



ROSS & CROMARTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

**LONEHILL NATIVE WOODLAND PLANTING SCHEME
ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT AND WALKOVER
SURVEY**

Lonehill, Dallas – Moray



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LONEHILL NATIVE WOODLAND PLANTING SCHEME
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Walkover Survey
Lonehill, Dallas, Knockando Estate, Moray

Summary

An archaeological desk-based assessment and walkover survey was carried out on 20 September 2011 on behalf of Scottish Woodlands Ltd on Knockando Estate, Dallas, Moray in advance of a native woodland establishment scheme. The work was undertaken to assess the nature and extent of any archaeology likely to be affected within the areas outlined for planting and regeneration and in order to inform recommendations for the protection and management of any sites recovered. The survey identified five archaeological sites including grouse butts, a small turf structure and clearance cairns. Mitigation measures are proposed to safeguard the sites during the establishment of the woodland scheme.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A desk-based assessment and walkover survey of the visible archaeological monuments surviving within the boundaries of a proposed woodland establishment scheme (centred at grid reference NJ 08676 51061) was carried out on the Knockando Estate, Dallas, Moray (see Fig.1) by Ross and Cromarty Archaeological Services on 20 September 2011. The survey was requested by Scottish Woodlands on behalf of Knockando Estate, because the area proposed for the woodland development is located in a landscape with a potential for sites of archaeological significance.
- 1.2 The purpose of the desk-based assessment and archaeological walkover survey was to identify and record the location and nature of any archaeological features of interest prior to development, whilst assessing any potential adverse impacts and proposing an appropriate strategy of mitigation. The *Scottish Planning Policy 2010* describes how archaeology should be managed when considering planning decisions and determining conditions for developments that have an impact on the historic environment.

2. Acknowledgements

- 2.1 We wish to thank John Sutherland of Scottish Woodlands for commissioning the work. Fieldwork was carried out by Lynn Fraser and Mary Peteranna, while mapping is reproduced by permission of ProMap license #LIG1044.

3. Site Location

- 3.1 The area for survey on the Knockando Estate is bounded to the north by a single track road that runs from Wester Meikle Branchill Cottage on the east end to a ruinous settlement at Alltnafourack at the west end. It is bound to the west by a tract of forested land and to the east by a fenceline boundary and cultivated field (see Fig.1).

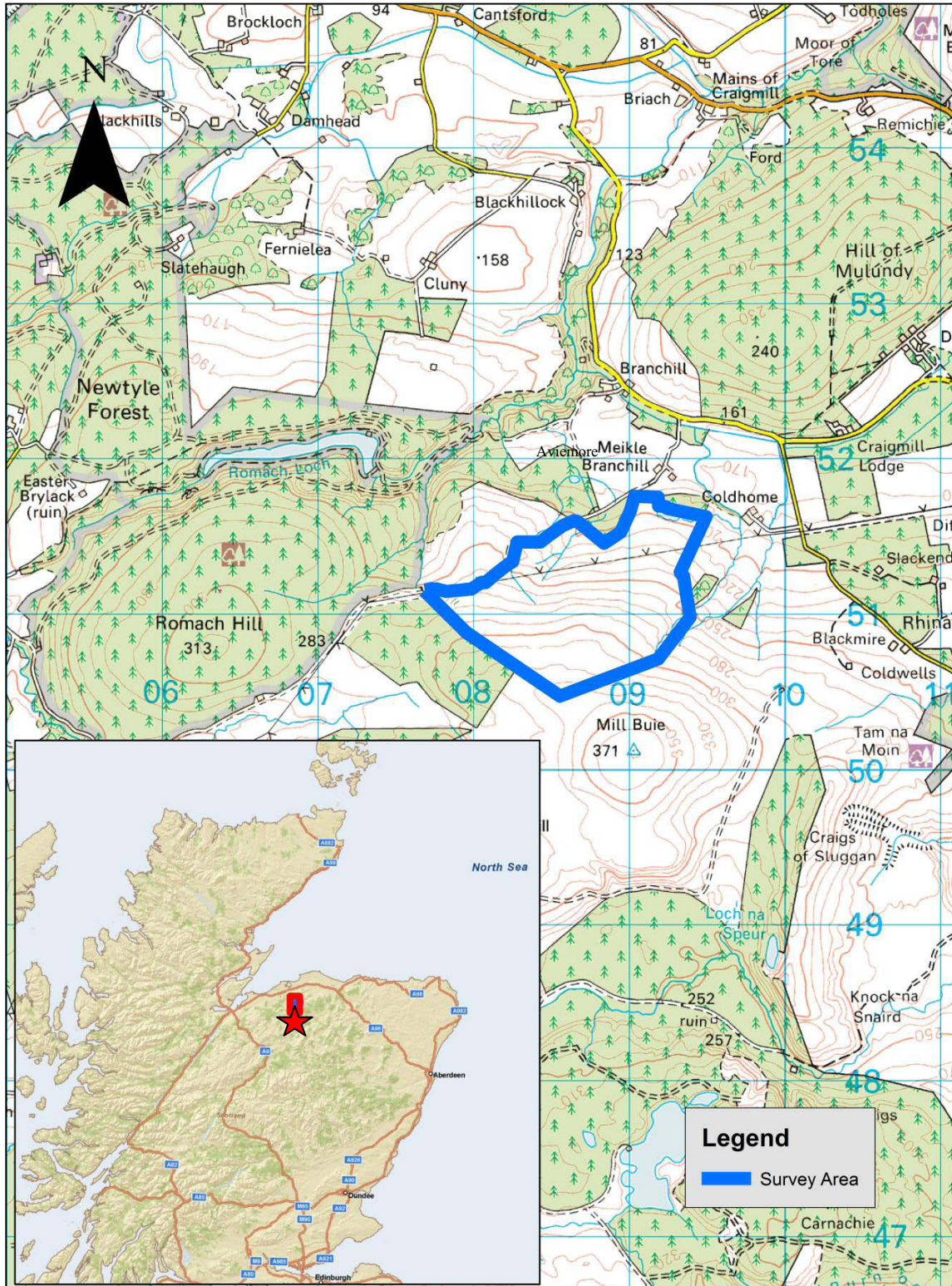


Figure 1 Location of survey area

3.2 The survey area generally slopes uphill from north to south and comprises open heather-covered moorland with two small burns lined with native trees running across the north half of the area and one burn in a small steep valley near the southeast boundary of the survey area. In addition to dense clusters of gorse and several small groupings of conifers, there are two small ponds in the northeast corner of the survey area. The south corner of the terrain rises more gently and consists of some flat, boggy terraces where the peat cutting areas were visible. The underlying bedrock comprises Grampian psammite and semipelite¹.

¹ British Geological Survey, 2011

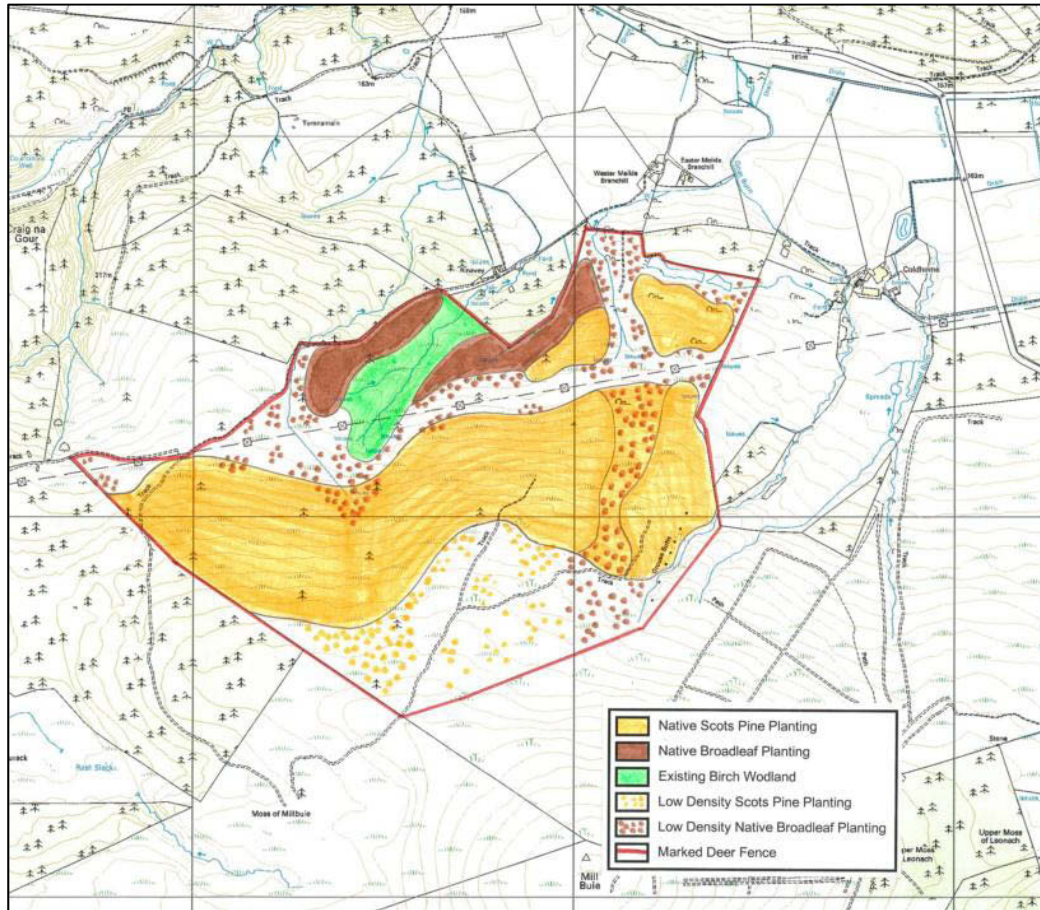


Figure 2 Map of the planting scheme²

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 The survey area sits in the north-western corner of the parish of Dallas, to the south of the B9010, which runs from Forres to Elgin in Moray. The parish name derives from the Gaelic words *dale* and *uis* meaning ‘watered valley’. It is surrounded by hills, almost equally divided by the River Lossie and intersected by several burns³.

There are no known prehistoric or early historic remains within the survey area.

The general area is shown on Roy’s Military Survey between Blackhillock to the east and Forb to the west (Fig. 3). As can be seen from the map extract, most of the settlement in the general area was close to the River Lossie. Forb and the unnamed settlement to its south differ in this respect, with their cultivated ground stretching towards the western edge of the survey area and Mill Buie. The survey area is shown as uncultivated and may well have formed one of the extensive mosses within the parish, referred to in both the Old and New Statistical Accounts⁴, with the cut peats being sold twice a week in Forres and Elgin.

Further settlement appears near, but not within, the survey area in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

² Plan supplied by Scottish Woodlands

³ OSA, 105

⁴ OSA; NSA

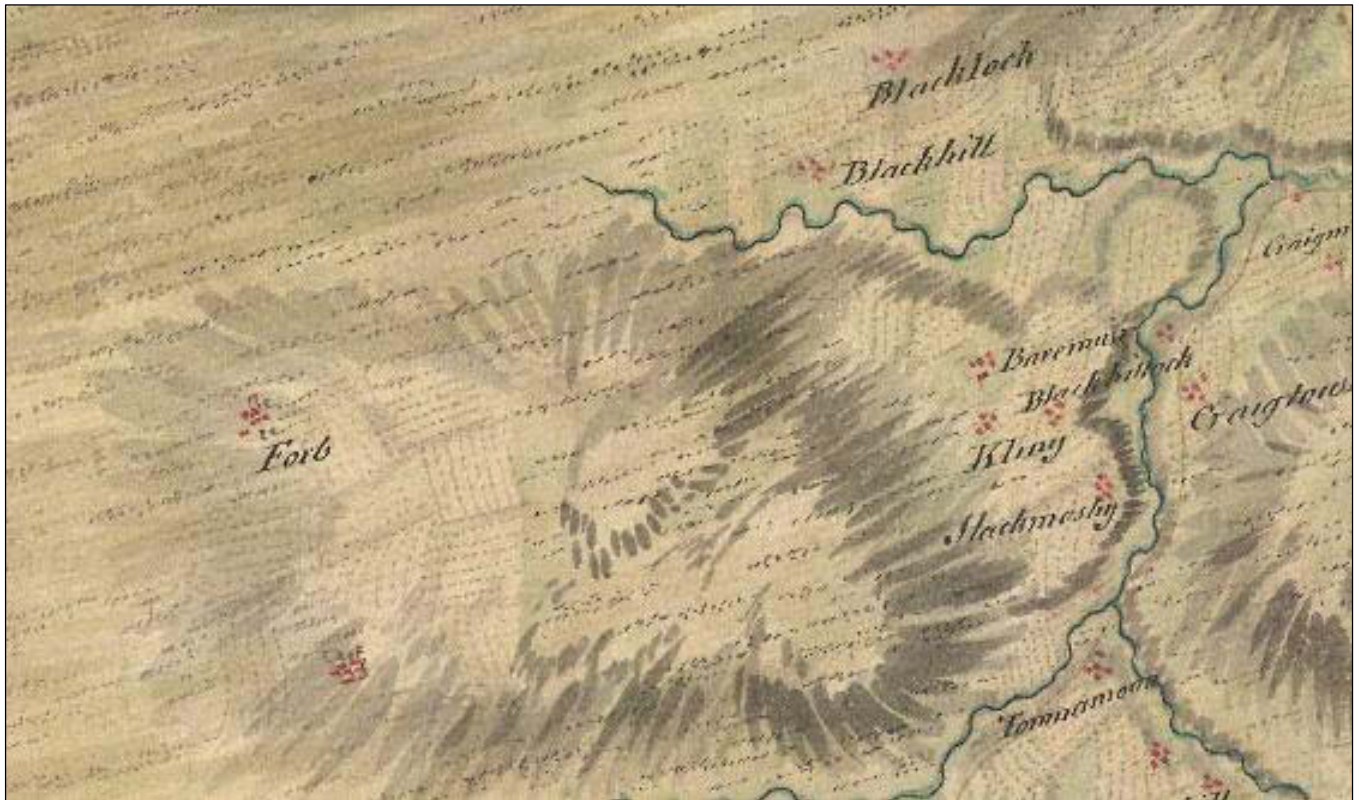


Figure 3 Extract from Roy's Military Survey showing the settlement pattern in the vicinity of the survey area⁵

5. Methodology

The overall aim of this assessment was to identify and record any archaeological sites or features that might be affected by the proposed tree planting, regeneration and fence erection within the survey area on the Knockando Estate and to propose mitigation as appropriate to ensure that archaeological evidence is not unnecessarily damaged or destroyed.

5.1 Desk-Based Assessment

- 5.1.1 A desk-based assessment was conducted prior to commencement of the survey in order to assess the archaeological potential of the area based on previously recorded sites and any historical documentation.
- 5.1.2 The drawings of the area, as supplied by the client, were checked in detail against the Ordnance Survey 1:25000 Map, Aberdeenshire Council's Sites and Monuments Record (ASMR), the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) and Historic Scotland's records of scheduled monuments and listed buildings. Online aerial photographs were checked and the map collections of the National Library of Scotland (NLS) were studied. Other literary sources were also consulted.

5.2 Walkover Survey

- 5.2.1 The area of the proposed woodland planting scheme was walked over and surveyed on the 20th of September 2011, during a period of fine, sunny weather. Conditions on the ground for the

⁵ National Library of Scotland (NLS) 2011

walkover survey were generally good with adequate light levels and visibility, although the terrain was wet underfoot in parts and pitted with extensive deer grass mounds. Areas of dense gorse resulted in some difficulty in checking for archaeological features. Two of the seven previously recorded grouse butts were not located, probably for this reason. Vegetation coverage also resulted in difficulty in photographing sites.

- 5.2.2 Archaeological sites were recorded individually including using high-resolution digital photography where possible, while sketch survey drawings were produced where necessary. The individual site locations were plotted using DGPS technology and ArcPad software on a handheld Windows Mobile-based computer. Details relating to the individual recovered sites and monuments can be found in the Gazetteer of Archaeological Sites in Appendix 1.
- 5.2.3 Survey and recording methods from the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) were employed and all work was conducted in strict adherence to the *Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct*.

6. Results

The following sections present the results of the desk-based assessment and walkover survey.

6.1 Desk-based assessment

A desk-based assessment was carried out in advance of the walkover survey in order to assess the archaeological potential of the area based on previously recorded sites and any historical documentation.

6.1.1 Cartographic Sources

Mapping held at the National Library of Scotland⁶ in Edinburgh was checked on-line and produced the following results.

6.1.1.1 William Roy's Military Survey of Scotland 1747-55

Roy's Military Survey (Fig. 3) shows the survey area generally between *Forb* in the west and *Blackhillock* in the east. There is no settlement or cultivation shown within the survey area.

6.1.1.2 First Edition OS Six-inch to the mile map (Elgin 1874, Sheet XVI)

The Ordnance Survey was carried out in 1871. The map published in 1876 does not depict any settlement within the boundary of the survey area (Fig. 4). There are, however, three areas of settlement shown close by. On the northern edge of the area is Rinavey, which is shown as having three buildings, a well, sluices and a mill dam. Alltnafourack on the western edge is shown as having four buildings, one of which also has an enclosure. To the east of the survey area is Slacks of Coldhome, which is shown as consisting of five buildings, one of which is L-shaped, a small enclosure and a well.

An undefined boundary is shown as running from Alltnafourack to Mill Buie, along which are marked three piles of stones and three boundary stones.

⁶ NLS 2011

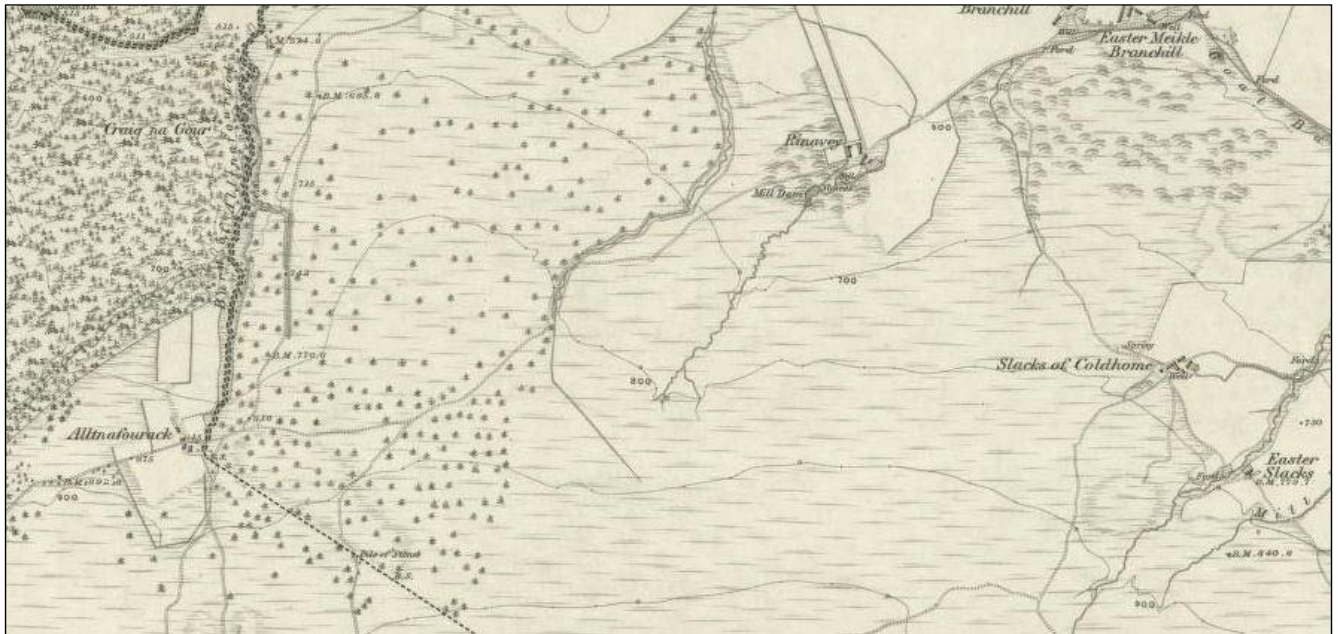


Figure 4 Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1st edition showing the settlements of Rinavey, Alltnafourack and Slacks of Coldhome⁷

6.1.1.3 Second Edition OS One-inch to the mile map (Rothes 1896, Sheet 85)

By the time of the second edition Ordnance Survey map Rinavey is shown as two buildings, one of which has an enclosure. Alltnafourack is also shown as having reduced in size to two buildings. Slacks of Coldhome, however, is still shown as having three buildings. The piles of stones and boundary stones marked on the first edition map are not shown.

6.1.1.4 Current mapping

The current Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map for the area shows Rinavey and Alltnafourack, but there is no trace of Slacks of Coldhome.

A line of seven grouse butts is marked running in a north-easterly direction within the eastern extent of the survey area.

6.1.2 Aberdeenshire Council Sites and Monuments Record

The Aberdeenshire Sites and Monuments Record (ASMR) was consulted online⁸. There were no archaeological sites within the survey area's boundaries. There were three sites recorded close to the survey area's boundary:

NJ05SE0030 Alltnafourack

The remains of a township as depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey map.

NJ05SE0037 Upper Coldhome

This is shown as Slacks of Coldhome on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey 6-inch map (see above).

NJ05SE0039 Easter Slacks

The site of three small buildings, one of which is disused and a two small enclosures.

⁷ National Library of Scotland (NLS) 2011

⁸ ASMR 2011

6.2 Walkover Survey Results

The walkover survey revealed four new archaeological sites (see Fig. 6), all of which most likely relate to the Post Medieval use of the landscape including transhumance and shooting activities. The Gazetteer of Archaeological Sites (see Appendix 1) provides details of the individual sites recovered during the survey.

6.2.1 Prehistoric Period

6.2.1.1 No archaeological sites of definite prehistoric date were identified within the survey area.

However, the walkover survey only records upstanding and visible sites and monuments, and there is the possibility that archaeology relating to prehistory is preserved within buried contexts.

6.2.2 Historic Period



Plate 1 Site 3 – Turf 'U'-shaped structure – facing W

- 6.2.2.1 The sites identified during the walkover survey most likely relate to the use of the landscape during the Post Medieval period. Transhumance activities are well known in the Scottish Highlands and Islands, where shielings (possibly Site 3) were utilised to manage domestic stock and utilise upland pastures and areas of marginal ground.
- 6.2.2.2 There was an extensive area, Site 1, in the south central portion of the survey area (see Fig. 6) where peat cutting had clearly taken place in the past. It was also noted by the surveyors that the disused tracks, which cross the survey area to settlement areas to the north, would have readily accessed the areas of peat cutting.
- 6.2.2.3 Only five of the seven grouse butts (Sites 2a-e, aligned NE-SW) shown on the current mapping were identified during the survey (see Fig. 6). Dense gorse bushes, noted as particularly thick along the burn running beside the SE edge of the survey area, almost certainly disguised the two unidentified sites. Shooting has long been a major element of Highland estate activities. Given both that the structures are not shown on the 2nd Edition OS map of 1896, and that the butts were in good condition, it is most likely that they were constructed sometime after that date.

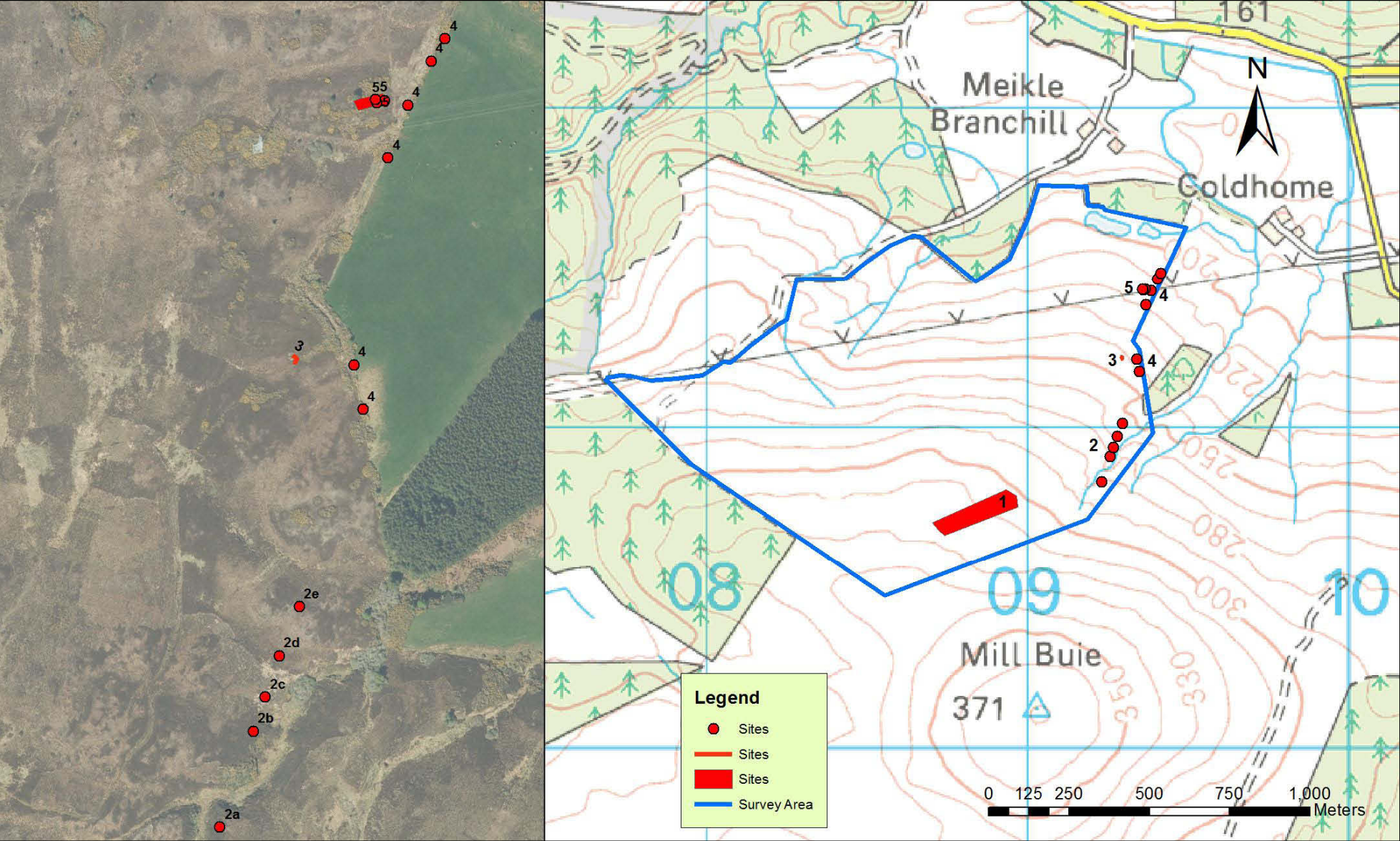


Figure 5 - Location of archaeological sites (right), close-up of Sites 2-5 (left)

6.2.2.4 An area of dense gorse masked a grouping of low cairns of stone (Site 5) in the NE corner of the survey area (see Fig. 6). There was no visible evidence that they formed anything structural other than small clearance cairns. However they were very different in size and stone type from the array of stone heaps (Site 4) lying along the boundary fenceline in the NE edge of the area (see Fig. 6). Both sites have been interpreted as clearance cairns, but the differences between them suggest that the Site 5 cairns relate to an earlier period of occupation.



Plate 2 Site 2c – Turf subcircular grouse butt – facing SW

6.2.2.5 The boundary stones and piles of stone shown on the First Edition Ordnance survey map, depicted as per the image below in relation to the survey area (Fig. 5), were not identified during the survey. It is likely they have since disappeared, probably overgrown with vegetation.

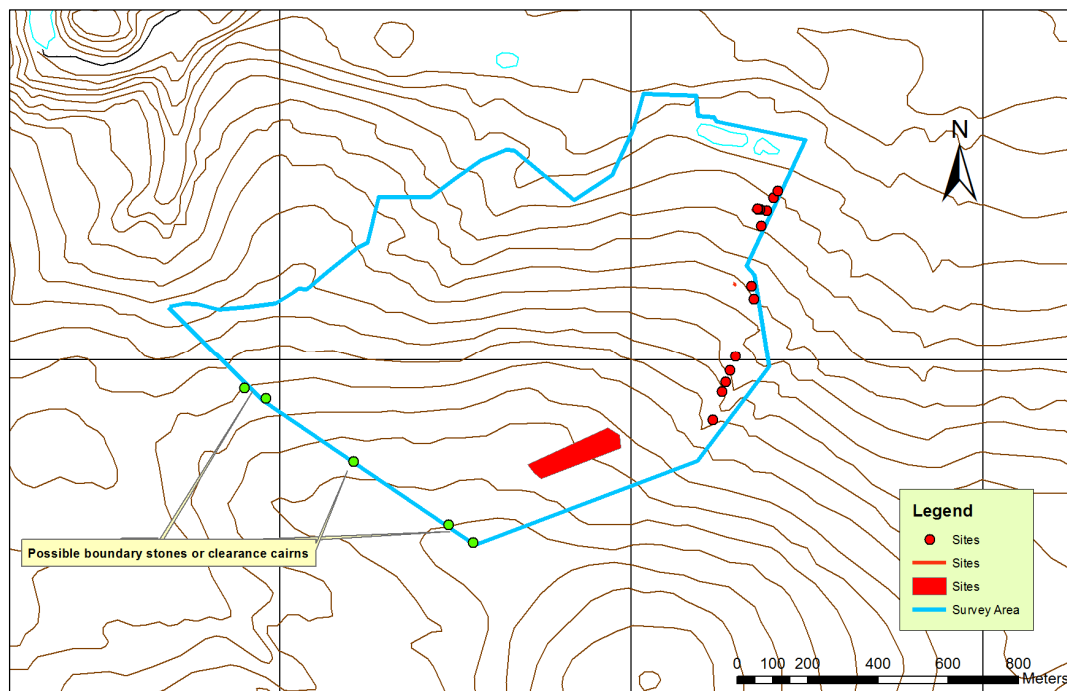


Figure 6 Survey area, showing location of possible boundary stones recorded on the 1st Ed OS map

7. Discussion

- 7.1 The walkover survey recorded four new archaeological sites within the proposed area of the planting scheme. These generally comprise structures and features associated with transhumance and estate activities, although their effect on the landscape has been minimal.
- 7.2 Two of the grouse butts were not identified during the survey, nor were the boundary stones along the SW edge of the survey area. It appears that the majority of the survey area has been left untouched during past occupation, probably due to the nature and location of the terrain. However, the grouping of clearance cairns (Site 5) in the NE corner of the area is intriguing and indicates that part of the area had been used for something other than shooting and peat cutting. It is a possibility that the Site 5 cairns are remnants of earlier occupation and possibly cultivation of the ground, and that earlier, possibly even prehistoric, sites may be buried beneath the peat and vegetation covering the ground today.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 At least a 10-metre buffer zone should be maintained around any individual buildings and structures, including the possible shieling (Site 3) and the grouse butts (Site 2a-e), while any new tree growth within these buffer zones should be managed.
- 8.2 At least a 5-metre buffer zone should be maintained in the planting scheme around the polygon depicting the area of clearance cairns in Site 5, given that they certainly predate the more modern clearance heaps along the NE boundary.
- 8.3 We do not recommend that planting be restricted in any way around the area of peat cutting (Site 1) or around the remaining clearance cairns (Site 4).
- 8.4 Access tracks for vehicles and the erection of any new fence lines should also respect the recommendations set out above.

9. References

ASMR 2011. Aberdeenshire Council Sites and Monuments Record. Accessed 19 September 2011 at <http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/smrpub/shire/default.aspx>

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APPENDIX 1 Lonehill, Dallas Gazetteer of Archaeological Sites

No.	Site Name	Site Type	Description	Align-ment	Condition	Period	Height OD (m)	Easting (centre)	Northing (centre)	Photo No.
1	Coldhome	Peat cuttings	An area which has been extensively cut for peat, probably linked to settlement by the disused tracks depicted on current mapping.	N/A	Ruinous	Post Medieval	310	308846	850733	N/A
2a	Coldhome	Grouse butt	A grass- and heather-covered subcircular grouse butt of turf construction measuring 0.7m wide by 1m long and 1m deep. The entrance is in the north side.	NE-SW	Ruinous	Post Medieval	280	309231	850830	N/A
2b	Coldhome	Grouse butt	A grass- and heather-covered subcircular grouse butt of turf construction measuring 1m wide by 1.4m long and 1m deep. The entrance is in the northeast side.	NE-SW	Ruinous	Post Medieval	270	309258	850909	N/A
2c	Coldhome	Grouse butt	A grass- and heather-covered subcircular grouse butt of turf construction measuring 1m wide by 1.5m long and 1.5m deep. The entrance is in the northeast side with a ditch running northeastward.	NE-SW	Ruinous	Post Medieval	265	309268	850937	10-11
2d	Coldhome	Grouse butt	A grass- and heather-covered subcircular grouse butt of turf construction measuring 1m wide by 1.3m long and 0.8m deep. The entrance is in the northeast side.	NE-SW	Ruinous	Post Medieval	260	309280	850971	N/A
2e	Coldhome	Grouse butt	A grass- and heather-covered subcircular grouse butt of turf construction measuring 1m wide by 1.5m long and 1.4m deep. The entrance is in the northeast side with a ditch running northeastward.	NE-SW	Ruinous	Post Medieval	255	309296	851011	N/A
3	Coldhome	Structure	A grass-covered turf and stone 'U'-shaped structure measures 4m wide by 5m long over walls spread 1-1.5m and standing up to 0.7m high; possible shieling	N-S	Degraded	Post Medieval	245	309294	851216	12

LHD11 – Lonehill, Dallas Woodland Planting Scheme: Archaeological Walkover Survey

No.	Site Name	Site Type	Description	Align-ment	Condition	Period	Height OD (m)	Easting (centre)	Northing (centre)	Photo No.
4	Coldhome	Clearance cairn	Multiple piles of large stones and boulders measuring between 1-1.5m in diameter are located to the E side of a ditch along the fenceline/ditch boundary between a cultivated field to E and moorland to W. They appear to be relatively modern, possibly both field clearance and boulders removed during construction of the drainage ditch. Located roughly between NGR NJ 0942 5148 and NJ 0935 5117.	N/A	Ruinous	Post Medieval	240	Various	Various	N/A
5	Coldhome	Clearance cairn	Located under a dense area of gorse and several conifers (approx 20m by 8m) are several low cairns of stone. They are comprised medium-large stones of a different type to the more recent stones piles along the fenceline boundary. They probably represent the spread-out remains of earlier clearance cairns, but it is possible that the stones are the completely degraded remains of a structure. There was no evidence of anything structural remaining, although the dense gorse made visibility difficult.	N/A	Degraded	Unknown	215	309353	851427	N/A

APPENDIX 2 Lonehill, Dallas Index of Photographs

No.	Direction Facing	Site No.	Notes	Taken By	Date
1	NW to NE	-	Panorama facing northward, looking across the survey area to the Moray Firth and North Sea	MKP	20/09/2011
2	NW	-	Looking northwest across the heather-covered survey area	MKP	20/09/2011
3	N	-	Looking north across the heather-covered survey area	MKP	20/09/2011
4	NNE	-	Looking north-northeast across the heather-covered survey area	MKP	20/09/2011
5	NE	-	Panorama facing northeast across the survey area	MKP	20/09/2011
6	NE	-	Looking northeast across the heather-covered survey area	MKP	20/09/2011
7	ENE	-	Looking east-northeast across the heather-covered survey area	MKP	20/09/2011
8	N	-	Looking across the survey area to Findhorn Bay in the distance	MKP	20/09/2011
9	NW	-	Looking across the survey area to E tip of the Black Isle and Nigg peninsula in the distance	MKP	20/09/2011
10	SW	2c	One of the upstanding, ruinous heather and grass-covered turf grouse butts	MKP	20/09/2011
11	SW	2c	One of the upstanding, ruinous heather and grass-covered turf grouse butts	MKP	20/09/2011
12	W	3	A grass-covered turf and stone 'U'-shaped structure	MKP	20/09/2011