

Archaeological survey: Garcrogo, Balmaclellan, Dumfries and Galloway

June 2018



Report by John Pickin Archaeology and Heritage for Watson Forestry Limited

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY: GARCROGO, BALMACLELLAN, DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

DGC reference number 17FGS20737 (Garcrogo Woodland Creation)

NGR (centre): NX 721 790

Survey date: 18 June 2018

1 INTRODUCTION

Watson Forestry Ltd, acting for Czernin Kinskey, is proposing a woodland creation programme at Garcrogo near Balmaclellan, Dumfries and Galloway. Following discussion with Dumfries and Galloway Council it was advised that a basic archaeological survey should be undertaken at two known archaeological sites within the proposed planting area: a farmstead shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1853 (Dumfries and Galloway HER: MDG 16231) and a section of the route of the former Dumfries to New Galloway road (HER: MDG 26887).

The following report outlines the results of the survey of the two sites plus a number of other archaeological sites in the immediate area and suggests the type of mitigation that could be applied should approval be granted for the Garcrogo Woodland Creation programme.

2 LOCATION

The survey examined an area of improved pasture and wetland located 6km west of Balmaclellan village. The area, which lies east of Garcrogo Kennels and north-west of Caldwell Lodge, is subdivided into three fields by dry-stone dykes. It is enclosed to the west by Caldwell Wood and to the north and east by Garcrogo Forest. To the south-east the area is separated from the A712 road by three enclosed pasture fields.

The northern part of the survey area comprises a broad south-facing hill slope with a large knoll to the south-west. The southern part comprises two large, rounded glacial knolls surrounded to the north and east by areas of low-lying wetland.

3 HISTORICAL MAPPING

John Blaeu's *'Praefectura Kirkvabriensis'*, produced 1662-65, marks a farmstead called 'Garreckraggow' but the scale of the map is too small to locate this site with any precision; it does, however, indicate settlement in the Garcrogo area during the first half of the 17th century. The first detailed map is Roy's military survey of 1752-55, which depicts the farmsteads of 'Gargroga' and 'Culdow'; this map also marks areas of open rig cultivation south of Garcrogo and north of Caldwell and shows the Dumfries to New Galloway road north of the two farmsteads. John Ainslie's *'The Stewartry of Kirkcudbright'*, 1797, is similar to Roy's survey but also shows the route of the 'proposed new road' from Dumfries to New Galloway.

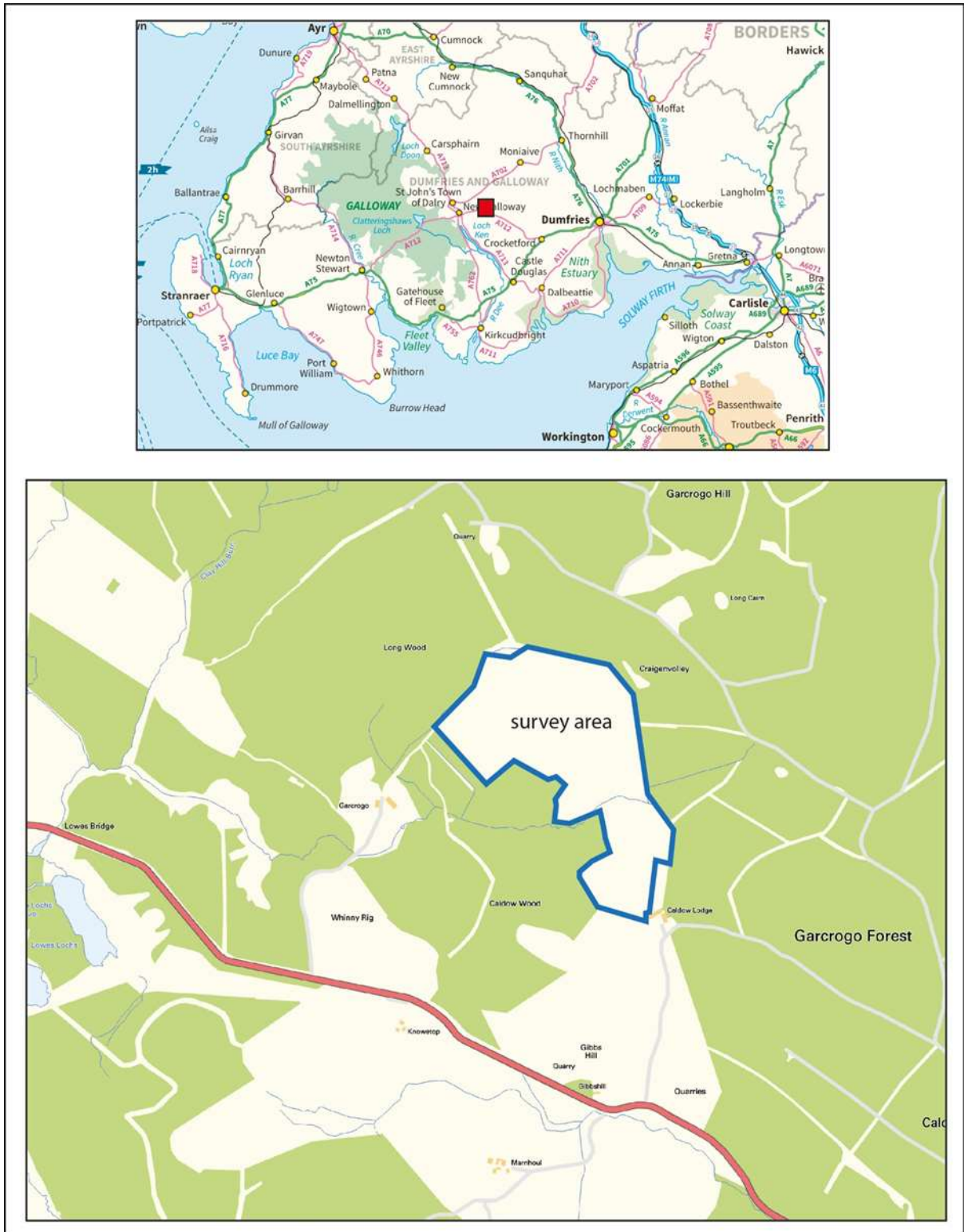


Figure 1. Site location.

(Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database 2014).

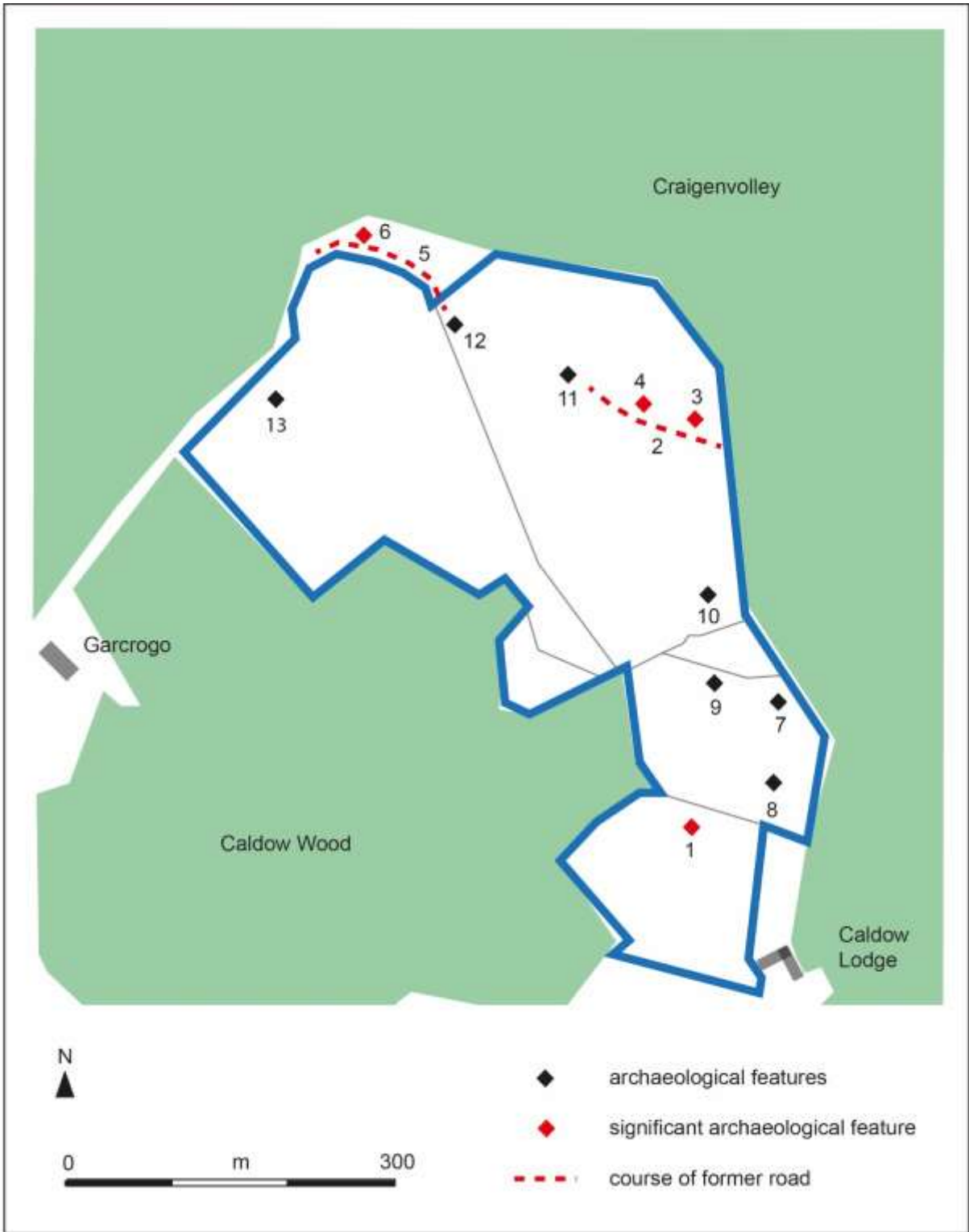


Figure 2. Survey area showing archaeological features.

John Thompson's 1821 map 'Kirkcudbrightshire' shows 'Garreroga' and 'Upper Caldwell' with the main road marked south of the two farmsteads; the road shown on the earlier maps is not depicted, indicating that this had gone out of use by the early 19th century.

The Ordnance Survey's First Edition six-inch map, surveyed 1849-50 and published 1853, provides the first large scale survey of the Garcrogo area. It marks the line of the former road with an enclosure wall on its south side and it also shows, just north of Caldwell, a farmstead (this report's site ID 1) comprising two unroofed buildings and a garden enclosure. The First Edition map also indicates that the modern pattern of field walls was in place by the mid-19th century. The Second Edition mapping of 1895 shows the course of the former road but without a wall on its south side; the site of the farmstead is not marked. The 1907 six-inch OS map shows neither the former road nor the farmstead.

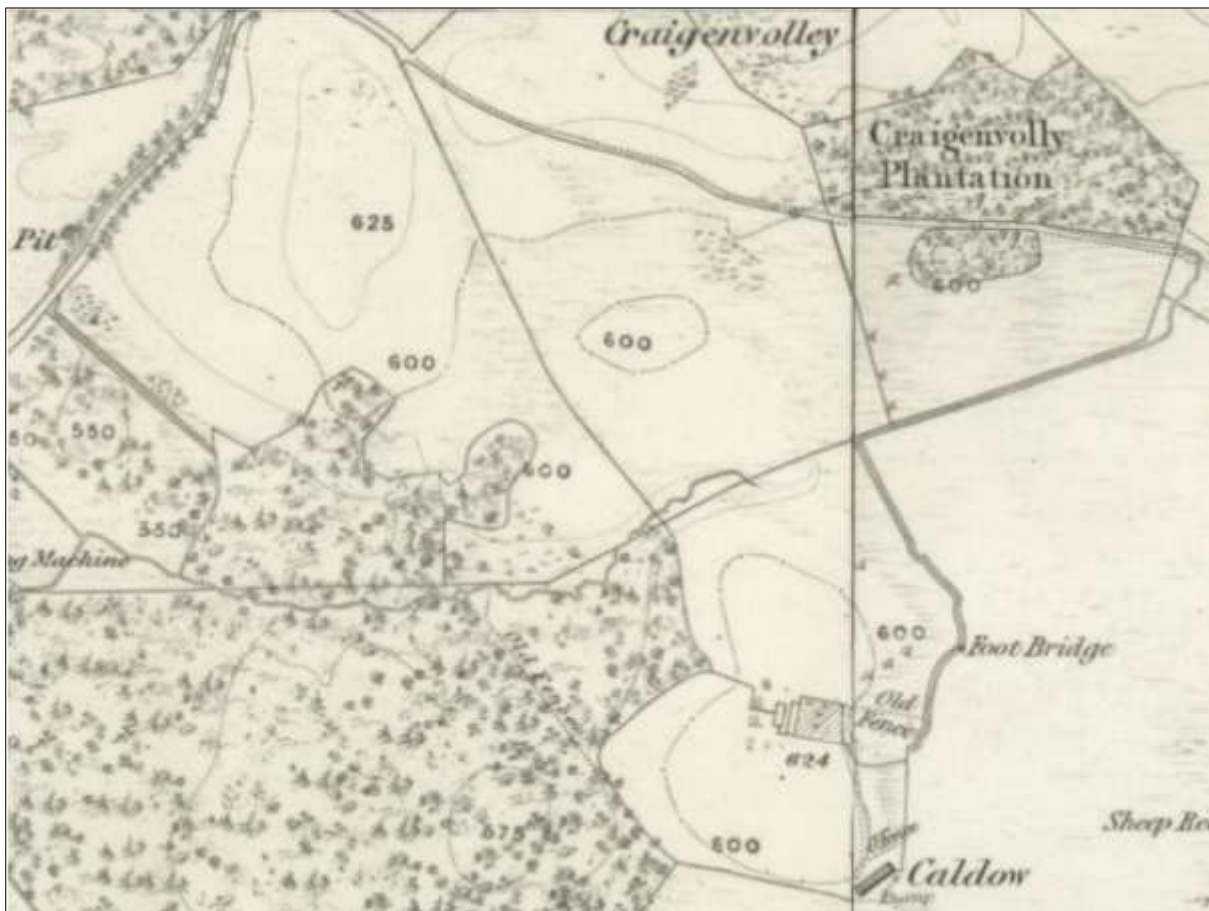


Figure 3. First Edition OS six-inch map (composite of Kirkcudbrightshire sheets 24 and 25), surveyed 1849-50. The unroofed farmstead (ID 1) is immediately north-west of Caldwell and the course of the former Dumfries-New Galloway road (IDs 2 and 5) is shown running north-west from Craigenvolley Plantation.

4 SURVEY RESULTS

The walkover survey was carried out on 19 June 2018. The brief was to inspect the farmstead and the former road recorded on the Dumfries and Galloway Historic Environment Register (HER sites MDG 26887 and 16231) and also to note any other archaeological

features in the immediate area. All features were given an ID number (see below) and were photographed, described and their positions recorded with a hand-held GPS device. In addition, tape and off-set surveys were made of the farmstead (ID 1) and a previously unrecorded burnt mound (ID 6).

ID 1 Farmstead (NX 72142 78785), [MDG 16231; Canmore ID 177892]

The farmstead shown on the First Edition OS map survives as two discrete areas of spread rubble associated with two linear hollows on the shallow north-facing slope of a small knoll. The northern rubble spread forms an irregular, low mound measuring 6m by 4m and incorporates at its north-east end a 2.5m by 0.8m wall footing; to the south, the mound appears to lie within and below a low terrace cut into the slope which may represent the south end of a building platform. On the surface of the mound and to its south are a number of large stone blocks, some of which may be displaced building masonry. Low earthworks between the mound and the dyke wall may represent additional structures. The dimensions of the mound and building platform indicate a rectangular structure measuring 4.5m by 8.5m

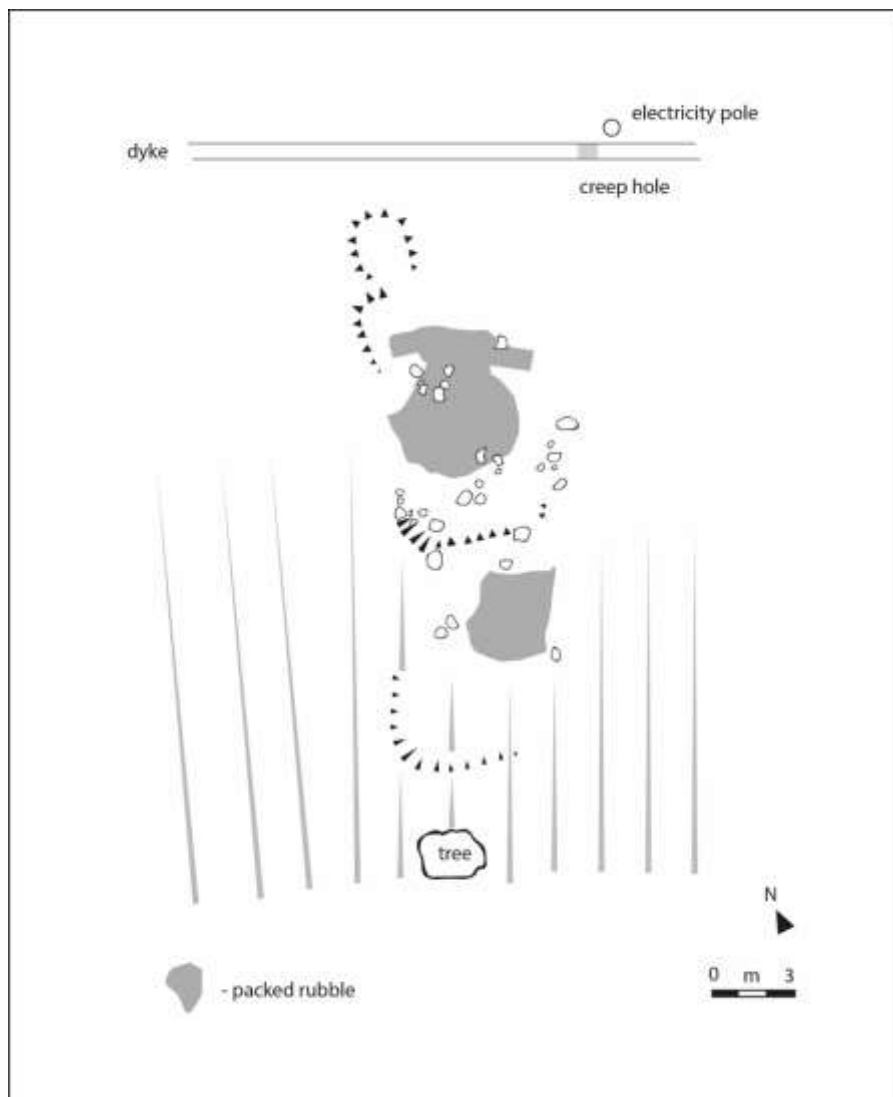


Figure 4. Plan of farmstead (ID 1).

The second mound lies on the slope immediately south of the first, and forms a low stone heap measuring 3.7m by 4m with a pronounced straight edge on its east side. Some 4m south is a shallow earthwork that might represent the south-west corner of a second building platform.

No evidence survives for the garden enclosure shown on the First Edition map although it may be relevant that the eastern section of the modern stone dyke north of the farmstead has been constructed above a low, linear bank. This bank may correspond with the north side of the former garden enclosure.

The field evidence suggests that the farmstead and associated enclosures were completely demolished and any reusable building stone removed from site. The remaining rubble was carefully placed in two discrete heaps, probably within the footprints of two of the demolished structures, and the northern foundations of the associated garden enclosure were incorporated within the line of a later field dyke. The date of demolition is unknown but must have occurred before 1895, the date of the second OS survey.

ID 2 Road 26887 (NX 72095 79176 – 72150 79156), [MDG 26887]

A well-preserved stretch of the former Dumfries to New Galloway road survives as an embanked track, 3.6m wide, terraced into the south-facing slope of the hill. At its west end the road is obscured by an area of boggy ground. On the road's south side are the 0.8m wide foundations of a stone enclosure wall; the wall starts 4m west of the Garcrogo forest fence and to the west it is obscured by bog.

ID 3 Quarry (NX 72142 79165)

A small rectangular quarry, 4.8m by 6.7m and 1.4m high, excavated into the slope on the north side of the road (ID 2). The quarry face is obscured by vegetation and no bedrock is exposed. It may have been a gravel quarry.

ID 4 Quarry (NX 72114 791670)

A small quarry, 2m by 7.2m and 1.6m high, excavated into the slope on the north side of the road (ID 2). The quarry is partly infilled and obscured by vegetation but the back wall contains a number of large boulders and there is an area of exposed bedrock. It may have been a stone quarry.

ID 5 Road (NX 71798 79324 to 71886 79280) [MDG 26887]

A well-preserved stretch of the former Dumfries to New Galloway road survives as an embanked earthwork track with a parallel field dyke to the south and an area of wetland to the north. The road is around 4m wide. The road is immediately outwith the boundary of the survey area but should be included for assessment and mitigation purposes.

ID 6 Burnt mound (NX 71830 793230)

An oval mound, 4.7m by 5m and 1.1m high, located immediately north of the former road (ID 5). The north side of the mound is bounded by a small stream beyond which is an area of marsh. To the south, the mound appears to be overlain by the earthwork bank of the road. The mound is mostly grass-covered but erosion on the north-east side – probably from stock

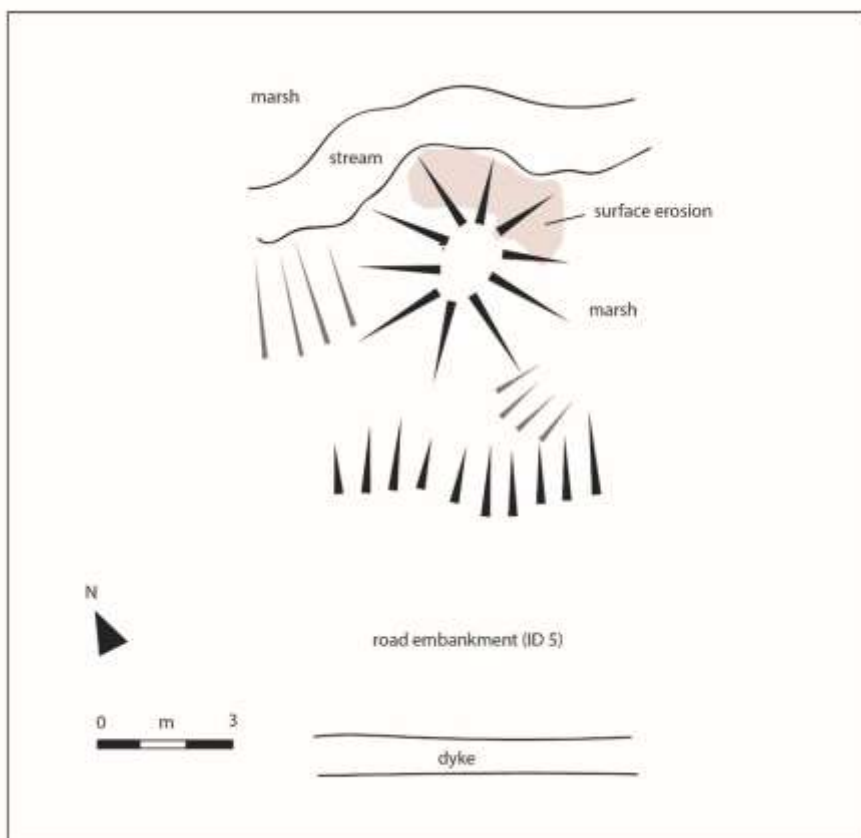


Figure 5. Plan of burnt mound (ID 6).

trampling – has exposed an area of burnt and heat-cracked stones. The mound is just outwith the survey area but should be included for assessment and mitigation purposes.

ID 7 Possible causeway or track (NX 72198 78925 to 72229 78887)

A linear feature, some 6m wide and up to 35m long in an area of wetland west of the Carcrog forest boundary fence. Vegetation obscures the feature's full extent and form but it may be a causeway or raised track constructed from dumped stone. At NX 7224 78878, close to the causeway's southern end, is an isolated clearance cairn measuring 1.5m by 2m.

ID 8 Clearance cairn (NX 72219 78811)

Linear stone dump, 4.5m by 2.5m, at the edge of the improved pasture and above an area of marsh. The cairn is loose with open voids and is probably the result of post-medieval or modern field clearance.

ID 9 Clearance cairn (NX 72154 78933)

Oval stone dump, 1.5m by 2.5m and 0.5m high in an area of marsh at the edge of improved pasture. The cairn is loose with open voids and is probably the result of post-medieval or modern field clearance.

ID 10 Clearance cairn (NX 72153 789870)

Large, rectangular stone dump, 4m by 3m and 0.5m high at the edge of improved pasture and above an area of marsh. The cairn is loose with open voids and is probably the result of post-medieval or modern field clearance.

ID 11 Clearance cairns (NX 72055 79195)

Two linear stone dumps close to the projected line of the former road (IDs 2 and 5). The eastern dump measures 9m by 2m and is 1.6m high and the western dump measures 9.5m by 3m and is 0.3m high. The cairns are loose with open voids and are probably the result of post-medieval or modern field clearance.

ID 12 Clearance cairn (NX 71894 79268)

Linear stone dump at side of stone field dyke, 6.5m by 2.5m and 0.4m high with a tail of small, spread stones extending the feature to the west. The cairn is loose with open voids and is probably the result of post-medieval or modern field clearance.

ID 13 Clearance cairn (NX 71736 79170)

Linear stone dump, 15m by 2.5m, at the edge of improved pasture and above an area of marsh. The dump lies between and surrounds two mature trees.

5 SIGNIFICANCE

ID 1: the farmstead

The farmstead probably predates the late-18th century settlements of Garcrogo and Caldwell and could be an example of a pre-improvement farmstead; it may equate with the farmstead of Garreckraggow shown on Blaeu's map of the 1660s. Despite extensive demolition, archaeological remains of the farmstead survive and there may also be below ground survival of the farmstead's associated enclosures. The site is of local significance and may be regionally important.

IDs 2-5: the road and quarries

The two sections of the former Dumfries to New Galloway road are well-preserved, especially the western section (ID 5) with its associated enclosure wall. The two quarries (IDs 4-5) were probably used to provide gravel and surface stone for the road and as such help to contextualise the road and add to its group value. The stratigraphical and chronological relationships between the road and the burnt mound are important in establishing the relative age of archaeological features in the immediate area. The road and quarries are locally significant.

ID 6: the burnt mound

The majority of Scottish burnt mounds are Bronze Age, although a few examples date from the early medieval period. They are relatively common in the lowlands of Galloway but only a few have been recorded in the higher ground of Kirkcudbrightshire: this may be due to the low level of archaeological survey in the area rather than a true archaeological distribution

pattern. The relative value of this example is enhanced by its relationship with the earthworks of the later road (ID 5). The burnt mound is of regional significance.

ID 7: the 'causeway'

The form, function and date of this feature are unknown. It may be a post-medieval road or causeway but it could also be an earlier feature; it is not shown on any of the historic maps. Its significance cannot be assessed.

IDs 8-13: clearance cairns

Many clearance cairns in the Galloway uplands are later prehistoric in date or relate to pre-improvement field clearance; they generally form distinct clusters and the stones are often firmly embedded in a grass-covered mound. The clearance cairns recorded during the survey are mostly composed of large loose stones and are located on the edges of improved ground; they probably relate to relatively modern (19th century or later) field clearance and enclosure. They are of interest as part of the local agricultural and historic landscape but are not archaeologically significant.

6 MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that unplanted zones are created at the following archaeologically significant sites:

ID 1: farmstead. Leave a 20m by 20m unplanted buffer zone around the site; its north line should follow the existing stone dyke with corner points at NX 72140 78801 and 72158 78796. This will protect the main farmstead structures and include part of any associated enclosures that may survive to the east.

IDs 2-4: road and quarries. Leave a 12m wide unplanted buffer zone with its central axis on the line NX 72097 79178 to 72112 79165 to 72154 79156. This will protect the course of the road, its associated enclosure dyke and the two roadside quarries.

IDs 5-6: road and burnt mound. These two features are immediately outwith the proposed plantation but should be included for mitigation purposes. Leave a 5m wide unplanted zone on the south side of the field dyke between NX 71880 79274 and 71795 79323. This will protect the course of the road and provide an adequate buffer zone for the burnt mound.

It is recommended that consideration should be given to creating an additional unplanted zone at ID 7, the site of the possible causeway; this zone should be 10m wide with a central axis between NX 72198 78925 to 72229 78887. The significance of this site cannot be assessed but, if operationally feasible, it would be prudent to afford it some protection.

The remaining features (IDs 8-13) are not of sufficient significance to merit protection.

7 APPENDIX 1 – Photographs



Plate 1. Farmstead (ID 1), view from north.



Plate 2. Farmstead (ID 1), view from south-west. The eastern (left) section of the dyke has been built on an earlier linear bank.



Plate 3. Road (ID 2) viewed from west with foundations of stone dyke to south.



Plate 4. Quarry (ID 3) viewed from south-east.



Plate 5. Quarry (ID 4) viewed from south-east.



Plate 6. Road (ID 5) viewed from east.



Plate 7. Burnt mound (ID 6) viewed from south-west.



Plate 8. Probable causeway feature (ID 7), view from north-west.



Plates 9 and 10. Clearance cairns, ID8 (left) and ID9 (right).



Plates 11 and 12. Clearance cairns, ID 10 (left) and ID 11 (right).



Plates 13 and 14. Clearance cairns, ID 12 (left) and ID 13 (right).

8 APPENDIX 2 – entry for Discovery & Excavation in Scotland 2018

Local authority: Dumfries and Galloway

Parish: Balmaclellan

Site name: Garcrogo

Name of contributor: John Pickin

Type of project: survey

Name of organisation:

NGR: NX 721 790 (centre)

Report: A walkover survey was carried out in advance of a proposed woodland creation programme. The following features were located:

NX 72142 78785. Slight remains of a farmstead marked as an unroofed structure on the First Edition OS map (also recorded as Canmore ID 177892).

NX 72095 79176 – 72150 79156. Well preserved section of the former Dumfries to New Galloway road.

NX 72142 79165. Roadside gravel quarry.

NX 72114 791670. Roadside stone quarry.

NX 71798 79324 to 71886 79280. Well preserved section of the former Dumfries to New Galloway road.

NX 71830 793230. Burnt mound, partially overlain by the earthwork bank of the former road.

NX 72198 78925 to 72229 78887. Possible causeway or track.

A number of post-medieval field clearance cairns were also noted within the survey area.

Location of report: DGC HER and HRHE (intended)

Funder: Watson Forestry for Czernin Kinskey

Contact details of organisation: High Weirston House, Leswalt, Stranraer DG9 0RQ