

Keppoch HEP, Roybridge: Metal Detecting Survey & Watching Brief: Data Structure Report

AOC Project 21922

28th March 2012

OASIS Number: aocarcha1-112684



Keppoch HEP, Roybridge.

Metal Detecting Survey & Watching Brief: Data Structure Report

On Behalf of:	Green Highland Renewables Ltd
National Grid Reference (NGR):	NN 2274 7828 (centred) & NN 2265 7831 – NN 2279 7821
AOC Project No:	21922
Prepared by:	Rob Engl & Alan Duffy
Illustration by:	Stefan Sagrott
Date of Fieldwork:	November 2011 & February 2012
Date of Report:	28th March 2012

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

Author: Rob Engl & Alan Duffy

Date: 28/03/2012

Approved by: Martin Cook

Date: 28/03/2012

Draft/Final Report Stage: Draft

Date: 28/03/2012

Enquiries to: AOC Archaeology Group
Edgefield Industrial Estate
Edgefield Road
Loanhead
EH20 9SY

Tel. 0131 440 3593
Fax. 0131 440 3422
e-mail. admin@aocarchaeology.com



www.aocarchaeology.com

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Abstract

An archaeological Metal Detecting Survey and Watching Brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on ground breaking works associated with the construction of a hydro scheme and associated infrastructure at Coillie Diobhain, Keppoch, Roybridge (NN 2274 7828) centred and (NN 2265 7831 – NN 2279 7821).

These archaeological works were undertaken along the full extent of the proposed development, due to proximity of the Battle of Mulroy which took place in 1688.

No significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during either the Metal Detecting Survey or the Watching Brief.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Green Highland Renewables Ltd on behalf of their client Mr John MacDonald, to undertake a programme of archaeological works consisting of a Metal Detecting Survey and Watching Brief prior to and during ground breaking works associated with the construction of a hydro scheme and associated infrastructure at Coillie Diobhain, Roybridge (Planning Ref No: 11/01200/FUL).
- 1.1.2 The archaeological works were conducted in accordance with the principles set out in *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government 2010) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology* (Scottish Government 2011) and were designed to meet the requirements of Highland Environment Team (HET) archaeological advisor to Highland Council.
- 1.1.3 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2011) outlining the programme of archaeological works was agreed with HET in advance of the evaluation being undertaken.

1.2 Location

- 1.2.1 The development area is located to the immediate northwest of Roybridge, on the western slopes of Maol Ruadh (centred NGR: NN 2274 7828). The route of the hydro scheme runs from NGR: NN 2265 7831 to NN 2279 7821 (Figure 1). The development lies directly above Glen Roy and is bounded to the south by a minor road and moorland to the east and west. A conifer lies to the north.
- 1.2.2 The site is underlain by solid geology of Cambrian Limestones of Appin Group (Peacock, Gordon & May 2004, 5). The drift geology is comprised of Pleistocene deposits of reddish brown clay tills.

1.3 Historical & Archaeological background

- 1.3.1 The development lies within the general area identified as the location of the Battle of Mulroy (NMRS: NN28SE1; Highland Council SMR: MHG4273; Figures 1 and 2), which was fought between Mackintosh and his clan Chattan allies and the MacDonalds of Keppoch and their allies (NSA 1845). The battle, which took place immediately prior to the 1688 rebellion, is considered as the last of the clan battles (NSA 1845). The battle is listed in Scotland's Historic Fields of Conflict (UKFOC Number 478; 2005) and is on the Historic Scotland Consultation List.
- 1.3.2 Although the Battle of Mulroy is said to have taken place on the southern lower slope of Maol Ruadh, the MacDonalds' are recorded as having spent the night before the battle on the higher ground above the battle (Appendix A). The possibility of initial skirmishes taking place, including an hour long firefight, has been suggested, implying the proposed Macdonalds' camp may contain evidence for the battle itself.
- 1.3.3 More generally, a settlement has been known to exist at the village of Roybridge to the immediate south of the development area, since 1750, when General Roy recorded both settlements and associated tracks in Glen Roy. The post-medieval expansion of the area

was encouraged by the construction of Telford's Laggan Road through Glen Spean and a bridge over River Roy in 1818 (Smith 2001, 810).

- 1.3.4 Prior to the Metal Detecting Survey and Watching Brief works there were no recorded instances of archaeological interventions or recorded heritage assets within the development site.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- i) to safeguard the archaeological resource that may be disturbed by the proposed development works;
- ii) to liaise with HET and the client in the event of significant archaeological features and /or small finds being unearthed as to the most appropriate response in safeguarding these features either by preservation *in situ*, if at all feasible, or by archaeological recording.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Metal Detecting Survey

3.1.1 The metal detector survey was undertaken using Whites M1 metal detectors (primary detector and smaller unit for detailed location). The metal detecting area was walked in transects no greater than 3 m wide. This allowed for a degree of overlap between transects ensuring ground was not missed. The transects were marked out prior to the survey being undertaken.

3.2 Watching Brief

3.2.1 All ground breaking works associated with the development were monitored by an experienced field archaeologist. The ground-breaking works were undertaken with a JCB/360° tracked excavator equipped with a 0.45 m toothless ditching bucket. The Watching Brief was halted when clean natural subsoil was observed. A digital photographic record was kept during the ground breaking works.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Metal Detecting Survey

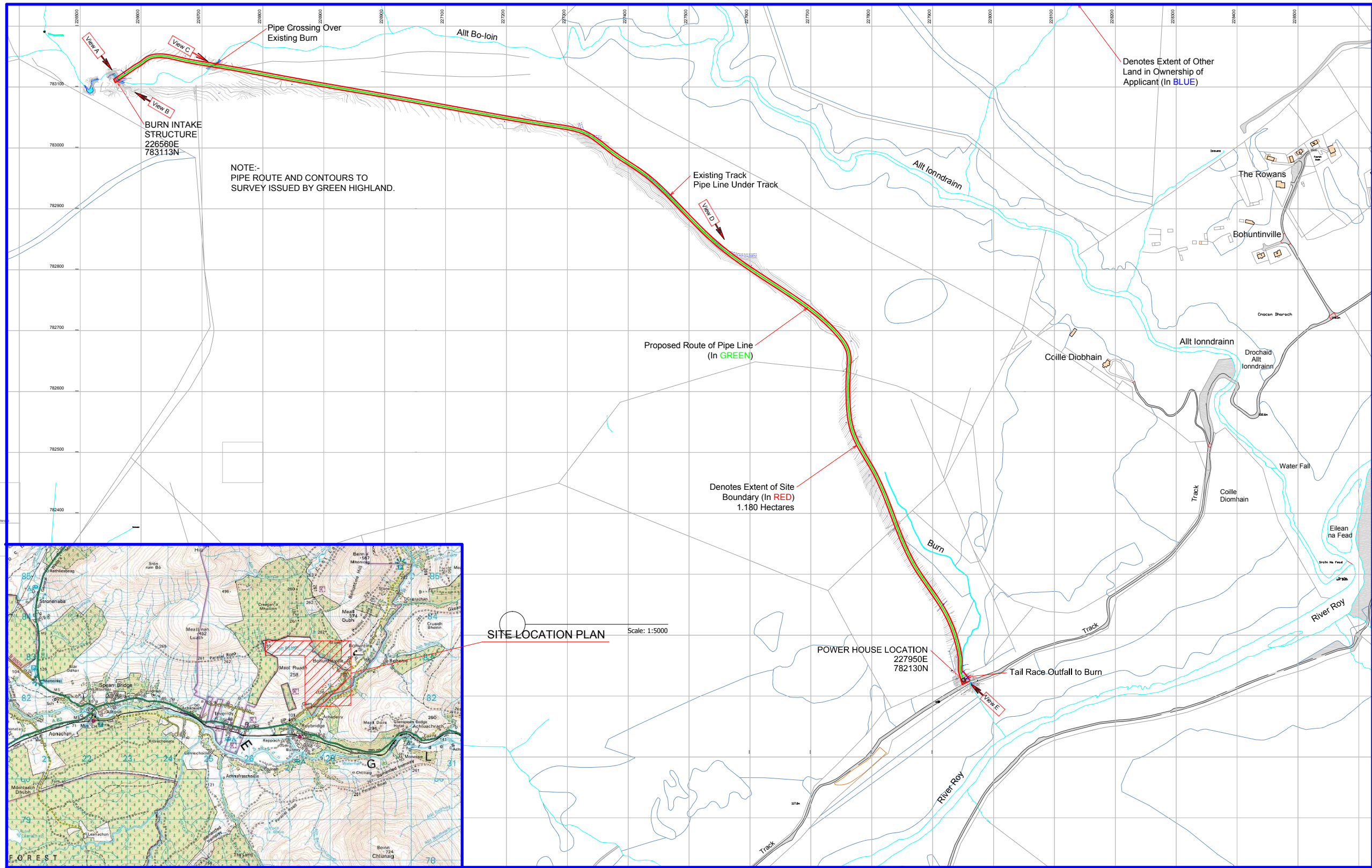
4.1.1 The metal detecting survey produced few finds. Those recovered were located within the southernmost pasture close to the minor road and consisted of modern detritus such as iron nails, fence pins and a tin lid. These were removed from the area. No archaeologically significant material relating to the battle of Mulroy was recovered.

4.2 Watching Brief

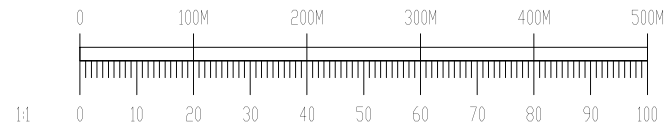
- 4.2.1 The Watching Brief monitored the removal of topsoil along the length of the proposed pipeline. The topsoil consisted of a dark brown peaty soil, the subsoil was, in the main, pale yellow sands and gravels with occasional very large stones and measured between 0.10 m and 0.40 m in depth.. No significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the Watching Brief works.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The archaeological Watching Brief and Metal Detecting Survey revealed neither significant archaeological features nor artefacts. Rather than prove that no significant archaeological remains of the battle or any other occupation of the site occur, it perhaps demonstrates the difficulty in trying to find such ephemeral and minor activity on site.
- 5.2 No further works are considered necessary, although this will have to be confirmed by the Highland Environment Team.



Based on a drawing supplied by the client



Location of monitored works

Figure 1: Location of monitored ground breaking works, Keppoch HEP

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Evaluation Data Structure Report**

Section 2: Appendices

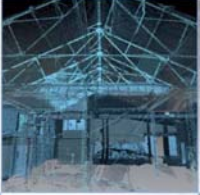
APPENDIX 1: Photographic Record

Frame	Description	From
1	General view	W
2	Sample section	N
3	General view	SE
4	General view	NW
5	Sample section	NE
6	General view	N
7	General view	S
8	General view	N
9	General view	S
10	General view	N
11	General view	S
12	Battle monument	-
13	Battle Monument (detail of plaque)	-

APPENDIX 2: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Highland Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	Keppoch HEP, Roybridge
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 21992
PARISH:	Kilmonivaig
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Alan Duffy & Rob Engl
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Metal Detecting Survey and Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	NN28SE1
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Battlefield
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NN 2265 7831 – NN 2279 7821
START DATE (this season)	7 th January 2011
END DATE (this season)	28 th February 2012
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeological Metal Detecting Survey and Watching Brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on ground breaking works associated with the construction of a hydro scheme and associated infrastructure at Coillie Diobhain, Keppoch, Roybridge (NN 2274 7828) centred and (NN 2265 7831 – NN 2279 7821).</p> <p>These archaeological works were undertaken along the full extent of the proposed development, due to proximity of the Battle of Mulroy which took place in 1688.</p>

	No significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during either the Metal Detecting Survey or the Watching Brief.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	-
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Mr John MacDonald
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	AOC Archaeology Group, Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Edgefield Road, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	edinburgh@aacarchaeology.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



AOC Archaeology Group, Edgefield Industrial Estate, Edgefield Road, Loanhead EH20 9SY
tel: 0131 440 3593 | fax: 0131 440 3422 | e-mail: admin@aocarchaeology.com

www.aocarchaeology.com