

**Corsock Meteorological Mast  
Dumfries & Galloway:  
Archaeological Assessment**

by Rebecca Shaw

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**Rathmell**  
Archaeology Ltd

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## 1 Overview

- 1.1 This report presents findings of a desk based assessment and reconnaissance field survey carried out on behalf of Infinergy Limited to determine the potential adverse impact of the installation of a temporary meteorological mast at Darngarroch Hill, Corsock on the archaeological resource.
- 1.2 These works are being undertaken in keeping with the condition applied to the issued planning consent (06/P/20246) from Dumfries & Galloway Council. Dumfries & Galloway Archaeology Service who advise Dumfries & Galloway Council, the planning authority on archaeological matters, have identified that the ground had the potential to contain archaeological sites. The conditioned consent specifies that no archaeological sites should receive an adverse direct impact from the erection and/or removal of the mast.
- 1.3 The meteorology mast is to be sited on rough grazing on the western side of Darngarroch Hill, (roughly NGR: NX 7971 8135). There is an existing track which gives access as far as the remains of Darngarroch Farm, which comprises the upstanding remains of a dwelling and a roofed barn, which is still in use. The track passes through and immediately adjacent to a number of ruined structures and enclosures associated with Darngarroch Farm. The site is then accessed across ground used now as rough grazing, but which contains cultivation remains from the mid eighteenth to mid nineteenth century.
- 1.4 This assessment report includes recommendations to ensure that the mast is sited and accessed in a manner that ensures that there is no adverse direct impact on any archaeology from this temporary development.

## 2 Scope of Assessment

- 2.1 This report considers the predicted impacts and effects on archaeological sites from the installation of a temporary meteorology mast at Darngarroch Hill, Corsock (NGR: NX 7971 8135).
- 2.2 The assessment focuses on all activities associated with the access road and erection of the meteorological mast and guy wires, as well as a specific zoned area, centred on the mast, of 1800m<sup>2</sup>. The concrete founds for the base of the mast will be 1.6m<sup>2</sup> by 1.5 to 3m in depth with the equivalent founds for the four sets of guy wires being 0.7m<sup>2</sup> by 1.5 to 3m in depth. The guys are to be secured some 25m out from the base of the meteorological mast.
- 2.3 The development would occupy the location shown on Figure 1, which lies at roughly 290m AOD. The land-use over the development area is for the most part rough upland grazing with conifer plantations to both the north and west.
- 2.4 The proposed access road will use an existing maintained track which leads to the remains Darngarroch Farm via the inhabited farmsteads of Muil and Slongaber before this track terminates; necessitating a route over the rough grazing for the last 600m (440m direct map route).
- 2.5 The specific objective of this current archaeological assessment was to:
  - a. identify the archaeological within the assessment area;
  - b. propose measures, where appropriate, to prevent any predicted adverse effects.
- 2.6 The assessment was undertaken by Rathmell Archaeology Limited, informed by comments and information from Dumfries & Galloway Archaeology Service.

## 3 Methods

- 3.1 This assessment was conducted in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Code of Conduct and Appropriate Standards. In addition the assessment was conducted according



Figure 1a – Ainslie 1797



Figure 1b – Ainslie 1821



Figure 1c – Thompson 1831



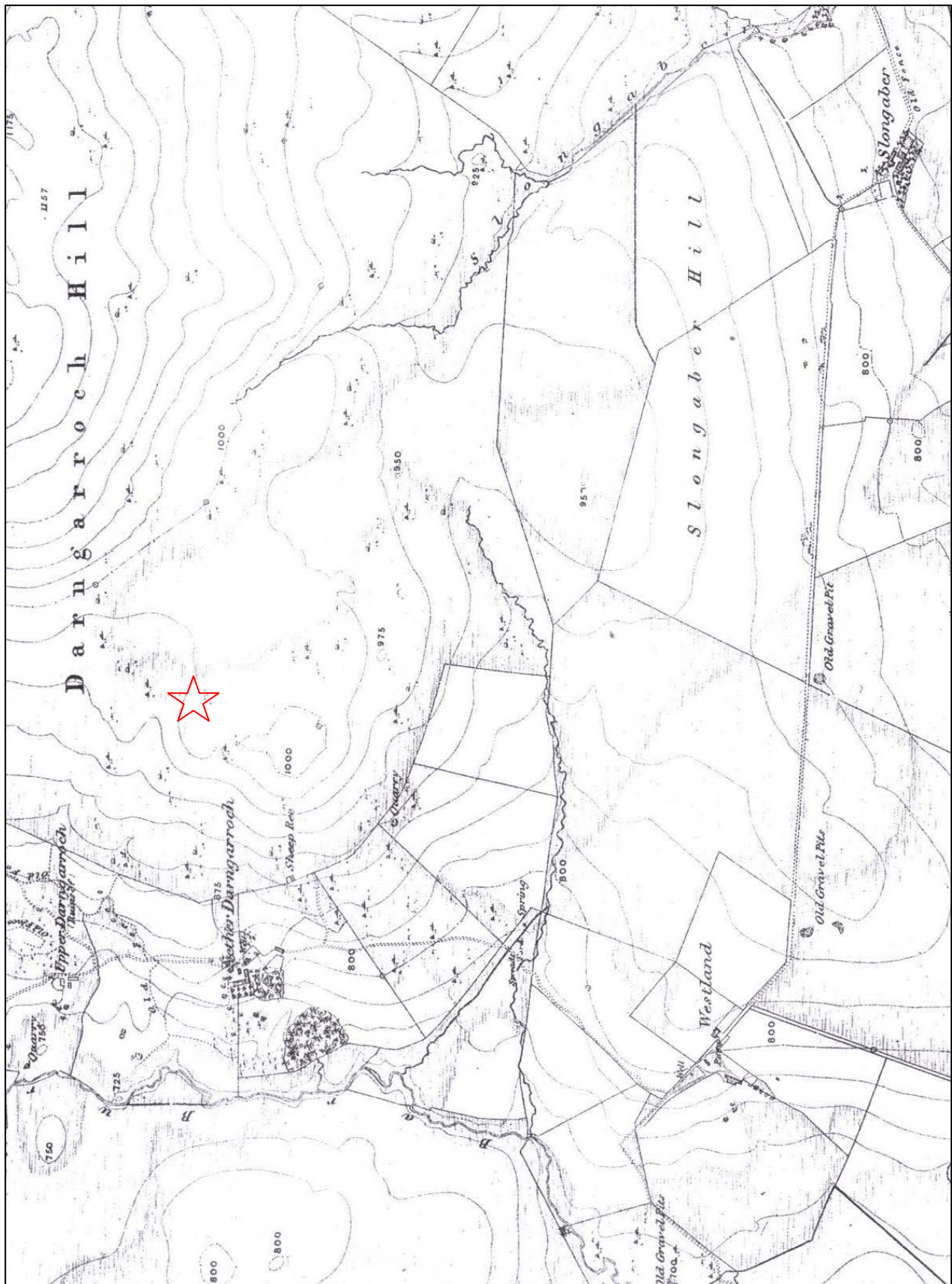


Figure 2 – 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey (1854)

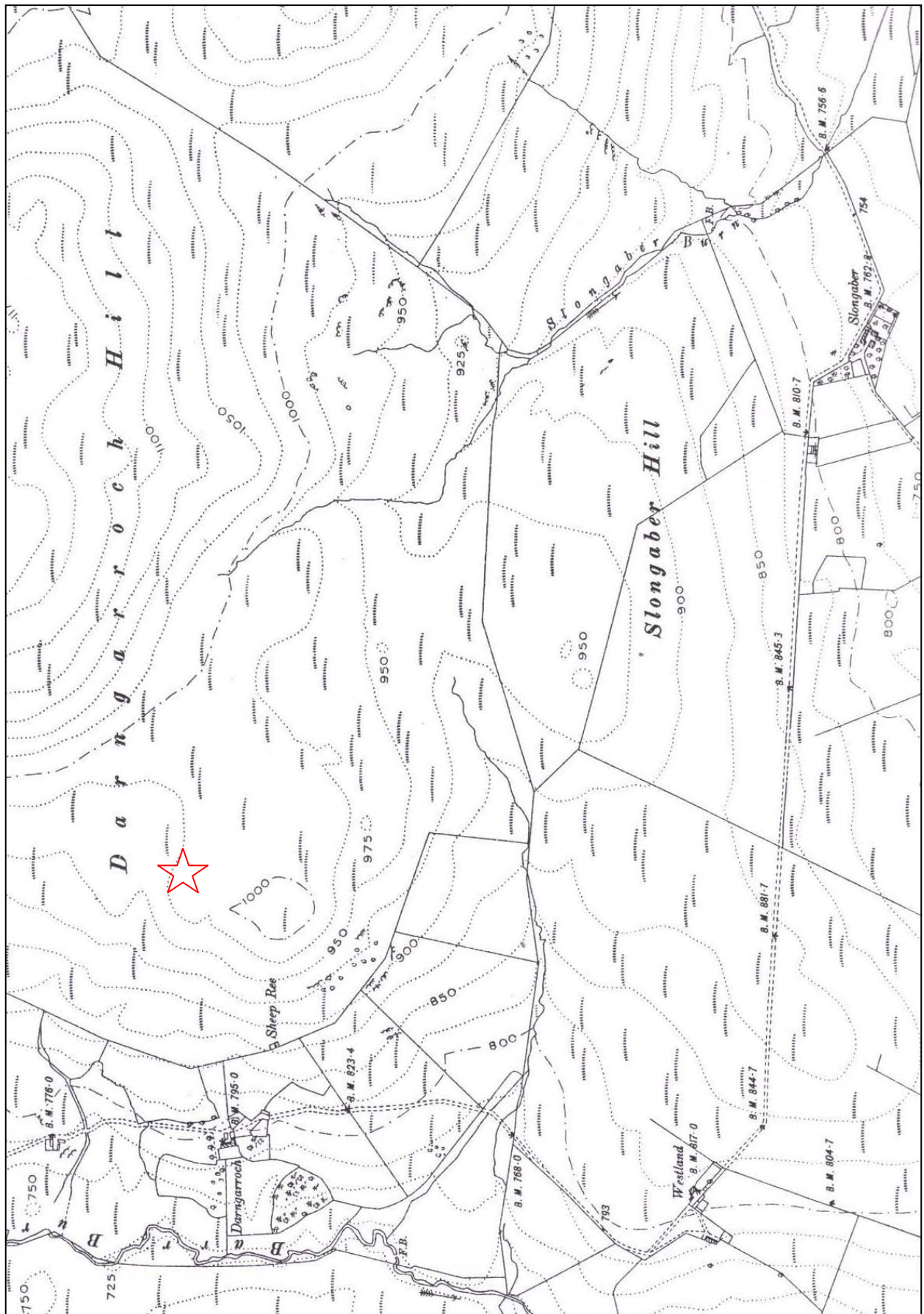


Figure 3 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey (1900)

to established Rathmell Archaeology Ltd methods.

### 3.2 *Desk-based assessment*

3.2.1 The application area, as shown on Figure 6, including the site access road was the subject of a desk-based study and reconnaissance field survey. All sites identified by the desk-based study and the reconnaissance survey were recorded and assessed for potential direct or indirect impacts.

3.2.2 Up-to-date information was obtained on the locations of archaeological sites with statutory protection and non-statutory designations within the proposed development site.

3.2.3 Ordnance Survey maps and earlier historic maps held by the Map Library of the National Library of Scotland were examined to provide information on sites of potential archaeological significance and to assess land-use history for the area. Bibliographic references providing historical background were consulted from the National Library of Scotland and the National Monuments Record of Scotland library and our company reference collection. The aerial photograph collections of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland were also consulted.

### 3.3 *Reconnaissance field survey*

3.3.1 A targeted reconnaissance field survey was undertaken on 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 2006 when Rebecca Shaw, using DGPS equipment, visited known or presumed archaeological sites in or within close proximity to the development area.

## 4 Archaeological baseline

4.1 The development area and access route do not overlay any statutory protected archaeological sites (Scheduled Ancient Monuments or Listed Buildings). Nor are there any sites which have the potential to contain funerary remains. A full listing of the archaeological sites that were considered on the line of access and at the development area are detailed in Appendix 1, depicted on Figure 6 and discussed below.

### 4.2 *Desk-based assessment*

4.2.1 The earliest sound mapping for the area is from Roy's Military Survey of 1747-55. This survey depicts the development area as barren hillside (named 'The Forrest Hills') with the nearest marked settlement as 'The Mule', now named Muil on the access route. The subsequent available cartographic evidence from 1797 to 1831 (Ainslie to Thomson; Figures 1a to 1c) continues to represent the study area as open hillside; although closer settlements are depicted on these maps at Upper and Nether Darngarroch, to the west of the meteorological mast location.

4.2.2 The 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey (1854) (Figure 2) provides the first detailed mapping and clearly maps an 'L' shaped structure called Nether Darngarroch (1) with numerous associated structures and enclosures. There is also an Upper Darngarroch (5) on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey noted as 'Ruins of' and unnamed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey (1900). It is marked as a sheepfold on the current map sheet

4.2.3 The 1900 map (Figure 3) shows Nether Darngarroch (1) (now contracted to Darngarroch) as a roofed rectangular structure, with part of the 'foot' of the previous 'L' shape now unroofed, two other structures recorded on the previous map as roofed are now also recorded as unroofed. Numerous enclosures are still marked. On Ordnance Survey maps that post-date this period, the roofed structure gradually contracts until it is as it appears on the current map – a small roofed rectangular barn.

4.2.4 The reasonable inference from this sequence is a period of active settlement and farming of more marginal land commencing in the mid eighteenth century. The marginal character of the land rapidly led to the consolidation and contraction of landholdings (with the loss of Upper Darngarroch prior to the mid nineteenth century). This process has continued with the





Figure 4a – Summit of Darngarroch Hill



Figure 4b – Area where meteorological mast to be sited from southwest



Figure 4c - Area where meteorological mast to be sited from northwest





Figure 5a – Remains at Darngarroch Farm (1)



Figure 5b – Remains at Darngarroch farm (1)



Figure 5c – Some of the outlying remains at Darngarroch Farm (1)

abandonment of (Nether) Darngarroch with only a portion of one structure retained as a improvised field barn.

- 4.2.5 A trackway (3) is visible on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey (1854) coming from Slongaber, past Westland to Nether Darngarroch and onto Upper Darngarroch. This same trackway is still apparent on the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey (1900) and on the 1951 Ordnance Survey; although by this period it stops Nether Darngarroch. By the 1980 Ordnance Survey the track seems to terminate at Westland.
  - 4.2.6 The farms of Muil and Slongaber are mapped from Ainslie 1787, depicted on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey and are both still inhabited today. Both Darngarroch and Westland appear occupied on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, by the 1951 Ordnance Survey map, they are both still roofed and thus are probably both still occupied, but in the case of Darngarroch it was possibly just by animals. On the 1980 Ordnance Survey both are again recorded as roofed, but Westland had been abandoned and Darngarroch was (and still is) in use as a barn.
  - 4.2.7 The farms of Slongaber, Westland, Upper Darngarroch and Nether Darngarroch are all recorded in the Ordnance Survey Name Book (1848) in which they were all – with the exception of Upper Darngarroch which was ‘*in ruins*’ – noted as occupied and in good repair, with each comprising a farm house, out houses and attached acreage.
- 4.3 *Reconnaissance field survey*
- 4.3.1 There were no observable upstanding archaeological sites within the surveyed footprint of where the meteorological mast and associated guy wires are to be sited.
  - 4.3.2 Outwith the meteorological mast area the most suitable access route was reconnoitred (see Figure 6) which ran from the formal farm track to the meteorological mast location. Along this route there were three archaeological sites noted (from track onwards): numerous ruined structures associated with Darngarroch Farm (1); the head dyke of the visible enclosure dykes (5); and visible cultivation remains (2) (lazybeds) above the head-dyke.
  - 4.3.3 The ground within the area around the meteorological mast site was predominately very rough, fairly boggy grazing and comprised mainly moss and molinia (purple moor grass). As the ground sloped downhill towards the remains of Darngarroch (1), there was effectively a path of much greener firm-standing ground that could be followed for most of the potential access route. There are two drains/ditches that need to be crossed as well as a tumbled down field dyke (5).
  - 4.3.4 The dyke (5) represents the head-dyke, part of a field system where this dyke divided the good cultivable ground (downslope) from the rough grazing (upslope). However, there are patches of good land within the rough pasture on Darngarroch Hill and some of these have obviously been cultivated, as lazybeds (2) are easily visible (NX 7954 8129). The juxtaposition of the extant field system which is visible on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey with the lazybeds upslope suggests that this is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century field system which supplants a more varied and fragmented mid eighteenth century use of the land.
  - 4.3.5 There are a number of upstanding ruins surviving immediately adjacent to the start of the track at the actual site of Darngarroch Farm (1). These include dwelling houses, ancillary structures and enclosures, which all appear to be mid 19<sup>th</sup> century or earlier in origin.
  - 4.3.6 Within the remains of Darngarroch (1) a visible track (3) runs south towards Westland. This track is drivable using a 4x4 and is a formed, visible route. The track cuts through the middle of the remains of Westland (which are still upstanding), with the main structures set back from the track. The track proceeds on to Slongaber Farm from where it becomes a well formed road, continuing to the public highway past Muil.

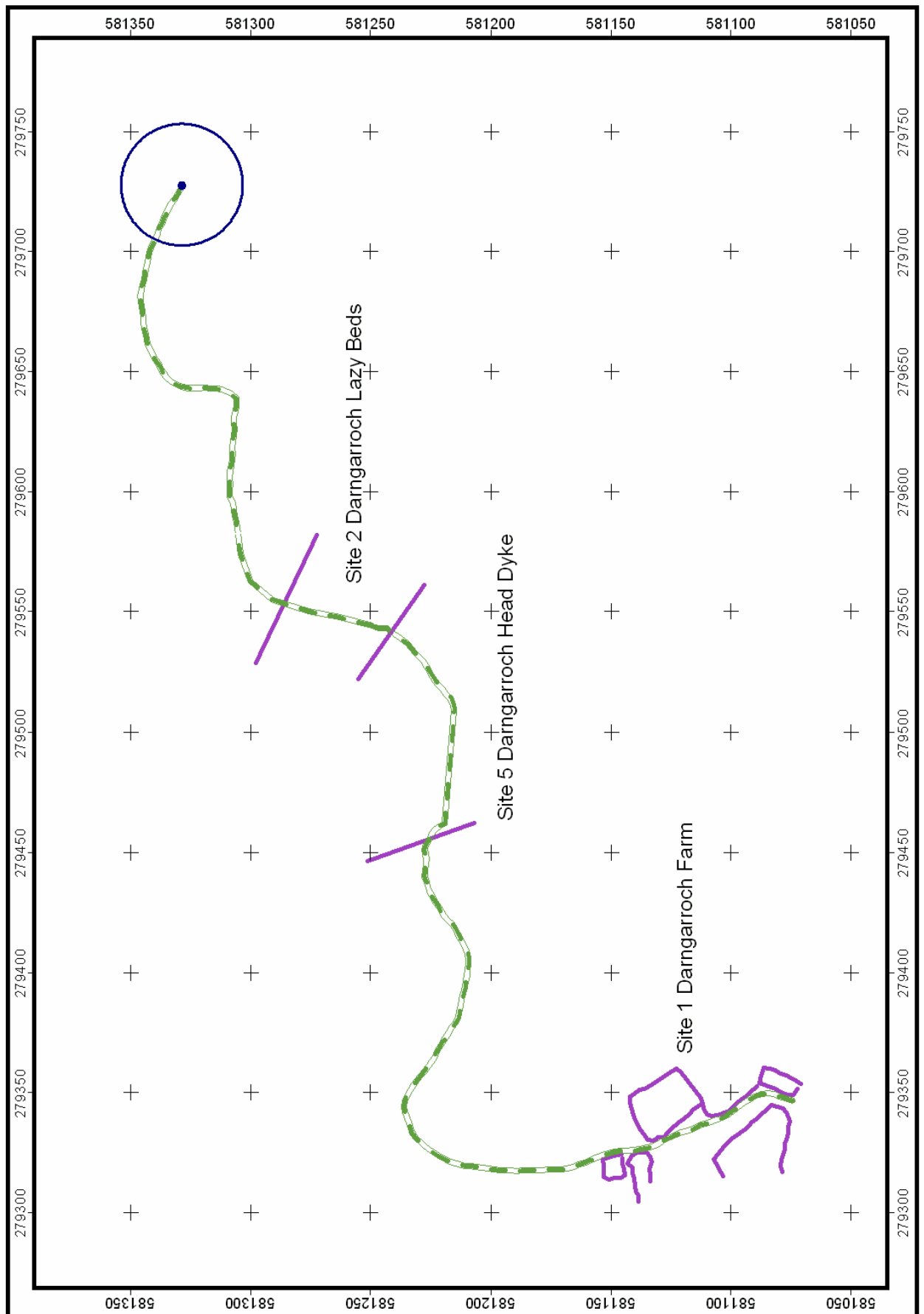


Figure 6: Proposed access route (Green) and relationship to archaeological sites (Purple) to Meteorological Mast site (Blue); overlain by Ordnance Survey Grid



- 4.3.7 On-site observation at the site of Upper Darngarrch (5) showed that the denuded remains of the original small farmstead survive; comprising a dwelling with attached enclosure, a barn and a byre. This site is not in proximity to the proposed access route or meteorological mast location.

## 5 Information Gaps

- 5.1 The record of archaeological sites is effectively a composite of antiquarian and archaeological interest through time (whether stimulated by academic or commercial drivers) and as such is piecemeal, fragmentary and partial (both spatially and temporally). This process of compilation has the potential to perpetuate information gaps.
- 5.2 During these assessment works all effort has been taken to consult the available archives and to undertake new studies (field survey; aerial photograph interpretation etc). This will have significantly improved the archaeological record for the proposed development area and ensured a sound archaeological baseline. However, the compilation of such a record can never claim to be definitive given the nature of the resource.

## 6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Presented below is a package of mitigation designed to deliver an effective management of the archaeological resource within the context of the meteorological mast development.
- 6.2 *The Meteorological Mast site*
- 6.2.1 No sites of archaeological significance have been identified at the site of the meteorological mast. Given that the ground is above the head-dyke and there is no evidence of cultivation at the mast location it is considered that any archaeological features present should have been identifiable as upstanding, topographically distinct features. Hence we consider it highly likely that there are no archaeological remains within the identified site for the meteorological mast.
- 6.2.2 Consequently we recommend that this assessment has shown the erection of the mast (not access, see below) will not require any further mitigation and should be allowed to proceed at the currently agreed site.
- 6.3 *Site Access*
- 6.3.1 There is the potential for site access to impact on three archaeological sites: Darngarroch Farm (1); the head-dyke (5) and the lazy bed cultivation remains (2). The well formed track through Westland coupled with the absence of track upgrade means that this farmstead has no potential for adverse impact.
- 6.3.2 To safeguard these sites we would propose that during the construction and decommission phases the following protocols are adhered to:
- No upgrading work is conducted to the track (3) and that all vehicle movements are kept to a minimum and follow the existing line of the track from Slongaber through Westland and to the far side of Darngarroch Farm (1) without diversion.
  - The route to the site from Darngarroch must proceed across the head-dyke (5) and has the potential to cross areas of lazybeds upslope (2). A proposed route is detailed on Figure 6; however ground conditions and vehicle types will determine whether this route can be followed without rutting or damage to these features. Consequently we recommend on the commencement of access (for either construction or decommission) an archaeologist attend and mark a safe route that:
    - crosses the head-dyke (5) at a point where it is fully collapsed and derelict;
    - either* travels up the lazybeds (2) without turning and/or rutting (if dry and suitable vehicles) *or* circumvents the lazybeds where this is not credible.

- c. Written guidelines would be issued for use by all construction or decommission contractors, outlining the need to avoid causing unnecessary damage to archaeological sites.

6.3.3 Should the above recommendations be acceptable to Dumfries & Galloway Council then we would anticipate that site access can be achieved without compromising any archaeological sites.

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1 An archaeological desk based assessment and reconnaissance field survey was carried out on behalf of Infinergy Limited to determine the potential adverse impact of the installation of a meteorological mast (temporary) at Darngarroch Hill, Corsock on the archaeological resource.
- 7.2 These works confirmed that the site of the meteorological mast did not contain any archaeological remains. The potential access route to the site would necessitate passing through three archaeological sites: a farmstead; head-dyke and area of lazybeds.
- 7.3 Rathmell Archaeology has recommended a mitigation strategy that will enable the site to be accessed without generating any adverse physical impact on the archaeological resource. No intrusive archaeological works are envisaged as being necessary and the development should proceed maintaining the best principles of preservation *in-situ*.

## 8 Bibliography

### 8.1 Cartographic sources

1747-55	Roy	Military Survey of Scotland, sheet 5/2d
1797	Ainslie, John	The Stewartry of Kirkcudbright
1821	Ainslie, John	Ainslie's Map of the Southern part of Scotland
1832	Thomson, John	Atlas of Scotland, Kirkcudbrightshire
1854	Ordnance Survey	1 <sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey, Kirkcudbrightshire
1900	Ordnance Survey	2 <sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey, Kirkcudbrightshire
1951	Ordnance Survey	Kirkcudbrightshire
1980	Ordnance Survey	Kirkcudbrightshire

### 8.2 Documentary sources

AMAA	1979	Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
Ordnance Survey	1848	Ordnance Survey Name Book
SODev	1994	National Planning Policy Guideline 5, Archaeology and planning. Scottish Office Development Department.
SOEnd	1994	Planning Advice Note 42, Archaeology. Scottish Office Environmental Department.

## Appendix 1: Archaeological Sites

Presented below are the sites identified by the works. Only those sites whose number is in bold lie wholly or substantially within the area that could be affected by the development.

<b>Site</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grid Ref.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>NMRS ref.</b>
<b>1</b>	(Nether) Darngarroch Farm	NX 7930 8114	Depicted on maps since Ainslie 1797 as a settlement. 1 <sup>st</sup> OS shows an 'L' shaped structure called Nether Darngarroch with numerous associated structures and enclosures. Survey noted one roofed building, three unroofed buildings and at least four enclosures. This complex was bisected by an access track which remained of vehicle width.	-
<b>2</b>	Darngarroch Lazybeds	NX 7954 8129	Area of lazybeds identified by survey, sited on firm-standing ground above the head-dyke aligned northeast/southwest, probably associated with the use of Nether Darngarroch Farm.	-
<b>3</b>	Trackway	NX 8060 8012 to NX 7934 8112	Trackway that has been in use since at least mid-nineteenth century. Comprises mostly stone (upgraded <i>circa</i> 1985) after Westland as it approaches (Nether) Darngarroch it becomes more grassy in nature but is still a formal vehicle width track.	-
<b>4</b>	Upper Darngarroch Farm	NX 7930 8144	Depicted on maps since Ainslie 1797 as a settlement. Is marked 'Ruins of' on the 1 <sup>st</sup> edition OS (1854) and recorded as sheepfold on current OS. Survey notes that this site comprises three unroofed buildings and one enclosure.	NX78SE 65
<b>5</b>	Head-dyke	NX 7945 8125 – one point along route	Largely tumbled down stone built dyke, used as a boundary between pasture ground and rough grazing. Mapped since the 1 <sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey.	-

## Appendix 2: Discovery &amp; Excavation in Scotland

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	Dumfries & Galloway
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Corsock Meteorological Mast
<b>PARISH:</b>	Kirkpatrick Durham
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Rebecca Shaw
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	Rathmell Archaeology Limited
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Reconnaissance Survey
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	NX78SE 65
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	Farmstead, Head Dyke; Lazy Bed
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	None
<b>NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)</b>	NX 797 813
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2006
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2006
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	None
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (may include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeological desk based assessment and reconnaissance field survey was carried out on behalf of Infinergy Limited to determine the potential adverse impact of the installation of a meteorological mast (temporary) at Darngarroch Hill, Corsock on the archaeological resource.</p> <p>These works confirmed that the site of the meteorological mast did not contain any archaeological remains. The potential access route to the site would necessitate passing through three archaeological sites: a farmstead; head-dyke and area of lazybeds.</p>
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	06068
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Infinergy Limited
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	10 Ashgrove Workshops, Kilwinning, Ayrshire KA13 6PU
<b>E MAIL:</b>	contact@rathmell-arch.co.uk
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)</b>	Report to Dumfries & Galloway Archaeology Service and archive to National Monuments Record of Scotland.



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