



Highland Archaeology Services Ltd

Bringing the Past and Future Together

Land at Leanach Farm, Leanach,
Culloden Moor



Archaeological Metal Detecting Survey
& Watching Brief

for
Scottish & Southern Energy Networks

Final Report and Recommendations

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Metal Detecting Survey & Archaeological Watching Brief

Final Report & Recommendations

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Summary

A metal detecting survey and watching brief was undertaken to mitigate the heritage impact of development works undertaken by Scottish and Southern Energy Networks to reroute an existing overhead power line and transfer part of the same line underground at Leanach Farm, Culloden Moor. The works involved the excavation of a cable trench and a series of pits for the relocation of overhead powerline poles.

The works were located within the footprint of the designated Culloden Battlefield (BTL6) and in the vicinity of the nationally important Clava prehistoric funerary monuments.

The metal detecting survey identified a small collection of ferrous and lead objects along with two modern one pound coins. The lead objects, whilst not of obvious military origin, have been retained. No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were identified during the course of the watching brief and no further archaeological work is recommended.

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Legislation and Policy

The common principles underlying international conventions, national legislation and local authority planning policies are that cultural heritage assets should be identified in advance of development and safeguarded where practicable; if disturbance is unavoidable appropriate recording of features and recovery of portable artefacts should take place. These have been set out in international and European Union agreements, and UK and Scottish legislation, as well as national and local planning policies¹.

Professional standards maintained throughout the present project adhered to the Codes of Conduct and Approved Practice and Standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists².

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork and preparation of the present report was undertaken by Andrew Young MCIfA. Metal detecting was undertaken by Eric Soane. The project was commissioned and funded by Scottish and Southern Energy Distribution (SSE).

Background mapping has been reproduced by permission of the Ordnance Survey under Licence 100043217. Historic mapping is courtesy of the National Library of Scotland.

Introduction

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was commissioned by Scottish and Southern Energy Distribution (SSE) in order to mitigate the impact of ground works at Leanach Farm, Leanach, Culloden Moor (Figures 1, 2 and 3) for the rerouting of an existing overhead power line and the transfer of part of the same line underground. The development area is centred at NGR NH 7550 4478 and located within the designated footprint of Culloden Battlefield (BLT6).

Archaeological mitigation involved a preliminary metal detecting survey followed by a standard archaeological watching brief, the latter designed to identify and record all significant archaeological remains revealed during the course of development ground works.

The fieldwork was undertaken by the writer between the 10th and the 17th April 2018.

¹ A summary of relevant international, EU, UK and Scottish legislation and policies is available from the HAS office on request.

² Chartered Institute for Archaeology (CIfA) Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Excavation.

Site Location

The study site is located in open agricultural land on the north side of the river Nairn at Leanach Farm, Leanach, Culloden, centred at NH 7547 4477 (Figures 1, 2, 3 and 6). The development area lies within the designated area of Culloden Battlefield (BTL6).



Figure 1: General Site Location.

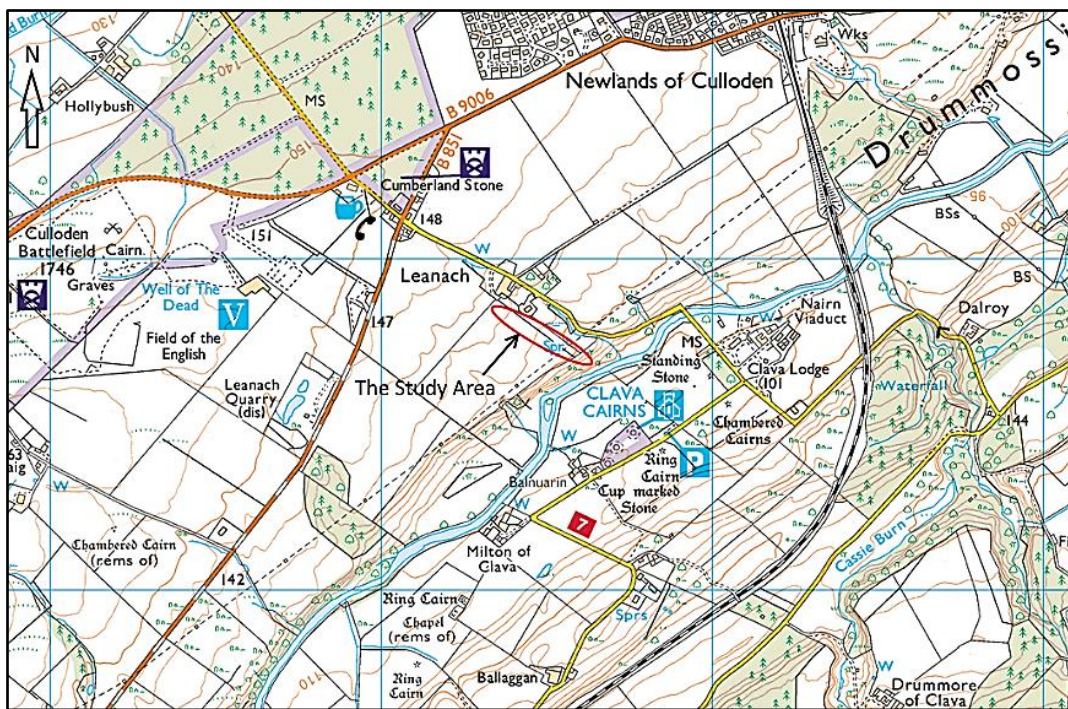


Figure 2: Location of the Study Area

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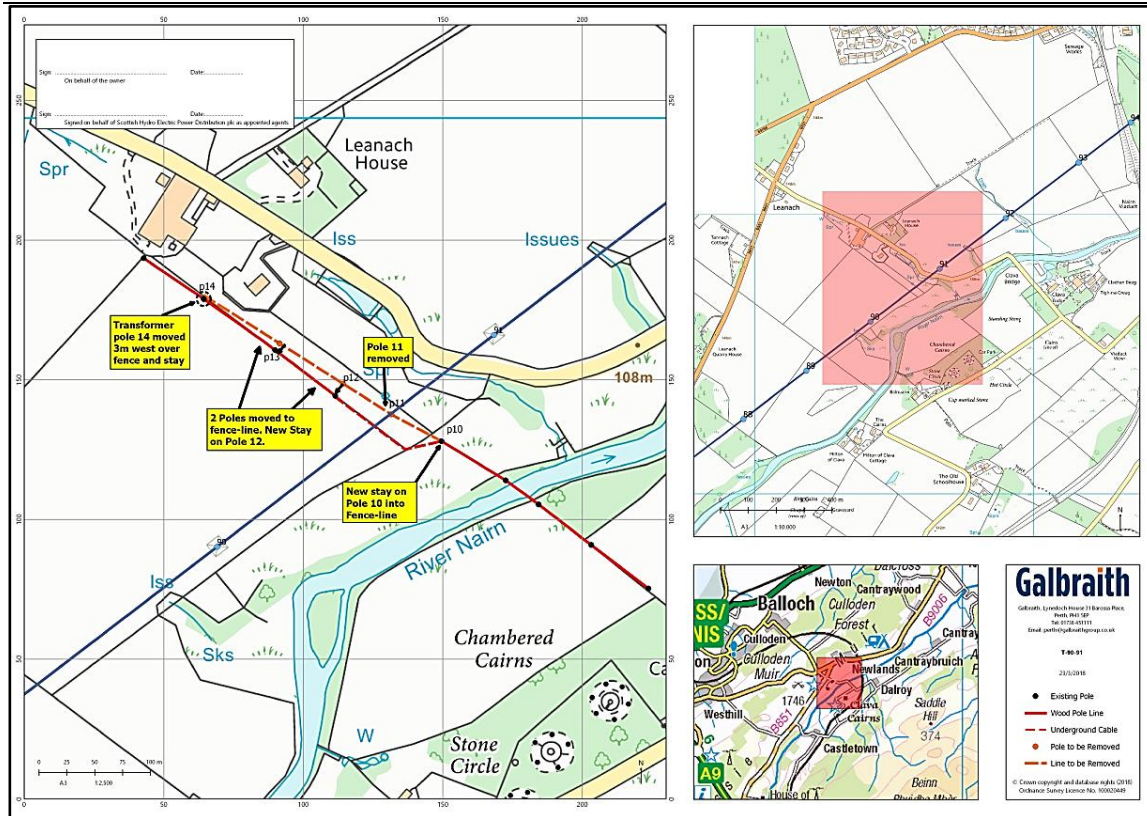


Figure 3: The Study Area showing area of Watching Brief

Desk-based Assessment

Readily available documentary and cartographic sources for the site were examined and reviewed as part of the preparation of the preceding WSI document in order to identify significant recorded monuments, areas, sites and find locations in the vicinity of the development area. In accordance with the guidelines set out in the Highland Council’s published *Standards for Archaeological Work 2012*³.

The study areas lies within the boundary of Culloden Battlefield (BTL6), a designated historic battlefield site (Figure 4). The battlefield is of international importance and is often referred to as the site of the last pitched battle fought on the British mainland in 1746 that effectively ended the last Jacobite rebellion led by Bonnie Prince Charlie.

³ Downloadable from http://www.highland.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/1033/planning_environment_and_development/attachment/19663

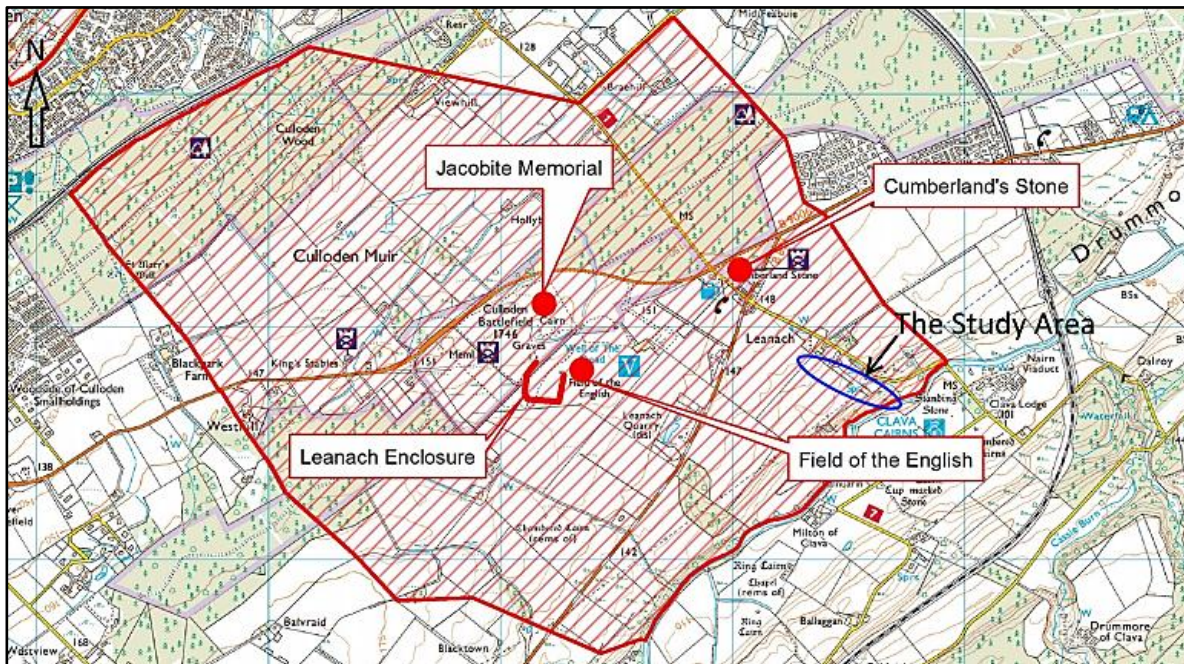


Figure 4: The designated area of Culloden Battlefield (BTL6) showing location of the study area in blue. Scale in kms

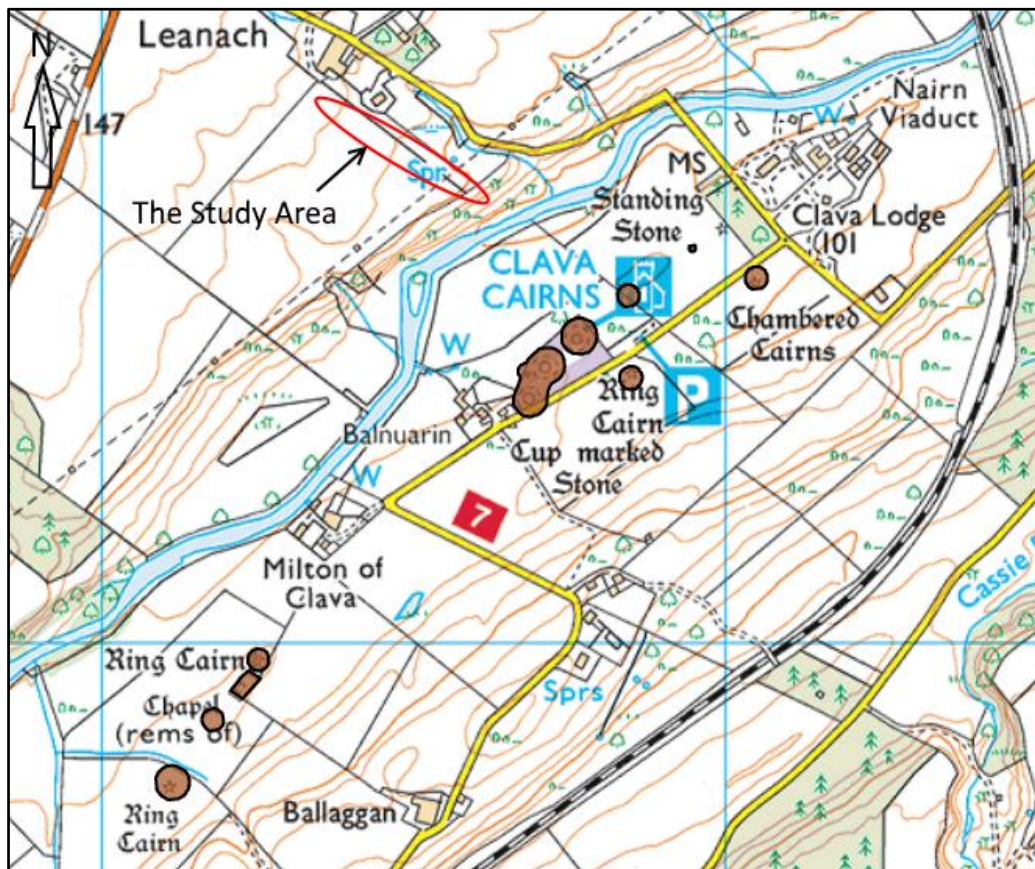


Figure 5: The study area showing Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the near vicinity. Scale in kms

The study area also lies close to a series of nationally important prehistoric funerary monuments constructed along the southern flank of the river Nairn during the Bronze Age (c 2500-800BC), which are designated Scheduled Ancient Monuments (Figure 5). These include the Clava Cairns (SM90074), a collection of monuments that includes a series of chambered cairns, a kerb cairn, a barrow and a series of standing and cup-marked megaliths. The group combined are interpreted to reflect elements of a focus of prehistoric ritual activity.

In addition to the Culloden Battlefield site and the large number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments nearby a number of other heritage assets (Figure 6) are recorded in the environs of the study area on the Highland Council Historic Environment Record (HER). These include a series of find spots of prehistoric domestic artefacts and incised rock-art (Cup and Ring marks).

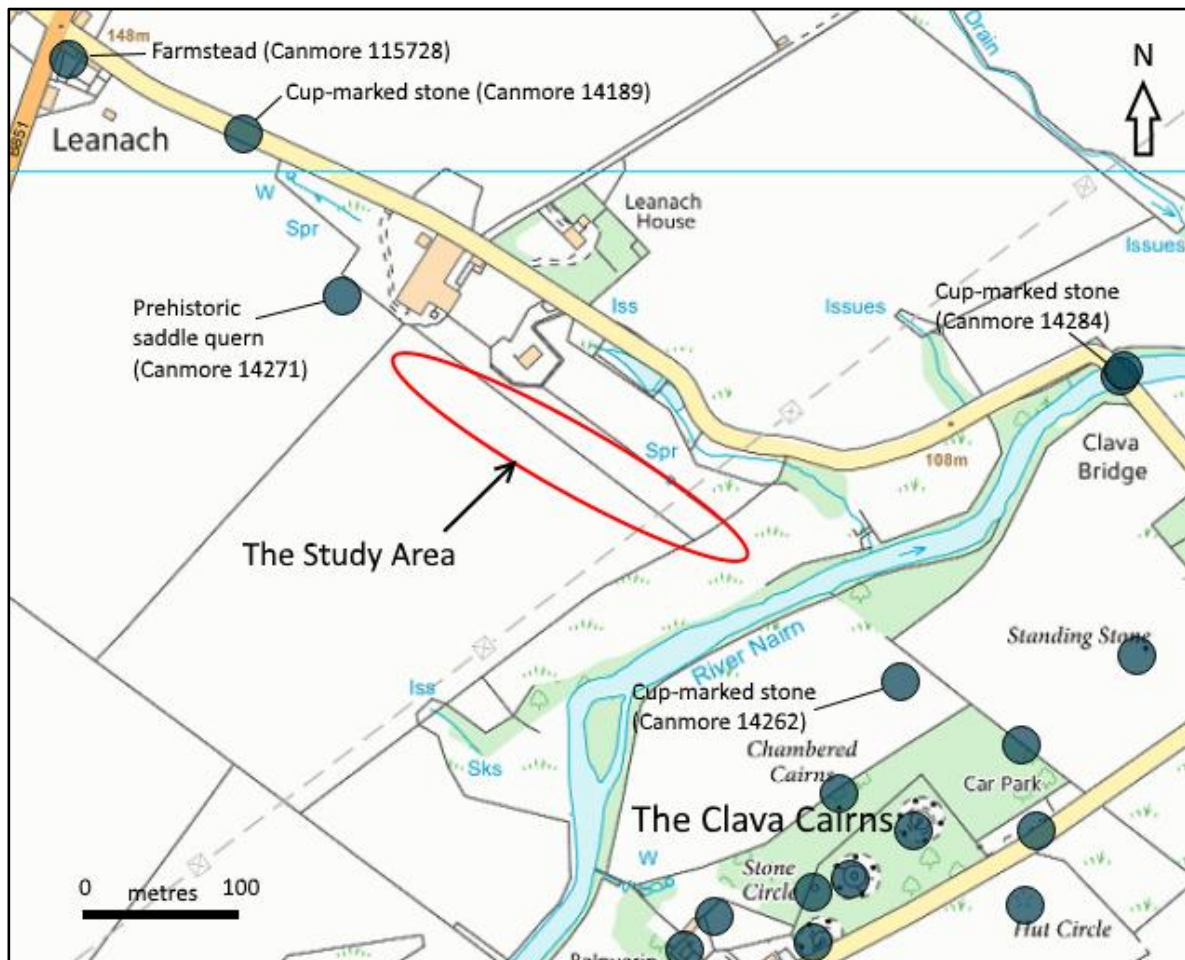


Figure 6: Location of recorded Heritage Assets in the vicinity of the study area. Scale shown

Historic Mapping

Historic maps for the area were examined as part of the project, the earliest of which is the OS Nairnshire Survey map of 1871 (**Error! Reference source not found.7**).

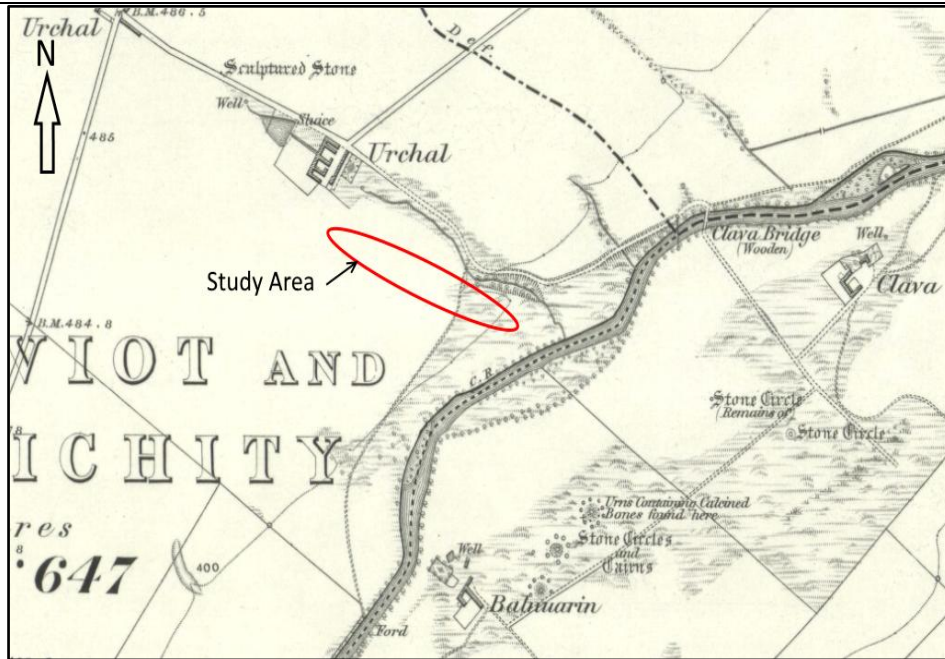


Figure 7: Extract from the Nairnshire Survey of 1871 showing the Study Area. Not to scale with HAS annotation

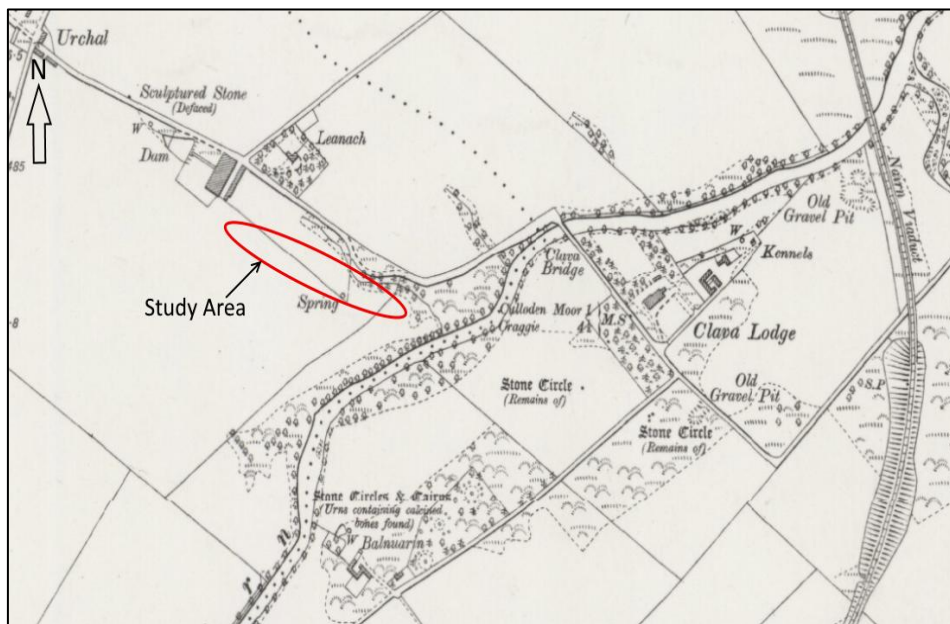


Figure 8: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1906 Inverness mainland map Sheet XIII showing the Study Area. Not to scale with HAS annotation

Statistical Accounts

The Old Statistical Account for the parish of Daviot and Dunlichty was examined as part of the desk-based research. The site appears to have lay within the parish of Pettie at the time of the New Statistical Account.

Neither account contains any direct reference to Leanach or the study site or makes reference to any historic site or potential heritage asset relevant to the present project.

Fieldwork

Aims and Objectives

The principal aims of the project were to:

- Locate all buried ferrous and non-ferrous buried objects present within the corridor of the proposed underground cable trench by means of a professional metal detecting survey in order to recover all significant archaeological artefacts, in particular objects associated with the Battle of Culloden .
- Identify and record all significant archaeological material revealed during the excavation of the underground cable trench and relocated power poles.
- Minimise any possible delay or cost to the development by anticipating archaeological requirements as far as possible, timetabling and integrating archaeological recording work with the project, and dealing with any issues arising quickly and efficiently.

Methodology

Metal Detecting Survey

A metal-detecting survey was undertaken by specialist Eric Soames across a defined area that incorporated and extended well beyond the footprint of the underground cabling trench (Figure 9).

All metal finds discovered within the detecting corridor (see below Finds and Appendix 3) were lifted, recorded and located using a survey grade GPS unit.

The objects have been examined by the senior project archaeologist; those of obviously modern date have been discarded. A small number of unidentified lead objects have been retained and will be submitted for Treasure Trove inspection.

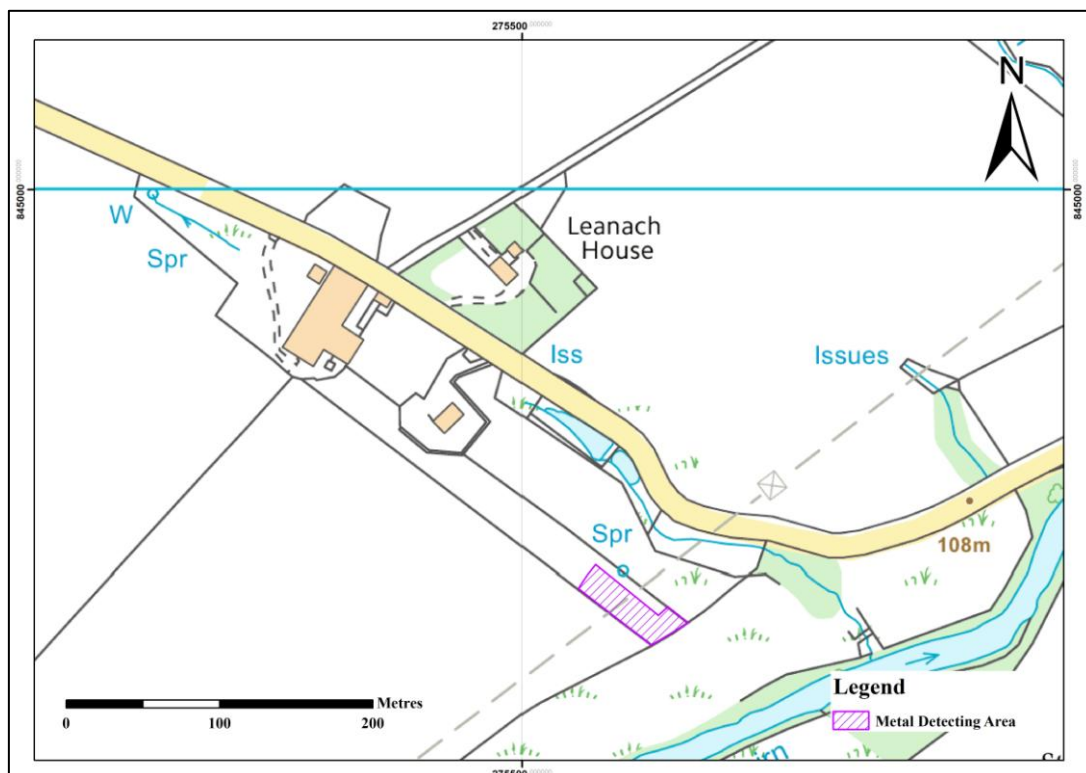


Figure 9: Area of the metal detecting survey

Watching Brief

The trench for the new underground section of the power line was opened using a slew tracked machine equipped with a 600mm wide toothless bucket. The same machine was used to excavate pits for the new power line poles. All excavation work was monitored archaeologically by the writer.

Results

Metal Detecting Survey

The survey area for metal detecting (Figure 9) was defined prior to the start of work using flags.

A total of 20 metal objects (Appendix 3, SF1 to SF20) were identified and lifted within the survey area, the distribution of which is shown on Figure 10.

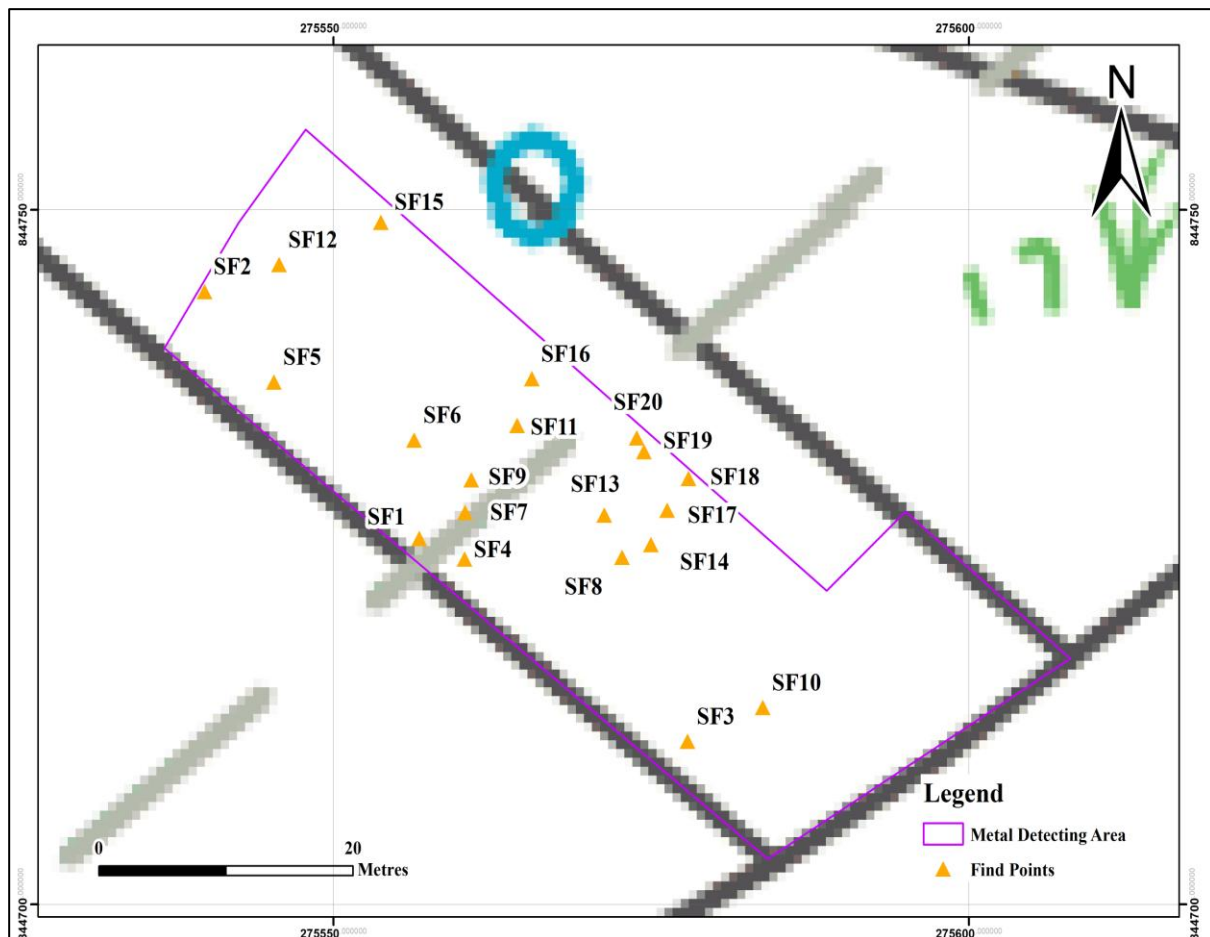


Figure 10: Distribution of metal detecting finds

The character and significance of the metal detecting finds recovered are discussed below.

Watching Brief

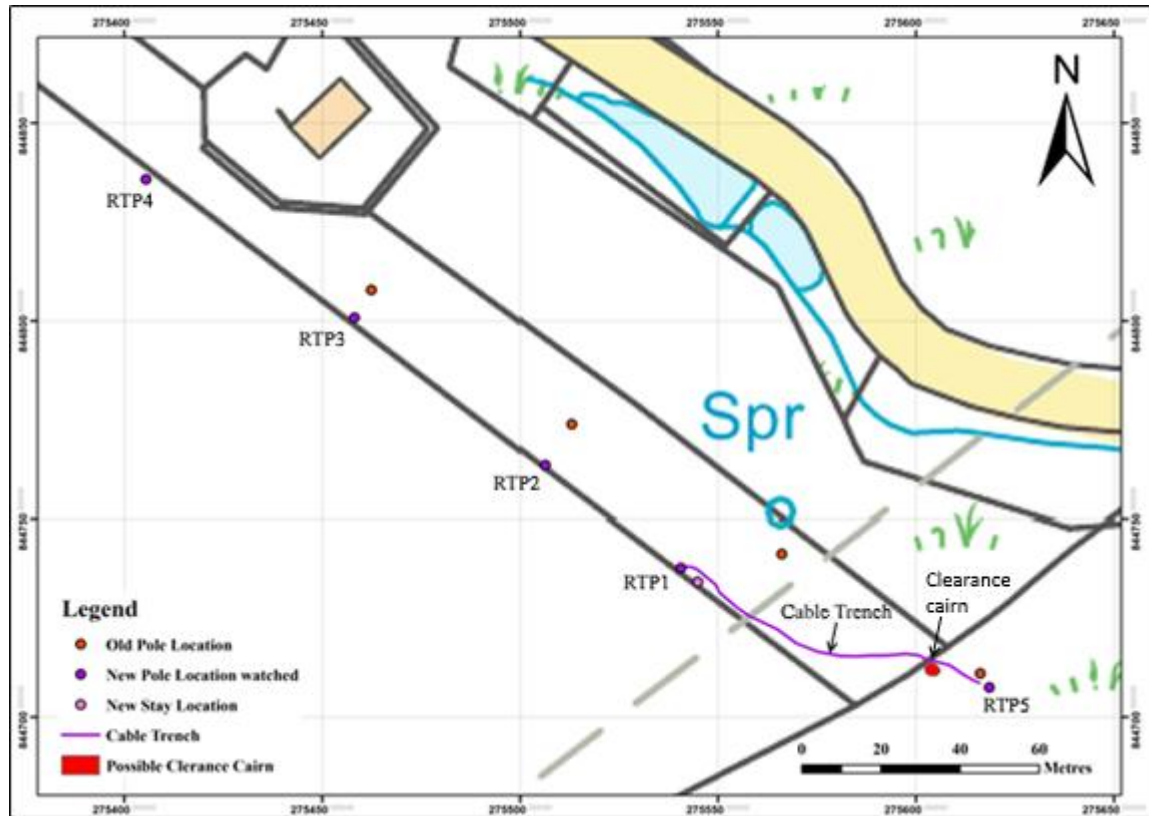


Figure 11: Location of the Cable Trench and RTPs 1 to 5. Scale shown

RTP1

The pit (Figure 9) for the replacement power pole was opened in grassland alongside the modern fence line at c NH75540 44737. The cutting was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.7m and revealed 300mm of stony sandy silt topsoil that lay directly over a natural substrate of unsorted glacial till and gravels, which extended beyond the depth of the pit. Perched water was reached at a depth of 1.3m.

No archaeologically significant deposits or finds were revealed in the pit.

RTP2

The pit (Figure 9) was excavated for the relocation of existing power pole TP12. It was opened alongside the modern fence line at c NH75506 44763 and excavated to a maximum depth of 1.7m. It revealed 200mm of stone free sandy silt topsoil that lay directly over a natural substrate of light yellowish-brown gravelly sand and narrow bands of coarser till gravels, which extended beyond the depth of the pit.

The pit failed to reveal any significant archaeological deposits or finds.



Figure 12: RTP2 as excavated. Scale in 500mm graduations

RTP3

The pit (Figure 9) was excavated for the relocation of existing power pole TP13, approximately 6m to the west of that pole. It was slightly L-shaped measuring 2.75m x 900mm in plan and was opened alongside the modern fence line at c NH75458 44800. The pit was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.6m and revealed 300mm of stone free sandy silt topsoil that overlay a natural substrate of light yellowish-brown sandy silt that contained rare angular to subangular cobbles and small boulders. The pit did not reveal any significant archaeological deposits or finds.

RTP4

The pit (Figure 9) was excavated for the relocation of existing transformer power pole, approximately 3m to the west of that pole. The cutting measured 1.6m x 1m in plan and was opened alongside the modern fence line at c NH75405 44835. The pit was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.6m and revealed 300mm of stone free sandy silt topsoil that overlay a natural substrate of light yellowish-brown sandy silt that contained sparse stones and small cobbles.

The pit did not reveal any significant archaeological deposits or finds.

RTP5

The pit (Figure 9) was excavated for the relocation of existing power pole in rough sloping ground at the south eastern end of the cable trench, approximately 2.5m to the west of the existing pole. The cutting measured 2.2m x 900mm in plan and was opened at c NH75618 44707. The pit was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.7m and revealed 300mm of very rooty sandy silt topsoil that overlay a natural substrate of light yellowish-brown sandy silt that contained sparse stone sized to large cobble inclusions.

The pit failed to reveal any significant archaeological deposits or finds.



Figure 13: RTP5 as excavated. Scale 2m

Underground Cable Trench

The cable trench was excavated for a total distance of c 75m in grassland and rough ground between RTP1 and RTP5 (Figure 9). Beyond the fence line to the southeast it was opened in rough sloping ground that declines increasingly steeply to the river Nairn.

The trench was up to 1.1 m deep and 700mm wide throughout. The topsoil (101) varied between 250mm and 350mm deep and consisted of friable sandy silt that was generally stone free. The topsoil in the part of the trench opened in rough and sloping ground to the southeast of the fence was broadly similar but contained many more tree and plant roots.



Figure 14: The cable trench as excavated. Facing NW. Scale 2m

The topsoil overlay undisturbed natural substrate (102) throughout the trench although the nature of that natural material varied. The southern part of the cable trench and pole-pit RTP5 revealed a sandy silt substrate containing variable but subordinate inclusions of stone to small boulder sized inclusions. The northern third or so of the trench and RTP1 revealed a very different substrate consisting of an unsorted and poorly consolidated glacial till deposit.

A probable modern clearance cairn (103) was noted immediately to the southeast of the field boundary (Figure 10). Some of the stones had been arranged in an oval shape. Despite its probable modern origin the cable trench was adjusted to avoid the feature.

No archaeologically significant features of any kind were revealed in the trench and no finds of any kind were recovered.



Figure 15: Clearance cairn 103. Facing SE. Scales 1m

Finds

Finds recovered during the metal detecting survey (Figure 10) are listed in Appendix 3. The collection mainly consisted of modern agricultural items that included fragments of rusty fencing and miscellaneous bolts, nails and small fittings, which have all been discarded. The assemblage also includes two modern one pound coins and three irregular lumps of lead. These, along with two larger iron items, have been retained for possible submission for Treasure Trove assessment.

None of the objects recovered by metal detecting are thought likely to reflect items associated with the battle of Culloden Moor.

Not a single find was recovered during the watching brief stage of the project.

Discussion & Conclusions

A programme of archaeological survey and monitoring has been undertaken during ground works by SSE in accordance with the requirements of Highland Council.

Neither the metal detecting survey or the subsequent watching brief identified any significant archaeological deposits or finds during the course of the various intrusive works, which were all archaeologically sterile.

Recommendations

No significant archaeological deposits or finds were identified within the study area during the course of the project and no further archaeological mitigation is considered necessary.

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HAS 2018 *Land at Leanach, Culloden Moor, Inverness - Archaeological Watching Brief and Reporting Project Risk Assessment and Methods Statement*. Highland Archaeology Services unpublished client report *LEC18 -2*

HHER *passim* – Highland Council Historic Environment Record

Scottish Government 2014 *Our Place in Time – The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland*

Sinclair, Sir John. *The Statistical Account of Scotland, Daviot and Dunlichty*, Inverness, Vol. 14, Edinburgh: William Creech, 1795, p. 67. University of Edinburgh, University of Glasgow. (1999) The Statistical Accounts of Scotland online service: http://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk/link/osa-vol14-p67-parish-inverness-daviot_and_dunlichty

www.archaeologystrategy.scot 2015 *Scotlands Archaeology Strategy*

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Photographic Register

Photograph No.	View facing	Camera Point	Description
2413	SE	CP1	The trenching area before metal detecting survey
2414	SE	CP1	As 2413
2415	SE	CP1	As 2413
2416	NW	CP2	MD survey in progress
2417	NW	CP2	MD survey in progress
2418	SE	CP2	Clearance cairn
2419	SE	CP2	Route of cable trench (part in scrub) before excavation
2420	SE	CP2	As 2418
2421	NW	CP2	Route of cable trench (part in field) before excavation
2422	SE	CP2	Clearance cairn detail – scales 2 x 1m
2423	SE	CP2	As 2422
2424	SE	CP2	As 2422
2425	SE	CP2	Trench during excavation to SE of fence line – scale 1m
2426	SE	CP2	As 2425 but 2m scale
2427	W	CP2	Trench during excavation in field to NE of fence line – scale 2m
2428	W	CP2	As 2427
2429	NW	-	Trench during excavation in field to NE of fence line – scale 2m
2430	NW	-	Trench during excavation in field to NE of fence line – scale 2m
2431	S	-	RTP1 as excavated. Scale 2m
2432	S	-	RTP1 as excavated (detail). Scale 2m
2433	NW	-	RTP1 pole being inserted.
2434	W	-	As 2433
2435	NW	-	RTP2 as excavated. Scale 2m
2436	NW	-	RTP2 as excavated. Scale 2m
2437	NW	-	RTP3 as excavated. Scale 2m
2438	NW	-	RTP3 as excavated. Scale 2m
2439	N	-	RTP4 as excavated. Scale 2m
2440	N	-	RTP4 as excavated. Scale 2m
2441	N	-	RTP4 as excavated. Scale 2m
2442	NNW	-	Work at RTP4 with rainbow
2443	NNW	-	Work at RTP4 with rainbow
2444	NNW	-	Work at RTP4 with rainbow
2445	NNW	-	Work at RTP4
2446	NNW	-	Work at RTP4
2447	S	-	RTP5 as excavated. Scale 2m
2448	S	-	RTP5 as excavated. Scale 2m
2449	SE	-	Work at RTP5
2450	SE	-	Work at RTP5

Appendix 2 – Context Register

Context No.	Area	Description
101	all	Topsoil (all areas)
102	all	Natural gravel/sand /clay substrate (all areas)
103	-	Boulders and cobbles forming clearance cairn

Appendix 3 – Register of Metal Detecting Finds

Find No.	Description	Location
SF1	Modern 2012 £1 coin	NGR NH 75557 44726
SF2	Large square iron object with central perforation - probably modern agricultural fitting	NGR NH 75540 44744
SF3	Small circular copper alloy ring or washer - modern	NGR NH 75578 44712
SF4	Modern iron bolt and nut – NOT RETAINED	NGR NH 75560 44725
SF5	Small ?copper alloy bullet-shaped object - modern	NGR NH 75545 44738
SF6	Modern iron fitting – NOT RETAINED	NGR NH 75556 44733
SF7	Fragment of modern steel wire – NOT RETAINED	NGR NH 75560 44728
SF8	Large iron pipe fitting- probably modern	NGR NH 75573 44725
SF9	Fragment of modern steel wire – NOT RETAINED	NGR NH 75561 44731
SF10	Fragment of modern steel wire – NOT RETAINED	NGR NH 75584 44714
SF11	Modern 4 inch nail – NOT RETAINED	NGR NH 75564 44734
SF12	Fragment of modern steel wire – NOT RETAINED	NGR NH 75546 44746
SF13	Fragment of modern metal – NOT RETAINED	NGR NH 75571 44728
SF14	Fragment of modern steel wire – NOT RETAINED	NGR NH 75575 44726
SF15	Fragment of modern fitting with wire – NOT RETAINED	NGR NH 75554 44729
SF16	Fragment of modern metal cloaking – NOT RETAINED	NGR NH 75566 44738
SF17	Modern 2002 £1 coin	NGR NH 75576 44728
SF18	Small irregular fragment of lead	NGR NH 75578 44731
SF19	Irregular fragment of lead	NGR NH 75574 44733
SF20	Large irregular fragment of lead	NGR NH 75574 44734