

Scotia Archaeology

**REPORT
TO**

MNV CONSULTING LIMITED

**BUCKNY BURN, BUTTERSTONE
HYDRO-ELECTRIC SCHEME**

**Desk study
and
walk-over survey
April 2013**

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INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a desk study of archaeological sites and monuments and a walk-over survey along the route of a proposed new hydro-electric scheme at the Bucky Burn, near Butterstone, Perthshire.

Perth & Kinross Council had granted planning permission for this development although its implementation was dependent on certain conditions. One of these was to undertake a walk-over survey of the area of development to identify any hitherto unrecorded sites of archaeological or historical significance located within it. Should any such sites be identified, a Written Scheme of Investigation would be produced by the archaeological contractor outlining a proposed scheme for further investigative work. The aim of such a document would be to ensure that the archaeological record is preserved, either by avoiding sites of significance or, if this proved impossible, by record.

The desk study and survey were undertaken by John Lewis of Scotia Archaeology at the request of MNV Consulting Limited. The route of the proposed pipeline is shown on a map supplied by MNV Consulting Ltd.

THE DESK STUDY

The sources consulted for this work include:

the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS);

early editions of the Ordnance Survey (OS) maps; and

Discovery & Excavation in Scotland, the annual journal of Archaeology Scotland.

On the evidence of the desk study there were no sites or monuments of archaeological or historical significance directly on the proposed route of the development. However, the study did identify two sites relatively close to this route although neither is likely to be affected during construction work. They are described below.

Site 1 Building, enclosure

The remains of a sub-rectangular building measuring 8.5m by 5.2m over walls reduced to rubble and earth banks 0.3m high are located at NO 0600 4733, some 390m north of Macmaridge. Attached to its north-west end are the remains of a small enclosure measuring 6.6m by 5.1m internally.

These structures are not shown on the first edition OS 6-inch map surveyed in 1863 (Perthshire, sheet 51) nor on the second edition published in 1900.

Site 2 Quarry

At NO 0655 4716 is a quarry, now grassed over, which is shown on both the first and second editions of the OS maps as well as the one supplied by MNV.

THE WALK-OVER SURVEY

The walk-over survey was undertaken by John Lewis of Scotia Archaeology on 1 April 2013. It had been intended to carry out the survey two weeks previous to this date but substantial falls of snow prevented this happening.

The proposed intake for the pipeline is on the Buckny Burn some 300m south of Dubh Loch (also known as Dow Loch), at NO 05744 48177. Its route, or penstock, will follow closely that of the burn which runs southwards from Dubh Loch as far as the small village of Butterstone. From Butterstone the burn continues eastwards for 1.5km before debouching into the Lunan Burn. For most of its course the pipeline will run along the west side of the burn but will cross it at approximately NO 0645 4685 and continue along its east side as far as the power house whose intended location is NO 06448 45878. The overall length of the pipeline will be approximately 2.6km.

The penstock will run through mostly the wooded, steeply sloping sides of the valley of the Buckny Burn, its upper reaches being covered with coniferous plantation; lower down the valley the woodland is predominantly deciduous. A study of early OS maps shows that little has changed in this respect for some 150 years.

For the initial 800m, the route runs midway between the burn and the private tarmac road that runs northwards from Butterstone to Riemore before the road diverts to the south-west while the penstock continues southwards. From that point it runs through rough pasture of coarse grass with bracken and heather before diving sharply to the river crossing point. At approximately NO 0590 47180 it will cross the track, now grassed over, which led to the abandoned quarry.

To the south of the crossing point the pipe route will run along the east side of the burn, cutting across the contours until plunging down the river bank to the power house. Most of this stretch is wooded although towards the south it runs through pasture fields wherein was what may be the poorly preserved remnants of rig and furrow agriculture. These putative rigs are centred approximately on NO 06164 47167, the distances between their crowns being some 3m. A short distance to the north, at NO 06456 46281, is a scatter of small, rounded boulders, probably the result of field clearance during ploughing. The boulders appear to overlie a demolished drystone field boundary, spreading beyond both sides of it. They are clearly not a part of the wall, suggesting that they comprise the later of the two features although this chronology is far from secure. The putative rigs and the stone spread are collectively termed Site 3 on the accompanying map.

No structures or features that may be associated with the putative rigs or the field clearance dump are evident in their near vicinity although they may relate to either of the farms of Leduckie or Craigton a short distance to the east. Both farms are shown on the first edition OS map although no other settlements are shown nearby.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The installation of a new hydro-electric scheme can potentially cause severe disruption to the archaeological record, not only during the excavation of pipe trenches but also the deposition and retrieval of spoil, the movement of plant and other vehicles and the storage of materials.

At Buckny Burn, however, this is unlikely to have any adverse effect on any sites of archaeological or historical interest.

The remains of the building and enclosure at Site 1 lie to the east of the access road and should not be affected by this proposed development. The quarry at Site 2 is also sufficiently far from the penstock to be secure. However, it is recommended that the entrance to the quarry is taped off and a 'No Entry' sign erected at this point before construction commences.

It is likely that the pipe route will run close to Site 3 although it is far from clear whether this feature is really a remnant of early agriculture. Furthermore, damage would be minimal and would not affect any structural remains.

Wherever pipe trenches have to cut through field boundaries and other walls, it is recommended that the trenches cut through existing breaks in the walls. Where this is not possible, the walls should be reinstated following the completion of pipe-laying.

PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE

The photographs described below form part of the project archive and are not included in hard copies of this report.

- 1 The quarry (Site 2), viewed from the west
- 2 The track leading to the quarry, viewed from the east
- 3 Field clearance dump at NO 06456 46281, viewed from the north
- 4 Field clearance dump at NO 06456 46281, viewed from the south
- 5 Possible rig and furrow (Site 3), viewed from the north-east
- 6 Possible rig and furrow (Site 3), viewed from the north