

Scotia Archaeology

**REPORT
TO
GREEN HIGHLAND RENEWABLES LIMITED**

**ARDENTRAIVE HYDRO SCHEME
COLINTRAIVE,
KYLES OF BUTE, ARGYLL**

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

*Lismore
Dollerie Terrace
Crieff, Perthshire
PH7 3EG
Tel: 01764-652638
email: scotarc@btinternet.com*

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 hydro-electric scheme at Ardentraive, Colintrave on the Kyles of Bute, Argyll. The survey was undertaken by John Lewis of Scotia Archaeology at the request of Green Highland Renewables Limited who supplied a map showing an indicative route for the scheme.

THE SITE

The intake for the scheme will be at an existing dam which is located on the Milton Burn at NS 03874 75591. From there the penstock will run south-westwards, along the west side of the burn to a turbine house at approximately NS 03320 74650. The overall length of the pipeline is intended to be 1.08km.

Its route will run through a landscape covered mostly with coarse grass and other low-lying vegetation although it will pass through a small wood of birch trees near its top end. A few patches of bracken were encountered during the survey, mainly within the birch wood. As it approaches the turbine house, the penstock will cross a large field of improved pasture.

THE DESK STUDY

Prior to the commencement of fieldwork, a desk study of readily available source material was undertaken to identify any sites of archaeological or historical significance that might lie on or close to the area of the proposed development. The sites are listed below according to the numbers allocated by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS).

1 NS07SW 53 Ardentraive: house(s)

The grid reference for this putative site is given as NS 0334 7476. RCAHMS provides no further information about this site and it does not appear on any edition of Ordnance Survey (OS) maps.

2 NS07SW 6 Ardentraive: cup-marked rock

Approximately 300m north-east of Ardentraive Farm, at NS 0329 7505, is a flat rock measuring 8.5m by 2.6m upon which are four well-defined cup-marks.

3 NS07NW 7 Ardentraive: cup-marked rock

A survey undertaken in 1971 recorded five cup-marks on a rock at NS 035 752, some 400m NNE of Ardentraive Farm, although RCAHMS considers this site to be one and the same as NS07SW 6 (Site 2 above).

4 NS07SW 2 Ardentraive: find-spot

A small stone axe, discovered around NS 032 747, was donated to the National Museum of Scotland in 1960.

5 NS07SW 48 Milton: township

A township comprising four roofed and one unroofed buildings and three enclosures is depicted on the first edition OS 6-inch map (Argyllshire 1869, sheet 182) at NS 0352 7478. The 1979 1:10,000 OS map shows one unroofed building and one enclosure.

6 NS07SW 6 Milton: cup-marked stone

A cup-marked stone is located 30m south-east of a ruined building at Milton. Its grid reference is given as NS 035 748.

7 NS07SW 1 Colintrave: cairn

In an arable field, 100m SSW of the Colintrave Hotel and 50m from the shore, are the remains of a Wessex-type bell cairn measuring 13m by 12m and 1m high. It has been heavily disturbed, particularly in its centre. The cairn is not shown on the accompanying map, being located beyond its south limit.

THE WALK-OVER SURVEY

The walk-over survey was undertaken on 01 November 2013, a cloudy day with intermittent heavy showers.

The survey covered a corridor up to 200m either side of the notional route of the penstock. The only features of archaeological interest encountered along the route were the remains of two earth and stone banks, described below as Sites 8 and 9.

Site 8

The scant remains of a stone and earth bank were encountered at NS 03713 75347 from where it ran downhill to the east towards the Milton Burn, petering out after some 20m. It is now covered with grass and bracken and details of its structure could not be determined. This feature is not shown on any OS maps.

Site 9

This structure is depicted on early and modern OS maps and during the survey was photographed where it has been breached, at NS 03630 75205 (see accompanying photographs 1, 2 and 3). It survives to a height of 0.5m and appears to comprise field boulders and earth or perhaps degraded turf. It is now covered with low vegetation and details of its original structure could not be discerned.

On the evidence of Green Highland's map, this bank will be crossed by the penstock at approximately NS 03645 75225.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The most obvious danger to archaeological structures and features during the construction of a hydro-electric scheme is the excavation of pipe trenches. Other activities could also affect the survival of the archaeological record, particularly the deposition and retrieval of spoil, the

temporary storage of pipes and other materials and the movement of machinery and other vehicles. However, in the case of the scheme at Ardentraive, damage is likely to be minimal.

The only features of archaeological or historical significance identified along or close to the route of the proposed hydro-electric scheme are the two earth and stone boundaries described above (Sites 8 and 9). These structures lie very close to the proposed course of the penstock and may be difficult to avoid during the development. If these features cannot be avoided, it might be possible to take the pipe trench through existing breaches in them. Otherwise, it is recommended that the banks be reinstated following the completion of the project.

No other structures or features of archaeological significance are likely to be disturbed during the construction of the proposed hydro scheme. The cup-marked rocks of Sites 2 and 3 (if indeed Site 3 is distinct from Site 2) are well beyond the development area, as is the cup-marked rock at Milton and the adjacent settlement (Sites 5 and 6). The discovery of the axe-head (Site 4) near Ardentraive and the presence of the cairn near the shore suggest that there was prehistoric activity in this area although no associated settlement is noted in relevant records or identified during this survey.

No trace of the buildings of Site 1 was noted at their supposed location although the grid reference ascribed to it is somewhat vague and it is suggested that Site 1 may well be Ardentraive Farm itself.

PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE

- 1 Stone and earth bank (Site 9), viewed from the south-west
- 2 View to the east along the stone and earth bank (Site 9)
- 3 View to the west along the stone and earth bank (Site 9)
- 4 The dam at the proposed intake point, viewed from the south-west
- 5 Stone and earth bank (Site 8), viewed from the west
- 6 Improved pasture field to the east of Ardentraive, the supposed location of Site 1