

Scotia Archaeology

REPORT
TO
CAMPBELL OF DOUNE
AND
AUCHNAFREE ESTATE

LARICHRASKHAN
HYDRO-ELECTRIC SCHEME
GLEN ALMOND, PERTSHIRE

Walk-over survey
September 2014

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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 Larichfraskhan, Glen Almond, Perthshire. The survey was carried out by Scotia Archaeology at the request of Campbell of Doune, Civil and Structural Engineers, and commissioned by Auchnafree Estate.

THE SITE

The proposed hydro scheme will take water from the Larichfraskhan Burn which runs off Auchnafree Hill on the south side of Glen Almond, 8km west of Newton Bridge on the A822 Crieff to Aberfeldy road. The original intention was for the intake to be at NN 81336 32580 and the outflow from the powerhouse at NN 81528 33104, 600m to the north. A walk-over survey of the route, undertaken in 2012, identified one hitherto unrecorded site (Lewis 2012).

Since that time, it has been decided to reduce the length of the penstock, the intake point now being at approximately NN 81430 32770 while the powerhouse is to be sited at NN 81500 33110, some 340m to the north and 100m east of Larichfraskhan.

THE DESK STUDY

A desk study of readily available source material undertaken prior to the commencement of fieldwork revealed no known sites of archaeological or historical significance along or close to the route of the proposed pipeline, other than the structure identified in the 2012 survey which is described below.

Structure

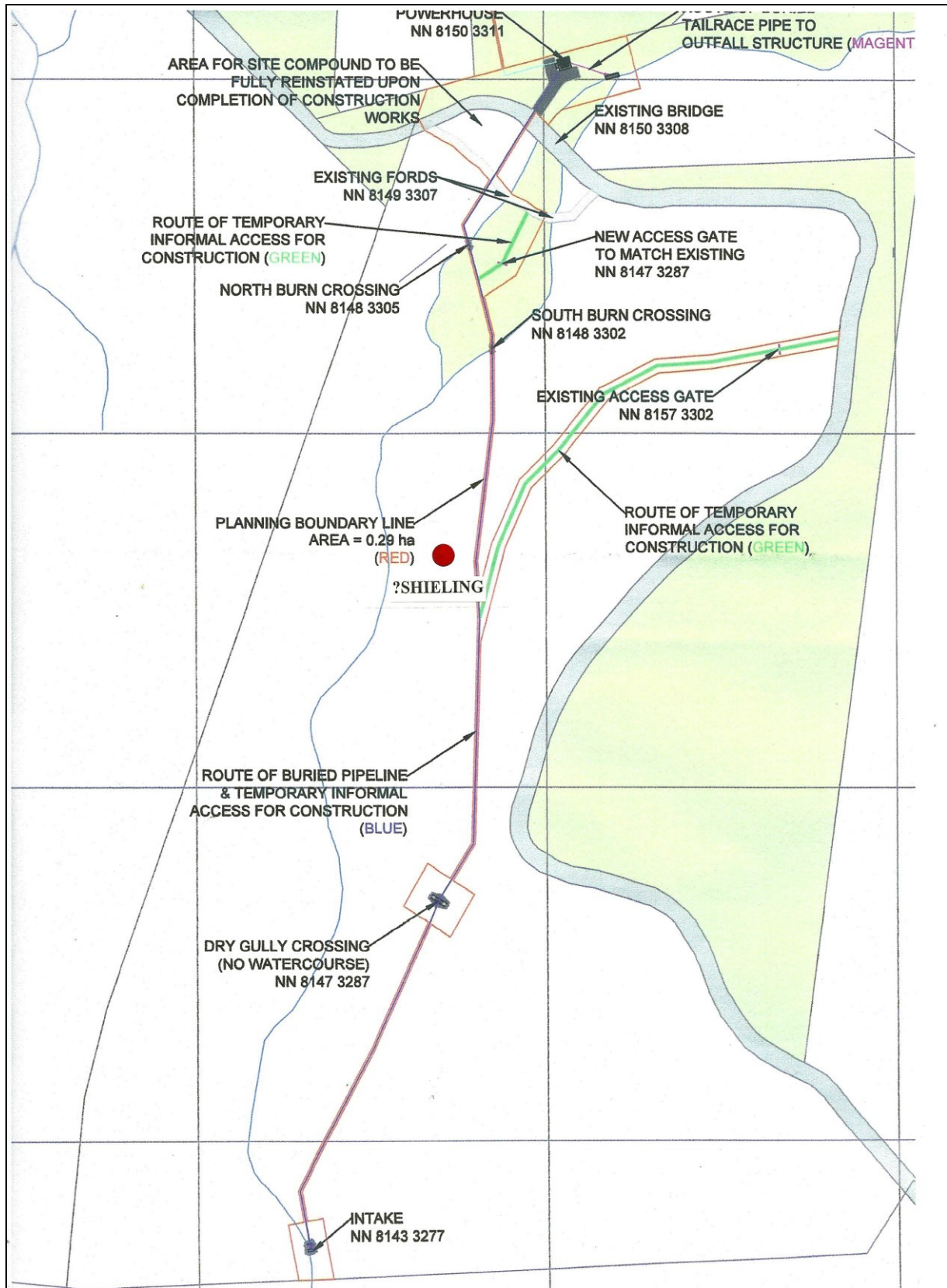
On a terrace on the east bank of the Larichfraskhan Burn, at NN 81470 32966, stand the remains of a single-celled, sub-rectangular structure measuring 4.1m east/west by 2.7m wide over rubble walls some 800mm wide of which a maximum of two courses remain. The possible remnant of a wall, surviving as 2m of single-skin, drystone rubble masonry, extends from the south-east corner of the structure. No other structures or features that might be associated with this building were noted nearby.

The character and size of this structure suggest that it represents the remains of a shieling hut, probably dating to the 18th or 19th century.

THE WALK-OVER SURVEY

The second survey was undertaken on 2 September 2014 during dry, mainly cloudy conditions and covered the area bounded by the Larichfraskhan Burn and the estate road, between the proposed intake point and that of the power house. It included the route of the penstock and the course of a new access road for construction and other traffic. A location map, based on one supplied by Campbell of Doune and showing the area of proposed development, is shown below.

The map also shows the location of the possible shieling hut encountered during the 2012 survey. It was clearly visible in 2012 whereas in 2014 it was almost completely covered by bracken, as is demonstrated in the two photographs below.



Map of Larichfraskhan Hydro scheme showing the location of the putative shieling hut



The putative shieling hut viewed from the south in June 2012



The putative shieling hut viewed from the south in September 2014

With the exception of this structure, nothing of archaeological significance was found during the 2014 survey, all other features being either of recent date or of geological origin.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The only archaeological feature encountered within the development area was the putative shieling hut at NN 81470 32966, on level ground midway between the burn and the proposed penstock route. The penstock will run only some 10m from this structure although at a considerably higher level, atop the steep bank that rises to the east from the burn's flood plain.

There is unlikely to be any direct danger from the excavation of the pipe trench itself although related factors may well be detrimental to this feature. One such threat could come from spoil spilling down the bank from the excavation trench, others perhaps being the movement of plant and the storage of materials, all of which could cause irreparable damage to this possible shieling.

As protection from these potential risks, it is recommended that a substantial fence is built around the structure, extending some 5m from it, and maintained during the entire development process. A further safeguard would be to ensure that traffic is excluded from its vicinity, at least on this level platform.

REFERENCE

Lewis, J 2012 *Larichfraskan Hydro-electric scheme, Glenalmond: desk study and walk-over survey*, unpublished report to Auchnafree Estate and Green Highland Renewables.