

# Scotia Archaeology

REPORT  
TO  
CAMPBELL OF DOUNE  
AND  
SOUTHANNAN ESTATE

GLENBURN  
HYDRO-ELECTRIC SCHEME  
NORTH AYRSHIRE

Walk-over survey  
January 2015

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## INTRODUCTION

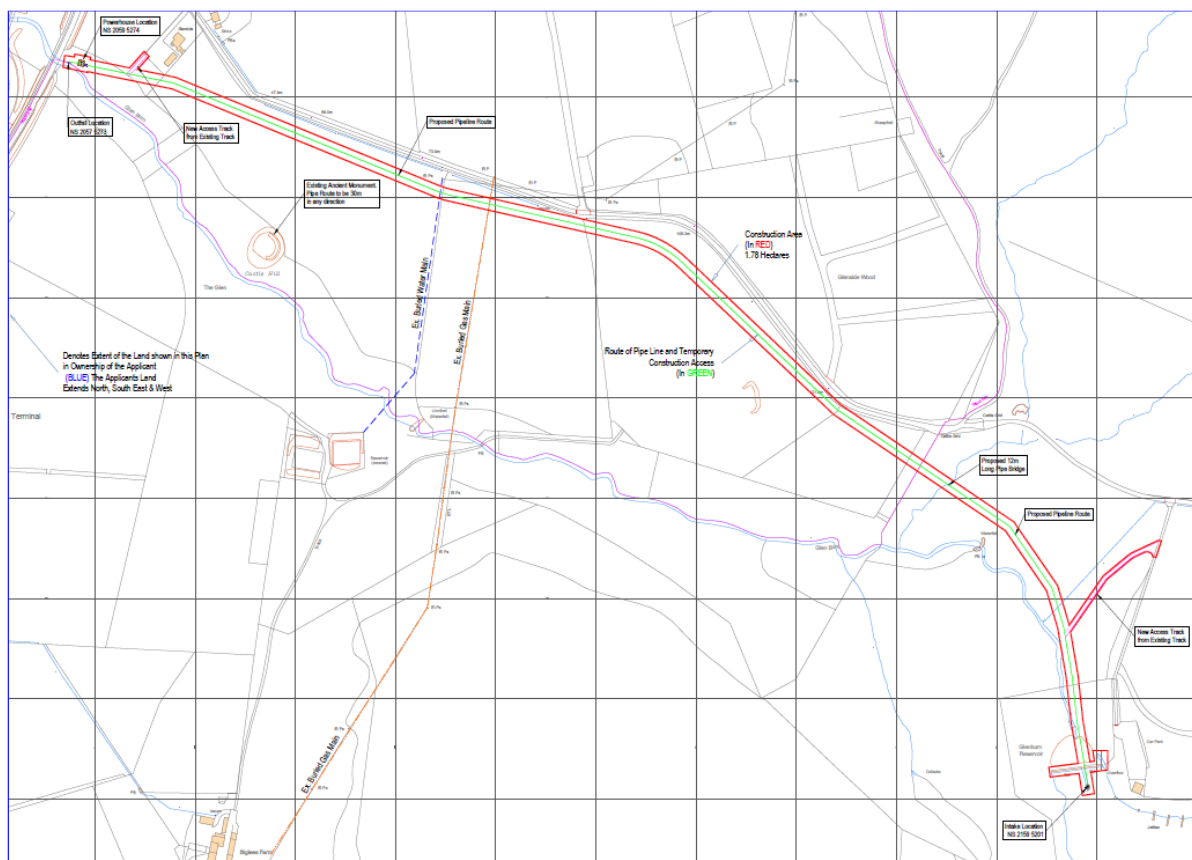
This report describes the results of a walk-over survey along the route of a proposed new hydro-electric scheme at Glenburn, near Hunterston, North Ayrshire. The survey was carried out by John Lewis of Scotia Archaeology at the request of Campbell of Doune, Civil and Structural Engineers, of Crieff.

## THE SITE

Glenburn is located just inland from Hunterston Bay, 4km north of West Kilbride and 9km west of Dalry in North Ayrshire. The proposed hydro scheme will take water from the Glenburn Reservoir, the original function of which had been to provide clean drinking water. It is intended to use the original draw-off point (at approximately NS 2159 5201) for the production of hydro-electricity.

From the reservoir the penstock will run in an arc roughly parallel with the Glen Burn as far as a power house which is to be built at approximately NS 2057 5273, just short of the Glasgow to Largs railway line running north/south at this point. The outflow from the power house will then discharge back into the Glen Burn.

Initially, the penstock will run northwards for some 250m along the east side of the burn before turning to the north-west for a further 450m before running westwards for its final 600m, close to the unclassified Hunterston to Dalry road. The proposed area of development is shown on the map below which was supplied by Campbell of Doune



*Location map of Glenburn Hydro*

The first half of the route crosses rough ground covered with coarse grass, heather, gorse and bracken whereas its west half runs through fields of improved pasture although, at the time of the field survey, much of the ground was very wet. Most of the proposed penstock route is quite steep.



*View, from the north, of the upper stretch of the penstock*

## **DESK STUDY**

A desk study of readily available source material undertaken prior to the commencement of fieldwork revealed few known sites of archaeological or historical significance along or close to the route of the proposed pipeline. Those described below are listed according to the numbers allocated by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS).

### **NS25SW 6 Castle Hill**

This, the only site in reasonable proximity to the development area, comprises the remains of what was probably a prehistoric defended homestead. It is located on the edge of the steeply sloping north-east side of the Glen Burn at NS 2076 5254, some 100m to the south-west of the proposed route of the penstock. It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM3305) and has statutory protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979.

The settlement measures some 28m by 25m within ramparts, now much eroded although standing to 1.7m on the north side. There are no traces of a ditch, an entrance or any upstanding structures or features within its grass-covered interior.

### **NS25SW 23 Cairn**

On Biglees Hill, at NS 2112 5196, stand the remains of a circular burial cairn measuring 13.5m in diameter. It survives to a height of only 0.8m on its south side but is heavily robbed on its north. This site is located 450m south of the proposed penstock route.

## NS25SW 16 Homestead

On Kaim Hill, at NS 2131 5277, stand the remains of a homestead, probably prehistoric in age, measuring 19m by 18m and surrounded by the remains of a rampart which survives to a maximum height of only 0.5m. No features are visible in its interior. This site is located some 250m north of the proposed route of the penstock.

## THE WALK-OVER SURVEY

The walk-over survey was undertaken on 27 January 2015 during dry weather with occasional sunny spells. It covered the area between Glenburn Reservoir and the proposed site of the power house, 100m west of Glenside Cottage. It included the route of the penstock and the course of a new access road for construction and other traffic which will feed off an existing access road to the reservoir.



*View to the east along the west half of the penstock route*

No features of archaeological significance were encountered at any point within the proposed area of development. There was no evidence of anything that might be associated with the prehistoric homestead of Castle Hill or any trace of previously unknown sites anywhere along the route.

## CONCLUSIONS

Nothing of archaeological significance appears to be threatened by the proposal to construct a hydro-electric scheme at Glenburn. Castle Hill lies some distance from the intended route of the penstock and, on the evidence of the survey, nothing associated with it lies on the low ground at its base.

## **PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE**

The photographs listed below form part of the site archive and only Frames 4 and 5 are reproduced in this report.

- 1 Glenburn Reservoir, viewed from the north
- 2 View to the north from the reservoir along the uppermost stretch of the penstock
- 3 View to the west from NS 21619 52116 along the penstock route
- 4 View, from the north, along the upper half of the penstock route
- 5 The west half of the penstock route crossing improved pasture, viewed from the east