

Scotia Archaeology

**REPORT
TO
MR PHILIP TALBOT**

**NEW DOMESTIC WATER PIPE
TO GLEN LYON COTTAGE,
INVERVAR, GLEN LYON**

**WATCHING BRIEF
JULY 2016**

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INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken during the excavation of a trench to accommodate a new domestic water pipe to Glen Lyon Cottage (formerly Invervar Cottage), Invervar, Glen Lyon, Perthshire. The watching brief was carried out on 7 July 2016 by John Lewis of Scotia Archaeology on behalf of Mr Philip Talbot.

The pipe trench ran along the edge of an area designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM), one protected by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979. As a consequence, this work required the approval of Historic Environment Scotland (HES). A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), describing a programme intended to mitigate any action that might damage the surviving archaeological record within the scheduled area, was forwarded to HES who approved its content.

THE SITE

The small village of Invervar is located in Glen Lyon, some 8km west of Fortingall and 20km west of Aberfeldy, Perthshire. Glen Lyon Cottage is situated on the north side of the unclassified road that runs through the glen, parallel with the River Lyon. It stands on the west side of a shrunken village, once an industrial settlement whose economy was based on the production of linen. From the late 18th century flax was processed in a lint mill whose remains stand on the north side of the village.



Extract from the first edition OS map showing Invervar in 1862

Although several houses in Invervar are still occupied, the settlement is considerably reduced from the one shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 6-inch map of 1862. Most of the structures dating from the late 18th and 19th centuries are now demolished and survive only as foundations or buried remains. Most of those on the north side of the road are contained within the scheduled area.

A brief description of the scheduled monument is given below. Scheduled Monument numbers are abbreviated as SAM. Sites and monuments listed by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) are shown as, for example, NN64NE 8.

SAM3388/NN64NE 8 Invervar village

The remains of the small industrial village is centred on approximately NN 66500 48290, on a south-facing hillside to the immediate east of the Invervar Burn. It was first depicted on Roy's mid-18th-century map while the lint mill first appears on James Stobie's map of 1783.

As well as the mill, the first OS map depicts nine roofed and one unroofed buildings, four enclosures and a field. The remains of some of the demolished buildings are still evident, as are the well-defined mill lade. Records held by RCAHMS also describe sections of a track (NN64NE 18) running north/south along the west side of the settlement.



The lint mill viewed from the west

Glen Lyon Cottage stands outside the scheduled area, on the east bank of the Invervar Burn which runs southwards from Meall Garbh through the village, debouching into the River Lyon a short distance away. At the time of the watching brief the scheduled area was covered in a thick swathe of lush grass with a few small trees and other vegetation scattered throughout it.

THE WATCHING BRIEF

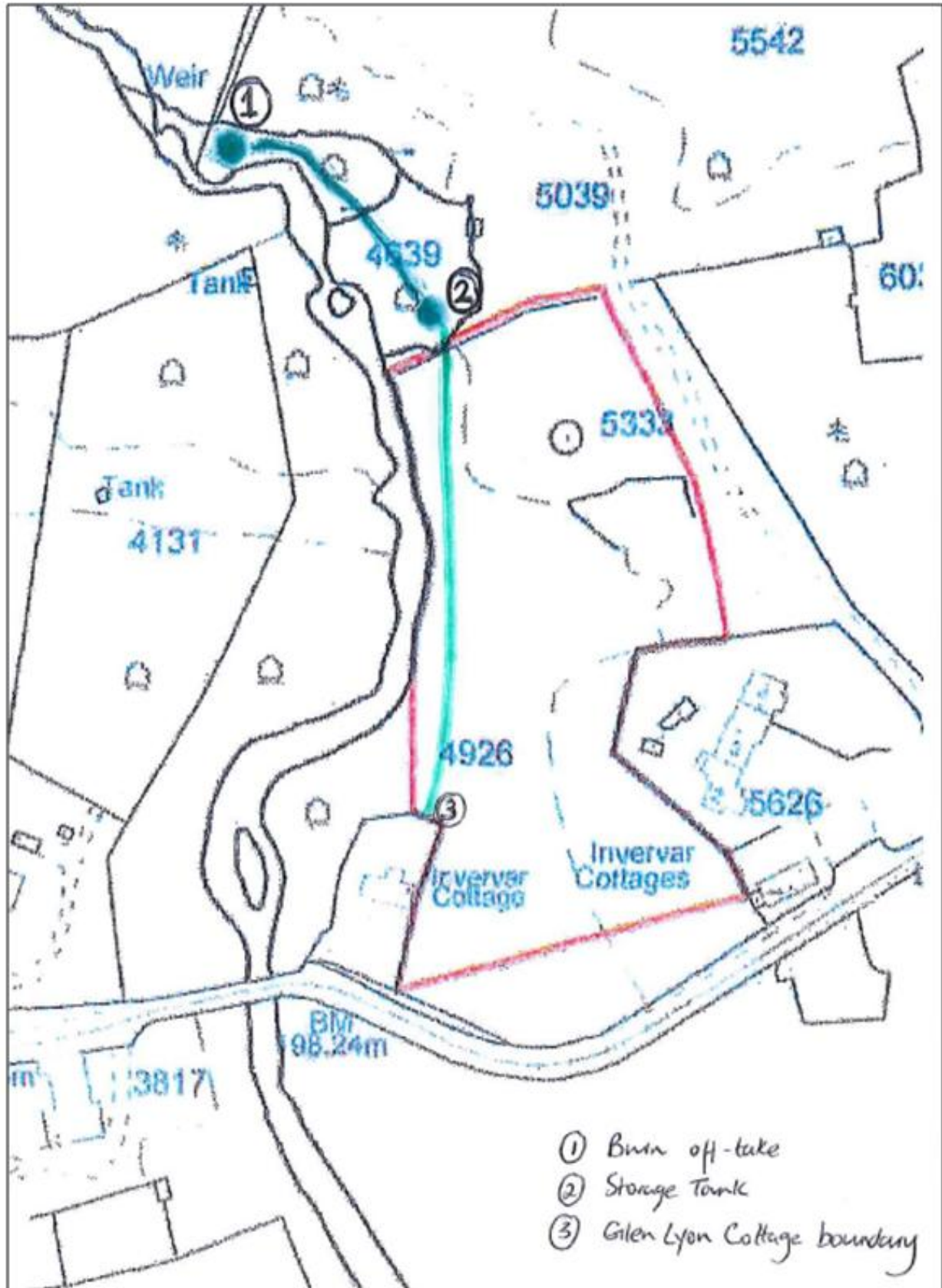
The map, supplied by Mr Talbot and reproduced overleaf, shows the route of the new water pipe as a blue line running north/south along the west edge of the scheduled area which is outlined in red. A weir on the Invervar Burn feeds an existing copper pipe which supplies Invervar Cottages to the east of the scheduled area and Glen Lyon Cottage to its west. Unfortunately, that pipe is now damaged, resulting in water leaking from it at several points. A new alkathene pipe will take water from the same location on the burn, the intention being to run it along the same route as the old pipe.

At the start of the watching brief the pipe trench had already been dug between the weir, at NN 66435 48400, and the drystone boundary wall which marks the northern limit of the scheduled area, at NN 66491 48345. The wall had been breached at this point on an earlier occasion, when the original pipe was installed.



The north end of the pipe trench showing the north boundary wall in the distance

The pipe trench was dug using a mini-excavator and measured 0.3m wide and 0.9m deep. For much of its course it ran along the track which RCAHMS has allocated monument status (NN64NE 18) although it appears simply to be an informal footpath resulting from recent public access to the lint mill and the hills to the north. The watching brief extended as far as the fence marking the boundary of Glen Lyon's garden, at NN 66473 48248, the trench measuring some 110m overall. At the fence the alkathene pipe will be connected to an existing section of intact copper pipe which runs to the house.



Map showing the route of the new pipe in blue; the boundary of the scheduled area is marked in red

The defunct copper pipe was traced along the entire length of the trench, most of the materials through which it cut having been disturbed during the earlier excavation. In places, however, the machine cut through topsoil of mid-brown sandy loam with pebbles and boulders, varying in depth from 0.1m to 0.3m along most of the trench although at its north end it extended below the base of the trench, perhaps signifying the course of an old glacial melt-water stream. Topsoil gave onto glacial till of orange sand, gravel and boulders, some of them very large and difficult to remove from the trench.



Laying the new pipe midway along the trench, viewed from the north. The edge of the Invervar Burn ravine is on the right

No features or deposits of archaeological significance were uncovered in the trench and no artefacts pre-dating the 20th century retrieved from it.

CONCLUSIONS

The pipe trench was located close to the edge of the ravine containing the Invervar Burn where little of archaeological interest is evident above ground although many features of significance survive elsewhere on the site. There was no evidence to suggest that the track ((NN64NE 18) is anything other than an informal footpath and, while it is impossible to date its origins, it is thought unlikely to be contemporary with the workings of the industrial village of Invervar.