

423/ ROC

Appendix B: Maps and Reports

**B6: Archaeological Survey of Proposed Plantation
at Coire an t-Seilich**

**An Archaeological Survey of a Proposed Plantation at
Coire an t-Seilich, Glen Carron**

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Inverness-shire IV3 6XQ
(tel 01456476288)

Archaeological Survey of Proposed Plantation at Coire an t-Seilich, Glen Carron

Introduction

The author was asked by Scottish Woodlands, on behalf of Kinlochdamp Estate, to supply an archaeological survey of a proposed plantation at An Ruadh Bruach, Glenshieldaig to form part of an Environmental Assessment. This involved an initial deskbound survey of all known reference material including the earlier OS map series and the Sites & Monuments Record held by Highland Regional Council in Clachnaharry Schoolhouse. This was followed by a field visit to look for sites on the ground.

Historical Background

There are no recorded archaeological sites in the vicinity of this survey area. The height above sea level and the marginal quality of the land make it an unlikely area for permanent settlement. However it is eminently suitable for summer grazing and was undoubtedly used for this in the past. With the extensive forest developments in Glen Carron since the establishment of the Forestry Commission, it remains one of the few areas in the glen available for archaeological survey.

The evidence of Roderick Mackenzie in 1892 (*Report of the Royal Commission on The Highlands and Islands 1895, pp461-9*) states that **Coriag-sheilich (Coire an t-Seilich)** and **Malafiuchart (Meall an Fhliuchaird)** were part of the hill grazings for the tenants of **Craig**. They were evicted together with the tenants of **Coulin, Wester Corrievanie** and **Coire-Liridh** to make way for sheep farmers. The sheep were in turn removed to make way for **Achnashellach Deer Forest** in 1863 (*op. cit. p469*).

Site survey

This was carried out on the 3rd November in clear dry weather. Particular attention was given to the grassy flushes besides the **Allt Coire an t-Seilich** and the **Alltan na Feola**, though the smaller unnamed burns were also examined. Only one building was recorded at NH 0773 4934 (*see below*) and this was perhaps too substantial to be a shieling, possibly being built for the use of a shepherd in the early 19th century. Being of drystone construction it is unlikely to have been built as a stalkers bothy in the late 19th century. In its present form it shows considerable alteration, possibly to make 4 lambing pens.

A second feature was intermittent walling at NH 079 505 and a possible building at NH 0845 5025 (*see Fig 3*). The walling did not make sense as revetting to the bank of the **Alltan na Feola** and must be interpreted as some form of stock fence. Neither its present height nor its position at the base of the ravine worn by the burn made this seem a totally convincing explanation for its construction. So its original purpose remains uncertain. It is also unclear whether the feature at NH 0845 5025 had been a building.

Archaeological Survey of Proposed Plantation at Coire an t-Seilich, Glen Carron

Recommendations

The revised map boundary excludes the building at NH 0773 4934 from the proposed plantation and if this plan is followed then no further protection should be required for this site

The features beside the Alltan na Feola lie in an area where only natural regeneration is planned. While such regeneration may damage the stone walls in places, the walls have been severely damaged by erosion from the burn and it is unlikely that they will suffer more heavily from regeneration. It is therefore recommended that no special protection should be given to these features

Jonathan Wordsworth MIFA, FSA (Scot)
10th November 1995

B6: Archaeology Map.

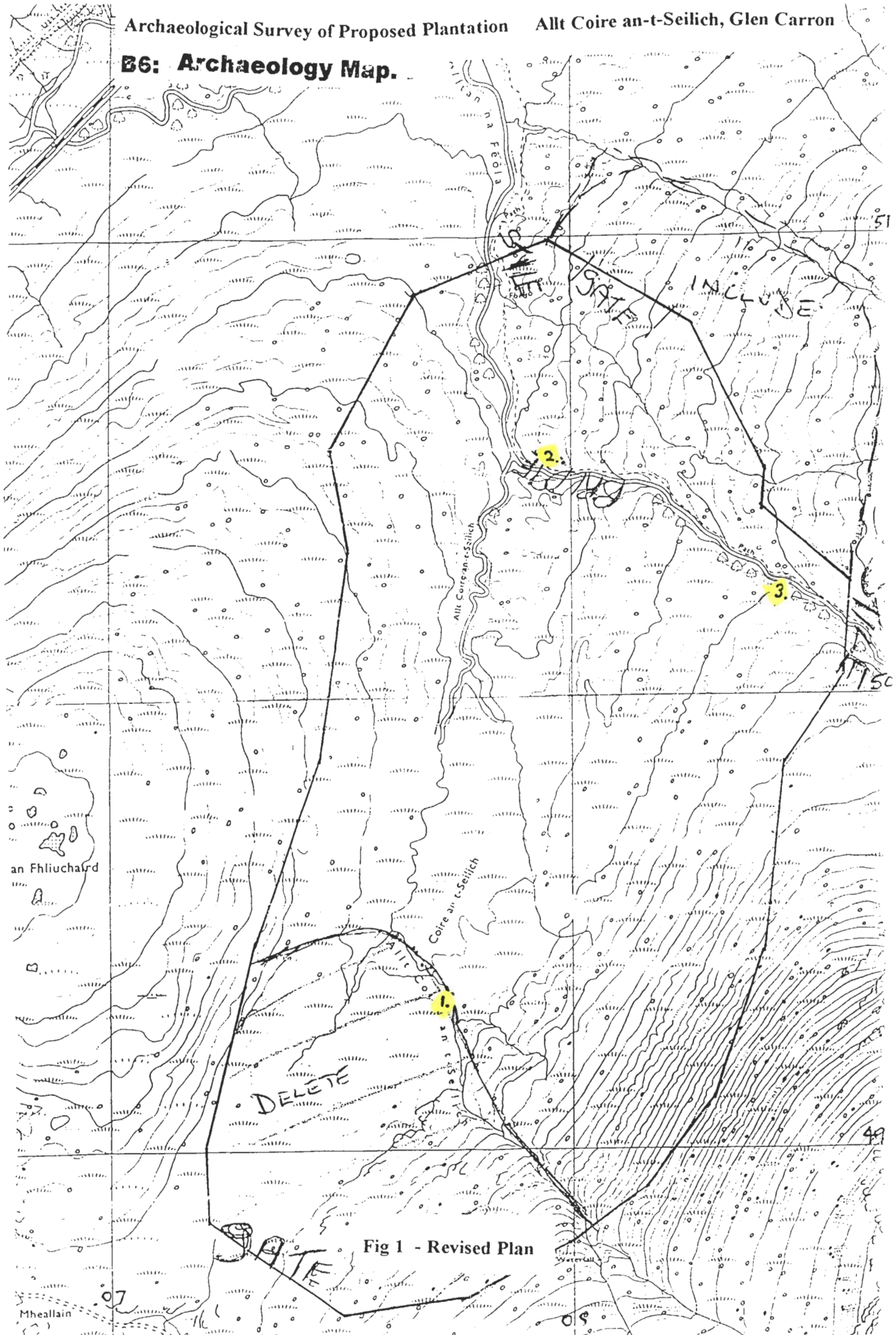


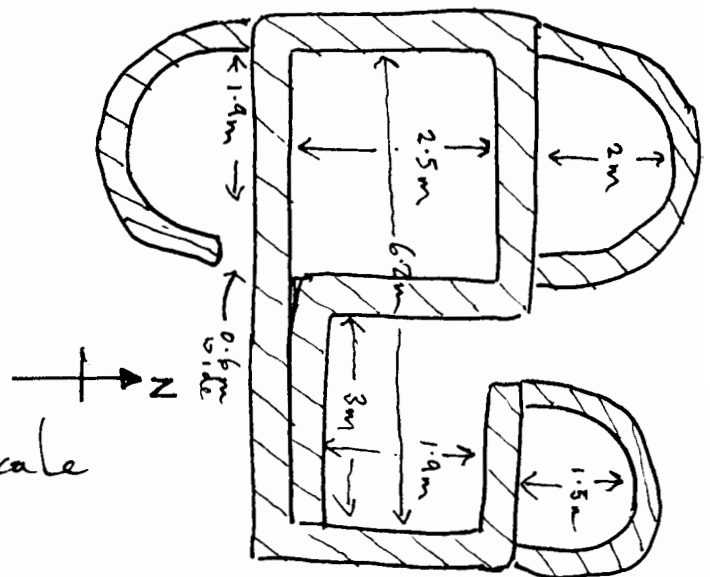
Fig 1 - Revised Plan

Archaeological Survey of Proposed Plantation at Coire an t-Seilich, Glen Carron

Appendix

Site 1 NH 0773 4934 Allt Coire an t-Seilich

A rectangular drystone structure with a distinct batter to its walls lies on the west bank of the burn. In its original form it was 6.2m long by 2.5m wide with walls 0.5m thick. It was aligned E/W with a doorway in the centre of the north wall. A slumping of the stone work 0.9m east of the north west corner suggested there might have been a cruck slot 0.12m wide to take a beam to support the roof (see Fig 2(i)). However this was not paralleled on the south wall and so remains unproven. At a later date the building was altered by the insertion of additional walls to make a chamber 3m by 1.9m. 3 semi-circular structures of c2m diameter were also added. These may have been used as twinning pens during the lambing season. Alternatively they may have been used as an illicit still.



N.B. Rough sketch - not to scale

Site 2 NH 079 505 Alltan na Feola

A short stretch of drystone walling some 20 metres long revetts the north bank of the Alltan na Feola close to its junction with the Allt Coire an t-Seilich. After a break next to a small waterfall the walling continues for about 30 metres. It does not appear to continue beyond this point. As it survives it makes little structural sense but it may originally have formed a more substantial barrier and been used as an enclosure for folding sheep or cattle. At the west end are two distinct bays (see Fig 3(i)) c2 metres in diameter that may have formed one side for either a building or a fold. If this was the original situation the south wall has been eroded by the burn.

Further stretches of drystone walling survey to the north of the survey area such as the fragment centred at NH 0782 5135 and they may be contemporary with these. Unless there has been extreme erosion they do not appear to have formed a continuous boundary.

Site 3 NH 0845 5025 Alltan na Feola

On the south side of the burn is a line of coursed stone c3m long. This forms part of the north side of a platform c4 metres by 2 metres and may mark the site of a building. If it was a building it has been severely eroded by flood waters from the burn. (see Fig 4)

Archaeological Survey of Proposed Plantation at Coire an t-Seilich, Glen Carron



Fig 2(i) Site 1 Detail of interior west end. Looking north.



Fig 2(ii) Site 1 Location view. Looking south.



Fig 3(i) Site 2
West end of walling.
Looking north east.



Fig 3(ii) Site 2
Walling on the north side of the
Alltan na Feola.
Looking west.



Fig 4 Site 3

Looking south west.

Appendix C: Landscape And Design

C1: Survey Information

KEY TO SITE SURVEY MAP

-  MAIN TRUNK ROAD A890
-  INVERNESS - KYLE OF LOCHALSH RAILWAY
-  TEMPORARY UNMADE CAR PARK
-  FOOTPATH
-  FOOTBRIDGE
-  EXISTING SCATTERED WOODLAND
-  EXISTING ARCHAEOLOGY
-  EXISTING HILL TRACK
-  WATER COURSES
-  MAJOR MOUNTAIN RIDGES
-  MINOR RIDGE TO SCREEN WOODLAND
-  MAJOR CORRIES

SUMMARY

The proposal relates to the creation of approximately 246.8 hectares of native woodlands. The tree species will be a mixture of native broadleaved species and Caledonian Scots pine.

The main objective of the proposal is to establish further areas of native woodlands on the estate in conjunction with the existing programme of fencing for natural regeneration of native broadleaves and Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). This proposal would enhance the conservation and amenity value of the area by creating new habitats for wildlife. In time, the woodland should provide shelter and protection for the Red deer, and in the long term limited commercial timber returns.

The key issues to be addressed are the effects of the proposal on landscape, red deer and wildlife.

The original landscape design incorporated three woodland enclosures providing access to the upper and lower margins.

An informal site meeting with the Consultees proposed a fundamental change in the original design to provide for one single enclosure. This re-evaluation provided a more compact shape and linkage to the upper and lower margins.

Control of the Red deer population by the Estate will reduce the resident hind population by approximately 30%. Monitoring of the Red deer will continue in association with the Red Deer Commission.

Liaison with RSPB identified the presence of eagles and a decision was made to re-align the fence to accommodate their hunting zone.

Re-alignment of the enclosure retained improved agricultural grazing land for the domestic stock managed by the Estate.

Archaeological remnants were identified following a survey and measures taken to protect the sites.

This Environmental Statement (ES), describes and objectively assesses the impact of this proposal on key environmental elements of the site at Coire an t-Seilich. The Environmental Assessment carried out hopes to demonstrate that the proposals will make a positive contribution to landscape, conservation and natural heritage.

vivipara) was also observed.

Curlew (Numenius arquata) and numerous grouse (Lagopus lagopus) were disturbed on site visits. Craig an Ardaich, on the west of Sgurr nan Ceannaichean, is a nesting site for Golden Eagles (Aquila chrysaetos), while the summit of Meal an Fliuchaird is an important site for red-throated divers (Gavia stellata) and breeding waders.

The area carries a population of sheep and red deer (Cervus elaphus). A list of flora and fauna recorded at the site is shown in Appendix B5 Responses from the RSPB and SNH are shown in Appendix C9 and C4 respectively.

2.4 LANDSCAPE

Glen Carron Estate covers approximately 5670 hectares of land in a mountainous region. The proposed site lies on the lower slopes leading to Sgurr nan Ceannaichean. The land is predominantly open hill, with large corries at the South and East of the site. North of the site is a valley containing the Inverness to Kyle of Lochalsh railway and the A890.

Vegetation is typically dominated by poor grassland and moorland. The site contains only a few trees, in the downslope gullies by the larger stream sides.

Monar Forest SSSI lies to the south of the site. It is the southern representative of the central mountains of Ross and Cromarty and supports a number of plants of restricted distribution, including the nationally rare curved wood rush (Luzula arcuata). The vegetation survey at Coire an t-Seilich did not highlight any rare plants.

2.5 SOCIAL ASPECTS

There are no dwellings within the site. Sheep grazing and stalking are the main economic activities.

2.6 ARCHAEOLOGY

The Archaeology report from Wordsworth Archaeological Services forms Appendix B6.

3 SITE ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 Landscape
 - 3.1.1 Sensitivity
 - 3.1.2 Character
 - 3.1.3 Heritage
 - 3.1.4 Elements of Diversity and Special Features
- 3.2 Flora and Fauna
- 3.3 Agriculture
- 3.4 Archaeology
- 3.5 Recreation
- 3.6 Water

3.1 LANDSCAPE

3.1.1 Sensitivity

The site is very visible from the A890 and the Kyle railway line. The site is framed by a ring of mountain peaks and is within a wider landscape which is almost totally devoid of trees.

The sensitivity of the site is therefore high and there is a need to retain a balance between woodland cover and open space, and ensure that the proposal fits into the surrounding landscape.

3.1.2 Character

Glen Carron lies in the "mountainous interior West of the Great Glen" Landscape Zone (IFS, Highland Regional Council, 1992). The area is highly dissected with a strong East to West orientation to its relief. Hill ridges are long and sustained, with steep sided intervening valleys and are invariably centrepieces to areas of fine mountain scenery.

The character of the site is dominated by the two corries and the associated mountain ridge, all of which are highly prominent when travelling either east or west on the A890.

3.1.3 Heritage

Sparse archaeological remains have been found, the most significant of which is an old sheiling beside the Allt Coire an t-Seilich. There are also remains along the Alltan na Feola. Please see the Archaeology report (Appendix B6) and section 3.4 below.

3.1.4 Elements of Diversity and Special Features

The lower slopes of the site have a fairly uniform texture comprising acid grassland vegetation grading out into heather moorland above. The special features of the landscape lie above the moorland where rock scree and the mountain peaks provide most of the diversity and visual focus.

The gullies and streamsides provide strong linkage between the corries and the lower foreground area when viewed from the transport corridor..

3.2 FLORA AND FAUNA

A vegetation survey of the area has been carried out and mapped in accordance with the NCC Phase 1 vegetation survey. (See Appendix B5) This did not highlight any major areas of significant importance. A number of small areas of alpine communities were discovered, and these will be kept free from planting. The areas were found on the steep banks of the Alltan na Feola in the area zoned for natural regeneration.

The main considerations are the deer population and the important nesting areas adjacent to the site.

3.3 AGRICULTURE

The site represents only a small proportion of the Estate grazing lands and the resident sheep population can easily be accommodated elsewhere.

The Red Deer Commission indicated that the initial proposal involving three blocks of woodland was unsuitable. The revised design was considered to accommodate deer movement. However a slightly increased winter hind cull would be required to allow for the reduction in the winter range of the deer..

3.4 ARCHAEOLOGY

There are three archaeological sites within the proposed deer fence. It has been recommended that the best preserved of these, a sheiling beside the Allt Coire an t-Seilich, should be protected with a planting holdback. The remaining sites are in areas planned for natural regeneration. Considering the poor condition of these sites, this is considered sufficient preservation. Please see the Archaeology report (Appendix B6).

4.4 AGRICULTURE

The proposal covers only a small proportion of the Glencarron Estate grazing land. The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries have indicated that any domestic stock disposal necessary will be minimal.

4.5 ARCHAEOLOGY

There will be no significant effect on the archaeology of the site.

4.6 RECREATION

The Estate intends to encourage public access. Stiles will be placed where the track to Coire Toll nam Bian crosses the deer fence. This track lies within the area for natural regeneration. Regeneration will be cleared from the path to allow continued access in association with managed open ground to maintain views.

4.7 WATER

The proposal does not include any drainage system and the "Forests and Water" Guidelines will be adhered to. The effects on water quality and rates of runoff are therefore likely to be minimal. The Highland River Purification Board (HRPB) have no objection to the proposal, provided that potable water supplies arising in the area are not adversely affected. See Appendix D5.

4.8 SOIL AND GEOLOGY

The proposal is considered to have no significant effects on the underlying geology. The increased natural drainage due to transpiration of the trees, and the seasonal leaf fall and litter should improve soil conditions in the long term.

4.9 CLIMATE AND AIR QUALITY

Air quality is unlikely to be affected by the scheme. As the trees mature carbon fixation will remove some carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Interception of precipitation within the water catchment will increase as the trees mature. Transpiration will increase from the canopy. The cumulative

5.6 ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeological sites will be protected from woodland establishment and maintained to provide open ground around the notified sites.

5.7 WATER

SEPA have stated that the scheme will have no significant effects so long as operations comply with the Forest and Water Guidelines. (See Appendix D5).

5.8 RECREATION

The site is an important focus for informal recreation for hill walkers and skiers.

This opportunity will be enhanced through the provision of a car park adjacent to the public road and the improvement of a footbridge leading to the woodland.

The scheme as a whole promotes the recreational gains through extended access, information, landscape diversity both external and internal. The losses anticipated are identified through ground disturbance and semi-intrusive fencing.

5.9 SPORTING

Long term shelter will provide for improved red deer quality. A diverse woodland structure in the long term will allow for a variety of improved sporting opportunities.



Scottish Woodlands Ltd

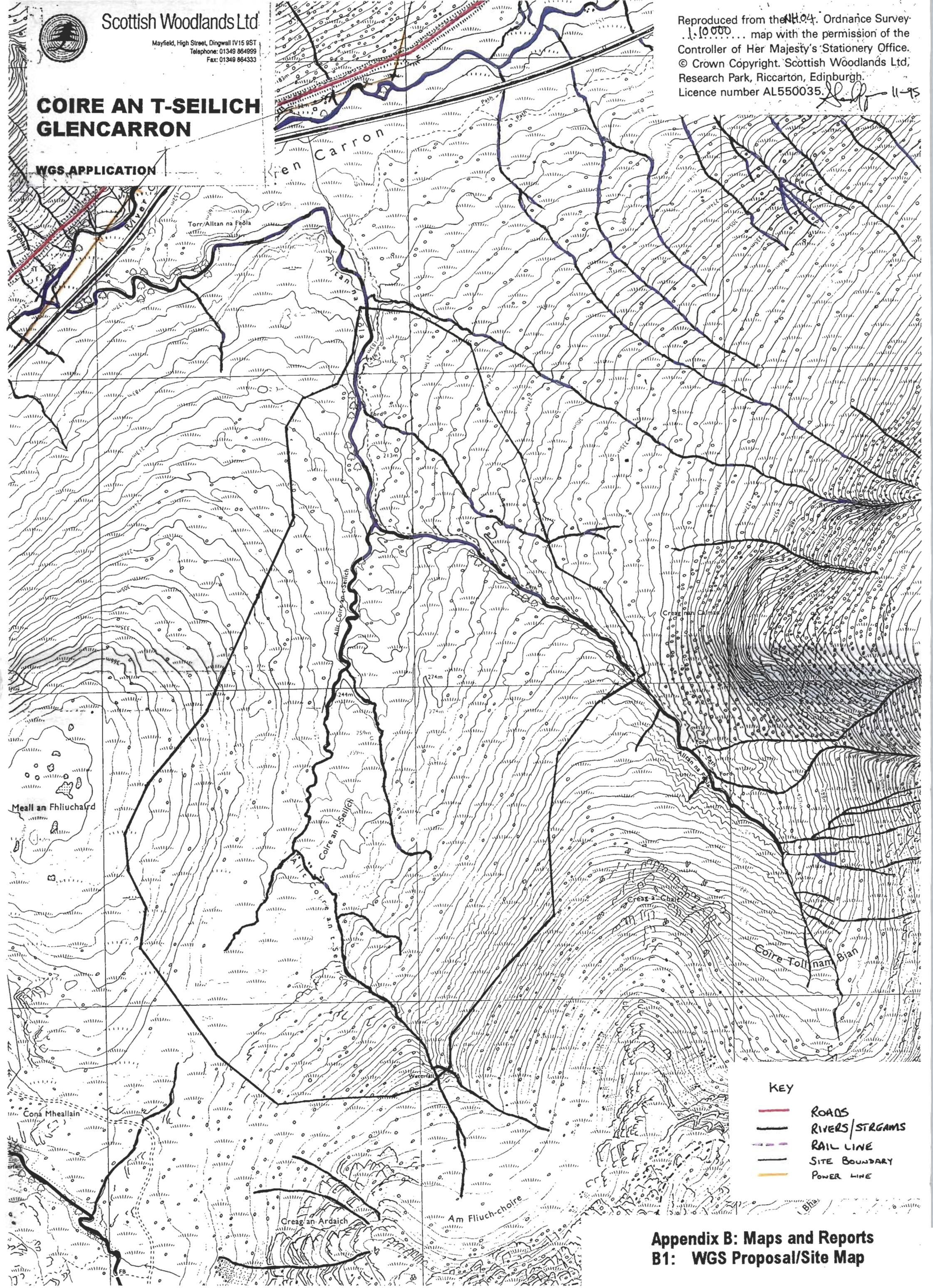
Mayfield, High Street, Dingwall IV15 9ST
Telephone: 01349 864999
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COIRE AN T-SEILICH GLENCARRON

WGS APPLICATION

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- KEY**
- ROADS
 - RIVERS/STRGAMS
 - RAIL LINE
 - SITE BOUNDARY
 - POWER LINE

**Appendix B: Maps and Reports
B1: WGS Proposal/Site Map**



CHEAG NAN CALHAN

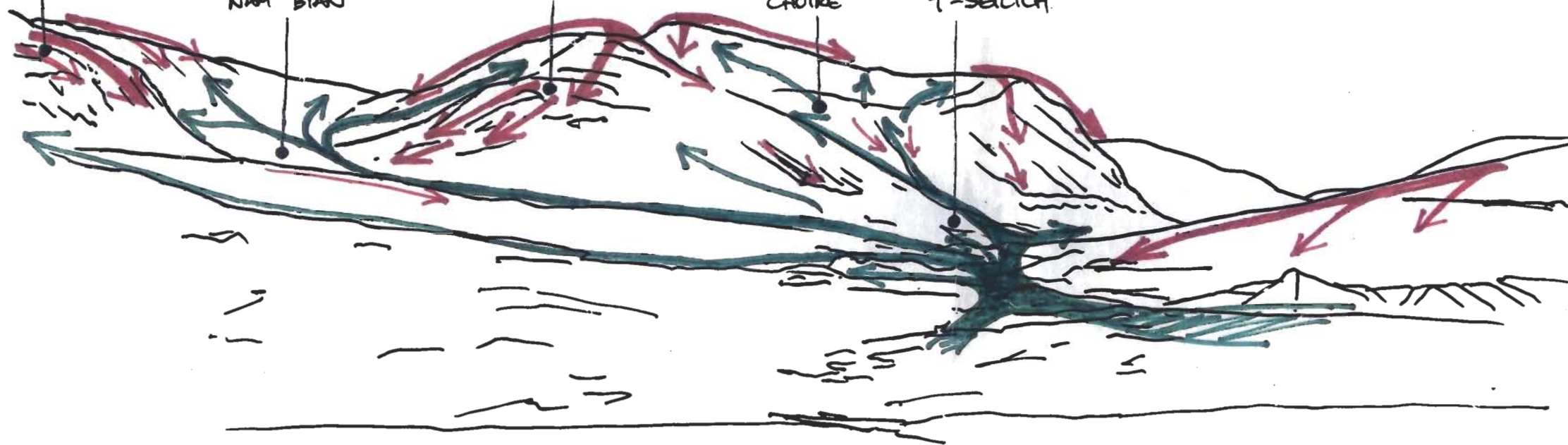
COIRE TOLL
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CREAG A CHAIT

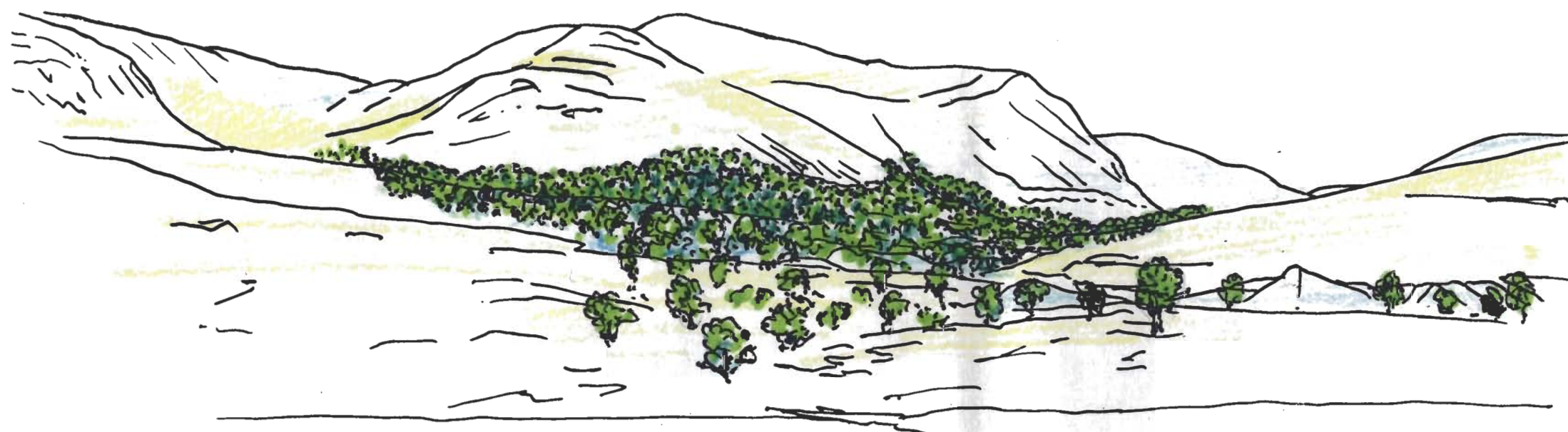
AM FLUCH-
CHOIRE

COIRE AN
T-SELICH

LOCATION PLAN



Appendix C: Landscape and Design
C5: Landform Appraisal



IMPRESSION OF FUTURE VIEW



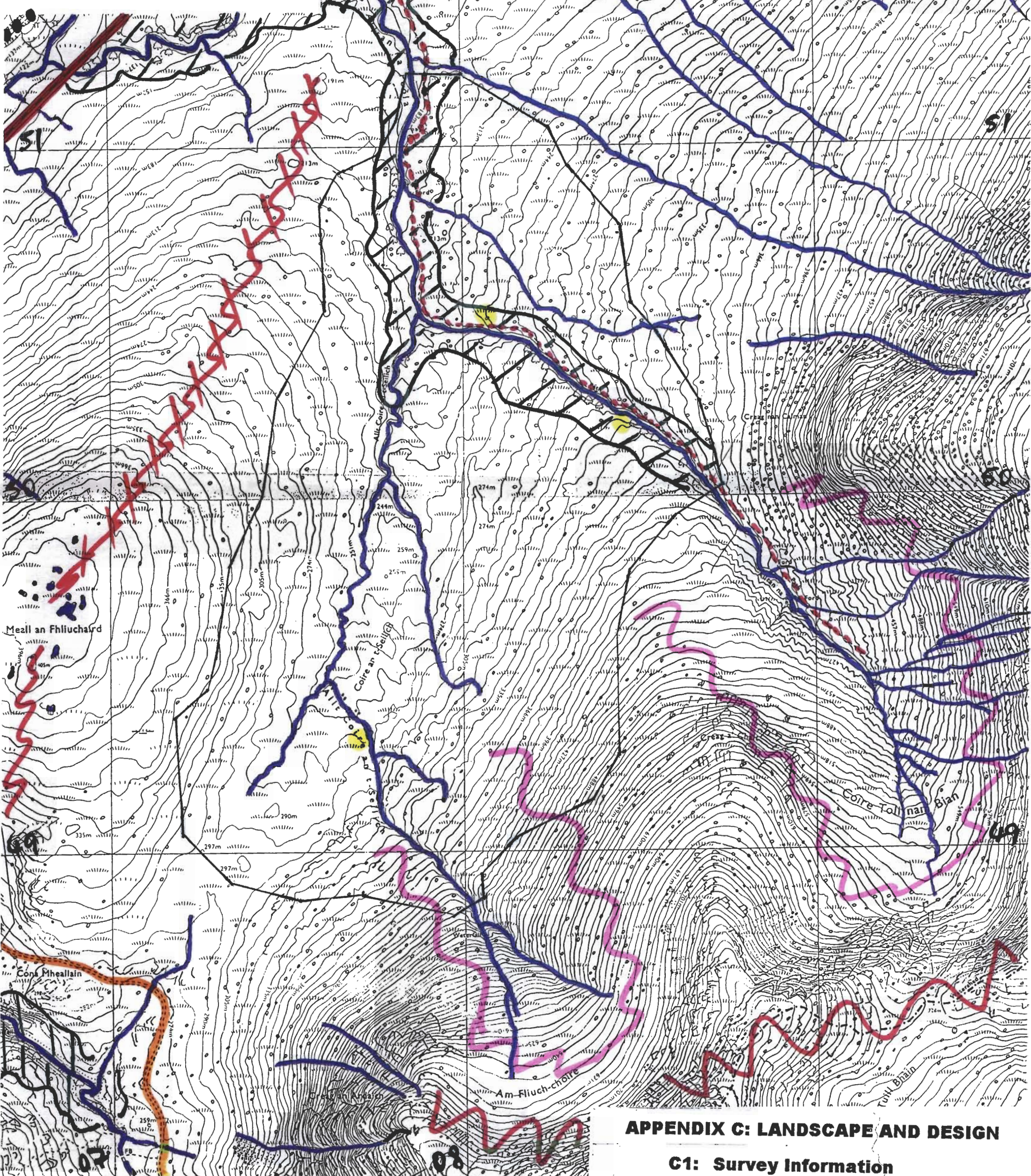
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COIRE AN T-SEILICH GLENCARRON

NEW NATIVE WOODLAND WGS APPLICATION



APPENDIX C: LANDSCAPE AND DESIGN

C1: Survey Information

Roinn na
Gaidhealtachd



Highland

Department of Libraries and Leisure Services
H. W. Wilkinson M.A., M.I.L.A.M.
Director of Libraries and Leisure Services

Highland Regional Council
Kinmylies Buildings
Leachkin Road
Inverness
IV3 6NN

Telephone 0463 703506
Facsimile 0463 711177

Please ask for John Wood

Our ref. EA1/JW/MKI

Direct Dial No. 703669

Your ref.

Date 12.9.95

R.G. Wilson
Branch Manager
Scottish Woodlands Ltd
Mayfield
High Street
Dingwall IV15 9ST.

Dear Mr. Wilson

GLENCARRON ESTATE - ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT.

Thank you for your enquiry. Our observations and comments are as follows:

No archaeological sites are recorded within the proposed area. However no systematic archaeological survey has been undertaken in this area and there is therefore a possibility that unrecorded sites may be damaged.

The Environmental Statement should therefore include a report by a qualified field archaeologist prepared to the attached brief. This will ensure any features of importance have been identified and suitable conservation measures included in the overall management plan. I can supply details of local archaeologists who would provide estimates for this, or could make the necessary arrangements if desired on a rechargeable basis. In either case the cost will be relatively small but the benefits to the archaeology and future management of the land would be considerable.

Yours faithfully

A.J.R. Wood
Regional Archaeologist.

ENCS.

Appendix D: Correspondence with Consultees

**D2: Highland Regional Council Department of Libraries and Leisure Services (Archaeology)
(Now Highland Council Department of Cultural and Leisure Services (Archaeology))**