

**Hospital** Obsdale 1384 (?)  
**Parish** Rosskeen  
**Council** Highland  
**Location** Obsdale is located on the east side of Alness  
**NGR** NH 66 69  
**NMRS site** NH66NE40  
**Site visits** 13<sup>th</sup> October 1999

### **History**

A site 'hospitale' which evidently lay between Helmsdale and Wick is mentioned in 1290. The context makes it clear that this was not the hospital at Helmsdale, and it is equally unlikely to refer to the hospital of St Magnus which lies well off the route between Helmsdale and Wick. The site is much more likely to be located on the coastal plain between these places. In this respect Obsdale, which has been identified with the land of Hospitill which appear in 1384, 1490 and in several post-Reformation sources, appears to most nearly fit the requirements. There is no positive evidence of a medieval hospital here. The only foundation connected with Obsdale which is on record is a chaplainry in Fortrose cathedral, mentioned 6 Nov 1547, 21 July 1570 and 10 May 1583 (Cowan and Easson 1976, 199).

### **Archaeology**

There are no records of any archaeological investigations of a medieval hospital within the area of Obsdale.

### **Current State**

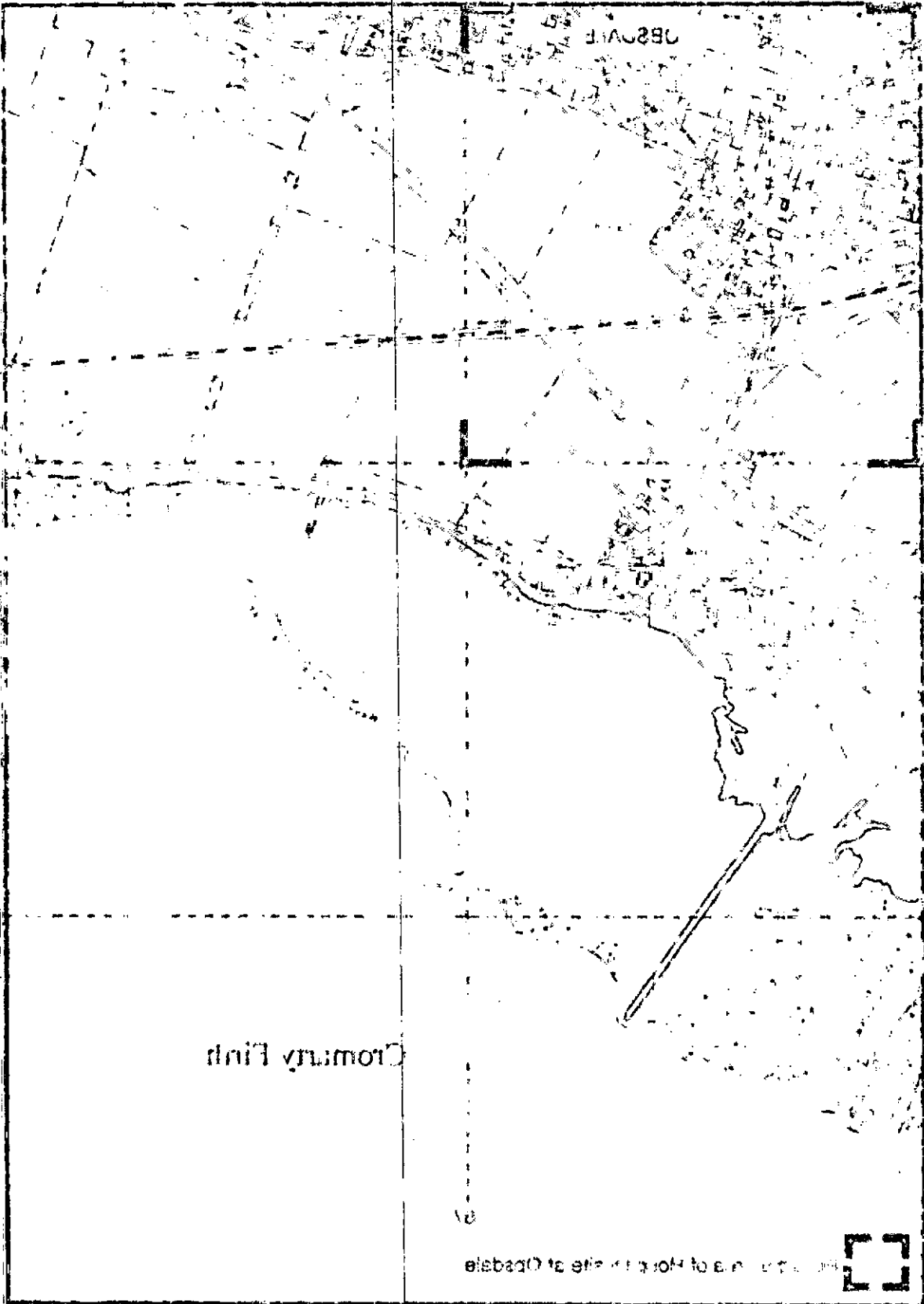
Obsdale at NH 665 699 is not between Wick and Helmsdale! The site is in fact on the east side of Alness. Here the names Obsdale, Obsdale Park and Obsdale Gardens occur. Obsdale is located on the west side of the Old Milnafda Road. A visit to the site at NH 665 699 revealed an area that is currently undergoing the transition from agricultural to residential use. Nothing was observed on the ground that could relate to medieval occupation.

### **Recommendations**

Further documentary research may reveal a more precise location for the site of the hospital mentioned in 1290.



Opdale Hospital  
Highland



Cromarty Link

The ... of ... at Opdale



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