

Site Visits and Findings

Carn Glas chambered cairn SMR no. NH63NW0015. Henshall ref. INV31
Scheduled monument

Site visited on 3/2/2005 by EK

Location Grid Ref. NH6493 3830

From Essich, S. of Inverness, take the minor road SSW to the edge of the conifer plantation on the W. side of the road. On the E. side, follow the fence beside the narrow plantation until a small lochan on the right. The cairns are in line on a low ridge behind the lochan. There are likely to be sheep in the field. The location gives unobstructed panoramic 360° views

Description

The site consists of a line of stone covered mounds in a north/south alignment. This well-defined cairn is in fact 3 separate chambered cairns joined by an infill of cairn material of small angular stones. Figure 6 shows the situation of the site, on a natural raised mound, while Figure 7 shows the extent of the cairn, looking north. Figures 8 & 9 show detail of the construction. At the north end is what appears to be the entrance, with 2 large rectangular upright stones standing on their long edges. At the S. end a hollow appears to show another entrance. Between the exposed angled stone covering there is grass cover. A few very old windswept juniper trees are growing out of the cairn. These and the stones of the cairn are well covered with a great variety of lichen species. The hollows and surrounding grassland are well covered with a large range of moss species and a few ferns. Patches of thick gorse are encroaching on the site, especially at the N. end. Ideally this should be removed, however it is providing shelter for sheep.

Recorded details of the cairn (mainly Henshall and Ritchie 2001)

This cairn is of the **Orkney-Cromarty type**.

In 1876 members of the Inverness Scientific Society and Field Club visited the site several times and recognised it as 'a long cairn with chambers, similar to those in Caithness'. On a subsequent visit by Society members in 1918, they recorded 'distinct indications of a burial, and a few small bones' were found. During the 2nd World War, emergency surveys were carried out by Gordon Childe and Angus Graham (Edinburgh University.), in anticipation of the site being damaged during military exercises.

The whole structure is approx. 116m in length and a maximum of 36m wide, with the height varying from 3.5m on the south to 2m on the north. The two end cairns are larger than the central one, and all have rectangular chambers. Figure 10 (Henshall and Ritchie) shows the layout of the cairns. A large slab at the N. end is thought to be a portal stone, indicating a passage from there into the chamber of the N. cairn. The axes of the chambers are at different orientations and all different from the main axis of the long cairn. This may indicate that the individual cairns and the material linking them may have been built at different times.

References

Henshall, A and Ritchie, 2001 "*The Chambered Cairns of the Central Highlands*"
Meldrum, Edward, 1977 "*Local History & Archaeology - Guidebook No. 1 – From Nairn to Loch Ness*"