Achnaluachrach,
Rogart, Sutherland

The site, with sheepfold, looking south

A Report on an Archaeological Walk-Over Survey Prepared for Scottish Woodlands Ltd

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1.0 Executive Summary

An archaeological desk-based study and subsequent walk-over survey of an area to the west of Achnaluachrach, near West Langwell, Rogart in East Sutherland, was undertaken in March 2010. The survey was required by Scottish Woodlands Ltd to establish the extent of archaeological remains, which would, in turn, determine the viability of planting trees.

The survey area comprises an area of land approximately 110 hectares of gently to moderately sloping hill ground, 0.5km west of the dwelling of Achnaluachrach. It is situated approximately 18km to the north west of the East Sutherland coastal village of Golspie, and is accessed from Achnaluachrach, via a track from the end of the public road (see Appendix I).

The survey resulted in the recording of 14 archaeological features, only one of which had previously been recorded on the Highland Council Archaeology Unit's Historic Environment Record (HER).

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Background

On behalf of the Sutherland Estate, Scottish Woodlands Ltd propose to plant trees to the west of Achnaluachrach, in Rogart. Prior to this, they commissioned a desk-based assessment and subsequent walk-over survey to record and survey any archaeological remains present in the area and assess the impact which the proposal may have on the archaeology.

2.2 Objectives

The objectives of this survey were to:

- Identify the cultural heritage baseline within the proposal area.

- Consider the potential impacts of the proposed development on the cultural heritage resource.

- Propose measures (where appropriate) to mitigate any predicted adverse impacts.

2.3 Methodology

A desk-based study was made of the Highland Council's HER, in conjunction with many specific and relevant references held locally in Sutherland, in order to identify any known and/or visible archaeology. Google Earth was also consulted prior to the walkover survey to get an overview of any likely archaeology to be encountered.

The subsequent walkover survey used the most recent Ordnance Survey maps and a hand-held Garmin GPS unit was used for GPS co-ordinates, and a pocket compass clinometer was used for 360^0 whole circle bearings and slope gradients.

2.4 Limitations

The majority of the site was found to be open, and vegetated only by low heather and grass, so limitations to finding archaeology on the ground were few. It has to be borne in mind, however, that archaeology may still lie concealed beneath the surface.

GPS co-ordinates are found to differ from Ordnance Survey National Grid co-ordinates generally by around 10m (can be up to 18m) to the SSW. This may pose local problems when relating recorded features to large-scale OS maps. GPS accuracy is wholly determined by the ability to access available satellites by line of sight. This ability can be reduced by proximity to hillsides and valley-sides and also by tree cover.

2.5 Setting

The area identified for this proposal covers approximately 110 hectares of hill slope and flatter moorland, to the west of Achnaluachrach. The majority of the site is covered with heather and grass, resting on peat with occasional outcrops of bedrock. It is divided into roughly equal parts by the track from Achnaluachrach extending west to the deserted croft of Achtomliny; the northern part slopes moderately to the south, whereas the remainder is more level and only

gently undulating. The eastern part has been improved and is vegetated mainly by grass, which has become latterly overgrown with reeds. The site has been used for cattle and sheep grazing and deer roam freely on the hillside.

The area is not now habited, but map evidence suggests that there has been a long-lived human habitation history in the wider area, from the Bronze/Iron Age to the Post-Clearance era, after which the site would have been used for sheep-farming, right up to the end of the 19th Century, since when cattle have shared the ground.

3.0 Results

3.1 Desk-Based Assessment

3.1.1 Historic Environment Record

Initial consultation of the Highland Council Archaeology Unit's Historic Environment Record (HER) showed that there are two recorded sites within the survey area, although there are hut circles associated with the Bronze/Iron Age and Medieval township dwellings and associated structures in the wider area. These two sites are also recorded on the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland's (RCAHMS) National Monument Record of Scotland (NMRS). The easternmost of these two sites has been mis-plotted and should actually fall outwith the survey area. The nearest Scheduled Ancient Monument is Tigh Creag Hut Circle, approximately 10km to the west.

The presence of these hut circles, together with the other recorded ancient monuments dating back as far as the Neolithic in the surrounding district, show that the area has a long lived and rich history. Early colonisers would have grown subsistence crops on the valley sides and flat valley floor. They would have hunted on the hillsides and fished in the rivers and lochs and it clearly shows that several communities would have been able to sustain an existence here.

3.1.2 Maps

The current Ordnance Survey map depicts a roofed building, a sheepfold and the track, as well as several boundary features within the survey area itself.

Investigation into maps of earlier origins, from William Roy's Military Survey of Scotland, of 1747-55 reveals a little more. No features are recorded by Roy in the survey area, although a settlement named Atumlary is depicted to the west.

Thomson (1823) depicts Achtomaliney and also Achnaluachrach, but the latter is shown on the SW bank of the River Brora, some 2km to the NE of its actual location today.

Burnett & Scott's map of 1853 shows two buildings at Achna-luachrach and also two at Achutomlinie, as well as a named burn bordering the SW of the survey area, Dhu-altan (Black Burn).

The Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 scale 1st Edition map of 1879, shows the improved area in the east half of the survey area, and a roofed, 'L'-shaped building with a track connecting it to Achnaluachrach to the east. It also shows a well on a small burn to the SW of the building. The 2nd edition map of 1907 has the same building unroofed and there is an addition of a circular sheepfold to its NW.

3.1.3 Documentary Evidence

The place name Achnaluachrach is Gaelic (Achadh na Luachrach) for 'Field with the Rushes' (www.scottish.parliament.uk/vli/language/gaelic/pdfs/placenamesA-B).

Being set high above the low straths of the parish, this area appeared to have formed sheiling ground for summer grazing and Adam (1972) has a footnote to a memorandum relative to the Sutherland Set of July 1806 (vol 1, p9) that '*Achinlucharich........possessed by Major Sutherland...and Achtomliny, if thrown together will be sufficient to grass above 300 cattle and*

will accommodate the tenants of the parishes of Golspy and Dornoch in Summer Grass for their cattle in lieu of their former Grasings which is thrown into the Sheep Tenements'

The tenants of Achnaluachrach in 1808 were James Douglas, Alexander Murray and George McKay and by 1815, the latter had been replaced by Revd George Urquhart.

The area was never included in one of the great sheep farms of the Sutherland Estate, formed after the notorious Sutherland Clearances. Instead, as noted above, it was let to small tenants and Achnaluachrach (as well as Achtomliny) was '*ready to be set as small Cattle Grazings'*, as reported in a letter from William Young to his employer, the Marchioness of Stafford, dated January 1st, 1813 (Adam, 1972, vol 2, p174). By 1819, there were only 2 tenants, both having 12 year leases to 1828: Revd George Urquhart and John MacKay (NLS, Acc 10853-264) and there were also two at Achtomliny: William Ross and William Macdonald, whose leases were to 1827.

Sutherland Militia lists (see Tables 1 & 2, below) show inhabitants at both Achnaluachrach, to the east of the survey area, and at Achtomliny, to the west, in 1809 and 1824.

Name	Occupation	Residence
James Douglas	Tenant	Achnaluachrach
George MacKay	Tenant	Achnaluachrach
William MacKay (dead)	Tenant	Achtomliny
John Murray	Tenant	Achnaluachrach
Peter Murray	Labourer	Achnaluachrach
David Ross	Labourer	Achtomliny
William Ross	Labourer	Achtomliny
Henry Sutherland	Tenant	Achnaluachrach

Table 1 – Extracted from Rogart Militia List, 1809
(www.countysutherland.co.uk)

Name	Occupation	Residence
William MacDonald	Tenant	Achtomlinie
John MacKay	Tailor	Achnaluachrach
William MacKay	Labourer	Achtomliny
John Murray	Tenant	Achnaluachrach
William Ross	Tenant	Achtomliny
John Sutherland	Labourer	Achnaluachrach

Table 2 – Extracted from Rogart Militia List, 1824
(NAS SC9/87/96/1)

3.1.4 Archaeological Timescales (from Am Baile)

Stone Age – 10,000 to 4,400 Years Ago
About 10,000 years ago, Scotland lay under a great sheet of ice. As the climate slowly warmed and the ice retreated, people were already living in the area, hunting, fishing and where possible gathering wild plants and fruits. The retreating glaciers left behind boulders and mud, which would soon be colonised by grasses and shrubs. Trees followed - hazel and birch at first, followed by oak and pine. A rich variety of animals were attracted and the seas and lochs had fish in plenty.

The retreat of the Ice marks the end of the Palaeolithic (Old Stone Age), whose primitive stone tools have been found in southern England. Evidence of Palaeolithic people and the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) is thought to have been lost through ice action in Scotland. This is characterised by shell middens - heaps of debris containing many seashells as well as stone and bone tools. Middens have been found in Skye, Argyll, and Wester Ross dating to around 8,000 years ago. A working site, where stone tools were being made, has now been found at Oliclett in Caithness.

From about 6,000 years ago people began to settle and farm the land. This change brings in the Neolithic (New Stone Age), and the creation of the first monuments. Great burial cairns were built overlooking the cultivated land in which the bones of tribal ancestors were collected together. Good examples of chambered cairns can be seen at Camster, Cnoc Freicadain, Yarrows (Caithness), Achcoillenaborgie (Strathnaver), Clava (Inverness), Vatten, Kensaleyre, Rudh' an Dunain and Kilmarie (Skye) and other places. Some of these are round and others are long, but they all have chambers inside to hold the ancestors. At the end of the Neolithic, about 4,400 years ago, great enclosures and stone circles were being built. The magnificent examples at Callanish in Lewis or the Ring of Brodgar in Orkney are well known. In Highland we have the sophisticated Clava Cairns near Inverness where burial cairns are surrounded by stone circles and attached to them by stone rays.

Bronze Age – 4,400 to 2,600 Years Ago
From about 4,400 years ago travelling metalworkers introduced ornaments and tools made of copper and then bronze (copper and tin mixture), bringing in the Bronze Age. A bronze-worker's open air workshop has been found on the Island of Eigg and a hoard of buried axe-heads has been found in Lochaber. It is an interesting fact that the nearest sources of copper and tin are many hundreds of miles away from the Highlands. The great monuments of the late Neolithic continue into the middle Bronze Age, around 3,500 years ago, after which there was a change to individual burials of important people only. These are often set in stone boxes or 'cists' and have pottery or other finds buried with them. Sometimes they are found inserted into earlier burial cairns.

Some buried evidence of large communal houses dating to the Neolithic has been found, but from the middle Bronze Age we start to get visible evidence in the landscape of round houses (the overgrown stone footings are known as 'hut circles'). These are often surrounded by groups of stone clearance heaps where land has been used for growing crops. Woodland that had grown up since the end of the Ice Age was now being felled in earnest. The climate had improved to a point that it was warmer than it is today. Many hut circles are in areas that are now too high and cold for cultivation.

Iron Age – 2,600 to 1,500 Years Ago
The weather seems to have worsened towards the end of the Bronze Age (about 2,700 years ago), and upland houses and fields became abandoned to the encroaching peat. At the same time we find the first clear evidence of conflict - hillforts with great ramparts to protect people and their animals from attack. Some hillfort ramparts in Highland, especially around the Moray Firth, have been set on fire and burned so fiercely that the stones have fused together. This is

known as vitrification and it can be seen at Craig Phadraig, Inverness, or Knockfarrel, Dingwall. It is not known why or how this was done. Recent experiments have failed to establish the answer.

At the same time, iron working was being introduced. This requires much higher temperatures to work than bronze but the result is much harder and more durable. Hut circles continue through the Iron Age, and increasingly we find evidence of field boundary walls as well as groups of clearance heaps.

The Roman Empire never conquered the Highlands but nevertheless there was a sophisticated local culture here which traded with the Romans. Caithness is the heartland of the broch, a uniquely Scottish type of round stone tower with hollow walls dating from about 200 BC to 200 AD. Some of these have been excavated and have produced traded Roman finds. The finest brochs to visit in Highland are in Glenelg. At Rubh an Dunain on Skye, there is a broch-like stone wall defending a rocky headland, and a variety of other types of Iron Age fort, many of them called duns, are found. Often these make use of natural defensive features such as sea-cliffs.

Duns and brochs were not just for defence. They also indicated the status of the chief who lived there. Crannogs for example would have had limited defensive potential in an age of boat transport as they were houses built on artificial islands, in lochs. Many of these local centres of power seem to have continued in use well into the medieval period - there are references to crannogs still being occupied in the 16th Century.

Another curious type of site associated with the Iron Age is the souterrain. This is a curved underground tunnel built of stone slabs. There are good examples in Skye, Sutherland, and at Easter Raitts in Badenoch. We do not know what they were built for originally but later they seem to have been used for storage and for hiding from enemies. The entrances to souterrains often seem to lead from the inside of houses.

From the 4th Century AD the people of northern Scotland were being referred to by Roman writers as 'Picti' - painted people. These people produced characteristic symbols which are found carved on stone and also on finds of jewellery from the period. Pictish stones are found all over the Highlands, but there is a concentration in the east. Some of the great Pictish carved cross-slabs such as those in Easter Ross are magnificent works of art dating to the 8th - 10th Centuries AD, with influences from Northumbria, Ireland, and Scandinavia. These combine Pictish and Christian symbolism.

The Medieval Highlands - 1,500 to 500 Years Ago
Christianity was introduced into the area from Ireland in the latter half of the 6th Century AD. There are many sites associated with early Christian activity, many of them including the place name elements Cille or Kil and Annat. St Maelrubha founded a monastery at Applecross in 673 AD. His grave is supposed to be marked by the Red Priest's stone in Strathnaver, although this is disputed. The early Tarbat monastery at Portmahomack in Easter Ross has been excavated over the last few years by York University, who have found evidence of a range of craft activities including making parchment for manuscripts.

Viking raids began at the end of the 8th Century, and it seems likely that Tarbat was burned down. The Vikings arrived from Norway by way of Shetland and Orkney, and they soon began to settle many coastal areas. Caithness, the coastal areas of Sutherland and Wester Ross, and the Hebrides all came under Norse control as can be seen from many surviving place names. The Hebrides transferred from the Kingdom of Norway to the Kingdom of Scotland after the battle of Largs in 1266, but Orkney and Shetland did not become part of Scotland for another 200 years. Even today the Caithness dialect shows Scandinavian influences. Dingwall was the Thing-vollr, the local Norse parliament, as survives today in the Isle of Man's Tynwald.

The Highlands lay on the great trading seaway from Scandinavia to Ireland, France and Spain, and at Smoo Cave (Sutherland) boat fittings have been found where ships have put in to refit before or after rounding Cape Wrath. Today however there are few Norse archaeological sites that can be visited in Highland. In Caithness there are the remains of extensive settlements hidden beneath sand dunes, and Old St Peter's Church in Thurso has a runic stone built into its wall. Near Thurso can be seen the remains of the Castle of the Norse Bishops at Scrabster and near Wick is the square stone tower of the Castle of Auld Wick. Many local chiefs seem to have continued to occupy Iron Age forts.

The later middle ages, from about 1200 to about 1550 AD, were dominated by the attempts of the kings of Scotland to establish their power over the highlands, including the Earldom of Orkney in Caithness and Sutherland, and the Lordship of the Isles in the west. The Lords of the Isles were the successors to the largely independent kingdom of Man and the Isles. In an attempt to divide and rule, chief was set against chief. The insecurity of the times encouraged the growth of the clan system. There are still many castles surviving from this period built by clan chiefs: on Skye alone there are Duntulm, Dunvegan, Brochel, Knock, Dun Sgathaich and Castle Maol. Anglo-Norman lords such as the De Morays in Sutherland and the St Clairs (Sinclairs) in Caithness were granted estates in the area, and they too established castles. Alexander Stewart, the 'Wolf of Badenoch' had his at Ruthven, where fragments of wall can still be seen beneath the 18th Century barracks. Towns such as Inverness were also established as centres of trade and royal power. These burghs were however confined to the east, around the Moray Firth - there do not seem to have been any foundations in the west.

King James IV repeatedly visited the shrine of St Duthac at Tain in the early 16th century, combining pilgrimage with political expediency. Medieval kings could made use of church organisation to help them establish control in their territories. The bishopric of Ross was established by the 12th Century with its centre initially in Rosemarkie, then later at Fortrose Cathedral.

However in much of the Highlands it was also a time of flourishing Gaelic culture and learning, with extensive links to Ireland, the Isle of Man, and continental Europe. Medical science, music, poetry and art all received patronage from clan chiefs. St Columba's Isle, near Skeabost on Skye was the cathedral of the Bishops of Sodor (i.e. Sudreyar, the Norse Southern Isles) and Man until they moved to Iona in 1499.

Apart from castles and the remains of a few churches, there is little later medieval archaeology that can be seen today. Most houses seem to have been built using wood, peat, and thatch and most household items were also made of organic materials. Everything was recycled. However it seems very likely that many remains of deserted villages dating to the 18th and 19th Centuries are sitting on top of earlier houses and fields: once you have cleared the stones from the land in the Highlands, why move unless you have to?

The 'Post-Medieval' Period - 500 Years Ago to Modern Times

In the 17th Century, the Covenanter Wars left battle sites at Auldearn and Carbisdale, and Montrose was imprisoned after his defeat at Ardvreck Castle in Sutherland. Oliver Cromwell established forts to control the Great Glen, including one at Inverness, now almost disappeared except for one corner of the rampart still visible in Lotland Street near the harbour. Cattle droving began to develop as a way of life - Highlanders could raise cattle and sell them on to drovers who took them to markets in central and southern Scotland and on to England. In the early - mid 19th Century many drovers and cattlemen emigrated to become the cowboys of the American West.

In 1688, King James VII (II of England) was ejected by his daughter Mary and son in law (and cousin) William Prince of Orange. There followed a series of uprisings to restore James and his heirs, whose supporters were known as Jacobites (Latin Jacobus - James). Following the rising

of 1715, the British Government began a national mapping programme, the Ordnance Survey, and also a programme of military road building to control the Highlands. These roads generally followed droving routes and were to form the basis of the modern road network. Barracks were built at Ruthven in Badenoch and Bernera in Glenelg, and major new Forts were built at Fort William, Fort Augustus, and near Inverness at Fort George at Ardersier. This last is still in active military use, although also open to the public. In 1745 the Jacobite army under James's son Bonnie Prince Charlie used the military road over the Corrieyairack Pass on its way south, and finally assembled at Ruthven Barracks to disband after the defeat at Culloden. Not all Highlanders supported the Jacobites, but all suffered the consequences after the '45, as the British Government made serious attempts to destroy the local culture. The lands of Jacobite clan chiefs were confiscated and given to government supporters or sold.

However, for over two hundred years successive kings and governments had already been encouraging Highland chiefs to see themselves as landlords rather than leaders of men. Many of them were now living beyond their means and looking for increased income to support their lifestyles. As the Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions took off in England and southern Scotland, tenants found themselves evicted to make way for large-scale commercial sheep farming to supply the woollen industry and the new urban markets. Estate owners meanwhile built new houses and monuments. Around the Cromarty Firth, a grain trade developed and girnals (storehouses) were built by the shore like that at Foulis. Attempts to introduce new employment meant the establishment of fishing stations like Ullapool and Pultenytown (Wick), as well as engineering and mining enterprises at Brora. The slate quarries at Ballachulish in Lochaber supplied much of Scotland with roofing, while Caithness flagstones came to pave the streets of towns and cities around the Empire. However for many people there was terrible hardship, especially after a series of famines in the 1840s, and many emigrated, leaving their villages deserted.

At the same time, the mid 19th Century saw the growth of a romantic Highland image promoted by Sir Walter Scott and others, and so admired by Queen Victoria. It also saw a rapid decline in the sheep prices after the end of the Napoleonic War. These both encouraged the development of shooting and fishing estates in the highlands where the wealthy could 'get away from it all' among the hills and moors. Some of these survive, but in other cases they have given way to other forms of land management. They have left shooting butts and lodges and other features in the landscape. Railways encouraged the growth of tourism, and Strathpeffer developed as a spa village where people arrived to take the waters.

3.2 Field Survey

3.2.1 Field Report Style

This report contains information on any existing recorded archaeology from a comprehensive desk-based assessment. It also details any archaeological remains discovered during the field survey, which may be affected by the proposed operations, with *significant* new discoveries highlighted in *italics*.

Included at the start of each feature is:

First Line
- Feature Number, unique to this report
- Feature Type
- Site Name
- Possible Age or Period

Second Line
- Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference
- GPS Reading Accuracy in metres
- Highland Council HER Reference Number

Third Line
- Whether Feature Appears on Ordnance Survey Map

3.2.2 Field Results

The site was visited on March 21st, 2010.   The weather was calm, with watery sunshine, although brighter weather appeared later from the East.

In total, there were 14 archaeological features recorded within the site boundary, only one of which had been previously recorded. They are all plotted on the Feature Location Map of Appendix III.

Feature 1. Sheep Shearing Shelter. Achnaluachrach. 20th Century.
Grid Reference: 267509 910106 (7m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
On Current OS map.

NW corner of old collapsed sheep shearing shelter, with stone base, timber lined corrugated iron walls and roof (Plate 1). The base measures 9m x 6m. The roof and walls have been dislodged by wind and have partially collapsed. The stone base stands 0.7m high on its south side and is flush with ground surface level on its north side. The roof timbers remain in excellent condition.

There is some graffiti on the south inside wooden wall, one of which reads 'AMM 1976'. The interior floor is concrete, with 10cm squares lined on it for drainage and dish channels in between each slab which are 1m wide and extend 3.5m from the front side. The rear (north) section is made of smooth concrete. There are two sets of stone built steps, each comprising three risers, extending from the south frontage of the base, from the interior floor level down to ground surface level.

Wooden fencing associated with, and surrounding the sheep shearing shelter is also partially collapsed.

Feature 2. Sheepfold (Circular). Achnaluachrach. Late 19th Century.
Grid Reference: 267264 910086 (6m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
On 2nd Edition OS Map.

An almost perfectly preserved, 11m internal diameter, circular sheepfold (Plate 2) is set on a slight shelf covered in reeds and grass. Its walls stand to 1.6m high and only a 2m stretch on its north arc is missing its coping stones. Its lintelled opening is 1.1m high and 0.9m wide and faces to 165°. Its walls are 1m thick at its base, tapering to 0.5m thick at its top.

Feature 3. Building. Achnaluachrach. Post-Clearance.
Grid Reference: 267294 910060 (6m). HER Reference: MHG 28445.
On all OS Editions.

The eastern corner of the well preserved stone wall footing remains of a probable shepherd's house (Plate 3) is situated to the SE of the sheepfold of Feature 2 (above). It comprises robust boulders, especially in its gables, measuring up to 0.7m in size and there are only a maximum of two courses remaining. The gables stand 0.7m high and are 1m thick and the side walls stand only 0.5m high and are 0.7m thick. The main building measures 26m x 4m and is divided into two compartments, both with doorways on the SE frontage. On the NW back wall at its NE end, a 3m wide outshot extends 6m from the main building line, and this is less prominent than the main building.

The interior of the main building is reedy and the walls are moss covered. Below the ruined building is a gentle grassy slope and above it towards the sheepfold of the ground is covered in reeds.

The older editions of OS maps show this building firstly as roofed, then unroofed, but the current OS map incorrectly depicts a ruined building trending NNW-SSE at this location.

Feature 4. Building. Achnaluachrach. Post-Clearance?
Grid Reference: 266648 910473 (6m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
Not on map.

An unusual small building is tucked below a steep rocky crag (Plate 4). The substantial, crudely built stone wall remains measure 6m x 3m, with its longer sides orientated 056°. It has a 0.5m wide entrance situated 1m from its SW front corner. The large boulder wall footings, probably hewn from the crags directly above, stand of 1m high and are 0.7m thick. The back wall at the base of the outcrop has partially collapsed into the interior of the building.

The purpose of this building remains a mystery. It is possible that it is a precursor to the substantial building of Feature 3 (above) for a shepherd to temporarily stay in while watching over his flock. Another possible explanation is that it is associated with quarrying activities on the rock outcrops above, which may have been used as the supply for the construction of the sheepfold of Feature 2 (above).   It may be that it was crude accommodation for a quarrier or may have been used just for storage.

Feature 5. Hut Circle. Achnaluachrach. Bronze/Iron Age.
Grid Reference: 266566 910286 (5m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
Not on map.

Old degraded remains of a hut circle (Plate 5), set on a small shelf with steeper ground below and above. The surrounding area is mostly grassy with some scrubby heather and the interior is

just grass. The structure is actually quite oval, measuring 9m x 7m (trending 110°) and its 2m wide entrance is to 126°. The walls on its upside are spread to 3m and they stand 0.5m high and there is occasional stone visible in its construction. The side and lower walls are spread to 2m wide and stand only 0.3m high.

Attached to its SW side is a later, rectangular annexe, using the SW arc of the circle as its back wall (Plate 6). The footings of the annexe are only 0.3m high, are spread to 0.7m wide and are covered with short grass and moss, as is its interior. The annexe is 4m wide and extends 6m out from the hut circle. There is a 0.6m wide entrance on its SE wall.

Feature 6. Borrow Pit. Achnaluachrach. 20th Century.
Grid Reference: 266555 910269 (5m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
Not on map.

Below and to the south of the hut circle is a large horseshoe-shaped borrow pit, measuring 16m x 9m. It has a boulder lip around it and a spring in a hollow in its centre. It opens to 215° and was probably excavated for the construction of the track from Achnaluachrach to Achtomlinie.

Feature 7. Hut Circle. Achnaluachrach. Bronze/Iron Age.
Grid Reference: 266535 910367 (6m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
Not on map.

Another hut circle overlooks the hut circle of Feature 5 (above) and is set on a commanding small shelf, to the west of a small knoll and 30m to the east of a small burn (Plate 7). Its internal diameter is 10m and it has a 1m wide entrance on its downhill side to 170°. Its back wall is 4m wide and 0.4m high, whereas its side and front walls are only 2m thick and 0.3m high. Its interior is grassy, as is its front and side walls, but its back wall is covered in heather.

Feature 8. Pits (x2). Achnaluachrach. Unknown.
Grid Reference: 266939 909996 (5m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
Not on map.

Two sub-rectangular pits, 0.3m deep have been dug into the top of a small grassy knoll with some short heather. The SW pit is 1m square and the other is 2m square (Plate 8); they are separated by 1.5m. There is no sign of any civilisation close to here for them to be potato pits, so their use remains a mystery.

Feature 9. Enclosure. Achnaluachrach. Pre-Clearance?
Grid Reference: 267073 910055 (5m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
Not on map.

The NW curving corner of a moss and grass covered enclosure wall with occasional large stone, stands to a maximum of 0.5m high and is 1-2m wide (Plate 9). The grass covered interior is slightly raised compared to the area outwith the extensive enclosure.

Feature 10. Building/Sheiling. Achnaluachrach. Pre-Clearance?
Grid Reference: 267104 910045 (5m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
Not on map.

Within the enclosure of Feature 9 (above), there are faint footings of several features, one of

which can be identified as a 6.5m x 4m building (Plate 10). Its low turf and occasional stone walls are less than 0.3m high and are spread to 1.5m. The side walls trend 096° and there is a 0.5m wide entrance in its south facing wall.

Feature 11. Building/Sheiling. Achnaluachrach. Pre-Clearance?
Grid Reference: 267114 910033 (4m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
Not on map.

5m from the SE corner of Feature 10 (above) is the NW arc of a possible hut circle or sub-rounded building. It is very difficult to determine exactly what the structure is, due to the scant remains which are left. The structure is slightly oval, measuring 7m x 6m and trends east to west, with a level interior. The back wall is the most prominent, being 0.4m high and 2m wide; all other walls are less substantial. There is only one stone visible in the construction, on its south wall. There is a possible entrance in the east.

There are many other lumps and bumps within this enclosure and these can only be realistically properly identified through excavation.

Feature 12. Stone & Turf Dyke. Achnaluachrach. Pre-Clearance?
Grid Reference: 267031 909955 (5m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
Not on map.

A 0.7m high stone and turf dyke, spread to 2m wide, trends NE across the hill from here to the bottom of the enclosure of Feature 11 (above) and it curves to the SW, marked by reeds.

Feature 13. Sheep Dip. Achnaluachrach. 20th Century.
Grid Reference: 267166 909978 (5m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
On Current OS Map.

A relatively modern sheep dipping station (Plate 11) is set between two small burns. A concrete dipping run is set between two platforms; the steps of the run are at its western end. The dip is 1.2m deep and 3m long and the whole structure is surrounded by partially collapsed timber fencework.

Feature 14. Sheilings (x4). Achnaluachrach. Pre-Clearance.
Grid Reference: 267178 909968 (5m). HER Reference: Not on HER.
Not on map.

Set on the east bank of a small burn are the remains of four possible sheilings, all set in a rough N-S line (Plate 12). They are a maximum 4m long and 2m wide, are separated by 1m, with the lower two being joined together. The grass mounded walls are 0.3m high and are spread to a maximum of 1m. The eastern edge of the burn bank has been supported by stonework to form a firm edge.

4.0 Conclusions

The aim of this walk-over survey was to determine whether there was any archaeology within the survey area and to record and survey anything discovered in detail.

This aim was achieved, with 14 sites being recorded during the current survey, only one of which had been previously recorded.

Whilst nothing present, previously recorded or newly discovered during the survey, could be regarded as being of National or Regional significance as per National Policy Planning Guideline 5, much of the of the recorded archaeology is regarded as being of significant local importance.

5.0 Recommendations

Given the local importance of the archaeology discovered during this survey, there should be a 10m no planting buffer zone around all of the archaeology.

In the south east of the survey area, there should be no planting zone within the enclosures marked in black on the Feature Location Map of Appendix III. This will ensure the preservation of the buildings/structures contained within.

In the west of the survey area, there should be a through connection from the track to the two hut circles (Features 5 and 7) and a similar no-planting zone should connect the track with sheepfold and building Features 2 and 3.

Should any archaeological features be discovered during the any planting operations, the Highland Council's Archaeology Unit should be contacted immediately.

In summary:

- **10m no-planting buffer zone around all of the archaeology**

- **No-planting zone within the enclosures of Feature 9**

- **No-planting zone from the track to hut circles of Features 5 & 7**

- **No-planting zone from the track to sheepfold and building of Features 2 & 3**

- **Be mindful of known archaeology outwith survey area during any planting operations**

- **In the event of any discovery of archaeological remains, *immediate* contact must be made with Highland Council's Archaeology Unit for advice**

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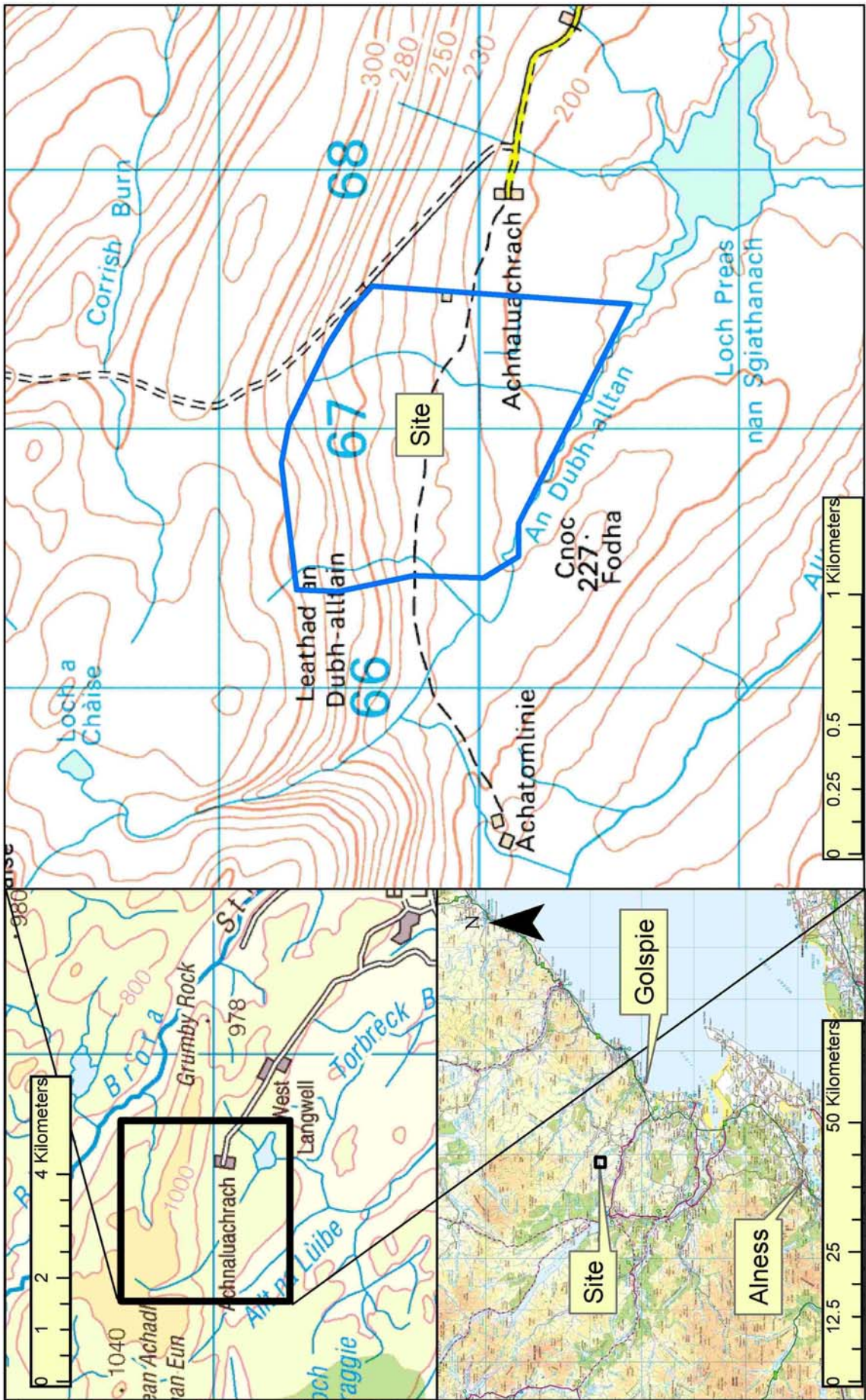Scottish Parliament website: www.scottish.parliament.uk

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Appendices

Appendix I – Site Location Map

Site Location Map

Appendix II – Summary Table of Features

Feature No	Type	Easting	Northing	Age	HER No
1	Sheep Shearing Shelter	267509	910106	20th Century	-
2	Sheepfold (Circular)	267264	910086	Post-Clearance	-
3	Building	267294	910060	Post-Clearance	MHG 28445
4	Building	266648	910473	Post-Clearance?	-
5	Hut Circle	266566	910286	Bronze/Iron Age	-
6	Borrow Pit	266555	910269	20th Century	-
7	Hut Circle	266535	910367	Bronze/Iron Age	-
8	Pits (x2)	266939	909996	Unknown	-
9	Enclosure	267073	910055	Pre-Clearance?	-
10	Building/Sheiling	267104	910045	Pre-Clearance?	-
11	Building/Sheiling	267114	910033	Pre-Clearance?	-
12	Stone & Turf Dyke	267031	909955	Pre-Clearance?	-
13	Sheep Dip	267166	909978	20th Century	-
14	Sheilings (x4)	267178	909968	Pre-Clearance	-

(see details in section 3.2 - Field Survey)

Appendix III – Feature Location Map
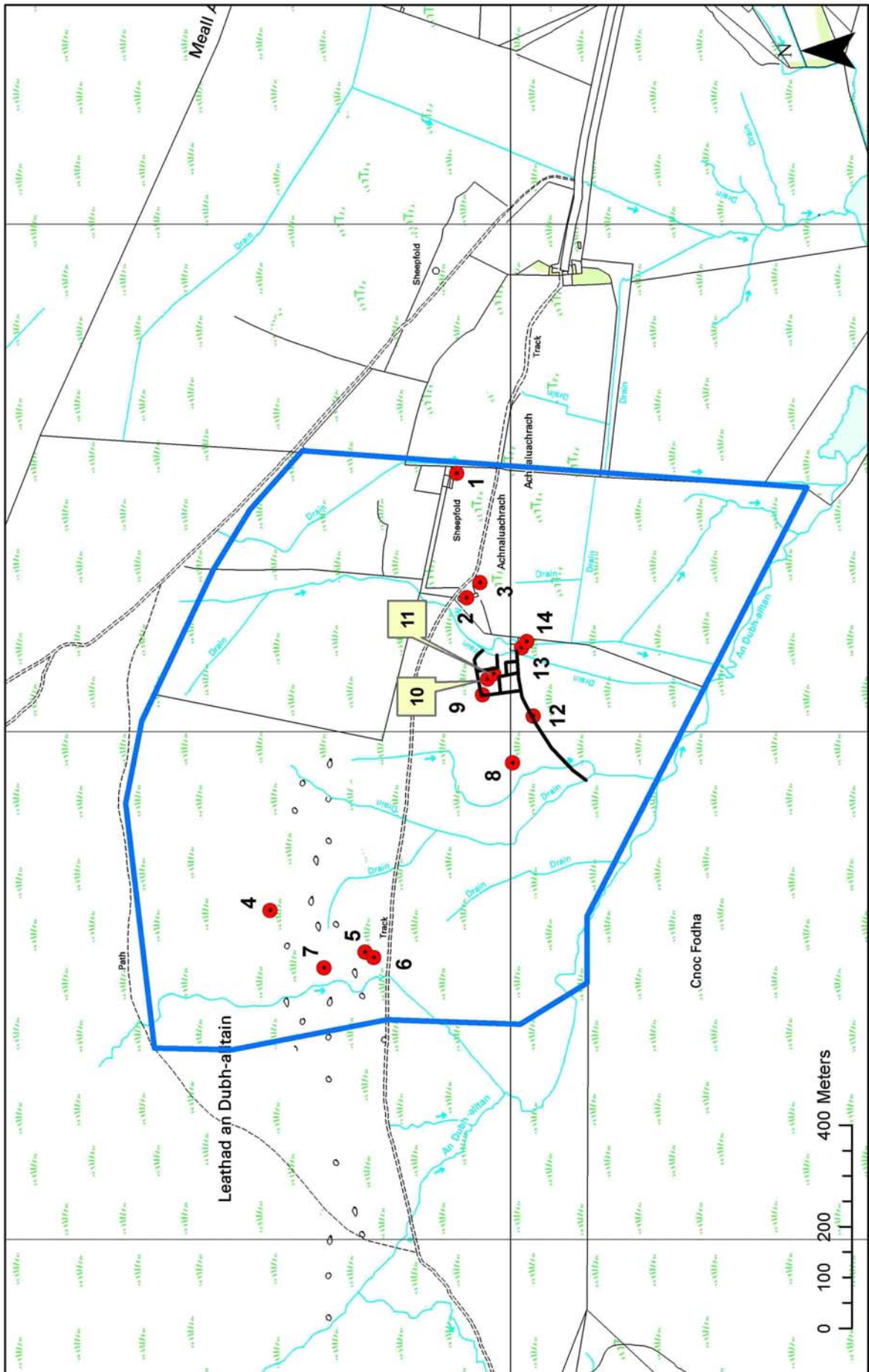
Feature Location Map

Appendix IV – Plates

*Note: the walking pole used as a scale
in the following plates is 1.2m long.*

Plate 1: Feature 1 – Collapsed sheep shearing shelter (from S).

Plate 2: Feature 2 – circular sheepfold (from S).

Plate 3: Feature 3 – building with outshot (not visible) (from E).

Plate 4: Feature 4 – crude building at base of rocky crags (from S).

Plate 5: Feature 5 – hut circle (from E).

Plate 6: Feature 5 – annexe attached to SW side of hut circle (from SW).

Plate 7: Feature 7 – hut circle (from E).

Plate 8: Feature 8 – the NE of the 2 pits (from NW).

Plate 9: Feature 9 – enclosure dyke – note lumps and bumps inside (from W).

Plate 10: Feature 10 – sub-rectangular building within enclosure (from W).

Plate 11: Feature 13 – sheep dipping station (from E).

Plate 12: Feature 14 – line of sheilings on E bank of burn (from N).