

**Report of Archaeological
Desktop & Walkover Survey
Acheilidh Common Grazings,
Rogart, Highland.**

Centred NC 633/020



Client: McGlade Forestry

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September 2012**

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Cover: View North from Site 5.

Non-Technical Summary

Stuart Farrell was commissioned by McGlade Forestry in late August 2012 to undertake an archaeological desktop and walkover survey for an area of proposed forestry at Acheilidh Common Grazings, Rogart, Highland.

Work revealed two unrecorded archaeological sites of a dyke with associated clearance cairns and a group of clearance cairns and lynchet of a field system.

A number of recommendations have been made in relation to the proposed scheme.

1. Introduction

This report is for an archaeological desktop and walkover survey conducted for McGlade Forestry for an area of proposed forestry at Acheilidh Common Grazings, Rogart, Highland.

The walkover survey was conducted on the 11th September 2012.

2. Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following for their help during the work:

- Mr. John McGlade of McGlade Forestry;
- Staff of the Highland Council Archives, Inverness.

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Figure 1 – Site Location. 1:25,000
 © McGlade Forestry.

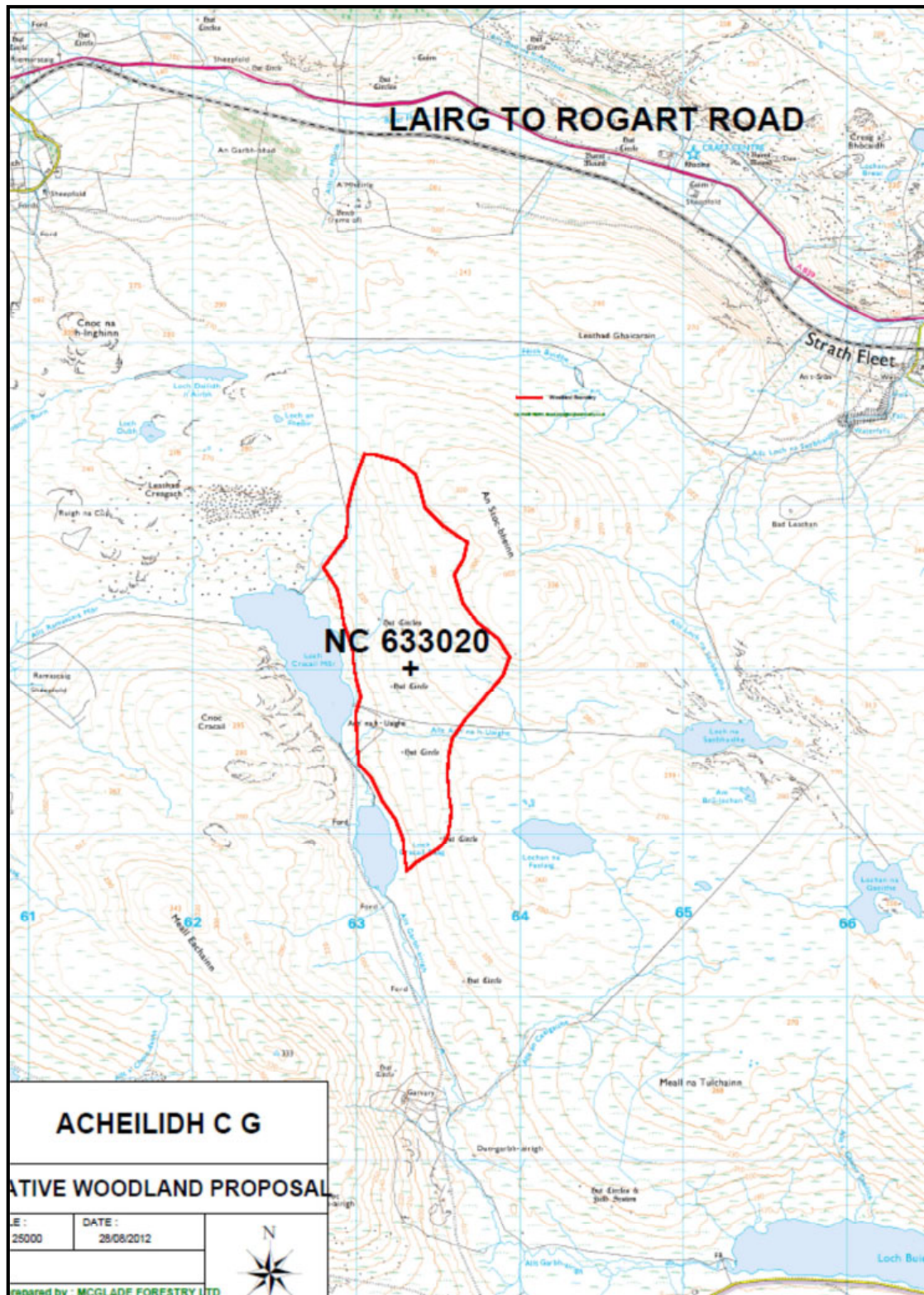


Figure 2 – Site Location 1:10,000 (A3).
 © McGlade Forestry



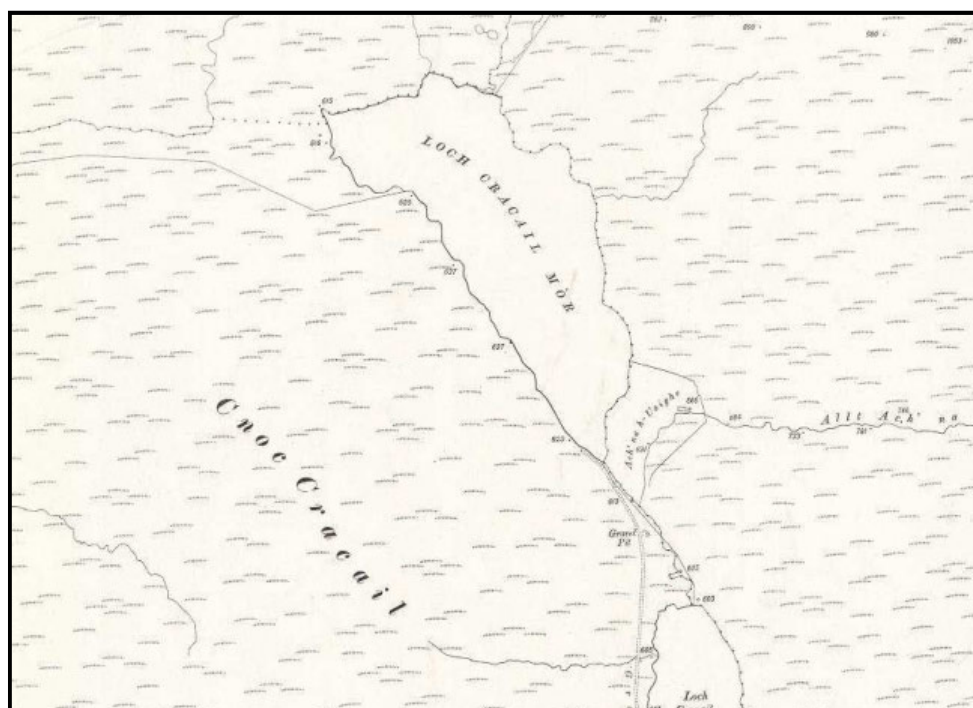
Figure 3 – 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1879.

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Figure 4 – 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1907.

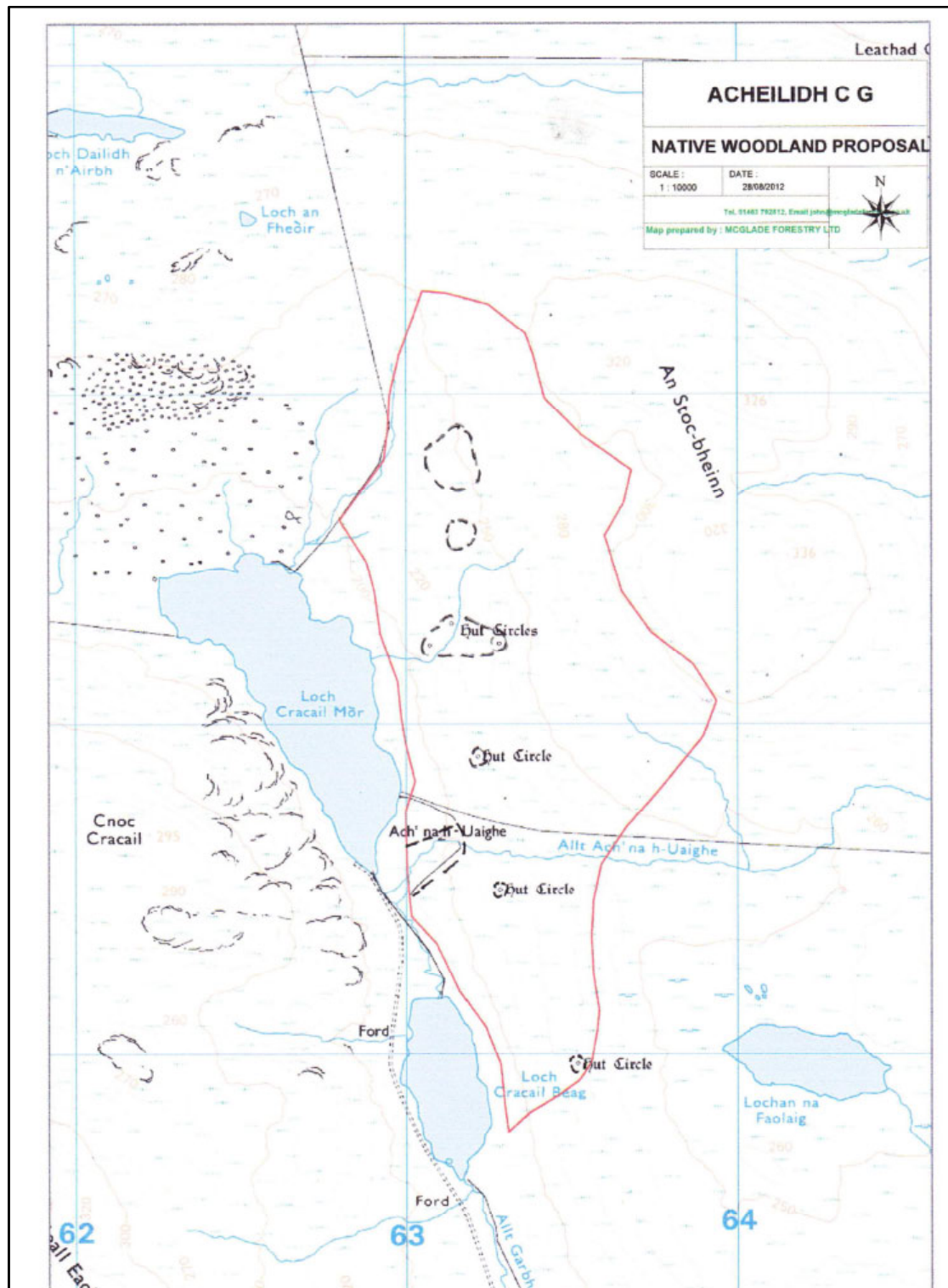
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Figure 6 – Proposed Areas of Exclusion for Archaeological Sites 1:10,000 (A3).
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3. Objectives

To conduct a desktop and walkover survey to record any archaeological features to the area of proposed forestry. This survey to follow those guidelines as proposed by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA, 1999); and those of the Forestry Commission (FC, 2011).

4. Archaeological Survey

Desktop Results

A desktop survey was conducted using the following sources:

- Highland Council Historic Environment Records;
- National Monuments Record of Scotland, Edinburgh;
- National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh (Maps);
- Highland Council Archives.

The area of proposed forestry is of a total of 149 hectares on a predominantly southwest facing slope situated above Loch Cracail Mor and Loch Cracail Beg with areas of peat and heather with the ground rising to c300m above sea-level rising to the northeast corner of the scheme.

Map coverage was limited to the area of interest, as the 1st edition OS of 1879 was almost the same as the 2nd edition of 1907 and little survey work has been carried out in detail in the 20th century, with the next edition being 1971. Early historical maps of the area do not provide enough detail for the area of forestry, Roy's Military Map does not even depict Loch Cracail Mor or Loch Cracail Beag.

A search of Aerial photographs for the area of proposed forestry held in the Highland Council Archives noted that the area had very limited coverage and what was available was limited as being slightly high for most of the sites of interest. A similar search made in the RCAHMS, Edinburgh revealed no coverage for 1960's or 1970's by Ordnance Survey with later flight of 1988 being too high.

No archaeological survey work has previously been conducted to the proposed area of forestry except that done by the Ordnance Survey, with last site visits being made in 1980.

The following archaeological sites were to be found in or close to the proposed forestry area:

HER – Highland Council Historic Environment Record

NMRS - National Monuments Record of Scotland

N/a – not available

Recommendations are given after each site.

1 – An Stoc-Bheinn

HER – MHG 12774, 32643, 32644, 38992

NMRS – NC60SW 5

Grid Ref: NC 6314/0274 (centred)

Type – Hut Circles, Field System

Noted in HER and NMRS of 'Centred at NC 6314 0274 is a settlement of three stone-walled huts (A-C), and a contemporary field system, marked by stone clearance heaps and ruinous walls. 'A' measures about 7m in diameter between ill-defined wall centres. Entrance in the S. 'B' is placed on a built-up platform. It measures about 9.5m between the centres of a poorly preserved wall which is virtually destroyed in the W. Entrance probably in the S. 'C' is oval, measuring about 13m SSW-NNE by about 12m between the centres of a wall spread to 2.5m in the NNE widening to 4.5m at the E side of the entrance in the SSW. Surveyed at 1/10,000. Visited by OS 25 June 1975. No change; Visited by OS 6 October 1980.'

Walkover reveals site to be comprised of numerous clearance cairns to G/R varying in height but 3-5m in diameter and well prominent field plots. Hut circles are very ill defined, with only 2 sites being located, there are a few flat pieces of ground but none of the sites as closely discernible as that described by OS –

- Possible platform at NC 63175/02763 12m diameter on terrace.
- HC at NC 63164/02817 at 858ft 10.8m in diameter visible due to rise and fall in heather with bank 1m wide, with some stones with possible entrance to SE.
- Clearance cairns extend to E at NC 63182/02802 then steep rising slope, to NW at NC 63121/02809 and W at NC 63116/02733.

Site to be excluded from scheme and 20m exclusion area put in place.

2 – Loch Cracail Mor

HER – MHG 12771

NMRS – NC60SW 2

Grid Ref: NC 6307 0224

Type – Hut Circles

Noted in HER and NMRS of 'At NC 6307 0224 ('A') is a mutilated hut circle about 12.0m in overall diameter, with facing stones indicating a wall thickness of 1.5m. The E arc has been destroyed. No entrance is evident. The interior is partly obscured by heaps of stones, and ruinous sheiling bothies.

At NC 6313 0230 ('B') is another overgrown oval hut measuring about 13.5m NNE-SSW by about 10m between wall centres. No entrance is visible. Surveyed at 1/10,000. Visited by OS 25 June 1975.

The hut circles are as described above except that the entrance to hut 'A' is evident in the SSE. The W side of the entrance appears to be splayed. Visited by OS 6 October 1980.'

Single hut circle is visible on aerial photograph of 1949 (3256).

Walkover reveals site to be as follows:

- 2B at NC 63140/02294 at 760ft 12.8m in diameter with doorway to SW, wall 2m wide and of large stones up to 0.5m high. No sign of an entrance.
- 2A at NC 63075/02227 at 737ft of large stones 14m in diameter with no evidence of entrance, possible 2nd structure on E side, though site obscured by bracken. Has commanding view both NW and SW and may actually be a bigger structure than being a hut circle maybe a Dun, with it being robbed out to make enclosure dyke (site 9) in the medieval/post-medieval period. No evidence to either A or B of any associated field system.

Site to be excluded from scheme and 20m exclusion area put in place.

3 – Loch Cracail Mor

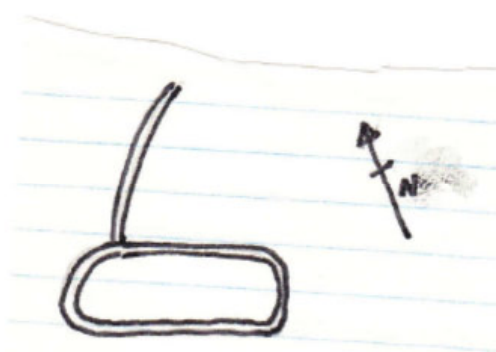
HER – MHG 12766

NMRS – NC60SW 11

Grid Ref: NC 6327 0224

Type – Hut Circle

Noted in HER and NMRS of 'At NC 6327 0224, on a W-facing hillside occupying a spur, is a probable mutilated hut circle. All that remains is an arc of walling in the E forming about two-thirds of a circle approximately 8m in diameter, with intermittent upright inner facing stones visible. In the W the wall is no longer traceable, though there is some evidence of possible later walling in this arc. A radial line of stones of uncertain association extends from the N side of the structure. More recent land-use occurs nearby to the N, possibly accounting for the disfigurement of the site. Surveyed at 1:10 000. Visited by OS 1 October 1980.'



Walkover reveals site to be located at NC 62273/002232 at 803ft of a rectangular structure visible due to heather being burnt off, with an arc of wall running N-S on its N side 8.3m EW x 3m NS with walls 0.5m wide and up to 0.2m high. Possibly some kind of shieling associated with enclosure to N (see site 9) rather than being a hut circle as proposed by OS.

Site to be excluded from scheme and 20m exclusion area put in place.

4 – Loch Cracail Mor

HER – MHG 12772

NMRS – NC60SW 3

Grid Ref: NC 6321 0190

Type – Hut Circle

Noted in HER and NMRS of 'At NC 6321 0190 is an ill-defined oval hut measuring about 10m NNE-SSW by 8.5m between the centres of a wall destroyed on the NE arc. It has been set on a platform on a slight knoll on a W-facing slope. In the immediately vicinity are a few contemporary stone clearance heaps. Surveyed at 1/10,000. Visited by OS 25 June 1975.

As described except that there is no certain trace of field clearance heaps in the vicinity. Visited by OS 6 October 1980.'

Walkover reveals site to be located at NC 63201/01857 at 741ft visible due to rise and fall in heather with only a turf bank with no evidence of any stone or an entrance. Overall 11.2m in diameter with wall spread to 1.2m with rise in heather 0.25m. No evidence for field system, there are a few mounds quite close but no evidence of any stones.

Site to be excluded from scheme and 20m exclusion area put in place.

5 – Ach Na H-Uaighe

HER – MHG 19395

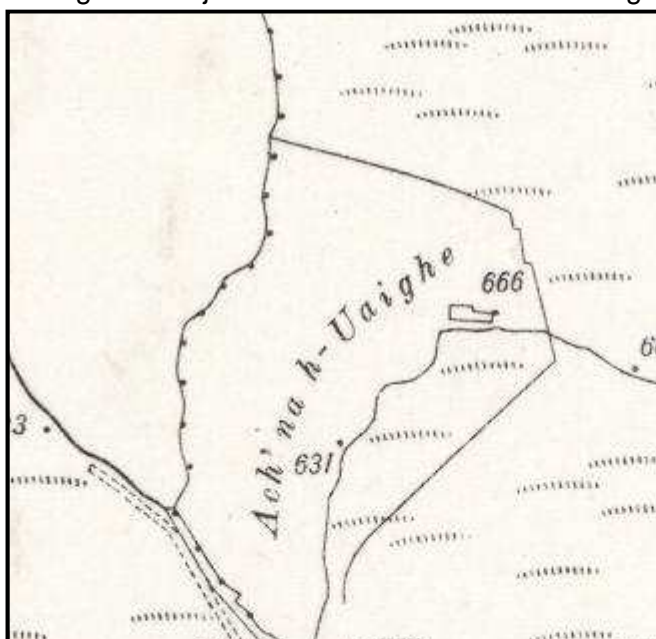
NMRS – NC60SW 17

Grid Ref: NC 630 016

Type – Enclosure, Field Boundary

Noted in HER and NMRS of 'An enclosure, a field wall and an area of cultivation are depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Sutherland 1879, sheet ciii). A boat house, the remains of what may be an enclosure, a length of wall and two lengths of wall are shown on the current edition of the OS 1:10000 map (1971). Information from RCAHMS 3 November 1995.'

Recorded in the Ordnance Survey Name Book (book 30 page 8) as 'This name applies to a small field of pasture land situated at the south end of Loch Croach Mor. The name signifies the field of the grass. His Grace the Duke of Sutherland Prop.' Though the adjacent burn named Allt na h-Uaighe (Book 30 page 7) is recorded as



'This name applies to a mountain stream having its sources about a mile east of Loch Croach Mor. It flows in a western direction for about a mile, and joins a small stream flowing between Loch Crochal Mor and Loch Croach Beag. The name signified Burn of the field of the graves.'

Recorded in the Sutherland Estate Management Papers (Adam 1972, 73) as being named Achnaheih in the Parish of Rogart, with 1 tenant in Rental of 1811-16 with a rent of crop 1812, at Martinmas 1811 of £1.15.0. Suggesting at least one house.

What may be an enclosure is also shown on the 2nd edition OS (see previous page).

What may be 2 rectangular unroofed buildings and an enclosure are visible on aerial photograph of 1946 (4046) but only part of the enclosure visible on aerial photograph of 1949 (3256) with burn having possibly changed direction.

Walkover reveals site to be to be comprised of the following:

Field wall or head-dyke visible, as depicted on latest OS map, 1.2m wide and up to 0.3m high. Sites all lie closest to Burn to South are as follows:

- Enclosure centred at NC 63104/01639 aligned E-W c28m by 10m situated above burn (probably that depicted on OS Map) with walls 1m wide and up to 0.8m high.
- Large Clearance Cairn at NC 63052/01635 15.4m EW x 4.6m NS s-shaped and up to 1.2m high.
- Enclosure at NC 63009/01569 6.6m NS x 10.8m EW with walls up to 1.5m wide and 0.5m high.
- House (?) at NC 63035/01587 aligned NNE-SSW 4m x 7.4m with walls 0.8m wide and up to 1m high, especially at E end, possibly compartment to centre.
- Clearance cairn at NC 63023/01655 2m in diameter x 0.5m high.
- Clearance cairn at NC 63032/01549 1.5m in diameter x 0.5m high.
- Possible clearance cairn at NC 63020/01643 1.5m² x 0.5m high.

Southern side of site to be excluded from scheme and 20m exclusion area put in place.

6 – Allt Ach Na H-Uaighe
HER – MHG 12773, 41347
NMRS – NC60SW 4
Grid Ref: NC 6328 0150
Type – Hut Circle

Noted in HER and NMRS of 'At NC 6328 0150 is an unusually positioned oval hut. It lies in the path of the natural drainage of the hill, though raised above it on either a natural or artificial platform. It measures c. 14m NE-SW by c. 11.5m between the centres of an overgrown wall which has been partially destroyed or obscured in the SE quadrant. No entrance evident. Surveyed at 1:10,000. Visited by OS 25 June 1975.

As described; the entrance is in the SW. Some of the peat and heather-covered mounds in the area are possibly associated field clearance heaps. Visited by OS 6 October 1980.'

Hut circle is visible on aerial photograph of 1949 (4278).

Walkover reveals site to be located at NC 63283/01490 at 732ft 16m in overall diameter with walls spread to 2m and up to 1m high especially on E side. Possible entrance to SW. No evidence for any field system, few mounds in vicinity seem to be natural with no evidence of stone in them.

Site to be excluded from scheme and 20m exclusion area put in place.

7 – Loch Cracail Beag
HER – MHG 12765
NMRS – NC60SW 10
Grid Ref: NC 6351 0096
Type – Hut Circle

Noted in HER and NMRS of 'At NC 6351 0096 on a W-facing hillslope is a turf and heather-covered hut circle. It measures 10m N-S by 7.5m within a wall spread from 2m-2.5m and 0.5m high internally. The simple entrance is in the S. There is no evidence of associated cultivation. Surveyed at 1:10,000. Visited by OS 1 October 1980.'

Walkover reveals site to be located at NC 63520/00955 at 780ft 12m in diameter with wall spread to 1.5-2m, at W up to 0.7m high with entrance to S. No sign of any associated field system.

Site to be excluded from scheme and 20m exclusion area put in place.

8 – Loch Cracail Mor
HER – MHG 18424
NMRS – NC60SW 16
Grid Ref: NC 626/026
Type – Enclosures

Noted in HER and NMRS of 'Two enclosures are depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Sutherland 1879, sheet ciii). An enclosure, which is attached by a short length of wall to another incomplete enclosure, is shown on the current edition of the OS 1:10000 map (1971). Information from RCAHMS 3 November 1995.'

Site is visible on aerial photograph of 1949 (3256).

Walkover reveals site to be well away from proposed scheme.

No recommendation's to be made.

9 – Loch Cracail Mor
HER – N/a
NMRS – N/a
Grid Ref: NC 6323/0234 (centred)
Type – Dyke, Clearance Cairns

Walkover reveals site to be stone & turf dyke 1.2m wide and up to 0.25m high with southerly edge at NC 62331/02309 running EW for c80m then turning N with NW side following course of burn, overall an irregular shaped feature which may be a field boundary of a field system related to site 3. Within the following:

- Large Clearance cairn at NC 63234/02340 5m in diameter and 1m high.
- Clearance cairn at NC 63220/02340 1.5m in diameter and 0.3m high.
- Clearance cairn at NC 63218/02364 3m x 2m and 0.5m high.

Site to be excluded from scheme and 10m exclusion area put in place. Area of exclusion to include sites 2 and 3.

10 – Loch Cracail Mor

HER – N/a

NMRS – N/a

Grid Ref: NC 63194/02587

Type – Clearance Cairns, Lynchet (possible)

Walkover reveals site of 7/8 clearance cairns varying in size of 2-4m in diameter but up to 1m high. Possible lynchet at NC 63238/02575 spread to 2m and 12m in length, no evidence of any hut circles. Clearance cairn at NC 63212/02533.

Site to be excluded from scheme and 10m exclusion area put in place.

5. Conclusions

Overall the area for proposed planting is on a West-facing slope of heather, grass, occasional outcrops of stone and areas of bog with natural knolls. Almost all the archaeology is situated to the same height above sea-level with no indication of any archaeological activity on the higher slopes or close to the water's edge of each loch.

6. Archive

A copy of this report is to be deposited in the National Monuments Record of Scotland in Edinburgh.

7. Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

A short summary of the results of this project will be submitted to the Council for Scottish Archaeology's publication *Discovery & Excavation in Scotland*.

8. References

Adam, R J (1972) Papers on Sutherland Estate Management 1802-16. 2 volumes. Scottish History Society. Edinburgh.

Forestry Commission (2011) Forests and historic environment – UK Forestry Standard Guidelines. Forestry Commission. Edinburgh.

Highland Council Historic Environment Record entries MHG 12774, 32643, 32644, 38992, 12771, 12766, 12772, 19395, 12773, 41347, 12765 and 18424.

IFA (1999) By-laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. Reading.

National Monuments Record of Scotland CANMORE entries for NC60SW.

Ordnance Survey Name Book Parish of Rogart Book 30 pages 7 & 8.

Maps Consulted

Roy, W (1747-55) Military Map of Scotland.

Ordnance Survey 1st edition 6inch-mile sheet 103 Sutherland of 1879 surveyed 1874.

Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 6inch-mile sheet 103 Sutherland of 1907 revised 1903.

Ordnance Survey map NC60SW of 1971 1:10,000.

Aerial Photographs Consulted

RAF 106G/Scot/UK	23 August 1946	4047-45	1:16,600
RAF 541/A/464	17 April 1949	3256-7, 4278-79	1:16,600

Top: Plate 1 – General view of site 1 facing W.

Bottom: Plate 2 – View of hut circle (2) site 1 facing N.



Top: Plate 3 – View of site 2B facing NE.
Bottom: Plate 4 – View of site 2A facing W – scale 2m.



Top: Plate 5 – View of site 3 facing E – scale 2m.

Bottom: Plate 6 – View of site 4 structure 2 facing SW – scale 2m.

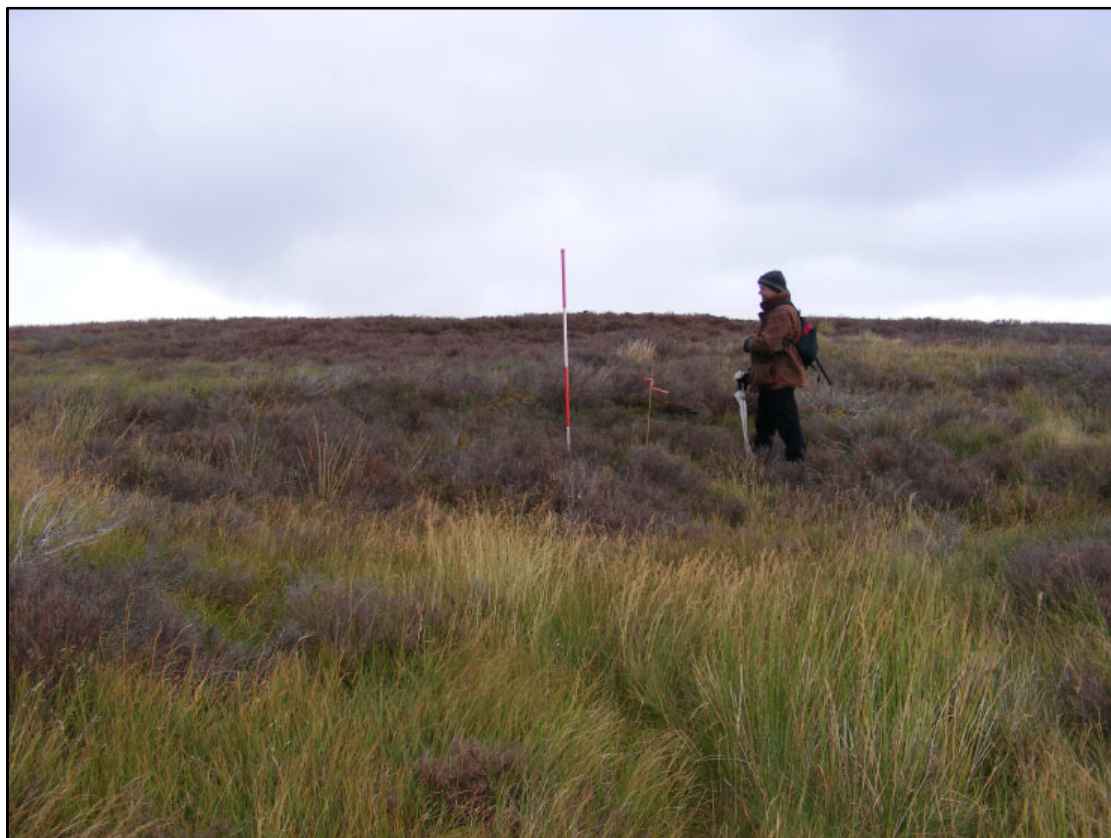


Top: Plate 7 – View of part of enclosure (1) site 5 facing N.

Bottom: Plate 8 – View of enclosure (2) site 5 structure 2 facing SW – scale 2m.



Top: Plate 9 – View of site 6 facing N – scale 2m.
Bottom: Plate 10 – View of site 7 facing E – scale 2m.



Top: Plate 11 – View of site 9 facing E.
Bottom: Plate 12 – View of site 10 facing N.

