

SHEIRDRIM RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Technical Appendix 11.1: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Walk Over Survey

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11.1 Introduction

A targeted walkover survey of the Inner Study Area was undertaken on the 18th, 19th and 27th of June 2019. Weather conditions were fair on each day of the survey. All areas out with conifer plantations were inspected: conifer plantations are impenetrable, with visibility too poor to be able to find or record assets adequately. The plantation tracks and rides were assessed where appropriate. Pictures of previously unrecorded assets are below. The location of assets referred to below are presented in **Figure 11.2**

Ground conditions, excluding the plantations, were predominantly that of rough grazing with grasses and heather, with areas of bog and lochans. Drainage ditches across the areas of the Inner Study Area had been used to improve pasture. In areas of dense vegetative cover, vegetation may have obscured above ground archaeological features, but overall there was low potential of this happening.

In total, seven heritage assets recorded by the Historic Environment Record (HER) and/or Historic Scotland database Canmore were not found by the walkover survey: sheilings SLR Nos 60, 61 and 63; undated cairns SLR Nos 99 and 100; prehistoric cairns at SLR No 98; and a prehistoric standing stone SLR No 101. SLR Nos 60, 98 and 101 are locations close to the proposed infrastructure and are further discussed below. Two sites (SLR Nos 108 and 109) are described as unroofed buildings and possible sheilings. Some further comments regarding these are also made below.

SLR No 60 is described as the location of two sheiling huts on the south west side and uphill of a small burn. No archaeological features were located at SLR No 60, bar some drainage ditches crossing the area (**Photograph 11.1.1**). The description matches that of two sheilings recorded as SLR Nos 136 and 137, and it is assumed that it is these two huts that are being referred to.

SLR No 98 locates two features, the first a linear cairn utilising bedrock in its construction, measuring 8.50 m by 3.5 m on a north west / south east orientation and 0.40 m high. Its chamber or cist, which appears to have been robbed in antiquity, consists of drystone wall uprights and several capstones; at NGR182560 655900. The second cairn measured 6.00 m diameter incorporating bedrock into its construction and with a kerb up to 0.50 m high on its SW side, located at NGR 182560 655890. These locations and their environs were visited by the walkover survey, and no evidence of the cairns were observed (**Photograph 11.1.1**). The cairns were first identified in Gartnagrenach, Kintyre, Argyll: Archaeological Assessment, by Firat Archaeological Services, produced in 1995. Examination of the photography in the report and in the site archive, in comparison to that obtained during this site visit, strongly suggest the cairn is located further to the north east and at a higher position than indicated by the HER.



Photograph 11.1.1: Area of cairns SLR No 98, looking north

Standing stone SLR No 101 is described as comprising schist measuring 0.8 m high. It is in a position within an area of plantation, above a small quarry presumably excavated to produce road stone for the plantation tracks (**Photograph 11.1.2**). The area has been heavily affected by forestry activity. A search of the area of trees and underlying brash for the stone location failed to locate it. The site was first reported in the same 1995 survey as that of SLR No 98. Photography of the stone in the report show it in an area of open ground with trees in the background. It is likely that the asset has been lost due to tree planting or quarrying.



Photograph 11.1.2: View towards location of SLR No 101, looking NE

Three sheiling huts were located at positions not previously recorded by the HER or Canmore, SLR Nos 134, 136 and 137 (the latter two being referenced above as the correct location of SLR No 60). SLR no 134 comprised a circular wall 5 – 6 m in diameter and approximately 0.8 m in height constructed of earth and stone (**Photograph 11.1.3**).



Photograph 11.1.3: Sheiling hut, SLR No. 134, looking west

Sheiling SLR Nos 136 and 137 are two sub-circular huts located on the south western side of a small burn. They measured approximately 6 m by 4 m and 6 m by 5 m in size, comprising low earthen banks covered by vegetation (**Photograph 11.1.4**). The entrance of SLR No 136 was to the north east. The entrance to SLR No 137 was not clearly discernible, but possibly was to the north west.



Photograph 11.1.4: Very low banks of sheiling hut SLR No 173, looking north west

Two upright stones (SLR No 139) were located between the main forestry track, and a track leading down to the former farmstead 'Scotmill' (SLR No 105). The stones were of schist located 1.18 m apart. The larger of the two to the east measured 1.75 m high and 1.4 m wide, and the other 1.75 m wide and 0.9 m high (**Photograph 11.1.5**). There were no markings or settings for metal fittings upon the stones. The orientation of the stones in relation to each other is suggestive of an access point through a former boundary, but such a boundary is not marked on or would orientate with boundaries depicted on historic Ordnance Survey maps (the earliest examined being the first edition 1:10,560 of 1873). Alternatively, they may relate to historic or prehistoric structures with potential interpretations including the cist of a burial mound or part of a stone alignment. The adjacent tracks and forestry tracks appear to have avoided the two stones.



Photograph 11.1.5: Standing stones SLR No 139, looking east

SLR No 135 comprised a small former stock enclosure (**Photograph 11.1.6**), located approximately 25 m to the north west of sheiling SLR No 134. It measured approximately 12 m in length and 6m wide, on a north / south orientation, with an east / west orientated internal division to the north. A second small structure or enclosure, measuring 4 m by 4 m, was constructed on its southern end. The maximum height of the surviving drystone wall of the enclosure was approximately 1 m.



Photograph 11.1.6: Eastern boundary wall of enclosure SLR No 135, looking north

SLR No. 138 is an enclosure complex marked upon modern mapping (**Figure 11.1**) as well as the second edition 1:10,560 OS map of 1900. They are absent from the first edition of 1873 (**Photograph 11.1.7**). They are likely, therefore, to be small enclosures of the late 19th century for the management of stock driven off the hill.



Photograph 11.1.7: Boundary wall SLR No 138, looking north east

SLR No 140 is a substantial banked boundary extending from SLR No 108 northward. At the location of the stream north of SLR No 108 (**Figure 11.1**), there was evidence that ground had been excavated to either assist crossing the stream or facilitate access to it (**Photograph 11.1.8**). It is likely that the boundary formed one side of a former track way from SLR 108 northward. To the north of the stream it was noted that the orientation of the boundary had a direct relationship with the post-medieval drainage to the east and is probably contemporary with these features.



Photograph 11.1.8: Bank of SLR No 140 looking north

SLR Nos 118 and 119 are recorded by the HER as possible large sheilings, depicted as unroofed structures on the first edition (1873) OS mapping. A visit to the sites demonstrated that in each instance the upstanding remains of a domestic dwelling were each accompanied by the less well-preserved remains of a larger byre (**Photograph 11.1.9 to 10**). The buildings, abandoned by the time of the late 19th century OS mapping of the area, are former longhouse accommodating both a domestic dwelling and housing for livestock under a single roof. Each also had an adjacent sub-rectangular stock enclosure, for corralling animals close to the building. Within the domestic dwelling there was no evidence of a stone chimney, and the buildings may have had a central fireplace or a hanging chimney.



Photograph 9: Longhouse SLR No 118 with the byre in foreground and domestic dwelling at the end of the building, looking south west



Photograph 11.1.10: Upstanding remains of longhouse SLR No 119, looking south

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