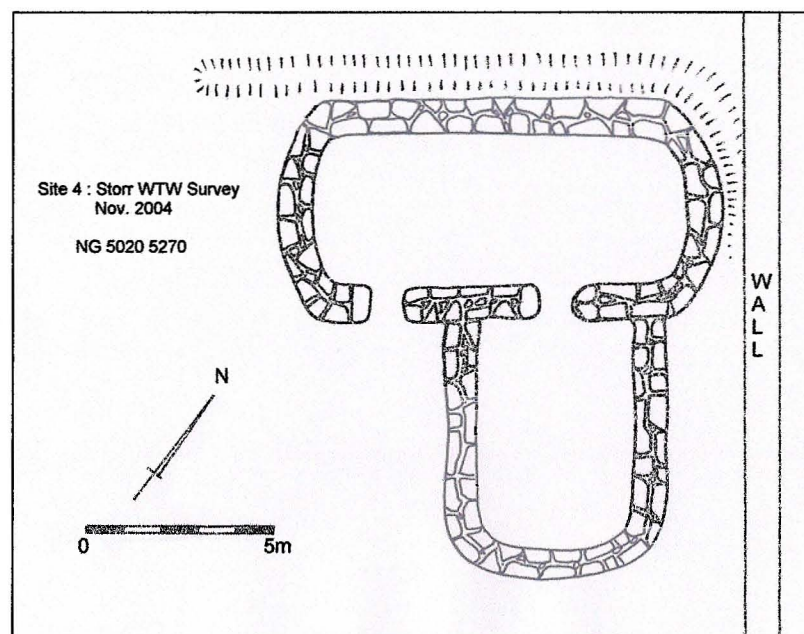


STORR FOREST (PORTTREE)

WATER TREATMENT WORKS

Autocode 0796

Walkover Survey (Archaeology)

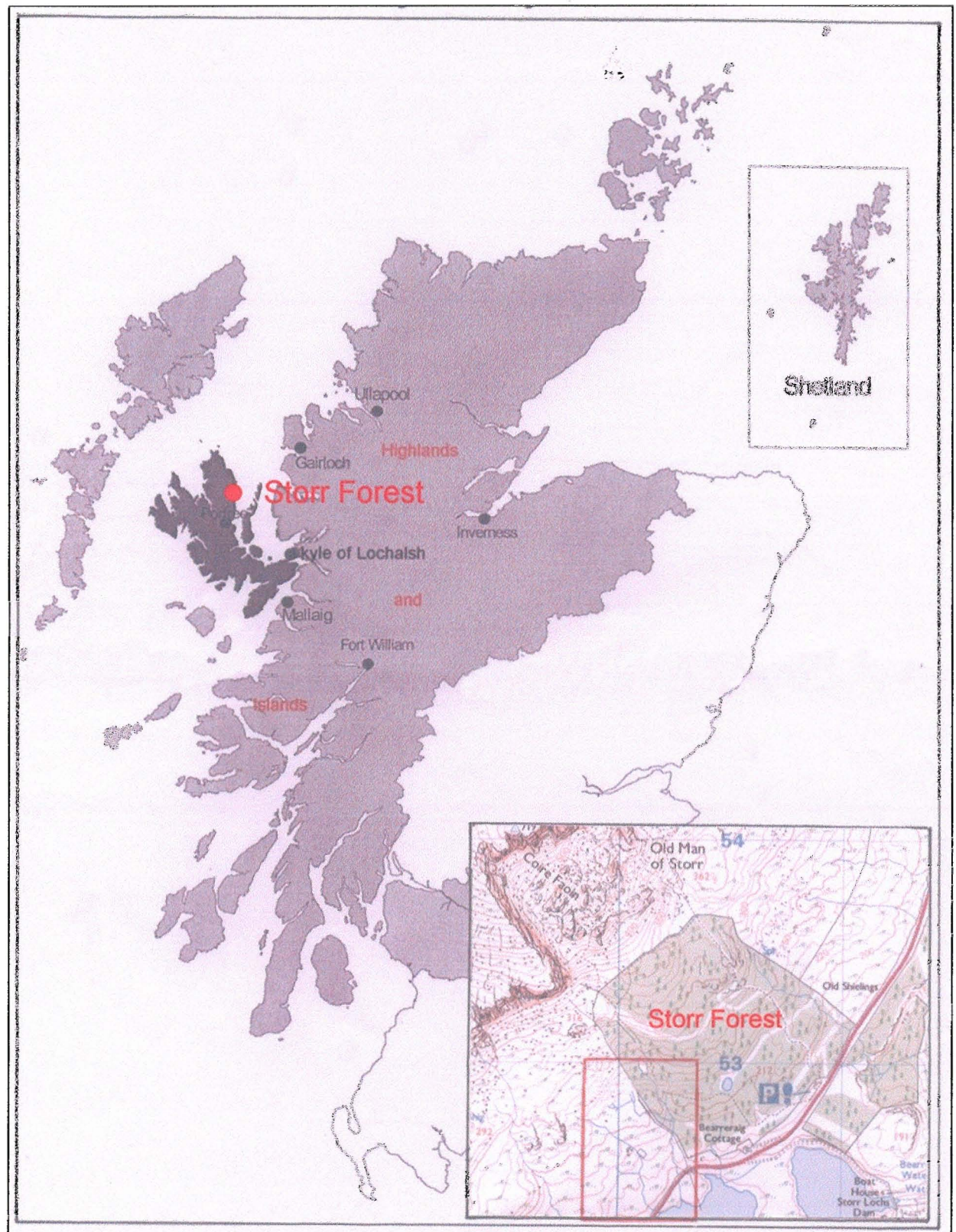


Illus. 1, Storr Forest Survey 2004 : Sketch plan of Site 4

Archaeological and Ancient Landscape Survey

Report No. 153

By Martin Wildgoose AIFA
and
Steven Birch PIFA



Illus. 2, Storr Forest : Location and area covered by illus. 3 (outlined in red)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WALKOVER SURVEY OF STORR FOREST (PORTREE) WTW

Sited at NG 5010 5300

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a walkover survey of the access corridor and proposed new works at the Storr Forest Water Treatment Works sited 9km to the north of Portree on the Isle of Skye. The area under survey lies part outwith and part within the Storr Forest, a conifer plantation currently owned by the Highland Council. The survey was commissioned by Tulloch Civil Engineering Ltd of Inverness ahead of site works.

2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 A desk-based search, covering the National Monuments Record for Scotland (CANMORE/CANMAP), the Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record (HCSMR) and the local archive held at DUALCHAS, (Skye's Museum Service), was carried out prior to the survey to recover previously recorded monuments.

Note. All recorded monuments were visited during the survey.

- 2.2 The walkover survey was carried out by 2 surveyors on the 18th of November – a clear but cold sunny day. On the day of survey the local snowline lay just above the upper limit of the survey. The survey area was grass covered with areas of rush and although very wet was very easy to read archaeologically.

- 2.3 The area under survey was walked, generally across the slope of the hillside, at 50 meter intervals. A wide overlap, beyond the specified corridor, was surveyed to allow for adjustments of the access corridor. Recovered archaeological sites were recorded on to prepared record sheets and given a GPS reference as they were located. As each site was recorded its current condition was assessed. A sliding scale was used to indicate site condition. These categories are listed below:

Well preserved	- All elements visible and in close to original condition.
Ruinous	- All elements visible but some disturbance and collapse.
Degraded	- Type of site still discernable but only foundations visible.
Very degraded	- Not possible to say with any certainty what the site is.

- 2.4 All the archaeological sites lying within, or close to, the access corridor were marked with canes and red and white barrier tape.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Desk-based Search

The desk based search recovered just 2 previously recorded archaeological sites – 1 from a previous survey of the area, and 1 recorded on the current 1:10000 and 1:25000 OS maps. These sites are listed below and described in detail in the Sites Gazetteer (Part 4)

- a. An archaeological survey of Storr Forest, carried out by Dualchas in July 1994 lists a single shieling (Site 5 in the survey) at NG 5012 5292 (before GPS). This site lies in the centre of an open ride just 30 meters to the south of the fenced spring box and gallery sited just within the western edge of the forest.
- b. The current OS maps show a farmstead/settlement lying some 50 meters to the west of the proposed access corridor. This settlement consists of 5 buildings and a large enclosure. The buildings lie to the west of a burn the enclosure to the east. An aerial photograph held by the RCAHMS in Edinburgh, No. CPE/SCOT/UK 175, Neg. No. 5052, taken in October 1947, before the Storr Forest was planted, clearly shows the Farmstead/Settlement but not the shieling (too small).

The second edition 6" OS map for this area (Inverness-shire Sheet xviii) shows no indication of either site.

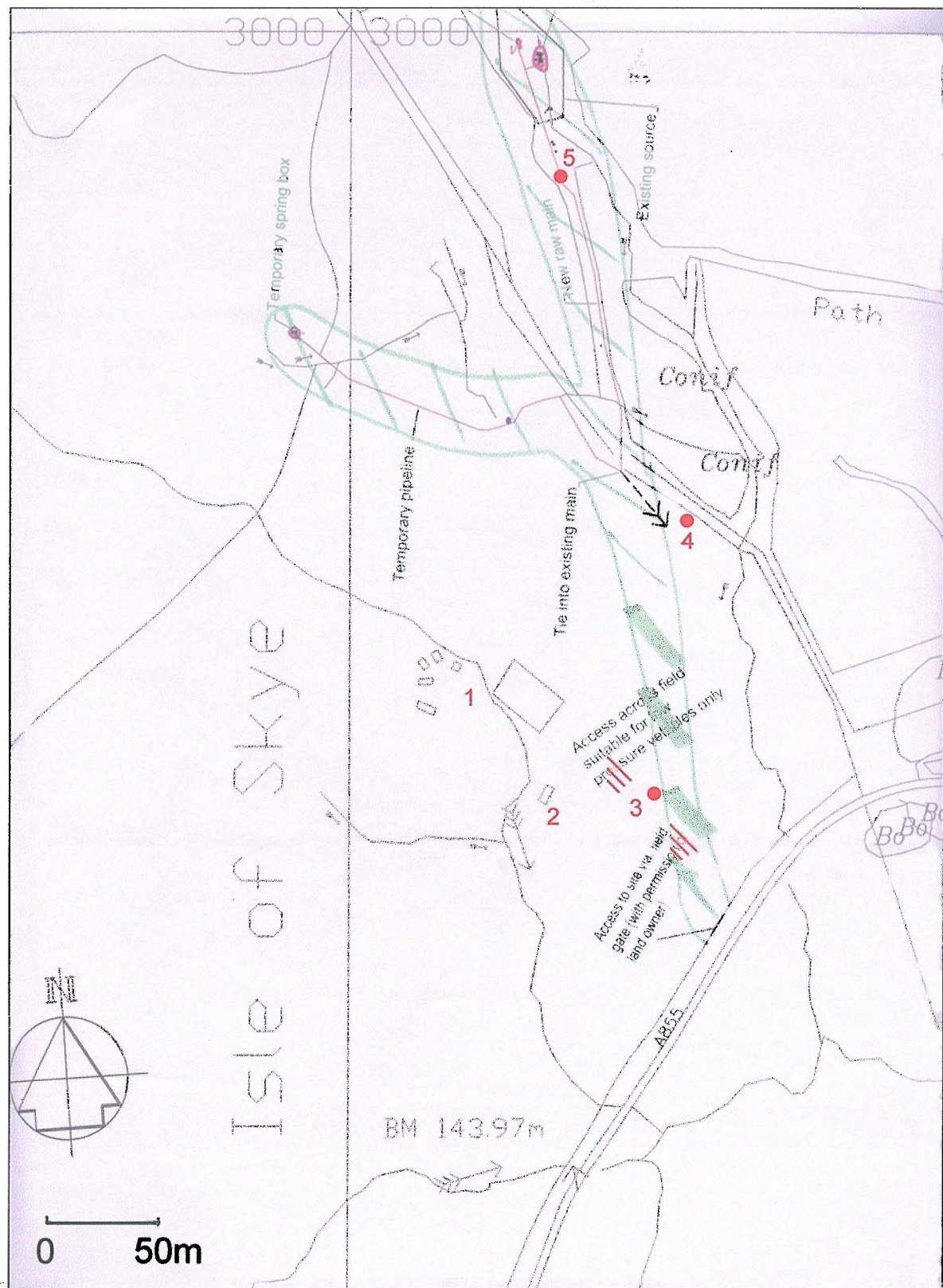
3.2 The Walkover Survey

The Walkover Survey recorded a further 3 archaeological sites in addition to the 2 known sites. All 3 new sites lie outwith the proposed access corridor. The 2 known sites were visited and reassessed. All 5 sites are listed in Table 1 below with an expanded description in the Gazetteer (Part 4)

No. in Survey	NMRS No.	OS Map Ref.	Type of Site	Condition
1	OS Map	NG 5005 5260	Farmstead/settlement	Ruinous
2	-	NG 5012 5255	Stone structure	Degraded
3	-	NG 5018 5254	Enclosure	Degraded
4	-	NG 5020 5270	Stone structure	Ruinous
5	NG55SW 9	NG 5012 5291	Shieling Mound	Well preserved

Table 1: Archaeological sites recorded during the Walkover Survey.

Note: The Grid Reference for Site 5 is slightly different to that recorded in the Dualchas Survey of 1994. The 1994 ref. (NG 5012 5292) was a guesstimate; the 2004 ref. was taken by GPS.



Illus. 3: Extract from map No. 0796-NW-100-DG-CS-0001-01 showing relationship of archaeological sites to the proposed access corridor and area of new works (outlined in green).

4. GAZETEER OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Site no.

1. Farmstead/Settlement
NG 5005 5260
Ruinous

A compact group of 5, stone built, round cornered structures lying on a natural terrace on the open hillside above Storr Loch and the A855. The group consists of at least two houses and 3 related structures (byres). All 5 structures lie on the west side of a prominent fast flowing burn. On the east side of the burn, and approximately 30 meters lower down the slope, is a rectangular enclosure which measures 40 meters NW-SE by 25 meters NE-SW over earth and stone dykes 1.5 meters thick.

2. Stone-built structure
NG 5012 5255
Degraded

A round ended, stone built, structure lying on a NE to SW alignment which measures 10 meters long by 4.5 meters wide over walls spread to 1.2 meters thick. This site lies only 85 meters to the SW of Site 1 and probably relates, in some way, to that site.

3. Enclosure
NG 5018 5254
Degraded

Lying on the first major SE facing terrace above the A855 is a small, turf and stone built, enclosure which measures 20 meters NW-SE by 12 meters NE-SW. The surrounding turf and stone bank measures circa 2 meters wide and stands to 0.5 meter high. Small areas of lazy-bed cultivation lie to the NW and SE of the enclosure.

4. Stone-built structure (see cover illustration)
NG 5020 5270
Ruinous

Lying on a narrow SE facing terrace immediately by the west side of a massive stone wall are the remains of a two compartment Stone house. The main part of the 'house' lies on a NE to SW alignment with its NE end abutting the stone wall. This section measures 12 meters long by 6 meters wide over walls 1.2 meters thick. A door opening survives in the SW half of the SE facing wall. Attached to the NE half of the SE facing wall is a single room annex which measures 7m NW to SE by 6 meters NE to SW. The walls of the annex are 1.2 meters wide. Access to the annex is through a central door opening in the NE half of the SE facing house wall. A clearly defined drainage channel lies between the slope of the hill and the rear wall of the house.

5. Shieling mound (summer bothy)
NG 5012 5291
Well preserved

Description taken from the 1994 Survey

*"Close to the west side of the current ascent path and 30 meters to the south of the Water Boards fenced enclosure, is a single cell turf and stone shieling. The shieling, which lies on the summit of a low mound, measures 2 meters by 1 meter internally with a narrow entrance facing to the south".**

- * Storr Woodland : An archaeological Survey of a Mature Forest Plantation.
Wildgoose, M. July 1994. Dualchas.
2004 Survey

As described in the 1994 survey but situated on the west side of a small burn in the centre of an open ride through the conifer plantation.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The access route and line of the new pipe-works cut through a fossilized cultural landscape without actually endangering the major sites. The only archaeological sites threatened by the site works are Site 5 (shieling mound), which lies directly across the line of a proposed new water main, and a small area of lazy bed cultivation lying to the SE of Site 3.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Archaeological sites are considered to be a finite and none-renewable resource. All Archaeological sites, monuments and landscapes affected by development (in this case access and trenching for a new water main) should be preserved, or, in exceptional circumstances where preservation is impossible, the sites will be recorded at the developer's expense to professional standards.*

*Statement issued by the Highland Council Archaeology Unit

- 5.2 All the recorded and marked archaeological sites, (red and white barrier tape), should be protected from over-running during the duration of the site works.
- 5.3 Wherever possible a 30 meter buffer zone should be left between site works and the outer limits of the archaeological sites.
- 5.4.1 The location of Site 5 does not allow for a 30 meter buffer zone. In this instance it is recommended that the water main should pass to the east side of the shieling mound with a reduced buffer zone, (5 meters wide measured from the base of the shieling mound).
- 5.4.2 Recommendation 5.4.1 should be discussed and agreed with the Highland Council Archaeologist responsible for this area, (Kirsty Cameron).

- 5.4.2 If the above is not a realistic solution and a straight course is preferred then the shieling will have to be archaeologically excavated, at the developer's expense, prior to the start of site works.
- 5.4.3 Any excavation of the shieling mound should be carried out by an *IFA accredited archaeologist with the approval of the Highland Council Archaeology Unit.
- 5.4.4 The small area of lazy bed cultivation lying to the SE of Site 3 is a well-defined feature in a dry position and will survive the over-running during site works. There are no recommendations regarding this feature.

* Institute of Field Archaeologists

6. LOCATION OF RECORDS

All field records generated by this survey are held in the archive of:

Archaeological and Ancient Landscape Survey

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END

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19th November 2004