



*Highland Archaeology Services Ltd*

Bringing the Past and Future Together

## Rogart Park



## Archaeological Walk-over Survey

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# Rogart Park

## Archaeological Walk-over Survey

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OASIS	
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### Summary

*Desk-based and rapid walk-over surveys were carried out to inform a potential tree-planting scheme at Rogart Park, Sutherland. Nine areas of archaeological sensitivity were defined covering approximately 16% of the scheme area. Further fieldwork is recommended to refine these and establish more detailed management proposals to conserve archaeological evidence within the scheme.*

### Acknowledgements

Fieldwork was carried out by John Wood. We wish to thank Peter Voy of Bell Ingram for commissioning this survey. Modern Ordnance Survey mapping is reproduced by permission of Landmark Information Group under Licence 100043217. Historic maps are courtesy of the National Library of Scotland.

## Contents

Site Location .....	4
Introduction.....	6
Policy Background.....	6
Methodology .....	6
Desk-based assessment .....	6
Walkover Survey .....	6
Results.....	7
Desk-based Assessment .....	7
Field Survey .....	11
Conclusions and Recommendations .....	12
Appendix 1: Satellite images (Montage) .....	13
Appendix 2: Photographs.....	21

## Illustrations

Figure 1 Site location .....	4
Figure 2 Survey area, with archaeological sites and areas .....	5
Figure 3 General Roy's Map (Extract) 1747-55 .....	9
Figure 4 1 <sup>st</sup> edition OS :2500 map .....	10
Figure 5 Satellite image (NW) .....	14
Figure 65 Satellite image (N).....	15
Figure 75 Satellite image (NE) .....	16
Figure 85 Satellite image (E) .....	17
Figure 95 Satellite image (SE) .....	18
Figure 105 Satellite image (S) .....	19
Figure 115 Satellite image (W).....	20
Figure 12 Camera points (photo locations).....	22

## Site Location

The survey area covers 34 hectares or thereby, at Little Rogart, Sutherland, at a height of between 75 and 90m above sea level, and centred approximately at OS grid reference NC 7317 0392. See Figures 1 and 2 below.



Figure 1 Site location

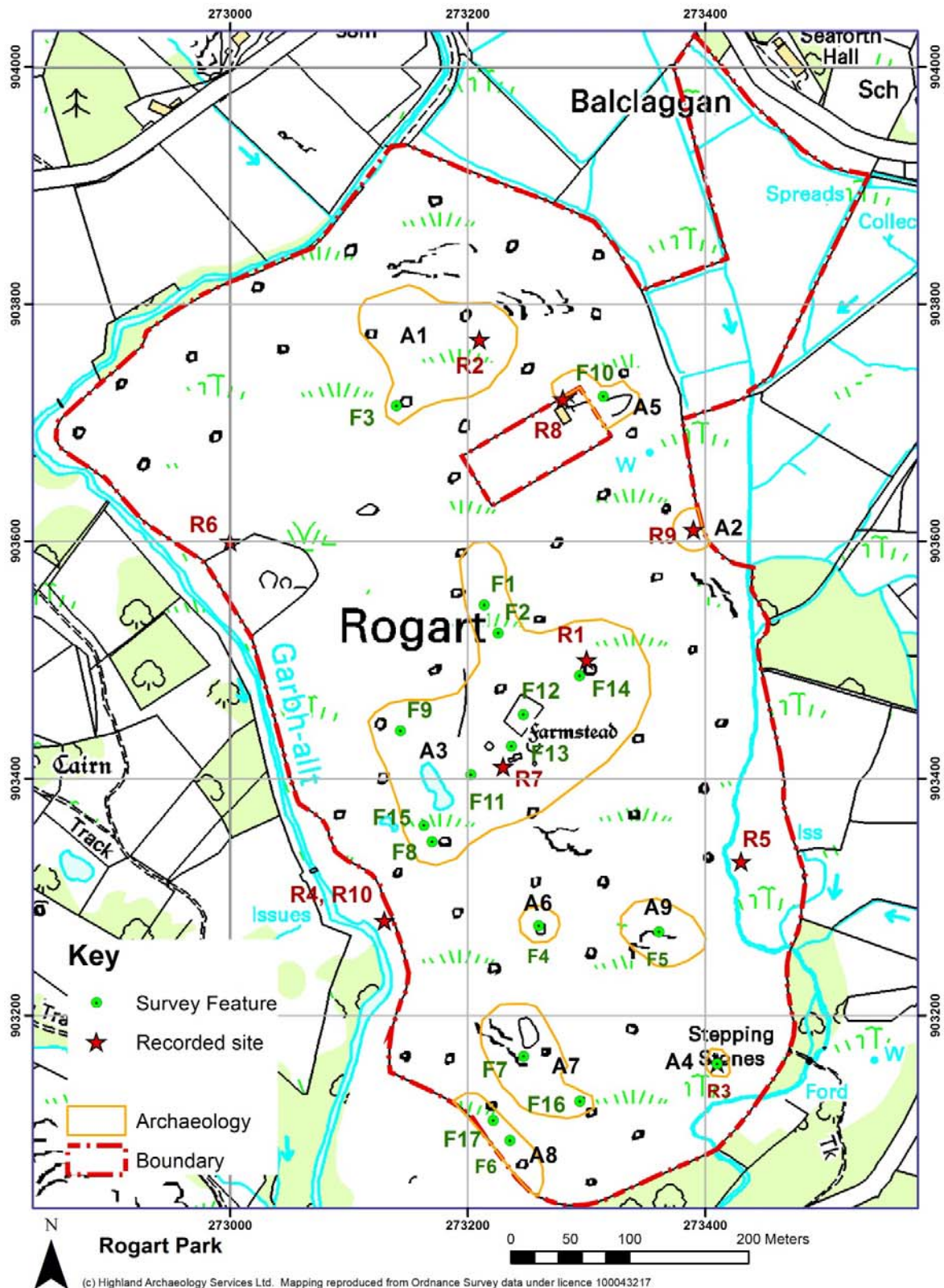


Figure 2 Survey area, with archaeological sites and areas

## Introduction

An archaeological walkover survey was conducted in January 2011 to inform the design of a possible new woodland creation scheme.

The area surveyed covers about 34 hectares of rough grazings. It rises from about 75m to 90m above sea level. The survey area mostly comprises heather moorland with exposed bedrock and wet peat basins. Most of the area is formed by Rogart Park, an enclosure defined by a stone dyke which includes several rock outcrops, separated by peat mosses and areas of former cultivation. In the north-east is an extension at Balclaggan bounded by the road opposite the Seaforth hall consisting of improved, lower lying grazing fields.

## Policy Background

The Scottish Government's *Scotland Rural Development Plan* (SRDP) is a programme of economic, environmental and social measures, worth some £1.5 billion, designed to develop rural Scotland from 2007 to 2013. Individuals and groups may seek support to help deliver the Government's strategic objectives in rural Scotland. It covers all aspects of rural land management, including forestry<sup>1</sup>

It is the responsibility of land managers in receipt of grant under the scheme need to ensure as far as possible that archaeological sites and historic buildings (the historic environment) should not be damaged by changes in land management.

## Methodology

### ***Desk-based assessment***

A desk-based assessment was conducted in order to assess the archaeological potential of the area based on previously recorded sites and any historical documentation.

A check was made of all relevant records from the Highland Historic Environment Record (HHER), National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS), Highland Council Archives and Historic Scotland's records of scheduled monuments and listed buildings. Online aerial photographs and historical maps were checked for any relevant site information.

The Statistical Accounts of Scotland were checked online. The National Library of Scotland online collection of historic maps was also checked including the First Edition Ordnance Survey 1:10560 scale and 1:2500 maps.

### ***Walkover Survey***

The survey was undertaken on 27 January 2011 in bright sunshine. Features were recorded using a Promark 3 DGPS unit operating in mobile mapping mode using real-time satellite-based correction

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP>

(WAAS / EGNOS/GLONASS). This typically offers accuracy of 1-2m although it can be affected by tree cover or atmospheric or other conditions. The brief was only to outline areas of potential archaeological significance in this case so features were not recorded in detail; and it may be that other features may exist, especially within the peat basins in the northwest of the site.

## Results

### *Desk-based Assessment*

The following features had been previously recorded on the Highland Council's Historic Environment Record (HHER). There were no additional features on the RCAHMS records (NMRS). These have been numbered with the prefix R. Their locations are shown on Figure 2 above. Sites have been combined where more than one record apparently refers to the same location.

Where these features were subsequently examined in the field the Feature number from the survey is provided in brackets.

<b>R1</b>	<b>(a) Hut circles</b>	HHER: MHG28251; NMRS: NC70SW106.4 NC 7329 0349
	<b>(b) Find (Stone cup)</b>	HHER: MHG10632; NMRS: NC70SW36 NC 7330 0350

Four possible, partly destroyed hut circles were identified RCAHMS in 1995. Features were identified here also during the survey. The area has been included in Archaeological Area A3.

There are no details recorded of the stone cup.

<b>R</b>	<b>Hut circle; field system</b>	HHER: MHG28250, MHG40547; NMRS: NC70SW106.3 NC 7321 0377
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A hut-circle and traces of a field-system were recorded amongst field systems by the RCAHMS in 1995. The hut-circle, which is partially levelled into the slope, measures 12.5m in diameter within a stone-faced bank 1.3m thick and up to 0.5m high. There is a wide gap on the SW, presumably an enlarged entrance, and the interior has been converted into a sub-square enclosure by the addition of material to the bank. Field banks to the NW and SE of the hut-circle entrance run along the edge of a terrace and have the same alignment as the banks of a field-system which occupies the rigged ground to the WSW; cross-dykes indicate that the field-system was divided into small plots. These features have been included in Archaeological Area A1 together with field boundaries and a cairn (F3: see below) as warranting further survey.

**R3      Burnt Mound**HHER: MHG28253; NMRS: NC70SW106.6  
NC 7341 0316

This was recorded by Roger Mercer in 1995 as a 'circular burnt mound, which is situated on the edge of a boggy area to the SE of Little Rogart', comprising 'a low, dimpled mound about 6m in diameter and 0.3m in height'. This interpretation seems uncertain and it may be a field clearance heap. Archaeological Area A4 has been defined here as a precaution.

**R4      Quarry**HHER: MHG28254; NMRS: NC70SW106.7  
NC 7313 0328

The RCAHMS visited in 1995 and found a quarry and part of a mill dam visible beside a knoll on the E of the Garbh-allt (See also R10). The quarry has been dug into the SE of the knoll and the stub of a dam-wall runs from the W side of the quarry pit. The stone dyke that encloses Little Rogart cuts across the quarry-pit. The quarry may have supplied the material for building the dam and in itself does not need to be excluded from planting. Although the stone dyke enclosing Little Rogart cuts across the quarry, this may well be a reconstruction to an earlier line. .

**R5      Dam?**HHER: MHG28256; NMRS: NC70SW106.9  
NC 7343 0333

The stone foundations of the two ends of what may be a dam were noted by the RCAHMS in 1995 on either side of an unnamed burn that runs down the E of Little Rogart. As they note, 'One unroofed structure is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Sutherland 1879, sheet civ) which may be a mill or a structure belonging to the Volunteers' Rifle Range.' The 25 inch map does not seem to show this building and the present survey, like the RCAHMS, did not find any evidence for it on the ground. The most likely explanation would seem to be that it was a target. The 'two ends of what may be a dam' seem more likely to be either natural features or field clearance heaps. These features would not seem to offer a reason to exclude planting from this area.

**R6      Find spot (unspecified)**HHER: MHG27048; NMRS: NC70SW156  
NC 7300 0360

There are no details available. This is unlikely to be a constraint on planting.

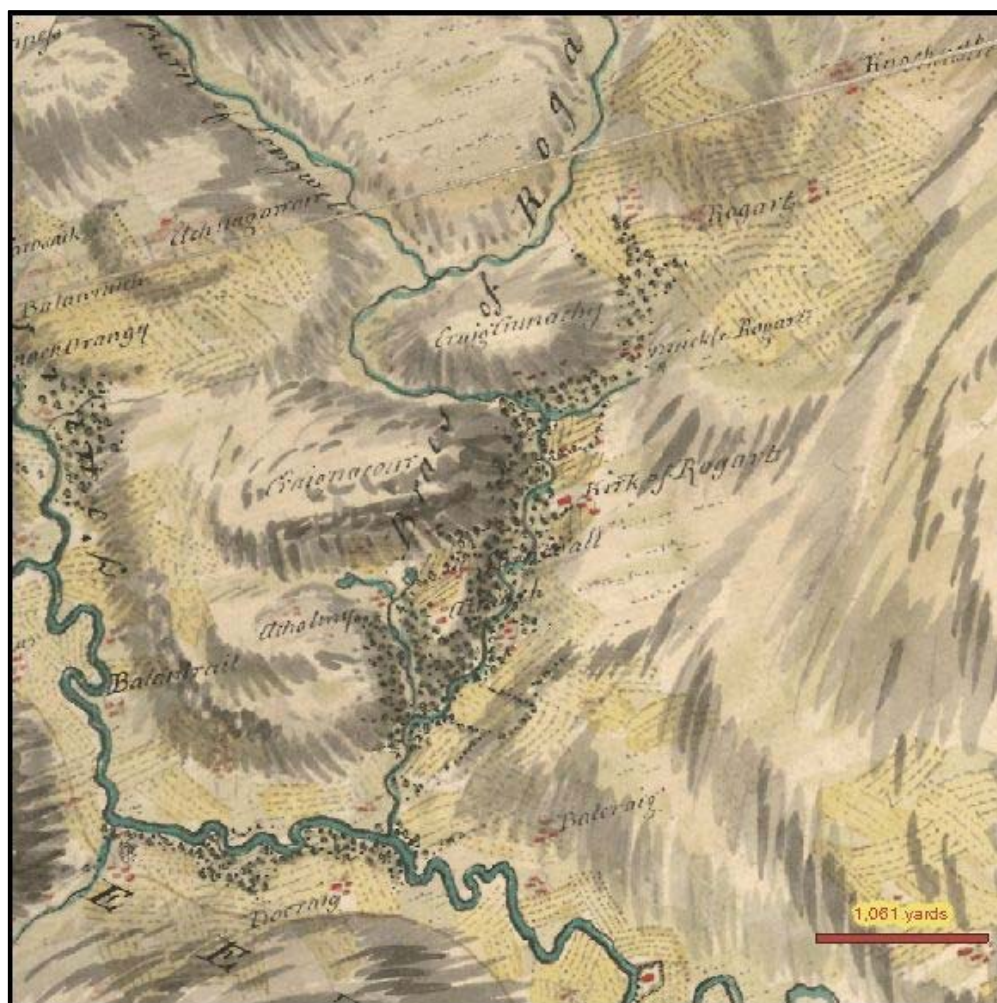
**R7      Settlement**HHER: MHG28247, MHG28248;  
NMRS: NC70SW106  
NC 7323 0341

This is the core of the extensive township and fields surveyed and described in some detail by the RCAHMS in 1995. The survey itself is held in Edinburgh and could not be consulted as part of the present exercise, but according to the NMRS record,

Little Rogart was occupied by David Sutherland and two other tenants in the Hearth Tax return of 1691 (SRO E69/23/1). In a rental of 1808 ten tenants were listed for 'Little Rogart and one-third of the shieling of Craigachnarich', and in 1815 'Little Rogart and an Improvement' had fourteen tenants (Adams 1972), but

by 1828 the township must have been cleared, as it ceases to be listed in the rentals (NLS Dep. 313/2162), and it is not depicted on Burnett and Scott's map of Sutherland of 1833 (Burnett and Scott 1833)

However there has clearly been erosion and disturbance over the years. Although full re-survey is not proposed, it is recommended that the survey held by the RCAHMS and the estate plan of 1811 referred to in the archaeological records (NLS Dep. 313/3591/2) should be consulted and if possible, copies obtained and checked against the current conditions on the ground. This should enable much better definition of plantable areas and areas to safeguard than could be done within the scope of the present survey.



**Figure 3 General Roy's Map (Extract) 1747-55**

*Derived from digital data courtesy of National Museum of Scotland. Not reproduced to original scale*

**R8 Farm**

HHER: MHG28249; NMRS: NC70SW106.2  
NC 7328 0372

This ruined nineteenth century farmstead comprises a roofed farmhouse and an unroofed outbuilding set within a rectangular field. The farmhouse, which is roofed with pantiles, is a three-bay cottage, whilst the outhouse, which has lost its roof, has opposed entrances and is divided into two compartments with an

outshot added to the ENE end. The 1st and 2nd editions of the OS 6-inch map depict both these buildings as roofed (Sutherlandshire 1879 and 1907, sheet civ). The field is enclosed by a stone dyke; cultivation within the field has all but levelled the remains of earlier agriculture. This enclosure has been excluded from the scheme.

**R9 Burnt Mound**

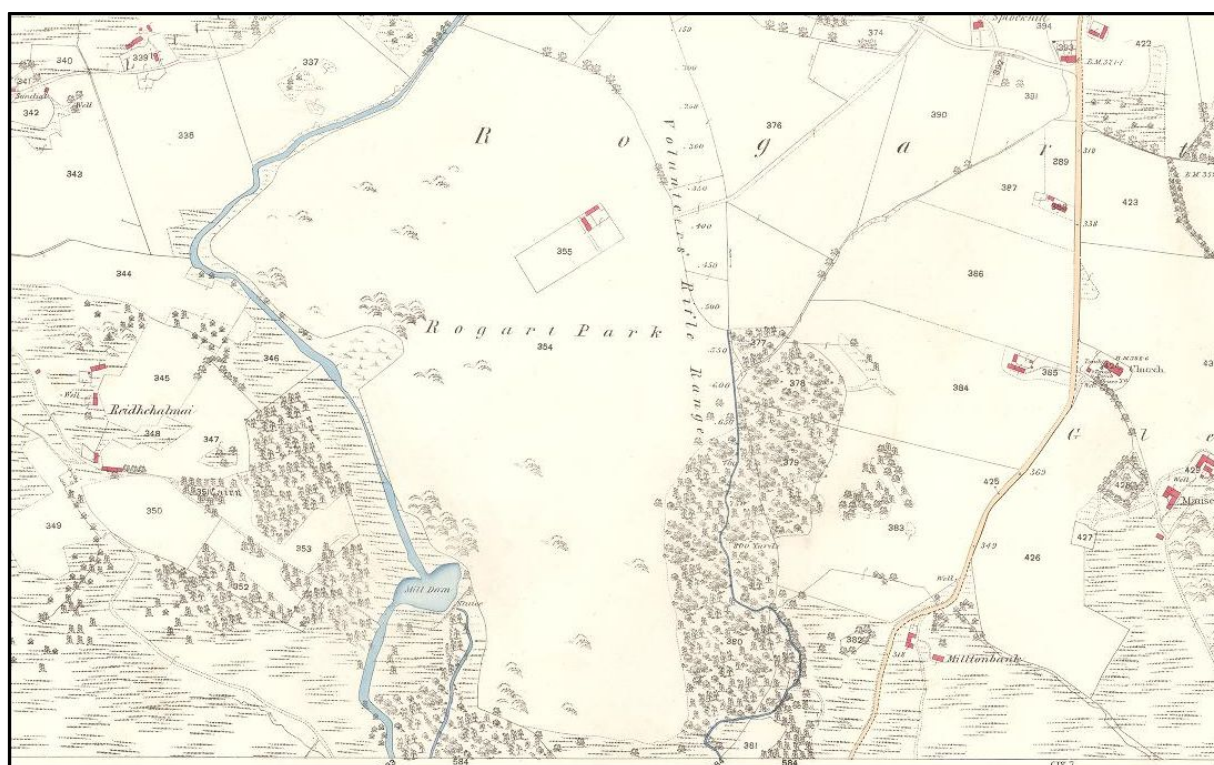
HHER: MHG28252; NMRS: NC70SW106.5  
NC 7339 0361

In 1995 Roger Mercer identified a 'C-shaped burnt mound' 'situated at the edge of an expanse of boggy ground on the E of Little Rogart township. It measures 8m from NW to SE by 5.3m transversely and stands to about 0.75m in height with an opening for a trough on the NE'. This was not found during the survey but an archaeological area has been defined here as a precaution.

**R10 Mill pond, dam**

HHER: MHG43579-80; NMRS: NC70SW106.7  
NC 7313 0328

A dam and the adjacent mill-pond are depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Sutherlandshire 1879, sheet civ). They appear to lie outwith the present proposed scheme boundary, and are unlikely to be affected. See also R5.



**Figure 4 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS :2500 map**

*Sutherland Sheet CIV.3 Derived from digital data courtesy of National Museum of Scotland. Not reproduced to original scale*

General Roy's map (1747-55) shows extensive arable land in the Rogart area, but unfortunately not sufficient detail to provide useful information about this site (Figure 3). The Statistical Accounts for the parish likewise do not throw any light on Rogart Park.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS 1:10560 (6 inches to 1 Mile) and 1:2500 mapping, both surveyed in 1873, provide the first detailed mapping. By this time, the landscape was already remarkably similar to that found today. The 6 inch (1:10560) scale map appears to have been derived from the 1:2500 scale survey. (Figure 4). However down eastern edge of the site is marked on both maps the Volunteers' Rifle range. Recorded site R6 lies exactly at the furthest (800 yards) point on this line and is probably part of it (see above).

## Field Survey

Individual features were not plotted in detail although where evidence of cairns or walls was found way from previously recorded features these were noted for reference. These are as follows:

Feature No	Type	NGR	Arch. Area
F1	Cairn?	NC 73213 03546	A3
F2	Cairn?	NC 73225 03522	A3
F3	Cairn?	NC 73139 03714	A1
F4	Hut circle?	NC 73259 03275	A6
F5	Walls and buildings?	NC 73360 03270	A9
F6	Wall	NC 73235 03094	A8
F7	Walls	NC 73246 03165	A7
F8	Hut circle?	NC 73169 03346	A3
F9	Buildings?	NC 73143 03440	A3
F10	Walls?	NC 73314 03722	A5
F11	Walls	NC 73202 03403	A3
F12	Enclosure	NC 73246 03453	A3
F13	Hut circles?	NC 73236 03426	A3
F14	Hut circle and walls	NC 73294 03486	A3
F15	Walls	NC 73163 03360	A3
F16	Hut circle?	NC 73294 03127	A7
F17	Building?	NC 73221 03111	A8
F18	Burnt mound or clearance heap	NC 73409 03159	A4

Nine areas were identified as being clearly sensitive. These all lie within Rogart Park itself: no archaeological features were visible in the Balclaggan extension. They are indicative, for reference only, and should not be regarded as final. The extent of these is approximately 5.6 hectares, or 16.4% of the whole area; these need not be excluded entirely from planting, provided care is taken to identify and safeguard the individual features the field systems could support, we suggest, careful native broadleaf planting. See the recommendations below for proposed approach to managing the archaeology within the scheme.

### **Area 1** (9,852 sq.m. Centred at NC 7317 0376)

This area contains the recorded site R2 on a rock outcrop and also a possible cairn (F3) identified in the field together with possible prehistoric and later fields and field boundaries.

**Area 2** (775 sq.m. Centred at NC 7336 0360)

A precautionary area centred on a possible burnt mound identified in 1995 (R9)

**Area 3** (32,146 sq.m. Centred at NC 7323 0344)

An extensive area, which includes evidence of Bronze Age / Iron Age hut circles, cairns, and a medieval / post-medieval township (Sites R1, R7, F1-2, F8-9, F11-12, F13-15). More detailed survey is recommended here to clarify areas where some planting could be accommodated.

**Area 4** (369 sq.m. Centred at NC 7341 0315)

A precautionary area centred on a possible burnt mound identified in 1995 (R3; F18)

**Area 5** (1,671 sq.m. Centred at NC 7331 0372)

A precautionary area defined at the eastern end of the croft excluded from the scheme. There are possible features visible here on the aerial photographs, which might be associated with recorded site (the farm: R6 ) but these were unclear on the ground (F10).

**Area 6** (801 sq.m. Centred at NC 7326 0327)

A precautionary area defined around a possible hut circle (F4)

**Area 7** (5,408 sq.m. Centred at NC 7325 0316)

A precautionary area defined around possible features noted on the ground (F7, F16).

**Area 8** (2,239 sq.m. Centred at NC 7323 0309)

A precautionary area defined around the remains of a former boundary dyke and possible associated building noted on the ground (F6, F17).

**Area 9** (2,909 sq.m. Centred at NC 7323 0309)

A precautionary area defined around possible features noted on the ground (F5).

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Rogart Park comprises a roughly oval area of land, now rough grazing, surrounded by a stone dyke. The name refers to this enclosure. Most of the north and west sides are formed by the Garbh-Allt (the rough or wild burn) – there have been considerable attempts over the last 200 years to tame this with water management works around the edges, including a substantial dyke along the northern access, and a mill pond and dam shown on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS 1:10560 map on the south-west boundary.

The site as a whole now consists of rough grazing land which includes knolls of exposed bedrock, areas of former cultivated fields, and wet peat basins. Although many archaeological features are present it would seem that much of the site could be used with care for native broadleaf woodland.

It is important to note that the brief for the present survey was simply to help clarify the potential viability of a planting scheme here. In the writer's view there is no reason why a scheme should not be possible but if a scheme is proceeded with, a more detailed study is strongly recommended to clarify details. This should include checking copies of the 1995 RCAHMS survey and the 1811 estate map against the situation on the ground

Areas of particular sensitivity have been defined but these are indicative only and should not be regarded as exclusion zones. Some careful planting of native broadleaf trees may be possible within these, for example on areas of former fields. Equally, there are no doubt other features present outwith these areas which could not be recorded in a short visit.

Individual archaeological features would need to be marked off on the ground to ensure they are safeguarded during planting; but a full 20m buffer from the nearest visible edge of each feature as in the Forestry Commission guidelines may not be necessary in all cases, depending on the nature of the archaeology and the type of planting proposed.

To avoid the unchecked and damaging growth or scrub across archaeological features that can occur if sites are fenced out permanently from grazing pressures, archaeological features should be managed in context with the surrounding land. Open native woods including birch and alder, if carefully planted and managed, might even help to protect archaeology from future erosion and maintain the visible profile of the ridge and furrow and other features.

The enclosing dyke around Rogart Park is of archaeological interest itself and should be safeguarded in any scheme by keeping planting back at least 5-10m from it.

Although this is not required to inform the planting scheme, from a historical and archaeological point of view the site as a whole has research potential and would warrant further investigation, making use if possible of the Sutherland Estate archives. This might be a suitable subject of study for a local history group or field club.

Appendix 1 includes satellite images georeferenced and overlaid with basic survey details. These provide a general indication of the distribution of field systems and other features.

Photographs were taken but provided panoramic views of the site as a whole rather than details of individual features. They have therefore not been included as plates but can be found on the accompanying CD. An index to the photographs may be found at Appendix 2 below. .

## **Appendix 1: Satellite images (Montage)**

These are reproduced courtesy of [wheresthepath.com](http://wheresthepath.com)

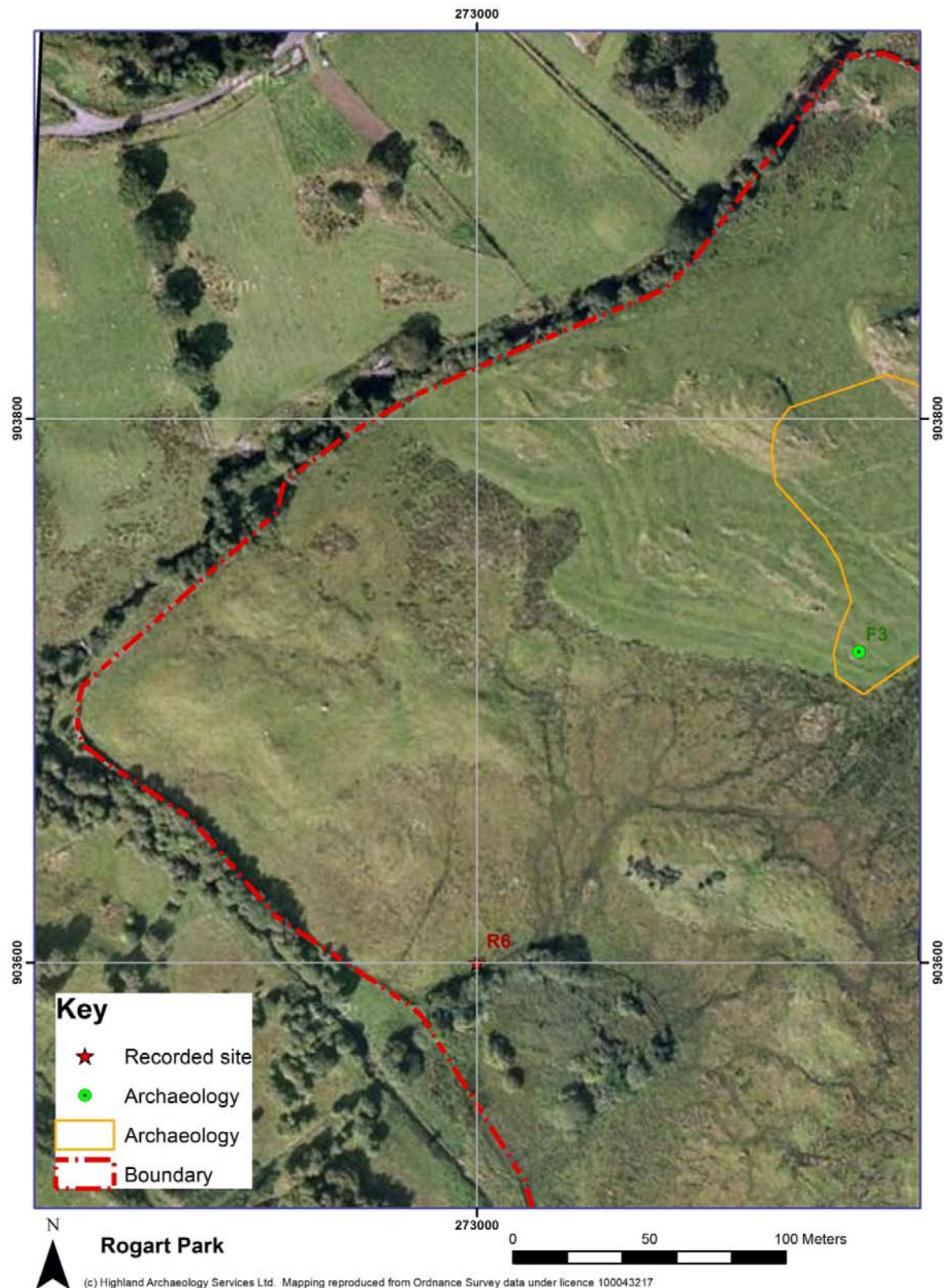


Figure 5 Satellite image (NW)

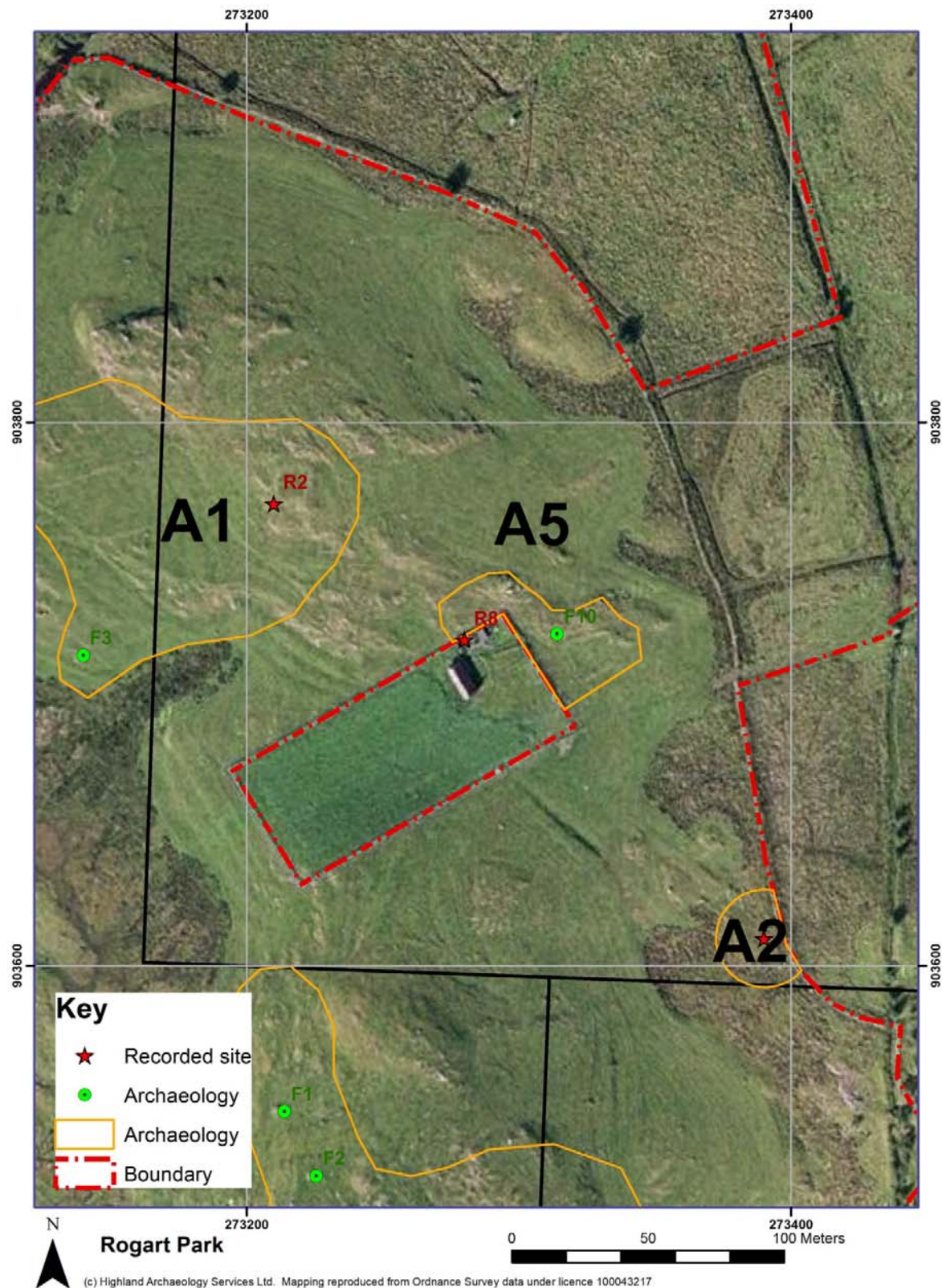


Figure 65 Satellite image (N)

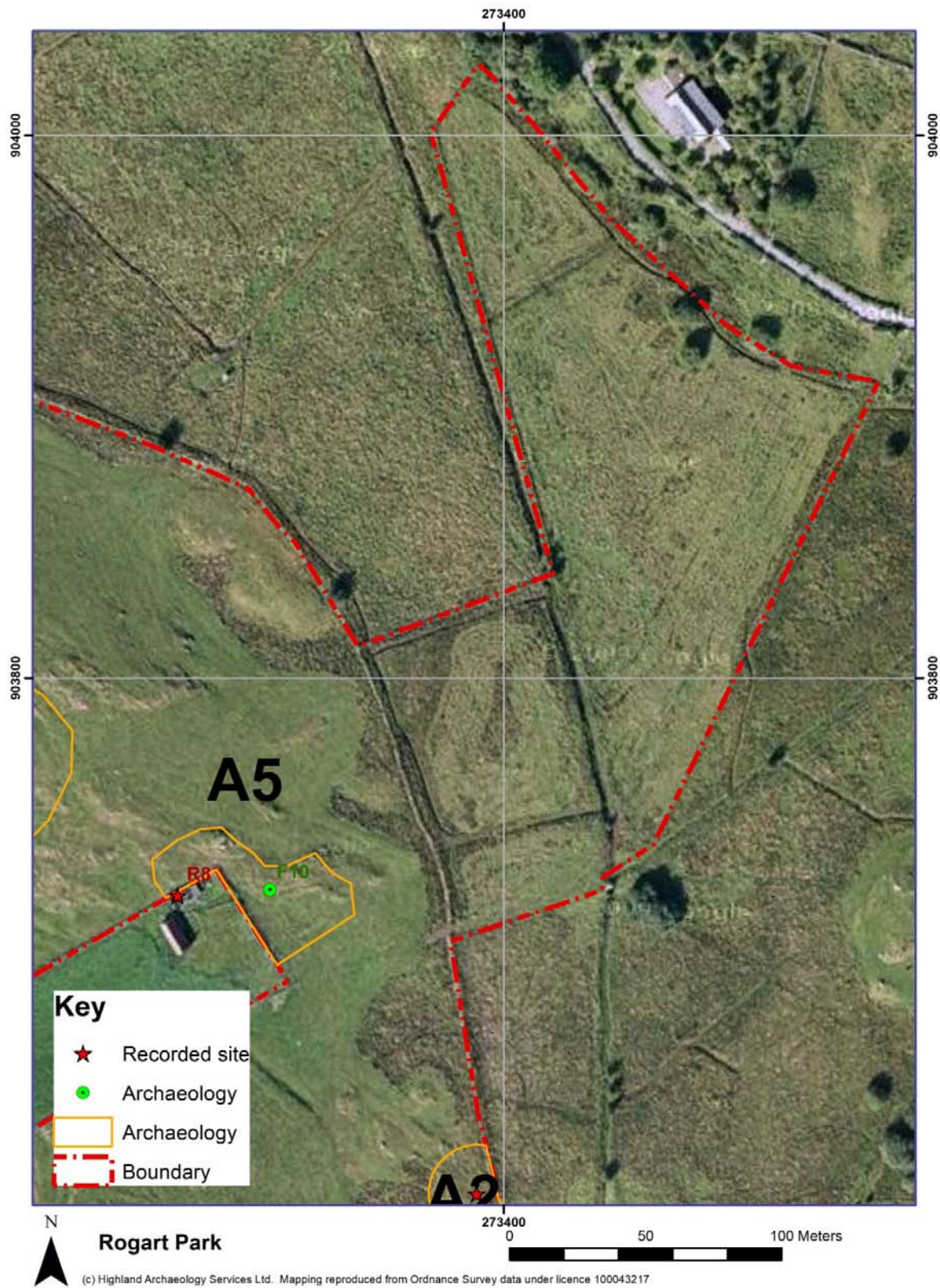


Figure 75 Satellite image (NE)

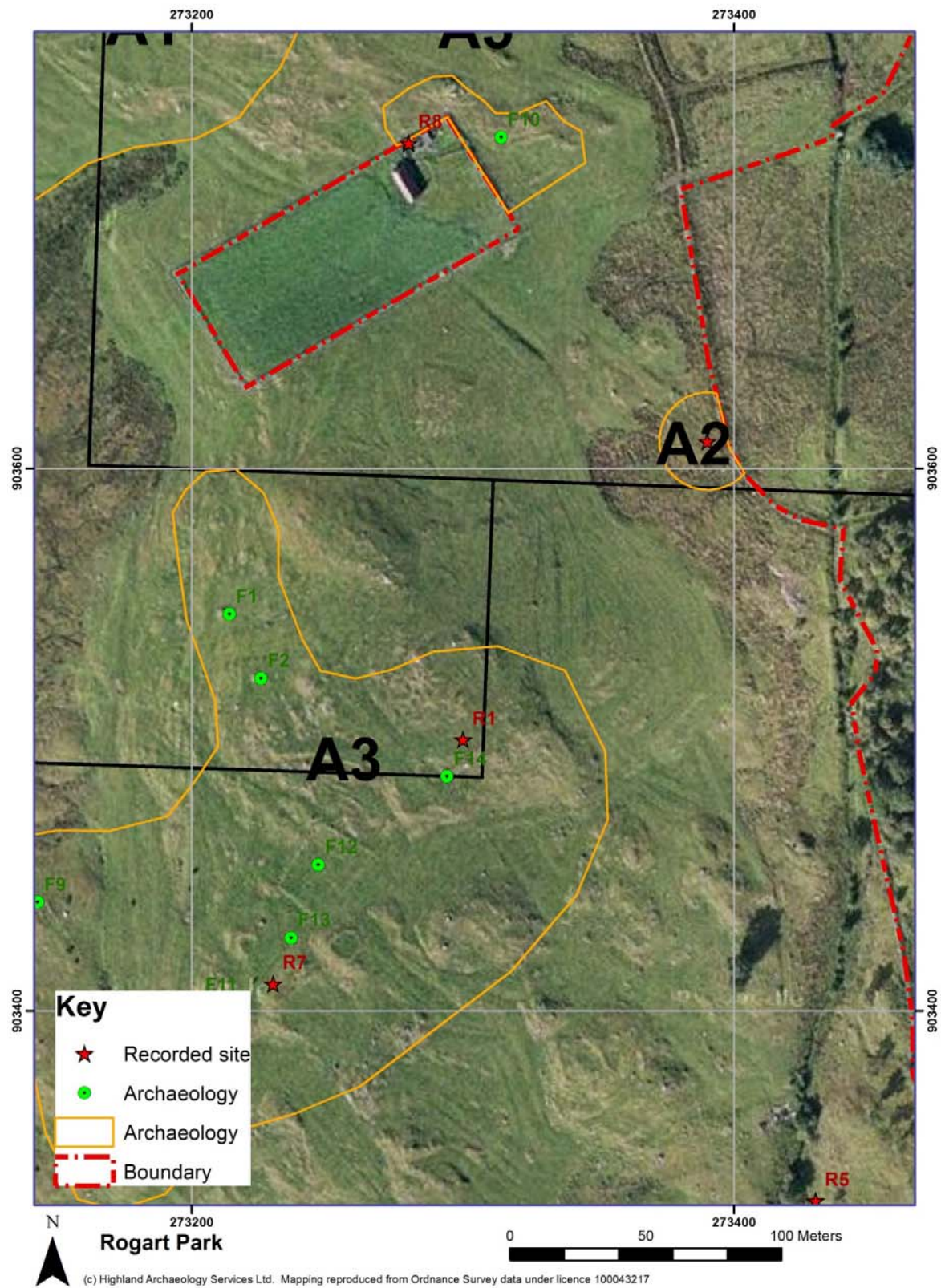


Figure 85 Satellite image (E)

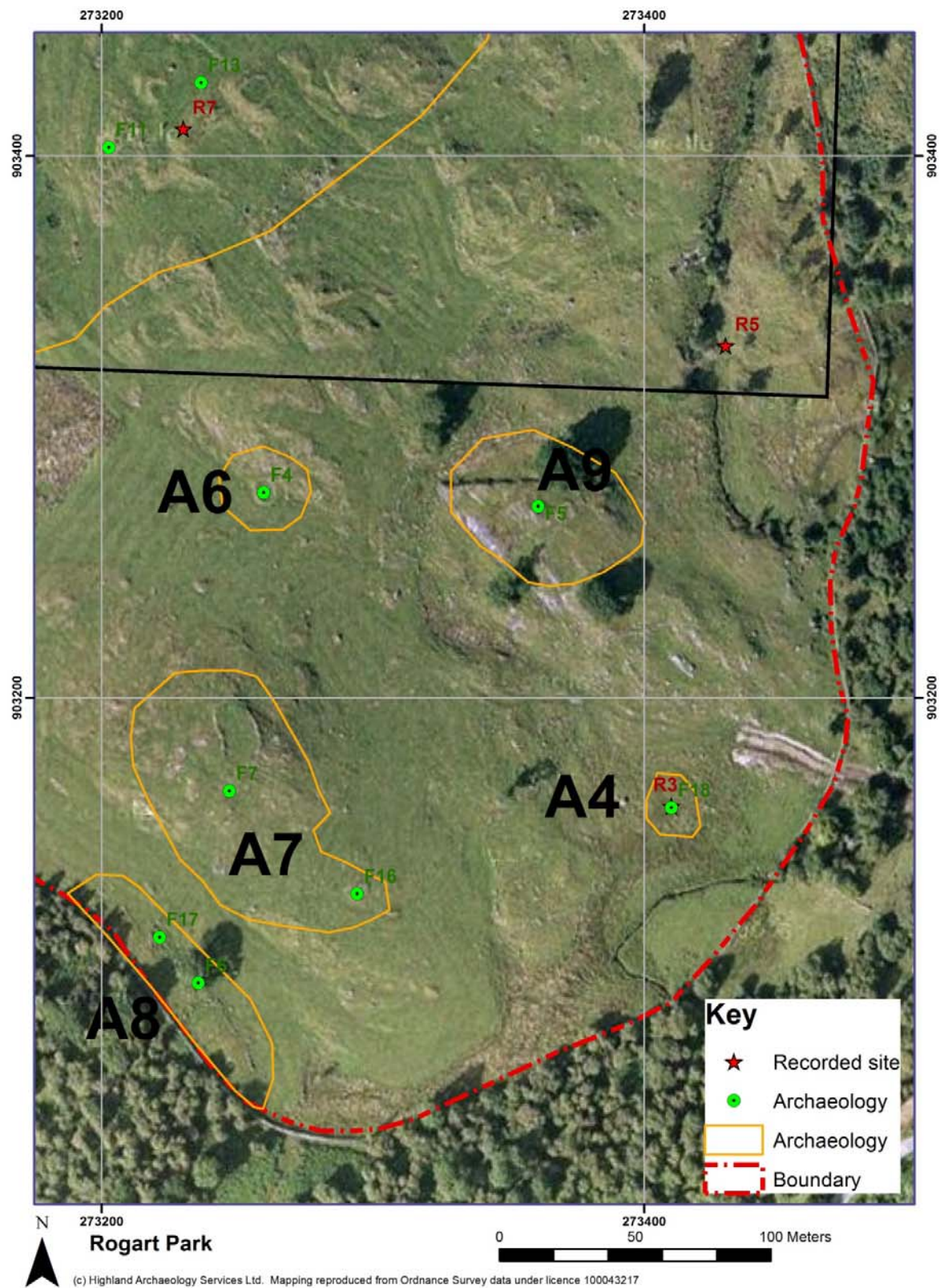


Figure 95 Satellite image (SE)

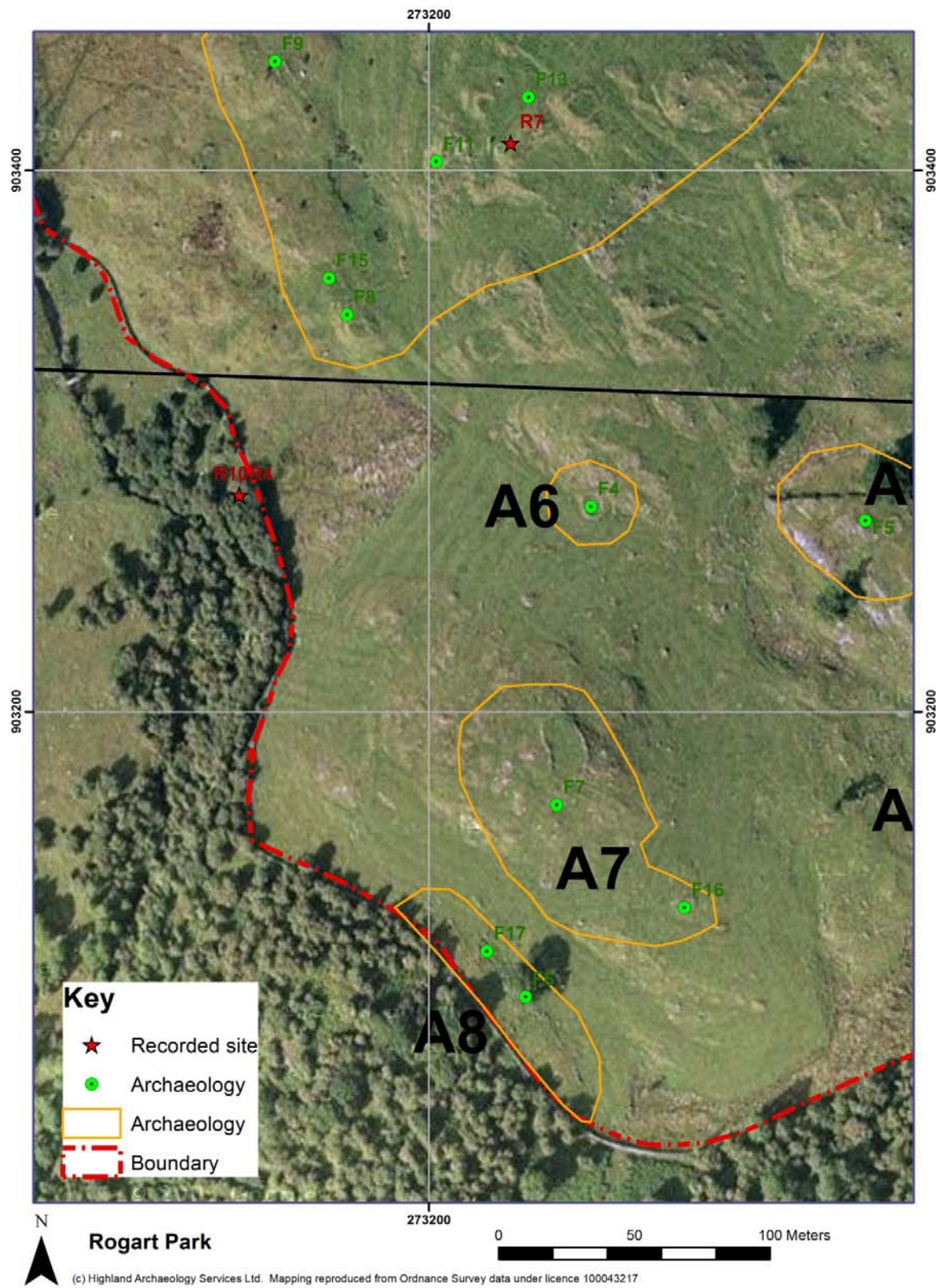


Figure 105 Satellite image (S)

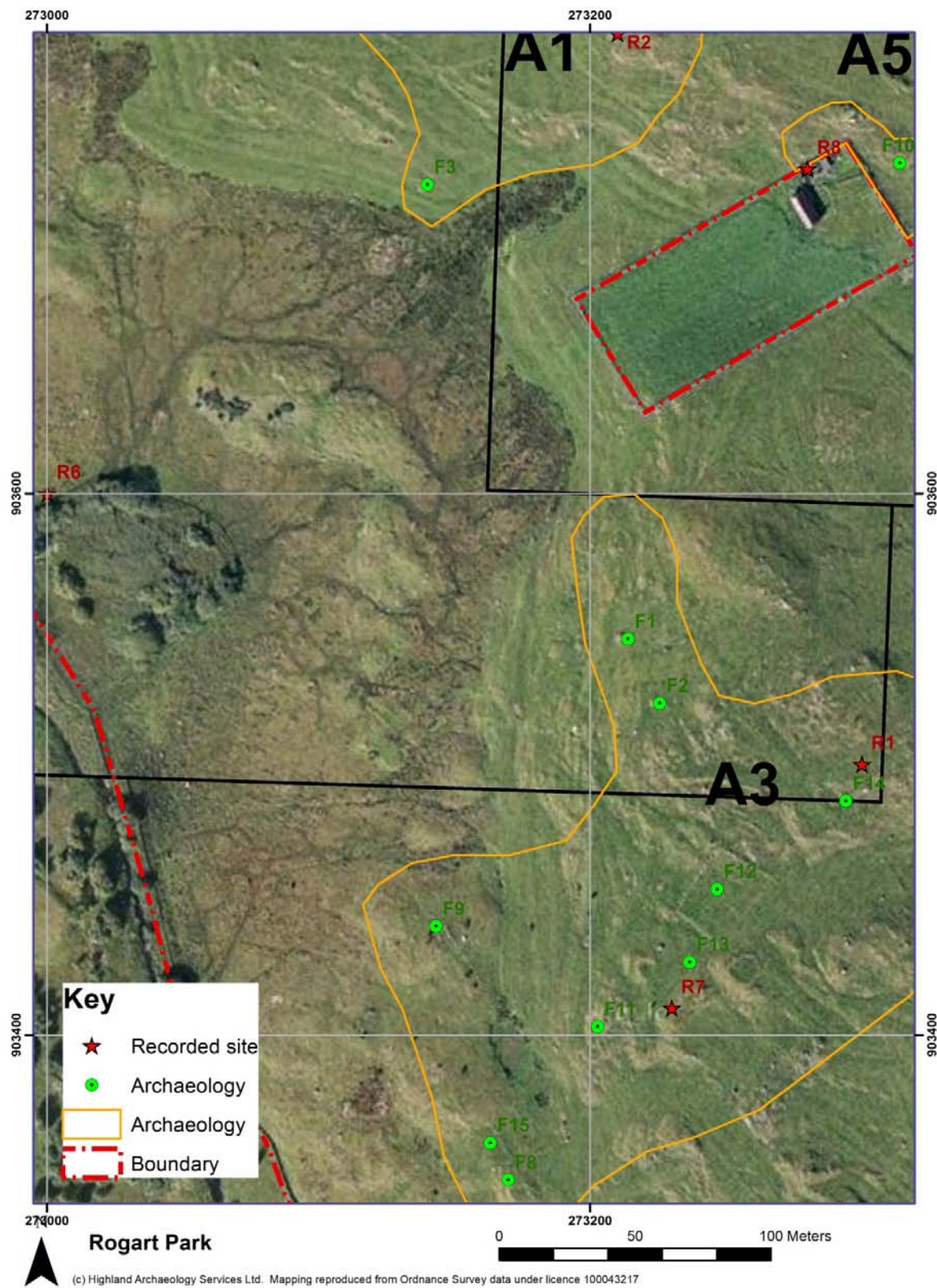


Figure 115 Satellite image (W)

## Appendix 2: Photographs

Photo no	Location	Direction	Subject
DSC_0092	CP1	N	Landscape view including croft R10 excluded from scheme (Panorama)
DSC_0093	CP1	NE	Landscape view including croft R10 excluded from scheme (Panorama)
DSC_0094	CP1	E	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0095	CP1	SE	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0096	CP1	SSE	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0097	CP1	SSW	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0098	CP1	SW	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0099	CP1	WSW	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0100	CP1	W	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0101	CP1	WNW	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0102	CP1	NW	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0103	CP2	W	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0104	CP2	NW	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0105	CP2	NNW	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0106	CP2	NNE	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0107	CP2	NE	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0108	CP2	E	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0109	CP2	SE	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0110	CP2	S	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0111	CP2	SW	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0112	CP3	SE	View along site boundary wall (Panorama)
DSC_0113	CP3	E	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0114	CP3	NE	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0115	CP3	NNE	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0116	CP3	N	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0117	CP3	NW	View along site boundary wall (Panorama)
DSC_0118	CP4	W	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0119	CP4	NW	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0120	CP4	NE	Landscape view (Panorama)
DSC_0121	CP5	NNW	Landscape view
DSC_0122	CP6	N	Landscape view - Fields

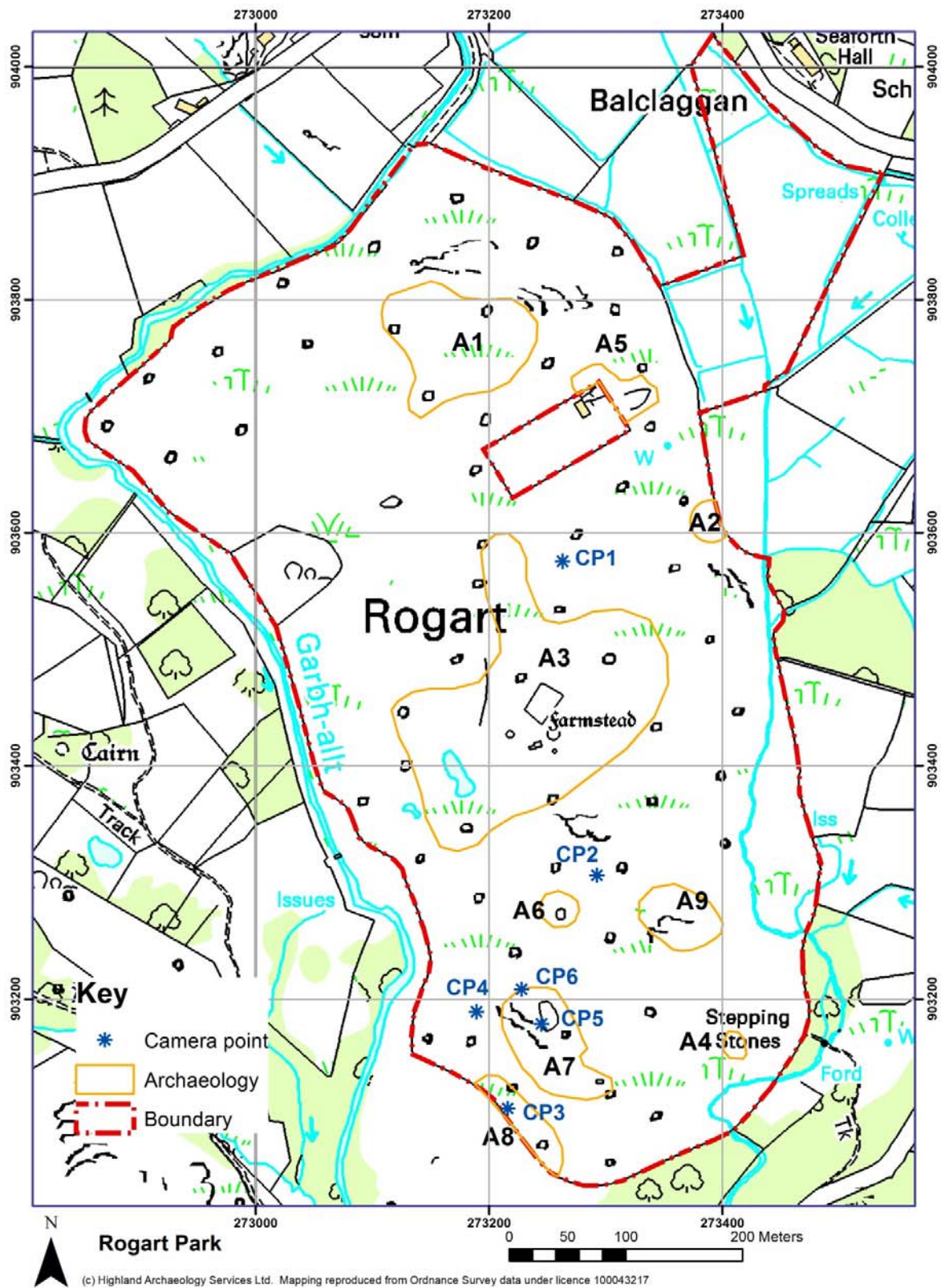


Figure 12 Camera points (photo locations)