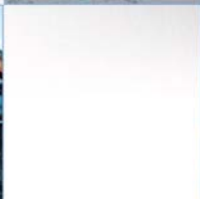
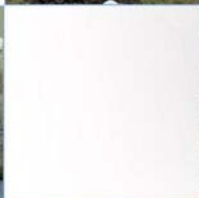


# Conchra Estate Woodland Creation, Ardelve, Skye & Lochalsh Archaeological Walkover Survey Report

AOC 70281  
8<sup>th</sup> May 2018



ARCHAEOLOGY

| HERITAGE

| CONSERVATION

# Conchra Estate Woodland Creation

## Ardelve, Skye & Lochalsh

### Archaeological Walkover Survey Report

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On Behalf of:	Galbraith Reay House 17 Old Edinburgh Road Inverness IV2 3HF
National Grid Reference (NGR):	NG 86181 28105 (Area 1, west, centred) NG 88786 28141 (Area 2, east, centred)
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## **Abstract**

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This report details the results of an archaeological walkover survey undertaken on land at Conchra Estate proposed for a woodland creation project. The survey was required due to the location of the site within an area considered to have the potential for unrecorded historic environment features to be present.

The walkover survey was undertaken on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April 2018. Fifty-seven archaeological sites were recorded including hut circles, clearance cairns, dykes and buildings.

A mitigation strategy is proposed to safeguard the sites from damage during plantation of new woodland.

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 An archaeological walkover survey was required on behalf of Galbraith with regards to an area of proposed forestry plantation as part of a woodland creation project at Conchra Estate, Ardelve, Ross-shire. The aim of the survey was to identify and assess the nature and extent of any upstanding archaeology likely to be directly affected by the proposed development and to inform decisions on any further fieldwork or mitigation.
- 1.2 The site lies within the administrative area of Highland Council, which is advised on archaeological matters by Kirsty Cameron, Archaeologist, Highland Council Historic Environment Team. The walkover survey was specified in keeping with the policies outlined in *Scottish Planning Policy* (2014) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology* (2011) in order to record the extent and significance of any archaeological remains which may be present within the development area.
- 1.3 The survey was carried out on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April 2018. Fifty-seven archaeological sites were identified including hut circles, clearance cairns, dykes and structures. A mitigation strategy has been recommended to prevent unnecessary damage to sites of archaeological significance.

## 2.0 Project Background

- 2.1 The two survey areas are located on the west, south and east facing slopes of Beinn Conchra overlooking Loch Alsh and Loch Long to the north of Ardelve, approximately 8 miles east of Kyle of Lochalsh (**Figure 1**) (centred on grid references NG 86181 28105 (Area 1, west) and NG 88786 28414 (Area 2, east); **Figures 2-3**). The terrain consists of a mix of heathland and improved ground on fairly steep slopes in places (**Plates 1-2**).
- 2.2 The proposed woodland creation is located in a wider area that is rich in archaeological remains from prehistory through to more recent times. Several prehistoric hut circles have previously been recorded in Gleann Udalain and Conchra. Post-medieval buildings and farmsteads are located at Cnoc an T-Searraich, Allt an Ard-Achaidh, Camas-Longart and Allt-na-Sugh.

## 3.0 Desk-based Assessment

### 3.1 Methodology

- 3.1.1 A desk-based assessment was conducted prior to commencement of the survey in order to assess the archaeological potential of the area based on previously recorded sites and any historical documentation. A full check of all available historical and archaeological records, aerial photographs and historical maps was conducted using the Highland Council Historical Environment Record, the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE), Ordnance Survey Name Books, Historic Environment Scotland's databases, the National Library of Scotland, statistical accounts and other available records, literary sources or online resources about the site.

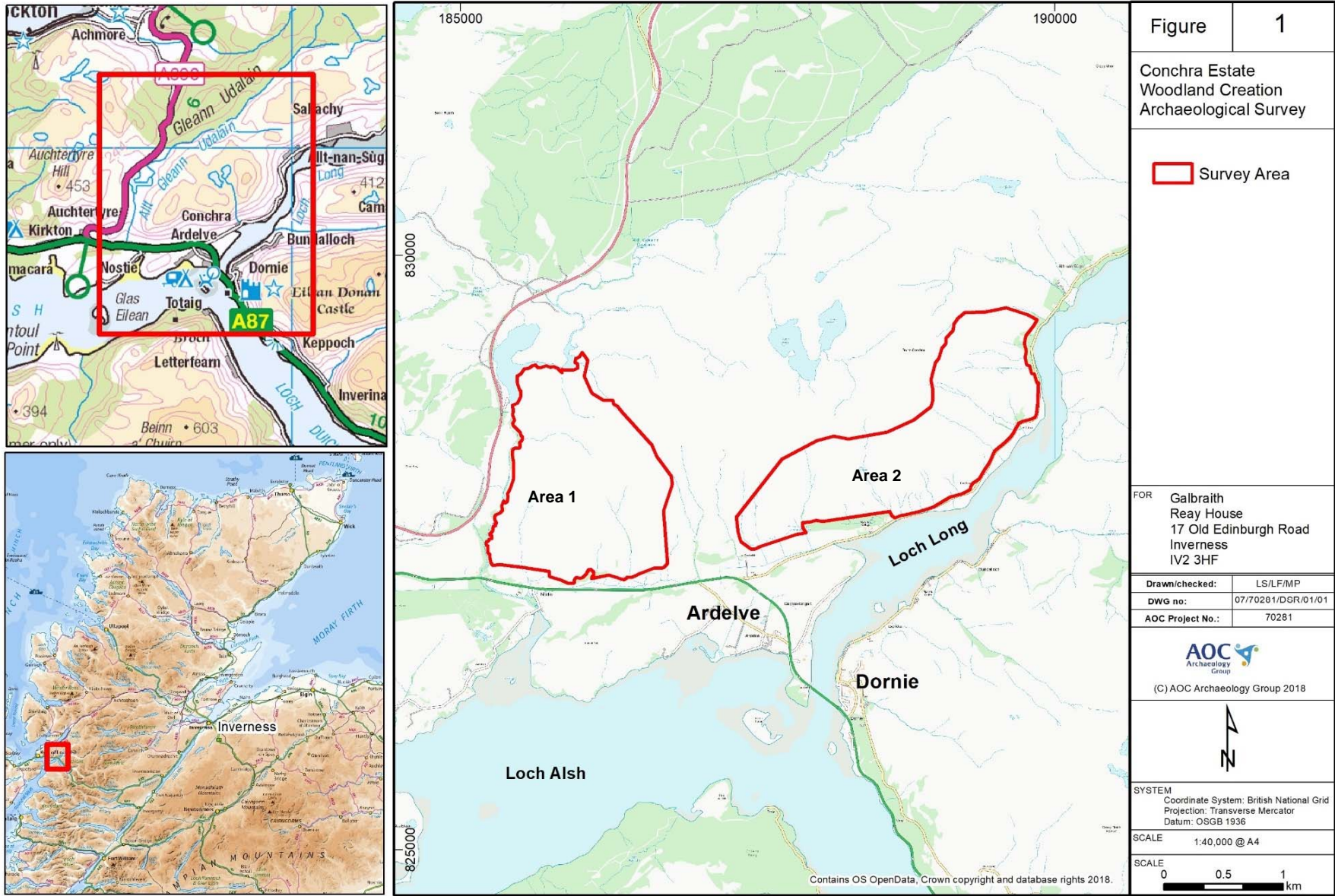


Figure 1: Site location map



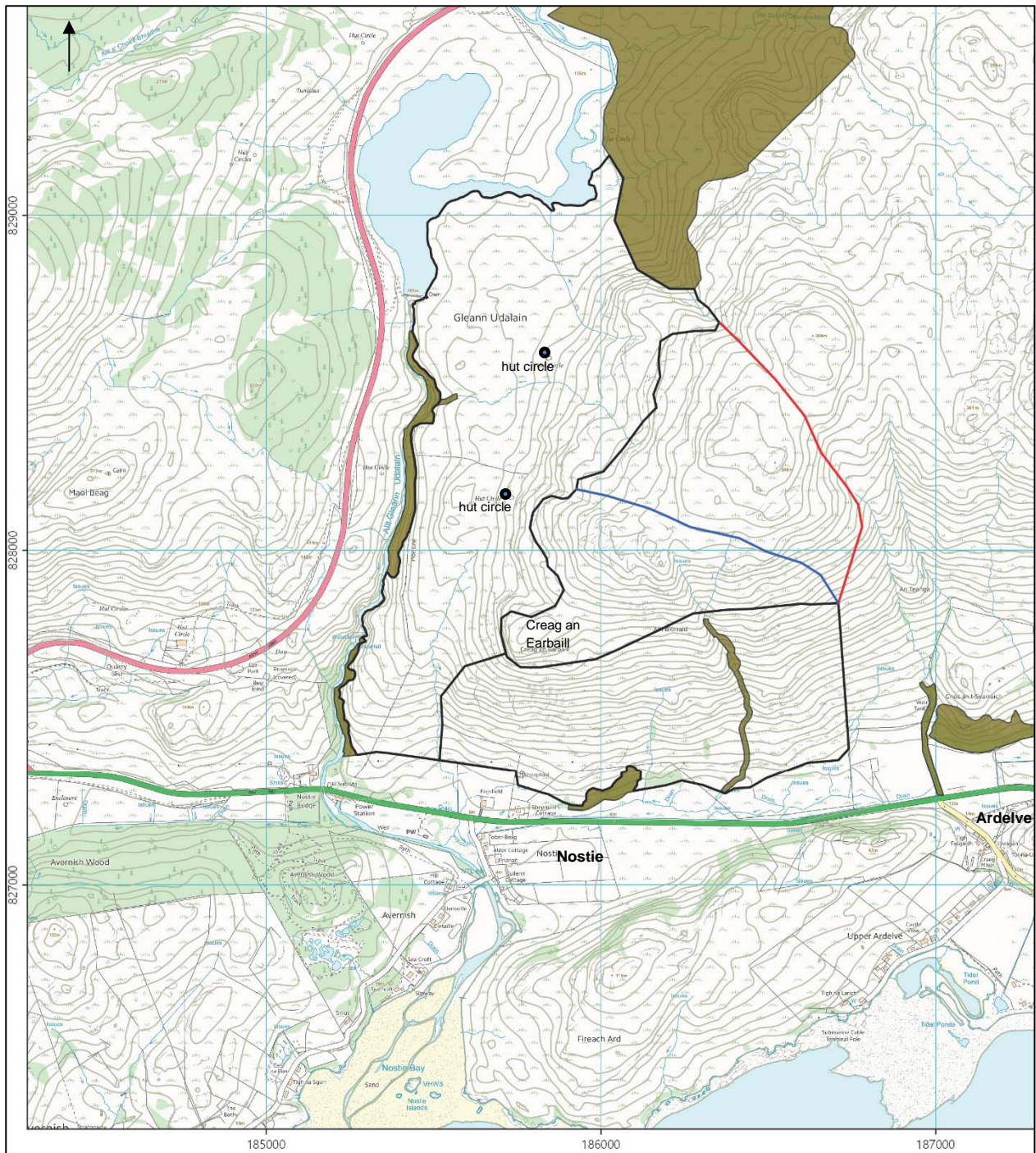
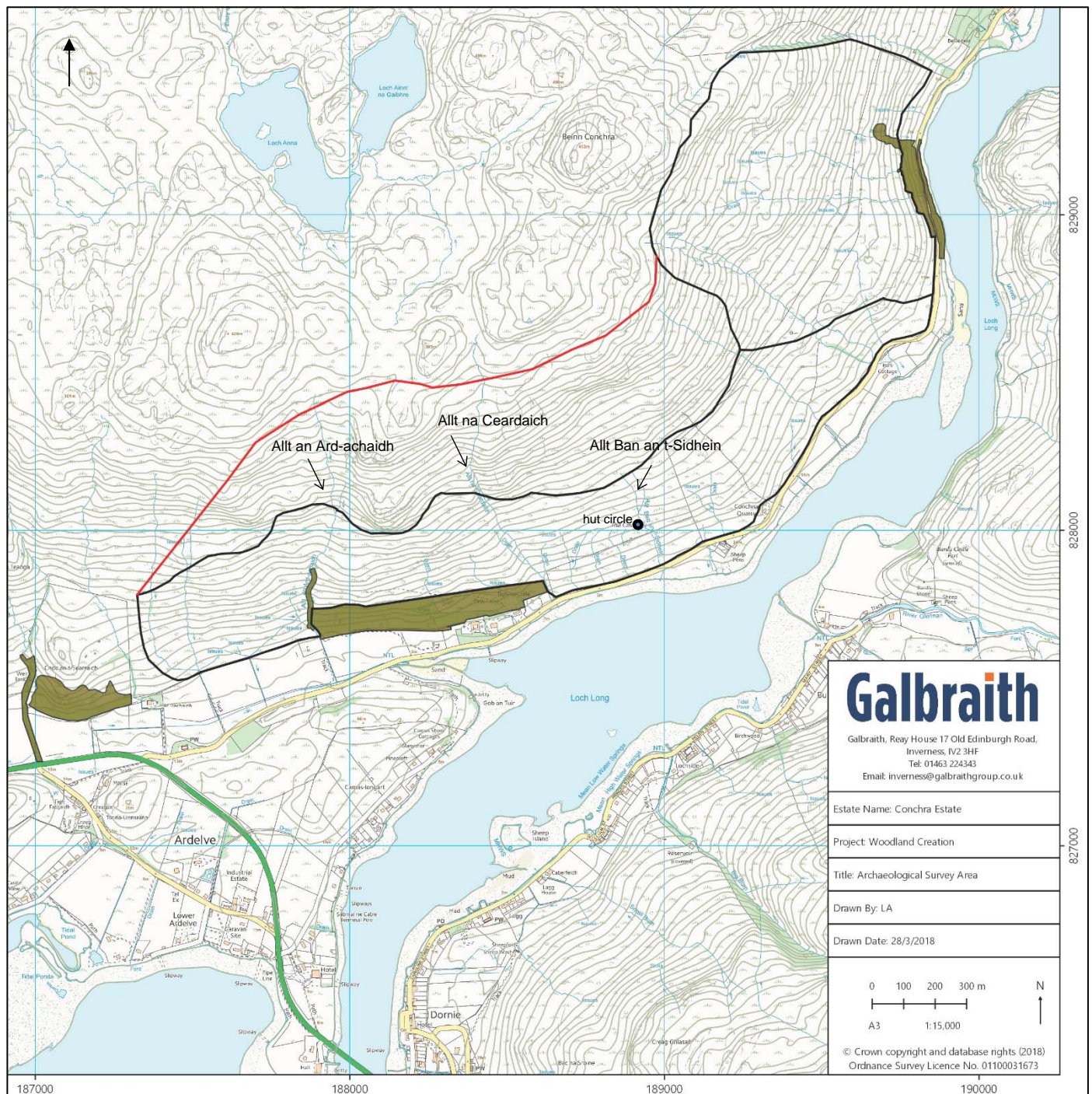


Figure 2: Survey area 1 location map (plan provided by Galbraith)





**Figure 3: Survey area 2 location map (plan provided by Galbraith)**





**Plate 1: Panorama view over the north end of survey area 1, facing NW**



**Plate 2: Panorama view over the west half of survey area 2, facing E**



## 3.2 Cartographic Sources

### 3.2.1 Historical maps were consulted online at the National Library of Scotland (NLS 2018):

- a) William Roy Military Survey of Scotland, 1747-1755

This map shows an early picture of Conchra Estate, depicting several townships and cultivated areas at the base of the hills and along the shores of Loch Alsh and Loch Long. Named settlements include: *Nostie*, *Ardtellive*, *Achnabing*, *Anacha* (Conchra) (**Figure 4**).

- b) John Thomson's Atlas of Scotland, 1832

This map shows an early depiction of the survey area with the townships of *Nosti*, *Ardkyle* and *Conchra* marked.

- c) Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 6-inch-to-the-mile map  
Ross-shire and Cromartysire (Mainland), Sheets CXXIII and CXXIV  
Survey Date: 1875 Publication Date: 1880

#### Area 1

This map shows the western survey area as rough open ground called Creag an Earbaill (**Figure 5**). It borders the Allt Gleann Udalain on its west side and is crossed by a small number of stream courses. On the east side, the survey area terminates on the west side of a deep gully at An Teanga. There were no structures, dykes or enclosures noted within the survey area. Notably the current loch and dam on Allt Gleann Udalain are not depicted since they were built at a later date.

#### Area 2

This map shows the eastern survey area as mostly rough open ground, with enclosed areas of improved ground, mostly outside of the southern edge of the survey area. Area 2 is located on the east side of Cnoc an t-Searraich and Beinn Conchra is located beyond the northern central survey boundary. There are a number of notable burns running through the area, including Allt an Ard-achaidh, Allt na Ceardaich, Allt Ban an t-Sidhein, from west to east.

The small settlements within the improved ground outside of the south and southeast sides of the survey area pertain to farms at Ceann-na-moine, Ardelve and Conchra. Spread amongst these settlements are a corn mill, smithy, post office, free church and manse. A sheepfold is depicted at Cnoc an t-Searraich, just north of the free church, and west of the Allt Ban an t-Sitheain – both beyond the survey area. To the northeast, slightly outwith the survey area is the township of Allt-na-subh.

- d) Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition 6-inch-to-the-mile map  
Ross and Cromarty Sheets CXXIII and CXXIV  
Survey Date: 1902 Publication Date: 1905

This map shows a very similar picture to that of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition. The survey area is still depicted as rough open ground with a few improved fields to the south alongside the main road. A new boundary dyke is shown running north across the survey area from Cnoc an t-Searraich before turning west to join the Allt Gleann Udalain. While the settlements in the

area remain much the same, Ceann-na-moine is now called Nostie and a new building called Fernfield (a convent/nunnery) is named. A new sheepfold is also marked next to Fernfield.

### 3.3 Ordnance Survey Name Books

3.3.1 The Ordnance Survey Name Books (for the 1875 survey) were consulted online at *Scotlands Places* (Scotlands Places 2018) and the following names were found that are related the survey area:

- a) *Creag an Earbail*- This name Signifying the "Hill of the Tail" is Applied to a prominent Eminence Situated above the District of Ardelve on the property of Alexander Matheson Esqr. M.P. [Member of Parliament]
- b) *An Teanga*- This name Signifying the "Tongue" is Applied to an Eminence forming a tongue in the fork of two Streams. on the property of Alexander Matheson Esqr. M.P. [Member of Parliament]
- c) *Allt na h-Aodainn*- This name Signifying the "Stream of the Face" is Applied to a Stream flowing S. [South] down the hillside and falling into another Stream near Cnoc an t-Serraich on the property of A. Matheson Esqr. M.P. [Member of Parliament]
- d) *Cnoc an t-Searraich*- This name Signifying the "Hill of the Foal" is Applied to a Small Eminence Situated adjacent to and South of Teanga. on the property of A. Matheson Esqr. M.P. [Member of Parliament]
- e) *Allt Gleann Udalain*- This name the signification of which is obscure is applied to a stream flowing through Gleann Udalain and falling into Loch Alsh. On the property of A. Matheson Esqr. M.P. [Member of Parliament]
- f) *Allt an Ard-Achaidh*- This name Signifying the "Stream of the high Field" is applied to a Stream flowing South down the hillside north of the district of Ardelve and falling into Loch Long. on the property of A. Matheson Esqr. M.P. [Member of Parliament]
- g) *Conchra*- This name applies to a Sheep Farmers residence with Suitable offices adjacent. the dwelling house is 2 and the Offices are 1 Storey high. all Slated and in Good repair. on the property of A. Matheson Esqr. M.P. [Member of Parliament]
- h) *Allt na Ceardaich*- This name Signifying the "Smithy Burn" is applied to a Stream flowing past Conchra on the E. [East] and falling into Loch Long by a smithy on the property of A. Matheson Esqr. M.P. [Member of Parliament]
- i) *Allt Druim Dhonnchaidh*- This name signifying the "Stream of Duncan's Ridge" is applied to a stream having its source on the S.W. end of Beinn Conchra flows N.W. and falls into "Allt Gleann Udalain". On the property of A. Matheson Esqr. M.P. [Member of Parliament]



Figure 4: Extract from Roy's Military Map, 1747-55 (NLS)



Figure 5: Extract from the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS 6-inch map (surveyed 1875) centred on survey area 1 (NLS)

### 3.4 Documentary Sources

- 3.4.1 The survey area is situated in the former County of Ross and Cromarty and lies within the parish of Lochalsh.
- 3.4.2 The Statistical Accounts for Scotland were consulted for information relevant to the survey area. The Old Statistical Account (1794) makes no direct reference to the area of investigation, but generally describes a mountainous area in which farming and fishing are the main industries and there is a general growth in the population. The New Statistical Account (1845) also makes no direct reference to the survey area, but says that “great improvements” have taken place within the parish in the last forty years.

### 3.5 Historic Environment Sources

- 3.5.1 A full search of the Highland Council Historic Environment Record and the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) was carried out. The survey area lies within a rich archaeological landscape containing remains from prehistoric to post-medieval times. Within the survey area boundary there are five previously known sites: three hut circles, a possible fort site (although its location is disputed) and 1940s power station. Near the survey area are a number of prehistoric cairns and hut circles, as well as a prehistoric dun, a post-medieval crofting township and various isolated post-medieval farmsteads and boundary dykes. The Scheduled Monument of Eilean Donan Castle (SM7575) is located on the opposite shores of Loch Alsh and Loch Long from the survey area.

- 3.5.2 The following sites were found in the within survey **area 1**:

<b>MHG9262</b>	<b>NG 8570 2770</b>	<b>Possible Fort, Creag-an-Earbail</b>
Although the remains of a fortification on the top of Creag-on-Earbail were reported in 1898 this claim was refuted by an Ordnance Survey in 1966.		

<b>MHG9248</b>	<b>NG 8573 2815</b>	<b>Hut circle, Gleann Udalain</b>
A stone-walled circular hut measuring 9.0m in overall diameter. The outer face is visible for much of the periphery. The N arc is partially destroyed, and no entrance is evident. There is so much debris around the inside of the wall that it seems likely to have been occupied at a later date.		

<b>MHG9212</b>	<b>NG 8584 2857</b>	<b>Hut circle, Gleann Udalain</b>
A circular stone-walled hut measuring 8.6m in diameter within a wall 1.3m thick with no evident entrance.		

<b>MHG29659</b>	<b>NG 8545 2875</b>	<b>Power Station, Gleann Udalain</b>
Part of a schemes for the generation of electricity promoted during 1948		

- 3.5.3 The following sites were found in the within survey **area 2**:

<b>MHG9252</b>	<b>NG 8892 2800</b>	<b>Hut circle, Conchra</b>
At NG 8892 2800 levelled into a S-facing slope, is a circular stone-walled enclosure, almost certainly a hut circle of unusually strong construction. It measures 12.0m in diameter within a		



wall 1.6m thick faced with large stones on edge, best preserved in the W. The E half has been mutilated there are traces of later walls in the interior. The entrance is not evident. It is suggested that this may be what Wallace had pointed out to him as a fort (see NG82NE 5). The hill above the hut has been extensively cultivated at some period in the past, leaving a few stone clearance heaps, lynchets, & ruinous walls, none of which can positively be said to be contemporary with it.

#### 3.5.4 The following sites were found near the survey areas:

##### **MHG9271                      NG 8490 2753                      Structure, Clearance Cairn, Auchtertyre**

To the S of the A890, at the foot of a small hill, 250m SW of the reservoir and at a height of 72m OD is a very degraded stone structure with bow sides. A small cleared area with clearance cairns to its N side lies immediately to the N.

##### **MHG9196                      NG 8495 2776                      Cairn, Auchtertyre**

Within the loop of the old line of the A890, just to the E of the fenced area, at a height of 110m OD are three enclosed terraces with associated clearance cairns.

##### **MHG9251                      NG 8506 2773                      Dun, Nostie**

Surmounting a rocky knoll at NG 8506 2773 is the foundation of an oval dun. It measures overall 23.0m NNW-SSE by c. 13.0m, with the outer wall face visible in the debris for most of the perimeter except in the W where the wall has mostly slipped away. The entrance is not evident but may have been in the W at the easiest approach. Below the dun on the W is a near-circular enclosure. This seems to be relatively recent and may be contemporary with late cultivation close by.

##### **MHG9275                      NG 8500 2800                      Hut Circle, Gleann Udalain**

Enclosures or hut circles in Gleann Udalain

##### **MHG9256                      NG 8522 2792                      Enclosure, Stone Setting, Gleann Udalain**

Lying 25m to the E of the A890, at a height of 140m OD is a ruinous sub-rectangular rubble-built enclosure. Small annexes lie to the NW and SE. A small circular setting of stones 2m in diameter lies 17m to the NE.

##### **MHG9258                      NG 8520 2830                      Cultivation Remains, Gleann Udalain**

On the E-facing slope overlooking the A890, at a height of 175m OD are two isolated lengths of lazy bed cultivation.

##### **MHG9257                      NG 8532 2818                      Stone Setting, Gleann Udalain**

Overlooking the Allt Gleann Udalain at a height of 150m OD is a 2m square setting of small stones. A stone revetted terrace leads S off the southern side of this setting of stones.

##### **MHG9210                      NG 8534 2822                      Hut Circle, Gleann Udalain**

A circular stone-walled hut measuring 5.5m in diameter within a wall 1.3m thick. The entrance in the E is obscured by debris from the wall.

##### **MHG9203                      NG 8585 2937                      Mound, Gleann Udalain**

By the E side of the boundary dyke which lies on the rise to the E of the reservoir, at a height of 170m OD is a turf and stone mound.

**MHG9250                      NG 8603 2925                      Hut Circle, Gleann Udalain**

At NG 8603 2925 is a circular stone-walled hut 10.5m. in diameter between centres of a wall spread to 3.0m. Entrance not evident.

**MHG55741                      NG 86982 29096                      Boundary Bank, south of Allt Glean Udalain**

A boundary bank was seen south of the Allt Glean Udalain during a walkover survey in 2010. This feature can in fact be seen on aerial photographs continuing south-westwards for several hundred metres.

**MHG22532                      NG 8692 2748                      Structure, Cnoc an T-Searraich**

An unroofed structure attached to a field wall is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Ross-shire 1880, sheet cxxiii), but it is not shown on the current edition of the OS 1:10000 map (1972).

**MHG22531                      NG 8710 2760                      Building, Cnoc an T-Searraich**

An unroofed building is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Ross-shire 1880, sheet cxxiii), but it is not shown on the current edition of the OS 1:10000 map (1972).

**MHG22530                      NG 8787 2763                      Farmstead, Allt an Ard-Achaidh**

A farmstead comprising one unroofed building within an enclosure is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Ross-shire 1880, sheet cxxiii).

**MHG22552                      NG 8795 2746                      Farmstead, Camas-Longart**

A farmstead comprising two roofed buildings, a circular unroofed structure and some field walls is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Ross-shire 1880, sheet cxxiii).

**MHG27287                      NG 9010 2980                      Crofting Township, Allt-na-Sugh**

What may be a crofting township comprising one unroofed, two partially roofed and thirty-nine roofed buildings is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Ross-shire 1880, sheet cxxiv). Four unroofed and twelve roofed buildings are shown on the current edition of the OS 1:10000 map (1971).

**MHG9272                      NG 8500 2700                      Nunnery, Fernfield**

It is thought that there was once a convent at Fernfield.

**MHG9254                      NG 8747 2730                      Ardelve Free Church****MHG24463                      NG 8736 2745                      Ardelve Free Church Manse****MHG48848                      NG 85470 27146                      St Donnan's Episcopal Church, Nostie**

This is a tiny chapel of whitewashed blockwork with asphalted concrete and woodwool roof slabs, sequestered in a birchwood clearing by the Nostie burn.

### 3.6 Aerial Imagery

3.6.1 Satellite imagery was consulted on Google Maps online (2018). Field boundaries for the improved fields to the south of the survey area are visible on the aerial imagery but there are no identifiable features within the survey area.



## 4.0 Survey Methodology

- 4.1 The archaeological survey was conducted by two archaeologists. The areas of the proposed woodland creation was systematically walked and sites were recorded using written descriptions and high resolution digital photography, as well as their locations being recorded using an Archer Field PC unit capable of sub-metre accuracy.
- 4.2 Survey and recording methods recommended by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (2004) were employed and all work was conducted in strict adherence to the *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of Conduct* (2014).

## 5.0 Survey Results

### 5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 The walkover survey was carried out on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April 2018. The weather was variable with heavy rain, light winds and some dry sunny spells.
- 5.1.2 Fifty-seven sites were recorded during the survey with three hut circles having been previously recorded (**Figures 2; 3**). The sites relate to activity in the area spanning from prehistoric to more modern times and include hut circles, sheilings, clearance cairns, structures and dykes. For ease of reference the two survey areas will be discussed discretely as Area 1 (west) and Area 2 (east). Figures and Plates cited are set out in **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 2** respectively. The detailed site gazetteer and photograph register are set out in **Appendix 3** and **Appendix 4** respectively.

### 5.2 Area 1

- 5.2.1 The western survey area produced eighteen sites most of which could encompass both prehistoric and post-medieval activity within the area. The sites recorded include four hut circles or possible hut circles, a building, shieling, clearance cairns and dykes. The survey area comprised mostly heather-covered hillsides over most of the area, but places of improved ground within the southern third, closest to the southern survey boundary.
- 5.2.2 A small, rush and heather-covered rectangular building (Site 40; **Plate 3**), which contained two small twinning pens (Sites 40a and 40b), was ascribed to the post-medieval period due to its shape. A nearby dyke (Site 41) was most likely associated with the building (**Figure 7**). The sites are located near the northern end of the survey area at the base of the hillside.
- 5.2.3 Four hut circles or possible hut circles were recorded across the area. Two of these had been previously recorded: Site 43 relates to HER site MHG9248 and Site 56 to HER site MHG9212 (see paragraph 3.5.2). Site 43 is located on a heather and grass-covered knoll and is in a degraded condition. It measures approximately 5m in diameter internally and is comprised of large boulders (**Figure 8; Plate 2**). Site 56 is located on a heather-covered spur above the valley floor and was difficult to locate, in a very degraded condition below deep heather. It is larger being approximately 9m in diameter internally with only the surface of a few boulders showing in its banks (**Figure 8; Plate 4**). Site 47, again located on a knoll, was another smaller

hut circle with double-skin, boulder-built walls that stood up to 0.5m high. A large boulder had been incorporated into the wall on its south side (**Figure 9**). Situated on a terrace near the base of the survey area was Site 50, which is a circular, boulder-built hut circle or pen. A large boulder within its interior possibly adds weight to the interpretation of use or re-use as an animal pen (**Figure 10; Plate 6**).

5.2.4 Two shielings (Sites 44 and 50b) were also recorded. Site 44 was a double-celled structure on a high, south-facing ledge and built into the base of some scree (**Figure 10; Plate 7**). Site 50b was less distinct. Situated to the south of Site 50 (see above), it comprised an arc of stone that may be the remains of a small, single cell shieling (**Figure 10**).

5.2.5 Several dykes (Sites 42, 46, 48, 49, 51 and 57; **Figures 8, 9, 11**) were located across the survey area. These were a mix of stone and turf, boulder and drystone dykes that would have most likely been used for animal management. Some such as Sites 48 and 51 appeared to have been part of enclosure walls.

5.2.6 Agricultural cultivation of the land is evidenced by the large number of clearance cairns that were recorded on a flat terrace of improved ground above the eastern side of the burn valley (Sites 45, 52 and 53; **Figures 10, 11, 12**). Site 52 (**Plate 8**) is particularly extensive. Within this landscape is also a pen (Site 54) and a possible lynchet (Site 55) (**Figure 11**).

### 5.3 Area 2

5.3.1 The eastern survey area produced thirty-nine sites that encompass prehistoric and post-medieval activity in the area. The sites include eight hut circles, banks and dykes, structures and clearance cairns. The area comprised steep hillsides with natural boulder and stone scatters across the ground and small terraces dotting the hillside across the high ground.

5.3.2 A total of eight hut circles or possible hut circles were recorded across the survey area, one of which (Site 3) had been previously recorded. Site 3 relates to HER site MHG9252 (see paragraph 3.5.2), which sits on a prominent knoll with extensive scatters of natural stone on the downslope side. Partially buried orthostats are located around the perimeter. Piles of stone on the northeast side include a small twinning pen (Site 4), which is a later addition (**Figure 13; Plate 9**).

5.3.3 Three hut circles are strung out along the upper reaches of the survey area. Site 22 sits on a prominent knoll. Well-preserved, it is approximately 5.5m in diameter internally and comprises double-skin walls that are up to 1.6m wide with a degraded entrance in the southeast side. Site 23 is of a similar size and situated at the base of a slope. The downslope wall has visible large boulders and orthostats whereas the upper wall has been overrun by slope-wash. Site 24 is again situated on a high knoll and defined by orthostats and boulders due to being buried to an extent by peat growth (**Figure 14; Plates 10-12**).

5.3.4 Two hut circles (Sites 26 (**Plate 13**) and 27) were located in fairly close proximity of each other in raised positions. Both were identified by their boulder and orthostat construction, although very degraded (**Figure 15**).

5.3.5 The final two hut circles (Sites 29 (**Plate 14**) and 37) were also in a very degraded condition with boulder and orthostat construction visible. As with previous hut circles, they occupied

grassy knolls. Site 29 was distinct from the other hut circle sites in that it also had a revetment wall to its southeast (**Figures 16, 17**).

- 5.3.6 Several structures were recorded across the survey area. The majority, due to being rectangular, have been interpreted as post-medieval. A group of structures (Sites 11-14; **Plate 15**), banks and dykes (Sites 10, 15-17 and 20-21 (**Plates 16-17**)) and areas of clearance (Sites 18-19) appear to represent a spread out post-medieval settlement with the possible remnants of prehistoric activity scattered amongst it (Sites 25 and 30-31) (**Figures 18, 19**). All the remains were in a degraded or very degraded state meaning that definitive interpretations are difficult to make.
- 5.3.7 A very degraded and robbed out post-medieval rectangular structure (Site 7) was located at the south-eastern extent of the survey area close to Conchra Quarry above the unclassified road. Within the structure were two large stone cairns (Sites 6a and 6b) (**Plate 18**). A section of turf and stone dyke (Site 8) runs in a south-westerly direction at the end of which is a large clearance cairn (Site 9) (**Figure 19**).
- 5.3.8 Several dykes of possible prehistoric origin were recorded (Sites 32, 35, 36, 38 and 39). These tended to be comprised of turf and stone or of a crude boulder construction (**Figures 15, 17, 21, 22**).
- 5.3.9 As in Area 1, there is a large area of clearance cairns (Site 33), which evidences agricultural activity in the area. It is difficult to place a time period on them as they are in a location where both prehistoric (Sites 26-28 and 32) and post-medieval (Site 5) remains are present (**Figure 15**). A possible prehistoric lynchet (Site 34; **Figure 13**) was also recorded again suggesting ancient cultivation.

## 6.0 Discussion

- 6.1 The survey recorded a wide variety of sites that attest to the occupation of the area from prehistoric times through to the post-medieval era. Of particular note is the high number of hut circles recorded (**Figure 23**). Out of a total of twelve, only three were previously known. Hut circles are one of the most abundant prehistoric monument types throughout the Highlands of Scotland, often listed with an attendant 'field system'. The ubiquity and apparent uniformity of this designation conceals the potential for a range of interpretations – and are most commonly thought of as prehistoric roundhouses. But they have a date range that spans from the Bronze Age to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (McCullagh 1993).
- 6.2 At Conchra, the majority of the hut circles are found between 160-220m OD. It is known that, during the Bronze Age some 4,000 years ago, climate conditions were considerably warmer than in the modern period. This would mean that settlement and use of higher ground was possible and previous research has shown considerable use of upland landscapes during this period in Scotland. It is also certainly possible that many of the Conchra 'hut circles' could have been used as small stock pens or temporary shelters, either during prehistoric or later periods. But it is only with excavation that a definitive interpretation and date can be ascribed.
- 6.3 Field systems directly associated with the hut circles were not apparent during the survey. However, the large number of clearance cairns and two possible lynchets are indicative of

agricultural practices. Like the hut circles themselves, these remains have a large date range that can only sometimes be defined through excavation. The numerous dykes again cannot be confidently ascribed to a particular time period, although tentative interpretations have been made based on the surrounding sites. Some may have been parts of enclosures for animal management; a small number of twinning pens suggest later reuse for sheep husbandry – and it is also possible that earlier ‘hut circles’ were reused for stock pens during later periods.

- 6.4 The rectangular stone buildings with associated dykes have been interpreted as post-medieval in date. The fact that they are not depicted on the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition of the Ordnance Survey map suggests that they were in a very degraded state prior to 1875 and may date to the early 1800s or earlier. As the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century map from William Roy’s survey shows, much of this area was extensively cultivated at that time. This could indicate that these ruinous post-medieval buildings and possibly some of the hut circles date to the mid-1700s or earlier.

## **7.0 Conclusion and Recommendations**

- 7.1 The survey areas contain a rich variety of archaeological sites that fit into the wider archaeological landscape. The data adds considerably to the corpus of knowledge on the area particularly the addition of nine hut circles or possible hut circles to the record.
- 7.2 It is recommended that buffer zones of 20m are maintained around the hut circles, Sites 3, 22-24, 26-27, 29, 37, 43, 47, 50 and 56.
- 7.3 It is recommended that a buffer zone of 10m is maintained around all buildings, Sites 7, 11-15, 40, 44 and 45.
- 7.4 A buffer of 5m is recommended around the main enclosures and field boundary dykes.

## 8.0 References

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## Appendix 1: Site Photographs



**Plate 3: Site 40, a rectangular building with a twinning pen in the SW corner, looking N**



**Plate 4: Site 43, location of the hut circle, looking NW**





**Plate 5: Site 56, location of the hut circle, looking NW**



**Plate 6: Site 50a, a hut circle or pen, looking NE**





**Plate 7: Site 44, a small double-cell shieling, looking W**



**Plate 8: A landscape shot showing some of the cairns that make up Site 52, looking NE**





**Plate 9: Site 3, hut circle, looking SSW**



**Plate 10: Site 22, a well-preserved hut circle, looking ENE**





**Plate 11: Site 23, the southern half of the hut circle, looking N**



**Plate 12: Site 24, hut circle, looking E**





**Plate 13: Site 26, a possible hut circle, looking E**



**Plate 14: Site 29, a very degraded stone-built structure, looking SSE**





**Plate 15: Site 13, a rectangular, stone-built structure, looking E**



**Plate 16: Looking over Site 20, the remains of a pen or wall, looking E**





**Plate 17: Site 21, a boundary dyke, looking S**



**Plate 18: View over Sites 6-7, cairns and a degraded structure, looking SW**



## Appendix 2: Survey Plans

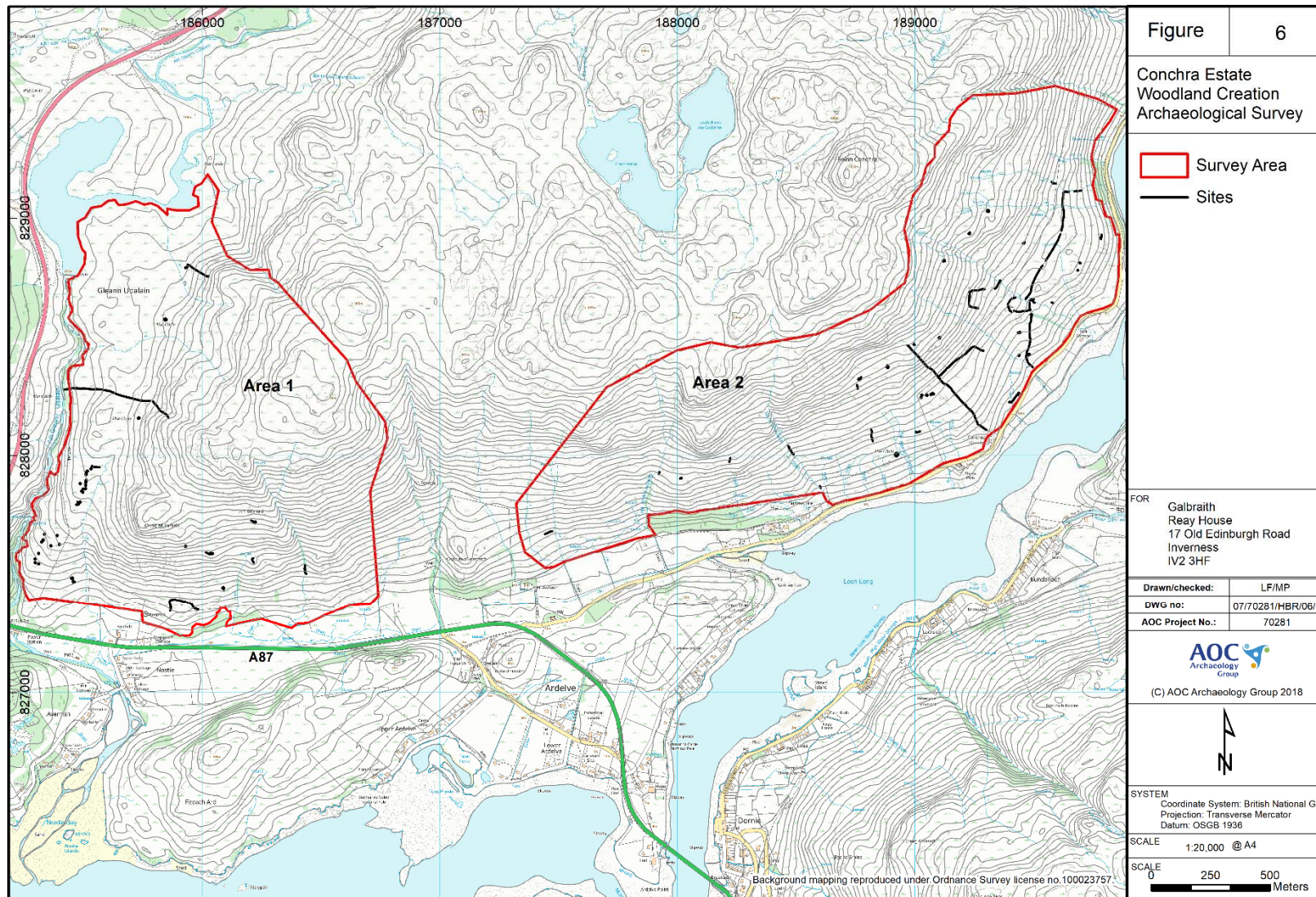


Figure 6: Location of the archaeological sites

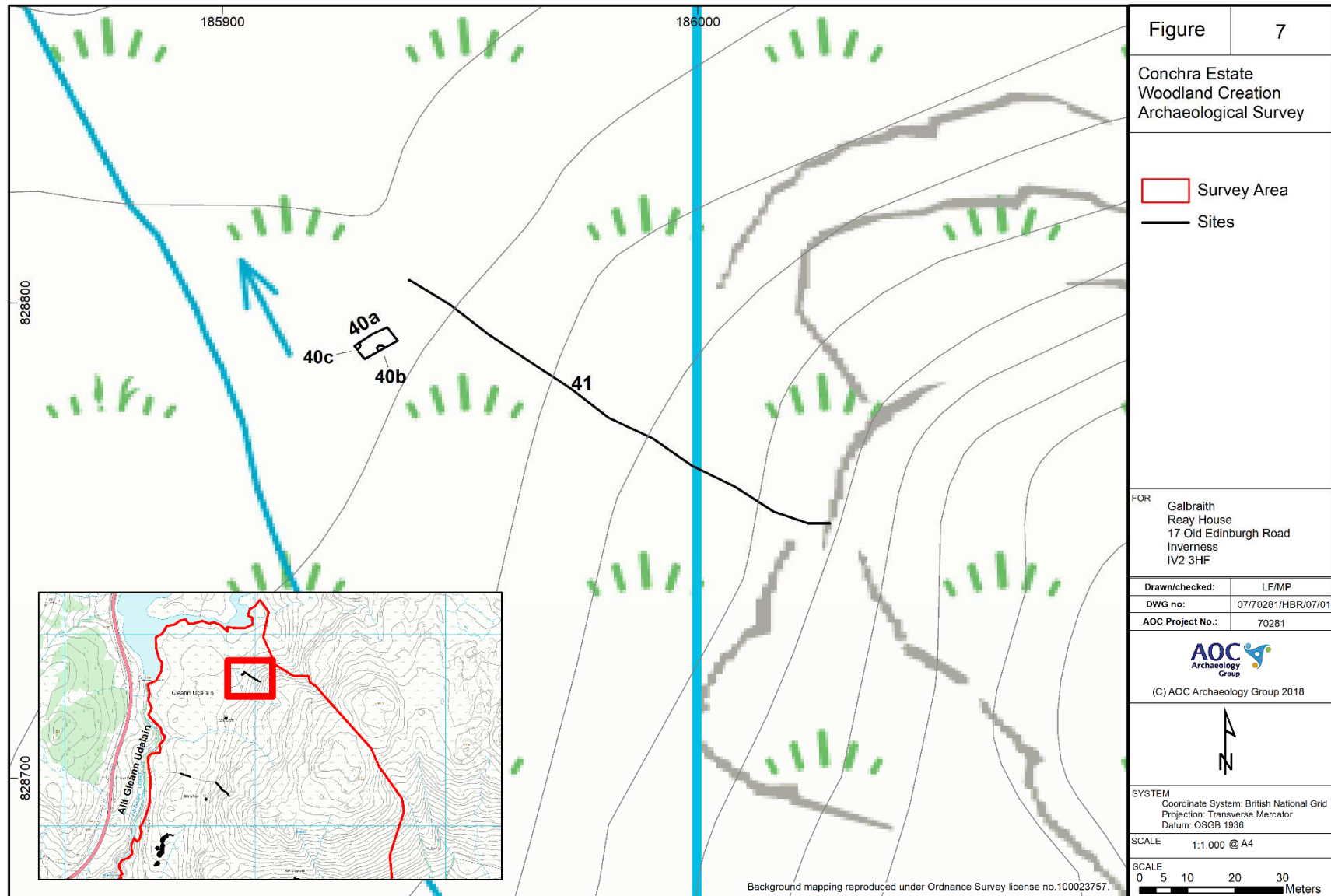


Figure 7: Sites 40 – 41



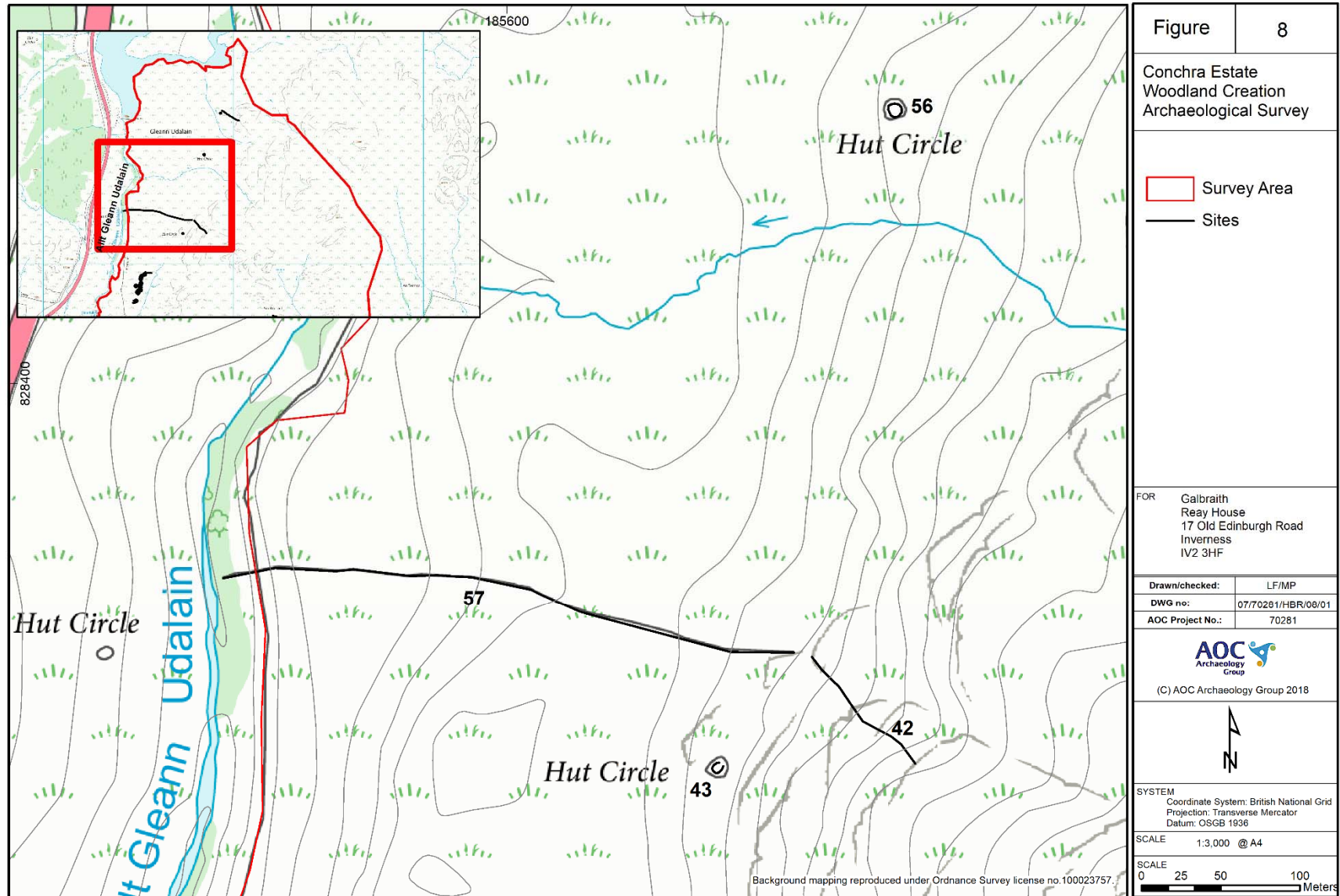


Figure 8: Sites 42-43 and 56-57



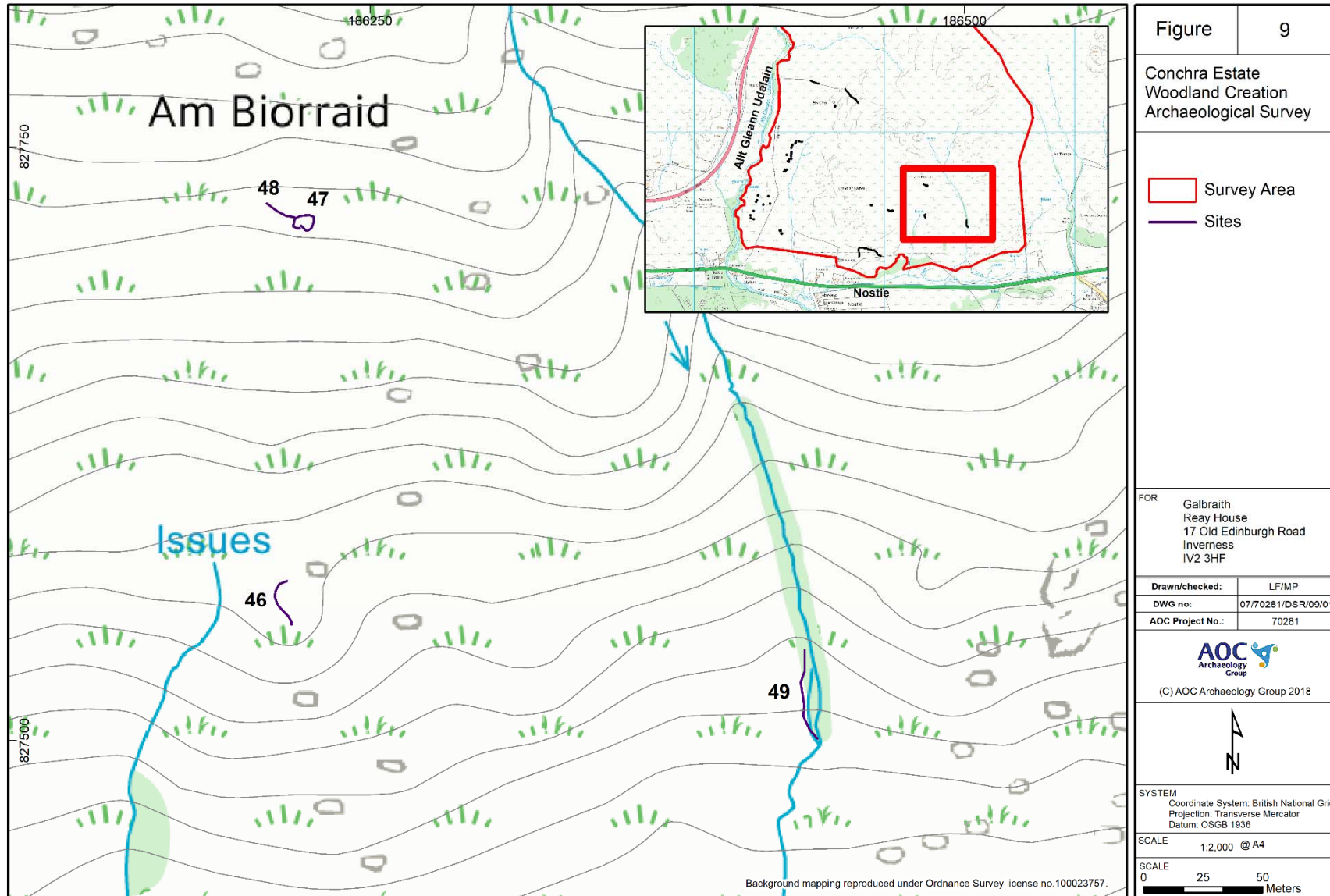


Figure 9: Sites 46-49

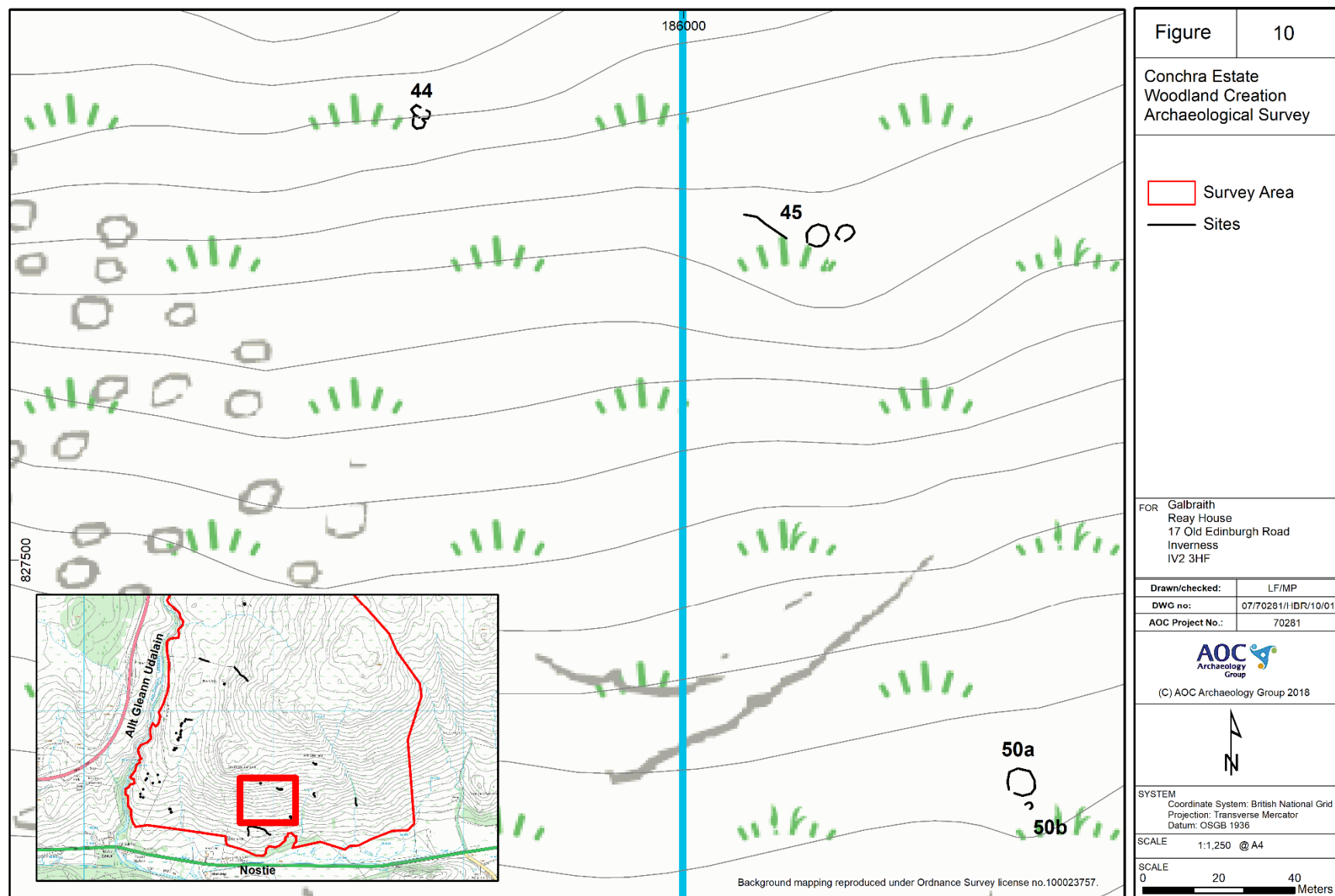


Figure 10: Sites 44-45 and 50

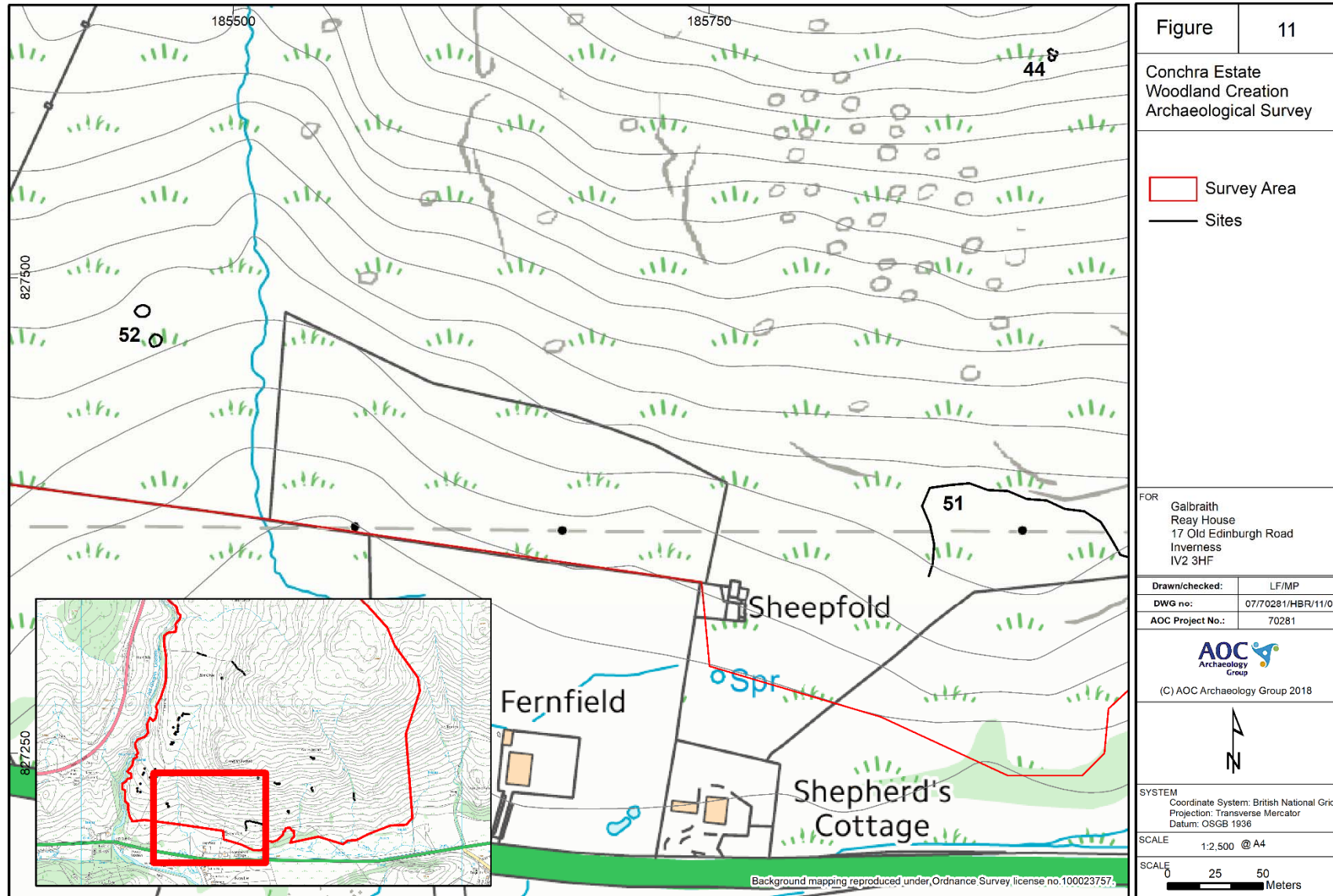


Figure 11: Sites 51-52



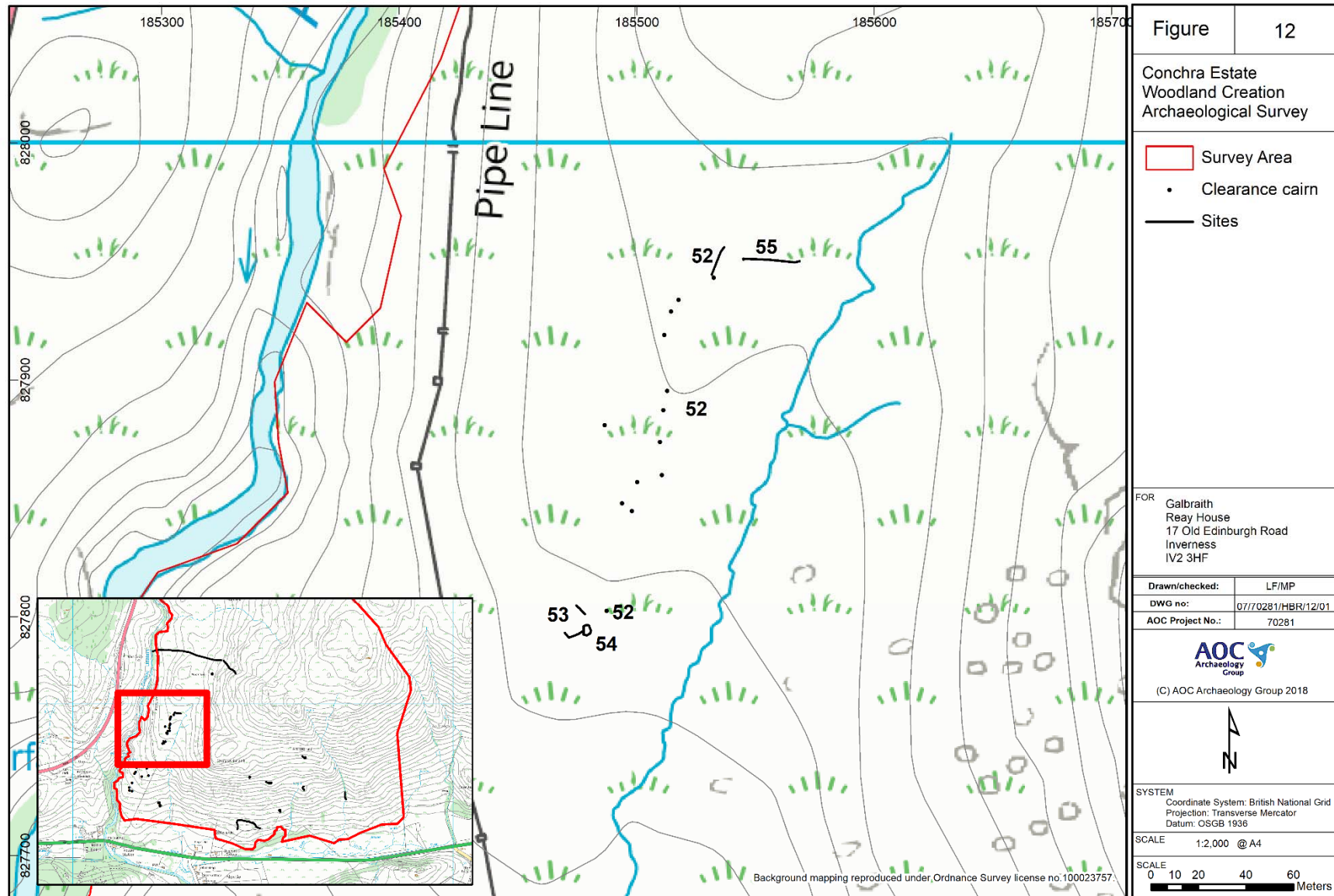


Figure 12: Sites 52-55



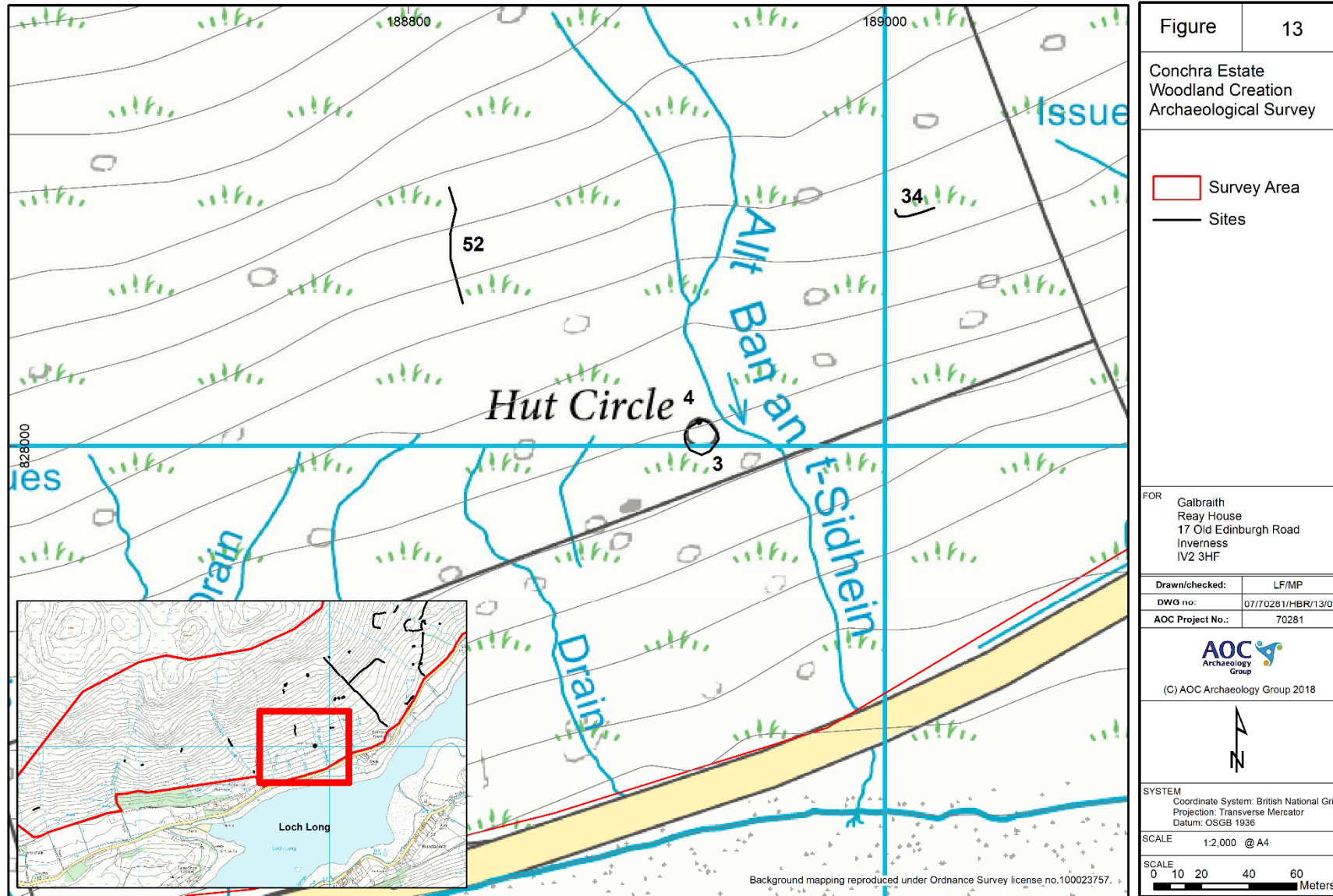


Figure 13: Sites 3-4 and 34

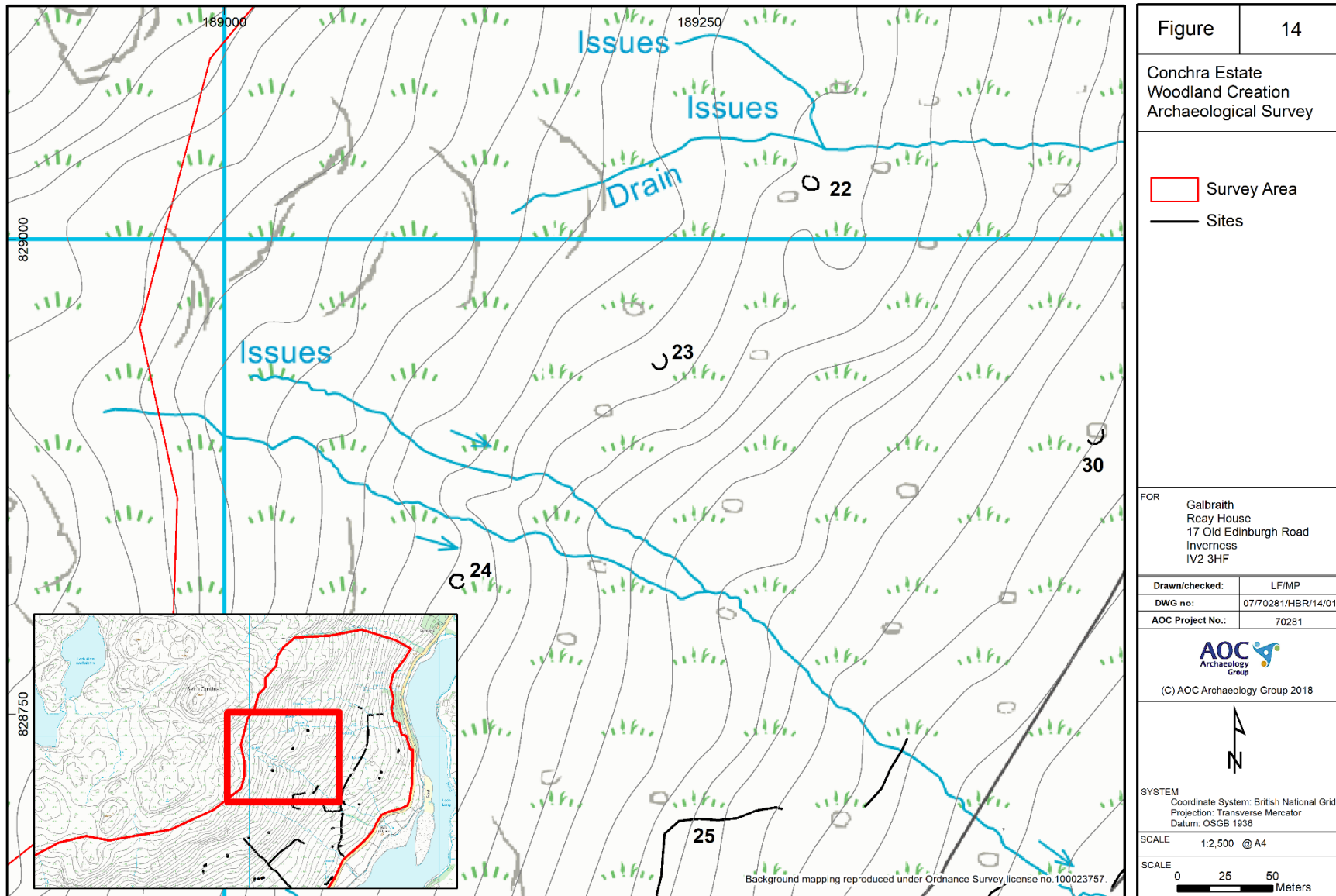


Figure 14: Sites 22-24 and 30

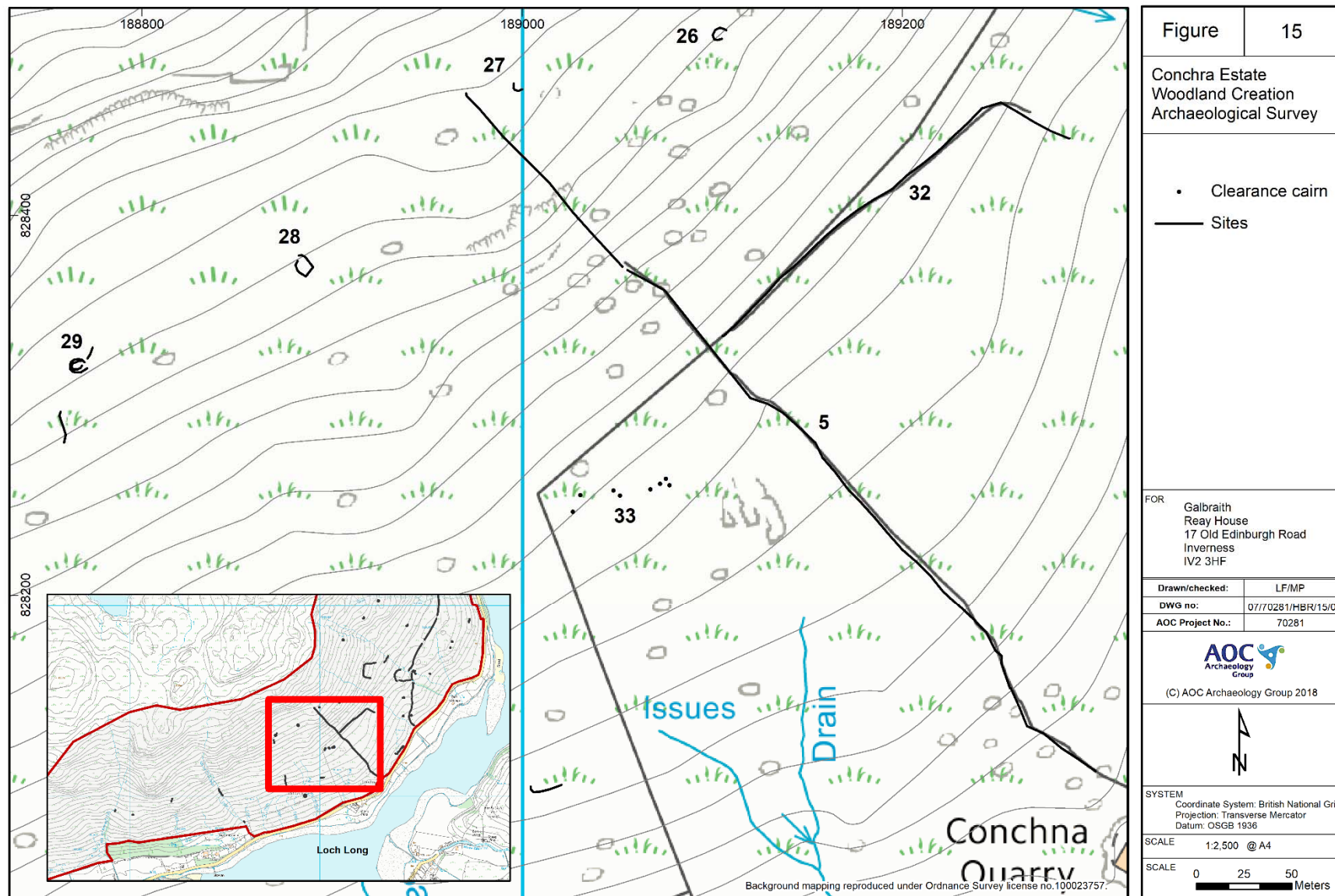


Figure 15: Sites 5, 26-28 and 32-33



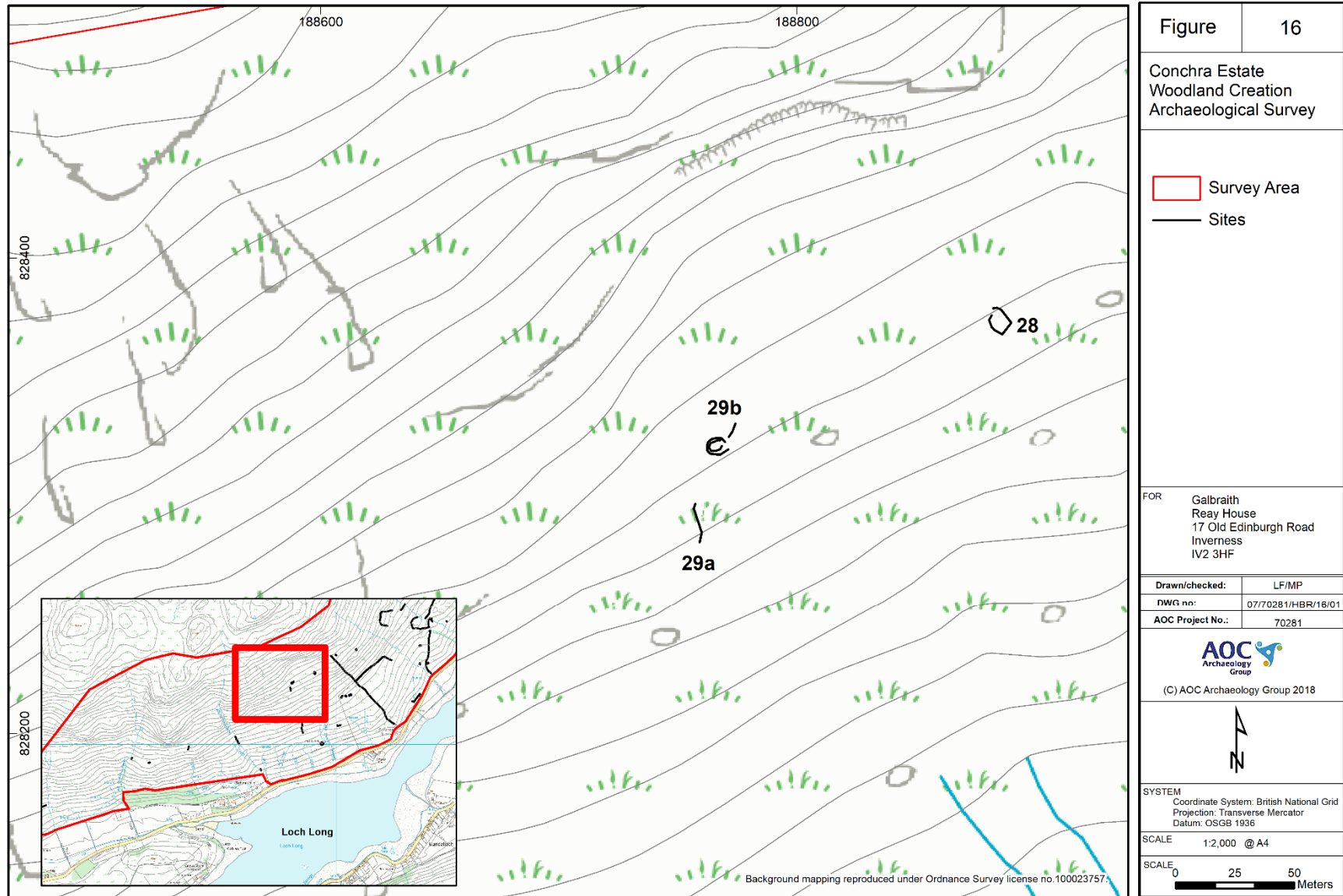


Figure 16: Sites 28-29

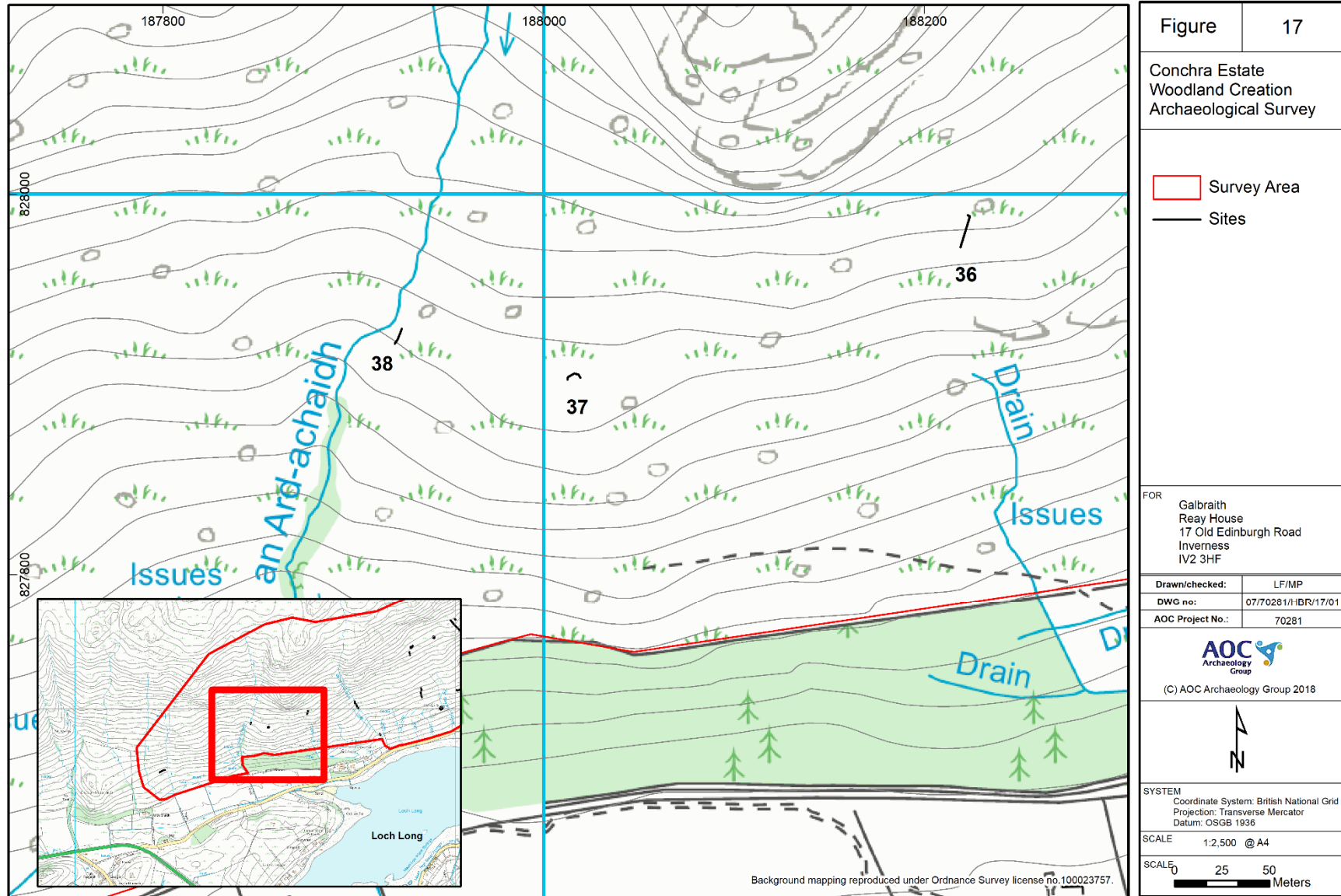


Figure 17: Sites 36-38

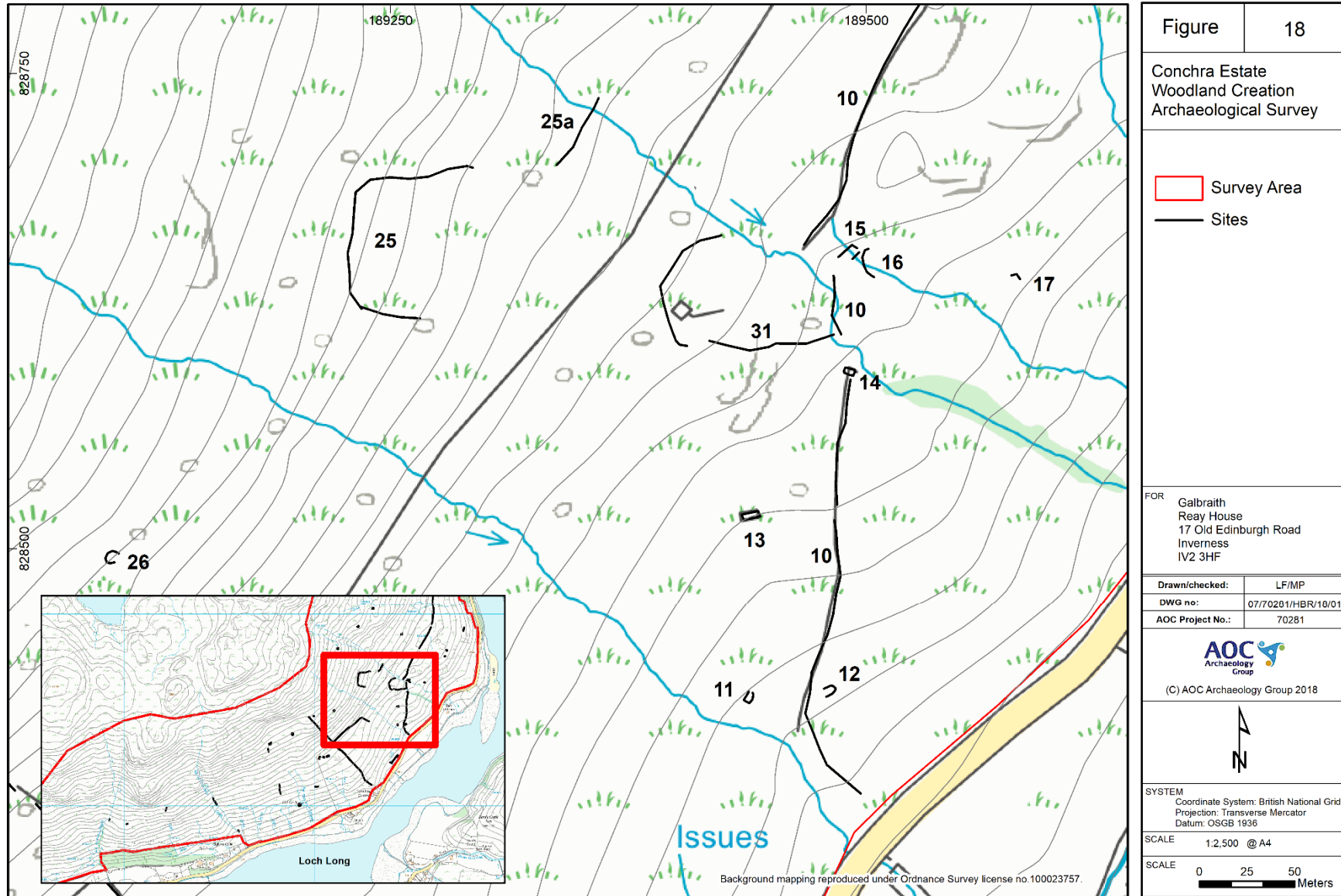


Figure 18: Sites 10-12, 14-17, 25 and 31



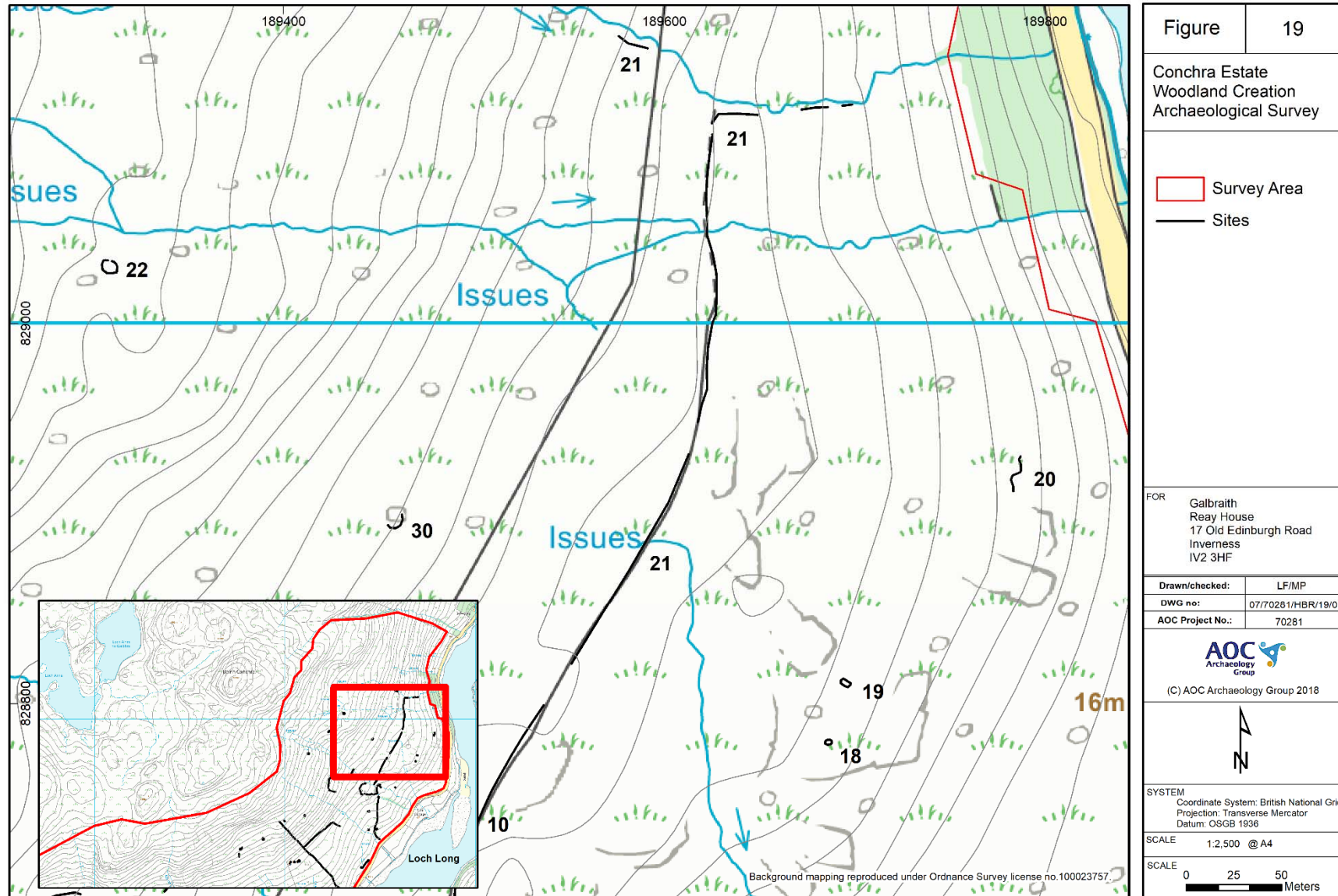


Figure 19: 10, 18-21 and 30

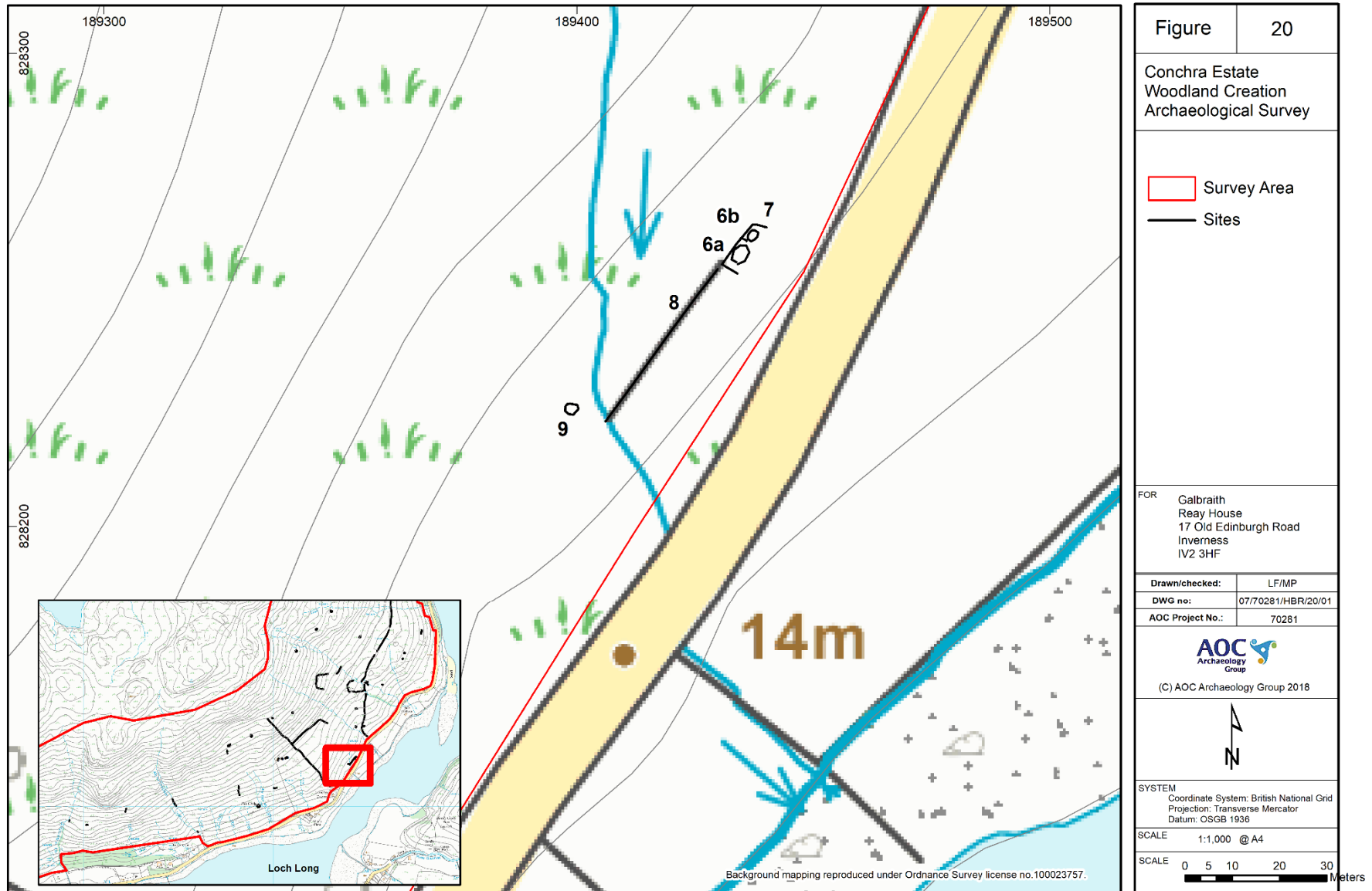


Figure 20: Sites 6-9

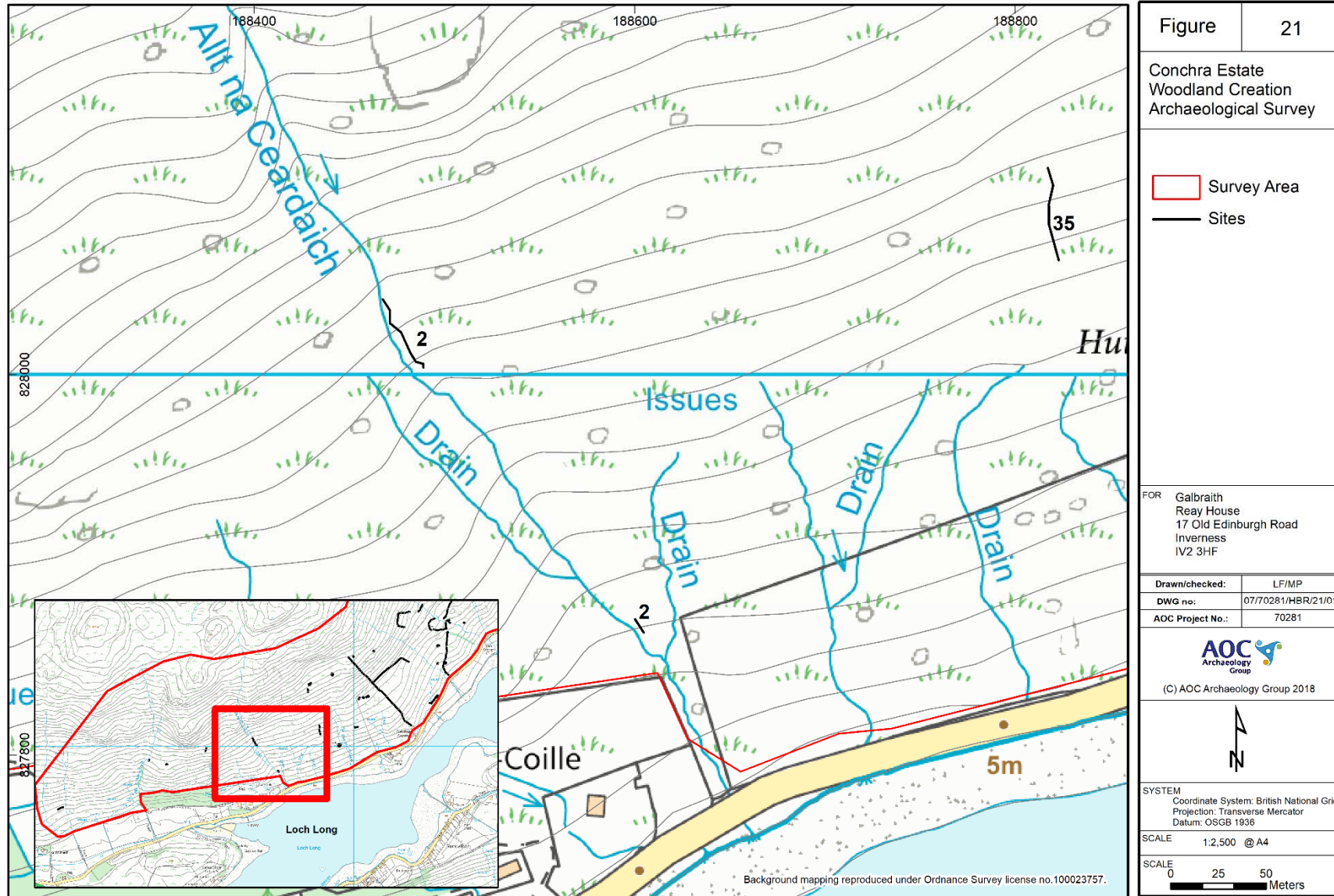


Figure 21: Sites 2 and 35



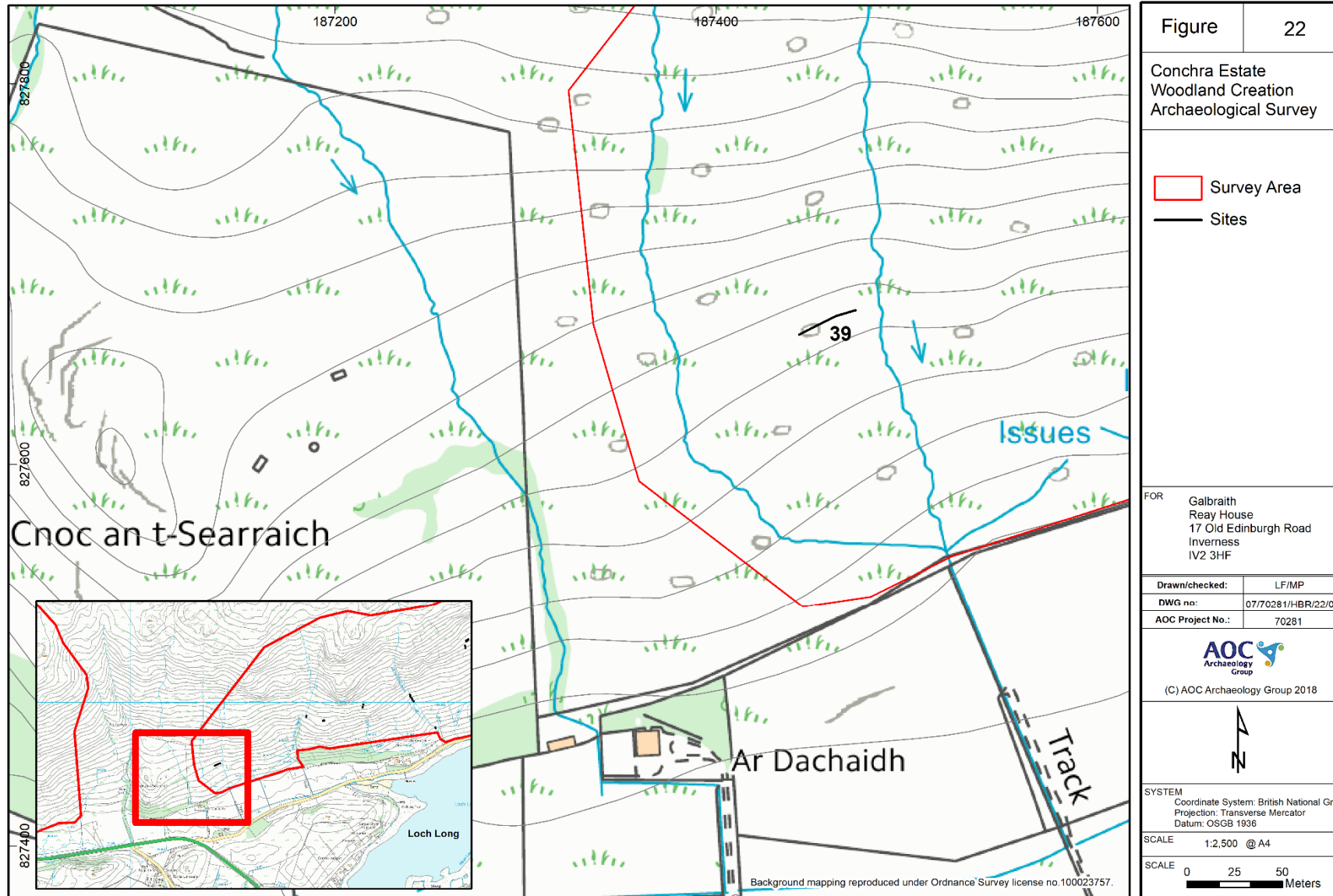


Figure 22: Site 29

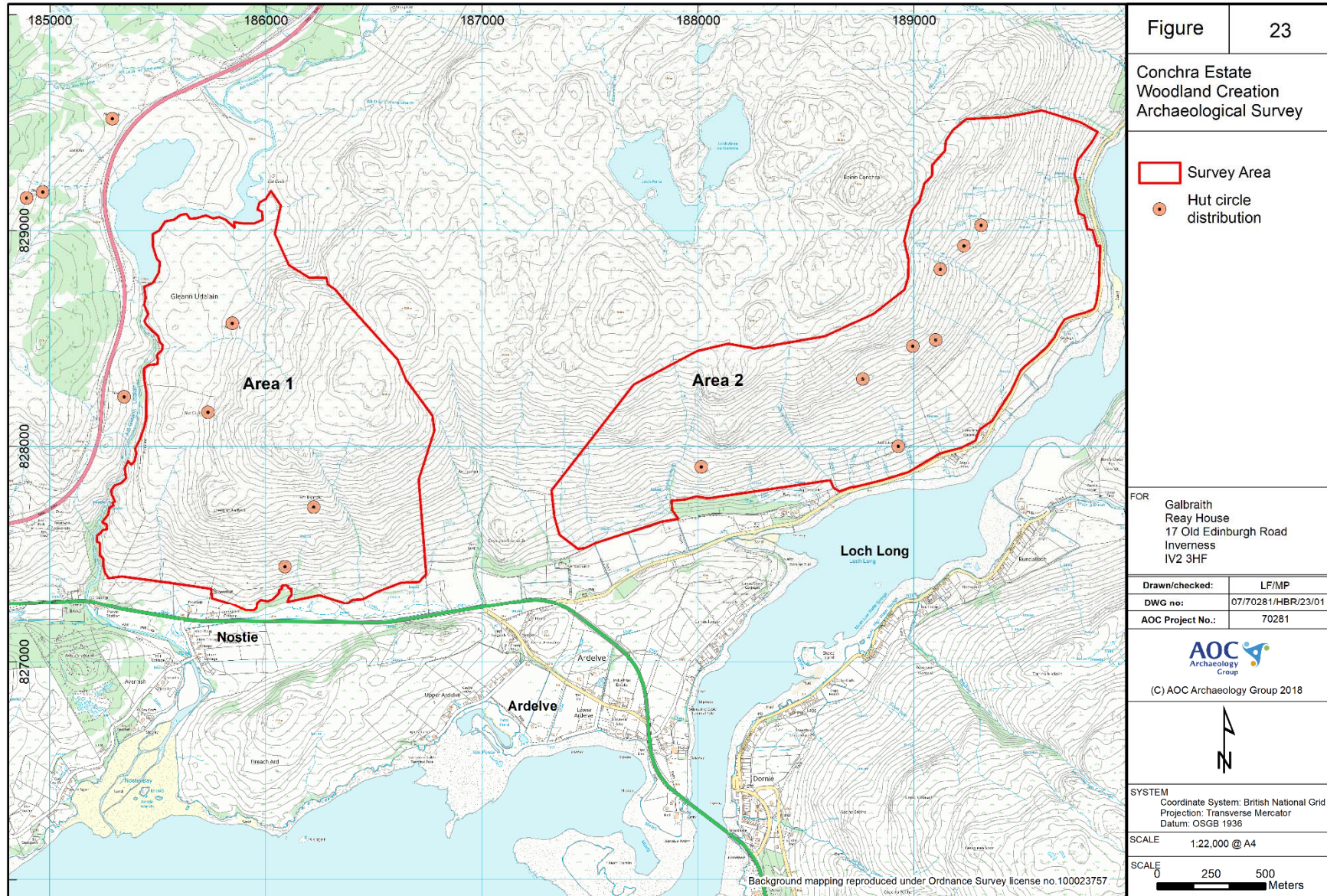


Figure 23: Hut circle distribution



### Appendix 3: Gazetteer of Archaeological Sites

Site No.	Site Type	Description	Alignment	Condition	Period	Ht. OD (m)	Easting	Northing	Photo No.
1	Wall	An estate wall runs across the base of slope of area 2, standing up to 1.4m high and 0.8m wide at the base.	-	Well-preserved	Post medieval	-	-	-	-
2	Wall?	A linear rubble bank runs up the E slope of the burn. A possible wall fragment 3m wide at the base and standing up to 0.5m high.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	100	188589	827860	-
3	Hut circle	A hut circle with a stone and boulder bank with partially buried orthostats around the perimeter. The walls where surviving are spread up to 1.8m wide and stand up to 0.6m high. It measures 12m x 10m internally. No visible entrance.	N-S	Degraded	Unknown	60	188931	827993	4-10
4	Twinning pen	A small circular stone structure measuring 0.7m in diameter internally. It is set into the piles of stone on the NE side of the hut circle, site 3.	-	Degraded	Post medieval	75	188927	828007	-
5	Dyke	A large turf and stone dyke, which runs from the road to the W of Conchra Quarry and meanders uphill. It continues to the SE.	-	Degraded	Post medieval	75	189271	828121	12-14
6a	Clearance cairn	A stone cairn measuring approx. 4m in diameter and standing up to 0.4m high situated within the rectangular footings of a building.	-	Degraded	Post medieval	30	189440	828249	15
6b	Clearance cairn	A stone cairn measuring 4m x 3m and standing up to 0.6m high situated in the W end of a building, site 7.	E-W	Degraded	Post medieval	30	189443	828251	15

Site No.	Site Type	Description	Alignment	Condition	Period	Ht. OD (m)	Easting	Northing	Photo No.
7	Building	A much degraded and robbed out rectangular building set on a platform above the road. It measures 10m x 4.5m internally with the surviving walls on the N and E approx. 0.7m wide and up to 0.4m high. An entrance in the E end is 0.8m wide.	E-W	Degraded	Post medieval	30	189440	828250	15
8	Wall	A fragment of turf and stone dyke runs W from site 7 spread up to 3m wide and standing up to 0.8m high.	-	Degraded	Post medieval	30	189423	828228	-
9	Clearance cairn	A clearance cairn 4.5m in diameter and standing up to 0.7m high.	-	Degraded	Post medieval	30	189404	828215	-
10	Dyke	A stone boundary dyke running alongside the burn 0.8m wide and standing up to 1m high.	-	Degraded	Post medieval	35	189473	828419	-
11	Structure	Located on a terrace in the vicinity of two streams are the much degraded stone footings of a sub-rectangular structure 5m x 4m with walls up to 0.4m wide and standing up to 0.4m high. There is no visible entrance.	E-W	Degraded	Post medieval	60	189439	828409	-
12	Structure	The much degraded and robbed remains of a rectangular structure measuring 7m x 4m internally with walls spread to 1m wide and standing up to 0.4m high. It presents as a green mound.	E-W	Degraded	Post medieval	50	189485	828416	16
13	Building	On a prominent knoll in a gully with a burn to the W is a rectangular stone-built structure measuring 10m x 2.8m internally with walls 0.6m wide and standing up to 0.8m high. The entrance in the S wall is 0.5m wide.	E-W	Degraded	Post medieval	80	189440	828507	17



Site No.	Site Type	Description	Alignment	Condition	Period	Ht. OD (m)	Easting	Northing	Photo No.
14	Building	A rectangular stone byre 5m x 1.8m internally with walls up to 0.7m wide and standing up to 0.6m high. There is a possible entrance in the E corner, which is 0.4m wide.	NW-SE	Degraded	Post medieval	85	189491	828576	18
15	Structures	A complex of stone banks and spreads with no apparent structure measuring 1-2.5m wide and standing up to 0.5m high.	-	Degraded	Post medieval	85	189490	828639	-
16	Structure enclosure?	A linear, curving bank of stone spread up to 1.8m wide and about 18m long. A possible pen or enclosure.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	85	189499	828631	-
17	Structure?	An L-shaped stone bank situated in bracken and measuring up to 1.5m wide and standing up to 0.4m high. A possible clearance cairn approx. 3m in diameter sits about 8m to the SW.	N-S	Very degraded	Post medieval	85	189579	828644	-
18	Cairn	A clearance cairn on a high grassy ledge approx. 4.5m in diameter and standing up to 0.6m high.	-	Very degraded	Post medieval	100	189691	828773	-
19	Cairn	A clearance cairn 5m x 1.6m and standing up to 0.6m high.	-	Very degraded	Post medieval	100	189696	828805	-
20	Wall?	A fragment of a boulder wall measuring approx. 12m x 0.8m and standing up to 0.6m high. It is located on a high bluff above woodland and may be the remains of a pen.	NE-SW	Very degraded	Post medieval	65	189788	828914	20
21	Wall	The fragmented remains of a stone dyke running along the W side of a stream measuring 0.6m wide and standing up to 0.5m high.	-	Very degraded	Post medieval	100	189699	829108	21

Site No.	Site Type	Description	Alignment	Condition	Period	Ht. OD (m)	Easting	Northing	Photo No.
22	Hut circle	A well-preserved hut circle with double-sided boulder walls. It measures approx. 5.5m in diameter internally with walls 1.6m wide and standing up to 0.6m high. There is a degraded entrance on the SE 0.8m wide.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric	235	189312	829020	22-23
23	Hut circle	A hut circle approx. 6m in diameter with walls of large boulders and orthostats spread over 0.8m - 1.2m wide on downslope side. Possible entrance on S side.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric	235	189232	828925	24
24	Hut circle	A degraded hut circle defined by orthostats and boulders. It measures approx. 6m in diameter with walls up to 1.2m wide. An entrance in the SSE side is 0.7m wide.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric	240	189119	828821	25
25	Dyke - enclosure	A much degraded stone and turf bank with a 1m spread and standing up to 0.7m high.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric	160	189233	828669	-
25a	Wall	Remains of a boundary wall?	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric?	130	189350	828700	-
26	Hut circle	A possible hut circle of boulder and orthostat construction with walls up to 0.8m wide and standing up to 0.5m high. It measures approx. 6m in diameter internally. The S side has fallen away.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric	200	189099	828494	26
27	Hut circle site?	A possible hut circle measuring approx. 10m in diameter. Stones on the W to SW are just visible.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric	210	188995	828464	27
28	Pen	A stone-built pen measuring 9m x 6.5m internally with walls up to 0.8m wide and standing up to 0.6m high. No visible entrance. A small pen 1m in diameter is in the NE corner.	N-S	Very degraded	Prehistoric	200	188891	828369	29



Site No.	Site Type	Description	Alignment	Condition	Period	Ht. OD (m)	Easting	Northing	Photo No.
29	Hut circle?	A much degraded stone- and boulder-built structure measuring 6m x 4.5m with walls up to 1m wide and standing up to 0.4m high.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric	210	188762	828311	-
29	Hut circle?	There is a possible revetment approx. 5m long and standing up to 1.2m high.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric	210	188761	828313	-
29b	Wall	An isolated fragment of a possible field boundary measuring up to 0.8m wide and standing up to 0.5m high.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric	210	188772	828320	-
30	Structure?	A very degraded possible boulder structure with walls spread up to 1.6m wide and standing up to 0.4m high.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric?	140	189464	828887	-
31	Dyke	A much degraded stone and turf bank up to 1.2m wide and standing up to 0.6m high forms an enclosure.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric?	105	189394	828622	-
32	Dyke	A stone and turf enclosure dyke spread up to 1.8m wide and standing up to 0.7m high.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric?	130	189200	828403	-
33	Clearance Cairn	Stone heap approx. 4m in diameter.	-	Degraded	Unknown	130	189077	828258	-
34	Lynchet?	An alignment of stone on the break of slope measuring approx. 12m long with a spread of up to 2.5m and standing up to 0.6m high. It returns uphill at the W end.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric?	80	189013	828092	-
35	Dyke	A fragment of stone and turf dyke spread up to 1.6m wide and standing up to 0.7m high. There is some boulder facing on WNW side.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric?	110	188820	828077	-
36	Dyke	A crude boulder measuring up to 1m wide and standing up to 0.6m high.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric?	179	188222	827981	34

Site No.	Site Type	Description	Alignment	Condition	Period	Ht. OD (m)	Easting	Northing	Photo No.
37	Hut circle?	Orthostats and sections of boulder walls under rushes possibly comprise a much degraded hut circle.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric?	140	188016	827906	-
38	Dyke	A fragmentary rubble dyke.	-	Very degraded	Prehistoric?	140	187924	827925	-
39	Dyke	A boulder revetting wall runs across the slope forming a spread up to 4m wide and standing up to 1.4m high on the downhill slope.	E-W	Very degraded	Prehistoric?	60	187458	827676	-
40a	Building	A rectangular stone-built building measuring 7.5m x 2.5m internally with walls 0.6m wide and standing up to 0.5m high.	NE-SW	Degraded	Post medieval	190	185936	828793	35
40c	Twinning pen	A well-preserved twinning pen located in the SW corner of site 40a measures 0.5m in diameter internally with walls 0.4m wide and standing up to 0.6m high.	-	Degraded	Post medieval	190	185929	828791	36
40b	Twinning pen	A twinning pen against the E wall of site 40a measuring 1m x 0.7m internally with walls 0.4m wide.	-	Degraded	Post medieval	190	185933	828791	-
41	Dyke	A stone and boulder dyke spread up to 1m wide and standing up to 0.5m high.	-	Degraded	Post medieval	200	185982	828776	-
42	Dyke	A Stone/boulder and turf dyke measuring up to 1.5m wide at the base and standing up to 0.8m high.	-	Degraded	Post medieval	200	185828	828185	-
43	Hut circle	A much degraded hut circle comprising large boulders. It measures approx. 5m in diameter internally with banks that are spread up to 1.8m wide.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	215	185737	828136	39



Site No.	Site Type	Description	Alignment	Condition	Period	Ht. OD (m)	Easting	Northing	Photo No.
44	Shieling	A small double-cell shieling measuring 5.5m x 2.5m with walls spread up to 1m and standing up to 0.5m high. The entrances faces E and is 0.6m wide.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	190	185928	827619	43
45	Clearance	Groups and spreads of stone clearance on a grassy terrace.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	160	186022	827589	-
46	Enclosure	The fragments of a turf and stone boundary dyke spread up to 1.5m wide and standing up to 0.5m high.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	135	186211	827558	44
47	Hut circle	A boulder-built hut circle revetted into the slope measuring approx. 6m in diameter internally. The double-skin walls are spread up to 1m wide and stand up to 0.5m high. No visible entrance, although there is a break in the SW wall.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	200	186224	827721	-
48	Dyke	A fragment of a boulder bank running off the W side of the hut circle, site 47, measuring up to 0.8m wide and standing up to 0.5m high.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	200	186212	827722	45-46
49	Dyke	A drystone dyke measuring up to 0.8m wide and standing up to 0.7m high.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	190	186432	827518	47
50	Hut circle ? pen?	A circular boulder-built pen or hut circle measuring approx. 7m x 6m internally with walls spread up to 1m wide and standing up to 1m high. An entrance in the SW is 0.8m wide.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	70	186091	827444	48-49
50b	Stone setting	An incomplete arc of stone to the S of hut circle, site 50a, approx. 3m in diameter internally with walls up to 0.4m wide.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	70	186092	827436	-

Site No.	Site Type	Description	Alignment	Condition	Period	Ht. OD (m)	Easting	Northing	Photo No.
51	Dyke	A boulder-built enclosure wall spread up to 1.2m wide and standing up to 0.6m high.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	85	185911	827386	-
52	Clearance cairn	Clearance cairn approx. 5m in diameter and standing up to 0.7m high.	-	Degraded	Unknown	65	185459	827470	51-54
52	Clearance cairn	Clearance cairn approx. 5m in diameter and standing up to 0.7m high.	-	Degraded	Unknown	55	185451	827485	51-54
52	Clearance Cairn	Stone heap approx. 4-6m diameter and standing up to 0.70m high situated under bracken.	-	Degraded	Unknown	130	185298	827548	51-54
52	Field clearance	Clearance cairn approx. 5m in diameter and standing up to 0.7m high.	-	Degraded	Unknown	75	185534	827950	-
53	Clearance	An area of field clearance.	-	Degraded	Unknown	145	185475	827793	-
54	Structure?	A much degraded boulder-built structure within the area of field clearance measuring 4m x 3m internally with walls spread up to 1m wide and standing up to 0.4m high.	N-S	Degraded	Unknown	145	185478	827792	-
55	Field system	A possible lynchet with a revetment towards the S. It measures approx. 18m long and steps up to 0.6m with level ground behind to the base of slope.	-	Degraded	Unknown	175	185557	827951	-
56	Hut circle	A much degraded hut circle measuring approx. 9m in diameter internally with banks spread up to 1.5m wide and standing up to 0.5m high. Some boulders and orthostats visible. No visible entrance.	-	Very degraded	Unknown	200	185850	828564	55
57	Dyke	A part of a stone dyke that continues to E and W.	-	Degraded	Unknown	-	185633	828263	-



## Appendix 4: Photograph Register

Photo No.	Site No.	Description	Direction Facing	Date
1		Landscape shot of area 2	S	26/04/2019
2		Landscape shot of area 2	SW	26/04/2019
3		Landscape shot of area 2	ESE	26/04/2019
4	3	Location of the hut circle	SE	26/04/2019
5	3	Location of the hut circle	SSW	26/04/2019
6	3	Location of the hut circle	SSW	26/04/2019
7	3	Location of the hut circle	SE	26/04/2019
9	3	Location of the hut circle	ESE	26/04/2019
10	3	Image showing the S side of the hut circle	E	26/04/2019
11		Sheep fank at Conchra Quarry		26/04/2019
12	5	Turf and stone dyke	SSE	26/04/2019
13	5	Turf and stone dyke	S	26/04/2019
14	5	Turf and stone dyke		26/04/2019
15	6, 7	Cairns and degraded rectangular building	SW	26/04/2019
16	12	Degraded rectangular building	SE	26/04/2019
17	13	Rectangular stone-built structure	E	26/04/2019
18	14	Rectangular stone byre	SE	26/04/2019
19		Landscape shot of the survey area	NE	26/04/2019
20	20	Looking over site 20, a fragment of a boulder wall	E	26/04/2019
21	21	Boulder dyke	S	26/04/2019
22	22	Well-preserved hut circle	ENE	26/04/2019
23	22	Well-preserved hut circle	S	26/04/2019
24	23	Southern half of the hut circle	N	26/04/2019
25	24	Hut circle	E	26/04/2019
26	26	Possible hut circle	E	26/04/2019
27	27	Location shot of site 27, a possible hut circle	SE	26/04/2019
28		Landscape shot of the survey area	S	26/04/2019
29	28	Stone-built pen	SSE	26/04/2019
30	29	Very degraded stone-built structure	SSE	26/04/2019
31		Panorama over survey area 2	E	26/04/2019
32		Landscape shot of area 2 towards Eilean Donan Castle	SW	26/04/2019
33		Landscape shot over the western side of survey area 2	W	26/04/2019
34	36	Looking over site 36, a crude boulder wall	SW	26/04/2019
35	40a	Rectangular building	N	27/04/2018
36	40c	Twinning pen in the SW corner of the rectangular building	WNW	27/04/2018
37		Panorama over the northern half of survey area 2	NW	27/04/2018
38		Landscape shot of survey area 1	W	27/04/2018
39	43	Very degraded hut circle	NW	27/04/2018
40		Image showing the very green area to the S of hut circle, site 43	WSW	27/04/2018
41		Landscape shot over the southern part of survey area 1	S	27/04/2018
42		Landscape shot over the southern part of survey area 1	SE	27/04/2018
43	44	Small double-cell shieling	W	27/04/2018

Photo No.	Site No.	Description	Direction Facing	Date
44	46	The remnants of a turf and stone enclosure	W	27/04/2018
45	48	Fragment of a boulder enclosure	SE	27/04/2018
46	48	Image showing the SE side of the wall	NW	27/04/2018
47	49	Drystone dyke	SE	27/04/2018
48	50a	Circular, stone-built pen or hut circle	NE	27/04/2018
49	50a	Circular, stone-built pen or hut circle	SE	27/04/2018
50		Image showing a sheep enclosure and hut	W	27/04/2018
51	52	Clearance cairn	N	27/04/2018
52	52	Landscape shot looking over an area of clearance cairns	S	27/04/2018
53	52	Landscape shot showing two clearance cairns	NE	27/04/2018
54	52	Image showing the upper terrace of clearance cairns	SW	27/04/2018
55	56	Very degraded hut circle	NW	27/04/2018





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