

# *Scotia Archaeology*

**REPORT  
TO  
SCOTTISH & SOUTHERN ENERGY**

**FORT AUGUSTUS  
TO  
GLEN QUOICH  
OVERHEAD POWER LINE**

**WALK-OVER SURVEY  
SEPTEMBER 2013**

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## INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a walk-over survey along the route of an overhead power line between Fort Augustus and the east end of Glen Quoich, Highland. The line, which is due to be rebuilt, runs from Auchterawe Power Station, 2.5km south-west of Fort Augustus (at approximately NH 3555 0839) south-westwards as far as Invergarry. From there it continues westwards along the north side of Loch Garry and the River Garry, terminating at NH 0703 0230 near a dam at the east end of Loch Quoich.

The length of this line is some 36km although five short branches lead off the main line, adding a further 4km to the overall length of the route.

Scottish & Southern Energy plc (SSE) commissioned a desk study of the route in order to identify any sites of archaeological or historical significance that might lie on or near it. Following the desk study, a walk-over survey was initiated to investigate whether there are any hitherto unrecorded sites of archaeological or historical significance on or close to the route

The desk study and field survey were undertaken by John Lewis of Scotia Archaeology at the request of Max Bigham, wayleave manager at SSE. For the convenience of the reader, a summary of the results of the desk study are included in this report. The maps that accompanied that report should be consulted to locate the sites and monuments identified within it. Included with this report are Maps 1 and 5A which shows the locations of two sites that might be affected by the development (see below).

## SUMMARY OF THE DESK STUDY

### MAP 1

#### 1 NH30NE 36 Auchteraw: farmstead

The first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1873, sheet 73) depicts a farmstead comprising six roofed and two unroofed buildings at approximately NH 3500 0790. The current OS 1:10,000 shows three roofed buildings at the same location.

#### 2 NH30NE 12 Auchteraw: quern

A trough quern of micaceous schist and measuring 600mm by 460mm, was found at NH 3511 0730 during gravel extraction. The quern has been dated to 2500-1400BC. No archaeological features were noted within its vicinity.

#### 3 NH30NW 2 Allt Na Cille: burial ground

Centred on NH 3478 0741 is a graveyard thought to date from the early 17th century and which is still in use today.

#### 4 NH30NW 1 Torr Dhuin: dun/fort

On a rocky knoll at NH 3487 0695 stand the remains of a vitrified fort with two possible outer defences on its north, west and south sides, its east side being defined by a steep

precipice. Outside the fort and enclosing the summit of the knoll are the scant remains of another wall. There is no evidence of archaeological features at the foot of the mound.

## **5 MHG30740 Invervigar: isolation hospital**

The remains of an isolation hospital are located at NH 3400 0600. Some walls still stand. The very vague grid reference given in the record gives no indication of its precise location, being accurate only to within 1km. The record does not mention any date for the hospital.

## **6 NH30NW 4 Invervigar: township**

The first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1873, sheet 73) depicts three unroofed buildings and other walls at NH 3380 0550. Six unroofed buildings and other walls at the same location are shown on the current OS 1:10,000 map.

## **7 NH30NW 5 Cnocan Biorach: building**

The first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1873, sheet 73) depicts one unroofed building at NH 3375 0525, as does the current OS 1:10,000 map.

## **8 NH30SW 15 River Oich: building**

The first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1873, sheet 73) shows one unroofed building at NH 3360 0480 but no trace of this structure appears on the current OS 1:10,000 map.

## **9 MHG32818 Leac Farm: farmhouse**

A building and a well are depicted at NH 33713 04523 on the first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1873, sheet 73). The building, probably a farmhouse, is thought to have been built in the late 18th or early 19th century. It is not shown on the current OS 1:10,000 map.

## **10 MHG32819 Leac Farm: building**

The footings of an old building have been identified at NH 33852 04569 although the structure does not appear on any edition of OS maps.

## **11 MHG32820 Leac Farm: enclosure**

The remains of what was probably a livestock enclosure have been identified at NH 33884 04536 although it is not shown on any edition of OS maps.

## **12 MHG32821 Leac Farm: building**

The stone footings of a building have been identified at NH 33837 04479 although the structure is not shown on any edition of OS maps.

**13 MHG32822 Leac Farm: building**

The stone footings of a building have been identified at NH 33807 04312 although the structure is not shown on any edition of OS maps.

**14 NH30SW 16 Bridge of Oich: farmstead**

A possible farmstead, comprising four roofed buildings, two unroofed buildings and three enclosures, are depicted at NH 3370 0360 on the first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1873, sheet 63). The current OS 1:10,000 shows two roofed buildings and two enclosures at the same location.

**MAP 2****15 NH30SW 14 Creag Dhubhain: farmstead**

The first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1873, sheet 63) shows one roofed building, one unroofed building and an enclosure at NH 3330 0320. This settlement is not shown on current OS 1:10,000 maps.

**16 NH30SW 4 Fassie Wood: enclosure**

At NH 3320 0300 are the remains of a rectangular, ditched enclosure which has been almost entirely destroyed by forestry. The enclosure is located in a hollow, indicating that it is unlikely to have been a defensive feature and its purpose and date remain unknown.

**17 NH30SW 3 Invergarry: ironworks**

Invergarry Ironworks commenced operations in 1729 and ceased production in 1736 because of the lack of ore. No structural remains of the furnace or ancillary buildings now survive above ground. However, large quantities of blast furnace slag have been retrieved from around a footpath at NH 3132 0111 and traces of a lade can be seen between NH 3132 0111 and NH 3102 0107.

**18 NH20SE 9 Faichem: township**

The first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1873, sheet 62) depicts three roofed buildings, one unroofed building and four enclosures at NH 2870 0150. Current OS 1:10,000 maps show two roofed buildings and one enclosure at the same location.

**MAP 3****19 NH20SE 4 Cill Donnain: cemetery, church**

A church was founded in the early 7th century by Saint Donnan at Munerigie on Loch Garry. At NH 2658 0276 is a graveyard which is near-circular, and hence probably very early, which is now disused. In its south-east corner is a raised area measuring 6m east/west by 3m north/south, perhaps the site of a church or small cell.

**20 MHG29815 Achadh Luachraih: bobbin mill**

At NH 2480 0290 are the remains of what is believed to have been a bobbin mill of uncertain date although recent investigations have identified only its lade.

**21 NH20SW 7 Loch Garry: building**

The first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1873, sheet 62) shows one unroofed building at NH 2433 0280. It is also shown on current OS 1:10,000 maps.

**22 NH20SW 9 Loch Garry: building**

The first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1873, sheet 62) depicts one unroofed building at NH 2420 0290. This structure is shown on current OS 1:10,000 maps.

**23 NH20SW 4 Daingean: township**

The first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1873, sheet 62) depicts one unroofed building at NH 2375 0303 whereas the photograph record held by RCAHMS shows the substantial remains of several buildings at this location.

**24 NH20SW 5 Loch Garry: farmstead**

The first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1873, sheet 62) shows the remains of a farmstead comprising two unroofed buildings and a field at NH 2220 0270. Current OS 1:10,000 maps show nothing at this location.

**25 MHG29492 Ardochy: sawmill and ancillary structures**

Centred on NH 21614 02309 are the remains of several structures thought to be associated with an early 20th-century sawmill and the sawyers who operated it. However, some of these remains may relate to Ardochy Lodge and date to the 1850s.

**26 NH20SW 2 Glengarry: bloomery**

Bloomery slag is reputed to have been recovered from around NH 2050 0050 although no associated structures or features have been identified.

**27 MHG29829 Greenfield: township**

Centred on NH 2010 0050 are the remains of what was a substantial township in the 18th century. This settlement was abandoned in the 1790s but reoccupied 50 years later. Greenfield is now a much disturbed site although some remains, including a head-dyke, are still evident.

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## MAP 4

### 28 NH10SE 2 Inchlaggan: township

The first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1876, sheet 62) shows seven roofed buildings, one partially roofed building, one unroofed building and five enclosures at NH 1740 0165. The current OS 1:10,000 map shows 14 roofed buildings, two unroofed buildings and two enclosures at the same location.

### 29 NH10SW 2 Loch Pouлары: enclosure

The first edition OS 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1876, sheet 62) depicts an enclosure at NH 1245 0152. The current OS 1:10,000 map also shows this structure.

## MAP 5

### 30 NH00SE 1 Loch Quoich: farmstead

The first edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 6-inch map (Inverness-shire 1876, sheet 62) shows three unroofed buildings, one of them a longhouse with three compartments, and two enclosures at NH 0735 0245. The current OS 1:10,000 map shows one unroofed building and two enclosures at the same location.

This farmstead was one of many pre-Improvement settlements that once stood around the shores of Loch Quoich. At least some of them are now submerged beneath its surface although the remains of others still survive on dry land.

## THE WALK-OVER SURVEY

The walk-over survey was undertaken on 1-3 October 2013, during weather that ranged from bright and sunny to heavy rain. Much of the route runs through commercial forestry plantations and, although the power line is set in a corridor that is clear of trees, the ground within this corridor is covered with bracken. At the time of the field survey the bracken stood to its full height, making it very difficult to traverse on foot but also rendering it impossible to determine what might lie beneath it.

Two areas were almost free of bracken, one towards the east end of the route, the other at its west end. There were a few short stretches running through forestry that were relatively free of bracken although nothing of archaeological significance was encountered in any of them.

### The east section (see Map 1)

The east section runs through Glen Oich, from near Bridge of Oich at approximately NH 3370 0370 northwards to the edge of a forestry plantation at approximately NH 3465 0578, the overall distance being some 2.5km. This stretch ran mostly along the flood plain of the River Oich which now provides mainly good quality pasture although, on the evidence of the many recorded sites in this area, it was farmed intensively in pre-Improvement times.

Most of the sites noted in this area (Sites 6-14) are sufficiently far from the power line as not to be threatened by its refurbishment. However, there is one exception, Site 8 (NH30SW 15),

which sits directly adjacent to an extant pole at the north end of a pasture field and close to a small stream (see photos 1-3). The site, centred on NH 33656 04826, comprises the sparse remains of a building measuring approximately 11m north/south by 5m wide over grass-covered, drystone rubble walls of which only one to two courses survive. This is a two-roomed building, the south one being very small and was perhaps a store.

No associated structures or the remains of early field systems were noted at or near Site 8.

### **The west section** (see Maps 4, 5 and 5A)

The west section extends from the dam on Loch Quoich at NH 0703 0230 to Poulery at approximately NH 1350 0130, a distance of some 6.5km. It crosses a post-glacial landscape typical of many Highland glens where coarse grass with patches of blaeberry, reeds and occasionally bracken cover undulating ground littered with glacial debris, particularly drumlins.

The desk study identified two sites in the proximity of this part of the power line. Site 29 (NH10SW 2), an enclosure at NH 1245 0152, is located approximately 300m from the power line and will not be affected by its refurbishment. A short distance from the dam on Loch Quoich is Site 30 (NH00SE 1), the remains of a pre-Improvement farmstead (see photo 4). It was noted during the walk-over survey, when it was almost obscured by bracken. However, it is located some distance south of the power line and should not be affected by the proposed development.

One other site was encountered in this area and is annotated as Site 31 on the accompanying Map 5A. On gently sloping ground some 30m south of the extant overhead line and centred on NH 10565 01451, are located the substantial remains of a long, rectangular building, partially obscured by bracken at the time of the survey (see photos 5-7). The building measures approximately 17m east/west by 4.3m wide over mortar-bonded walls 0.6m thick which stand to a maximum height of 1.5m. It consists of two equal-size rooms, the eastern one having a doorway in its south wall whereas the south side of the west room is almost completely demolished. The foundations of a structure against the south wall may be the remains of an external stair.

The east gable of the structure has been partially rebuilt with drystone rubble although the construction is of very poor quality and clearly the building was not meant for human habitation latterly and has perhaps been used as a sheep shelter in recent times.

This building was clearly a substantial structure and, on the evidence of its mortar-bonded masonry, probably dates to the 19th century. No associated structures or features were noted in the vicinity of the building although there were extensive patches of bracken in this area which might well cover such evidence.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

On the evidence gleaned from the walk-over survey there are two sites that could be adversely affected by the line refurbishment: Site 8, the foundations of a pre-Improvement building in Glen Oich (see Map 1) and Site 31, the substantial remains of a large structure towards the west end of Glen Garry (see Map 5A).

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## Site 8

Site 8 is probably the more vulnerable of the two structures, an existing pole sitting directly against the west side of the building. As a consequence, it is recommended that any work carried out there should avoid direct contact with the remains of this structure. If the pole is to be replaced at Site 8, it is suggested that the new one is erected some distance from these fragile remains.

## Site 31

The first edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 6-inch map (Inverness-shire, sheet 95), surveyed in 1872, shows the farmstead of Darvorgil at Site 31's location. The settlement appeared to consist of two buildings, two enclosures and some sheep pens, the buildings being roofless by the time of the second OS map of 1892. The northernmost of the two buildings, which is still depicted on modern OS 1:10,000 maps, was the one encountered during the walk-over survey.

While the ruins of Darvorgil farmstead lie a short distance from the extant power line, its presence should be noted by those undertaking the line refurbishment to ensure that no damage is inflicted on the surviving remains.

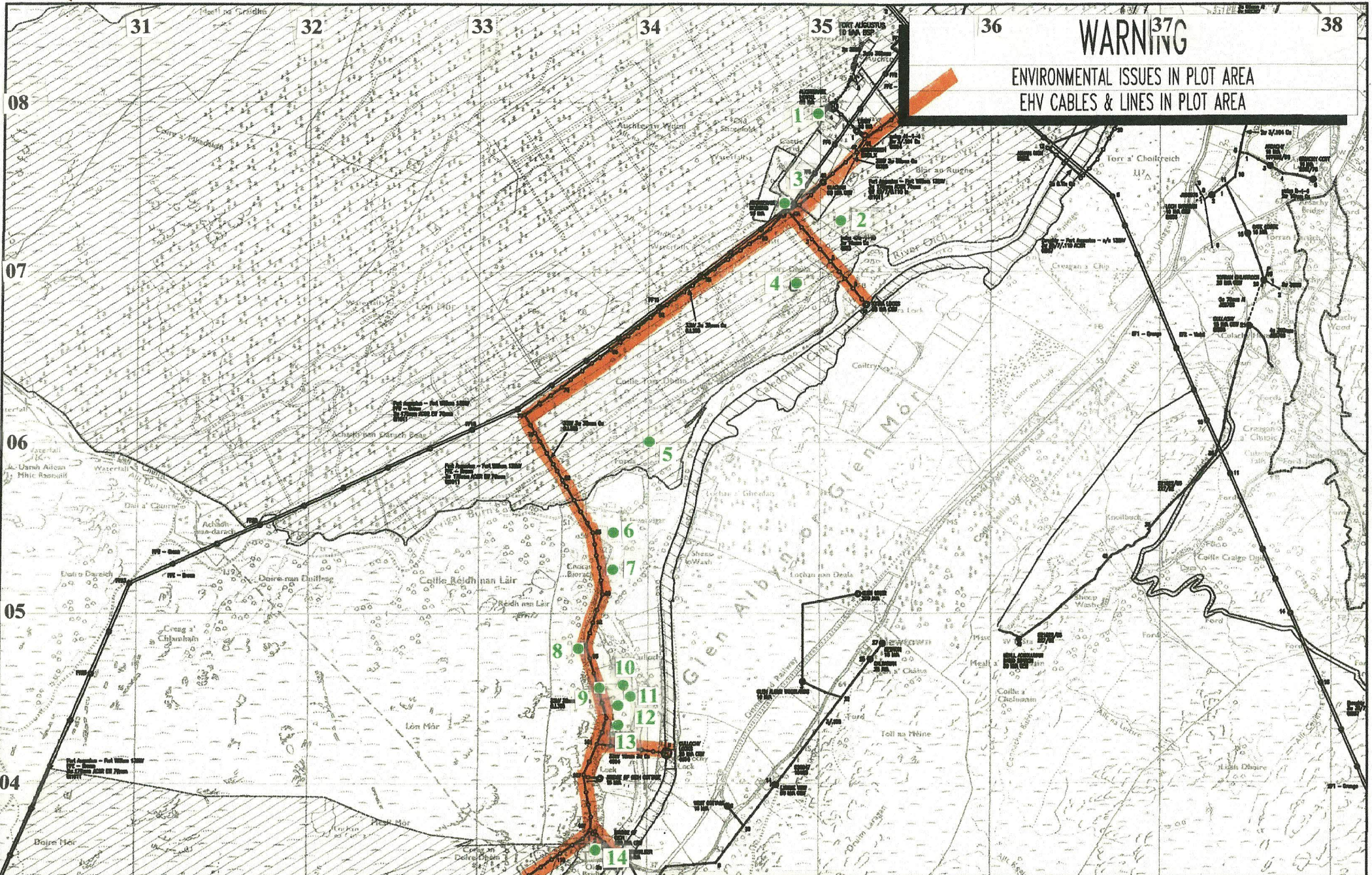


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**PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD**

- 1 Site 8 at NH 33656 04826, viewed from the south
- 2 Site 8 at NH 33656 04826, viewed from the south-west
- 3 Site 8 at NH 33656 04826, viewed from the north
- 4 Elements of Site 30, viewed from the east
- 5-6 Remains of building (Site 31) at NH 10565 01451, viewed from the west
- 7 Remains of building (Site 31) at NH 10565 01451, viewed from the north





# WARNING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN PLOT AREA  
EHV CABLES & LINES IN PLOT AREA

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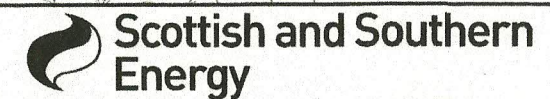
O.S. Ref:  
nh30sw, nh30se  
nh30nw, nh30ne

Date: 13/03/2013  
Scale: 1:20000



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## MAP 1



a3.landscape\_plot

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