STORAGE PROJECT CORSHELLACH, LAND WEST OF BERRYBURN SUBSTATION, MORAY

Archaeology Desk-Based Assessment

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1.0 Introduction

SLR Consulting was commissioned by the Client (RES UK & Ireland Ltd) to prepare an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment concerning a proposed development located on land immediately to the west of Berryburn Substation, Moray (NGR: NJ 04181 46977; hereafter referred to as 'the Site'). The proposal is for the construction of a battery storage site. This document reports on the findings of the assessment, which was conducted in March and April of 2023, and updated with final designs in May 2024.

1.1 The Site

The Site (Figure 1) comprises a roughly rectangular shaped parcel of land of approximately 6 ha, which comprises an agricultural field and grassland, which will be accessed via an existing road. To the northeast of the Site is an existing electrical substation, an unnamed road is to the south and agricultural field enclosures are located to the north and west. Further to the north are forestry plantations and the Berryburn Wind Farm, located c.600m to the north-northwest. Overhead powerlines follow the northern boundary from southwest to northeast past the substation to the northeast. The Site is within a valley which is pastural in nature with parcels of woodland plantations.

The proposal is for a battery energy storage facility located within a development boundary of approx. 6 ha (23/00274/SCN). This will include battery containers sited within a compound with fencing, drainage and other associated development and will have a capacity of up to 49.9 MW. The infrastructure layout for the Site is shown on Figure 4.

1.2 Objectives

This report considers the likely effects of the proposed development on cultural heritage (archaeology and built heritage).

The specific objectives of the report are to:

- set out the cultural heritage baseline of the Site;
- assess the archaeological potential of the Site;
- assess the effects of the proposals on the cultural heritage resource, within the context of relevant legislation and planning policy; and
- determine whether, where any predicted adverse effects are identified, these effects can be mitigated.

1.3 Standards

The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with all relevant statutes, policies, and guidance, including the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct (CIfA 2014) and Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment (CIfA 2017).

The assessment has been undertaken, and the report prepared, by Gwynaeth McCullough, Project Archaeologist (ACIfA), and Elliot Grater, Senior Consultant (ACIfA) at SLR Consulting. The assessment has been quality audited by Alastair Becket, Principal Consultant (MCIfA).

2.0 Legislation, Planning Policy & Guidance

2.1 Legislation

The primary legislation relating to cultural heritage at the national level comprises:

- The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (UK Government 1979); and
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 (Scottish Government 1997).

2.1.1 The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (UK Government 1979)

Under the 1979 Act, the Scottish Ministers are required to compile and maintain a schedule of monuments considered to be of national importance. The consent of the Scottish Ministers is required before any works are carried out which would have the effect of demolishing, destroying, damaging, removing, repairing, altering, adding to, flooding or covering up a Scheduled Monument. In addition, impacts of proposed development works upon the setting of a Scheduled Monument form an important consideration in the granting or refusal of planning consent to conduct development works.

2.1.2 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 Under Section 59(1) of the Act:

"In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, a planning authority or the Secretary of State, as the case may be, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".

Under Section 64(1) of the Act:

"In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".

Under subsection 64(2) those provisions are:

- (a) The planning Acts, and
- (b) Part I of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953".

For the purposes of the Act, 'conservation area' means:

"An area for the time being designated under section 61" (Section 81: Interpretation).

2.2 National Planning Policy

Planning policy at the national level includes:

- National Planning Framework for Scotland 4 (NPF4) The Scottish Government 2023);
- Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement (HEPS) (Historic Environment Scotland 2019); and
- Planning Advice Note 2/2011 (PAN 2) (2011).

2.2.1 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (2023)

Under Policy 7 of NPF4: Historic assets and places, the policy sets out the following for all cultural heritage assets in Scotland. Primarily Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings.



Scheduled Monuments in line with Policy 7 h:

Development proposals affecting scheduled monuments will only be supported where:

- *i. direct impacts on the scheduled monument are avoided;*
- *ii. significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the setting of a scheduled monument are avoided; or*
- *iii.* exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated to justify the impact on a scheduled monument and its setting and impacts on the monument or its setting have been minimised.

2.2.2 Historic Environment Policy Statement (HEPS) (Historic Environment Scotland (2019)

HEPS sets out the principles under which Historic Environment Scotland (HES) operates and provides a framework that informs the day-to-day work of a range of organisations that have a role and interest in managing the historic environment. The policy statement complements and is to be read alongside the Scottish Planning Policy and other relevant documents, including 'Our Place in Time: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland' (2014).

2.2.3 Planning Advice Note 2/2011; Planning and Archaeology

Planning Advice Note 2/2011 (PAN 2) advises that, in determining planning applications, planning authorities should consider the relative importance of archaeological sites (para 5). It also notes that in determining planning applications that may impact archaeological features or their setting, planning authorities may on occasion have to balance the benefits of development against the importance of archaeological features (para 6). The desirability of preserving a monument (whether scheduled or not) is a material consideration and the objective should be to assure the protection and enhancement of monuments by preservation in situ, in an appropriate setting. When preservation in situ is not possible, recording and/or excavation followed by analysis and publication of the results may be an acceptable alternative (para 14).

2.3 Guidance

Guidance at the national level includes:

- Our Place in Time The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland (2014); and the
- 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment' guidance notes.

2.3.1 Our Place in Time - The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland (2014)

The Strategy sets out the Scottish Government's 10-year vision for the historic environment and states that Scotland's historic environment is important, and that people value their historic environment and the economic and social benefits it brings. The vision and aims of the Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland are:

- that Scotland's historic environment is understood and valued, cared for and protected, enjoyed and enhanced. It is at the heart of a flourishing and sustainable Scotland and will be passed on with pride to benefit future generations;
- Scotland's historic environment should be preserved and maintained to secure the many associated benefits; and,
- the cultural, social, environmental, and economic value of Scotland's heritage makes a strong contribution to the well-being of the nation and its people.

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The Strategy outlines how these aims, and vision should be achieved:



- Through understanding by investigating and recording our historic environment to continually develop our knowledge, understanding and interpretation of our past and how best to conserve, sustain and present it.
- Through protecting by caring for and protecting the historic environment, ensuring that we can both enjoy and benefit from it and conserve and enhance it for the enjoyment and benefit of future generations.
- Through valuing by sharing and celebrating the richness and significance of our historic environment, enabling us to enjoy the fascinating and inspirational diversity of our heritage.

The Strategy states that there should be an assumption to conserve the historic environment, that we should improve standards and base practice upon the best available understanding, and that we should conserve the wider setting and context of our historic assets.

2.3.2 Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting (Historic Environment Scotland 2016)

"This note sets out the principles that apply to developments affecting the setting of historic assets or places, including scheduled monuments, listed buildings, Inventory historic gardens and designed landscapes, World Heritage Sites, conservation areas, historic battlefields, Historic Marine Protected Areas and undesignated sites."

"Setting can be important to the way in which historic structures or places are understood, appreciated and experienced. It can often be integral to a historic asset's cultural significance. Planning authorities must take into account the setting of historic assets or places when drawing up development plans and guidance, when considering environmental and design assessments/ statements, and when making decisions on planning applications."

"Where development is proposed it is important to: -

- identify the historic assets that might be affected –
- define the setting of each historic asset –
- assess the impact of any new development on this"

"Setting often extends beyond the property boundary or 'curtilage' of an individual historic asset into a broader landscape context. Both tangible and less tangible elements can be important in understanding the setting. Less tangible elements may include function, sensory perceptions or the historical, artistic, literary and scenic associations of places or landscapes."

"If proposed development is likely to affect the setting of a key historic asset, an objective written assessment should be prepared by the applicant to inform the decision-making process. The conclusions should take into account the significance of the asset and its setting and attempt to quantify the extent of any impact. The methodology and level of information should be tailored to the circumstances of each case."

2.4 Local Planning Policy

2.4.1 Moray Local Development Plan (2020)

The policies relevant to the Historic Environment within Moray Local Planning Policy (2020) is set out in Policy EP8: Historic Environment, and are as follows:

"EP8: Historic Environment

a) Scheduled Monuments and Unscheduled Archaeological Sites of Potential National Importance.

Where a proposed development potentially has a direct impact on a Scheduled Monument, Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) is required, in addition to any other necessary consents. Historic Environment Scotland manage these consents.

Development proposals will be refused where they adversely affect the integrity of the setting of Scheduled Monuments and unscheduled archaeological sites of potential national importance unless the developer proves that any significant adverse effects are clearly outweighed by exceptional circumstances, including social or economic benefits of national importance.

b) Local Designations

Development proposals which adversely affect sites of local archaeological importance or the integrity of their settings will be refused unless;

- Local public benefits clearly outweigh the archaeological value of the site, and;
- Consideration has been given to alternative sites for the development and preservation in situ is not possible;

The Council will consult Historic Environment Scotland and the Regional Archaeologist on development proposals which may affect Scheduled Monuments, nationally important archaeological sites and locally important archaeological sites. Where possible any adverse effects can be satisfactorily mitigated at the developer's expense."



3.0 Methodology

3.1 Study Parameters

The following search areas have been used to establish the Site's baseline cultural heritage conditions:

• for purposes of assessing known and potential buried archaeological remains, a 1km buffer has been utilised; and

All cultural heritage assets identified within the Site and 1km of the Site are listed in **Appendix 1** and shown in Figure 1.

3.2 Data Collection

Up-to-date cultural heritage information has been obtained from the following sources:

- Historic Environment Scotland's Spatial Warehouse Database (HES 2017a), for the locations and extents
 of Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes, Conservation
 Areas and Inventory Historic Battlefields, procured as GIS data;
- Moray Council Historic Environment Record (HER), for known non-designated cultural heritage assets, complete with information on their character and condition;
- Canmore, the HES database, for additional information relating to cultural heritage assets;
- the National Library of Scotland, for historic Ordnance Survey maps and other historic maps, to provide information on sites of potential archaeological significance and on historic land use development;
- archival information, published and unpublished literature for additional background and historical information; and
- the online Historic Land-Use Assessment Map (HLA Map) for Scotland (HES 2017c), maintained by HES, for information on the historic land use character of the Site.

Aerial Photographic data, LIDAR data, and the Statistical Accounts for Scotland (1791-1845) were consulted, but no relevant information pertaining to the Site could be obtained from these sources.

A list of all sources consulted during the assessment is provided at the end of this report.

3.3 Site Walkover

A Site walkover was undertaken on the 31st of March 2023 to verify the presence and condition of known cultural heritage assets, and to identify any previously unrecorded cultural heritage assets. Assets identified during the walkover are presented on Figure 2 and Appendix 1 (Table 2), and are discussed in Section 4.

3.4 Assessing Impact

HEPS (2019) define impact as:

"The effect of changes on the historic environment is often referred to as the impact. This can be neutral, positive or negative. There can be impact on the physical elements of a place or on its setting, if its surroundings are changed so that our understanding, appreciation or experience is altered. Changes in the historic environment can also affect people's associations with a place or its setting, and their responses to it."

With the above definition and Historic Environment Policy 4:



"HEP4 Changes to specific assets and their context should be managed in a way that protects the historic environment. Opportunities for enhancement should be identified where appropriate. If detrimental impact on the historic environment is unavoidable, it should be minimised. Steps should be taken to demonstrate that alternatives have been explored, and mitigation measures should be put in place."

Assessment of impact has been broken down into the following:

- Positive impact; in line with HEP2, that a positive impact will ensure that the understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment is preserved as well as secured for present and future generations;
- Neutral; The development would not diminish the ability to understand, appreciate or experience a cultural heritage asset or its integrity; and
- Negative; An impact that would significantly alter the ability to understand, appreciate or experience a cultural heritage asset and its integrity.

3.5 Setting Assessment

In respect of identifying the importance of setting to the identified significance of a cultural heritage asset, HES's good practice guidance presented in the Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting (2016) will be utilised; specifically, the four-step approach to assessment:

- Step1 Identify which assets may be affected
- Step 2 Define and analyse the setting of the asset;
- Step 3 Evaluate the potential impact of the proposed changes to the setting of the asset;
- Step 4 Mitigate if possible.

Any indirect effects of the proposed development have been scoped out of further assessment. The closest Designated Heritage Asset is Category C Listed Bantrach Bridge over River Divie (LB2186, Figure 1) located c.1.45km to the southwest. There are no Scheduled Monuments, Inventoried Battlefields, Gardens and Designed Landscapes or Conservation Areas within 3km. Considering its position sheltered within the valley, the scale of the Site, its low construction height, and proximity to a recent development (Berryburn Substation), the development is not expected to cause any indirect impacts, and therefore assessment of setting for heritage assets has been scoped out.

4.0 Archaeological Baseline

4.1 Designated Assets

There are no Designated assets within the Study area. The nearest Scheduled Monument located outside the study area is Dallas Market Cross (**SM2206**), located c.9.25km to the northeast of the Site. It is unlikely therefore that any unknown archaeology related to designated assets would be located within the Site.

4.2 Topography, Geology, and Historic Land Use

The Site is located in a landscape of non-rocky formed hillsides and valleys with gentle to strong slopes. The Site slopes from the north at its highest to the south, ranging from 218m – 240m aOD, with the Sneishin Hill and Hill of Glaschyle to the northwest and north respectively, and the watercourse named Stripe of Corshellach to the southeast. This forms a shallow valley in which the Site is located on the northwest slopes.

The geology of the Site comprises superficial deposits of freely draining diamicton, noncalcareous gleys and peaty gleys (Scottish Government, 2022, British Geological Survey, 2022, Plate 1). Alluvium deposits of gravel, sand and silt are located to the south with some clay, sand and gravel mixes along the bed of the Stripe of Corshellach. On the upper hills to the northwest, between Sneishin Hill and Hill of Glaschyle, are some sporadic peat formations.

An appraisal of the Historic Land-Use Assessment Data provided by Historic Environment Scotland was undertaken. The Site is recorded as being brought under use as rough grazing and moorland during the late 20th century, with the Site forming part of a roughly rectangular enclosure.

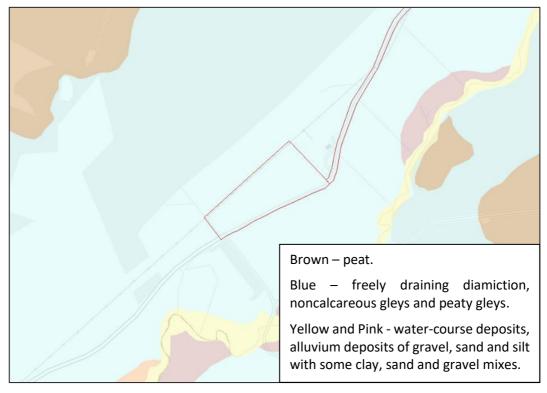


Plate 1: BGS Geology data¹



¹ Contains British Geological Survey materials © UKRI [2023]

4.3 Previous Archaeological Works

Two archaeological watching briefs have been conducted to the north and to the northeast of the Site boundary during the laying electrical cabling and construction of a transformer building (NJ04NW0118 and NJ04NW0135) associated with the Berryburn Substation. A single posthole was recorded within the south of the observed area of groundworks for the cable laying, while a cairn, previously identified during a walkover, was identified in the western area of the substation footprint. Due to nearby possible prehistoric remains recorded in the HER (a hut and field system (NJ04NW0010) and a cairn (NJ04NW0009)), it was concluded that these remains were probably prehistoric in date.

A further watching brief (**NJ04NW0103**) was conducted to the south of the Site, overlapping the Site Boundary in the area of the modern road, but found no archaeology within this area.

Three desk-based assessments and walkovers have taken place to the north of the Site at Sneishin Hill, which have led to a high level of detailed recording within the study area. A walkover in 2012 identified a potential cairn c.200m to the south of the Site. Desk-based assessments and walkover surveys were also carried out in 2011, c.600m to the south (**NJ04NE0028**) and c.630m to the northwest (**NJ04NW0108**).

All archaeological works recorded within the HER within the Study Area are shown on Figure 3.

4.4 Site Walkover

The walkover was conducted in clear conditions, with the full area of the Site accessible, on 31st March 2023. The field is currently used as agricultural land (pasture), and the field conditions reflect this, with low levels of grass and vegetation across the Site. The eastern end of the Site is rocky, and becomes less rocky and flatter to the west, while also becoming boggier. The access track within the Site consists of a modern, unpaved track. Two milestones listed on the HER along the track (NJ04NW0058, NJ04NW0100) were not identified during the walkover, though the remains of a farmstead was (NJ04NW0052), now located behind a fence to the north of the track.

The walkover survey identified 17 previously unrecorded potential archaeological assets within and just beyond the Site. These are set out in Appendix 1 Table 2, and Figure 2. Of these, eleven were recorded as circular features, possibly cairns, the vast majority of which were located in the northeast corner of the Site, within the prehistoric field system recorded within the HER (**NJ04NW0010**). The location of a previously identified quarry (**NJ04NW0136**) was confirmed, as well as possible field systems identified on historic mapping. All assets are discussed within their relevant period in Section 4.5

4.5 Chronological Background

All HER assets within the Study Area are set out in Appendix 1 and shown on Figure 2. Not all assets are necessarily discussed in the following section, only those that are relevant for determining the archaeological background and potential of the Site.

Prehistoric

The Site is located within a valley which has a large amount of recorded prehistory, with a landscape of funerary cairns, hut circles, and settlements and field systems.

Within the north-eastern corner of the Site an area recorded as a prehistoric hut and field system (**NJ04NW0010**) extends to the north up the slope of the valley. Recorded initially in 1971, the hut-circle and field-system has not been identified in subsequent visits, although walkovers and fieldwork conducted in relation to the Berryburn Substation identified a possible structure within the substation footprint, as well as a cairn, and a single posthole on the western boundary of the construction work, which would sit just northeast of the Site. During the



previous walkover survey (see Section 4.4), several possible cairns were identified to the west of the substation. During the walkover for this assessment, six possible cairns (SLR 2, SLR 3, SLR 4, SLR 8, SLR 9, SLR 11) were identified within the eastern portion of the Site, overlapping with NJ04NW0010, along with two further possible cairns just north of the Site (SLR 6 and SLR 7). Though the archaeological nature of these features cannot be determined at this stage, the circular form of these features and the visible stones within them suggest that these may be clearance cairns/cairns. The context of possible prehistoric remains within the immediate vicinity lend to the possibility that these could be associated with prehistoric agricultural or ritual activity.

Two further features were identified within the footprint of **NJ04NW0010**, an area of possible rig and furrow (**SLR 1**), and a possible bank (**SLR 5**). The location and orientation of these features, running parallel alongside the post-medieval field boundary that marks the edge of the Site, may suggest that these possible features are later in origin, but their proximity to the potential prehistoric archaeology does mean a prehistoric origin cannot be ruled out at this stage.

Three more circular features were identified within the Site (SLR 12, SLR 13, SLR 14), all southwest of NJ04NW0010 and scattered and more isolated than the features in the northeast. Though these features appeared as potential circular earthworks, there were fewer visible stones or defined edges to the features, and, given the boggy ground and presence of cattle, these may just be the natural result of erosion of the surrounding area, with these features surviving as higher, drier patches of ground and vegetation.

Further prehistoric features have been identified in close proximity to the Site. Approximately 130m to the south of the Site are more potential cairns; two mounds recorded during surveys in 2012, one measing 4m by 4.5m and another to the northeast measuring 4.5m x 3m (**NJ04NW0106**); these are recorded as possibly stone clearance heaps or natural. Another is a potential robbed kerb type cairn, or a stone clearance heap, measuring 4m by 3m (**NJ04NW0018**). During a visit in 1991 by RCAHMS, an oval hut was identified as set on level ground near the cairn.

Located c.320m to the west of the Site is a cluster of prehistoric dated assets recorded on the HER comprising of settlement activity, field systems (NJ04NW0024), and a potential stone circle (NJ04NW0023). The two north-most assets are settlement features comprising of two stone-walled huts and a field system, measuring 3.5m and 8.5m in diameter. The HER record states there are a number of cairns scattered around the hillside in this area, measuring up to 6m in diameter, with lynchets and banks recorded to have been seen. Within the area outlined on the HER, a possible site of stone circles was recorded in 1991 by RCM, comprising of an upright stone set into a fragmented bank, were all that remained of the alleged stone circle. It may be more likely to be a post-medieval land boundary stone associated with agricultural enclosures and is more west of the other two stones recorded on the 1965 OS map and sit east of the hut-circle.

To the south of these assets are two areas of further prehistoric settlements recorded on the HER, comprising a hut circle (**NJ04NW0025**) and circular stone walled hut (**NJ04NW0013**) within associated field systems marked by stone clearance heaps, lynchets and partial field walls. The HER again states that there is a scatter of small cairns up to 5m in diameter around the latter monument (**NJ04NW0013**), likely to be stone clearance piles.

Extending up the east slopes from the Stripe of Corshellach, c.440m to 1,200m to the southeast, is further prehistoric settlement activity identified mostly during assessment for the Berryburn windfarm proposals, which identified remains of hut circles and an associated field system (**NJ04NW0008**), a dozen small cairns spread across the northwest facing slope (**NJ04NW0046**) and a roughly circular platform with two circular mounds (**NJ04NW0104**), which may be part of the complex of prehistoric activity identified in **NJ04NW0008**.

Overall, the valley of the Stripe of Corshellach has a broad record of prehistoric activity, and within the Study Area this has included possible settlement and ritualistic remains in the form of hut circles and stone circles, as well as a large quantity of possible agricultural remains, primarily clearance cairns, identified in clusters in proximity to and possibly within the Site. The possible prehistoric remains identified during the walkover are broadly consistent with the known prehistoric features recorded within the HER and may form the western edge of a series of agricultural and potentially settlement related features, recorded within the footprint of the Berryburn Substation and extending north up the Hill of Glaschyle. Identified features are concentrated to the east of the Site, though given the topography of the Site, gently sloping towards the Stripe of Corshellach, with high ground to the north, the whole of the Site may have been suitable land for cultivation.

Though no assets recorded within the Site have been confirmed as prehistoric, the wider context of features within the Study Area suggests there is a high chance of a prehistoric origin, as well as the general potential for prehistoric remains which are not evident above ground, such as cultivation remains and negative-cut features.

Pictish and Early historic context

There is no evidence within the Site nor its vicinity of any Pictish or early historic archaeological remains or potential for unknown remains of this period.

Early medieval and medieval context

There is no evidence within the Site nor its vicinity of any early medieval or medieval archaeological remains or potential for unknown remains of this period.

Post-medieval and modern context

The post-medieval landscape of the valley of the Stripe of Corshellach is first depicted on Roy's Map (1752, not reproduced here), which shows a road from Edinkille in the west to Tomnamoon, roughly following the modern track, and highlighting a settlement of Corshellach to the south of the road. This settlement is likely the one described on the 1871 Ordnance Survey First Edition 6-inch map (**Plate 2**) as Little Corshellach, with a further settlement, Meikle Corshellach, further north along the track.

The recorded assets of the post-medieval period depict a landscape used for agricultural use in the later postmedieval to modern, approximately the 17th to 20th centuries, comprising of farmsteads, barns and field systems. There is also a low level of industry related to gravel pit extraction and the presence of kilns.

The Site is depicted on historic Ordnance Survey mapping (**Plates 2 and 3**) as primarily undeveloped, though the western area of the Site appears to have been part of an enclosed field, the field boundary of which is still in place as a drainage ditch (**SLR 16**). Two large stones located alongside this boundary may have deliberately been placed to mark the boundary (**SLR 15**). A further linear (**SLR 17**), running parallel to **SLR 16** to the west may mark a further former field division, though it does not match any division represented on available mapping. The present boundary of the Site was formed in the 20th century during land improvements for cattle grazing. Prior to this, the majority of the Site has no official record of being in active use during the post-medieval period.

A large quarry pit is noted in the east of the Site, and was recorded as part of the walkover (**NJ04NW0136**, **Plate 15**). This quarry is likely associated with the construction of the existing track running along the southern border of the site and is not depicted on any mapping. It may be post-medieval in origin but could also date to the modern era.

Along the eastern boundary of the Site, three features were recorded during the assessment, a possible area of Rig and Furrow (**SLR 1**), a possible bank/boundary (**SLR 5**), and a possible small quarry/extraction pit (**SLR 10**), located north of the previously identified quarry (**NJ04NW0136**). If these are indeed man-made features they may well be the result of modern farming practices or installation of the modern fence line, but the possibility does exist these relate to post-medieval agricultural activity within the field.

Within the wider landscape, the post-medieval buildings, which comprise 17 out of the 26 post-medieval records from the HER, form clusters or groups, primarily farmsteads with multiple outbuildings, and focus on the lower side slopes of the valley focused around the Stripe of Corshellach. These buildings are abandoned now, with the exception of Tomcork farm (NJ04NW0026) and Dallasbraughty (NJ04NW0066), a farmstead still in use. The closest locations of these historic buildings, now removed, are:



- **NJ04NW0029** and **NJ04NW0052**, at Meikle Corshellach, c.210m to the northeast of the Site, comprising a farmstead, outbuildings, sheepfolds and enclosures.
- **NJ04NW0028**, the remains of a kiln barn, just 2m to the east of the Site and south of the track, set into a southeast facing slope;
- **NJ04NW0027**, Little Corshellach, c.220m to the south of the Site, the remains of a farmstead comprising three buildings, one of which is still extant but with no roof.

Overall, the potential for unknown significant post-medieval remains within the Site is low; the majority of the Site was only brought into use in the 20th century, and aside from the known field boundary and quarrying activity, no definitively post-medieval remains have been identified. Any that did exist would likely be agricultural in nature, such as field boundaries etc. related to the settlements at Little Corshellach and Meikle Corshellach.



Filename: 240627_Storage_Project_Corshellach_DBA_V5

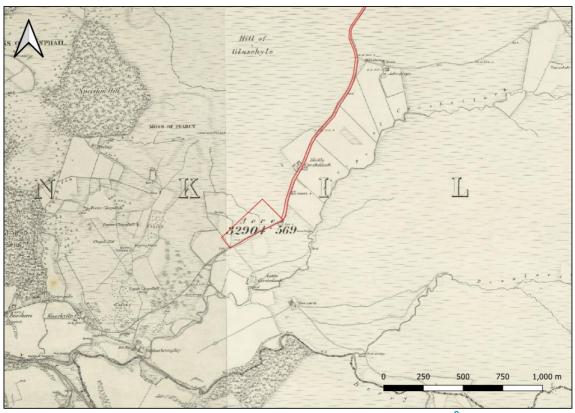


Plate 2: 1871 Ordnance Survey First Edition 6-inch map²

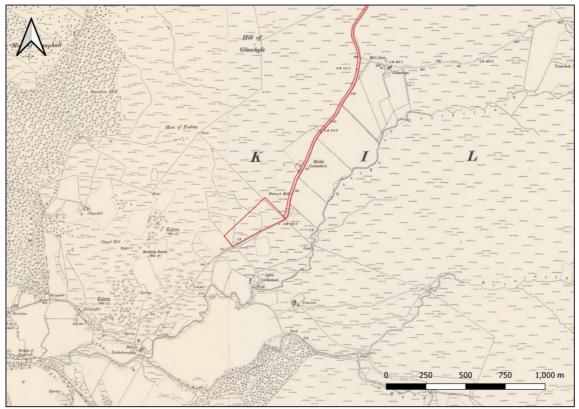


Plate 3: 1904 Ordnance Survey Second Edition map ³

4.6 Discussion of Archaeological Potential

To understand the potential for unknown cultural heritage assets within the Site, the baseline provided above has been used to inform a predictive model for the presence of any, as of yet undefined, buried remains which may exist within the Site.

Prehistoric Potential

The highest potential for unrecorded prehistoric archaeology within the Site is concentrated in the eastern portion of the Site. The HER has recorded an area of potential prehistoric settlement and agricultural activity within the north-eastern corner of the Site (NJ04NW0010), which has been corroborated with fieldwork conducted over two watching briefs, which uncovered a single post-hole and cairn in the footprint of the Berryburn Substation, east of the Site.

The walkover revealed six possible cairns in the eastern portion of the Site, as well as two beyond the Site Boundary to the north. Though at this stage it cannot be confirmed that these assets are prehistoric or indeed archaeological, they appear concentrated together as a group, and are within the footprint of **NJ04NW0010**. Notably, the area within which the possible cairns have been identified is considerably rockier than the remainder of the field, which was comparatively blank aside from scattered potential features, which would add further evidence that these may be cairns associated with stone clearing ahead of agricultural activity.

The HER record within the Study Area, supported by the fieldwork carried out to date, suggests a medium to high level of prehistoric activity across the valley of the Stripe of Corshellach, characterized by clusters of cairns (**NJ04NW0013**, **NJ04NW0046**, **NJ04NW0013** etc), as well as other features suggesting domestic, agricultural and religious function. Though the assets identified within the Site so far cannot be confirmed as prehistoric, the HER lends weight to the suggestion that they are a continuation of the activity noted in the wider landscape.

The potential for prehistoric activity within the Site is therefore considered high, though this is likely concentrated to the north-eastern edge of the Site, with lower potential for the remainder of the Site where the majority of the proposed development is located (Figure 4).

Post-medieval Potential

There is low potential for unknown post-medieval remains within the Site. The enclosure field which exists currently wasn't in use until the 20th century, when it was brought into use as cattle grazing land. Part of the land is shown to be enclosed during the late 19th century mapping, with a boundary passing north to south within the west of the Site. This boundary is extant and currently in use for drainage (**SLR 16**). The only other known post-medieval activity known within the site is quarrying in the southeast corner of the Site (**NJ04NW0136**), though whether this dates from the post-medieval or modern period is unclear. Other potential assets identified during the walkover (**SLR1, SLR 5, SLR 10**) may relate to post-medieval agriculture, but their archaeological provenance was dubious, and may be either modern disturbance or simply natural undulations in the landscape.

The majority of post-medieval activity within the wider Study Area is centred around known settlements, some of which survive today, and there is little evidence to suggest further activity associated with these assets within the Site. Any unknown remains within the Site would likely be agricultural in nature, or associated with the construction of the road running parallel to the south of the Site.



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Other Potential

There is very low potential for Pictish, early historic, early medieval or medieval remains to be found within the Site. There is no evidence within the Site or known potential within the wider landscape of any significant remains of these periods existing within the Site.

5.0 Significance and Direct Impact

5.1 Significance

The assessment above has identified specific potential for the following remains;

- A high potential for prehistoric remains, consisting of a series of possible cairns in the northeast of the Site; and
- A low potential for post-medieval agricultural remains associated with agricultural activity.

Possible Prehistoric Cairns

As discussed in Sections 4.5 and 4.6, there is a high potential for prehistoric remains within the north-eastern corner of the Site, where a series of possible clearance cairns were identified within the footprint of an area of prehistoric settlement and agricultural activity recorded on the HER (NJ04NW0010). Though the prehistoric origin of these features cannot be confirmed at this stage, similar archaeological evidence uncovered during fieldwork to the immediate east in the Berryburn Substation, and a wider landscape of similar prehistoric features, does lend evidence that these are prehistoric in origin.

NJ04NW0010 is considered regionally significant on the HER and contains potential for further archaeological information that would contribute to our understanding of the extant, character and periods of the asset within the context of prehistoric settlement and agricultural activity within the region. The number of possible cairns recorded in the Site, six within the HER monument and three more within the wider Site Area, is significant to note, given that within all fieldwork conducted within the footprint of **NJ04NW0010**, only one cairn and a posthole has been uncovered, suggesting a possible concentration of activity within the northeast corner of the Site.

These assets potentially contain archaeological information which could contribute to our archaeological understanding and would likely considered to be of regional significance, (though could be of local significance depending on the remains).

Post-medieval Agricultural Remains

Two post-medieval/modern remains have been identified within the Site, a quarry associated with the road to the south (NJ04NW0136), and the in-situ remains of a field boundary previously enclosing the western portion of the Site, now used for drainage (**SLR 16**). Several other possible assets were identified during the walkover and are discussed in Section 4.5 and 4.6, but the possibility that they dated to the post-medieval period or were indeed archaeological and not natural features was questionable. The available evidence indicates a low potential for unrecorded remains, albeit remains of post-medieval features associated with pastoral use cannot be ruled out. Should any remains survive buried within the Site they would most likely be post-medieval and pastoral in nature (e.g., remnant field boundary ditches). Any such pastoral remains would retain little, if any, archaeological interest, and would not warrant preservation *in situ* or otherwise preclude development within the Site.

5.2 Potential Direct Impacts

The proposals comprise outline consent for a battery energy storage facility with an area of approx. 6 ha (23/00274/SCN). This will include battery containers sited within a compound with fencing, drainage and other associated development and will have a capacity of up to 49.9 MW.

The footprint of the proposals would necessitate ground disturbance associated with, but not limited to, the following construction activities:

• Cable trenching for electricity cables



- Hard standing surfaces for infrastructure such as battery containers and other required buildings;
- Fencing posts on the boundary of the Site;
- Drainage groundworks; and
- Any further groundworks associated with construction and access to the Site.

Any groundworks associated with the development would have the potential to truncate identified possible archaeological remains if located over them, as well as truncate unknown remains. The potential archaeology is concentrated in the northeast of the Site and the majority of activity that could potentially impact buried archaeology is located further to the southwest, overlapping only with assets **SLR 12, SLR 13, SLR 14**, all of which were less clearly identified as archaeological features and may relate to natural erosion.

Though there is the high potential for Prehistoric remains to exist within the Site, the significance of these assets is unlikely to be high enough to warrant preservation *in situ* or otherwise preclude development, and, in line with the Moray Local Development Plan, impact to the assets may be offset by appropriate mitigation, as discussed in Section 6.

Any modern field boundaries dating to the 19th to 20th century within the west of the Site would not retain any archaeological interest and would be of no significance nor warrant preservation *in situ* or otherwise preclude development within the Site.

6.0 Conclusions

This Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has defined the Site's cultural heritage baseline conditions, including known/recorded cultural heritage assets within the Site and the potential for any unrecorded cultural heritage assets to survive buried within the Site. A series of possible archaeological assets were identified in the northeast corner of the Site, possibly relating to recorded prehistoric activity in the wider area, and some extant post-medieval assets were identified in the south and west of the Site. Additionally, a scatter of other potential assets was noted across the Site, the archaeological origin of which was questionable.

Overall, a high potential for prehistoric archaeological remains was identified in the northeast corner of the Site, with a lower potential for unknown archaeological remains across the remainder of the Site. The prehistoric remains identified likely consist of clearance cairns/cairns associated with agricultural or ritual activity and may be of regional significance. Archaeological examination of these assets may contribute to our understanding of the prehistoric landscape within the valley of the Stripe of Corshellach.

Post-medieval remains would be considered likely to comprise agricultural remains (e.g., former field boundaries) or quarrying and be of low significance. The examination of such remains under archaeological conditions would contribute little further to our understanding of the agricultural practices of these periods and/or of local land use.

Based on this assessment, and in line with pre-application advice received by the Client from the Regional Archaeologist for Moray Council, the development has been micro-sited, where possible, away from the concentration of possible archaeology in the north-eastern corner. This has minimised the impact to identified potentially prehistoric remains, though does not remove entirely the risk to unknown, buried archaeology associated with these assets. Further archaeological investigations may be required, such as trial trenching, or monitoring of groundworks under archaeological supervision, the requirements of which would be determined in discussion with the Regional Archaeologist.

In summary, this assessment has not identified anything that would preclude development within the Site, in principle, in relation to cultural heritage. The proposals would be consistent with the provisions of NPF4 (2023), HEPS (2019), and the Moray Local Development Plan.

References

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APPENDIX 1 – SITE GAZETTEER

Table 1: Non-designated Assets

Reference	Name	Significance	Туре	Date
NJ04NW0010	Moss of Faebuie	Regionally Significant	Banks, cairns, field-systems, hut-circles, lynchets, walls	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0024	Dallasbroughty	Regionally Significant	Field-systems, hut-circles	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0009	Moss of Faebuie	Regionally Significant	Cairns	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0013	Dallasbroughty	Regionally Significant	Cairns, field-systems, hut-circles, lynchets, plots, walls	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0012	Dallasbroughty	Regionally Significant	Cairns	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0001	Dallasbroughty	Regionally Significant	Cairns, Stones	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0046	Berryburn	Locally Significant	Cairns	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0018	Little Corshellach	Locally Significant	Cains, huts	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0019	Little Corshellach	Locally Significant	Dykes	Prehistoric



Reference	Name	Significance	Туре	Date
NJ04NW0023	Dallasbroughty	Locally Significant	Stone-circles	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0017	Little Corshellach	Locally Significant	Field-systems, huts	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0025	Dallasbroughty	Locally Significant	Cairns, field-systems, hut-circles, lynchets, plots, walls	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0008	Tomcork	Locally Significant	Cairns, field-systems, hut-circles, lynchets, plots, walls	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0105	Little Corshellach	Locally Significant	Platforms	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0106	Little Corshellach	Locally Significant	Cairns, mounds	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0104	Tomcork	Locally Significant	Mounds, platforms	Prehistoric
NJ04NW0060	Easter Chapelhill	Locally Significant	Crofts	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0120	Tomcork	Locally Significant	Buildings	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0031	Moss of Faebuie	Locally Significant	Buildings, enclosures	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0052	Meikle Corshellach	Locally Significant	Enclosures, farmhouses, Farmsteads	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0066	Dallasbroughty	Locally Significant	Farmsteads , lades,	Post-medieval



Reference	Name	Significance	Туре	Date
NJ04NW0033	Chapelhill	Locally Significant	Enclosures, farmsteads, horse-gangs	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0028	Stripe of Corshellach	Locally Significant	Barms, drains, kilns, rickles	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0034	Dallasbroughty	Locally Significant	Buildings, farmsteads	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0067	Chapelhill	Locally Significant	Letters, stones	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0027	Little Corshellach	Locally Significant	Enclosures, farmsteads	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0101	Greens	Locally Significant	Pits	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0030	Chapelhill	Locally Significant	Buildings	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0119	Little Corshellach	Locally Significant	Bothies	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0061	Knockyfin	Locally Significant	Buildings, enclosures	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0034	Dallasbroughty	Locally Significant	Buildings, farmsteads	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0065	South Chapelhill	Locally Significant	Buildings, enclosures	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0136	Stripe of Corshellach	Locally Significant	Quarry	Post-medieval



Reference	Name	Significance	Туре	Date
NJ04NW0029	Meikle Corshellach	Locally Significant	Buildings, enclosures , sheepfolds	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0026	Tomcork	Locally Significant	Enclosures, farmhouses, farmsteads, horse-engines	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0058	Hill of Glaschyle	Locally Significant	Stones	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0067	Chapelhill	Locally Significant	Letters, stones	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0100	Meikle Corshellach	Locally Significant	Milestones	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0064	South Chapelhill	Locally Significant	Buildings, enclosures	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0045	Little Corshellach	Locally Significant	Structures	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0032	Feabuy	Locally Significant	Buildings, enclosures	Post-medieval
NJ04NW0053	Tomcork	Locally Significant	Buildings	Post-medieval



Table 2: Site Walkover Assets

Reference	Туре	Possible Date
SLR 1	Possible rig and furrow, running parallel to modern field boundary and fence.	Post-medieval
	Appears as a faint set of parallel dips and raises in the field. The edges are diffuse and the recorded extant is based only on what was visible on the surface. It is entirely possible that this is in fact a natural formation, or imprints from modern agricultural activity (farming equipment, cattle).	
	Dimensions: 70m x 6m	
SLR 2	Circular feature, possible cairn.	Prehistoric
	Several visible stones, including a prominent upstanding stone in the south-western corner of the asset.	
	Dimensions: 3m x 4m (0.25m in height)	
SLR 3	Circular feature, possible cairn.	Prehistoric
	Prominent, circular feature, with a few visible stones. Domed profile, especially when viewed from south.	
	Dimensions: 3m x 3m (0.5m in height)	
SLR 4	Sub-circular feature, possible cairn.	Prehistoric

Reference	Туре	Possible Date
	Large flat stone (0.75m x 0.5m) in centre of cairn, with other overgrown stones surrounding. Western edge of the cairn appears straight, though as it is overgrown the edges are hard to confidently determine.	
	Dimensions: 3m x 3m (0.5m in height)	
SLR 5	Possible curved bank or headland.	Post-medieval
	Possibly natural, though located near field boundary. Curves gently, and slopes down to the east.	
	Dimensions: 10m x 0.5m	
SLR 6	Circular feature, possible cairn, beyond Site Boundary.	Prehistoric
	One of the largest possible cairns identified, and also one of the most prominent. Clear dome with visible stones.	
	Dimensions: 5m x 6.5m (0.75m in height)	
SLR 7	Sub-circular feature, possible cairn, beyond Site Boundary.	Prehistoric
	More diffuse than SLR 6, but with a visible shape and raised dome, and some visible stones amongst the vegetation.	
	Dimensions: 5m x 4.5m (0.5m in height)	
SLR 8	Ovoid feature, possible cairn.	Prehistoric

Reference	Туре	Possible Date
	Some visible stones, visible dome. Feature appears ovoid, with longest side running east-west.	
	Dimensions: 3m x 5m (0.4m in height)	
SLR 9	Circular feature, possible cairn, possibly natural undulation.	Prehistoric
	More uncertain and diffuse, though with an identifiable shape, with possible edges.	
	Dimensions: 3m x 4m (0.2m in height)	
SLR 10	Possible quarrying.	Prehistoric
	Semi-circular depression in the west, with a straight north-south edge. May be a natural feature, but only one of its type identified in the Site.	
	Dimensions: 2m x 1m (0.4m depth)	
SLR 11	Circular feature, possible cairn.	Prehistoric
	Quite overgrown and diffuse, though with a circular shape and lots of visible stones.	
	Dimensions: 3.5m x 3m (0.25m in height)	
SLR 12	Ovoid feature, possible cairn.	Prehistoric
	Possibly natural undulation, though a visible dome in the ground in an area of relatively flat terrain. Some visible stones.	

Reference	Туре	Possible Date
	Dimensions: 4m x 3m (0.5m in height)	
SLR 13	Ovoid feature.	Prehistoric
	Possible natural undulation, may just be raised ground in an area of bog, however the feature is ovoid and visible in a flat area.	
	Dimensions: 4m x 2.5m (0.3m in height)	
SLR 14	Circular feature with central depression.	Prehistoric
	Possible natural undulation, may just be raised ground in an area of bog, with some possible stones with a depression in the centre.	
	Dimensions: 2.5m x 2m (0.2m for bank height, dipping in centre to ground level)	
SLR 15	Two standing rocks, possibly marking a field boundary.	Post-medieval
	Large stones (granite) , with no overgrowth from vegetation, lying alongside SLR 16, the old field boundary.	
	Dimensions : Each stone is approximately 1.5m x 1m, with a height of 0.5m	
SLR 16	Gully/watercourse, continues further north beyond the Site Boundary.	Post-medieval
	Former field boundary, complete with plastic pipes in south-west corner, currently appears to be used for drainage. The southwest corner by the field entrance has been bridged to gain access to the western portion of the field.	

Reference	Туре	Possible Date
	Dimensions : 97m in length recorded, though continued, 0.5m in width	
SLR 17	Possible linear depression,	Post-medieval
	Appears as a shallow depression in the grassland, though straight, travelling northeast-southeast, continuing to the north east beyond the Site Boundary in a straight line. May be a walking track or depression related to farming activity.	
	Dimensions : 25m in length recorded, though continued, 0.4m in width.	

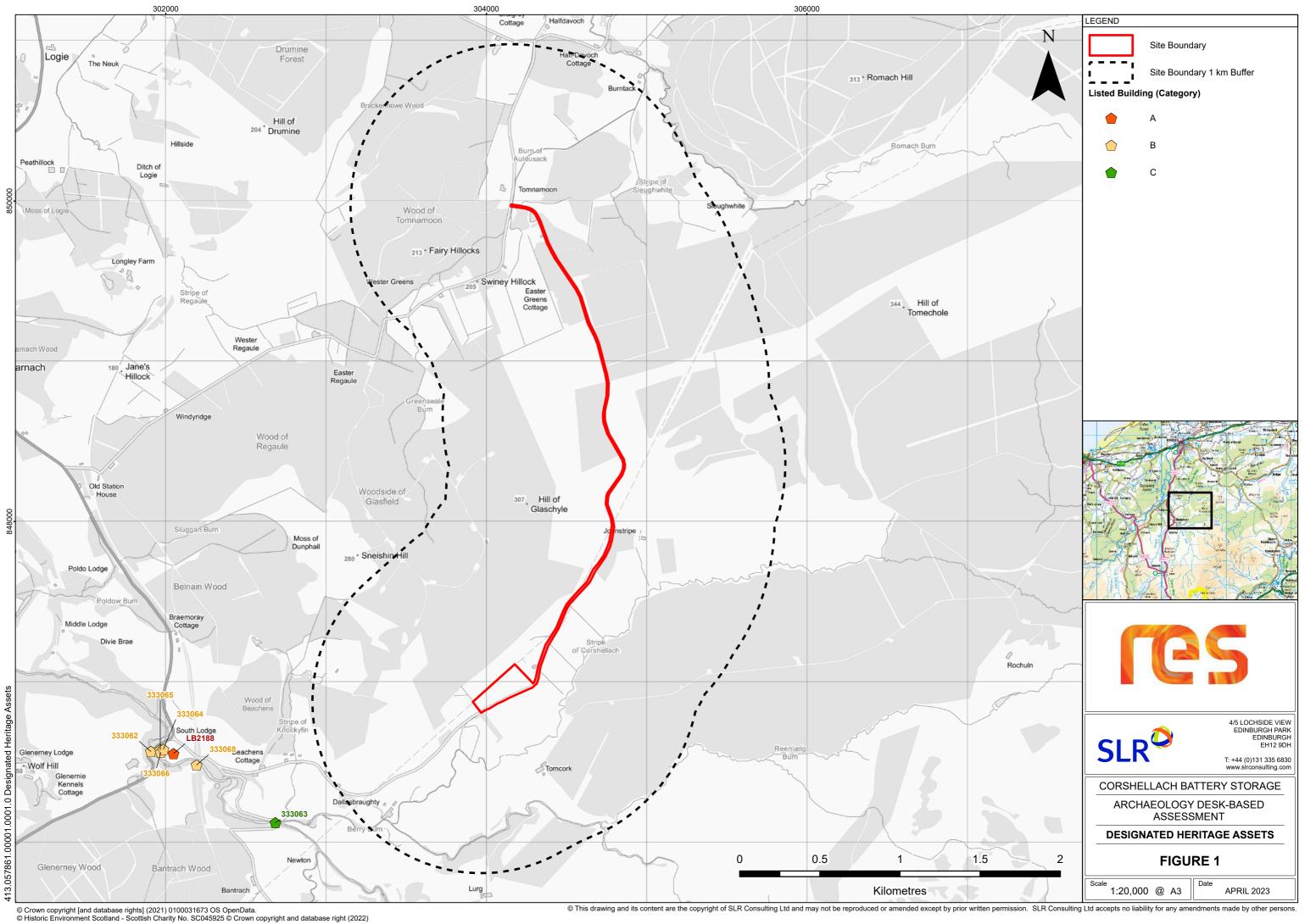


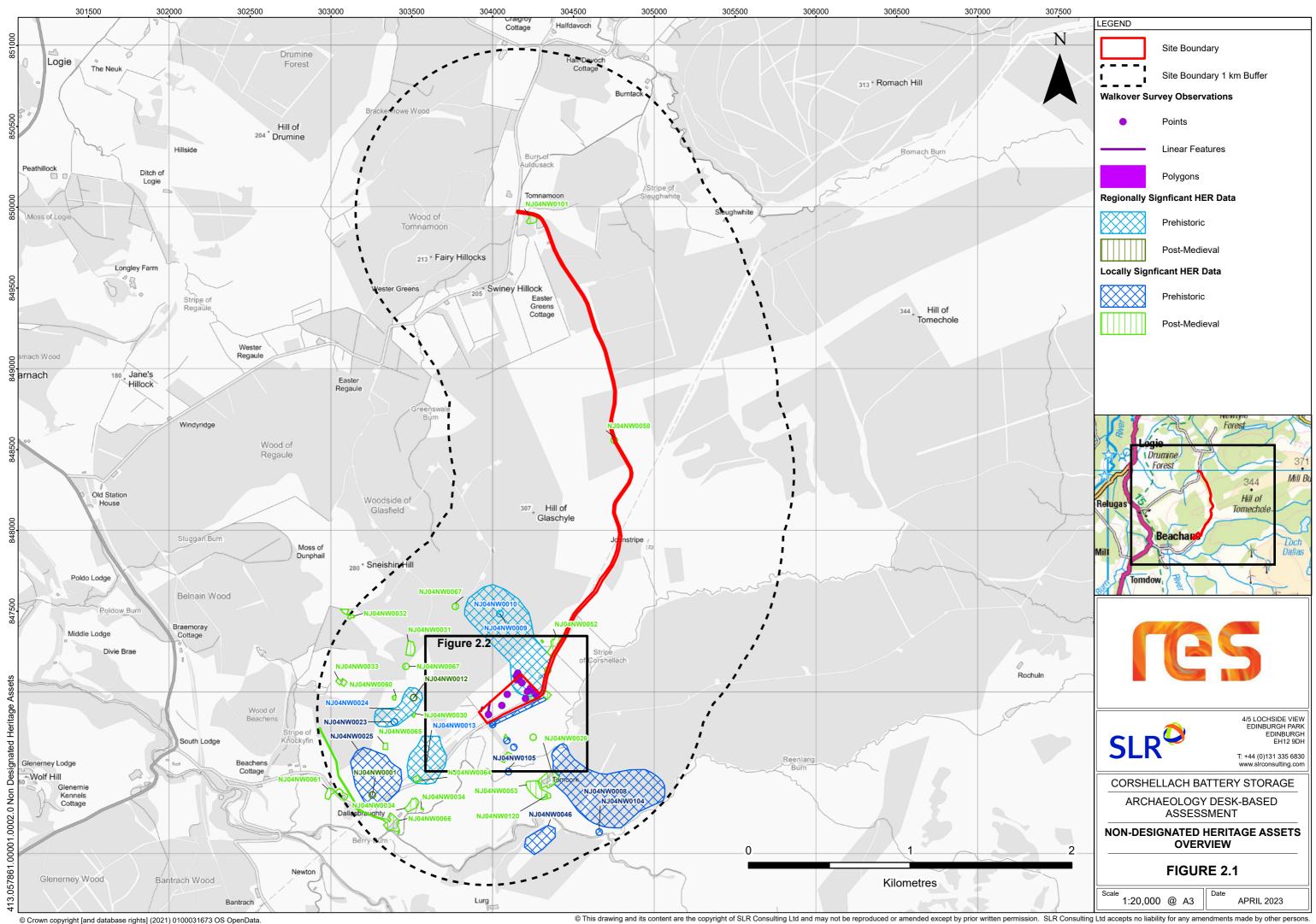
Table 3: Events

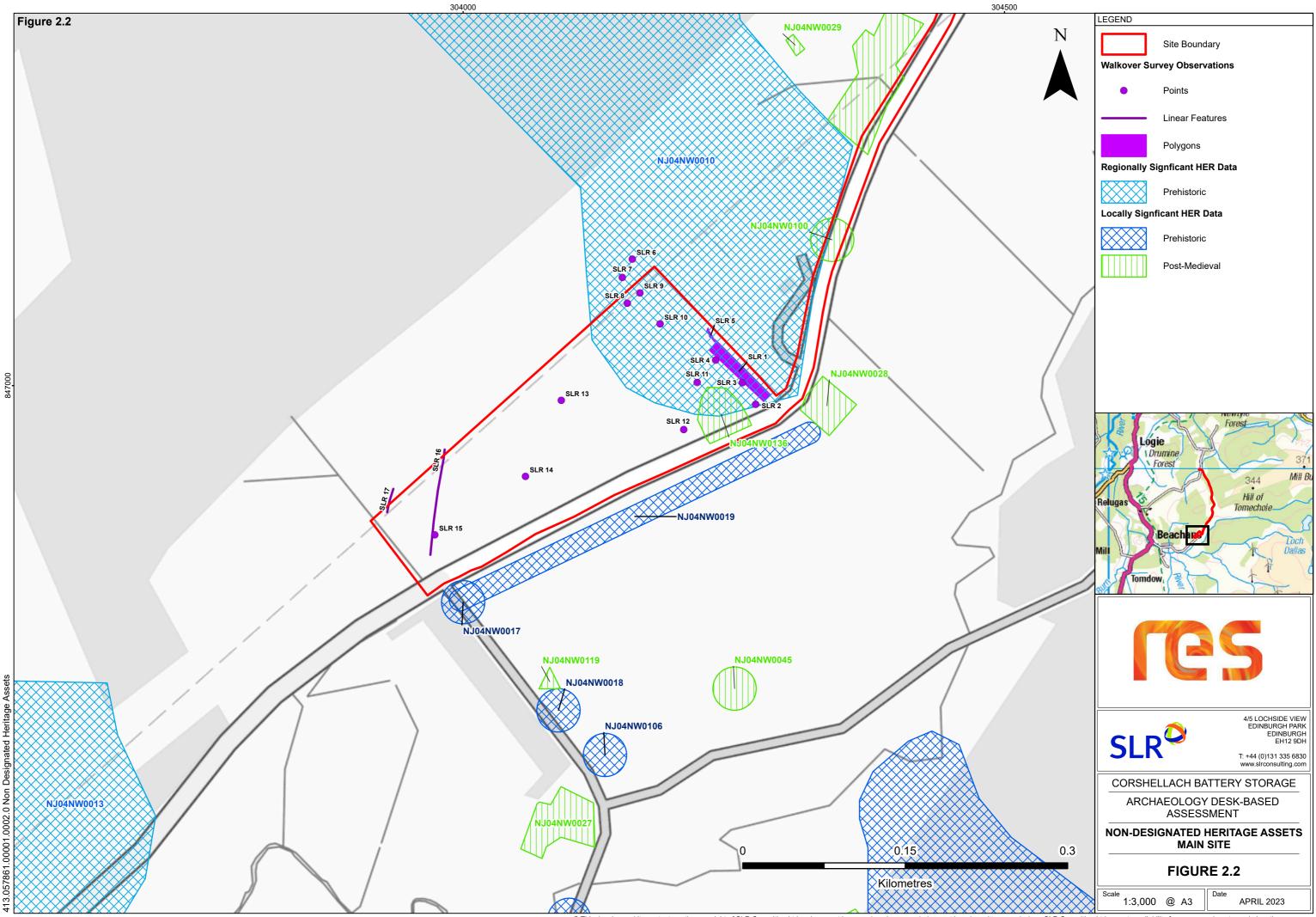
Reference	Site Name	Description
NJ04NW0106	Little Corshellach	Low heather covered mound, possibly the remains of a cairn, recorded during walkover surveys in connection with proposed wind farm.
NJ04NE0028	Berryburn Windfarm	Desk based assessments and walkover surveys were carried out by ASH in 2011 and CFA in 2012 in connection with proposed windfarm access. This identified a number of existing sites and new features.
NJ04NW0108	Hill of Glaschyle	Archaeological baseline assessment, comprising desk-based assessment and walkover survey, carried out in July 2012 by Highland Archaeology ahead of proposed windfarm development.
NJ04NW0118	Hill of Glaschyle	A watching brief was carried out in December 2016 by HAS during groundworks associated with laying electrical cabling and the construction of a transformer building. A single posthole was recorded to the south of the site.
NJ04NW0135	Berryburn Substation	A watching brief was carried out by CFA Archaeology in September 2012 during groundworks for the new substation over an area of 1.06 ha.
NJ04NW0103	Tomcork	A watching brief was carried out by CFA in 2013 during groundworks for a site compound for a windfarm construction. No archaeological features or artefacts were observed.



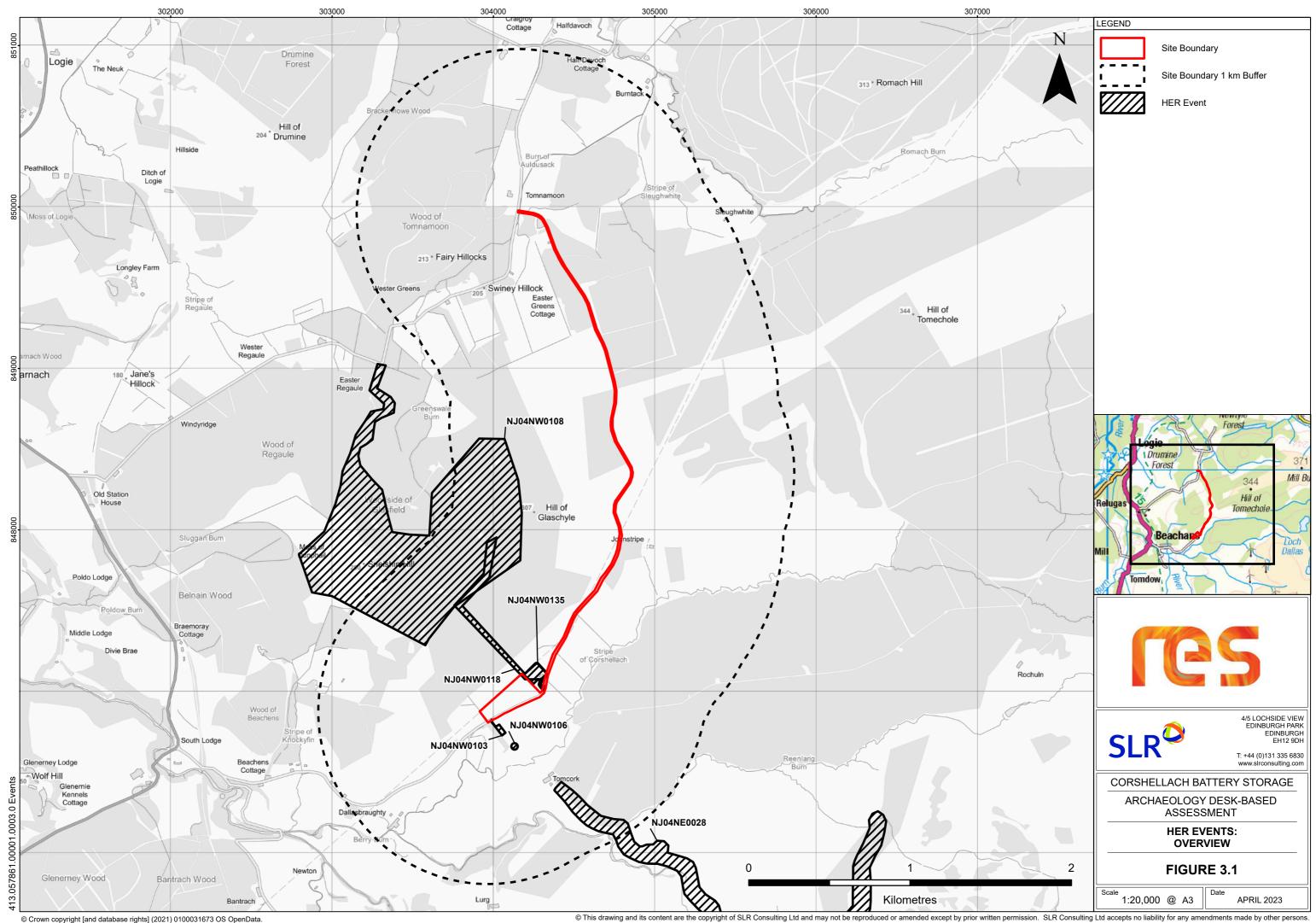
APPENDIX 2 – FIGURES

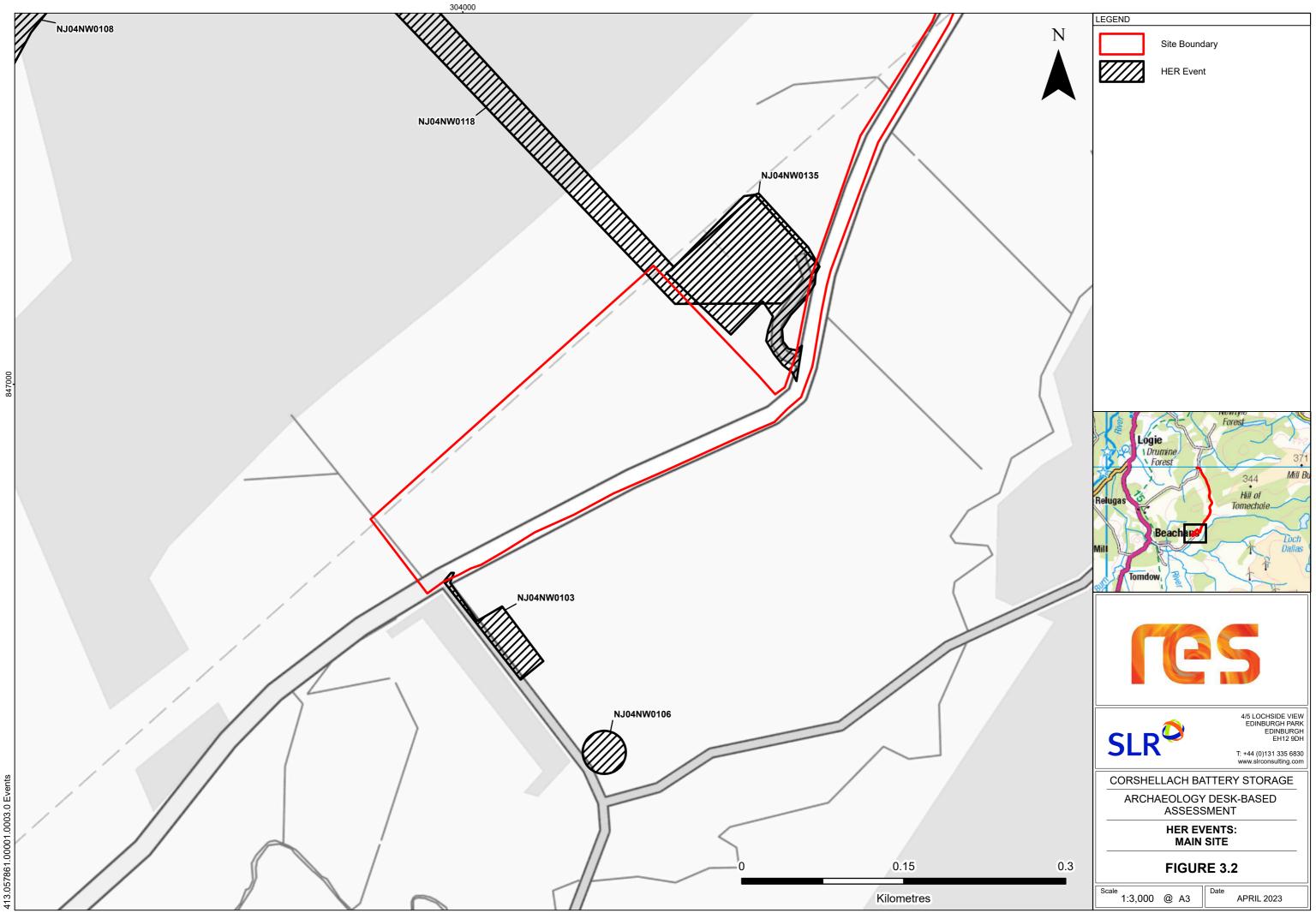




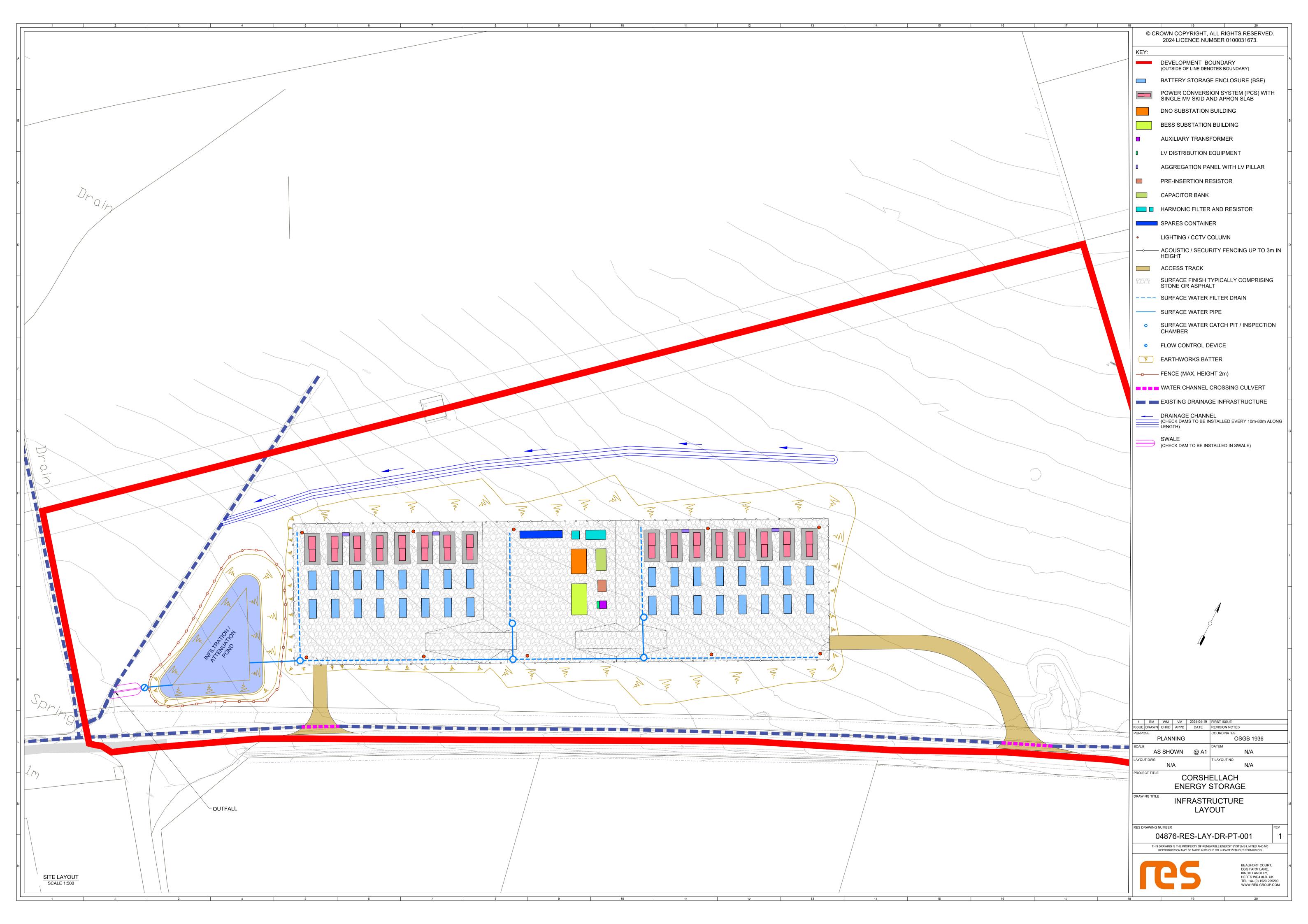


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APPENDIX 3 – SITE VISIT PHOTOS



Plate 4: SLR 1, Possible rig and furrow, facing north





Plate 5: SLR 2, Circular feature, possible cairn, facing northeast



Plate 6: SLR 3, Circular feature, possible cairn, facing south





Plate 7: SLR 4, Circular feature, possible cairn, with flat stone at centre, facing north



Plate 8: SLR 5, Possible curved bank, possibly natural, though located near field boundary, facing north



Plate 9: SLR 6, Circular feature, possible cairn, beyond Site Boundary, facing south



Plate 10: SLR 7, Circular feature, possible cairn, beyond Site Boundary, facing north





Plate 11: SLR 8, Ovoid feature, possible cairn, facing south



Plate 12: SLR 9, Circular feature, possible cairn, possibly natural undulation, facing northwest



Plate 13: SLR 10, Possible quarrying, facing east



Plate 14: SLR 11, Circular feature, possible cairn, facing northwest





Plate 15: NJ04NW0136 (quarry), facing east



Plate 16: SLR 12, Circular feature, possible cairn, possibly natural undulation, facing northeast

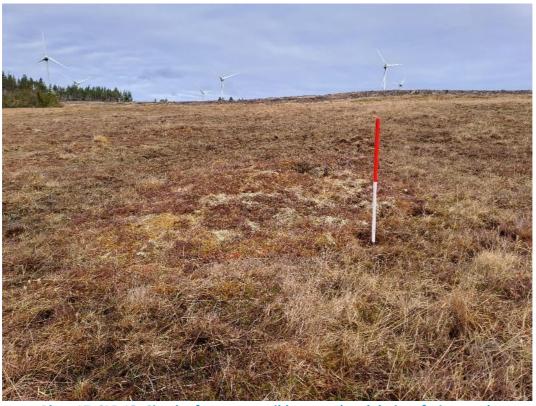


Plate 17: SLR 13, Circular feature, possibly natural undulation, facing north



Plate 18: SLR 14, Circular feature with central depression, facing north





Plate 19: SLR 15, Two standing rocks, possibly marking a field boundary, facing west





Plate 20: SLR 16, Gully/watercourse, continues further north beyond the Site Boundary, facing north





Plate 21: SLR 16, Gully/watercourse, continues further north beyond the Site Boundary, facing south





Plate 22: SLR 17, Possible linear depression, continuing to the northeast beyond the Site Boundary in a straight line, facing southeast



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