

Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc
Beaully-Denny Overhead Line Diversion
Environmental Appraisal
Technical Appendices

Appendix 10A.1 – Cultural Heritage Background and
Gazetteer
July 2025



Appendix 10A.1: Cultural Heritage Background and Gazetteer

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Appendix contains the Cultural Heritage Background related to the Site, and provides details of previous archaeological investigations, a historic background, the archaeological potential of the Site, and a gazetteer of all heritage assets within the Site and Study Area. Each entry in the gazetteer has a heritage asset (A) reference number which is used to identify it within the appraisal and on Figure 11.1 Cultural Heritage Assets. The heritage assets also have a unique identifying number provided by the Highland Council Historic Environment Record (HER) and/or Canmore.

1.2 Cultural Heritage Background

Geology

- 1.2.1 The bedrock geology underlying the Proposed Development is of the Ousdale Arkose Formation, a part of the Sarclet Group which stretches across the Northeast Highlands, once laid down by braided rivers¹. This sedimentary bedrock is described as being a red feldspar-rich conglomerate formed between 419.2 and 393.3 million years ago during the Devonian period. The distinctive red sandstone of the Sarclet parent group was quarried locally across the Northeast Highlands and used for many of the 19th and early 20th century buildings that make up the Conservation Area of Beauly.
- 1.2.2 The superficial deposits in the Proposed Development area are predominantly Till, Devensian - Diamicton. This is a sedimentary superficial deposit of sand and gravel deposited by glacial erosion and deposition between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period. The sediments may include material of late glacial to early Holocene date. These sands and gravel are free-draining and less susceptible to flooding, providing a suitable location for early settlements.

Walkover Survey

- 1.2.3 The walkover survey of the Site was completed on 11 June 2024 by heritage professionals from the WSP cultural heritage and archaeology team. Part of the Site was noted as being in use for livestock with other areas overgrown with heather and gorse at the edge of the woodland. The location of Ruttle Wood Cairn (Canmore ID 116606) (A6) was surveyed but the cairn was not identified as upstanding remains, possibly due to the heather and gorse at the time of the survey.

Previous Archaeological Work

- 1.2.4 There has been one archaeological investigation undertaken within the Inner Study Area:
- Watching brief by AOC in 2023 to monitor the ground investigations associated with the site selection of Beauly 400kV Substation and Western Isles HVDC Converter. The watching brief identified a number of features including pits, linear features, and possible postholes.

Baseline Discussion

- 1.2.5 There is one non-designated heritage asset within the Site, consisting of a possible prehistoric pit. There are four more non-designated heritage assets within the Inner Study Area, consisting of a cairn, pits, structures, and possible postholes (Figure 11.1).

¹ British Geological Survey, (2023). Geology Viewer [online]. Available at <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/> [Accessed May 2024].

- 1.2.6 The Outer Study Area contains an additional five designated heritage assets, consisting of one scheduled monument, one Garden and Designed Landscape, and three listed buildings (Figure 11.1).
- 1.2.7 The heritage assets within the Site and study areas are described in the context of a timeline of archaeological periods from prehistoric through to modern. The location of the heritage assets can be cross-referenced with the Gazetteer in Table 11.1.1 and Figure 11.1 Cultural Heritage Assets.

Prehistoric Period (12,000 BCE – 400 CE)

- 1.2.8 Although there is little evidence surviving within the archaeological record dating to this period within the Study Area, the broader environment possesses a rich prehistoric landscape.
- 1.2.9 The earliest prehistoric inhabitants of Scotland only left ephemeral traces of their lives within the archaeological record. The people of the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods were nomadic hunter-gatherers and left little evidence for their existence, with most heritage assets encountered related to flint scatters. Most known heritage assets from this period have been found in coastal regions or near rivers, with availability of resources the dominant influence on settlement during this period.
- 1.2.10 The Neolithic period in Scotland is represented through the increase in tangible evidence for the development of more sedentary lifestyles, with seasonal rather than continual movements becoming more evident alongside the growth of farming. The gently sloping fields around the Site and the River Beaully create areas of low-lying free draining sands and gravels that are ideal soil environments for cultivation. Settlement evidence from the Neolithic is scarce due to the semi-transient nature of activity and is typically evidenced by pit clusters and find spots. There is the potential that the features identified during GI works, including pits, linear features, and postholes, may be indicative of structures from this period (A19-A23). These remains indicate potential settlement, or at least fringe activity, on the elevated ground of the Site.
- 1.2.11 The most visible aspect of this period presented within the archaeological record are ritual or funerary monuments such as burial cairns. Burial cairns were funerary monuments built around either single or multiple burials, and tend to display architectural differences within geographical regions of Scotland. Ruttle Wood cairn (Canmore ID 116606) (A6), and the surrounding cairns in Ruttle Wood are ring cairns, judging from what can be seen from the remains. The cluster of burial cairns in Ruttle Wood are situated on heather-covered mounds and preserved within the woodland.
- 1.2.12 With the advent of the Iron Age, the archaeological record suggests many of the settlements became or were enclosed by walls, wooden palisades, or within elevated locations². No definitely dated Iron Age heritage assets are known within the Site or Study Area, though the structures and pits (A7 and A8) are thought to be Iron Age roundhouses. The nearest Iron Age feature is Corff House, fort (SM3195), located approximately 2 km to the east, which has been identified as an Iron Age promontory fort, primarily for its location atop a hill surrounded by a pair of ditches enclosing the summit and a medial rampart. No additional structures or earthworks survive, but it is suggested that occupation of this defensible position continued through the medieval period. Fanellan and Ruttle Wood are located on an elevated position which would have been advantageous for settlement. Other hills in the landscape, such as Dun Mor, have identified Iron Age hillforts, suggesting that the wider area of Beaully Firth was an area of significant activity and importance to Iron Age populations.

² Kruse, Susan et al (2023) *Iron Age*. Highland Archaeological Research Framework. <https://scarf.scot/regional/higharf/iron-age/>

Medieval Period (CE 400 – 1560)

- 1.2.13 Permanent settlements slowly continued to develop and cluster, leading up to and through the medieval period. The conversion of Scotland to Christianity strongly influenced the structure of communities. As a result, in the histories related to medieval Scotland, there is a far greater sense of sovereign and religious control and influence within the country than earlier periods. This is reflected in the archaeological record by the prominence of heritage assets such as churches, churchyards, and castles dating from this period onward.
- 1.2.14 Villages and towns normally clustered around churches, as Christianity was central to both physical and spiritual life. Churches were built to serve communities and were organised by parishes. Initially, the populations of the area to the west of Inverness were of Convinth Parish. Following 1226, the Kiltarlity Parish Church (SM5570) (A1) was built and formed the Kiltarlity parish (Plate 1). The current building is no longer in use and exists as ruins, within which a B-listed post-medieval cemetery (LB8081) (A3) is still in use. Unfortunately, there is no direct evidence for the settlement or community that was served by the church within historical or archaeological records. Based on the known archaeological record of the area, the Site is thought to be on land on the fringes of a medieval town and likely used as agricultural land.



Plate 1 - View of Kiltarlity Old Parish Church (SM5570) (A1) from the north-east. Kiltarlity Old Parish Church Burial Ground (LB8081) (A13) can be seen surrounded by fencing on the right side of the photograph.

Post-Medieval Period (CE 1560 – 1900)

- 1.2.15 Religious and political changes characterise the post-medieval period in Scotland, brought about by the Reformation in the 16th century, the union of the crowns in 1603 under James VI, followed by religious unrest and civil war throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. The area of Beaully is inextricably linked to a few Scottish Clans, notably the Lovat Frasers, Chisholms, and Mackenzies. Some names of heritage assets in the wider area were influenced by these clans – such as Lovat Bridge (LB8083), a Category A listed bridge constructed as a part of the northern Scottish road-building programme from 1811 to 1814, located approximately 2.2 km to the east of the Site.
- 1.2.16 The post-medieval period drew many religious and political boundaries in Scotland. The Protestant Reformation saw a big push to extend working Calvinist values to all parts of society. The Church of Scotland was pushed into the Highlands to extinguish folk religion and Gaelic tradition. Communities were reorganised to centre on the Church, redrawing clan boundaries and separating communities. The Old Kilmorack Parish Church (LB7122), located just outside the Outer Study Area, was built during this movement.

- 1.2.17 It was common for churches, priories, and burial grounds to be constructed on past ecclesiastical sites. The Kilmorack Old Burial Ground (LB7123) (A4) likely contains the remains of St Maroc's Chapel (Canmore ID 12384) that was replaced by Kilmorack Old Parish Church and Burial Ground (LB7122) just across the A831.
- 1.2.18 Within the estates in the area, the late 19th century saw a greater uptake in creating designed landscapes and gardens surrounding the established houses and castles. Beaufort Castle's Gardens (GDL00052) (A2) feature to the east of the Site. These extensive gardens were designed to accentuate the category A-listed Beaufort Castle (LB8068) by adding forested walks and gardens. The development of these gardens have obliterated many archaeological features of the original 12th century defences, but they also contain a number of listed buildings related to the functional aspects of the castle and estate.
- 1.2.19 A review of historic mapping indicates that activity within the Site remained agricultural from at least the mid-18th century.

Modern (1900 CE – Present)

- 1.2.20 There are no heritage assets within the Site or Study Area dating to the modern period. The closest heritage asset to the Site that dates to the modern period is the non-designated Kilmorack Power Station And Dam (Canmore ID 171639). It is located 200 m north of the Site, across the River Beaully. A review of OS mapping suggest the Site likely remained in agricultural use throughout this period.

Archaeological Potential

Factors affecting archaeological survival

- 1.2.21 The Site is within an area composed of free-draining soil deposits, which would have been attractive to early settlements at the onset of agriculture. It is situated on a slight south-facing slope overlooking the River Beaully to the east. Previous settlement evidence from the prehistoric period has been affected by post-medieval and modern agricultural activities such as ploughing and the construction of post-medieval farmsteads. Archaeological remains, if present, may survive below plough depth where there has been no modern development.

Prehistoric Period

- 1.2.22 The potential for prehistoric remains is deemed to be high. There is known prehistoric activity within the Site in the form of funerary and potential settlement evidence, which was identified from past archaeological investigations. If present, the potential prehistoric remains anticipated to be contained within the Site would relate to funerary monuments or settlement evidence and could be of low or medium value, depending on nature and preservation of the remains.

Medieval Period

- 1.2.23 The potential for medieval remains is deemed to be low. The area of Kilmorack to the east has medieval origins. Archaeological remains from this period are anticipated to be contained within the present areas of Kilmorack and not within the Site. If present, any remains from this period would likely be related to agricultural activity of low to negligible value.

Post-medieval Period

- 1.2.24 The potential for post-medieval remains is deemed to be high. The area has been continually agricultural since the 19th century and probably before. Field boundaries and buildings in the immediate area and within the Site have been maintained and appear to have changed minimally from the first edition OS 6-inch map. Any potential post-medieval remains would likely relate to agricultural features such as drainage, subsurface remains of earlier field boundaries, and other agricultural activities such as rig and furrow, and would be of negligible value.

Modern

- 1.2.25 The potential for modern remains is deemed to be negligible. There is no archaeological or cartographic evidence to suggest that there will be modern remains within the Site.

Table 11.1.1 Cultural Heritage Gazetteer

Heritage Asset No.	Ref No.	National Grid Ref		Site Type	Designation	Site Name	Description	Period
		Easting	Northing					
A1	SM5570 Canmore ID 12381 MHG2649	249735	843935	Church	Scheduled Monument	Kiltarlity Old Parish Church	The asset consists of the remains of the sixteenth century parish church of Kiltarlity, which may have succeeded an earlier one on the same site. The church is rectangular in plan, measuring 19m by 8m and was thought to have been originally dedicated to Thalargus, or Tarrail in the 13th century.	Post-medieval
A2	GDL00052	250253	842831	Garden	Garden and Designed Landscape	Beaufort Castle	<p>This asset consists of an extensive designed landscape that comprises a 19th century landscape park and pleasure grounds. It incorporates an earlier designed landscape that is associated with an earlier castle. It is set within a large woodland and the river Beaully lines its northern edge.</p> <p>It contains 5 listed buildings and 3 non-designated heritage assets related to the Beaufort Castle estate such as walled garden, lodges, and a coach house. The non-designated heritage assets are primarily cropmarks indicative of previous prehistoric settlement, now visible as cropmarks and subtle earthworks.</p> <p>The GDL's significance is derived from a number of interestes, but especially its archaeological, scenic, nature conservation, and horticultural elements. Its collection of trees were planted in the 19th century and left largely untouched within the landscape, now providing an enclosed atmosphere.</p>	Post-medieval
A3	LB8081 Canmore ID 12381 MHG31353	249743	843918	Burial ground	Category B Listed Building	Kiltarlity Old Parish Church Burial Ground, Excluding Scheduled Monument No	This asset consists of a burial ground. The burial ground has a rubble wall around it that is of irregular shape, and it contains 18th and 19th century tombstones and one supposed cup and ring marked stone.	Post-medieval

Heritage Asset No.	Ref No.	National Grid Ref		Site Type	Designation	Site Name	Description	Period
		Easting	Northing					
						5570 'Kiltarlity Old Parish Church', Kiltarlity		
A4	LB7123 Canmore ID 228895 MHG38675	249344	844285	Burial ground	Category C Listed Building	Kilmorack Old Burial Ground	This assets consists of a rubble walled burial ground with an entrance flanked by square tooled rubble gate piers with shallow pyramidal caps. It is the probable site of an earlier church that was replaced in 1786 by Kilmorack Old Parish Church (LB7122).	Post-medieval
A5	LB7117 Canmore ID 76518 MHG442	246889	841864	House	Category B Listed Building	Eileanaigas House	The house was constructed by Lord Lovat in 1839 and possibly incorporates an earlier core and has had subsequent additions. It was later occupied by the Sobieski Stuart brothers, followed by Sir Robert Peel during summer months.	Post-medieval
A6	Canmore ID 116606 MHG26642	247807	842305	Cairn	Non-designated	Ruttle Wood cairn	A small low circular cairn that survives as a mound on the north edge of a forestry track. It has exposed kerbstones. There are two other similar cairns which are covered in heather to the west, and another two and an elongated mound to the north.	Prehistoric
A7	Canmore ID 346470	248296	842782	Pits	Non-designated	Fanellan pits and structure	This is a scatter of pits and a possible structure or shelter.	Prehistoric
A8	Canmore ID 346720 MHG61055	248615	843131	Structure	Non-designated	Fanellan structure	The remains of a circular structure that consists of an outer ditch and an inner ring of postholes. Other finds include a central hearth; two pits that contained a large amount of burnt bone, pottery, and lithics. The structure is likely a roundhouse.	Prehistoric

Heritage Asset No.	Ref No.	National Grid Ref		Site Type	Designation	Site Name	Description	Period
		Easting	Northing					
A9	TP47	248066	842822	Pit	Non-designated	Possible pit	This asset consists of a possible pit, identified during GI works. The pit was circular and measures at least 0.75x0.65 m. The pit continues beyond the edge of the pit so the full extent and shape is unknown. It had a friable greyish brown silty sand fill with angular stones.	Prehistoric
A10	TP28.1	248370	843032	Posthole	Non-designated	Possible posthole	This asset consists of a possible posthole. The posthole was approximately 0.25x0.25 m. It had a greyish silty sand fill with possible ash mixed in. There were small charcoal flakes and tiny burnt bone flakes visible on the surface.	Prehistoric