

The Inventory of Historic Battlefields

The Battle of Carbisdale

Designation Record

The Inventory of Historic Battlefields is a list of nationally important battlefields in Scotland. A battlefield is of national importance if it makes a contribution to the understanding of the archaeology and history of the nation as a whole, or has the potential to do so, or holds a particularly significant place in the national consciousness. For a battlefield to be included in the Inventory, it must be considered to be of national importance either for its association with key historical events or figures; or for the physical remains and/or archaeological potential it contains; or for its landscape context. In addition, it must be possible to define the site on a modern map with a reasonable degree of accuracy.

The aim of the Inventory is to raise awareness of the significance of these nationally important battlefield sites and to assist in their protection and management for the future. Inventory battlefields are a material consideration in the planning process. The Inventory is also a major resource for enhancing the understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of historic battlefields, for promoting education and stimulating further research, and for developing their potential as attractions for visitors.

Contents

Name	Date of Addition to Inventory
Alternative Name(s)	Date of Last Update
Date of Battle	Overview and Statement of
Local Authority	Significance
NGR Centred	Inventory Boundary

Inventory of Historic Battlefields – Battle of Carbisdale

CARBISDALE

Alternative Names: None

27 April 1650

Local Authority: Highland

NGR centred: NH 574 944

Date of Addition to Inventory: 30 November 2011

Date of last update: 14 December 2012

Overview and Statement of Significance

Carbisdale is significant as the last battle of James Graham, the 1st Marquis of Montrose, in support of the Royalist cause. Widely thought to be one of Scotland's finest ever military commanders, Montrose is a highly significant figure within Scottish history. After Carbisdale, he was finally apprehended by the Covenanters and unceremoniously executed. Carbisdale also marks the end of the internal struggles within Scotland as part of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, as with the Covenanters' subsequent agreement with Charles II, they come into open conflict with Oliver Cromwell and the Protectorate, rather than Royalist supporters in their own lands.

Following his defeat at Philiphaugh in 1645, Montrose had fled abroad, only to return in 1650 as the Captain-General of the forces of Charles II. The battle was a decisive victory for the Covenanter forces arrayed against Montrose, with his forces routed almost without firing a shot. Montrose himself escaped the field but he was handed over to the Covenanters a few days later and taken to Edinburgh for his trial and subsequent execution.

Inventory Boundary

The Inventory boundary defines the area in which the main events of the battle are considered to have taken place (landscape context) and where associated physical remains and archaeological evidence occur or may be expected (specific qualities). The landscape context is described under *battlefield landscape*: it encompasses areas of fighting, key movements of troops across the landscape and other important locations, such as the positions of camps or vantage points. Although the landscape has changed since the time of the battle, key characteristics of the terrain at the time of the battle can normally still be identified, enabling events to be more fully understood and interpreted in their landscape context. Specific qualities are described under *physical remains and potential*: these include landscape features that played a significant role in the battle, other physical remains, such as enclosures or built structures, and areas of known or potential archaeological evidence.

The Inventory boundary for the Battle of Carbisdale is defined on the accompanying map and includes the following areas:

Inventory of Historic Battlefields – Battle of Carbisdale

- The low passage between the river and the high ground to the north of the area along which Montrose entered onto the flood plain from the north. This also takes in the craggy peak which accommodates Carbisdale Castle and the southern portion of the craggy ground known as Creag a' Choineachan, which has been translated as Lamentation Hill, a place name which may be related to the battle.
- The eastern side of the area runs along the western bank of the river, in which numbers of troops are reported to have drowned during the rout.
- The southern limit of the area takes in the pass of low ground along which Strachan's men advanced, continuing to the south of Balinoe. It also takes in the higher ground to the west which may have provided a less obvious line of advance for at least some of his men.
- The western limit of the area takes in the slope which bounds the western edge of the flood plain and accommodates the area of woodland to the north-west into which Montrose's men fled. The boundary joins with the northern boundary at the eastern end of the lochan from which the Culrain Burn flows.

The Inventory of Historic Battlefields - Boundary

Carbisdale

27 April 1650

Local Authority: Highland

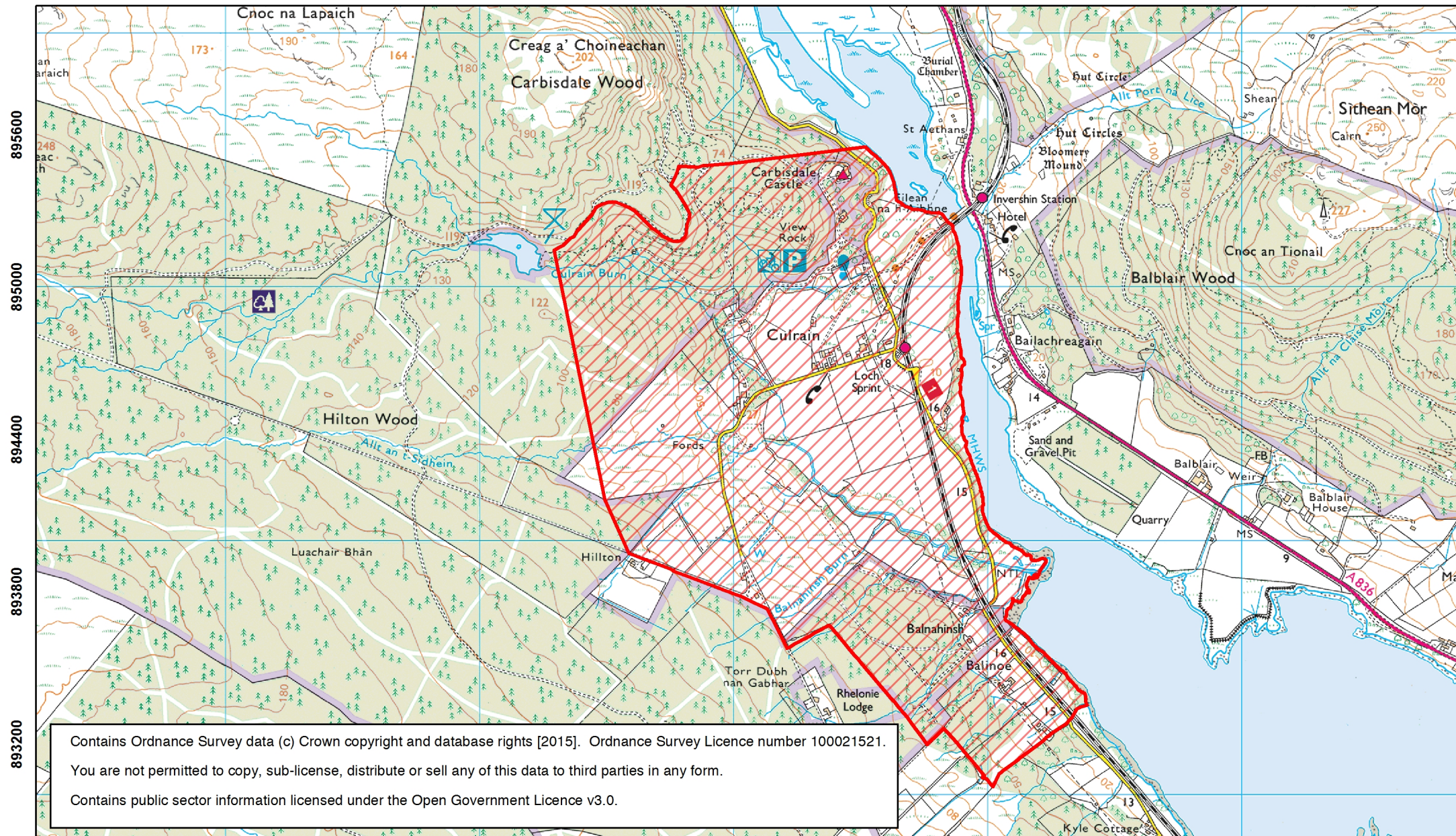
255000

256000

257000

258000

259000



Contains Ordnance Survey data (c) Crown copyright and database rights [2015]. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100021521.

You are not permitted to copy, sub-license, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

 Inventory of Historic Battlefields boundary

0 500 1,000
Meters 