

# The Inventory of Historic Battlefields

## The Battle of Kilsyth

### 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

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

# Inventory of Historic Battlefields

## KILSYTH

Alternative Names: None

15 August 1645

Local Authority: North Lanarkshire

NGR centred: NS 739 786

Date of Addition to Inventory: 21 March 2011

Date of last update: 14 December 2012

## Overview and Statement of Significance

Kilsyth is significant as the largest battle fought within Scotland during the period of the Civil Wars. It is the last battle in which the Marquis of Montrose would be victorious for the Royalist cause, and destroys the last Covenanter army remaining within Scotland. Although it left the Royalists effectively in military control of Scotland, this proved to be short lived, as they were heavily defeated at Philiphaugh soon after, by a Covenanter force recalled from England under Leslie. Kilsyth is also significant as it is a very rare example of a 17<sup>th</sup> century battle fought within a substantially enclosed landscape, rather than the open ground generally favoured by armies at the time.

Kilsyth was the largest battle to be fought between Scottish Royalist and Government Troops during the Civil War period. It was the sixth battle of the campaign of the Marquis of Montrose on behalf of Charles I and was to be his last victory. The battle was a crushing defeat for the Covenanters, who reportedly lost more than half of their army. This loss left no effective Covenanter force in Scotland and resulted in the Scottish Parliament recalling a Scottish Regiment from the fighting in England. However, their dramatic victory at Kilsyth had little long term effect for the Royalist cause, and Montrose, unable to raise much support in the Lowlands, was defeated at Philiphaugh in September 1645. The victory at Kilsyth had already come too late for Charles I, whose defeat at Naseby in June had effectively ended his ability to continue his campaign.

## 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,

## Inventory of Historic Battlefields

such as enclosures or built structures, and areas of known or potential archaeological evidence.

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

- The modern A803 from Ruchill to Shawend and lands adjacent to the north and south. The probable approach line of the Covenanter army and their initial deployment on a hill overlooking the glen. The identification of the hill is unknown but the likely candidates are Ruchill, Giral Hill or Shawend.
- Artefact findspots including Bullet Knowes where musket balls were common at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and reports of discoveries of human remains throughout the defined area.
- Local traditions positioned in the landscape through place names, notably Baggage Know, Slaughter Howe, Bullet Knowes and Drum Brae.
- The modern A803 from Shawend to North Barrwood and the minor Coach Road to the south. The probable approach of the Royalists from Kilysth.
- The settlements of Shawend and Wester Auchinrivoch. Farm buildings and enclosures are shown on Roy's 18<sup>th</sup> century map close to these locations. Primary sources indicate that main battle took place in and around houses and enclosures.
- The well preserved overall landscape characteristics of the battlefield including the views across the valley from the hills of Giral and Ruchill, the glen of the Shaw End Burn and the lower hill slopes to the west of Banton.

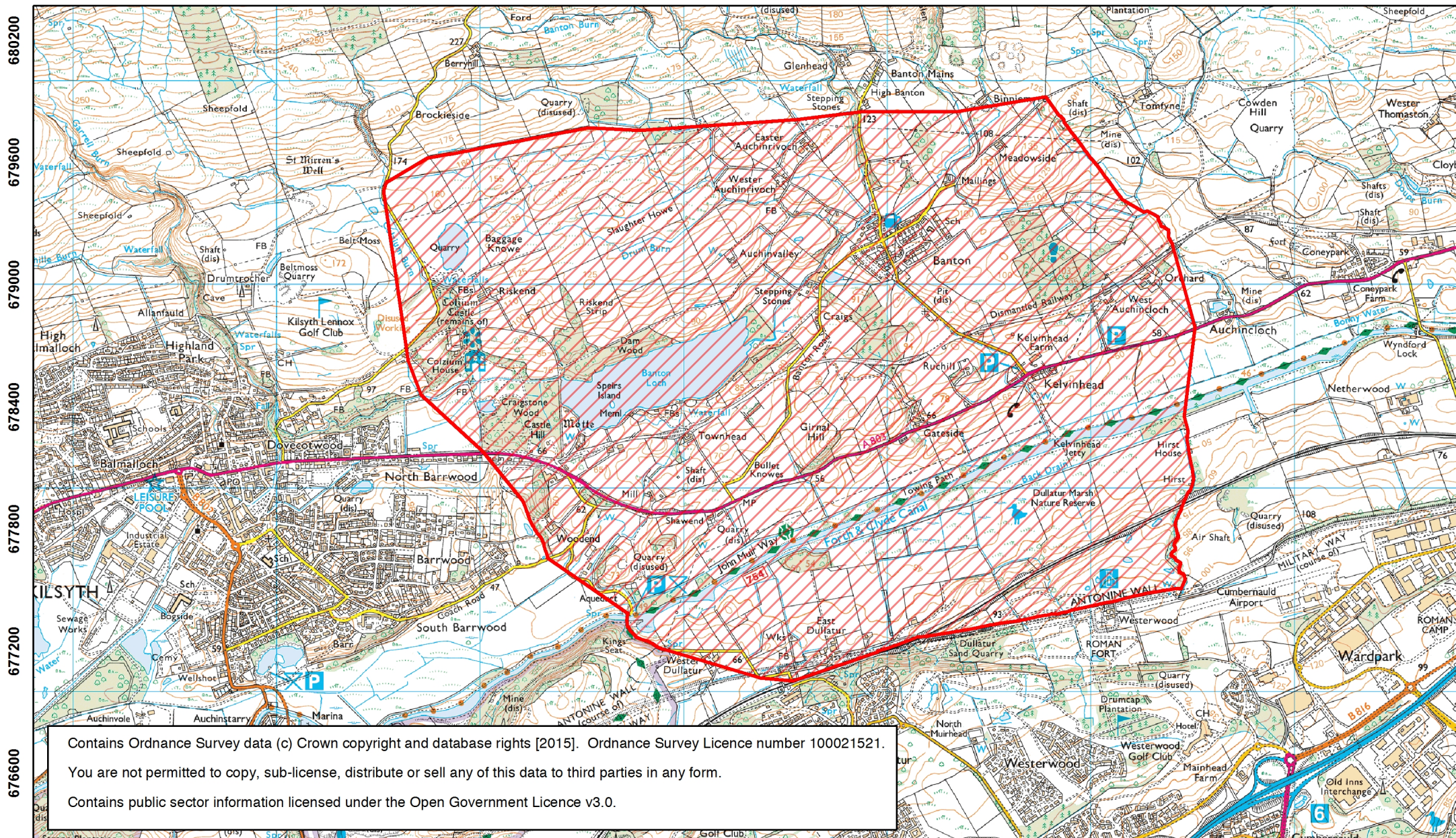
# The Inventory of Historic Battlefields - Boundary


Kilsyth

15 August 1645

Local Authority: North Lanarkshire

271000 272000 273000 274000 275000 276000 277000



 Inventory of Historic Battlefields boundary

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Meters