



Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba



Na Clachan Aoraidh stone circle

Archaeological measured survey

Scheduled Monument 1572
Tay Forest District
NN 838 620

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Na Clachan Aoraidh stone circle

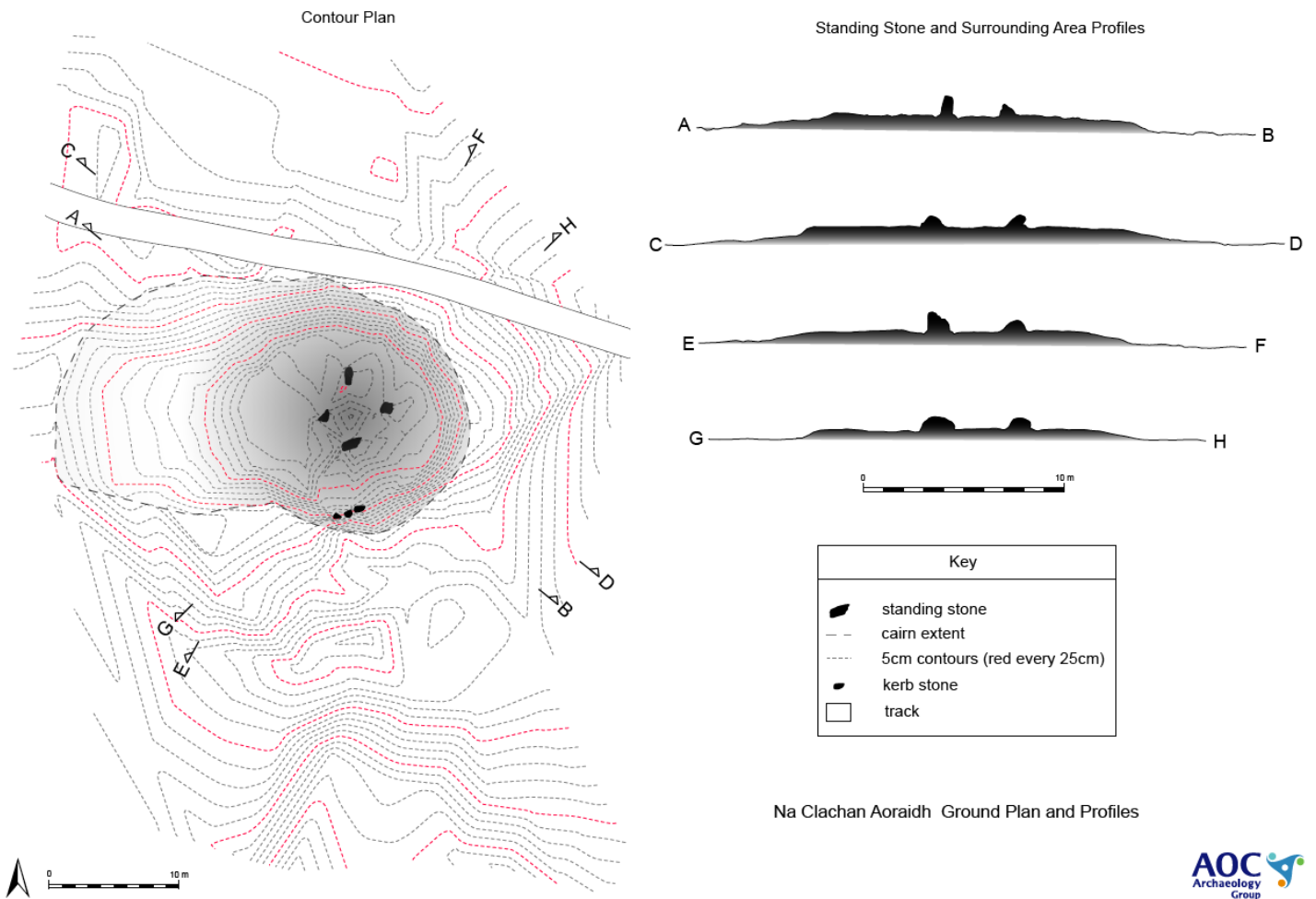
Na Clachan Aoraidh 'four poster' stone circle is an early Bronze Age ceremonial site on the limestone ridge of Cnoc na Craoibhe above Loch Tummel. The name translates as the '*Stones of Worship*'. The site is considered to be a 'four poster' stone circle – a quadrilateral arrangement formed by four large orthostats, generally dating to the early Bronze Age (early 2nd millennium BC). Although likely ceremonial, the few excavated examples often also display activities associated with funeral pyres and cremation burials. There is a particularly dense concentration of such sites in northern Perthshire, with examples scattered through the Tay, Earn and Tummel valleys.

"The retrieving of these forgotten things from oblivion in some sort resembles the Art of a Conjuror" (John Aubrey, 1670)

The site has significant archaeological importance, both in terms of buried archaeological deposits and in structural detail – and as a monument within the wider landscape. The site is situated on a distinct stone built grass covered platform that measures 16.5m in diameter and up to 0.7m in height. This unusual feature has kerb stones visible on its SE side. The south-westernmost of the four stones is upright and measures 1.2m in height; the others, of similar size, are either recumbent or semi-recumbent. A slight hollow in the centre of the platform is visible (probably the result of unrecorded antiquarian investigation). The site is scheduled as a monument of national importance. The recent laser scan survey will help inform conservation management and enhance the historic environment record – and is the first modern record since that of Coles in 1908.

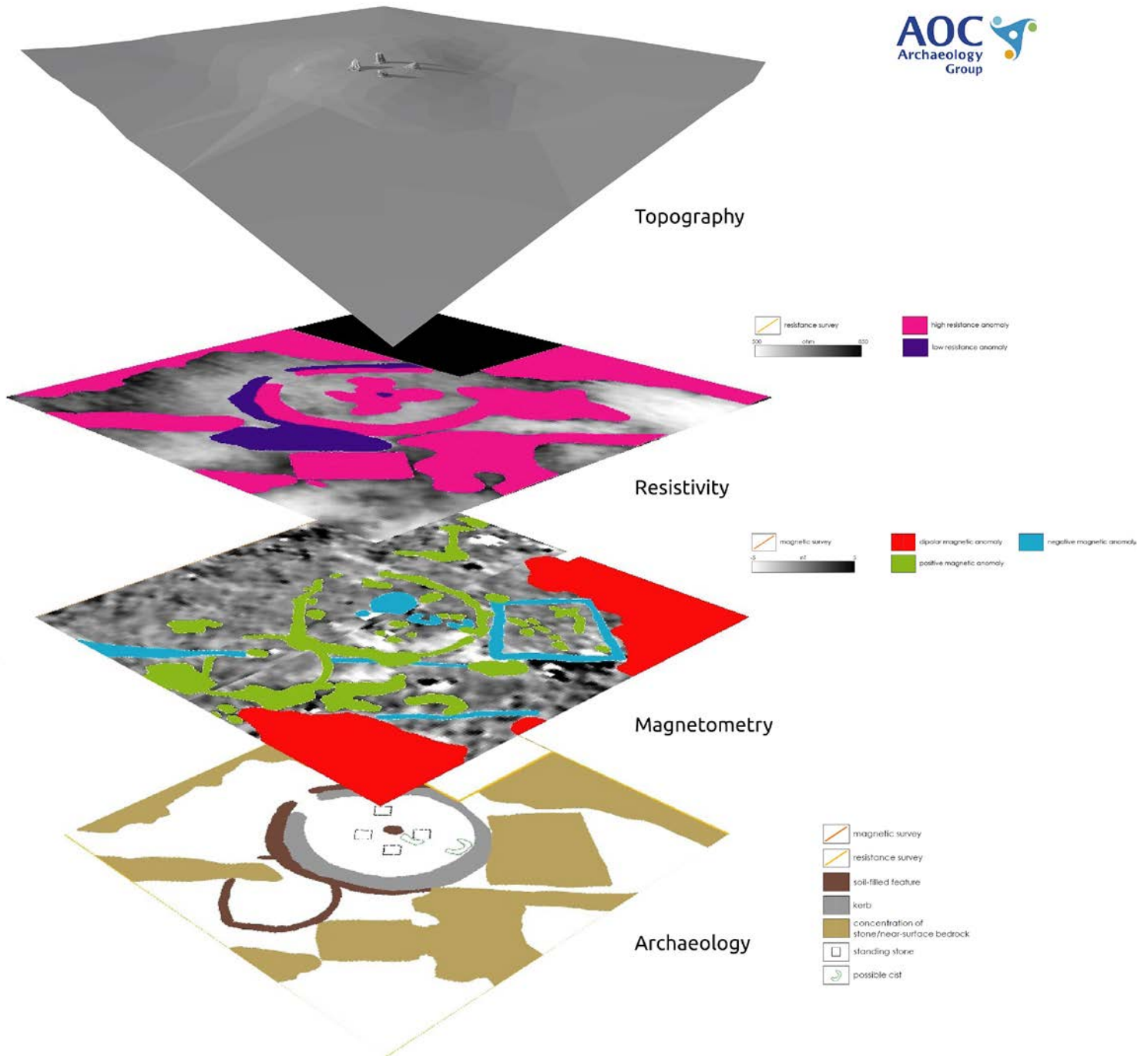


"Here site, scenery, megalithic remains and surroundings all combine to render the investigation of this group especially interesting" (Fred Coles, 1908).



The geophysical work comprised both resistivity and magnetometer survey of the interior of the monument and the area immediately surrounding it. The intention was to add an extra dimension to the measured survey – and to identify any potential associated archaeological deposits or structures (such as hearths or stone settings) or the extent of any later disturbance. The geophysical results indicate the presence of significant buried archaeology extending beyond the visible remains. Several features associated with the stone circle have been identified, including a stone kerb / revetment at the edge of the raised platform; a possible ring-ditch outside the platform; and possible cist burials. The results of the laser scan survey above ground were integrated with the geophysical results to produce a pioneering isometric illustration of all elements of the site.

The modern detailed measured survey has provided an exceptional base line record of this well preserved four poster stone circle; and the geophysical evaluation has enhanced our understanding of associated potential buried archaeological deposits.



The 3D view resulting from the laser scan survey data was combined with the geophysics to produce this unusual isometric view (facing N).