

Cairngorms National Park Authority

Cairngorms National Park
Historic Designed Landscapes Project

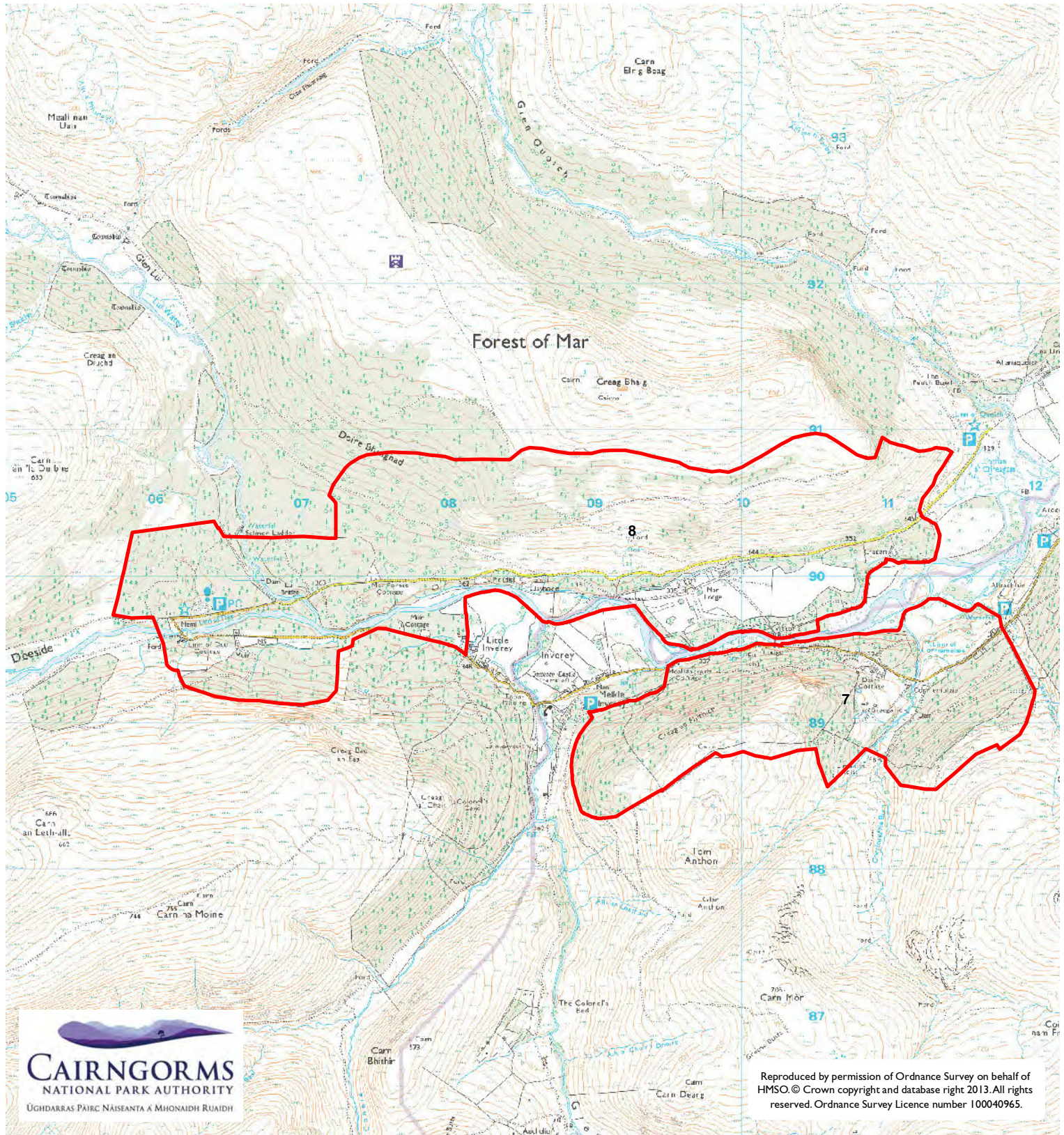
Site Research Report (draft)
08 Mar Lodge

Consultants



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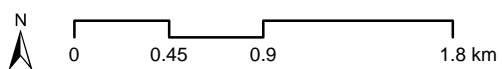


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- Legend**
-  Cairngorms National Park Boundary
 -  Designed landscape provisional boundary

Site 8

Mar Lodge /
Old Mar Lodge



May 2013

08 Mar Lodge

County Aberdeenshire
Parish Crathie & Braemar
NGR NO 097 899; OS 1:25.000 Map Sheet 404 (South)

DESIGNATIONS

Listing Mar Lodge, including garden wall, HB 48775 – Category B
Lodge at Victoria Bridge, HB 2999 – Category B
Victoria Bridge, HB 30002 – Category B
St. Ninian's Chapel, HB 50768 – Category B
Ballroom, HB 50769 – Category B

Mar Lodge lies towards the western end of the Deeside and Lochnagar National Scenic Area

Majority of valley floor woodland, and some small areas of hill planting designated as Ancient Woodland

Parts of valley floor woodlands subject of WGS Mark 1 and SFGS Agreements, with part of hill planting subject of WGS Mark 2 Agreement

LOCATION AND EXTENT

Mar Lodge, formerly known as Dalmore, lies on the north bank of the River Dee, approximately 6km to the west of Braemar, from where it is accessed by the unclassified road leading up to Linn of Dee. The designed landscape comprises an area of parkland on the valley floor, together with hill planting to the north, on the lower slopes of Creag Bhalg.

LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT

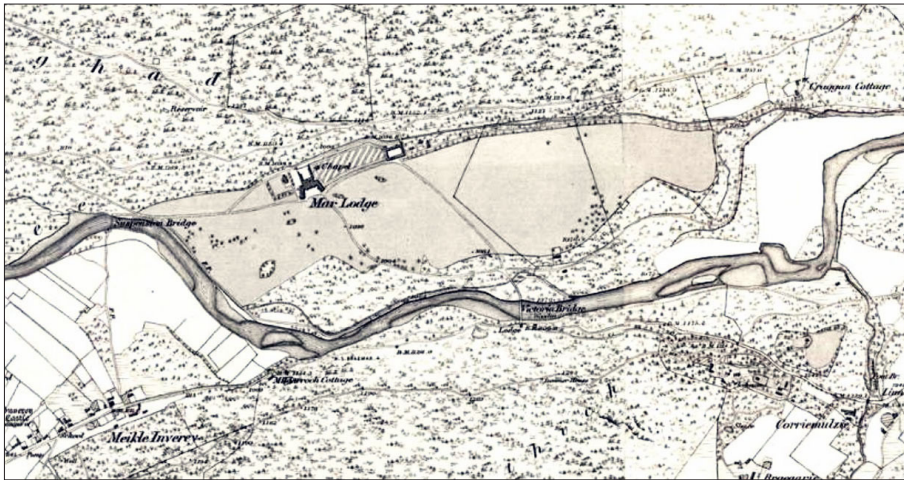
Maps and documentary evidence

The site appears as 'Dalmor' on Gordon (c1650) and Blaeu (1654), and as 'Delmor' on a sketch plan of the Forest of Mar drawn by John Farquharson of Invercauld (1703), all of which maps show fairly extensive woodlands on the north side of the River Dee at this point. Early tourist Thomas Pennant (1769) describes the fine trees to be found in the 'Forest of Dalmore', together with an abundance of game. Roy (c1750), too, records 'Dalmore', seemingly as a higher status house with projecting wings, with a small walled and tree-lined enclosure to the north, and a larger enclosure to the south-west, on the river bank. A stone wall is seen to surround a larger area of rig cultivation and a township settlement close to the principal house, with further township settlements and areas of unenclosed cultivation rigs further downstream as far as 'Craggan' – this ensemble presumably the scene depicted by Cordiner in the account of Pennant's 1769 tour. This picture also shows woodland on the hill ground to the north of the house. By the time of Robertson (1822) the main house had been renamed Mar Lodge. Following the forfeiture of his estates by the 6th Earl of Mar, as a result of his support for the Jacobite cause, the estate had passed through various hands until it was acquired by the Duff family, Earls of Fife, who began the process of improvement which involved the clearance of the township settlements and enclosure of the park.



Roy's Military Survey c1750

The OS First Edition (1866) marks the house as 'Old Mar Lodge', which had been largely abandoned in 1829 following flood damage, at which time a 'New' Mar Lodge was built at Corriemulzie, on the opposite side of the River Dee. This map shows the area between the old house and the River Dee converted to



Ordnance Survey 1:10,560
2nd edition 1900

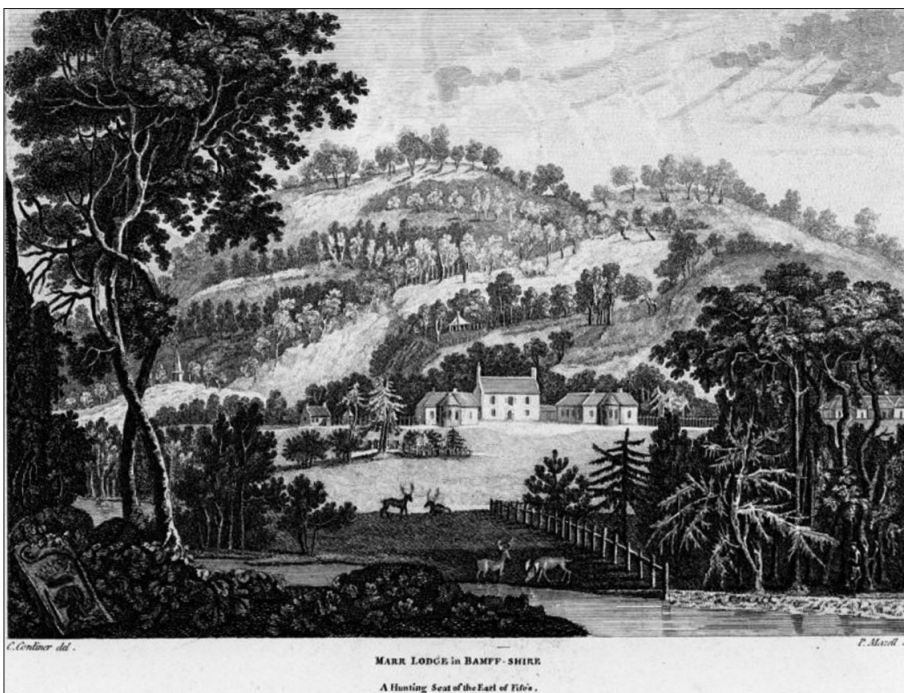
open parkland, with a strip of woodland at its southern edge. The hill ground to the north is shown as woodland. A kitchen garden is marked behind and to the east of the house. The approach to the old house is seen to lead from the Victoria Bridge, through the woodland and across the park. The new lodge at Corriemulzie served as the focus for the estate until its destruction by fire in 1895, after which a new lodge was built by Alexander Duff 1st Duke of Fife close to the site of the original house, on the north side of the River Dee. There is little change to be seen on the OS Second Edition (1900) apart from the new Mar Lodge. Originally built as part of 'New' Mar Lodge at Corriemulzie, the Mar Lodge Ballroom was dismantled in and rebuilt close to the present lodge in 1898. Recent maps and aerial photographs show much the same landscape today, save for the removal of much of the hill planting to the north, leaving a narrow strip of planting at the foot of the slope and a large clump on the hillside to the north of the lodge.

Building History and Ownership

Following the forfeiture of his estates by John Erskine 6th Earl of Mar, the estate remained in the ownership of the Erskine family for a short time, until it was acquired by William Duff, later 1st Earl of Fife. The estate continued in the ownership of successive Earls of Fife, and of the 1st Duke and Duchess of Fife, until its sale in 1959 to Alexander Ramsay. Further sales occurred, first to J & G Panchaud



James Duff, 2nd Earl of Fife
(1729-1809)



Engraving of Old Mar Lodge
c1780, prior to damage by
flooding

*Postcard of New Mar Lodge
re-built on site of previous
lodge*



in 1962, and then to J Kluge in 1989, before the property was acquired by the National Trust for Scotland in 1995 in whose ownership it remains to this day.

The first Mar Lodge is said to have been built by Lord Braco (later in the early 18th century). Following damage by flooding in 1829, the old house was effectively abandoned in favour of the 'new' Mar Lodge at Corriemulzie built by James Duff 4th Earl of Fife, though evidence suggests that part of the old house may have remained in use. The destruction of the new lodge by fire in 1895 prompted Alexander Duff, 6th Earl and later 1st Duke of Fife to build a new lodge close to the site of the original house. Fire damage to the new lodge in 1991 left the landscape and the rest of the estate unaffected. Restoration of the building had been completed by the time of its sale to the National Trust for Scotland.

APPENDIX

Historical notes

Thomas Pennant (1769) an early tourist, observed that "on the north side of the river [Dee] lies Dalmore, distinguished by the finest natural pines in Europe, both in respect to the size of the trees, and the quality of the timber ... on the opposite side of the river is the estate of Inverey, noted also for its pines, but of a size inferior to those of Dalmore. When the river is swelled with rains, great floats of timber from both these estates are sent down into the Low Countries. This tract, abounding with game, was in old times the annual resort of numbers of the nobility, who assembled here to pass a month or two in the amusements of the chace".

A Laing (1819) extolled the beauties of Mar Lodge in verse "Mar Lodge appears, and beautifies the scene, / with obelisks and variegated green, / where noble Fife, when cloy'd with balls and court, / with hound and horn pursues th'enliv'ning sport ; / Midst sylvan bowers behold the villas rise, / in spiral columns pointing to the skies, / where murmuring brooks in graceful cadence sing, / and downy warblers move on pinioned wing ; / Favonian graces hoist the aerial sails, / and Hybla's myriads rove in zephyr'd gales"

G & P Anderson (1850) noted that "two miles below the Linn [of Dee] is seen Mar Lodge, a commodious hunting seat of the Earl of Fife's, the long low wings of which give it a length of front which makes it a very conspicuous object. It is rented with the adjoining deer forest by the Duke of Leeds".

OS Name Book (1866) (Crathie & Braemar, Aberdeenshire Book 18, p32) noted that “Old Mar Lodge ... is a very handsome building beautifully situated in an extensive demesne on the Deeside. It consists of a dwelling house, part of which is two storey’shigh, and part one storey. There is a vbery large garden attached to it, and the office houses in connection with it are situated a short distance north-eastward. It is the property of the Earl of Fife, but is now leased by Mr. Powell”.

A I McConnochie (1900) described “Mar Lodge, anciently called Dalmore ... the *tout ensemble* is charming, but the architecture of the building, with its numerous gables and verandas, is not quite in sympathy with its magnificent situation, which ranks with those of Invercauld and Balmoral ... A deer park adjoins the lodge on the east ; it contains about 150 acres of wood, water and pasture”.
