

Cairngorms National Park Authority

Cairngorms National Park
Historic Designed Landscapes Project

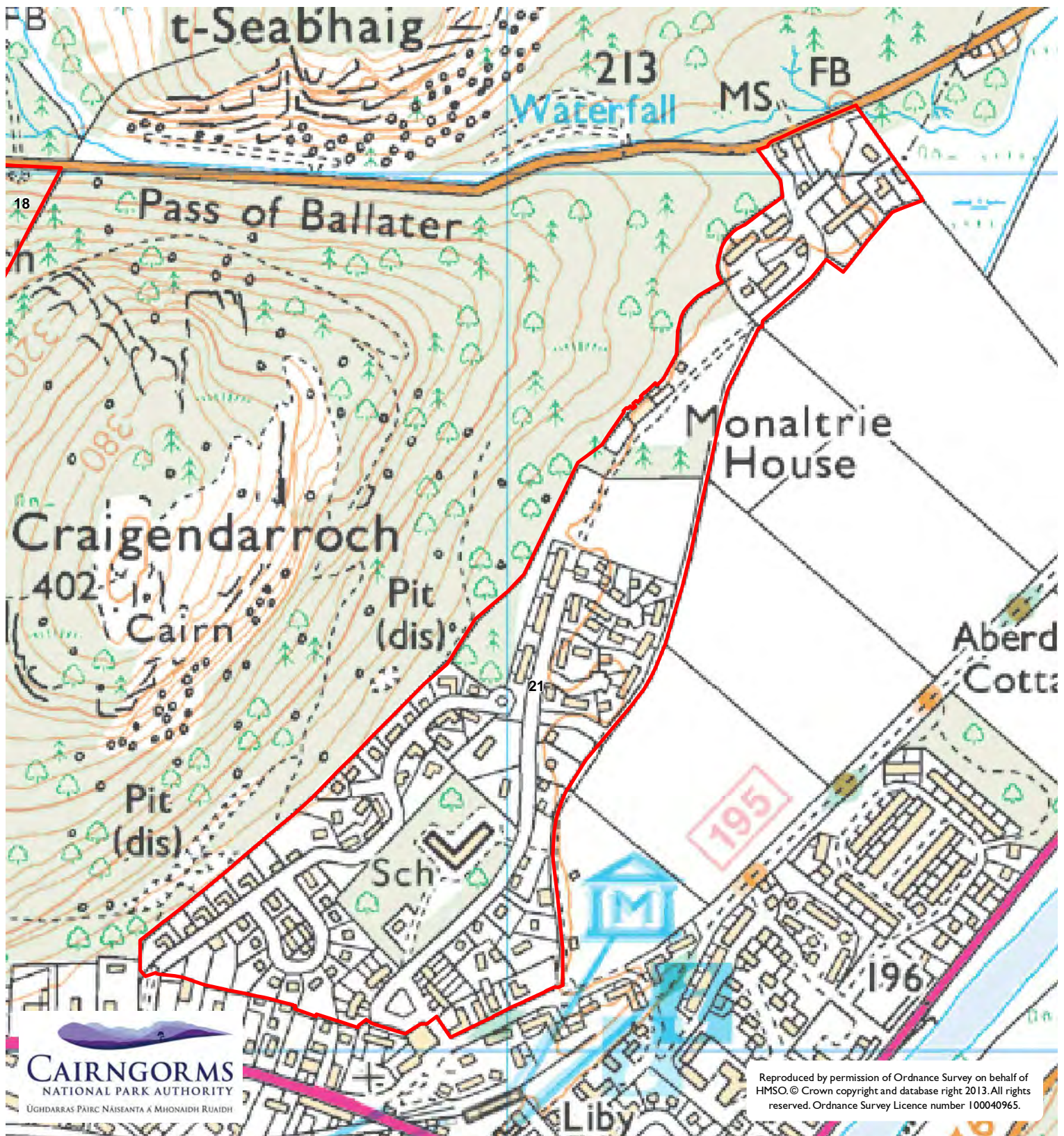
Site Research Report
21 Monaltrie House (Ballater House)

Consultants

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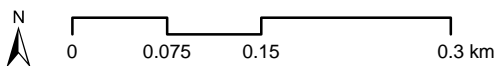


Legend

- Cairngorms National Park Boundary
- Designed landscape provisional boundary

Site 21

Monaltrie House



May 2013

21 Monaltrie House (Ballater House)

County Aberdeenshire
Parish Glenmuick, Tullich & Glengairn
NGR NO 371 967; OS 1:25,000 Sheet 388 (North) or 405 (West)

DESIGNATIONS

Listing Monaltrie House, including well house, HB Number 9317 – Category B (1971)
Monaltrie Monument, HB Number 9327 – Category C (1980) – related eye-catcher outwith the core designed landscape
Pannanich Lodge and Hotel, HB Number 9321 – Category C (1971) – buildings outwith the core designed landscape
Pannanich Upper and Lower Well-Heads, HB Number 9324 – Category C (1971) – feature outwith the core designed landscape

The woodland surrounding the house, and on the slopes of neighbouring Craigendarroch is designated as Ancient Woodland.

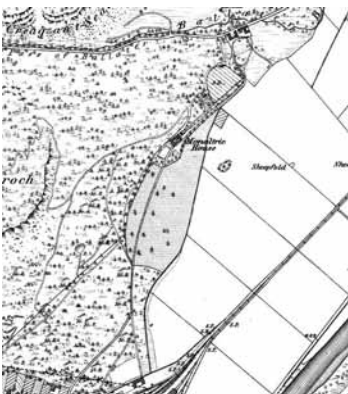
The woodland on neighbouring Craigendarroch to the west, though not in the immediate vicinity of the house, is designated as an SSSI (SNH Site Ref. 429).



Taylor & Skinner 1776



Roy's Military Survey c1750



Ordnance Survey 1:10,560
2nd edition 1900

LOCATION AND EXTENT

Monaltrie House stands on the eastern side of the hill of Craigendarroch approximately 0.5km north-east of the town of Ballater. The designed landscape is small in extent, but enjoys open views to the south-east, from where it can be seen across flat open fields. Access is by drives, whether from the A93 in Ballater to the south, or from the B972 Pass of Ballater Road to the north. With the expansion of Ballater, the southern part of the landscape has now been lost to residential development. The landscape has close associations with the Monaltrie Monument (NGR NO 399 976) and Pannanich Wells (NGR 394 967), both of which lie outwith the core designed landscape.

LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT

Map and documentary evidence

Originally known as Ballater House or House of Ballater, Monaltrie House is first seen on Roy (c1750) as a small group of four buildings, with a small walled enclosure to the south, recorded as 'Balater'. There is unenclosed rig cultivation to the east, and unenclosed woodland to the north, but little or no woodland marked on the neighbouring eastern flank of Craigendarroch. Taylor & Skinner (1776) record the name simply as 'Ballater'. Robertson (1822) marks it as 'Ballater House' with an indication of woodland or planting on all of Craigendarroch, but without other features. By the First Edition OS (1866) Monaltrie House is shown with kitchen garden, nursery, kennels and offices to the north, and a narrow strip of parkland to both north and south. It is seen to be separated from the town of Ballater by the railway. Little change is seen on the OS Second Edition (1900), and later maps, except for the gradual expansion of the town of Ballater, eventually encroaching on the southern parkland.

Although falling outwith the core designed landscape of Monaltrie, two other features deserve notice, being closely related to Monaltrie House. One being the so-called Monaltrie Monument, an obelisk commemorating William Farquharson of Monaltrie, erected as an eye-catcher in 1836 on a small hill approximately 2Km down the valley by Newton of Tullich. The other being Pannanich Wells, on the



*Monaltrie House c1920
(SCRAN / Scottish Motor
Museum)*



*Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 1st
edition 1866 (Panninich Wells)*



Monaltrie Monument



*Panninich Wells well-head
c1900 (deesidewater website)*

south bank of the River Dee, approximately 2km west of Ballater. Supposedly long known for their medicinal properties, the wells became commercialised in the late 18th and 19th centuries, at the instigation of Francis Farquharson of Monaltrie. Well-heads and a bath house were erected, and an inn was built to accommodate visitors. It is said that the town of Ballater owes its origins and early development to the popularity of the wells in the 19th century.

Building history and ownership

Although it has not been possible to determine landownership prior to the building of Monaltrie House, it seems likely that the site had been in the ownership of the Farquharson family of Invercauld for some time prior to the building of the present house for Jacobite sympathiser Francis Farquharson to designs by architect James Roberston in 1782. According to Geddes (2001), Monaltrie House was built to replace another house of the same name to the west of Balmoral, which had burnt down. Originally known as Ballater House, the name of the house appears to have changed in the early-to-mid 19th century. Historic Scotland reports that the house fell into disrepair in the second half of the 20th century, but that it has been 'extensively renovated'. The house is currently advertised as providing self-catering accommodation.

APPENDIX

Historical notes

Mr Brown 1843 wrote that Panninich Wells "at all times, but more especially in the summer, is a most immense concourse of people, from all parts of the country, afflicted with all manner of diseases, so that it may be compared to the 'Pool of Siloam' ... all flock here to drink the waters in whose efficacy they have great faith".

The OS Name Book 1866 (Glenmuick, Aberdeenshire Book 39, p14) describes "a large mansion house two storeys high, situated about half a mile north east of Ballater, and a short distance south of Craigendarroch. The office houses are situated about 300 yards to the north. The whole slated and in fair repair. The property of Col. Farquharson of Invercauld".

Queen Victoria 1884 described a visit made in 1870 with Princess Beatrice to the Panninich Wells "where I had been many years ago. Unfortunately almost all the trees which covered the hills have been cut down. We got out and tasted the water, which is strongly impregnated with iron, and looked at the bath and

*Pannanich Hotel c1900
(SCRAN / Scottish Motor
Museum)*



at the humble but very clean accommodation in the curious little old inn, which used to be very much frequented”.

Francis Groome 1884 describes “a commodious mansion in Glenmuick parish ... formerly called Ballater House” : also Pannanich Wells, “an inland watering place in Glenmuick Parish ... Its four chalybeate wells, all near one another, on the north side of Pannanich Hill, are said to have been discovered by an old woman about the year 1760, and soon began to attract notice for their medicinal virtue ... Mr Mackenzie of Glenmuick has greatly improved the accommodation for visitors to the wells”.

A I McConnochie 1900 noted that “Monaltrie House occupies a beautiful site at the foot of Craigendarroch, on the western slope of which is Craigendarroch Lodge” : also described Pannanich Wells “said to have been accidentally discovered in 1760 by an old woman who, full of scrofulous sores, bathed them in the scum of a bog. The result was as startling as pleasant, the cure became famous and the bog developed into the ‘wells’ ... A writer in 1825 says none of the baths is very inviting ... groups of care-worn and sickly creatures, whose narrow funds excluded them from the bath- house were patiently catching the water as it trickled over the discoloured stones on the open side of the hill”.

The original House of Monaltrie was situated on the north side of the River Dee, a short distance to the north and west of Balmoral, where its approximate location is indicated by the surviving farmstead Mains of Monaltrie (see NGR : NO 242 952). Aerial photographs of the area show what appear to be the well-preserved remains of old township settlements thereabouts.
