

Cairngorms National Park Authority

Cairngorms National Park
Historic Designed Landscapes Project

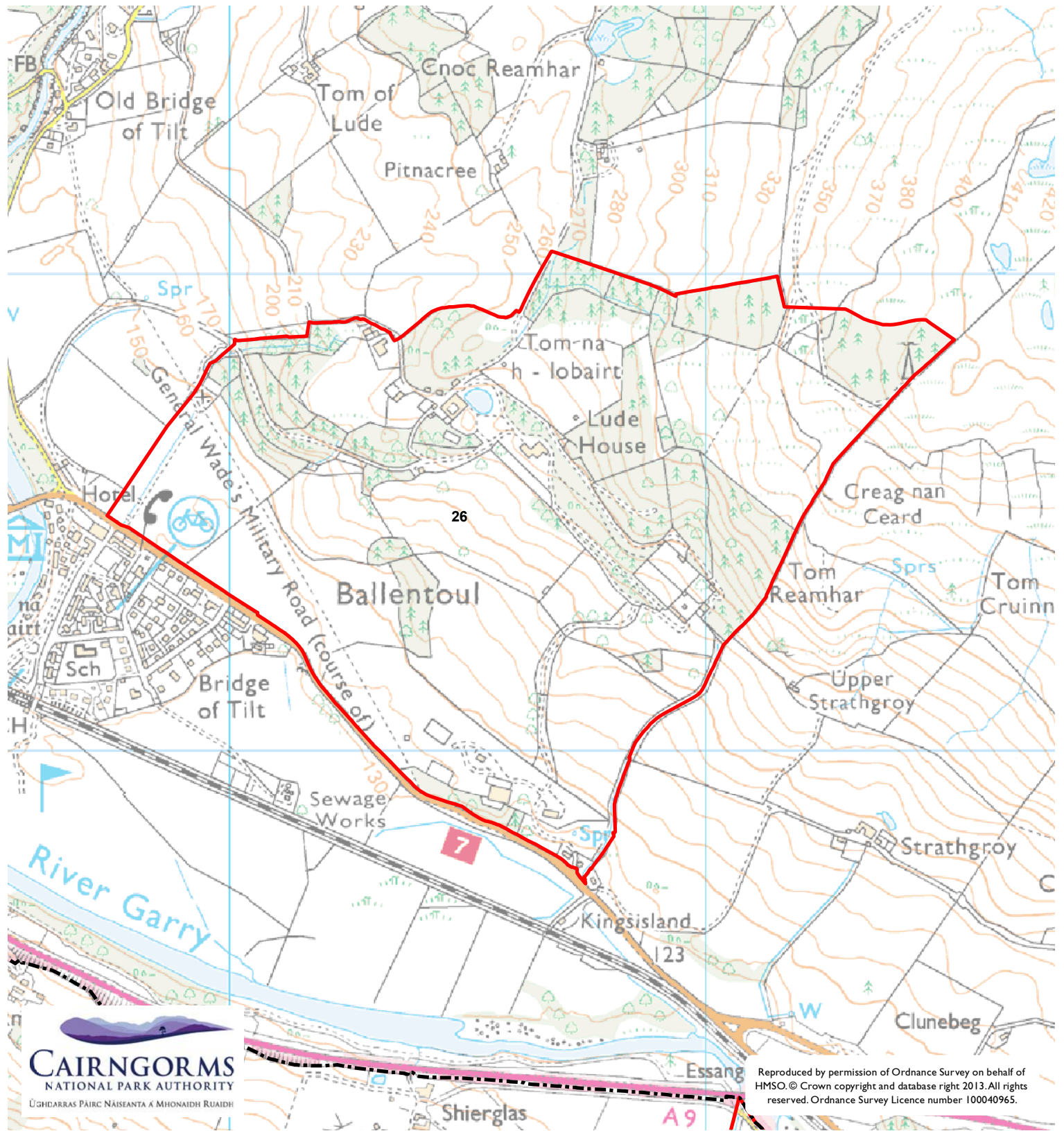
Site Research Report
26 Lude House

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May 2013

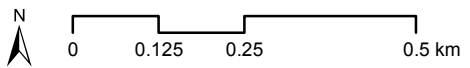


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- Legend**
- Cairngorms National Park Boundary
 - Designed landscape provisional boundary

Site 26

Lude



May 2013

26 Lude House

County Perthshire
Parish Blair Atholl
NGR NN 886 656; OS 1:25,000 Sheet 386 (East)

DESIGNATIONS

Listing Lude House : HB Number 6056 – Category B (1971)
Bridge of Tilt Lodge, Lude : HB Number 6055 – Category B (1971)
Walled Garden : HB Number 6059 – Category C (1971)
Pond Cottage, Lude : HB Number 6060 – Category B (1971)
Kilmaveonaig Chapel (Episcopal) : HB Number 6112 – Category B (1971)

Almost all of the woodland on the estate is designated as Ancient Woodland.

Small sections of woodland on the estate are the subject of WGS Mark 1, WGS Mark 2 and WGS Mark 3 Agreements.

The line of General Wade's military road passes through the landscape.



Roy's Military Survey c1750

LOCATION AND EXTENT

The house and policies of Lude occupy a steeply rising site overlooking the confluence of the River Tilt with the River Garry, approximately 1km east of Blair Atholl. Access is from the B8079, formerly the A9. The house overlooks fields stretching down towards the valley floor, and is sheltered on the north and east by blocks of woodland.

LANDSCAPE HISTORY

Map and documentary evidence

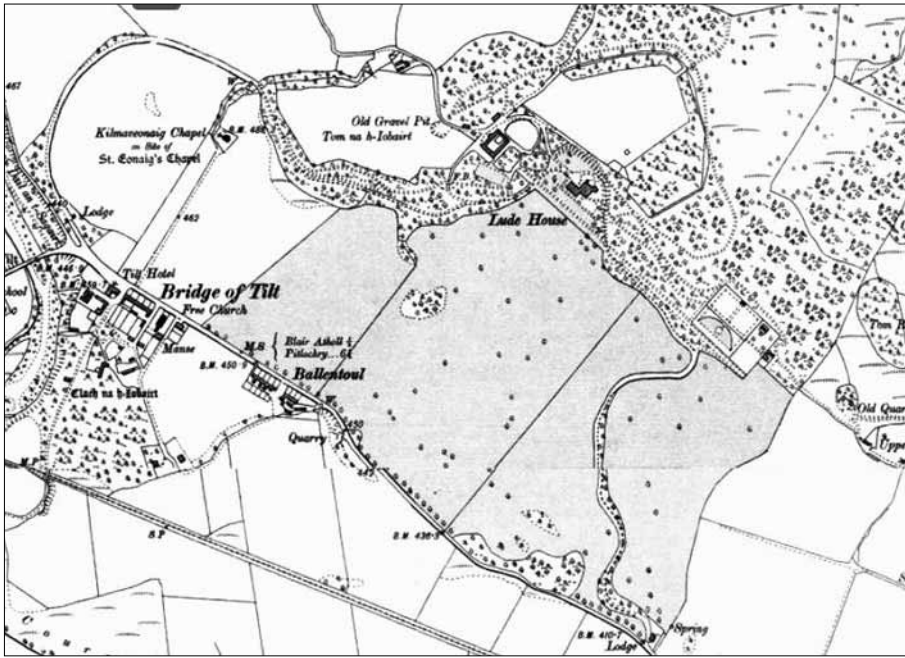


Taylor & Skinner 1776

The name does not appear on maps until Roy (c1750) who depicts a substantial house within a symmetrical landscape framework, comprising a small garden enclosure around the house, with four rectangular walled and tree-lined parks stretching down to the southwest, separated by an axial avenue or vista. To the north is a further irregularly-shaped walled and tree-lined enclosure. General Wade's military road is seen to pass through the township of 'Kilmivionach' on its way to Old Bridge of Tilt. Taylor & Skinner record 'Lude – Robertson Esq.'. There is no obvious remnant of the earlier formal landscape on Stobie (1783), which shows the house with surrounding planting, a long winding drive from the south, and a second more functional approach from the north. Also marked is 'Kilvonich' and 'Chapel in ruins'. With the establishment of Blair Atholl in the 1820s, and the building of a new bridge over the River Tilt, the public road was moved a little to the west, though Thomson (1832) shows both old and new roads. The OS First Edition (1861) shows an informal tree-studded park below the mansion house and offices, which are linked to a rectangular walled garden by a long terrace. The line of the military road had disappeared by this time, and the ruined chapel of St. Eonaig had been replaced by Kilmaveonaig Church. Much the same landscape is apparent on the OS Second Edition (1898), since when there have been comparatively few changes, apart from the insertion of some functional estate building in the southernmost part of the park. Also apparent on more recent maps and photographs is a progressive loss of trees from the park below the house.



Stobie 1783



*Ordnance Survey 1:10,560
 2nd edition 1900*

Building history and ownership

Timperley (1976) records 'James Robertson of Lude' as owner c1770. The Robertsons of Lude were a cadet branch of the family, whose support for the Jacobite cause brought them into occasional conflict with the neighbouring Dukes of Atholl. According to one website, Lude was sold in 1821 to 'a gentleman by the name of McInroy'. A William McInroy is noted by Groome (1882) as owner at that time. Subsequent changes of ownership have not been determined, although the Gordon family are known to have been owners for some time. According to Gifford (2007) the present house, which replaced an earlier building, was built to designs by the Scots country house architect William Burn c1838.



*Drawing of Lude House 1852
 (Perth Library)*

APPENDIX

Historical notes

Rev. James McLean c1792 (OSA) noted that "Lude (Le'oid) seems to signify declivities where a plough could bring a furrow only one way ... The Dukes of Athol have planted good deal, and Mr. Robertson of Lude some. The prevailing kinds of timber are birch, alder, ash, oak, poplar and hazle ; the shrubs are willow, broom, bog-gall, heath etc. Wood thrive very well in this country ... The Duke and Mr. Robertson have marle on their property".

Rev John Stewart 1838 (NSA) noted that "every estate in the parish has its plantations, but some were but lately formed. A considerable portion of suitable ground on the estate of Lude has been planted ... The house of Lude has been built at different times, and the greater part of it is old. It is said that a very handsome house in the English manor style, from a plan by Burn, is to be built at Lude ... The walls of the old church of Lude are still standing, and the old church of Kilmaveonaig was rebuilt in 1791 by the Episcopal of the country as a place for the worship of those of their own communion".

Lord Cockburn 1889 commented in 1842 on the existence of "two hostels on a lonely road, within three hundred yards of each other. This is one of the effects of the ridiculous rivalship that used to subsist between the houses of Athole and Lude. Each laird built his inn and his village ; and Lude consoled itself for

*View of Lude across
Strathgarry from Shierglas
1945 (SCRAN)*



Athole's getting the church by Lude getting the poor bit of an episcopal chapel, which stands in the field below the mansion house". And in 1846 he further commented on "the established feud between the Atholls and the owners of Lude, whoever these may be. Their kingdoms are too near to let the rival sovereigns be on good terms. But, besides this, the last (sane) duke, a man not to be rubbed against the hair, succeeded in establishing his strange claim of a right to shoot over Lude. As soon as he obtained his decree ... he proceeded to annoy General Robertson ...by a grand, ostentatious day's deer shooting over the lands of Lude. But the General outmanoeuvred him by a move which everybody admired. His lawn was ornamented by eight or ten cannons. These were distributed conveniently, and wherever the great man and his tail appeared, off went the guns, startling every hill and glen by their echoes, of course off went the deer, and his grace had nothing for it but to retire, cursing, with every ball in his rifles".

Charles McLean 1879 mentions "the grounds and house of Lude [where] the scenery increases in richness and variety till it terminates in the wide and full magnificence of Blair".

Thomas Hunter 1883 notes "the estate of Lude, in the Athole district, the property of Mr. McInroy [which] contains several trees of more than ordinary size. The most prominent of these are the larches ... On Beech Walk there is a larch planted in 1737 ... At the west end of the Long Terrace there is another aged larch, probably about the same age ... On the Garden Walk fine specimens of larch ... There are also a number of very good Scots firs, about 130 years of age ... There are several silver firs... Some fine standard oaks are scattered over the Parks and policies ; and on the Lower Terrace, which extends to 680 yards in length, there is a row of fine lime trees, while immediately to the right of the present mansion are four very old sycamores of respectable size. About 80 acres of moorland have been enclosed with the intention of planting larch and a few Scots firs, in the spring of 1884".
