

Cairngorms National Park Authority

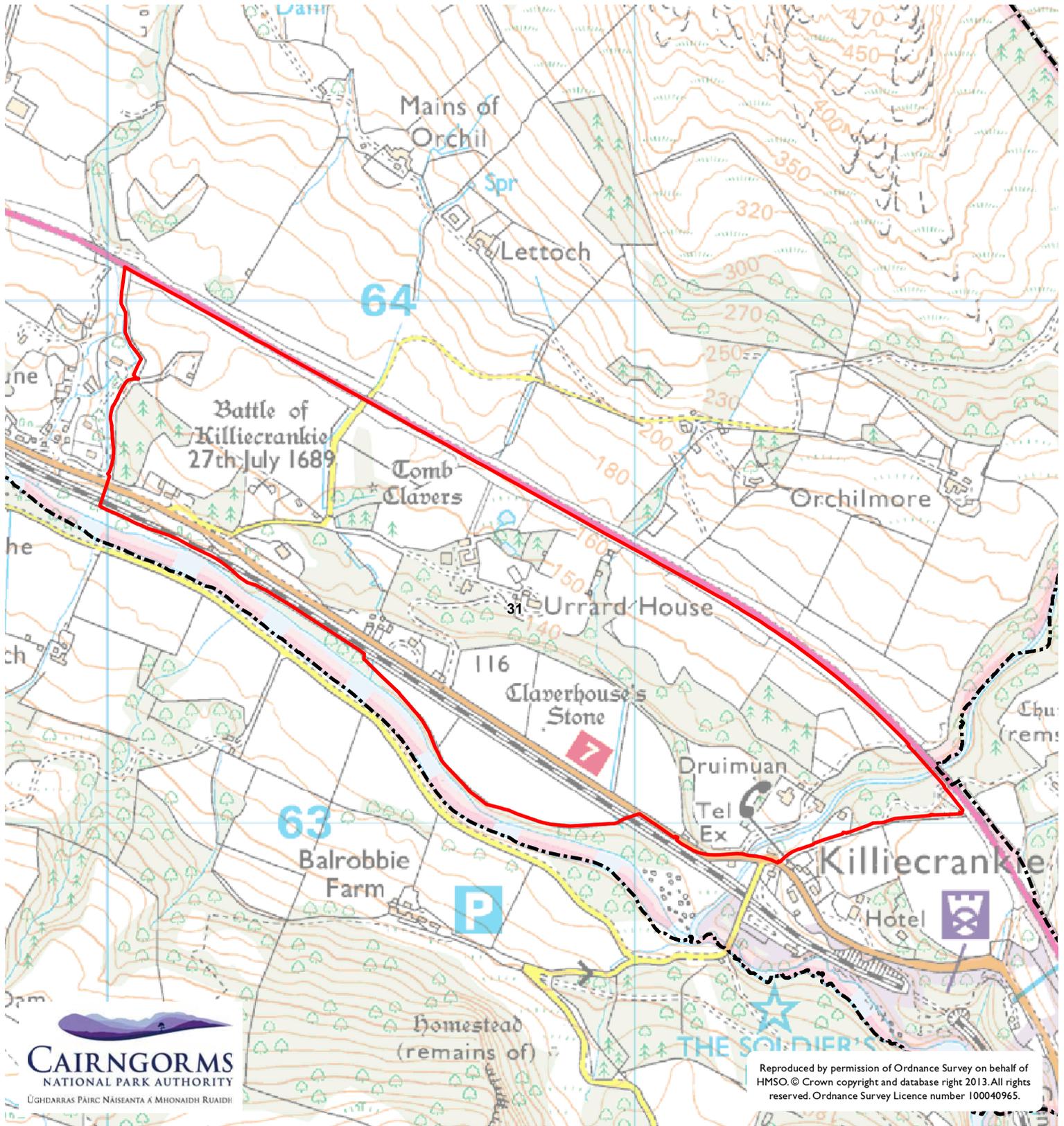
Cairngorms National Park
Historic Designed Landscapes Project

Site Research Report
31 House of Urrard (Renrory)

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May 2013



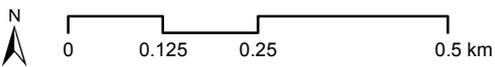
CAIRNGORMS
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
ÙGHDRARRAS PÀIRC NÀISEANTA A' MHONAIHD RUADH

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

Site 31

Urrard House



May 2013

31 House of Urrard (Renrory)

County Perthshire
Parish Moulin
NGR NN 908 634; OS 1:25,000 Sheet 386

DESIGNATIONS

Listing Urrard House, including walled garden with ancillary building and gate, HB Number 47646 – Category B (2001)

The southern extremity of the landscape overlaps the eastern edge of the Loch Tummel National Scenic Area.

Virtually all the policy woodland is designated as Ancient Woodland.

Claverhouse's Stone is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (HS Ref. No. 1520)

Tomb Clavers / Soldier's Grave is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Mounument (HS Ref. No. 242)

Some woodlands on the estate are the subject of WGS Mark 1 and WGS Mark 2 Agreements.

LOCATION AND EXTENT

This is a small but long-established house and its associated landscape, on a fairly restricted site a short distance to the north of the pass of Killiecrankie, approximately 5km to the north of Pitlochry. The house stands on a natural terrace on the east bank of the River Garry, between the B8079 (formerly the A9) and the new A9, higher up the hill-side on the slopes of Creag Eallaich. Access is from the old road, via a drive with a gate-lodge.



Roy's Military Survey c1750



Stobie 1783

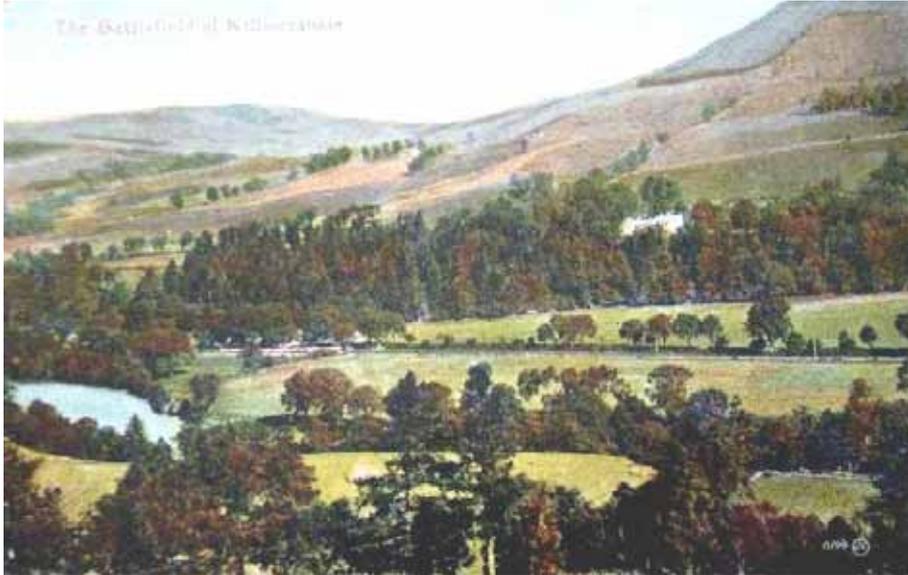


Ordnance Survey 1:10,560
1st edition 1861

LANDSCAPE HISTORY

Map and documentary evidence

Urrard House, previously known as Renrory, is first noted as 'Ranrourie' by Roy (c1750), who depicts a house within a walled enclosure, with two large enclosed fields to the east, and unenclosed rig cultivation to the west, together with some patches of woodland, probably confined on steeper ground. Also a couple of unnamed townships or farmsteads. Roy also marks 'Field of Battle', this hillside having been the site of the Battle of Killiecrankie in 1689, at which John Graham of Claverhouse was killed by a musket shot, possibly fired from Urrard House. The house is marked by Stobie (1783) as a mansion, with some indication of further enclosure and planting. The house is still named as 'Renrory' by Thomson (1832) – probably based on Stobie's earlier map – but had evidently had its name changed to Urrard House by the time of the OS First Edition (1861). This map shows a compact landscape, approached from the public road by a short avenue and a curving drive on the steep bluff slope. The house is flanked by small areas of parkland, with a walled garden to the north, and a court of offices and kennels to the west. Little change is apparent on the OS Second Edition (1897), save for the addition of a gate-lodge at the foot of the drive. Nor has the landscape seen much change during the 20th century, save for the realignment of the A9, which now runs to the north of the house, albeit shielded from view by the natural topography.



Urrard, The Battlefield of Killiecrankie, postcard by James Valentine

Building history and ownership

The family name Stewart seems to be associated with Urrard from an early date, though Timperley (1976) records ownership c1770 simply as 'Laird of Urrard'. Although the present house is known to have been built to designs by the Scots architect William Burn in 1831 for Alston Stewart, it may incorporate remnants of an earlier house of some significance – presumably that depicted by Roy (1783). Mrs Alston Stewart is named as proprietor by both Hall (1885) and Lyall (1880). Time has not allowed subsequent changes of ownership to be determined.



Urrard House, Killiecrankie, postcard by James Valentine

APPENDIX

Historical notes

Charles McLean 1879 noted that “in a field below Urrard House a rude upright stone marks the spot where Mackay’s army was posted, and where the Battle of Killiecrankie was fought. Dundee fell in front of the old house of Urrard, into which he was carried”.

Robert Hall 1885 recorded under Urrard “Proprietrix Mrs. Alston Stewart, per Mr. Gilliewie, Pitlochry. Tenant (vacant). Rent £450. Urrard House is delightfully situated about half a mile from the famous pass of Killiecrankie, and four from Pitlochry. It stands amid fine pleasure grounds ... There are two stables of six and three stalls each, two coach houses, rooms for stablemen, kennels, [an] excellent garden and conservatory”.

Lord Cockburn (1879) commented in 1839 that “I am sorry to see so many of Burn, the architect’s repetitions of himself throughout this picturesque district. There is one of his gimcrack cottage houses at Fascally, two, if not three about Urrard, and one at Lude, all the same, and none of them in keeping with a rough climate and situations of romantic wildness”; and in 1842 that “I called at Urrard, a most beautiful spot, and wished I had only £1,000 and two years time to dress it up”.
