

## Using the Field Recording Form

### 1. Introduction

These guidance notes are to help you use the recording form supplied by the SRP project. The form has been designed to follow the way information is set out in the RCAHMS database so that what you record can be entered directly to the database to be checked and made publicly available.

Before starting field recording, you will need to establish whether records for your site or sites already exist in the RCAHMS database, and the extent of these records. You can do this by searching our free on-line database, Canmore ([www.rcahms.gov.uk](http://www.rcahms.gov.uk)). If records for your site or sites do exist, they may be quite limited in the information they contain. A typical example, for the site of **Ardnagaul** in Glen Dochart, is shown below.

Entries for many sites can often contain less information than this, or the site may have no record at all. If you are unable to find an entry for your site you could try searching under a different name or spelling. Once you have located your site in the record, you can use this information to help you check whether what is actually on the ground corresponds to the record entry for the site. In many cases, the existing record may be out of date or inaccurate, and you will be able to update the information. If the record for the site is very brief, you will be able to add more detail, drawings or photographs – anything extra is a valuable addition.

If there is no existing record for your site in the database under any likely name, you will be creating a new record. In this case, any information is useful, even if it is just a grid reference and a note to say there is an abandoned rural settlement at that location.

**Figure 1:** Example of an entry in the RCAHMS database for an abandoned rural settlement. If your site already has an entry, you will need to use some of this information in your field recording form and on-line recording form.



#### **Ardnagaul, Glen Dochart**

**Type of Site:** Industrial/ Extractive; Lime Burning/ Township; Limekiln

**NMRS Number:** NN53SE 74

**Map reference:** NN 5557 3153

**Parish:** Killin

**Council:** Stirling

**Former District:** Stirling

**Former Region:** Central

#### **Archaeology Notes**

NN53SE 74 5557 3153

The OS 1:10000 map (1988) depicts seven roofless buildings and five enclosures at Ardnagaul, on the N bank of the river Dochart. The first edition of the OS 6-inch map (Perthshire 1867, sheet lxxx) depicts five roofed buildings and three enclosures here, as well as a limekiln at NN 5564 3156.

Information from RCAHMS (SDB) 3 February 2000

## References

There are no bibliographic references associated with this record.

## 2. Completing the recording form

### Your unique site number

This is whatever you want to call your site for your own purposes. This will not be submitted to the RCAHMS database.

### Site name

By searching the RCAHMS database, Canmore ([www.rchams.gov.uk](http://www.rchams.gov.uk)) you will be able to identify any existing record for your site and the name or names under which these have been recorded. The name is usually the site name or the nearest published place or topographical name given on the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map sheet.

If you are recording a new site, it may be named on the current 1:25,000 or 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey (OS) map. If not, it may exist on an earlier map such as the First or Second Edition OS maps. If you can find no record of the site, use the nearest or most logical nearest name from the modern OS 1:25,000 map sheet. This is the name that will be entered into the RCAHMS database. If you are unable to get hold of the relevant 1:25,000 map sheet, you can search for your site on the Ordnance Survey website ([www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk)), by using the name of a nearby site or feature to help your search. Small areas of First edition OS maps can be searched on-line using [www.old-maps.co.uk](http://www.old-maps.co.uk).

Sites on islands usually start with the name of the island, with the exception of Mainland Orkney and Shetland (e.g. 'Eigg, Kildonnan'; 'Islay, Lurabus').

### Alternative name

Some sites are known by more than one name (e.g. historic name from the First Edition Ordnance Survey map, or alternative spellings of the same name). It is important that all alternative names are listed in the RCAHMS database so that they can be retrieved by users. For example:

- **Site name:** Bute, Hawk's Nib
- **Alt name:** South Kelspoke

### Date of recording

The date (or dates) that you surveyed the site.

### Project name

The name of your project, as agreed with the SRP team at the start of your fieldwork.

**SRP project code**

This will be assigned by the SRP team when we receive your completed form. You do not need to complete this box.

**Name of group**

The name of the group doing the recording (e.g. NOSAS, Killin Heritage Society).

**Name of volunteers doing the recording**

The name(s) of the person or people doing the field recording.

**Grid reference (NGR)**

The British National Grid Reference (NGR) for your site, taken from a hand-held GPS, or from the 1:50,000 or, preferably, the 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey map. For most rural settlement sites, a six- or eight-figure grid reference should be adequate. For sites composed of more than one structure, you should take your readings from the centre of the site. Examples of grid references:

- **NT 557 315.** A six-figure grid reference will locate the site to within 100 m.
- **HN 6738 9602.** An eight-figure grid reference will locate the site to within 10 m. Both this and the six-figure NGR are adequate for the majority of rural settlements
- **HS 57625 45612.** A ten-figure grid reference will locate the site within 1 m and may be appropriate for individual features such as a limekiln or an illicit still, but is not necessary for sites and settlements that cover a larger area.

If using a GPS, please make sure it is set on [the British Grid system](#) so that your grid reference is given in letters and numbers rather than just numbers. If you take your grid reference from a map, first obtain the correct National Grid letter sequence from the map key, then record the Eastings (vertical lines running East-West across your map), followed by the Northings (horizontal lines running South-North up your map). Please give the same number of digits for both the Eastings and the Northings.

**Grid reference source**

Please indicate whether you used a map or a hand-held GPS to obtain your NGR.

**NGR description**

Please indicate briefly where you took your reading (e.g. centred on NR 3423 4347).

**Type of site**

This brief list includes the main types of site associated with historic rural settlements, and is intended to make it easier for you to log what you have identified before writing your site description, or instead of a site description. First, indicate first the type of site you are recording by ticking the relevant box in the left hand column (e.g. township, crofting township, farmstead or shieling). If cultivation remains are visible, also tick this box and, if you can, give a brief description (e.g. rig and furrow, field dykes, cultivation terraces). Then use the relevant boxes in the next three columns to indicate the number of features of a particular type you can identify (e.g. 1 barn, 3 byre dwellings, 1 corn kiln, 1 head dyke). For buildings where the function is not clear, please indicate numbers in the 'Building' box.

This list is not intended to include every types of site. If you can identify any features or structures not listed, please write them in the 'Other structure(s)' box. When you enter your data into the on-line form, our thesaurus will help you chose the term used by the RCAHMS database to make sure all entries are consistent.

Identifying the physical limits of your site may not always be straightforward. This is especially the case for settlements comprising scatters of buildings over an extensive area. The best guide is to look at the area by which the settlement is named on the First Edition OS map. All the buildings under that name should be considered as part of the same site.

### **Recording methods used**

Please tick the relevant box for the technique you used for recording:

- **Field reconnaissance** is the most rapid level of survey and involves identifying the site exists and the type of site it is (e.g. farmstead, village, township etc), taking an NGR and completing the basic information on the recording form. You may also want to count the number of buildings and even identify their functions.
- **Field sketch and description** involves the same as a field reconnaissance but you will spend longer investigating the site and will be able to make a field sketch showing the relative size, shape and relationship of the buildings and associated structures. This should ideally be supported by a short written description.
- **Measured survey** builds on the field reconnaissance and field sketch/description by creating a more accurate drawn record of the site using measured survey, and a more detailed written description. The measured survey could be the addition of measurements to the field sketch, or it could be a scaled drawing of the site or specific features on the site using survey techniques such as tape and offset or plane table.
- **Photographic survey** involves any photographic recording of the site. Tick this box if you have taken any photographs to record the site – even if you have only taken one!

### **Photo numbers and caption**

You may want to use this part of the form to note your photograph numbers and captions. It is very easy to forget what your photographs are showing when you are not on site, so it is good practice to always note the number from your camera as soon as you have taken a photograph and write a brief caption to describe what the photograph shows (e.g. SE end of barn 1, taken from building 3 facing N).

### **Drawing numbers and description**

You may want to use this part of the form to note any drawings you create of the site. If you have made a site plan, just write 'Site plan' in the 'Description' box. If you have made a detailed plan of a particular building or structure on the site, write 'Detail plan of [structure name]' in the 'Description' box. It is helpful to give a reference name or number to each structure on the site and include this in your description (e.g. 'Detail plan of structure C: kiln barn'). N.B. For measured drawings, remember to note the scale that you have used.

### **Site description**

You may chose to write a description of the site you are recording. This can be quite brief – two or three sentences can summarise the key information about a site – or you may prefer to make a more detailed written record, especially if a brief record already exists. There are specific pieces of information about the site which should be included in your written description and the notes below will guide you. You may also find it helpful to look at site descriptions in RCAHMS' Canmore database – to get you started, we have included three examples at the end of this in this document.

When planning your site description, imagine you are approaching the site from a distance and noting its setting in the landscape. As you get closer to the site, you can describe its layout and the

relationship of the buildings. As you get closer still, you are able to identify and describe individual structures and features. In line with the RCAHMS database records, your written site description should aim to include the following, in this order:

- **Setting and surroundings**

This is a brief description of the site's orientation, aspect and physical surroundings. Assessing the relationship between the site and natural features can help us understand the function of the site and where it is. For instance, is the site on a slope, a prominence or terrace? Is it close to a burn? Is it south facing? It is a good idea to include the site altitude in the summary description – take your reading from the contours of a 1:50,000 or 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey map, rather than a GPS (altitude readings from GPS have a very wide tolerance level and can be misleading).

- **Summary**

This should include information about the number and shape of the buildings and any related features (enclosures, middens, kilns, etc.). You do not need to describe the functions of the buildings and features – what we are looking for is an accurate description of what presently exists on the ground.

**If you want, your site description can stop here.** Even this short record, if accurate and well written, is immensely valuable for our understanding of the site. However, if you would prefer to explore and record your site in more detail, you can start to add information about each structure to your written description.

- **Details**

Useful details to include are:

- The size and shape of each structure, including wall thickness and height (N.B. remember to note whether your measurements are internal or external – internal measurements can be used to calculate floor space; external measurements define the footprint of the building).
- Any distinctive or unusual features, such as fireplaces, cruck slots, or wall cupboards.
- Any indications of phasing, such as blocked doorways and windows, inserted walls, etc.
- Building functions (e.g. byre-house, barn, mill, kiln). Beware, as functions may change through time - if so, include this in your description.
- Building materials (turf, stone or both; if stone, dressed or undressed, and what sort).
- Descriptions of enclosures and other features, such as garden plots, middens, or kilns, noting their relationship to the buildings. For features distributed across a wide area (e.g. cultivation remains, peat stacks, track-ways), try to give an indication of the area that they cover.
- Descriptions of features that are of an obviously earlier or later period. Include these briefly too as they are an integral part of the site as it appears today.

- **Useful Hints when writing a site description**

- For buildings, use the terms **external and internal** rather than exterior and interior.
- For consistency walls, banks, etc. are referred to as being **thick** whereas ditches, gates, entrances, gaps, etc. are **wide and broad**.
- **Stone-robbing** is the correct term for evidence of the removal of stone from a building.

### 3. Examples of site descriptions (for further examples, see Canmore database)

#### Enclosure

**Site name:** Kiltyrie

**Map reference:** NN 6347 3638

**Survey date:** 11 March 2004

**Surveyed by:** RCAHMS (SDB)

This rectangular enclosure stands on a SSE-facing slope in enclosed pasture 600m SE of Kiltyrie farmhouse. Bounded by a drystone dyke, it measures 42m from ENE to WSW by 22m transversely, and the entrance is on the NNW. Several mature trees grow along the line of the enclosing dyke, and along its SSE edge the level of the interior has been raised above that of the ground outside. No evidence of any buildings could be seen within or around the enclosure.

#### Farmstead

**Site name:** Balnreich

**Map reference:** NN 6425 3745

**Survey date:** 28 November 2000

**Surveyed by:** RCAHMS (SPH and MFTR)

This small farmstead is situated about 450m SW of Carie farmsteading, on the W bank of the Allt Coire a' Chonnaidh. It comprises three buildings (one of them a former smithy) and two enclosures, all of which stand in poorly drained ground, waterlogged on the date of visit.

The principal building measures 12.7m from ENE to WSW by 4.1m transversely within rubble walls 1.8m high at the sides and up to about 3.5m in height at the gable ends. There are two entrances in the SSE side and a small outshot at each end. The building stands on the NNW side of a rectangular yard, in whose E corner there is a small pen, or possibly a sump, fed by a drain running from the yard.

Standing about 25m to the SE, the second building measures 8m by 4m within rubble walls up to 1.5m high, though the SSE side has been robbed out. One infilled cruck-slot is visible in the NNW wall, there is a later pen in the WSW end and immediately to the SSE of the building there is a circular stone platform, measuring 2.5m in diameter and 0.1m in height.

The third building stands to the SW of the second. It has measured internally 8.2m from NNW to SSE by 3.4m transversely, but only the WSW side and the SSE end survive, the rest having been destroyed. There are two cruck slots in the WSW side.

#### Township

**Site name:** Druim Reamhar

**Map reference:** NN 6333 3681

**Survey date:** 11 March 2004

**Surveyed by:** RCAHMS (SDB) 11 March 2004

This township stands at the N edge of a pasture field 350m ENE of Kiltyrie farmhouse. It comprises nine rectangular buildings, a corn-drying kiln and three enclosures, and there is a small grass-grown quarry scoop to the W, at NN 63265 36838. The buildings are overgrown with bracken and nettles, and a large static caravan, now derelict, stands at the centre of the site. The visible remains appear to

belong to at least two phases of occupation. In its later phase the settlement comprised three buildings grouped around a roughly rectangular yard, with two additional buildings and two enclosures to the NW. A sixth building and a kiln to the SE of the main group may also belong to this phase, but the other three buildings, of which only slight traces remain, may be earlier.

The principal building that defines the NNW side of the yard is a byre-dwelling measuring 21.5m in length by 3.8m in breadth within rubble walls up to 0.7m in height. It has been divided into four compartments, and there are two entrances in the SSE side. A byre-drain runs the length of the E compartment, leading out beneath the SSE wall towards a scooped midden. The WSW side of the yard is formed by the second building, which measures 16.5m in length by 4m in breadth within walls up to 0.8m in height. It has been divided into two compartments, and there is an outshot at the N end. A farm track now runs across the S compartment, almost obliterating the sidewalls. The third building stands at the ENE side of the yard, immediately W of the midden. It measures internally 7m by 2.3m, the SSE gable stands up to 1.5m in height, and it has an entrance in the centre of each side, which suggests that it served as a barn. The SSE side of the yard is defined by a drystone dyke, now partly obscured by dumps of field-cleared stones, which appears to incorporate a fragment of an earlier building. To the SE of the yard, abutting the SSE gable of the barn, there is a corn-drying kiln with a bowl measuring 1.9m in diameter and a lintelled flue opening to the SSE, and 10m the SE of the kiln there are the grass-grown footings of a small outbuilding.

There is a second enclosure to the NW of the yard, bounded on its N side by a trackway approaching the township from the NW. Just beyond the NW corner of this enclosure there are two buildings facing each other across the trackway. The larger (N) building measures internally 18.8m from E to W by 3.5m transversely, and is divided into three compartments, each with an entrance on the S. It has stone gables, one of which survives to a height of 2m, and two cruck-slots can be traced in the N wall. The S building measures internally 9.2m from E to W by 3.2m transversely, and has a small stone-walled enclosure attached to its N side.

Two further buildings lie side-by-side to the NE of the main yard. They have both been severely robbed, and a later drystone dyke crosses both. One occupies a platform set into rising ground and measures 12.3m by 3.4m within a stony bank from which a few large grounders protrude. The other is even less-clearly defined; its walls have been reduced to slight grass-grown banks, though large stones appear to mark the four corners. It measures 10.8m by 3.9m overall