

Acha-bheinn, Kilmartin proposed woodland creation: black grouse lek survey

**ACHA-BHEINN, KILMARTIN:
PROPOSED WOODLAND
CREATION**

**BLACK GROUSE LEK SURVEYS
& IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

July 2018

V2

A report to:
SCOTTISH WOODLANDS Ltd

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1 INTRODUCTION AND METHODS

This report presents the results of black grouse lek surveys by Lawrence Environmental Consultants in relation to the woodland proposal at Acha-bheinn, Kilmartin, Argyll (grid reference NR 850 980). This follows the advice of the FCS conservator in December 2017 (which concluded that the SRDP proposal required an EIA determination) to provide a baseline audit of this species. The proposal area covers 141ha 06/07/2017 (Figure 1). Apart from the Stroneska Farm lek (Figure 1), the leks in the local area have been monitored since 1990 (Halliday 2018 & Table 1) as well as by Lawrence (2010, 2017). The Stroneskar farm lek has been surveyed by Mr. J. Halliday since 2015, the farmer Mr. D. McNair recorded blackgrouse lekking here since c. 2008 (2-3 cocks initially) and there was no lek prior to this date (D. McNair pers. comm. June 2018).

Surveys were undertaken during the dawn periods on 5th & 28th April 2018 with 05:15 starts (SW F0-2 50-0% cloud, sleet shower at start -2°C snow patches lying above 150m altitude; variable wind F0 mist inversion -2°C at start, 0% cloud cover respectively). Two observers were used simultaneously on each of the visits in order to maximize the chances of detecting all lekking activity to cover an area of 2.5km to the northeast and 2km to the south around the application site (Figure 1). Access to the survey area was via the forest track into Barmolloch 2 350m north of Loch Leathan and the surveyors also listened for lek sounds on arrival 150m north of Fearnoch (Figure 1). An additional survey was conducted at dusk on 29/03/17 from 16:30-19:30 from the ridge 300m NW of Lochan Add (NNW F4-5).

There were no significant disturbance effects concurrent with the surveys, but visibility was restricted for the early part of the morning on the 28th April 2018. The area between Beinn Bhan, Eurach and Barr Mor was not covered. The breeding bird dawn surveys in 2017 started from Kilmartin and no leks were detected between Kilmartin and Cnoc na h-Eilde (Lawrence 2017).

2 RESULTS

BLACK GROUSE LEKS

Two main lek sites were confirmed in 2018: There were a maximum of four cocks at the Lochan Add north site (within the Acha Bheinn application area) and a maximum of eight cocks at Stroneskar NM868009 (Figure 1). In addition there was a cluster of satellite lek locations in the Barmolloch plantation and within the north part of Acha Bheinn that were used by a maximum of two cocks (blue symbols Figure 1). This or these individuals moved from one location to another during the course of the dawn

lek period. The total number of cocks detected by LEC in 2018 was 14. Mr. J. Halliday counted a maximum of 13 cocks on 08/03/18, but did not cover the Barmolloch lek area or the two previously occupied leks directly west of Fearnoch (X in Figure 1). There was only one greyhen detected during the LEC 2018 surveys where the track crosses the Allt an Aigid (Figure 1). At the end of the lek period on the morning of 28/04/18 a group of four cocks flew east from the Stroneskar lek across the valley towards Glasvaar. There was no activity by black grouse during the dusk survey in late March 2018.

References

- Black R. (2017)** Acha-bheinn. Phase 1 habitat survey. May 2017. Report to Scottish Woodlands Ltd.
- Halliday J. B. (2018)**. Observations of black grouse, golden eagle and marsh fritillary (1990- present). Email to RSPB Alison Philip.
- Lawrence E.S. (2017)** Achadh bheinn, Kilmartin: proposed woodland creation- Upland bird surveys. Report to Scottish Woodlands Ltd.

Figure 1. The distribution of black grouse leks at and around Acha-bheinn, Kilmartin in 2018. (Data from Mr. H. Halliday on 08/03/18 also depicted).

**Table 1. Black grouse leks at and around Barmolloch, Kilmartin since 1990
Mr. J.B. Halliday.**

**Black Grouse Survey Lochan Add (North, South and East) and Barmolloch
(Peak Lek Counts)**

	LA North		LA South		LA East		Barmolloch		TOTAL	
	Cock	Hen	Cock	Hen	Cock	Hen	Cock	Hen	Cock	Hen
2017	4	1	0	0	2	0	NC	NC	6	1
2016	2	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	4	2
2015	3	0	1	3	0	0	NC	NC	4	3
2014	1	0	1	0	0	0	NC	NC	2	0
2013	2	0	2	2	0	0	NC	NC	4	2
2012	2	0	4	5	0	0	NC	NC	6	5
2011	2	0	5	0	0	0	NC	NC	7	0
2010	1	0	4	4	0	0	4	1	9	5
2009	4	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	7	2
2008	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	5	0
2007	0	0	4	1	0	0	2	0	6	1
2006	0	0	4	2	0	0	1	0	5	2
2005	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
2004	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
2003	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0
2002	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
2001	NC		NC		0	0	NC		0	0
2000	NC		NC		0	0	NC		0	0
1999	NC		NC		0	0	NC		0	0
1998	NC		NC		0	0	NC		0	0
1997	NC		NC		0	0	NC		0	0
1996	NC		NC		0	0	NC		0	0
1995	NC		NC		0	0	NC		0	0
1994	NC		NC		2	0	NC		2	0
1993	NC		NC		4	2	NC		4	2
1992	NC		NC		6	2	NC		6	2
1991	NC		NC		13	3	NC		13	3
1990	NC		NC		12	2	NC		12	2

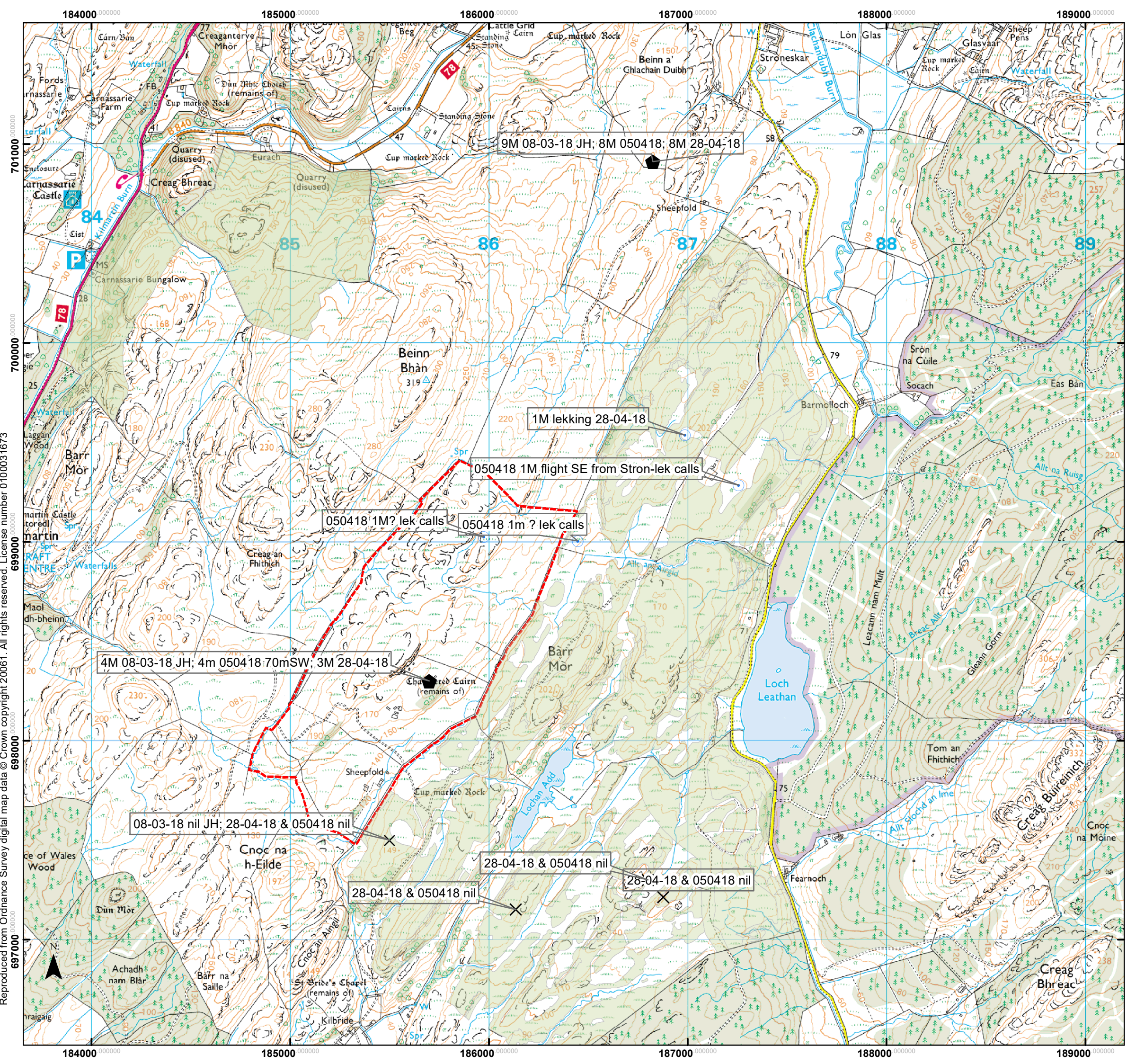
LA= Lochan Add NC= not counted

Barmolloch lek NR871993

Lochan Add East NR870970

Lochan Add South NR856975

Lochan Add North NR858983



Achadh-bheinn woodland proposal Kilmartin, Argyll

- Approximate locations:
- BK leks**
- 2018 Lek activity**
- 8M Main lek Stoneskar
 - 4M Main lek Acha Bheinn
 - 1M satellite lek 05-04-18
 - 1M satellite lek 05-04-18
 - 1M satellite lek 05-04-18
 - 1M satellite lek 28-04-18
 - NIL
 - NIL
 - Tree cover

1:17,982 Scale @ A3 (11/07/2018)

0 0.5 1 Km

Figure 1. Black grouse leks
2018

