

Managing relics of Scotland's wartime history

Why are these features important?

The impact of war on Scotland has been profound, particularly the events related to last two world wars. Despite the effects of war on our society surprisingly little survives to show the effects of these struggles.

Warfare has been endemic in Scotland but we only have evidence for it from about 1200 BC when the first hillforts were being built. In the historic period we have evidence through castles, defensive walls and named battle sites as to events and influences.

Why are they at risk?

Even with well known and well recorded battle sites like Culloden little can now be seen and yet received ideas as to where and how they were fought are frequently challenged. Battle sites can be destroyed by modern development, as with most of Bannockburn, or largely hidden by inappropriate woodland planting.

For World War 1 and 2 the extensive networks of sites built to protect the country on land and sea have often been destroyed without record, particularly as original plans were not kept for security reasons.



Battlefield sites, even when visitor attractions like here at Culloden, can often benefit from enhancement work to make them more visible landscape features.



In areas like here, at Flotta in Orkney, wartime remains can have a significant impact on the landscape and be important remains for visitors.

Some sites or buildings have been kept for re-use or visitor attractions, but in general most have been destroyed for safety or access reasons. Decaying asbestos roofs are a common hazard on many buildings. Some structures, like gun emplacements, are clearly unsuitable for conversion and were not designed to last, though many survive remarkably intact.

What should I do to protect them?

Battle sites have no statutory protection but Historic Scotland has produced an Inventory of the most important of these (currently 39 have been included). This gives them extra consideration through the planning process. However all known battlefields and piecemeal encroachment of plantations and other developments should be avoided on known sites.

At 20th century wartime sites, buildings should only be demolished where there are clear health and safety risks. Re-use of buildings should be considered wherever possible. It is important that both a photographic and an oral history record is made where resources are available.

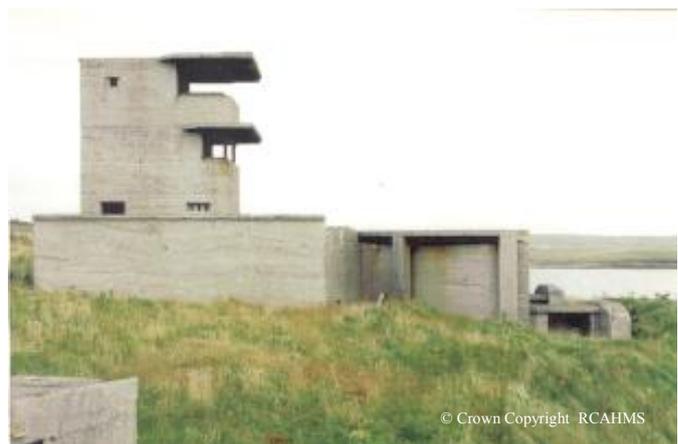
GOOD PRACTICE

- Identify what wartime sites you may have on your land through the [PASTMAP](#) site and from an archaeological audit of your farm.
- Check the Historic Scotland [Battlefield Inventory](#) for information on listed sites. The website will also give you more detailed information on how to care for these sites.
- Additional sites not previously recorded should be added to your farm plan and reported to your local authority archaeology service.
- Identify where sites could be better protected under general farming operations and where additional management is required to preserve a structure or protect a battlefield site.
- If World War 2 buildings can be re-used for farm or another use or are being considered for demolition, consult your local authority archaeology service, in case there are significant remains or particular features that should be recorded before construction or demolition.
- Where structures are being converted or demolished without a requirement to record them make a photographic record of them and supply this to your local Sites and Monuments Record - (held by your local authority archaeology service).
- Consider a battle site as a single unit to see whether it could be enhanced by appropriate planting or felling of woodland and make sure it is included in any Farm Woodland Plan.

Further information - see the [CANMORE](#) website for specific information on 20th C wartime sites. Further information may be found through specialist sites, such as the archived [Defence of Britain](#) project [2006]. Historic Scotland has produced more detailed guidance [Managing change in the historic environment Battlefields](#)



Wartime buildings have often been usefully re-used by farmers, but maintenance remains a problem.



Wartime structures, though built strictly for defensive reasons, can often be striking features in the landscape