

# Archaeology on... ...Mar Lodge Estate

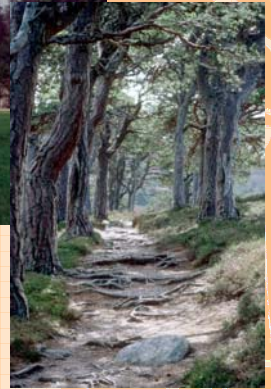


The vast 300 square kilometre (77,500 acre) Mar Lodge Estate, at the heart of the Cairngorms, is world famous for its wild landscapes and beautiful Caledonian pinewoods, but it once was home to thriving communities of farmers who worked the poor soils and grazed their animals in the hills. The remains of this activity can still be seen on the floors of the glens, and can also be glimpsed, by the trained eye, high into the mountains.

From medieval times the estate was a hunting forest of the Earls of Mar. Although it is almost certain that the glens were used and settled by prehistoric people, no remains more than 300 years old have been found within the estate.



*The present Mar Lodge, built in the late 1890s*



*Historical evidence has shown that the beautiful Caledonian pinewoods were carefully managed for centuries*



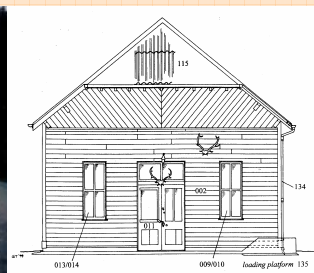
*Watercolour of the Mar Lodge designed landscape in the 1780s*

A study of old documents led to the startling discovery that the landscape around the Lodge was not always wild and rugged, but had been carefully 'designed' in the 18th century, to include obelisks, eye-catchers, and ornate planting of non-native trees.

There are many ordinary 19th- and even 18th-century buildings on the estate, mostly related to sporting activity. Some of these are ruinous, but others still have their roofs.

A long-term programme of Historic Building Survey has almost come to an end, forming the most complete record of such buildings on a single Scottish estate.

*Almost all of the estate buildings, like the 1899 Deer Larder, have now been recorded in detail*



*The slight remains of an illicit still site*

Intensive archaeological survey was begun by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. Over the past decade this has led to the recording of a surprisingly large number of sites.

In the townships were houses, yards, and corn-drying kilns. Further afield were shielings, and tucked away in the hills were traces of several illicit whisky stills.



*The archaeological remains are managed alongside the woodlands, sporting, recreational and nature conservation interests*

Find out more about the Mar Lodge Estate on our website at: [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk).



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