

13. CONCLUSIONS

At Craggan a significant multi-period landscape was identified with activity spanning from the Late Mesolithic to modern day. Mesolithic activity on site was limited, but it is likely that the River Spey, and the natural routeway of Strathspey, has played a significant role in attracting people to exploit and settle this landscape repeatedly. This was followed by Late Neolithic funerary activities likely as part of a wider ritual landscape. It was, however, during the Iron Age and the early medieval period that the site was at its height – seeing a shifting range of small-scale settlement.

Throughout these various iterations of settlement, there was no evidence for buildings being deliberately destroyed or backfilled. Instead, these structures appear to have gone out of use and been

left to decay. New structures were often positioned nearby but respected the locations of the previous structures, which were probably still discernible as decayed buildings. This was a dynamic settlement, perhaps representing the Iron Age and early medieval community expanding and contracting over time. It is likely inhabitants reused this location, on multiple occasions, due to its raised topographical position in the foothills of the Cairngorms, its proximity to the routeways through the region and access to the natural resources in and around the River Spey. These same factors have led to the recent development of the Cairn Distillery, appropriately continuing the practice of grain processing evident here since at least the Iron Age. Craggan is now a new home for an ancient craft, demonstrating the continued pull of this site by the Cairngorms and the River Spey in the modern era.