

8. CONCLUSION

The archaeological excavation at Beaully Substation is an important addition to the growing corpus of roundhouses excavated in the Scottish Highlands. Radiocarbon dates indicate that the site was occupied between 1700 and 1300 BC, during the Middle Bronze Age. This overlaps with the occupation of similar sites within the Highlands such as Navidale (Dunbar 2008), Lairg (McCullagh & Tipping 1998), and Dalchork (Glew & Peteranna 2020).

Despite some disturbance by forestry activities, this land use (rather than deep ploughing associated with arable cultivation) preserved the roundhouse as an upstanding structure, allowing for a more detailed understanding of its character. The intensive archaeological work that has been undertaken in Balblair Wood, has revealed the complex prehistoric

landscape in which the inhabitants of the roundhouse would have lived. The landscape contained a variety of features, including hut-circles, field banks, clearance cairns, and burial cairns and cists, many of which have been excavated. Comparison of the archaeological remains at Beaully Substation with similar sites within the Highland region has shown that timber post and turf and stone-walled construction methods are part of a common array of construction techniques. These types of structures frequently show signs of repair and refurbishment; however, this may have taken place after only a short period of time, and the length of occupation of the site could have been relatively brief. The various excavations and post-excavation programmes on the field system and roundhouses within Balblair Wood provide crucial data for investigating the nature and chronology of this prehistoric landscape.