



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

Property in Care (PIC) ID:

PIC094

Designations:

Scheduled Monument (SM90333)

Taken into State care:

1982 (Guardianship)

Last Reviewed:

2005 (2025 update to include Empire connections)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

MUIR O'FAULD ROMAN SIGNAL STATION



We continually revise our Statements of Significance, so they may vary in length, format and level of detail. While every effort is made to keep them up to date, they should not be considered a definitive or final assessment of our properties.



© Historic Environment Scotland 2025

You may re-use this information (excluding logos and images) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated.

To view this licence, visit <http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3> or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Any enquiries regarding this document should be sent to us at:

Historic Environment Scotland
Longmore House
Salisbury Place
Edinburgh
EH9 1SH

+44 (0) 131 668 8600
www.historicenvironment.scot

You can download this publication from our website at
www.historicenvironment.scot

Cover image: General view of Roman signal-station at Muir o'Fauld, Gask Ridge. © Crown Copyright HES.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

MUIR O'FAULD ROMAN SIGNAL STATION

Contents

BRIEF DESCRIPTION	2
CHARACTER OF THE MONUMENT	2
Historical overview	2
Archaeological overview	2
Artistic/architectural overview	3
Social overview	3
Spiritual overview	3
Aesthetic overview	3
What are the major gaps in understanding of the property?	3
ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	3
Key points	3
ASSOCIATED PROPERTIES	4
KEYWORDS	4
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	4

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The property at Muir O' Fauld, near Auchterarder, is a Roman signal-station or watch-tower of the late 1st century AD. It is situated 15m to the south of a Roman road. The monument forms part of a Roman military system, now termed the Gask Ridge frontier.

The Gask Ridge frontier is regarded as the earliest example from the Roman Empire of a frontier system of roads, forts and watchtowers/signal stations. It stretches over 37km from Glenbank, north of Dunblane, along the Gask Ridge, to Bertha on the Tay.

CHARACTER OF THE MONUMENT

Historical overview

- Site probably constructed during the initial Roman invasion of Scotland in AD 79-80 by Gnaeus Julius Agricola, Governor of Britain (AD 77/8 – 83/4), during the reigns of the Emperors Vespasian (AD 69-79) and his sons Titus (AD 79-81) and Domitian (AD 81-96)
- Gask Ridge sites abandoned c. AD 87/88 when the Roman Army withdrew from Scotland.
- Brought into Guardianship in 1982.

Archaeological overview

- 1901 The site was partially excavated by D. Christison who established form and nature of monument. The site came to notice while excavations were undertaken at nearby Ardoch (1896-7). Proprietors at Ardoch were Mr Samuel Smith, M.P., of Orchill, Sir Robert Moncreiffe, Bart., and Mr Kington Oliphant of Gask. It has been noted that Orchill owed at least some of his wealth to involvement in East India trade and American cotton grown by enslaved people. However, it is not clear if Muir O' Fauld also fell into his holdings.¹
- 1967 Site surveyed by Ordnance Survey.
- 1995 site noted by RCAHMS.
- Forms part of a study of Gask Ridge Roman Frontier by D.J. Woolliscroft from 1995 onwards.

¹ See [Surveying and Analysing Connections between Properties in Care and the British Empire, c.1600-1997](#)

- This property has provided information, and has the potential to provide more, on the design, function and organisation of the Roman military in a frontier zone at the height of their empire.

Artistic/architectural overview

The monument consists of a comparatively well-preserved circular mound (15.7m diameter), ditch (c. 3.25m wide) and a low, spread outer bank. A causeway leads north 15m of the mound to join the Roman road.

On comparison with more completely excavated examples from other sites, the site would have been a square timber tower surrounded by an earthwork rampart, a ditch and upcast bank.

Social overview

Not yet assessed.

Spiritual overview

The site does not currently fulfil a spiritual role.

Aesthetic overview

The site lies within an open area of grass and moorland surrounded by a coniferous plantation.

What are the major gaps in understanding of the property?

The precise date of construction, period of use and form of the monument is unknown.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Key points

- One of the better preserved watch-towers on the Gask Ridge.
- Regarded as component of earliest example of a Roman military frontier system from the imperial period.

ASSOCIATED PROPERTIES

Ardoch; Greenloaning; Blackhill Wood; Shielhill South; Shielhill North; Kaims Castle; Westerton; Strageath; Parkneuk; Raith; **Ardunie**; Roundlaw; **Kirkhill**; Gask House; Witch Knowe; Moss Side; Midgate/Thorney Hill; Westmuir; Peel; West Mains of Huntingtower; Black Hill; Bertha.

KEYWORDS

Gask Ridge; Roman Frontier; Agricola

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mullen, S., Mackillop, A., and Driscoll, S. 2024 Surveying and Analysing Connections between Properties in Care and the British Empire, c. 1600-1997. (Edinburgh, Historic Environment Scotland). Available online: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=e192ea9f-0d7e-4745-b499-b0fb010a167a> (accessed: 17 December 2024).