



Cracknie Souterrain
1:50 @ A3



Orthographic views

Cracknie souterrain Archaeological measured survey

Scheduled Monument 5663
North Highland Forest District
NC 665 509

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Cracknie souterrain

The Iron Age souterrain at Cracknie in Borgie Forest, North Highland Forest District was recently the subject of an archaeological measured survey by AOC Archaeology. The souterrain was scanned by laser and the results - illustrating the well preserved walls and roof lintels - are displayed as orthographic views (*front cover*). The baseline measured survey was supported by a detailed condition statement and an assessment of cultural significance, providing an enhanced historic environment record and placing the site within its regional context.

A *souterrain* is an underground stone-lined cellar, usually found leading from a roundhouse and associated with above-ground settlement. It is thought that they were used to store agricultural surplus, likely meat and cheese. The souterrain at Cracknie is almost intact (*illus 1*). The entrance is marked by a hollow and a number of large stones, including one fallen cap stone. The full length of the souterrain is 13.2m and it measures about 1.3m in height and about 0.8m in width. The souterrain is curved on plan - as is usual for such sites - and has a distinct sub-circular chamber at its end. The walls are carefully built without mortar and it is roofed with large slabs overlapping each other.



The site has significant archaeological importance, both in terms of buried archaeological deposits and in structural detail – and as a monument within the wider landscape. The assessment of cultural significance notes that “despite the remoteness of the location, there can be little doubt that the site is one of the most spectacular and best preserved souterrains in Sutherland and constitutes a site of considerable archaeological importance”.

Illus 1: Detail of interior (facing rear chamber)

The modern detailed measured survey (*illus 2a and 2b*) has provided an exceptional base line record of this well preserved structure and provided a state-of-the-art tool for site conservation and management.



Illus 2a: the site during survey (using Faro Focus 3D laser scanner)

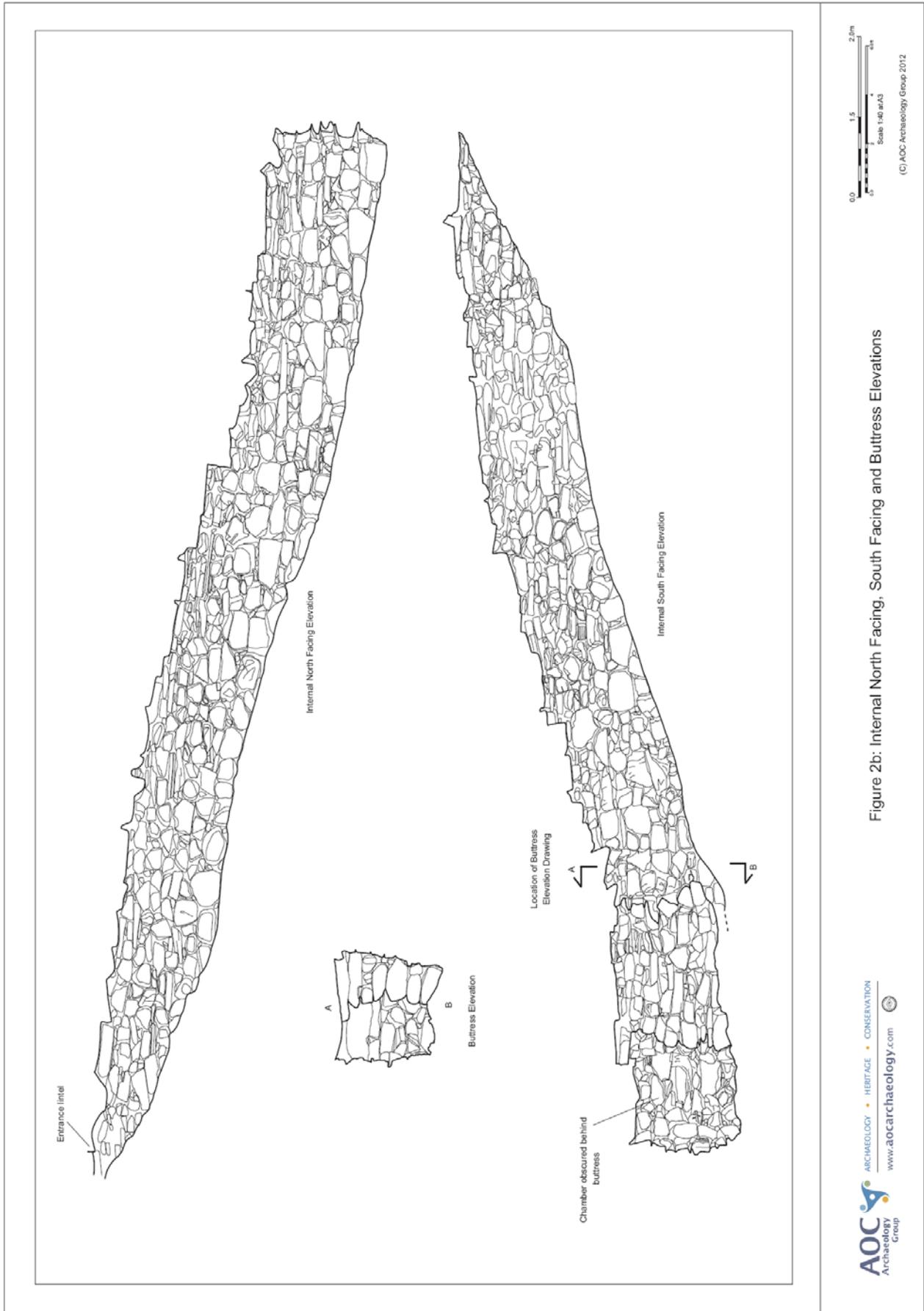


Figure 2b: Internal North Facing, South Facing and Butress Elevations