

Possible 'Henge' site at NH 6783 3590.

On a visit to look at the fallen standing stone (HER ref: MHG 32689) near to the Clava ring-cairn at Gask (NMRS ref: NH63NE 10, HER ref: MHG 3476) a possible, unrecorded henge was noticed.

Just under half of a substantial circular structure with an external bank and internal ditch can be seen projecting from under the modern road (B 861) on the opposite side from the ring-cairn. This area was until recently under modern pine plantation, there are the stumps of cut trees growing from the bank and a large quantity of brushings has been left lying over parts of it. Both bank and ditch are approximately 2.5 meters wide and at its deepest the ditch is approximately 1.1 meter deep. The bank remains slightly higher than the current road height while the central area is slightly below it. The width of the site measured along the roadside is 22 meters making the original diameter of the site in the region of 25 meters or so. The original centre of the site would now lie roughly around the middle of the road.

Projecting the line of the bank by eye suggests that the possible standing stone could either have stood on the bank or just outside it – possibly near an entrance? This might imply that the present road line may be the result of earlier traffic passing through the henge using entrances on a roughly N-S axis. Both bank and central area have visible stones showing, some of those on the bank are quite large and could perhaps be other monoliths.

D. Scott has suggested that from the Gask ring-cairn the fallen standing stone would indicate the setting position of the sun at the Summer Quarter days (early May and August). From the estimated centre of the henge this stone would indicate the rising position of the sun at Mid-Summer, and the largest monolith at the ring cairn would indicate the Winter Quarter days' sunrise (early February and November).

David Trevarthen, March 2009