

**Report of Archaeological Watching Brief
July 29th - August 8th 2002
An Dubh, Ballachulish, Highland
NN 08115 / 58440 (centred)**

**By
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Introduction

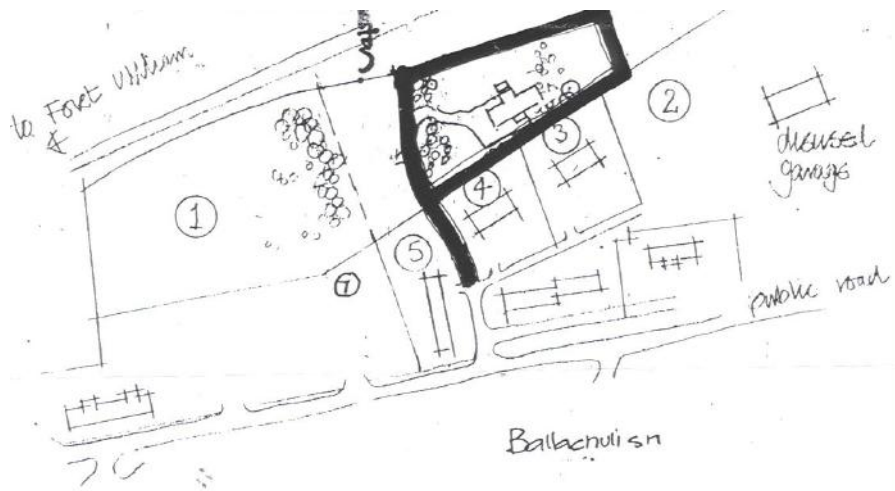
This report is for an archaeological watching brief conducted on behalf of Mr. P Watt by the author for an access road and house plot at An Dubh, Ballachulish.

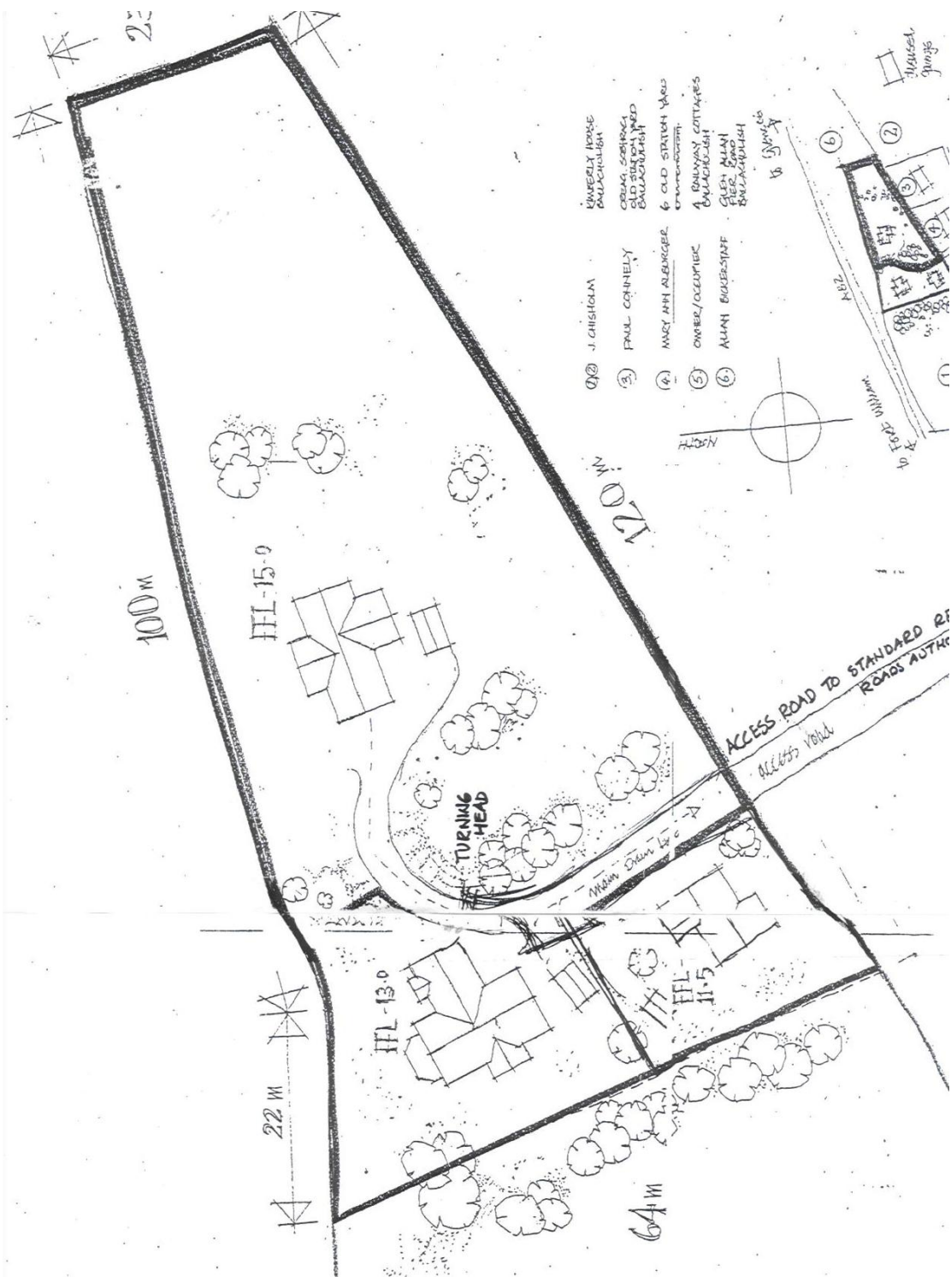
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following for their help during the work :

- Mr. P Watt;
- Mr. Watt senr;
- Mr. K Fraser for onsite works;
- Staff of Highland Council Archaeology Unit.

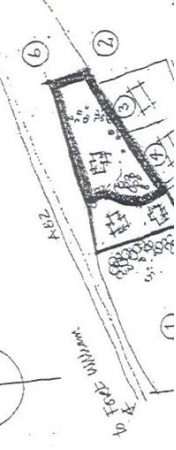
Location





- ① J. CHISHOLM
- ② J. CHISHOLM
- ③ PAUL COHNLEY
- ④ MARY ANN ALVAREZ
- ⑤ OWEN/OCCUPANCY
- ⑥ ALAN BUCKENSTEIN

- UNIVERSITY HOUSE
- COLEMAN HOUSE
- OLD STATION YARD
- BRUNNEN COTTAGES
- CLYDE HALL
- BALAKRISHNAN



ACCESS ROAD TO STANDARD RT
ROADS AUTHR

22 M

100 M

120 M

64 M

HFL-15.0

HFL-13.0

HFL-11.5

TURNING HEAD

Mulder Drain

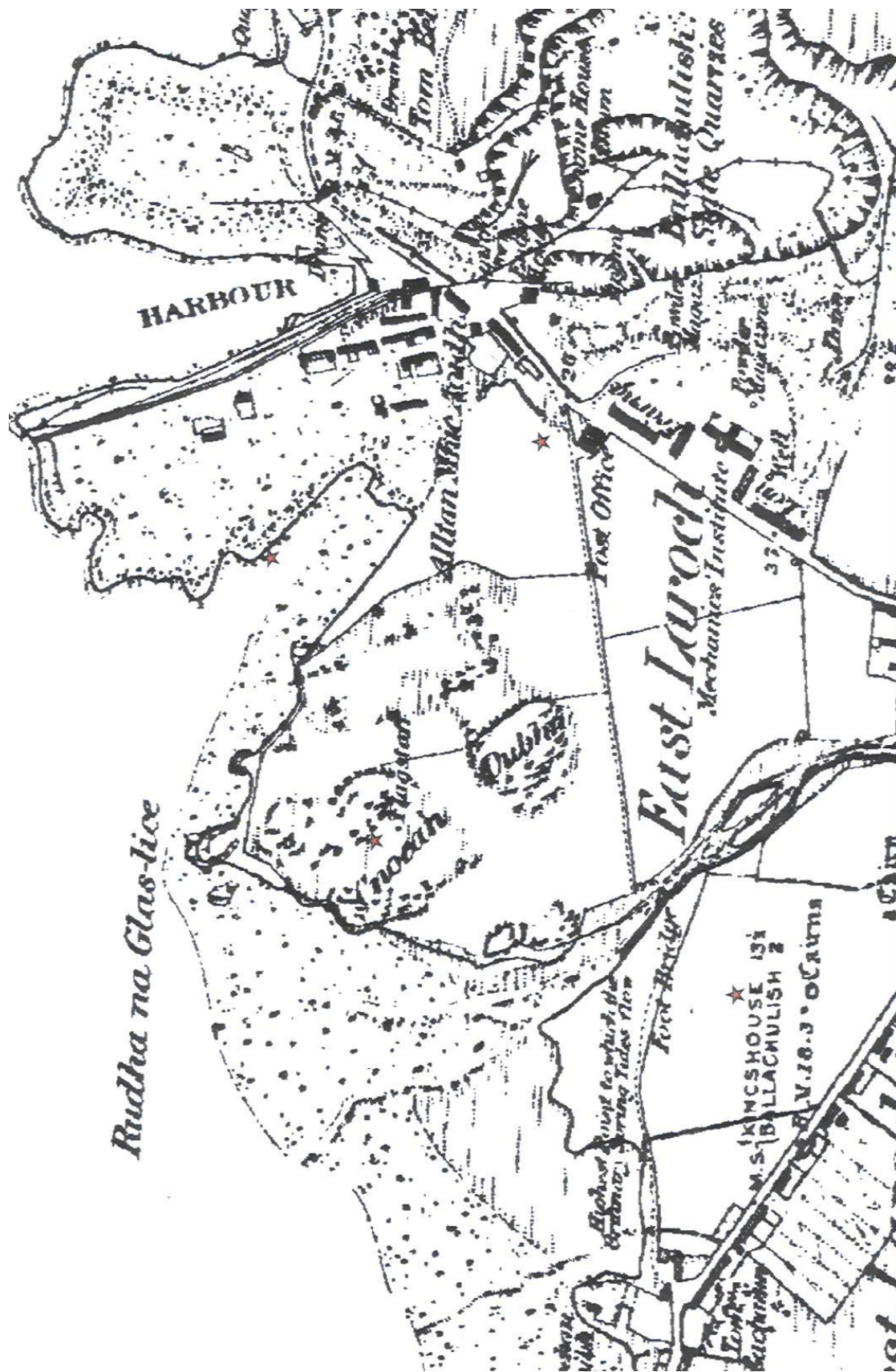
Access Road

NORTH

Access Road

R. T. ROAD

NORTH



Rudha na Glas-lice

Historical Background

The origins of Ballachulish village principally relate to the slate industry known to have been in operation in the 17th century, though settlement has occurred in the vicinity since the Bronze Age.

The development site lies to the SE of Cnocan Dubh fort located at NN 07990/58510, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The site also is situated to the E of another flat hilltop shown on the 1st edition OS to be part of the same monument. The fort (NMRS & HSMR NN05NE 6) is a fort of an unknown date, though surveyed by the RCAHMS in 1971 and having almost no traces surviving of any defences (RCAHMS, 1975, 65-66) no excavations have taken place here or in its vicinity. Nothing is marked at the development location on the 1st edition OS of the 1870's though a suggestion of a field is visible.

Objectives

To conduct a watching brief on the excavation of the development to record those features revealed by excavation work. A copy of the specification provided by Highland Council Archaeology Unit is enclosed.

Methodology

A monitoring was made of the removal of topsoil and subsoil's to a maximum depth of 200mm for the house plot to an area of 442m². Access road was made through existing woodland, heavy with root damage and cut through natural bedrock. Most of the road was fill rather than excavation.

Weather on the day of work (August 8th 2002) was slightly overcast but bright. An initial walkover was made on the 29th of July but dense undergrowth prevented any features to be noted.

Watching Brief Investigation

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with accepted professional archaeological standards as published by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 1999). Over the construction period a suitably qualified archaeologist was on site to carry out observations and assessment of the area affected by the excavation works.

Results

A monitoring of the excavation revealed no archaeological features or deposits only natural ground of yellow-brown sandy silt with an outcrop of bedrock to the SE. The site lies on a gentle slope facing north. Evidence for it being used for grazing recently was the find of a water trough in the NE corner of the site in dense undergrowth. The site had seen some dumping of modern rubbish and slate waste to the NE corner. Overall the site was heavy with root damage due to trees and shrubbery with no evidence for any features or deposits associated with the nearby fort.

Recommendations

No recommendations with regards to this project are currently to be proposed.

Archive

Notebook of results is to be deposited in the National Monuments Record in Edinburgh. A set of colour slides showing the progress of the work has been deposited with Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record.

References

Highland Council Sites and Monuments database entry for NN05NE 6.

IFA (1999) By-laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. Reading.

National Monuments Record of Scotland CANMORE database entry for NN05NE 6.

RCAHMS (1975) Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland : Argyll and inventory of the Ancient Monuments Volume 2 Lorn. RCAHMS. Edinburgh.

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Appendix 1 – Details of Slides

1 – View of access road before excavation facing north	29-7-02
2 – View of site of plots 2 & 3 to E side of development facing NNW	29-7-02
3 – View of site prior to excavation facing NE	29-7-02
4 – View of site prior to excavation facing E	29-7-02
5 – View of Cnochan Dubh facing NW	29-7-02
6 – View of access road facing east	8-8-02
7 – View of access road facing north	8-8-02
8 – View of south side of plot upon stripping of topsoil facing east	8-8-02
9 – View of Ballachulish slate quarry from site	8-8-02
10 – View of machining in progress facing west	8-8-02
11 – View of slate waste and trough to NE corner of site	8-8-02
12 – View of site upon excavation facing east	8-8-02
13 – View of site upon excavation facing west	8-8-02
14 – View of site upon excavation facing west	8-8-02