

# AUCHINDRAIN

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



## Data Structure Report

February 2012

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## Summary

As expected the installation of new drainage channels encountered several surfaces surrounding the buildings, and for the most part the alignments of the trenches were altered to avoid disturbing them.

Beyond these surfaces, several former drainage systems were encountered, mainly ceramic land drains and more recent concrete and plastic drains. The majority of the surfaces would appear to relate to the upstanding buildings and likely date to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The possible exceptions to this was a surface seen at the N end of Trench 1 and another seen at the E end of Trench 8 and both of these may relate to the suite of buildings depicted in Langland's 1789 estate map.

The bulk of the other surfaces lay directly over natural soil or bedrock at most sealing a very thin layer of subsoil or surface makeup that overlay the natural. Deeper sub-soils were seen within the W ends of Trenches 10 and 11 and within the re-excavated drainage ditches where there appears to be accumulations of colluvial within the damper boggy ground.



Possible W Edge of track running down W side of ACHDN CC

Contents	page
1. Introduction	1
2. Archaeological Background	2
3. Methodology	5
4. Watching Brief Results	5
5. Finds	9
6. References	9
Appendix 1: Context Descriptions	
Appendix 2: Context List	
Appendix 3: Photographic List	
Appendix 4 DES Entry	

## 1. Introduction

This Report has been produced for the Auchindrain Trust with respect to the installation of a new/upgraded drainage system within the settlement of Auchindrain. The aim of the work was to ease water accumulation around buildings ACHDN D, ACHDN E, ACHDN H and ACHDN J. The work involved both the excavation of new drainage trenches and reopening/clearing old drainage courses to install a system of perforated land-drains. The work was undertaken over two days, the 31st January and the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2012, the site code used was ACH 12.

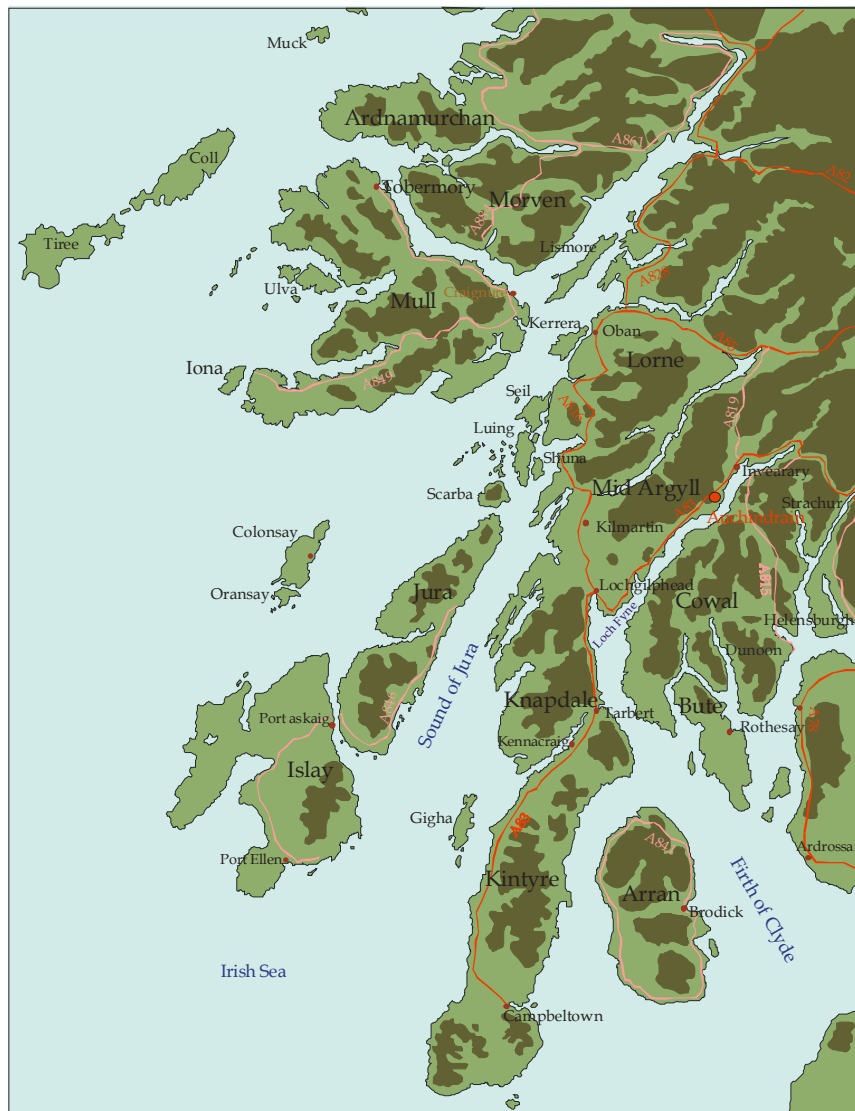


Figure 1: Location of Auchindrain in Argyll

## 2. Archaeological Background

The settlement or township of Auchindrain (NMRS No: NN00SW 9) is located in a gently sloping glen SE of the A83 trunk road and 9km SW of Inveraray (centered NGR: NN 03099 03161 Figure 2). The majority of the buildings are situated along a slope on the N side of a tributary of the Eas ' Chorabha, although a few buildings are situated on the slope above the S bank of the burn. As mentioned above the proposed works are designed to provide better drainage around several buildings within the settlement. These have previously been described by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Commission of Scotland in their Inventory on Argyll and the relevant extracts from this are included below (RCHAMS 1992).

### ACHDN D

*'is a byre-dwelling measuring about 17.4m by 6.6m over 0.8 walls, which preserves four cruck-couples set at intervals of about 3m and at heights of from 0.4m to 0.8m above floor level. They are scarf-jointed at about wall-bead level and some still rise to their full height, the blades being joined up below the apex by short horizontal yokes supporting the ridge-purlins, while some also incorporate collars. Part of a thatched roof survives below the present covering of corrugated iron. The plan comprises a two-roomed dwelling at the w end and a byre, latterly a stable, with its own entrance-doorway and -a communicating door in the stone partition separating it from the kitchen. The smoke-hole of a central hearth is visible in the thatched roof above the kitchen. A barn (N) associated with house D stands about 9Dm to the SW and is described below.'*

### ACHDN E

*'A stable (E) situated close to the SW angle of the house measures 7.9m by 5.3m and shows signs of partial reconstruction, the slated roof dating from after 1904. A stone in the rear wall bears the incised inscription 'D Munro 1897'. An open-ended cart-shed (P) 7m F of the house measures 5.2m from N to S by 2.7m, and the adjacent area to the N is a raised kailyard, partially encircled by trees.'*

### ACHDN H

*'Building H is a byre-dwelling measuring 17.4m from E to w by 6.1m. Its plan, which now corresponds to that of buildings A and D, probably dates from alterations of about 1907 by the occupant and local stonemason, 'Stoner' Munro, but traces remain of an earlier arrangement. Thus, the W window in the S wall of the kitchen appears to fill an earlier doorway, while both existing entrance-doorways show traces of alteration, that to the byre being an insertion which has caused the removal of an original cruck-blade. The existing partition between byre and kitchen appears to be an insertion, and originally there was probably a single entrance at the W end of the kitchen serving both house and byre, which were perhaps separated by a low wooden partition. About 1907 an attic floor was inserted, reached from the closet by a timber stair, while the box-beds in the kitchen were probably installed at the same time. The building is gabled at the E end but hip-roofed at the W, where a cruck-stump is centrally placed in the end-wall of the byre; this cruck shows no traces of scarf-jointing and was probably a single member.'*

### ACHDN J

*'The barn (J) immediately w of building H measures 1 8.9m by 6.1m over 0.9m walls and incorporates a stable at the N end, with a stackyard at the S.'*

The trenches also pass close to the remains of what may be buildings that relate to an earlier settlement layout, ACHDN CC, ACHDN BB and ACHDN DD.



Figure 2: Auchendrain Settlement Layout



Figure 3: Trench and Feature Locations

### 3. Methodology

The trenching was undertaken by a tracked mini digger using a 0.30m wide ditching bucket. Overall 13 trenches were excavated (172 m) while existing drainage ditches (A and B) were also re-excavated. The excavated trenches sloped from their higher ends to a depth of 0.50m. A description of all deposits appears in Appendix 1 and listed in Appendix 2. A photographic record of the watching brief was maintained and photos listed in Appendix 3. Few artefacts were recovered during the work and a description of these appears in section 5 below.

### 4. Watching Brief Results

#### Trench 1

The Trench ran down the SW side of ACHDN CC and past the NW corners of ACHDN D and ACHDN E turning SE past the W side of ACHDN H, joining an existing drainage ditch (Ditch B) leading to the burn. At the very N end of the trench vegetation and topsoil cover [001] overlay a rough cobble surface [002] to a depth of 0.1m-0.3m. The surface was confined to the W side of the trench and could be traced for 1.60m. As the stones of the surface were relatively large its possible these form the edging to a surface running along the W side of ACHDN CC. The surface was left in situ



Cobbles [002]

To the S of the surface beneath the topsoil were patches of loose gravel [003] that lay directly over natural glacial till. This loose gravel appeared to be the same material used elsewhere across the site as path make-up and is likely of recent origin. 12m from the N end of the trench on the W side of ACHDN D the Trench cut a deposit of dark brown humic silt [004]. This deposit appeared to lie within the cut of a former drainage ditch [005], this appearing to run NE/SW and cut obliquely by



the trench. The ditch was 0.45m deep with steep concave sides although the actual width of the ditch was hard to gauge given the oblique angle it had been cut through. Cutting this possible ditch was a section of concrete piping [006] providing a channel/outlet for the French drain at the rear (N side) of ACHDN D, this running under the current access track and connecting to the small burn running on the W of the track. Beyond the pipe to the S only natural glacial tills were encountered in the Trench.

#### Trench 2

The Trench ran down the N side of ACHDN D and connected with Trench 1 at the W. The works in this Trench involved the re-excavation of an existing gravel filled French drain or soak-away. The removal of the gravel and silt fill revealed the drain to have been originally cut through natural glacial till. This also revealed that the NW corner foundation had also been under-pinned or reinforced with concrete.

#### Trench 3

The Trench started near the threshold of the SW door of ACHDN D and connected with Trench 1 at the W. Removal of the topsoil revealed natural glacial till and bedrock along the length of the Trench.

#### Trench 4

This trench ran down the N side of ACHDN E and connected with Trench 1 at the W. The Trench revealed the presence of a former drainage system running down the N side of the building. This consisted of a cut [009] 0.24m-0.40m wide cutting natural bedrock at the E and glacial till further to the W. The base of the cut was occupied by a ceramic land drain [008], this covered by large to medium cobbles [007].



Ceramic land drain running at rear of ACHDN E

#### Trench 5

This Trench ran down the N side of ACHDN H and connected to Trench 1 at the W. This trench revealed up to 0.10m of topsoil and a thin layer of loose gravel [010] overlying natural glacial till.

The loose gravel [010] again appeared to be recent in origin and contained a silver plated dinner fork.

#### Trench 6

This Trench ran down the N side of ACHDN H turning SW and connecting to Trench 9. At the E end of the Trench topsoil lay directly over natural glacial till. Just beyond where the Trench turned SW were the remains of a disturbed ceramic land drain [011] along with backfill consisting of large to medium cobbles.

#### Trench 7

This trench ran along the S side of ACHDN H and connected with Trench 1 at the W. A cobbled surface [012] was initially encountered and the Trench moved E so this was not disturbed. The surface lay directly over natural glacial tills these encountered within the rest of the Trench. Over the natural at the W end of the trench was a deposit of up to 0.2m of recent gravel [013].



Cobbled Surface [012]

#### Trench 8

This Trench ran from the slope at the S of ACHDN F and connected with Trench 9 at the SW. A surface [014] was encountered at the E end of the trench, this left in situ. Within the rest of the trench up to 0.20m of topsoil lay directly over natural glacial tills. Surface [014] consisted of small to medium cobbles pressed into natural subsoil. The proximity of this surface to one encountered during evaluation work undertaken in 2011, make it likely that these area related, and if so might be contemporary with ACHDN DD.



Surface [014]

#### Trenches 9 & 9a

Trench 9 ran from the SE corner of ACHDN D past the W end of ACHDN H connecting to an existing drain (Drain A) leading to the burn. Trench 9a was a short trench at the SE of ACHDN D and connecting to Trench 9. The N end of Trench 9 appeared to coincide with a former drainage channel and much of the ground within it appeared to have been already disturbed. This for the most part included large to medium cobbles mixed in with fragments of ceramic land drain [015]. Trench 9a encountered cobbled surface [016] this likely associated with the threshold of ACHDN D and this was left undisturbed. Within the rest of Trench 9 topsoil lay over natural glacial till.

#### Trench 10

This Trench ran from the SW corner of ACHDN H and connected to Trench 9 at the E. The W end of the trench revealed a cobbled surface [017] running around the SE corner of ACHDN H, this was left in situ. Beyond this to the E was a darker brown mid brown clay silt [018] with occasional pebbles, this up to 0.30m deep and lying over natural glacial till. This soil would appear to be colluvial run-off accumulating within the lower parts of the settlement.

#### Trench 11

This trench ran from the SE side of ACHDN J connecting to an existing drainage ditch at the SE. Within the N part of the trench topsoil lay over glacial till, at the S and lower part of the trench below the topsoil (up to 0.25m deep) lay a mid grey sandy silt [019] that in turn overlay a dark brown humic silt with patches or lenses of more peaty material [020].

## Trench 12

This Trench ran and along the W side of ACHDN J and connected to an existing drain at the NW. A cobbled surface [021] was traced for m running along the W side of the building and was left in situ. Where the surface ran out at the N it could be seen to have been lain directly over natural glacial tills.



Cobbled Surface [021]

## Drainage Ditches A and B

These were re-excavated by ditching bucket and the sides of the ditches scraped clean of vegetation. The exposed sections revealed a dark humic soil along the lengths of both ditches with the occasional loose stone embedded within the soil.

## 5. Finds

Few artefacts were recovered from the watching brief, those that were included a complete section of ceramic land drain from Trench 4 and a silver plated fork from Trench 5. The only other finds were 5 sherds of pottery recovered from Trench 9 [015]. The sherds are all undecorated glazed white earthenwares. One sherd from the base of a bowl has distinct blue discolouration at the base and is likely a fragment of pearl ware which might suggest a date in the earlier half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## 6. Conclusion

The watching brief revealed several surfaces associated with the present upstanding buildings at Auchindrain. These comprised of cobbles surrounding the buildings at ACHDN D, ACHDN H and ACDHN J. Where the relationship could be observed the surfaces appeared to be directly lain over or into natural glacial till. The edge of a possible surface was seen in the N end of Trench 1 and this may represent a track running down the W side of the now denuded structure of ACHDN CC. Another surface was seen within the E end of Trench 8 and this may relate to a surface seen in an

earlier evaluation running down the NW side of putative structure ACHDN DD. If so, the surface may belong to an earlier settlement alignment as depicted on the Langland's estate map of 1789. Other features present within the trenches were related to past drainage schemes, including a possible ditch on the W side of ACHDN D, this possibly replaced by a later french drain at the rear of the building connecting to a cement pipe. Other former drainage features were represented by ceramic drains at the rear of ACHDN E and at the SE of ACHDN D. Deeper and darker humic soils were encountered at the S of Trenches 1, 9 and 11 where they connected with Drainage Ditches A and B, these likely originally cut to drain the damp ground in this part of the site.



Trench 6

## 7. References

RCAHMS 1992 *The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. Argyll: an Inventory of the Monuments: Volume 7: Mid-Argyll and Cowal, Historic and later Monuments.* No. 213, pp 457-464 Edinburgh.

Regan 2011 Auchindrain, An Archaeological Assessment, Data Structure Report

## Appendix 1: Context Descriptions

- [001] Layer. Vegetation and topsoil cover. The vegetation cover for the most part consisted of mossy grass, with some reed within the lower part of the site, this laying over a dark brown humic silt.
- [002] Surface. W edge of a cobble surface running 1.60m from the N end of the trench. The surface consist of medium to large cobbles (maximum size 0.25m x 0.16m x 70mm).
- [003] Surface. Loose grey pink limestone gravel chippings.
- [004] Fill. Dark brown humic silt, with occasional remnants of degraded roots.
- [005] Cut. Ditch/channel running NE/SW with steep concave sides and rounded base, 0.45m deep and 1.10m wide.
- [006] Drain. Cement/concrete pipe running under track.
- [007] Fill. Backfill of land drain consisting of large to medium cobbles.
- [008] Fill. Ceramic flat bottomed land drain. 'Horse shoe' shaped in profile measuring 9" diameter by 14" in length.
- [009] Cut. Cut for land drain against the N side of ACHDN E. Cuts into natural bedrock at E where it is 0.24m in width, otherwise 0.40m in width and 0.34m in depth.
- [010] Layer/surface. Loose grey pink limestone gravel chippings.
- [011] Fill. Consisting of mixed dark grey silt large to medium cobbles, with frequent fragments of ceramic land drain and occasional pottery.
- [012] Surface. Surface consisting of small to medium pebbles/cobbles set into natural subsoil.
- [013] Layer/surface. Loose grey pink limestone gravel chippings.
- [014] Surface. . The surface consisted of small to medium cobbles pressed into natural subsoil.
- [015] Fill? Consisted of dark grey silt with frequent large to medium cobbles mixed in with fragments of ceramic land drain.
- [016] Surface. Cobbled surface consisting of large to medium cobbles, situated along the threshold and SW side of ACHDN D.
- [017] Surface. Cobbled surface consisting of large to medium cobbles, around the S and E sides of ACHDN H.
- [018] Layer. Dark to mid brown mid brown clay silt.
- [019] Layer. Mid grey sandy silt.
- [020] Layer. Dark brown humic silt with patches or lenses of more peat-like material.

[021] Surface. Cobbled surface consisting of medium large cobbles running along the W side of ACHDN J.

#### Appendix 2: Context List

Context No.	Type	Trench	Structure	Description
001	layer	1		topsoil
002	surface	1	ACHDN CC	cobbled surface
003	layer	1, 2		chippings
004	fill	1	ACHDN D	ditch fill
005	cut	1	ACHDN D	ditch cut
006	other	1	ACHDN D	cement pipe
007	fill	4	ACHDN E	drain fill
008	other	4	ACHDN E	land drain
009	cut	2	ACHDN E	drain cut
010	layer	5	ACHDN H	chippings
011	fill?	6		disturbed fill
012	surface	7	ACHDN H	cobbled surface
013	layer	1,7		chippings
014	surface	8		surface
015	fill/layer	9		disturbed soil
016	surface	9, 9a	ACHDN D	cobbled surface
017	surface	10	ACHDN H	cobbled surface
018	layer	10		colluvial
019	layer	11		colluvial
020	layer	11		colluvial
021	surface	12	ACHDN J	cobbled surface

#### Appendix 3: Photographic List

Photo No.	Site Code	Context	Trench	Structure	Description	Direction from
1	ACH 12		2	ACHDN D	concrete footing	E
2	ACH 12		2	ACHDN D	concrete footing	E
3	ACH 12		2	ACHDN D	concrete footing	N
4	ACH 12		1		Trench 1	NE
5	ACH 12		3	ACHDN D	Trench 3	SW
6	ACH 12		3	ACHDN D	Trench 3	E
7	ACH 12	007	4	ACHDN E	land drain	
8	ACH 12	008	4	ACHDN H	land drain	NE
9	ACH 12	012	7	ACHDN E	cobbled surface	SW
10	ACH 12	012	7	ACHDN E	cobbled surface	SE
11	ACH 12	016	9a	ACHDN D	land drain	S
12	ACH 12	016	9a	ACHDN D	land drain	S
13	ACH 12	014	8		surface	SW
14	ACH 12	014	8		surface	NE
15	ACH 12	002	1	ACHDN CC	surface	S
16	ACH 12	005	1	ACHDN D	cement pipe	W

17	ACH 12		1		Trench 1	NW
18	ACH 12	012	7	ACHDN H	surface	SW
19	ACH 12				scraped surface	S
20	ACH 12		1		Trench 1	SW
21	ACH 12	012	7		Trench 7	NE
22	ACH 12		3		Trench 3	E
23	ACH 12		6		Trench 6	W
24	ACH 12		1		Trench 1 section	W
25	ACH 12		11		Trench 11 section	NE
26	ACH 12	021	12	ACHDN J	surface	SW
27	ACH 12	021	12	ACHDN J	surface	SE
28	ACH 12		12	ACHDN J	foundation	W
29	ACH 12		12	ACHDN J	foundation	W
30	ACH 12		7		Trench 7	SW
31	ACH 12		1		Re excavated ditch	N
32	ACH 12	017	10	ACDHN H	surface	W
33	ACH 12		10	ACDHN H	Trench 10	W
34	ACH 12		6	ACDHN H	Trench 6	E
35	ACH 12		6	ACDHN H	Trench 6	E
36	ACH 12		8, 9, 9a		trench junction	W
37	ACH 12		8		Trench 8 W end	N
38	ACH 12		2	ACDHN D	Trench 2	E
39	ACH 12	002	1	ACHDN CC	surface and wall	N
40	ACH 12		9		Re excavated ditch	N
41	ACH 12				scraped surface	NE
42	ACH 12		1		Trench 1	S
43	ACH 12		12	ACHDN J	Trench 12	NW



Appendix 4: DES Entry

<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Auchindrian, Archaeological Watching Brief
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	ACH 12
<b>PARISH:</b>	Inveraray
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Roddy Regan
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	The Auchindrain Trust
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Archaeological Watching Brief
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	NN00 SW 9
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	Township
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	
<b>NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)</b>	NN 03099 03161
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	January 2012
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	February 2012
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	Survey by RCHAMS (RCAHMS 1992 <i>The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. Argyll: an Inventory of the Monuments: Argyll, Volume 7: Mid Argyll and Cowal: Medieval and Later Monuments.</i> Edinburgh)
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	The work involved installing drainage around several buildings within the west of the settlement. Several surfaces were revealed during the work majority of the surfaces would appear to relate to the upstanding buildings and likely date to the 19 <sup>th</sup> century. The possible exceptions to this was a surface seen at the N end of Trench 1 and another seen at the W end of Trench 8 and both of these may relate to the suite of buildings depicted in Langland's 1789 estate map. Several former drainage systems were also encountered during the watching brief, mainly ceramic land drains and more recent concrete and plastic drains.
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Urras Achadh an Droighinn/The Auchindrain Trust
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	An Goirtean Steading, Kilmichael Glassary, Argyll, PA31 8QA
<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>	rodody@kilmartin.org
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)</b>	The archive will be deposited with the Auchindrain Trust and copies of the report lodged with, Historic Scotland, WoSAS SMR and the NMRS