



**Land East of Lynwood,
North Connel,
Argyll and Bute
Archaeological Monitoring
Data Structure Report**

September 2015



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Executive Summary

ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd was commissioned by Paul McFatridge to undertake archaeological monitoring in advance of ground-breaking works associated with the construction by Paul McFatridge of 4 semi-detached dwelling houses at Land East of Lynwood, North Connel, Oban Argyll and Bute.

The archaeological monitoring followed the placement of a planning condition upon the proposed development by West of Scotland Archaeological Services. This required a watching brief to monitor topsoil stripping whilst the site was being prepared for development.

One possible pit feature was identified during the project. ARCHAS Ltd recommend that no further archaeological mitigation be required on site beyond the existing planning condition.

A record of the evaluation has been deposited with the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) website hosted by the Archaeological Data Service (OASIS ID archascu1-224179) and with Discovery and Excavation in Scotland (DES), the annual publication of fieldwork by Archaeology Scotland.

1 Introduction

1.1 General

1.1.1 ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd was commissioned by Paul McFtridge to undertake archaeological monitoring in advance of ground-breaking works associated with the construction by Paul McFtridge of 4 semi-detached dwelling houses at Land East of Lynwood, North Connel, Oban Argyll and Bute PA 37 1RA. The site is located at NGR: NM 92660 34961 (centred) at the east end of Black Crofts village.

1.1.2 Located close to Moss of Achnacree, an area within which are numerous buried and upstanding archaeological sites, the area under investigation was identified by West of Scotland Archaeological Services (hereafter WoSAS) archaeological advisors to Argyll and Bute Council as having archaeological potential.

1.1.3 Upon submission of the planning application, WoSAS imposed a planning condition on the development. Through Planning Condition number 1, imposed as part of planning application Reference Number: 12/01908/PP. WoSAS state:

No development shall commence on-site or is hereby authorised until the developer has secured the implementation of an archaeological watching brief, to be carried out by an archaeological organisation acceptable to the Planning Authority, during all ground disturbance. The retained archaeological organisation shall be afforded access at all reasonable times and allowed to record, recover and report items of interest and finds. A method statement for the watching brief will be submitted by the applicant, agreed by the West of Scotland Archaeology Service, and approved by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the watching brief. The name of the archaeological organisation retained by the developer shall be given to the Planning Authority and to the West of Scotland Archaeology Service in writing not less than 14 days before development commences.

Reason: To enable the opportunity to identify and examine any items of archaeological interest and finds which may be found within the application site, to allow any action required for the recording, recovering or reporting of such remains to occur and to accord with Policies 'STRAT DC 9', 'LP ENV 16' and 'LP ENV 17'.

1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation outlining the standards and methodology to which ARCHAS Ltd would adhere during the project was submitted to, and accepted by WoSAS in July 2015.

1.1.6 Site works were monitored by Alastair Rees and Jozef Doran over two days from 18/08/15 to 19/08/15. Weather throughout was changeable.

1.1.7 ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd conforms to the standards of professional conduct outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Code of conduct, and relevant Standards and Guidance documents.

1.2 Site Location and Setting

General

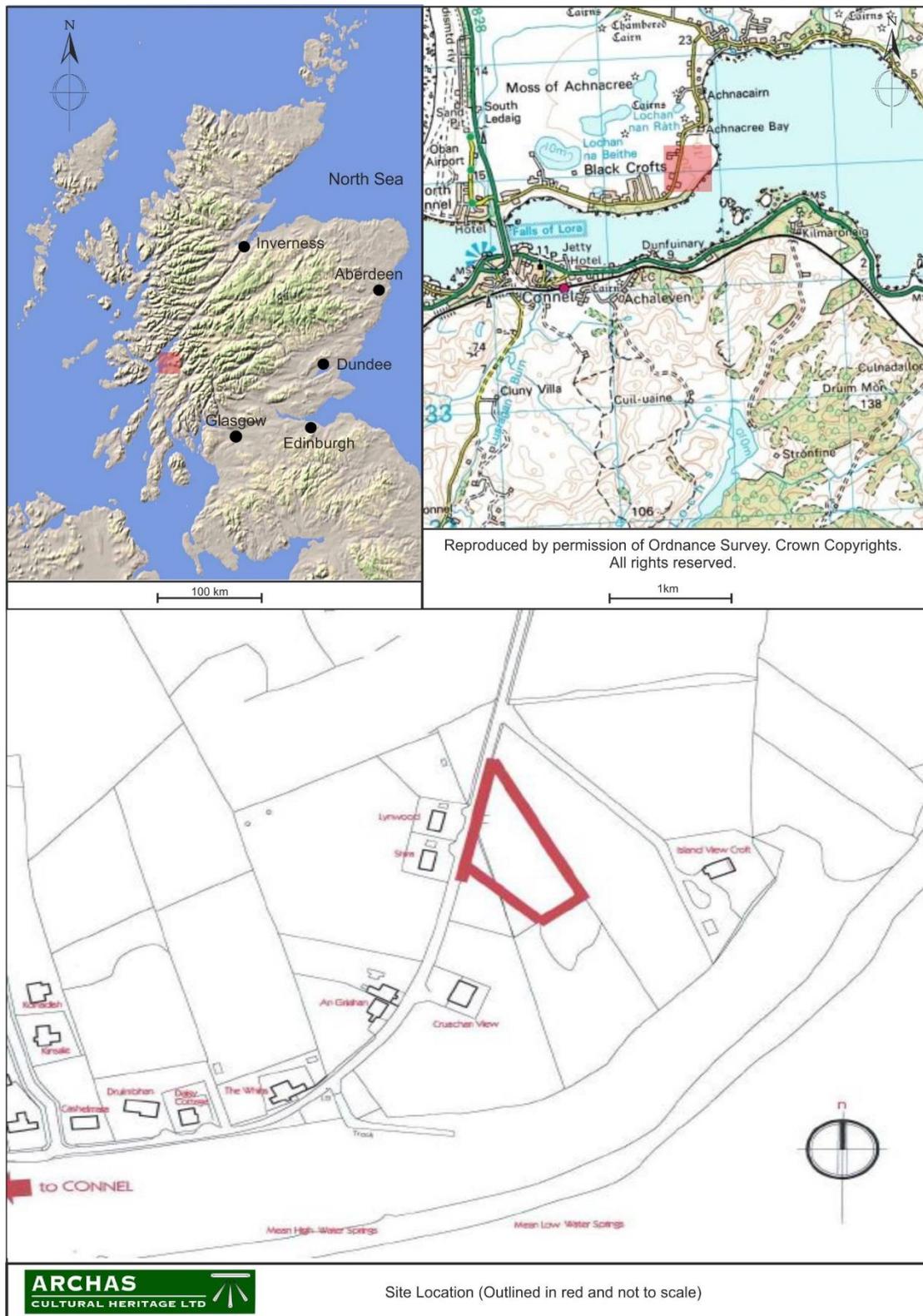


Figure 1: Site location

1.2.1 The development site is located east of Lynwood, North Connel, Oban Argyll and Bute PA 37 1RA. The site is located at NGR: NM 92660 34961 (centred) at the east end of Black Crofts village, just east of the road between Black Crofts and Achnacairn.

Study Area

1.2.2 The proposed development site is located on an area of ground just east of the road between Black Crofts and Achnacairn. It is covered with small trees and rough vegetation and the topography is generally flat.

Geology

1.2.3 The drift geology of the proposed development site comprises Raised Marine Deposits - Clay, Sand and Silt. These superficial deposits formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period with the local environment having previously been dominated by shallow seas, with the sediments deposited in these waters and now above the present shoreline as a result of earth movement or a general fall in sea level. The underlying bedrock geology consists of the Lorn Plateau Volcanic Formation, Andesite and Basalt - Igneous Bedrock formed approximately 398 to 419 million years ago in the Devonian and Silurian Periods.

2 Archaeological and Historical Background

2.1 Historical Background

- 2.1.1 The history of the site was assessed primarily using the National Monument Record Scotland (NMRS) as held by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS).

Archaeological background and recent works

- 2.1.2 The wider area surrounding the site contains a significant number of prehistoric remains. Achnacree Moss contains a number of Prehistoric Cairns, boundary features and earthworks, the most notable of which is the Scheduled Enclosure Lochan Nan Rath 455m NW of Murdostoun (NMRS No: NM 93 NW 15) which comprises a considerable earthwork situated 600m to the east. A large cairn Lochan A Chuirin (NMRS No: NM 93 NW 19) that has been heavily robbed is also located 500m to the north of the development site. No Roman or Medieval activity has been noted in the vicinity.
- 2.1.3 An evaluation (WOSAS event ID: 67) and a number of watching briefs have been undertaken in the immediate area to the west during previous developments and have produced several negative features as well as elements of possible Bronze Age boundary features (NMRS Nos: NM 93 SW 9).

2.2 Map regression

Pre-Ordnance Survey Maps

- 2.2.1 All relevant available maps as held by NLS were consulted in order to chart the recorded development of the site as well as any additional features that may previously have gone unrecorded.
- 2.2.2 Many of the early maps cover the site area, but do not go into enough detail to show anything of interest within the vicinity of the site.
- 2.2.3 William Roy's 'Military Survey of Scotland' conducted between 1747 and 1756 provides the earliest recognizable detail of any landscape features around local area. (



Figure 2). Roy's map revolutionised map making in Scotland, containing a lot more terrain detail than previously. Although the map was the result of 'rapid reconnaissance rather than a measured topographic survey'¹, the various inaccuracies can be forgiven in providing us with the first cartographic view of Scotland with any level of detail – a snapshot of mid 18th century Scotland.

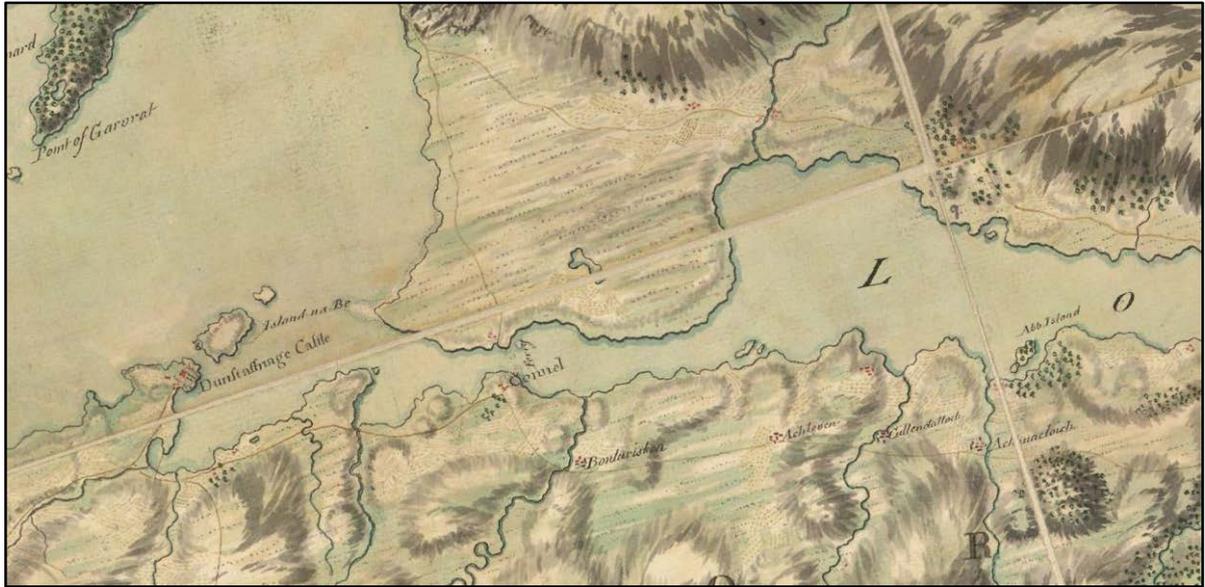


Figure 2: Detail of William Roy's map of the Connel area. No buildings are visible near the area of the site
© The British Library Board. All Rights Reserved (Roy Military Survey of Scotland)

2.2.4 Roy's map clearly shows the lack of habitation in the area around the site. No settlements are recorded east of North Connel.

2.2.5 By the production of John Thomson's 'Atlas of Scotland' in 1832 (Figure 3), buildings are clearly visible in the village known today as Black Crofts, with Achnacree mentioned as "Achnacremore" and "Achnacreheg." Though there is no definitive activity near the site, it is clear from this map that the wider area was becoming more intensively settled.

2.3.1 The evidence held by the NMRS and West of Scotland Archaeology Service SMR indicates significant prehistoric presence in the Achnacree area. Thereafter, a distinct lack of human activity is evident in the immediate vicinity of the site until the post-Medieval period, so it is likely that any remains will date from either prehistoric or modern times.

3 Methodology

3.1 Archaeological Monitoring

Watching Brief

- 3.1.1 In discussion with the developer Paul McFatridge, the main area where works were to be undertaken was the footprint of the northern building and the access from the road leading to said building (Figure 2). This focus was due to the fact that the construction of the northern building was potentially imminent, whilst the other parts of the development had no set schedule for construction.
- 3.1.2 ARCHAS Ltd undertook a watching brief on all ground breaking works associated with preparation works for the construction of the northern house and associated driveway

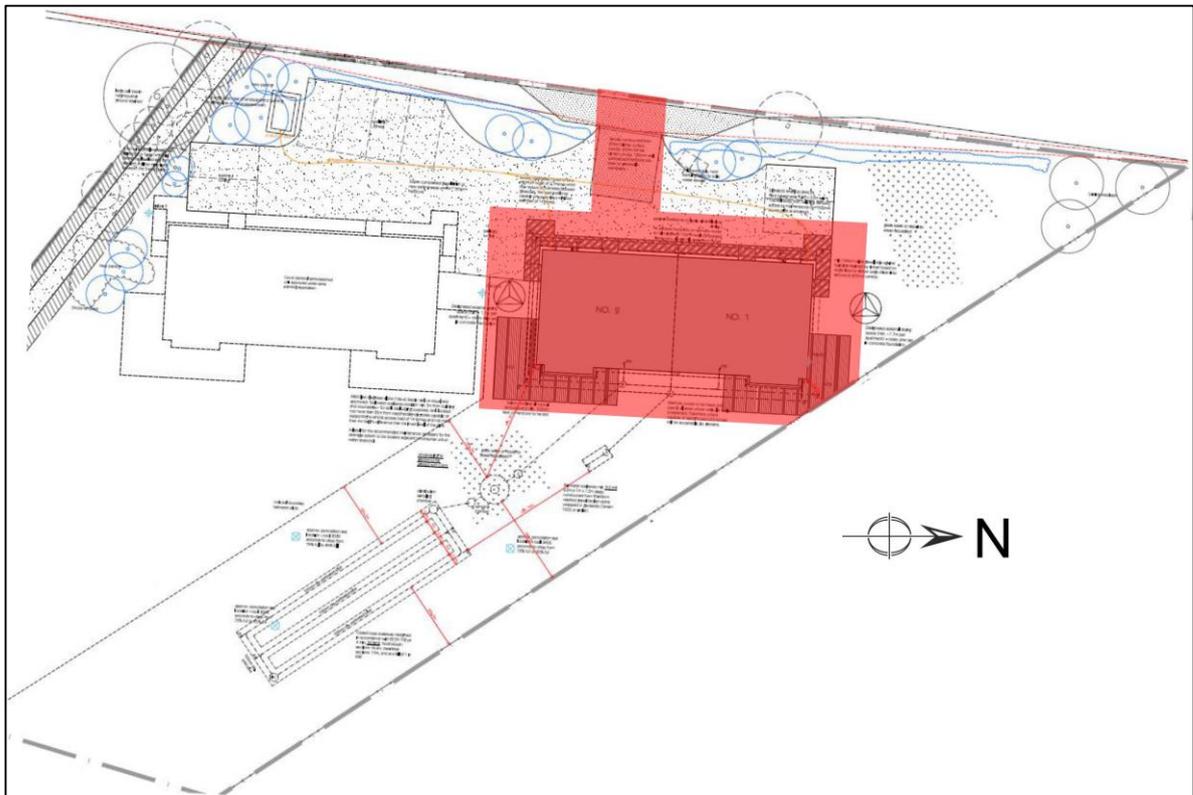


Figure 2: Plan of the site showing the areas monitored during the watching brief in red. (ARCHAS Ltd after Beaton and McMurchy Architects)

- 3.1.3 The methodology adopted by the contractor involved the removal of the vegetation and topsoil across the footprint of the northern building and its driveway, followed by removal of an upper subsoil down to the natural subsoil. This methodology allowed for the natural subsoil to be visually assessed for archaeological deposits across all parts of the site that were stripped.



Plate 1: Working shot showing machine stripping next to road. Note field clearance stones next to road (Photograph 011)

- 3.1.4 During the archaeological monitoring topsoil was removed by a mechanical excavator fitted with a smooth edged ditching bucket.

4 Results

4.1 Monitoring

- 4.1.1 The archaeological monitoring revealed a single feature of possible archaeological significance, a small sub-circular pit [005] measuring 0.75m x 0.68m in plan and 0.15m deep, with a single dark brown silty fill (004) that contained occasional small pebbles and some charcoal flecks. A large stone was visible in the top of the fill near the centre of the pit. No artefacts were found in the pit fill, so its date and function are uncertain.
- 4.1.2 The topsoil (001) was a dark brown silty sand with a depth <0.1m. This covered a light orange-brown silty gravel subsoil (002) with a depth of c. 0.2m, which may represent a buried soil that has been tilled. (002) overlay natural subsoil (006), a moderately compact mid reddish brown sandy gravel with frequent sub-rounded stones of various sizes. Pit [005] was cut into this deposit as were several small tree bowls, and small patches of manganese staining were also visible in this layer. A greater concentration of stones were noted in deposits (002) and (006) as they neared the hedge line adjacent to the road.

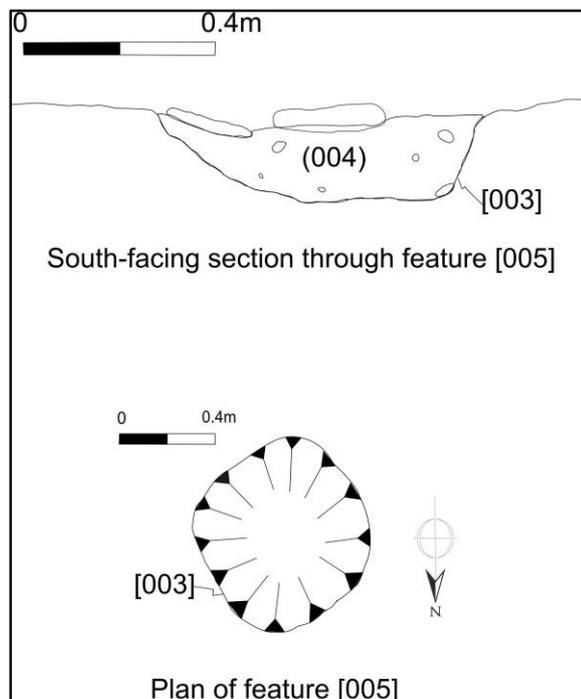


Figure 3: Post-excavation plan of [003/004]

5 Summary and Discussion

5.1 General

- 5.1.1 The archaeological investigations east of Lynwood revealed little in the way of archaeological features, beyond the discovery of pit [005], the function and date of which is uncertain though it is likely to be prehistoric given the amount of prehistoric activity in the area and the fact that it was sealed by subsoil (002). The depth of subsoil (002) suggests that the land may have been tilled at some point in the past, and the greater number of stones in the subsoil deposits adjacent to the road indicates that the field clearance was practiced in the area due to the stony nature of the soil. These stones may have been used to create a rough bank for the hedge line.
- 5.1.2 No significant artefacts were recovered during the project.

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 General

- 6.1.1 With the exception of the small pit [005], the archaeological monitoring east of Lynwood showed the area proposed for development to be archaeologically sterile.
- 6.1.2 ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd do not recommend any further archaeological mitigation associated with this project beyond the scope of the existing planning condition and believe the planning condition for the northern building and access can be accepted as having been met.

Acknowledgements

The nature of the archaeological condition and the excavation timetable employed by the contractor meant that successful completion of the archaeological mitigation to the satisfaction of all concerned parties could not have been possible without close co-operation and flexibility on the part of ARCHAS, the contractor and WoSAS

Paul McFatridge and his employees deserve credit for their commitment to the archaeological resource and ensuring the project was completed smoothly, as well as our thanks for their good humour and assistance to the archaeologists on site.

Appendix A Context Register

<i>Context No.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Initial</i>
001	deposit	topsoil/turf - dark sandy soil underlying turf	thickness: 0.1m		18/08/2015	AR
002	deposit	light orange-brown silty gravel	thickness: 0.2m	tilled subsoil	18/08/2015	AR
003	cut	sub-circular bowl-shaped cut	0.75m N-S x 0.68m E-W x 0.15m deep	cut for possible pit [005]	18/08/2015	AR
004	fill	dark brown silt with occ. small pebbles and charcoal flecks	see [003]	fill for possible pit [005]	18/08/2015	AR
005	feature	pit feature, see [003] and (004)	see [003]	possible pit	18/08/2015	AR
006	deposit	mid brownish red sand and gravel of medium compaction, with frequent sub-rounded stones of various sizes	Thickness >0.15m	natural subsoil	19/08/2015	JD

Appendix B Photographic Register

<i>Image No.</i>	<i>Taken from</i>	<i>Contexts No.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Initials</i>
1	S		View of topsoil stripping	18/08/2015	AR
2	N	[005]	Pre-ex of [005]	18/08/2015	AR
3	N	[005]	[005] half-ex	18/08/2015	AR
4	N	[005]	[005] fully-ex	18/08/2015	AR
5	N	[005]	[005] fully-ex	18/08/2015	AR
6			ID shot	19/08/2015	JD
7	N		Post-ex of manganese staining	19/08/2015	JD
8	N		Working shot - subsoil stripping	19/08/2015	JD
9	NW		Tree-throw	19/08/2015	JD
10	E		Working shot - driveway strip	19/08/2015	JD
11	N		Working shot - drive way strip, shows field clearance stones	19/08/2015	JD
12	N		Post-ex of site to S and E of access gate	19/08/2015	JD
13	N		Working shot - driveway strip	19/08/2015	JD
14	N		Post-ex of N side of driveway strip	19/08/2015	JD
15	N		Working shot - driveway strip	19/08/2015	JD
16	W		General shot - N part of site	19/08/2015	JD
17	NW		General shot - central and S part of site	19/08/2015	JD

Appendix C Drawing Register

<i>Dwg No.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Scale</i>	<i>Sheet</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Drawn by</i>
1	Section	1:10	1	S-facing section of pit [005]	18/08/2015	AR
2	Plan	01:20	1	Plan of pit [005]	18/08/2015	AR

Appendix D Provisional Discovery and Excavation Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Argyll and Bute
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	North Connel
PROJECT CODE:	215 North Connel
PARISH:	Ardchattan And Muckairn (argyll And Bute)
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Jo Doran
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	n/a
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	n/a
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NM 92648 34982
START DATE (this season)	24/03/15
END DATE (this season)	07/09/15
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd were commissioned by Paul McFatridge to undertake archaeological monitoring in advance of ground-breaking works associated with the construction of 4 semi-detached dwelling houses at Land East of Lynwood, North Connel, Oban Argyll and Bute.</p> <p>One small pit feature was identified during the project. ARCHAS Ltd recommend that no further archaeological mitigation be required on site beyond the existing planning condition.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	n/a
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	n/a
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ARCHIVE LOCATION	WoSAS SMR and NMRS (intended)