

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

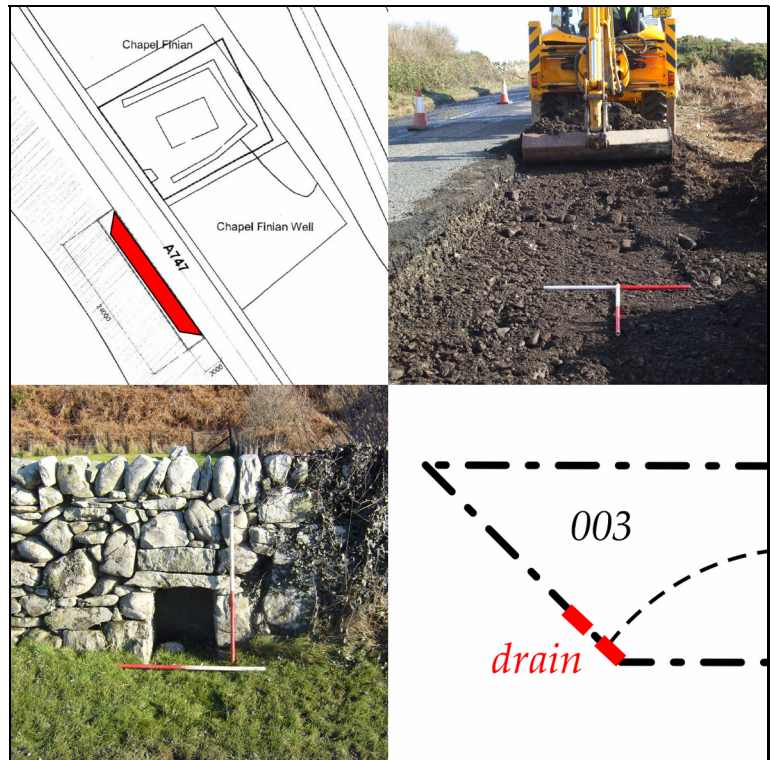
Updated on 15/06/2007

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Chapel Finian
PROJECT CODE:	HSCO-90071-2010-01
PARISH:	MOCHRUM
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	D Gorman
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Kirkdale Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Walkover survey, test trenching and archaeological monitoring
NMRS NO(S):	NX24NE 2
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Chapel
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NX 2783 4892
START DATE (this season)	29 January 2010
END DATE (this season)	1 March 2010
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	Ahead of the proposed installation of a lay-by on the road verge opposite Chapel Finian, a test trench was dug to establish the make-up of the verge to a maximum depth of 450 mm. This appeared to be a man-made verge of silt and pebbles held together by hardy self-seeding vegetation. Two modern drains were identified and recorded within or bordering the designated area. A further visit was made to carry out a watching brief while a trench was excavated by machine to a maximum depth of 450 mm. The trench was approximately 23.0 m x 3.0 m. No archaeologically significant finds or features were encountered during the course of this investigation.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Historic Scotland
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	4, Western Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5QF
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS

Historic Scotland
Properties in Care
Minor Archaeological Works 2010

Chapel Finian: Walkover survey, test trenching and archaeological monitoring, January & March 2010

HS PIC Index number: 90071
Project code: HSCO-90071-2010-01



26 March 2010
Kirkdale Archaeology

<u>Site</u>	Chapel Finian
<u>N.G.R</u>	NX 2783 4892
<u>Project Description</u>	Walkover survey, test trenching and archaeological monitoring.
<u>Project code</u>	HSCO-90071-2010-01

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SUMMARY: Ahead of the proposed installation of a lay-by on the road verge opposite Chapel Finian, a test trench was dug to establish the make-up of the verge to a maximum depth of 450 mm. This appeared to be a man-made verge of silt and pebbles held together by hardy self-seeding vegetation. Two modern drains were identified and recorded within or bordering the designated area. A further visit was made to carry out a watching brief while a trench was excavated by machine to a maximum depth of 450 mm. The trench was approximately 23.0 m x 3.0 m. No archaeologically significant finds or features were encountered during the course of this investigation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology undertook an archaeological walkover survey at the proposed site of a lay-by on an overgrown verge opposite and to the SW of Chapel Finian, a 10th to 11th-century chapel near Mochrum in Wigtownshire. Installation of the lay-by fabric would require a cutting 450 mm deep so a trial trench was dug to identify the ground make-up to this depth. The object of the survey was to identify any potential features within the footprint of the lay-by. In a 1950 excavation report on Chapel Finian by C.A.R Radford shows a well to the SW of the chapel on the opposite side of a track. Radford gives the measurement of the W wall of the Chapel as 2 feet 6 inches (760 mm). The W wall is the same width as the track shown to the E of the well in his excavation plan. The well, if accurately plotted, would therefore currently be situated under the modern road, which has covered both the track and well.

The proposed lay-by is 23 m long x 2.5 m wide. A plan was drawn to locate the trial trench and two drains, one crossing the lay-by footprint, the other bordering it to the NW. Photographs were taken to record the site prior to any interventions. No archaeological artefacts were recovered. This initial work was carried out on 19 January 2010.

A watching brief was undertaken in March 2010 to ensure there were no archaeological features in the area stripped for the proposed lay-by installation. The trench excavated was approximately 23.0 x 3.0 m, to a maximum depth of 450 mm. The area to be stripped was covered in shrubbery and weeds with a layer of turf.

2.0 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Walkover survey and test trenching, January 2010

2.1.1 Walkover Survey

Two existing features were investigated. The first was within the area of the lay-by. A ceramic drain set within a stone-lined channel sits 8-8.5 m from the N end of the proposed lay-by. It is capped by a re-used stone (with a hole for a metal fixture on its face) with large pebbles over it, the whole sealed in concrete below the turf. This feature is immediately below the turf to a depth of 750 mm and runs SE-NW, on the opposite side of the road is the inlet pipe set within an open brick box.

The second feature sits outwith the proposed lay-by area 2.5-3.0 m to the N and is again a ceramic drain with stone cap in a crude matrix of pebbles. No water was emanating from the pipe but it was noted that water was welling up either through the ground or through the lower portion of the pebble matrix. This may confirm that there is in fact a natural spring nearby which may have been the source for the well noted by Radford. It was noted that in the S portion of the drystone wall carrying the modern gate to the chapel was a low aperture called a 'sheep creep', which is sealed with a removal stone to allow the movement of herds.

These drain features appeared modern and did not appear to be re-cycling an existing stone drain - though it should be noted that only their terminal ends were exposed.

One feature worth considering is the stone-lined pit, which sits inside the chapel's boundary wall to the SE of the chapel. It currently seems to have its outlet through the second drain described, however its original course may have been diverted- it currently runs ENE-WSW but judging by the orientation of the outlet wall of the stone-lined pit (which changes suddenly as it goes under the wall) it originally wanted to carry on from NE-SW. If this was the case then there was the potential for a surviving portion of this *in situ* within the N extreme of the proposed lay-by.

2.1.1 Walkover Survey

The modern road is bordered to the SW by a verge *c* 3 m wide that scarps to the pebble beach beyond. A trial trench was placed on it, 2.5 m from the road. Turf 001

accounted for the top 100 mm, the remaining 350 mm being 002, small >20 mm to medium <150 mm beach pebbles in a silt matrix, almost certainly a man-made horizon combining plentiful local pebbles with silt to encourage growth - the area was covered by hardy shrubs, thorn bushes and weeds with rough grass and moss which keep the verge tightly held together with roots. In this respect, if this depth is consistent then it was considered acceptable to excavate to this depth.

2.2 Watching brief during excavation, January 2010

Once removed, the layer of turf which covered the area to be stripped was very thin. The removed fill had abundant root inclusions, and appeared to be man-made. The excavated trench showed two subsoils. Both were composed of the same material (beach pebbles in a silty matrix) with the overall colour varying slightly. The trench exposed a subsoil change in the north end of the trench. The dominant subsoil is mid-dark brown while the minor is lighter brown. The change appeared to relate to the modern drain, which would run SE-NW across the trench. The subsoil change was adjacent to the drain outlet which was exposed at the northern end of the trench and which also cut the NW end of the north section. This subsoil change lacked any definitive shape and probably results from a flow of water running from underneath the A747 road into the modern drain. It is also possible this change was due to a natural source of water in the area, or also an overflow of water from drainage in the area.

No evidence of the previously mentioned ceramic drains was exposed during the watching brief, although both the southern and northern drain outlets are still exposed. The length of drains themselves have not been exposed due the fact that the drains are situated 750 mm below topsoil and the trench itself only extends to 450 mm. No sections of ceramic pipe were exposed in the base of the trench, and no fragments of pipe were present in the fill removed from the trench. Stones removed from both fills of the trench were of substantial size and it is possible some of them have been re-used from an earlier feature but there is no evidence to support this. No other features were exposed within the trench. No archaeological artefacts were found and there was no evidence of any archaeologically significant features in the area stripped.

3.0 INTERPRETATION AND OBSERVATIONS

There was no evidence of archaeological activity within the area stripped for the installation of the proposed lay-by. No archaeological artefacts were uncovered during the course of the watching brief, and there is nothing to suggest anything of archaeological interest, which may hinder the proposed car-parking facility.

A1.0 APPENDIX 1: LIST OF CONTEXTS

Test trench, January 2010

#	Description
001	Turf
002	Pebbles in a silt matrix

Watching brief, March 2010

#	Description
001	Concrete mixed with stone
002	Hardcore
003	Light-mid brown pebbles in a silty matrix
004	Mid-dark brown pebbles in a silty matrix

A2.0 APPENDIX 2: LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Files have prefix "hsc0-90071-2010-01_" followed by number below

#	Description	From	Date
1	Shot of Lay-by site	SE	29/1/2010
2	Shot of Lay-by site	NW	29/1/2010
3	Site of S Drain Outlet	SW	29/1/2010
4	Site of N Drain Outlet	SW	29/1/2010
5	Site of N Drain Outlet	NE	29/1/2010
6	Site of N Drain Outlet and Beach	NE	29/1/2010
7	N Drain Outlet	E	29/1/2010
8	N Drain Outlet	E	29/1/2010
9	N Drain Outlet and Channel	E	29/1/2010
10	N Drain Outlet with Welling Water at Base	W	29/1/2010
11	N Drain Outlet	NE	29/1/2010
12	N Drain Outlet	N	29/1/2010
13	S Drain Outlet	NE	29/1/2010
14	S Drain Outlet showing Pipe	NE	29/1/2010
15	S Drain Outlet	N	29/1/2010
16	S Drain Outlet	N	29/1/2010
17	S Drain Outlet	E	29/1/2010
18	S Drain Outlet and Channel	SW	29/1/2010

#	Description	From	Date
19	Inlet Chamber of S Drain	NE	29/1/2010
20	Inlet Chamber of S Drain	NW	29/1/2010
21	Inlet Chamber of S Drain	NW	29/1/2010
22	Stone Lined Pit/Well in Churchyard	NW	29/1/2010
23	Stone Lined Pit/Well in Churchyard	SE	29/1/2010
24	View from Churchyard	SW	29/1/2010
25	View from Churchyard	SSW	29/1/2010
26	Sheep Creep in Drystone Wall	NE	29/1/2010
27	Shot of Lay-by site	NW	29/1/2010
28	Shot of Drystone Wall and Chapel	N	29/1/2010
29	Shot of Trial Trench	NE	29/1/2010
30	Shot of Trial Trench	NE	29/1/2010
31	Shot of Trial Trench	SE	29/1/2010
32	Shot of Trial Trench and Excavated Material	SW	29/1/2010
33	Shot of Excavated Material	SE	29/1/2010
34	Working shot, north end of trench	N	01/03/10
35	Working shot, north end of trench	N	01/03/10
36	Working shot, north end of trench	NW	01/03/10
37	Working shot, north end of trench , 2 x 1m scale	NW	01/03/10
38	Working shot, north end of trench., 2 x 1m scale	NW	01/03/10
39	Working shot	NW	01/03/10
40	Working shot, 2 x 1m scale	NW	01/03/10
41	Working shot, 2 x 1m scale	NW	01/03/10
42	Working shot showing completed trench , 2 x 1m scale	SE	01/03/10
43	Working shot showing completed trench , 2 x 1m scale	SE	01/03/10
44	Working shot showing completed trench, 2 x 1m scale	SE	01/03/10
45	Working shot showing completed trench, 2 x 1m scale	SE	01/03/10
46	West facing section showing 001, 002, 004, southern end of trench, 2 x 1m scale	W	01/03/10
47	West facing section showing 001, 002, 004, mid-section of trench, 2 x 1m scale	W	01/03/10
48	West facing section showing 001, 002, 003, northern end of trench, 2 x 1m scale	W	01/03/10
49	West facing section showing 001, 002, 003, northern end of trench, 2 x 1m scale	W	01/03/10
50	East facing section showing 004, mid-section of trench north of drain outlet which is present in western section of trench, 2 x 1m scale	E	01/03/10

#	Description	From	Date
51	As above	E	01/03/10
52	Working shot showing completed trench	SE	01/03/10
53	Working shot showing completed trench	SW	01/03/10
54	Working shot showing completed trench	SE	01/03/10
55	Working shot showing completed trench	NW	01/03/10
56	Shot of northern end of trench showing north section and adjacent drain outlet, 2 x 1m scale	NW	01/03/10
57	Shot of southern end of trench , 2 x 1m scale	N	01/03/10
58	Shot of southern end of trench showing south section	N	01/03/10
59	East facing section, north of drain outlet situated in east facing section, 2 x 1m scale	E	01/03/10
60	East facing section, northern end of trench, 2 x 1m scale	E	01/03/10
61	Shot of drain outlet situated in east facing section middle of trench, 2 x 1m scale	E	01/03/10
62	As above	E	01/03/10
63	Shot of drain outlet situated in northern section of trench, 2 x 1m scale	S E	01/03 /10
64	shot of completed trench	S W	01/03 /10

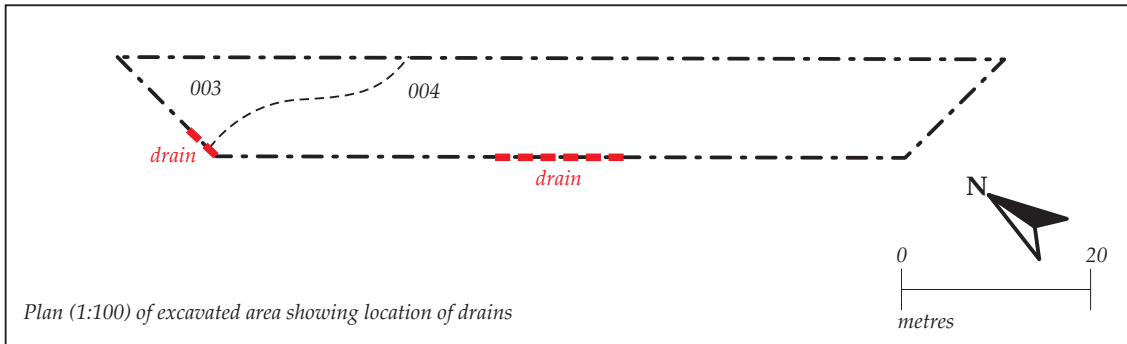
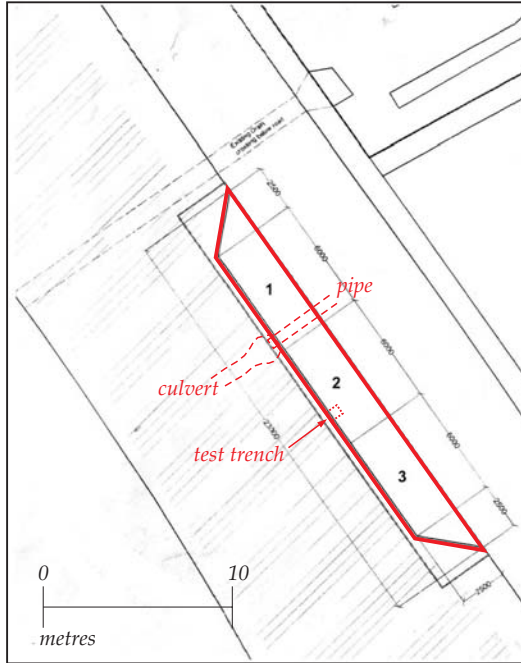
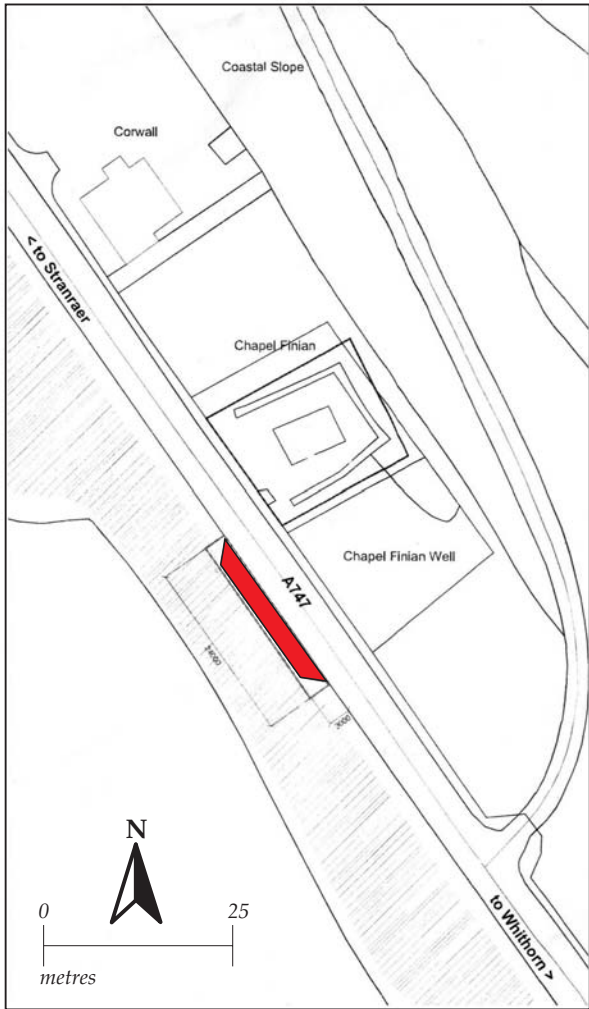


Fig. 1: Location plans