



Airigh Ghuaidhre

Archaeological survey of the 19th century township and later prehistoric monuments

by Steven Mithen, Darko Maričević and Karen Wicks

Supplementary report | May 2012



East Islay
Mesolithic
Project

East Islay Mesolithic Project

Supplementary report



Steven Mithen is Professor of Early Prehistory in the Department of Archaeology and Pro-Vice Chancellor for Internationalisation and External Engagement at the University of Reading.



Darko Maričević had a BA (hons) and PhD degree in Archaeology from the University of Reading. His PhD concerned the use of geophysics in the study of later prehistoric settlement on the islands of Coll and Tiree. He is currently a Research Fellow at the University of Southampton, working on Creativity and Craft Production in Bronze Age Europe (CinBA).



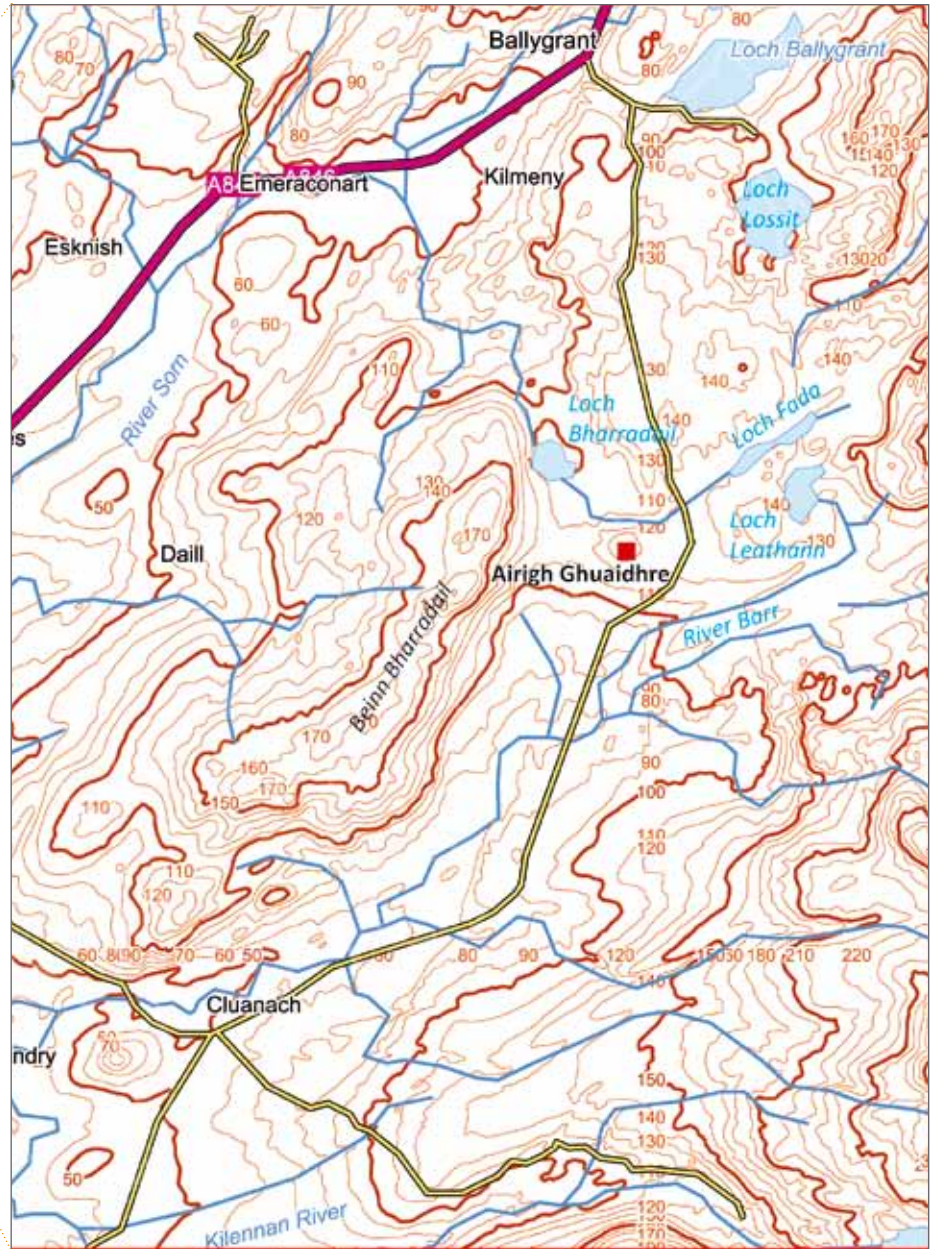
Karen Wicks PhD is a Research Fellow in the Department of Archaeology, University of Reading. She is an expert in Hebridean vegetation histories and palaeoenvironmental reconstruction.

Archaeological survey of the remains of the abandoned township of Airigh Ghuaidhre, near Kilmeny in the east part of Islay, was carried out between 20th of August and the 2nd of September 2011. This completed the survey begun in 2010 with a geophysical analysis of a probable chapel enclosure belonging to this township (Maričević et al. 2011).

The results of the chapel enclosure survey can now be viewed within the broader context of the township and its surrounding landscape. The 2011 fieldwork season involved the mapping of the layout of the township and the topographic survey of both the underlying terrain and the remains of the domestic and industrial structures. Features of probable prehistoric origin in the vicinity of the township were also surveyed. The first part of this report describes the results of the township survey; the second part addresses the historic evidence, which links these archaeological remains to the 18th and 19th century demographic data; the third and final part introduces the evidence for previously unrecorded later prehistoric monuments at Airigh Ghuaidhre.



1 Location map showing the position of Airigh Ghuaidhre in relation to the topography of the glen



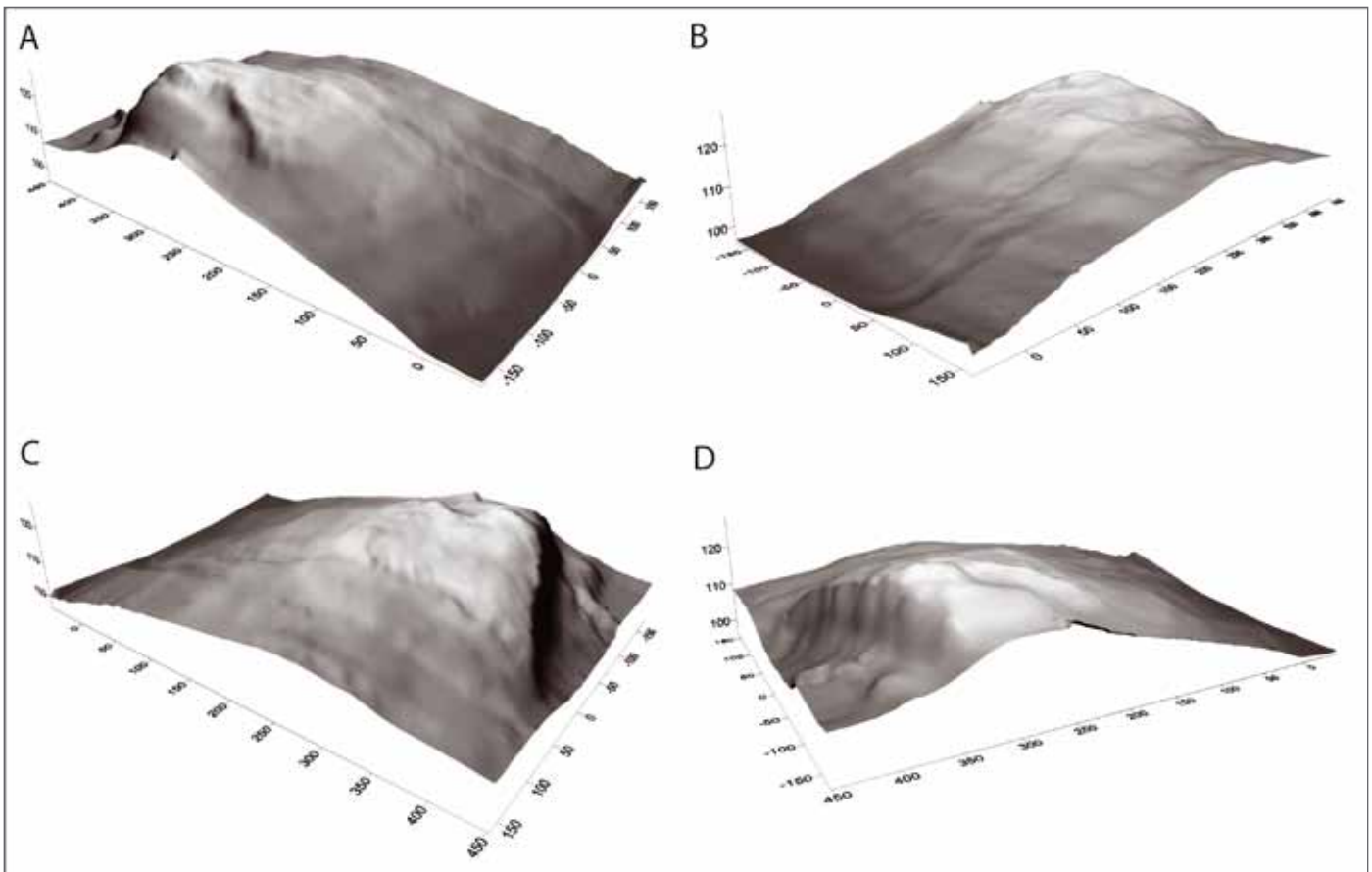
© Crown copyright/database right 2011. An ordinance Survey/EDINA supplied service

Survey of the township

The main inhabited part of the township of Airigh Ghuaidhre was situated on the southern and the eastern slopes of the hillock which rises northwards from river Barr in the direction of Loch Bharradail (Figure 1). The public road between Ballygrant and Cluanach bends around the township following the glen which stretches north to south from Kilmenny to Airigh Ghuaidhre and then south-westwards to Cluanach, where it opens up to the low lying ground and eventually the shores of Loch Indaal and Laggan Bay. The hillock sits in the middle of the glen and its summit offers great visibility northwards across Loch Bharadail and to the southwest towards Loch Indaal. Whilst the south, east and west sides of the hillock slope gradually, the northern side ends abruptly near the summit

and forms a cliff several meters high (Figure 2). The southern slope of the hillock from the summit to the road is the broadest and offers the greatest possibilities for habitation. It is currently divided into two by a large stone-built enclosure, which occupies the top half of the slope. This visually dominates the hillock from all directions except from the north.

The enclosure has featured on the Ordnance Survey (OS) maps since the first edition was published in 1881 (Figure 3) and covers the area between coordinates NR39730 62652, NR39756 62872, NR39898 62849 and NR39923 62660. It is trapezoidal in shape with a maximum width of 193m along the southern wall and a maximum length of 223m along its western side. The dry-stone wall of the enclosure is 1.5m high on average



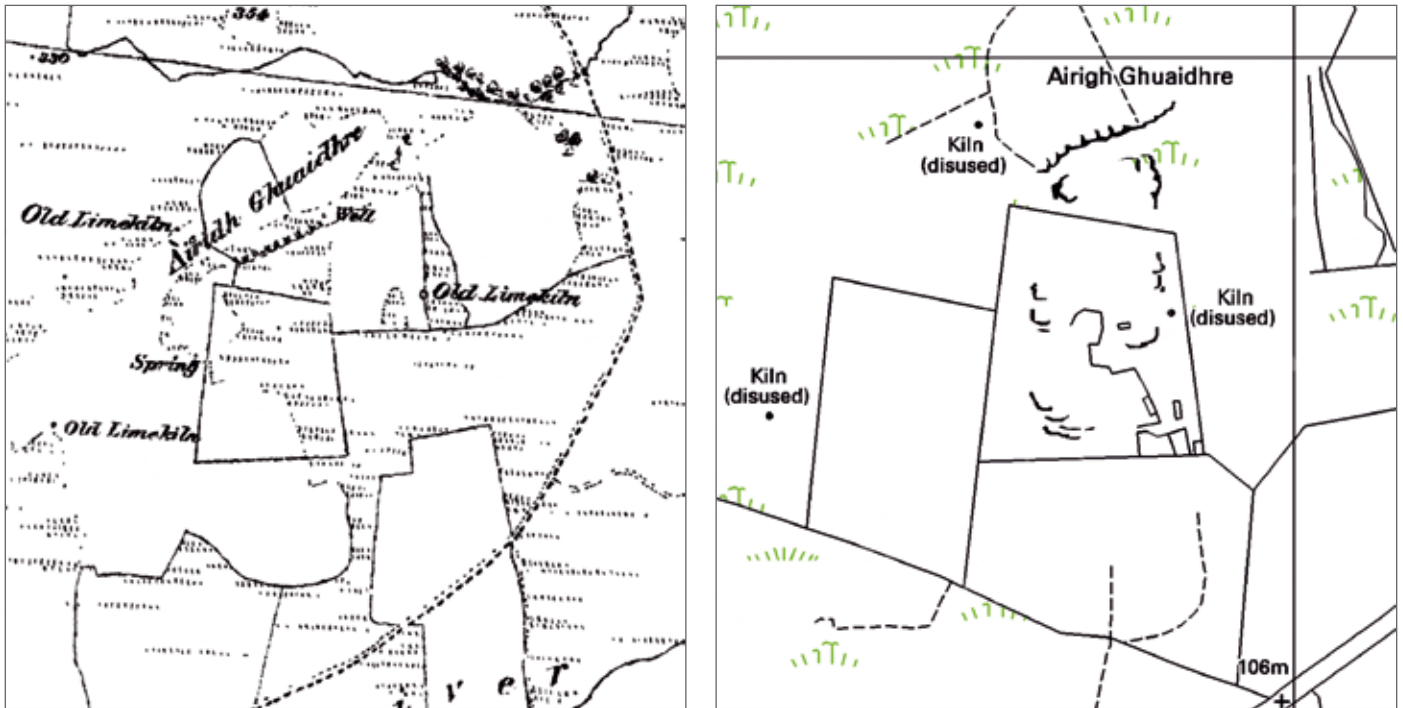
2 Oblique views of the topographic model of Airigh Ghuaidhre hillock from A – southwest, B – southeast, C – northeast and D – northwest

and incorporates a vast amount of stone, which derives from the buildings and other structures of an older township with which it overlaps. The OS surveyed part of the remains of Airigh Ghuaidhre township in 1978 including three buildings and several partial enclosure banks and boundaries, all of which are situated within the post-township stone enclosure (Figure 3). The OS maps also feature three disused kilns, which were first surveyed in 1878 and appear on the 1st edition of the OS map (Figure 3).

The RCAHMS records include a set of oblique aerial photographs of the township (Figure 5), but the general observations do not go beyond the Ordnance Survey note, which mentions ‘a small group of three rectangular building footings, the largest being 17m by 4m

and associated low field walls and strip cultivation’ and ‘a debris-filled limekiln’ which ‘lies at the N end of the group’, while ‘another is situated 320m to the W’ <http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/82928/details/airigh+ghuaidhre+islay>.

The new survey took two surveyors twelve days to complete using Leica TS-400 total station. Over 9000 measurements were taken in the course of the survey of the township and the surrounding topography and prehistoric monuments (Figs. 2 and 4). The overall survey area measured c.500m north to south by c.325m east to west. The surveyed area of the township extended beyond the arbitrary confines of the post-township enclosure as used by the OS, and provided additional detail. The comparison between the OS data



3 The OS 1st edition map (1881) showing trapezoidal enclosure, three old limekilns and a spring and a contemporary OS map (1981) showing some of the remains of the township inside the trapezoidal enclosure (©Landmark information Group Ltd and Crown Copyright 2011)

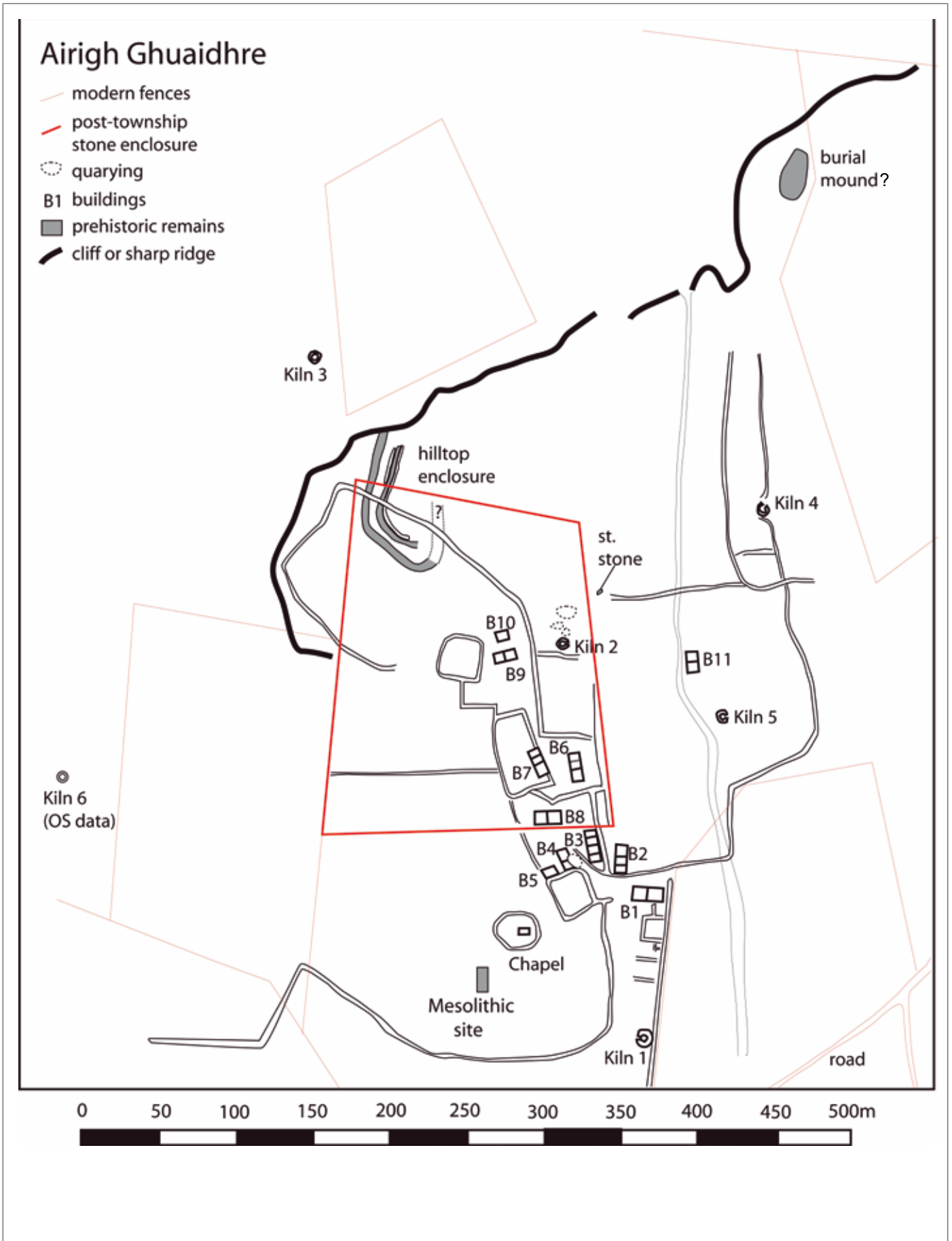
(Figure 3) and the new survey (Figure 4) shows some specific overlaps between the two surveys. The three buildings surveyed by the OS within the stone-built enclosure equate to our Buildings 6, 7 and 9, while the three kilns marked on the OS maps equate to our Kilns 2, 3 and 6. Kiln 6 was isolated to the west of our survey area and was not surveyed in the course of the 2011 fieldwork, as our efforts were concentrated at the much busier eastern part of the township (Figure 4).

1.1 Chapel and its enclosure

The investigation of the remains of the township during 2010 season was limited to the electrical resistance survey of the probable chapel enclosure situated at the southern end of the stretch of buildings and linked enclosures visible in the plan (Figure 4). The resistivity survey detected the presence of an E-W orientated structure c.8m long and c.5m wide situated below a pile of rubble at the eastern end of the enclosure platform (Figure 6), which gave substantial support to the chapel hypothesis.

The actual platform is oval in plan and measures 30m east to west and 25m north to south. It was created by cutting into the slope and then levelling the ground.

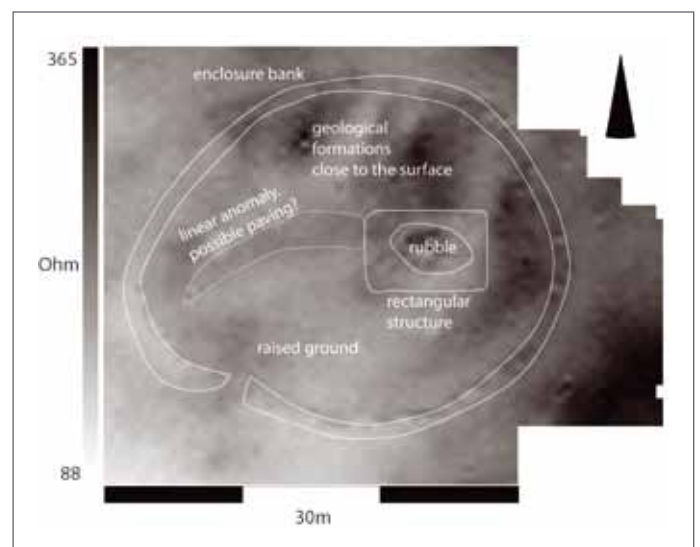
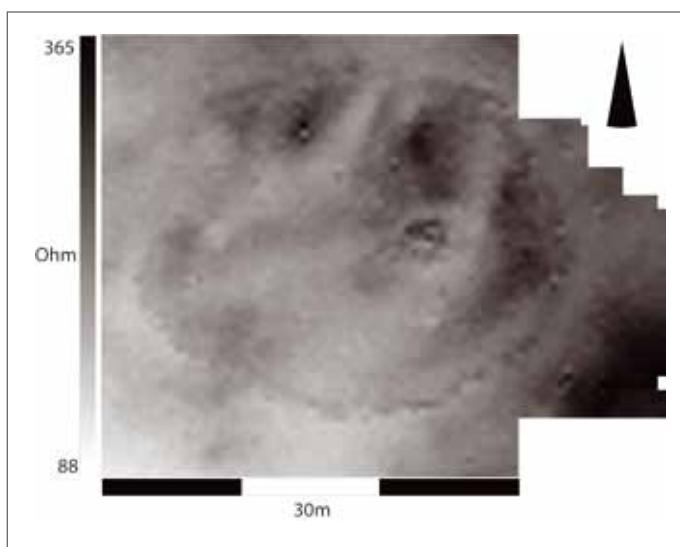
Its northern uphill side was enclosed within a bank, which is up to a meter high. The southern edge was either not enclosed or the bank did not survive. Because of the creation of the platform however this side was substantially raised in relation to the surrounding slope (Figure 7). The shape and size of the enclosure are consistent with a number of chapel enclosures on Islay and elsewhere in Western Scotland, although platform construction is not common (Figure 8). It is entirely possible that the enclosure served as a burial ground, although no direct evidence for this exists either on the ground or in the results of the resistivity survey.



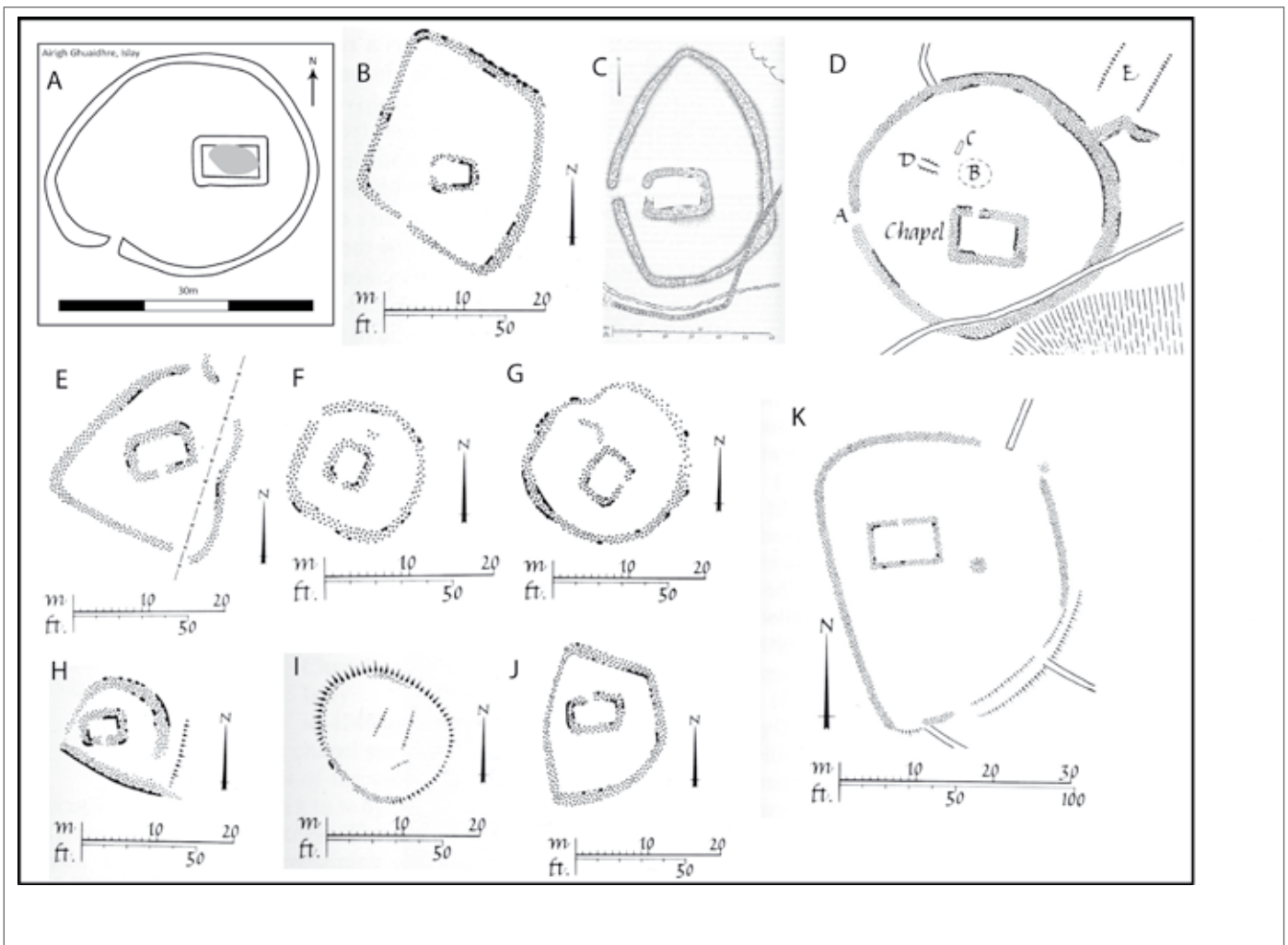
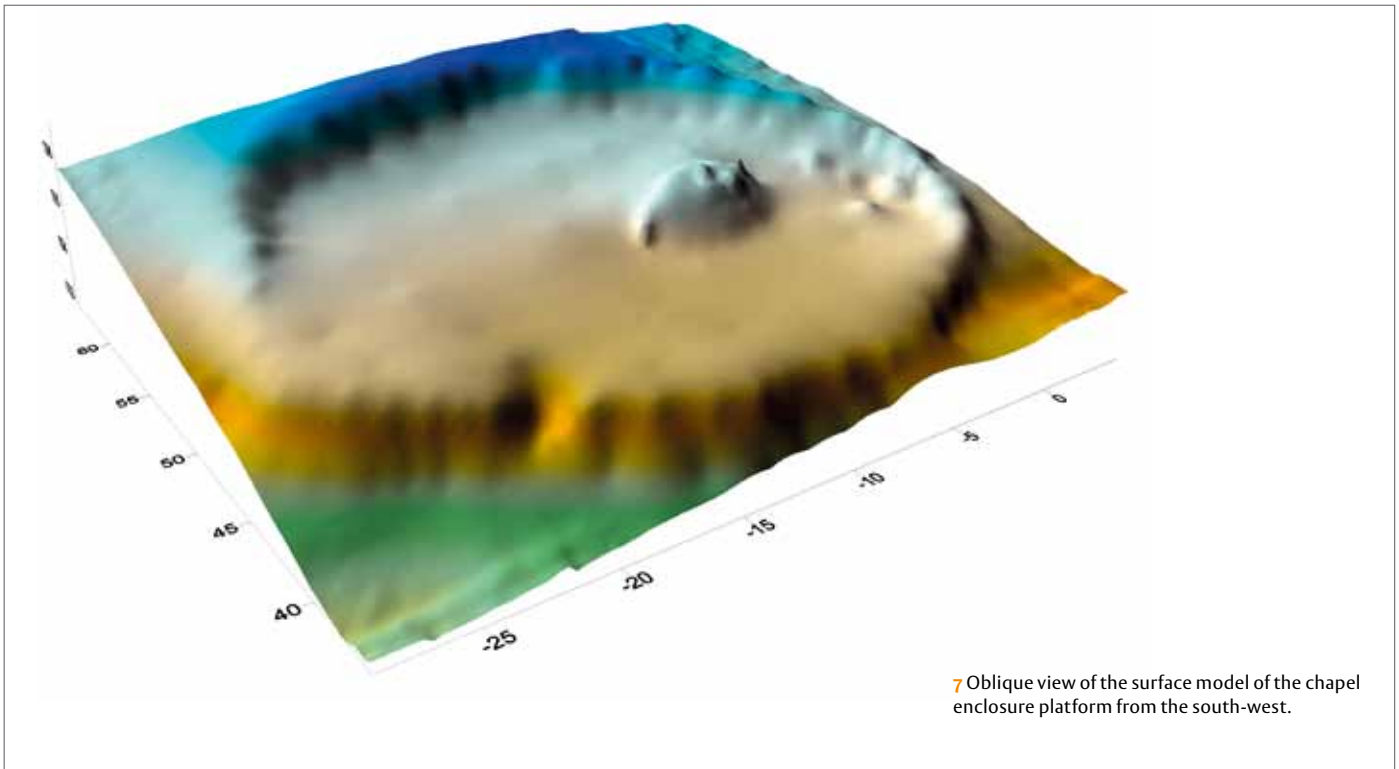
4 Airigh Ghuaidhre township and prehistoric remains surveyed in 2011. The overlapping post-township trapezoidal stone-built enclosure is highlighted for the easier comparison with the OS data in Figure 3



5 Oblique aerial photograph of Airigh Ghuaidhre from the south. The chapel enclosure is in the foreground and the string of sub-rectangular stock enclosures beyond it are clearly visible. A straight line of a possible road runs from the bottom left corner of the stone enclosure to the top of the chapel enclosure. Photo from the RCAHMS online collection at www.canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/82928/details/airigh+ghuaidhre+islay



6 Resistivity survey plot of the chapel enclosure at Airigh Ghuaidhre. Left: Interpolated raw data. Right: Interpretation of the results. The survey was conducted with the RM15 resistance meter with the twin probe configuration and 0.5m electrode, traverse and sample spacing.



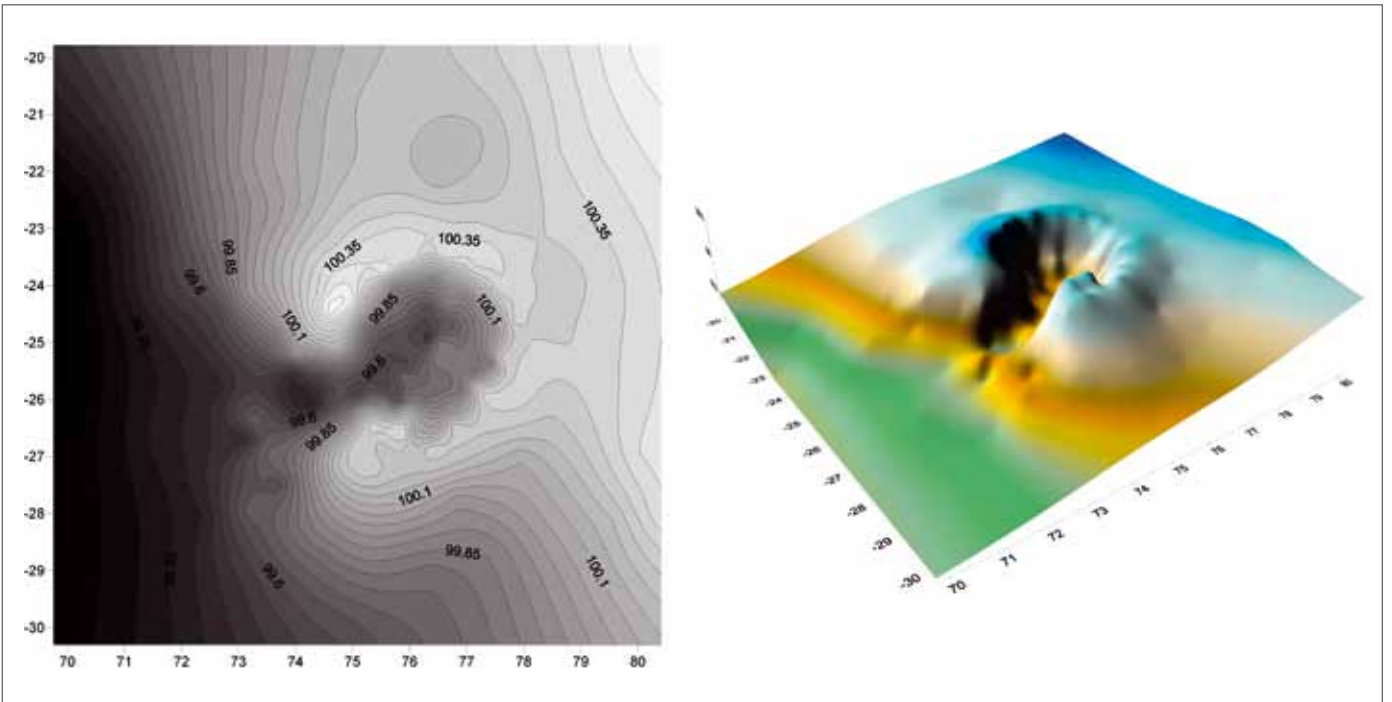
1.2 Building 1, Kiln 1 and associated field banks and boundaries

Kiln 1 was the southernmost surveyed structure and is one of six identified kilns in the immediate vicinity of the township (Figure 4). Three of the kilns were marked on the 1st edition OS map as ‘old limekilns’ and the likelihood is that this description is correct for all of the identified kilns. Airigh Ghuaidhre is for its most part located on limestone, which forms part of Storakaig Limestone Member. This rather fortunate situation meant that its inhabitants had direct access to limestone, which was quarried and burnt to produce quicklime, which was in turn used as a fertiliser on the fields to counteract the natural acidity of the peaty soils (Storrie 2011).

Kiln 1 (Figs. 9 and 10) was a relatively well preserved circular structure measuring 1m in height and 2.5m in internal diameter of the main chamber from which a narrow 1.5m long passage led out to the southwest. This was the ‘eye’ of the kiln through which the kiln was fired and quicklime and ash were raked out. The kiln was partly dug in into a still prominent N-S running field bank, which formed one of the main eastern boundaries of the township. The setting in the side of natural or artificial banks was a common feature of all of the kilns investigated at Airigh Ghuaidhre and has been noted elsewhere in the limestone outcropping part of the island, for example in the vicinity of Finlaggan (Caldwell 2010). The semi-circular cut was lined with stones, while the rest of the grassed-over stone-walled structure protruded outwards to form the free-standing part of the kiln. Caldwell suggests that the roofing would have been achieved by a corbelled turf construction (Caldwell 2010) and this is entirely plausible, although corbelling with stone would also be possible. The reasons for the dug in character of the kilns might have been in order to help achieve temperatures needed for the produc-



9 Kiln 1 from the southwest looking in through the opening. The bank can be seen in the background.



10 Contour plot of Kiln 1 (left) and the oblique view of the resulting surface model. Scales in meters.



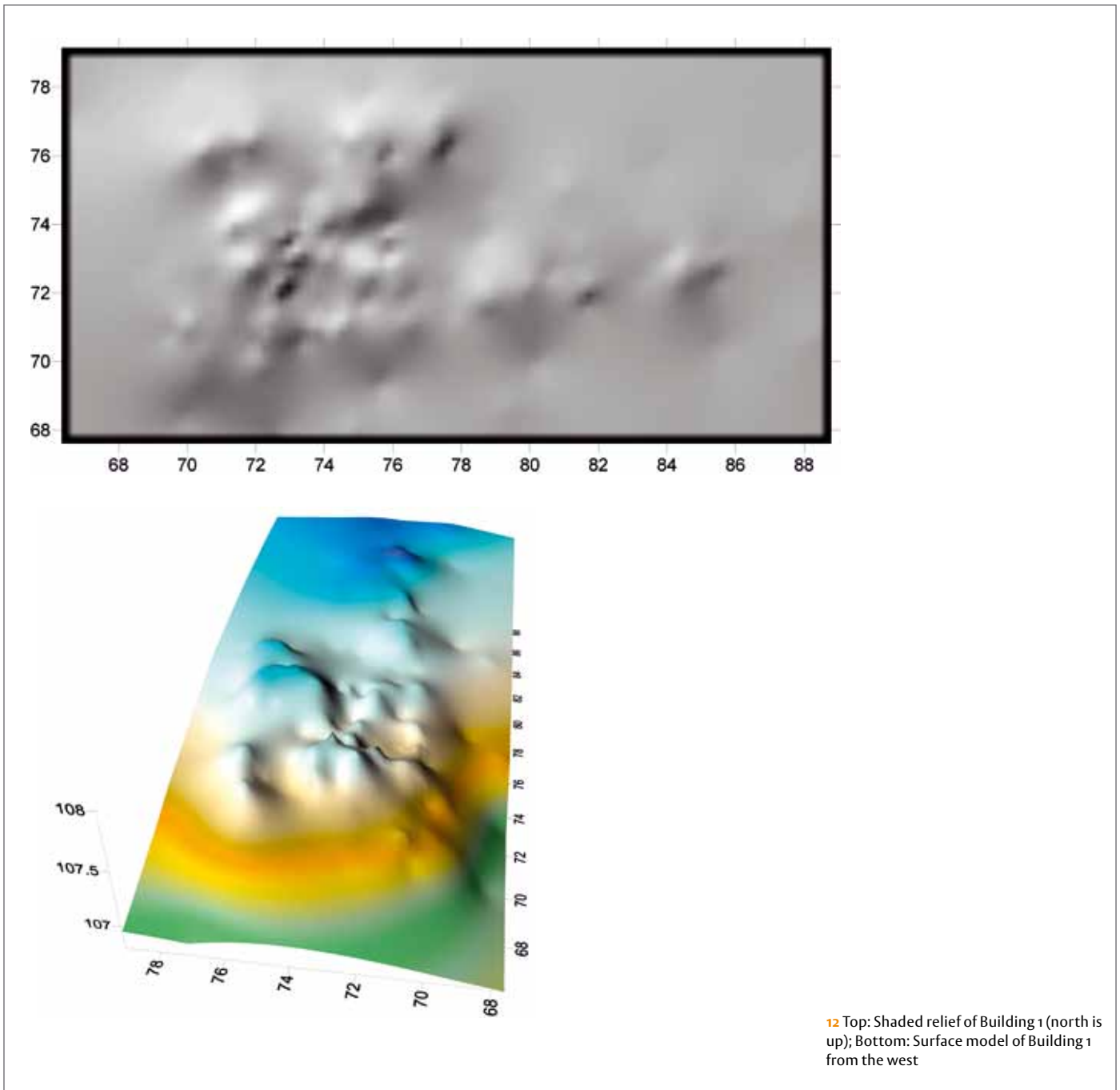
11 Google Earth image of Airigh Ghuaidhre showing the extent of the improved land around the township. Curved southern boundary at the bottom of the photograph clearly demarcates the change in the vegetation created by improved drainage. Strip of boggy vegetation to the east of the trapezoidal enclosure is poorly drained lower ground on non-limestone geology <http://maps.bgs.ac.uk>.

tion of quicklime (minimum of 900°C) and to provide extra stability to the structures.

In line with the kiln to the west was a long curved boundary, which forms the southern limit of the township (Figure 4). This boundary was a prominent stone and turf bank along its N-S orientated part, which runs roughly parallel to a similar N-S bank that contains Kiln 1. The southern part of the boundary was in the form of a retaining wall, which created a crisp division between the improved land to its north and the boggy ground to its south (Figs. 5 and 11). The largest extent of the improved agricultural land around the township was between the chapel and

this southern boundary in the area to the west of the township. Some remnants of lazy bed cultivation are visible in the west, especially in the aerial photographs <http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/82928/details/airigh+ghuaidhre+islay>.

North of Kiln 1 were several short E-W banks, which created a terracing effect whilst abutting a much longer and more prominent eastern boundary (Figure 4). Two of these banks were connected via N-S return bank to create a small square enclosure. Tucked in the corner of the lower bank of the enclosure and the eastern boundary was a small square structure with the opening to the west.



Immediately north of the enclosure, situated on the level terrace, was Building 1 (Figure 12). This was an E-W orientated structure measuring 16m by 6m and surviving only as partially visible grassed-over footings. The western half of the building was better preserved and might represent an original division inside the building, i.e. a room filled with rubble. Only

the southern wall could be traced towards the east. It is probable that this building would have had two equally sized rooms, although some ambiguity must remain in the light of the bad preservation of the eastern half.

1.3 Buildings 2, 3, 4, 5 and associated field banks, boundaries and features

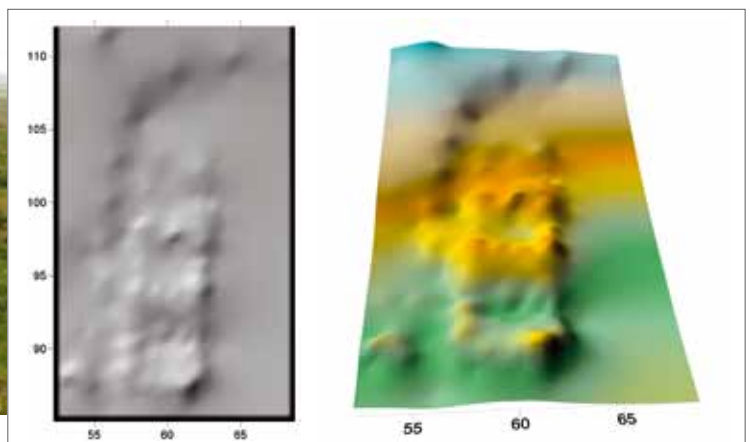
This group of four buildings is located between the chapel enclosure to the southwest, Building 1 to the southeast and the standing wall of the post-township enclosure to the north (Figure 4). Building 8 was once part of this cluster, but is now located on the inside of the post-township enclosure and is out of the view of Buildings 2–5. These buildings are separated from the complex of Building 1 by a field bank, which comes in from the east along the southern gables of Buildings 2 and 3. It is possible that this bank then turns northwest and runs between Buildings 3 and 4. Another low bank separates Building 2 from Building 3, runs underneath the stone wall of the post-township enclosure and joins the continuation of the system of small enclosures, which are situated between Buildings 6–8. Buildings 4 and 5 are abutting a sub-rectangular enclosure to the south, which measures c. 35m by c.30m. The enclosure is attached to the northern end of the N-S bank, which forms the part of the curved southern limit of the township.

Building 2 (Figs. 13 and 14) is a N-S orientated tri-partite long house, measuring 15m by 5m. The building is located on roughly level ground, which might have been purposefully terraced into the hillside (Figure 14). The partition walls are clearly discernible as is most of the course of the outer wall. Preservation is worst at the northern gable. The results of the survey show that the middle room is slightly smaller than the outer rooms. The southern gable abuts the E-W boundary, which can be seen in the background of the building (Figure 13).

Building 3 (Figs. 15 and 16) is a SSE-NNW orientated long house, measuring 20m in length and 4m in width. The building had four equally sized rooms, which are now filled with various amount of grassed-over rubble. The northern gable is merely 0.5m from the southern wall of the post-township enclosure. Similar proximity exists between the post-township wall and the southern side of Building 8 on the other side of the wall (Figure 4) and it is possible that the



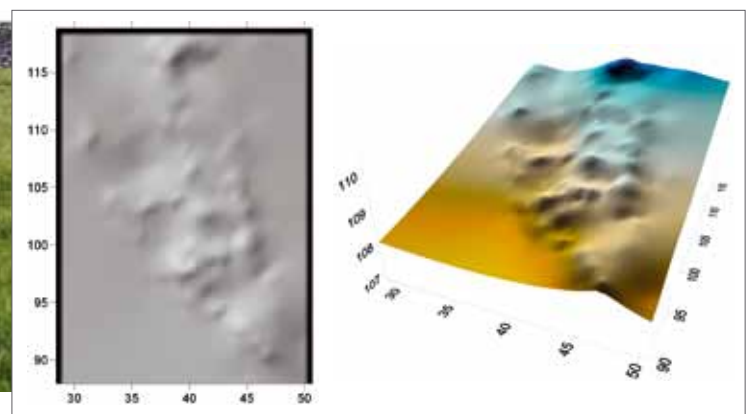
13 Grassed-over footings of Building 2 from the north.



14 Left: Shaded relief of Building 2; Right: Surface model of Building 2 from the south



15 Building 3 from the south. The scale is on the middle partition between rooms 2 and 3. The north gable end is immediately before the stone wall of the post-township enclosure. The stones in foreground are part of the southern gable end.



16 Left: Shaded relief of Building 3 and adjacent bank. Right: Surface model of Building 3 from the southeast.

wall was aligned on the gap between these two buildings when constructed.

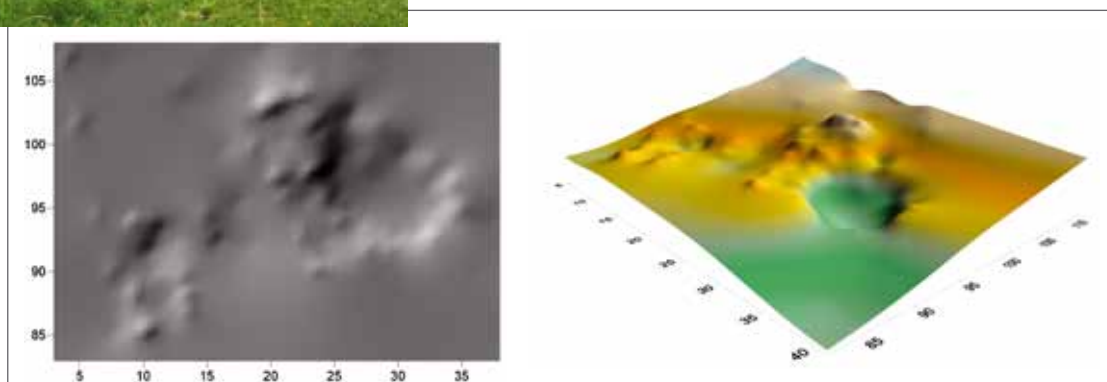
The results of the survey show the way the building was constructed on the relatively level raised ground (Figure 16). The southwest corner of the building would have been a touching distance from the adjacent bank, which runs past it from the southeast to the northwest, but then gradually disappears.

Building 4 (Figs. 17 and 18) is immediately west of Building 3. It is a SE-NW orientated building, measuring originally 12m by 5m. This building was truncated on its eastern side by a small quarry, which has taken away the best part of the north-eastern wall, as well as part of the partition wall. The building had two rooms of which that at the southeast end of the building was slightly larger, but also more affected by truncation. The quarrying probably took place after the township was abandoned, perhaps at the same time when the buildings were robbed for stone to build the post-township enclosure.

Building 5 (Figure 18) is a much smaller and not very well preserved structure situated to the immediate west of Building 4. This building was orientated SW-NE and could have been as much as 10m long and 4m wide, although little survives at its northeast end. Both Building 4 and 5 abut the sub-rectangular enclosure to their southeast (Figure 4) and it is possible that both Building 5 and the adjacent enclosure form one unit associated with Building 4. Judging by its size Building 5 was most likely an auxiliary building and in this respect it can be compared to Building 10 in the north part of the township. The southwest end of Building 5 is in line with the southwest bank of the enclosure, which then continues northwest beyond Building 5 under the post-township wall to join the next enclosure associated with Building 7.



17 Oblique view of Building 4 from the southeast with the post-township enclosure in the background. The southeast gable end is on the left and the scale is on the northwest gable wall. The building is truncated by a quarry in the foreground on the right.



18 Left: Shaded relief of Buildings B4 and B5; Right: Surface model of Buildings 4 and 5 (Building 4 is on the right of both images).

1.4 Buildings 6, 7, 8 and associated field banks, boundaries and features

The next group of three buildings forms the continuation of the township to the north. Since the construction of the post-township walled enclosure the remains of these buildings are not inter-visible with Buildings 2-5, although they are in the immediate proximity and would have probably formed a busy heart of the township (Figure 4).

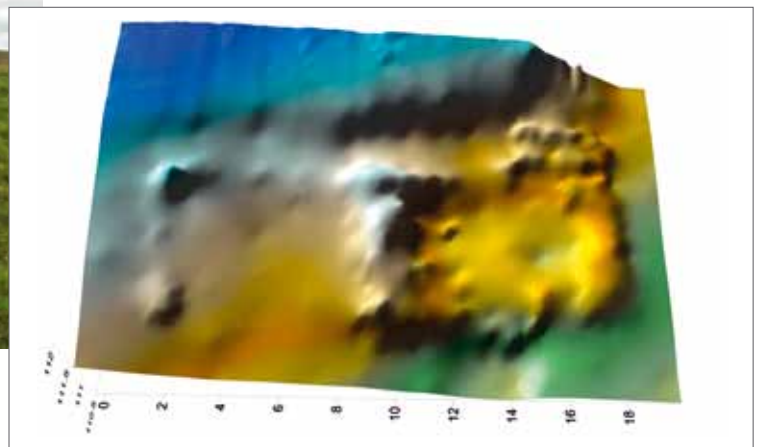
Building 8 (Figs. 19 and 20) is the southernmost of the three and the closest to the north end of Building 3, which is on the outside of the post-township enclosure. It is an E-W orientated building, measuring 16m by 5m, with two equally sized rooms. Preservation is somewhat better at the eastern half of the structure, where the eastern room is visibly filled with rubble. A three meter long trough is located next to the northeast corner of the building and this feature, which

might have been a cattle feeder, is also filled with rubble. Although the orientation is perpendicular to that of Building 2, the setting of both buildings is quite similar with the signs of deliberate terracing to level the ground for the construction (Figure 20).

Building 8 is surrounded by stone and turf banks on all sides except to the south. There is no evidence that the adjacent portion of the post-township enclosure wall was built on top of earlier bank, which would have separated Building 8 from Buildings 3, 4 and 5, but any such bank could have equally been destroyed in the process. Two of the N-S banks on either side of Building 8 are the continuations of the banks flanking Buildings 3 and 5 to the south. Another bank separates it from the space containing Building 6 (Figure 4).



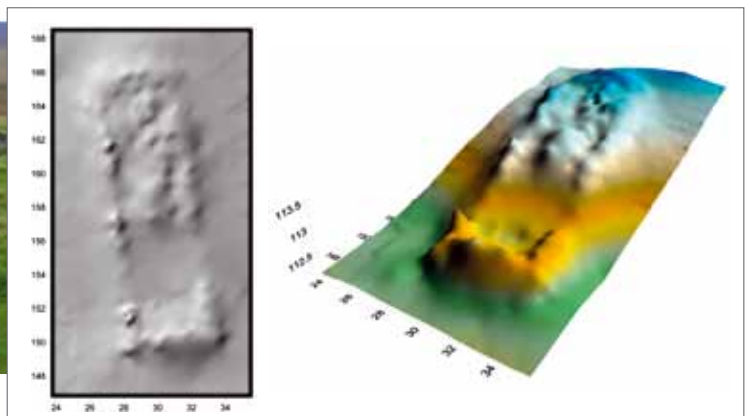
19 Building 8 from the east. The scale is on the western gable end.



20 Surface model of Building 8 from the south. Note the through feature at the northeast corner



21 Building 6 from the northwest with the peat cuttings at Storakaig in the distance.



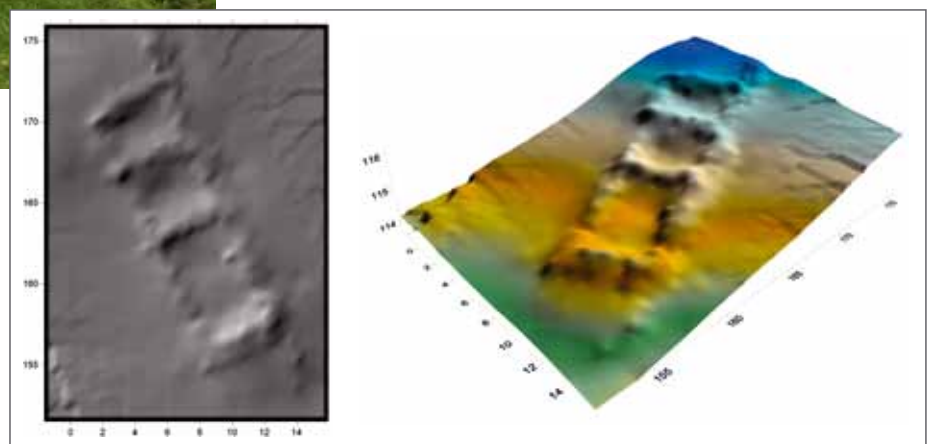
22 Left: Shaded relief of Building 6; Right: Surface model of Building 6 from the southeast.

Building 6 (Figs. 21 and 22) is a roughly N-S orientated long house, measuring 17m by 6m externally. It is not entirely clear whether this building had two or more rooms as any possible partitions in the northern half are obscured by the rubble infill. One partition wall is certainly clear just below the mid-point of its length, but a second to the north cannot be ruled out. It is possible that the northern half was divided into two smaller rooms and this might be reflected in the difference between grassed-over and bare rubble infill at this point in the structure (Figure 21). Two prominent stones in the southern part of the western wall are much larger than any others visible in any of the surveyed buildings, providing some indication of the large size of the masonry featured in the elevations of the township buildings, all of which are now denuded down to their footings. Building 6 is surrounded by turf and stone banks, which separate its space from Building 8 and form a rectangular enclosure to its north. Its nearest neighbour is Building 7, which is located 20m to the west.

Building 7 (Figs. 23 and 24) is a SE-NW orientated long house, measuring 17m by 6m externally. It is tri-partite building with well defined partitions. A larger room at the southeast end occupies roughly half of the building's length, while the northwest half is further divided in half to form two smaller rooms. This arrangement is the type of scenario which might also be present in the adjacent Building 6 and the fact that the two buildings have the same overall dimensions might be an indication that they were constructed following the same design. Northeast side of Building 7 is aligned with the bank of a sub-rectangular enclosure, which encompasses the building, so that there is little doubt that the two are directly related (Figure 4). The enclosure is c.60m long and c.35m wide at its widest point in the south. It is connected with projecting banks to similar but smaller enclosures in the south and in the north, next to Buildings 4 and 5 and Buildings 9 and 10, respectively. A silted up ditch, visible as a vague linear feature, runs on an E-W alignment from the western bank of the enclosure. It was surveyed as far as the western limit of the post-township enclosure, but judging by the aerial photographs it continues much further west in the direction of Kiln 6 (Figure 4).



23 Building 7 from the southeast.
The scale is on the far gable end



24 Left: Shaded relief of Building 7; Right: Surface model of Building 7 from the southeast

1.5 Buildings 9 and 10, Kilns 2 and 3 and associated field banks and features

Buildings 9 and 10 (Figs. 25 and 26) are located c.60m north of Building 7 on a level rise with great vistas over the rest of the township, across the Barr valley to Storakaig and far into the distance towards Loch Indaal in the southwest. These two buildings appear to have formed a complex of a domestic house and auxiliary building, judging by their comparative size and proximity. The buildings are parallel and just off the E-W orientation. Building 9 was probably 14m long and 6m wide externally. The ambiguity is related to its western gable end, where the footings of the gable wall do not visibly survive. However, the topographic survey indicates that a level platform, which probably relates to the construction of the building, stretches to around 14m from the better preserved eastern gable wall (Figure 26). Alternatively, a linear scatter of rubble 11m away from the eastern gable wall could represent the true end of the building or even a partition. This would make the building tri-partite with the westernmost room only about 2m wide. Nevertheless, this is a possibility as is a third scenario in which there were alterations to the length of the building during its period of occupation.

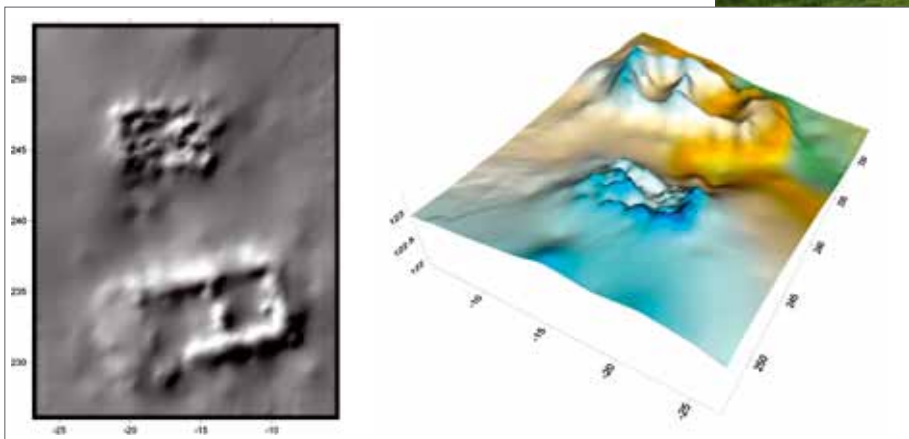
Building 10 is located less than 10m to the north and measures 7m by 4m. Its walls were notably thinner than the walls of any of the long houses and it is probable that this was a byre or a stable associated with Building 9. A third part of this complex might have been the sub-rectangular enclosure located immediately to the west of the buildings (Figure 4). This enclosure is similar in size to the enclosure located at the other end of the township next to Buildings 4 and 5. Indeed the two arrangements, comprising of one larger and presumably domestic dwelling with a smaller auxiliary building and an adjacent stock enclosure, are closely comparable.

Low and wide turf bank flanks Building 9 and 10 to the east, marking the break of slope in that direction. This is a long boundary which continues further north towards the top of the hill where it curves to the west beyond the walls of the post-township enclosure. It probably runs on a perpendicular alignment along the edge of the platform which marks the sharp break of slope to the west and then returns along the contour of the ridge back towards the enclosure associated with Building 9 and 10. The boundary crosses over the banks and ditches of the probable prehistoric enclosure, which will be discussed later (Figure 4).

25 Rubble filled Building 10 from the north with grassed-over footings of Building 9 in the background.



Buildings 9 and 10



26 Left: Shaded relief of Building 9 and 10; Right: Surface model of Buildings 9 and 10 from the northwest.

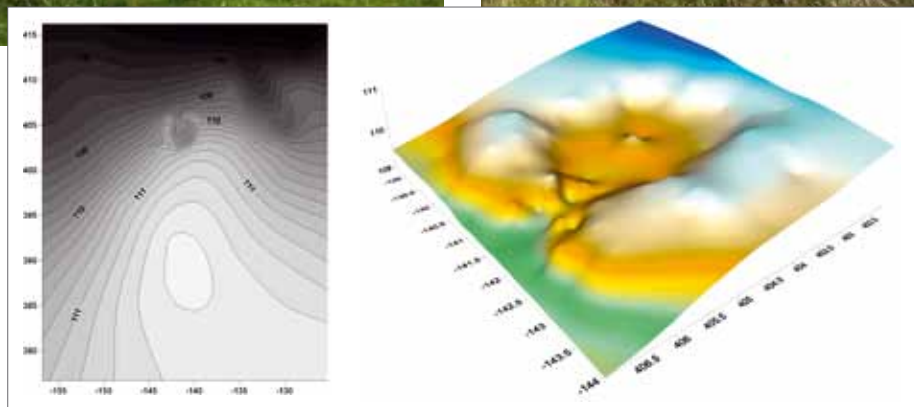
At the base of the slope to the east of the buildings is **Kiln 2**. The kiln was partly dug into the side of the hill with the opening to the east. It is completely filled with loose rubble, which is in contrast to the consolidated grassed-over structure of the kiln (Figure 27). There are several negative features both to the south and to the north of the kiln spread along the base of the slope. One to the south probably represents a small rectangular structure whose southern end was partly cut into the bedrock and partly constructed from dry stone walling, while the north end is currently open. This could have been some kind of storage structure associated with the kiln. The features to the north of the kiln are depressions, the largest of which is about 7m by 4m. These pits are probably associated with the quarrying.

Kiln 3 is not in the immediate vicinity of Kiln 2 or Buildings 9 and 10. In fact it is isolated far to the north from the heart of the township, set into the north facing natural bank below the cliff side facing the Loch Bhar-radail (Figure 4). Structurally it is very similar to the rest of the limekilns scattered around the township. The opening faces north and the interior of the chamber is partly filled with rubble (Figs. 28 and 29).

27 Kiln 2 from the east



28 Kiln 3 from the northwest. The cliff with the shooting hide on top of it points the direction of the rest of Airigh Ghuaidhre township.



29 Left: wider topographic survey around Kiln 3 showing its location in the side of natural slope; Right: Surface model of Kiln 3 from the northwest.

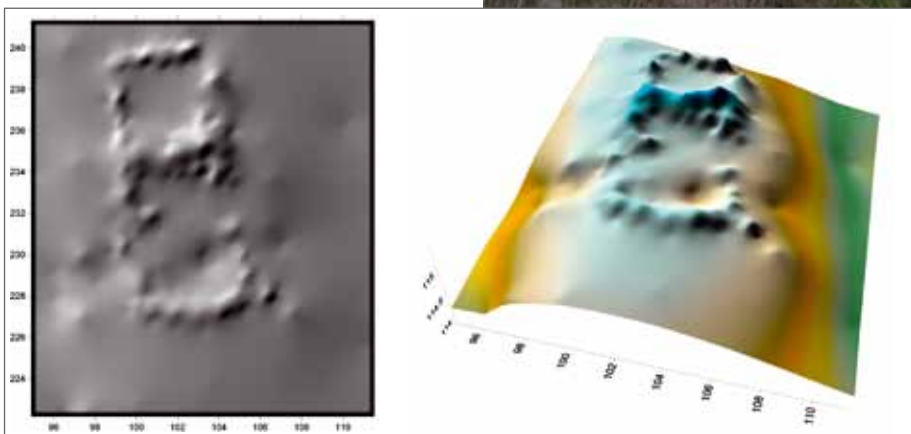
1.6 Building 11, Kilns 4 and 5 and the eastern part of the township

The topography of this part of the township continues as a gradual sometimes naturally terraced slope towards the lower boggy ground in the east through which a substantial drainage ditch runs on a N-S alignment (Figure 4). The ground conditions and the potential for agricultural activities in this boggy strip are negligible. Marked difference in vegetation can be seen in the aerial photographs (Figs. 5 and 11). The information from the British Geological Survey website, which offers the overlap of local geology with the Google Earth photographic imagery, suggests that this strip of boggy ground matches the change from limestone to poorly drained pelite geology <http://maps.bgs.ac.uk>. As the ground rises again further east the geology changes to next band of outcropping limestone and the reverse vegetation change follows suit (Figure 11).

Nevertheless, right in the middle of this boggy strip of ground and immediately next to the aforementioned ditch is a distinct raised grassy platform, which supports Building 11 (Figure 30). This is a N-S orientated structure, measuring 15m by 5m. It had two rooms, the southern of which was slightly larger. The partition between the rooms is the most prominent surviving part of the structure, although the outline of the outer footings is relatively clear. Nothing apart from its boggy setting and relative isolation distinguishes this building from the other bi-partite buildings in the township, such as Buildings 1, 4 or 8. **Building 11** was situated in the triangle between three limekilns. Kiln 2 to the west has already been mentioned. Kiln 4 is c. 100m to the northeast and Kiln 5 some 30m to the south-southeast. Both Kiln 4 and Kiln 5 conform to the usual kiln design already seen in the examples of Kilns 1, 2 and 3.



Building 11



31 Left: Shaded relief of Building 11; Right Surface model of the building from the south showing the position upon the narrow raised platform.

30 Building 11 from the southwest surrounded by boggy ground in the eastern part of the township.

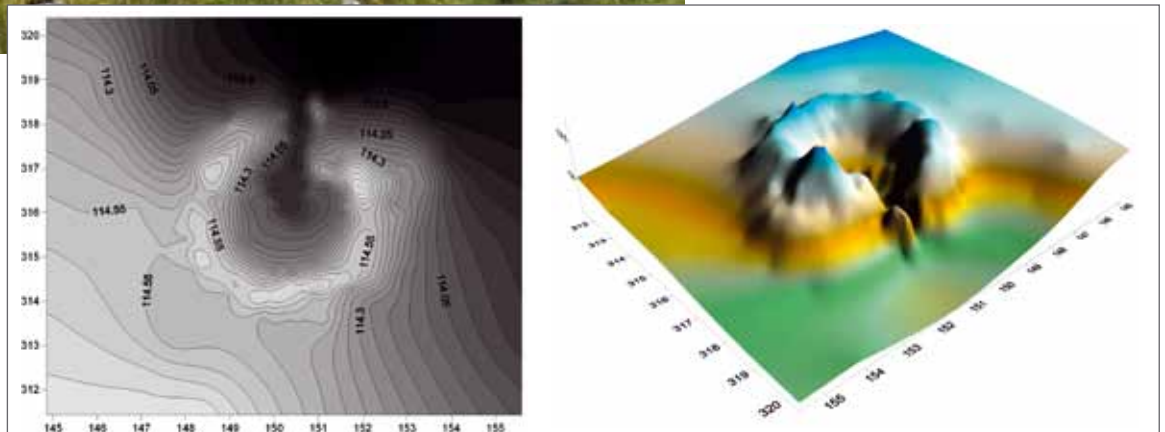
Kiln 4 (Figs. 32 and 33) is 4.5m in diameter with the internal chamber measuring c.2.5m in greatest diameter. The narrow opening 1.5m long is facing north. The kiln was partly set at an angle into a natural bank. Two N-S field banks approach the kiln from either side, which might indicate that they have been laid in relation to the kiln, especially as they serve and respect its position. Another parallel field bank runs c. 30m to the west marking the edge of the boggy ground in that direction.

Kiln 5 was the least well preserved of all limekilns identified at Airigh Ghuaidhre. Its sidewalls were reduced to low footings not more than 0.30m high. Nevertheless, all common features of the rest of the kilns in the vicinity could be identified including the opening which was on its eastern side. No further structures were identified in the eastern part of the township, although the field banks continued eastwards beyond the limits of the 2011 survey area.



Kiln 4

32 Kiln 4 from the northeast with the boggy strip of land and the post-township enclosure in the background.



33 Left: Contour plot of Kiln 4; Right: Oblique view of the surface model of Kiln 4 from the northeast

Summary, interpretation and some historical considerations

In the previous section various attempts were made to relate different parts of the township to each other wherever possible. All of the nine larger buildings would have been suitable for housing a family unit or even an extended family. Those buildings which were tri-partite or quad-partite probably contained byres or stores in some of the smaller rooms; those with only two rooms would be more likely to be associated with a separate outbuilding and this was probably the case with Buildings 4 and 5 in the south and Buildings 9 and 10 in the north of the township. Similarly, stock enclosures were linked to specific houses in accordance with their positioning and the proximity to each other, although they could have been shared between the households. One assumption underlies all such interpretations: the upstanding remains visible in the landscape are largely contemporary and do not form a palimpsest of mixed chronological origin. Archaeological remains described in the previous section share many common architectural traits; they have a similar level of preservation; and they form a meaningful layout. This means that they can be interpreted as belonging to the last chapter of sustained settlement at Airigh Ghuaidhre, i.e. the 19th century township.

A string of sub-rectangular stock enclosures formed the spine of the township. The majority of the buildings were spread out along the eastern side of this spine except for Building 11, which is an outlier further to the east. No domestic structures have been identified to the west of this line of enclosures and connecting banks and only the chapel and its enclosure break this rule. Aerial photographs show the distinction between the inbye improved land surrounding the township and the unimproved sliabh beyond. Much of the improved land was in the western part of the township, upon the favourable limestone geology. This would have been divided into cultivable strips belonging to different households.

It is important to understand that the survey area covers only the settlement and its immediate surrounding, which does not equate to the wider administrative concept of the township in terms of the rentable land for which the rent was paid by the tenant farmers. A mid 18th century map of Islay by surveyor Stephen MacDougall shows 'Ariquary' as a long strip of land stretching from the area south of Loch Bharradail, i.e. the survey area, all the way to the Sound of Islay (Figure 34). MacDougall was commissioned by Daniel Campbell of Shawfield 'to determine the areal extent of the holdings, as a basis for assessing the improvements already carried out and to identify areas where other improvements could be initiated, such as draining for land reclamation' (Storrie 2011:93). Importantly, MacDougall marked the centres of settlement and only one such mark appears within the block of land belonging to 'Ariquary'. This is located south of Loch Bharradail, which corresponds to the surveyed remains of the township settlement.



34 Close up of the part of MacDougall's Map of Islay (1749-51) showing the extent of the township of Ariquary south of Loch Bharradail and stretching eastwards to the coast between Storgaig (Storakaig) in the south and Ardochy and Eachvornach in the north. Dark rectangles mark the settlements. Original in the Papers of the Islay Estate.

Some of the earliest mentions of the names of many townships on Islay appear in the lists of rentals held by the Islay Estate, which before 1722 was in the ownership of the Campbells of Cawdor. Detail of the individual landholdings can be traced in these documents from 1633 when it appears that Airigh Ghuaidhre was already established as a tenancy held by a single tenant. This was more or less the norm at this time and the majority of landholdings were rented as tacks to the family and friends of the Cawdors (Storrie 2011). However, the trend towards shared farms and multiple tenancies starts to develop in the forthcoming decades, both as a consequence of rising population and an increase of agriculturally viable land through improvements. By 1644 Airigh Ghuaidhre became one of the first landholdings on Islay with two or more tenants (Storrie 2011:72). It is difficult to translate this kind of information into the actual population numbers or the size of the settle-

ment because 'on both tacks and joint farms there may also have been subtenants and possibly other families not responsible for any share of the rent, although they do not appear in the rentals' (Storrie 2011: 73).

In 1733, by which time most of the island passed to the hands of the Campbells of Shawfield, Airigh Ghuaidhre was shared between three to four tenants and this continues to be the case until the final clearance of the township in the early 1850's. By the end of the 18th century the names of the tenants appear on the rental documents. For example, the 1799 list of tenants for Aryghuary was simply 'Colin McFaiden & others', while in 1811 the tenancies were held by Colin and John MacPhadyne and Donald Currie. John McPhaden is still on the list in 1836, but now also joined by Peter McCalman, Angus McIndeor and Archibald McDearmid

<http://homepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com>.

While some tenants' surnames remain constant through this period and in some cases indicate those families, which remained in the township through three or more successive generations, others change on the regular basis. The above cited records relate to the tenancies for particular years, usually from Whitsunday of one year to Whitsunday of the next year. Couple of additional tenants' names from the years in between can be obtained from the cemetery inscriptions from across Islay compiled for the purposes of the genealogical research <http://homepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~steve/islay/cemetery/index.htm>. Thus we find that in the cemetery in Kilmeny one inscription dated to 1834 reads 'this burying place belongs to John Smith late tenant Arighuary and also lies his four sons whom died young'. In the same cemetery another inscription is for 'Archd. M. Cowan (died in 1822), tenant Arighuary; father of Peter who erected the

stone in 1827'. Another mention of Arighuary can be found on the gravestone of John Darrach in Kildalton cemetery, who died in 1808, although we do not know whether he was a tenant there or otherwise connected by residency.

Old Parish Registers (ORDs) of births/baptisms, banns/marriages and deaths/burials are extremely useful documents especially for the years prior to the 1841 census, which was the first census in Scotland to provide information at the level more detailed than a parish, i.e. by township and a single household. Table 1 gives an example of the type of information recorded in the OPRs, in this case the birth and baptisms of children born in Arighuary between 1800 and 1875. What is particularly striking in this list is the complete absence of entries post-dating 1848, a clear sign that the community has ceased to exist under this name.

Parochial Registers of Baptisms for Arighuary, Islay for the years up to 1875

Father (if Known)		Mother (if known)		Place Name	Child Name	Date of Baptism	Date of Birth	Parish
Buie	John	McDonald	Jane	Arighuary	Alexander	28 Sep 1830	- - -	Kilmeny
Campbell	John	McGilvray	Jane	Arighuary	Anne	31 Oct 1844	24 Oct 1844	Kilmeny
Campbell	John	McLelland	Anne	Arighuary	Alexander	11 Jun 1825	- - -	Kilmeny
Cowan	Peter	McIntyre	Mary	Arighuary	Duncan	3 May 1822	- - -	Kilmeny
Cowan	Peter	McIntyre	Mary	Arighuary	Catherine	13 Nov 1823	- - -	Kilmeny
Cowan	Peter	McIntyre	Margaret	Arighuary	Donald	1 Mar 1825	- - -	Kilmeny
Cowan	Peter	McIntyre	Mary	Arighuary	Mary	11 May 1827	- - -	Kilmeny
Cowan	Peter	McIntyre	Margaret	Arighuary	Sally	1 Dec 1831	- - -	Kilmeny
Cowan	Robert	McIntyre	Mary	Arighuary	Dugald	8 May 1829	- - -	Kilmeny
Kirkland	Samual	McLachlane	Bell	Arighuary	John	2 Apr 1835	- - -	Kilmeny
Lindsay	John	Currie	Catherine	Arighuary	Elespy	24 Nov 1817	- - -	Kilmeny
McArthur	Charles	Campbell	Mary	Arighuary	Flora	24 Apr 1826	- - -	Kilmeny
McCartan	John	Lindsay	Christian	Arighuary	John	- - -	12 Sep 1845	Kilmeny
McDougall	Hugh	McVoran	Elspe	Arighuary	Margaret	13 Mar 1833	1 Jun 1830	Kilmeny
McDougall	John	McLean	Catherine	Arighuary	Catherine	21 May 1820	- - -	Kilmeny
McFadyen	Archibald	Campbell	Suzanna	Arighuary	Anne	16 Nov 1821	- - -	Kilmeny
McFadyen	Archibald	McEwing	Mary	Arighuary	Dugald	1 Apr 1827	- - -	Kilmeny
McFadyen	Archibald	McEwing	Mary	Arighuary	William	- - 1828	- - -	Kilmeny
McFadyen	Donald	Smith	Mary	Arighuary	Catherine	13 Mar 1833	12 Jan 1832	Kilmeny
McFadyen	Donald	Smith	Mary	Arighuary	John	17 Mar 1828	- - -	Kilmeny
McFadyen	Donald	Smith	Mary	Arighuary	Donald	26 Oct 1830	- - -	Kilmeny
McFadyen	Dougald	McFadyen	Mary	Arighuary	Catherine	14 Nov 1817	- - -	Kilmeny
McFadyen	Dugald	McFadyen	Mary	Arighuary	Archibald	17 Dec 1809	- - -	Kilmeny
McFadyen	John	Cowan	May	Arighuary	Mary	19 May 1824	- - -	Kilmeny
McFadyen	John	Cowan	Mary	Arighuary	Archibald	1 Dec 1825	- - -	Kilmeny
McIndeor	Charles	McVoran	Marrion	Arighuary	Archibald	21 Sep 1813	- - -	Kilmeny
McIndeor	Duncan	McDougall	Betty	Arighuary	Angus	- - -	6 Sep 1848	Kilmeny
McLean	Hugh	McArthur	Catherine	Arighuary	Neil	21 Nov 1814	- - -	Kilmeny
McLean	Hugh	McArthur	Catherine	Arighuary	Jean	21 Mar 1815	- - -	Kilmeny
McNicol	Archibald	McArthur	Catherine	Arighuary	Catherine	6 Mar 1835	12 Jun 1834	Kilmeny
McNicol	Archibald	McArthur	Marion	Arighuary	Jane	- - 1828	- - -	Kilmeny
McNicol	Archibald	McArthur	Marion	Arighuary	John	1 May 1830	- - -	Kilmeny
McPherson	John	Darroch	Mary	Arighuary	Catherine	4 Aug 1803	- - -	Kilmeny
McQueen	Angus	Carmichael	Isabell	Arighuary	Donald	- - -	24 Sep 1848	Kilmeny
Robertson	David	Wilson	Mary	Arighuary	Janet	1 Nov 1827	- - -	Kilmeny
Sinclair	Hugh	Fraser	Janet	Arighuary	Mary	13 Mar 1833	12 Nov 1830	Kilmeny
Smith	John	McLellan	Margaret	Arighuary	William	22 Aug 1819	- - -	Kilmeny
Smith	John	McLellan	Margaret	Arighuary	Duncan	10 Jun 1822	- - -	Kilmeny
Smith	John	McLellan	Margaret	Arighuary	William	27 May 1824	- - -	Kilmeny
Smith	John	McLelland	Margaret	Arighuary	Bell	1 Dec 1829	19 Feb 1829	Kilmeny
Smith	John	McLelland	Margaret	Arighuary	Malcolm	18 Aug 1826	- - -	Kilmeny
Smith	John	McLelland	Margaret	Arighuary	Peter	12 Jan 1829	- - -	Kilmeny
Smith	John	McLelland	Margaret	Arighuary	Catherine	13 Mar 1833	- - -	Kilmeny

Table 1 Extract of registered births/baptisms for the township of Arighuary prior to 1875 as recorded in the Old Parish Registers of Kilmeny parish. Table compiled from the data available at <http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>

The censuses carried out in 1841 and 1851 (Tables 2 and 3) provide immensely useful insight into the size and the makeup of the population of Airigh Ghuaidhre in the decade prior to the clearance of the township.

The 1841 census (Table 1) records 53 people living in Aryghuary in 9 households. There are 15 children below the age of 15 and no less than ten 15 year olds. Only three children were below the school age, two of which were less than 1 year old. The oldest person in the township was 75 and the second oldest 60 years of age. The vast majority of the population would therefore be of working/family-rearing age group (age groups loosely based on Storrie 1962), which includes the fifteen year olds, two of which have specified occupations as the apprentice tailor and a servant, while the rest undoubtedly worked on the land and in their households. The main occupation of the population as a whole was in agriculture.

The 1851 census (Table 2) records only 28 people living in 6 households. This is almost half of the total numbers recorded in 1841. There are 4 children under 5 years of age and another 4 below the age of 14. A fourteen year old house servant starts the working/family-rearing age group, which again predominates. The oldest person is 96 years of age. Farming remained the main occupation in the township with the majority of the heads of the families listed either as farmers or cotters. There is an increase in the number of individuals listed as either house or farm servants. In 1841 these occupations accounted for 7.5% of the total number of individuals, while in 1851 this number climbed to 25%.

Strikingly, the majority of the families listed in 1841 were not living in Airigh Ghuaidhre by 1851. Whether they moved to live elsewhere on Islay or beyond its shores has not been investigated for the purposes of this report. These include household nos. 1, 3, 5, 6, 7,

8 and 9. McAlisters (household no.2 in 1841) expanded into two separate households in 1851 (households nos. 1 and 2) and McArthurs (household no. 4 in 1841) also remained (household no. 3 in 1851). McQueens and McVorrans form the remaining three households in 1851, although they did not feature in Airigh Ghuaidhre in the 1841 census.

The main notion that becomes apparent when different 19th century sources mentioning Airigh Ghuaidhre are crosschecked is that there is little continuity and considerable mobility in and out of the township during this time. This is not surprising considering that the emigration reached its peak in the 1840's and 50's and was by no means rare in the previous or following decades. Shifts in the tenancies between the neighbouring townships or even different parts of the island were common and often the wider search identifies the individuals, which disappear from the records of one place only to appear in the records of a different one. The population of Islay's villages was gaining on the overall rural population, which was in decline during this time, and this might explain further displacements (Storrie 2011).

All of these factors combined when the remaining residents were evicted from Airigh Ghuaidhre, probably in 1852. Among those interviewed by the Royal Commission during 'the Inquiry into the condition of the Crofters and Cottars in Highlands and Islands' was a 75 year old Duncan MacIndeor, a roadman in Kilmeny who gave the evidence as follows: 'I was a farmer at Airidh-Ghuairidh for 23 years. There were many others as well as myself put out or deprived of their parks about this time to make room for Webster. Four tenants got notice to leave Airidh-Ghuairidh; six or seven got notice to leave Storakaig. At or about that time Rosquern contained four who had to be moved from their holdings. Nosebridge had eight tenants

Table 2 The 1841 census data for Airigh Ghuaidhre. Table compiled from census data available at www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk

Household	Surname	First Name	Sex	Age	Occupation (if stated)	Place and Parish of birth
1	Buie	Betsy	Female	50	Independent means	Aryghuary, Kilmény
1	McArguhart	Margaret	Female	15	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
1	McArguhart	William	Male	15	Apprentice tailor	Aryghuary, Kilmény
2	McAlister	Duncan	Male	20	Farmer	Aryghuary, Kilmény
2	Kirkland	Mary	Female	50	Female servant	Aryghuary, Kilmény
2	McAlister	Marion	Female	25	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
2	McAlister	Mary	Female	20	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
2	McAlister	Bella	Female	15	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
2	McAlister	Angus	Male	11	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
2	Lindbergh	William	Male	15	Male servant	Aryghuary, Kilmény
3	Morrison	Duncan	Male	45	Agricultural Labourer	Aryghuary, Kilmény
3	Morrison	Christy	Female	40	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
3	Morrison	Roger	Male	11	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
3	Morrison	Duncan	Male	9	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
3	Morrison	Mary	Female	7	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
3	Morrison	Not Named	Female	6 months	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
3	Brown	Flora	Female	40	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
4	McArthur	Donald	Male	35	Agricultural Labourer	Aryghuary, Kilmény
4	McArthur	Isabella	Female	50	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
4	McQueen	Ann	Female	75	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
5	Carmichael	Mary	Female	40	Subtenant	Aryghuary, Kilmény
5	Carmichael	Janet	Female	15	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
5	Carmichael	Malcolm	Male	15	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
5	Carmichael	Catherine	Female	11	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
5	Carmichael	Mary	Female	8	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
5	McFadyen	Ann	Female	45	Female servant	Aryghuary, Kilmény
6	Morrison	John	Male	40	Agricultural Labourer	Aryghuary, Kilmény
6	Morrison	Catherine	Female	40	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
6	Morrison	Archibald	Male	15	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
6	Morrison	Mary	Female	15	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
6	Morrison	Christian	Female	9	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
6	Morrison	John	Male	7	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
7	McCalman	Peter	Male	60	Agricultural Labourer	Aryghuary, Kilmény
7	McCalman	Mary	Female	55	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
7	McCalman	Christian	Female	50	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
7	McCalman	Donald	Male	25	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
7	McCalman	Peter	Male	40	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
7	Hyndman	Christian	Female	55	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
8	McFadyen	Margaret	Female	50	Independent means	Aryghuary, Kilmény
8	Lamond	Colin	Male	15	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
8	Lamond	Catherine	Female	7	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
8	Lamond	Alexander	Male	7	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
8	Baker	Hester	Female	50	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
8	McNeill	Malcolm	Male	45	Male servant	Aryghuary, Kilmény
9	McFadyen	Archibald	Male	50	Agricultural Labourer	Aryghuary, Kilmény
9	McFadyen	Margaret	Female	30	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
9	McFadyen	Dougald	Male	15	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
9	McFadyen	William	Male	12	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
9	McFadyen	John	Male	10	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
9	McFadyen	Donald	Male	8	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
9	McFadyen	Archibald	Male	6	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
9	McFadyen	Mary	Female	4	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény
9	McFadyen	Christian	Female	1 motnh	–	Aryghuary, Kilmény

Household	Surname	First Name	Sex	Age	Relation	Occupation (if stated)	Place	Parish of birth
1	McAlister	Mary	Female	60	Head	Cotter	Aryghuary	Kilmeny
1	McAlister	Marion	Female	29	Daughter	House servant	Aryghuary	Kilarrow
1	McAlister	Margaret	Female	27	Daughter	House servant	Aryghuary	Kilarrow
1	McAlister	Isabella	Female	27	Daughter	House servant	Aryghuary	Kildalton
1	McAlister	Angus	Male	21	Son	Farm Servant	Aryghuary	Kildalton
2	McAlister	Duncan	Male	30	Head	Farmer	Aryghuary	Kilarrow
2	McAlister	Janet	Female	27	Wife		Aryghuary	Kilmeny
2	McAlister	Catherine	Female	5	Daughter		Aryghuary	Kilmeny
2	McAlister	Angus	Male	2	Son		Aryghuary	Kilmeny
2	Fletcher	Duncan	Male	28	Servant	Farm servant	Aryghuary	Kilmeny
2	McLellan	Mary	Female	14	Servant	House servant	Aryghuary	Kilmeny
3	McArthur	Anne	Female	96	Head	Pauper	Aryghuary	Kilmeny
3	McArthur	Isabella	Female	46	Daughter	Pauper	Aryghuary	Kilmeny
3	McArthur	Donald	Male	50	Son	Farm Laborer	Aryghuary	Kilmeny
4	McVorrán	Alexander	Male	47	Head	Cotter	Aryghuary	Kilmeny
4	McVorrán	Janet	Female	50	Wife		Aryghuary	Kilmeny
4	McVorrán	Janet	Female	17	Daughter	House servant	Aryghuary	Kilmeny
4	McVorrán	Christian	Female	11	Daughter		Aryghuary	Kilmeny
5	McQueen	Alexander	Male	37	Head	Farmer	Aryghuary	Kilmeny
5	McQueen	Anne	Female	60	Mother		Aryghuary	Kilmeny
5	Paterson	Archibald	Male	40	Visitor	Laborer	Aryghuary	Kilmeny
6	McQueen	Angus	Male	35	Head	farmer	Aryghuary	Kilmeny
6	McQueen	Isabella	Female	30	Wife		Aryghuary	Kilmeny
6	McQueen	Isabella	Female	7	Daughter		Aryghuary	Kilmeny
6	McQueen	John	Male	6	Son		Aryghuary	Kilmeny
6	McQueen	Anne	Female	4	Daughter		Aryghuary	Kilmeny
6	McQueen	Donald	Male	1	Son		Aryghuary	Kilmeny
6	McQueen	Margaret	Female	9 months	Daughter		Aryghuary	Kilmeny

Table 3 The 1851 census data for the township. Table compiled from census data available at www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk

who were also moved. Kynagarry also contained eight tenants; Benveridle also contained seven tenants, and four farmers got notice to quit Kilbranan and three to quit Dranich; in other words no less than 44 or 45 had to leave their holdings to give scoop to Webster and sheep' (extract from Report and Minutes of Evidence, Royal Commission – Highlands and Islands 1892 prepared by Gordon Booth for the Museum of Islay Life). William Webster was a factor for the Campbells of Shawfield with the residence at Diall Farm and was in charge of many affairs concerning the Islay Estate during the time the Estate was in the administration, which was managed by James Brown the Royal Bank of Scotland following the sequestration of Walter Frederick Campbell (Storrie 2011).

The increase in the amount of directly related histori-

cal evidence from towards the end of the townships' existence provides us with fascinating insights. But how much of what we learn from the written sources can be linked with the physical remains described in the first section of this report? One of the most satisfying things for the archaeologist is to be able to learn the names of the people who once lived and worked in the surveyed or excavated houses, enclosures and limekilns. The historical documents tell us about the overall size and makeup of the population at certain times, the family structures, the occupations of the people. In other words the census data and other records help to populate the denuded structures and the surrounding landscape of Airigh Ghuaidhre. The temptation is to try to go further and match the two types of evidence, the archaeological and the

historical, even more closely. For example, could the remains of the nine long houses identified at Airigh Ghuaidhre represent the individual homes of the nine households listed in the 1841 census? This is by no means beyond the realms of possibility.

The historical record is not perfect, it is drawn from several snapshots in time and there is no way of telling whether the 1841 census list represents the maximum population of the township or whether the number of people would have been higher a decade earlier. The 1831 census records the maximum population size for Islay as a whole, but that data was not recorded below the parish level.

The archaeological evidence suggests that a probable maximum of nine houses would have been occupied in the last stages of the township's existence, although there is a possibility that others might have been completely erased from the landscape. Some of those houses, whose remains did survive, however, would have probably been abandoned even before the notices have been handed out by the factor, as the diminished population of the 1851 census would suggest.

And what about the chapel, when was it built and how did it become forgotten in such a short time? Targeted excavation within the chapel enclosure and the additional geophysical survey with the ground penetrating radar could certainly bring some of the answers to

these and other questions, including the question of whether there are burials within the chapel enclosure. The paucity of references to Airigh Ghuaidhre on the gravestones of the cemeteries across Islay and especially in the parish church in Kilmeny might suggest that this might be the case.

The questions become ever more challenging as we go further back in time. The relative richness of the historical sources thins out and the upstanding archaeological evidence becomes scarce and more difficult to interpret. It is not possible at the moment to determine whether the settlement of Airigh Ghuaidhre existed in medieval or even Norse period. Its roots are echoed in its name which translates as 'Godred's shieling' (Thomas 1882) and which implies a transient nature of the early settlement set aside for summer grazing and perhaps occupied by temporary huts built of turf. No evidence of such structures has been found at Airigh Ghuaidhre, although it would not be surprising if they were swept away once the density of the settlement intensified. The same could be true of any possible Iron Age and Bronze Age structural remains, which are a common feature on several surrounding hilltops. Preliminary investigations into possible vestiges of the later prehistoric occupation at Airigh Ghuaidhre are described in the final section of the report.

Later prehistoric features in the landscape of Airigh Ghuaidhre

3.1 Hilltop enclosure

It has already been noted that the summit of the hillock occupied by Airigh Ghuaidhre township provides an excellent strategic position in the central part of the glen. The hillock marks the major dogleg in the glen's orientation and provides extensive views in both the south-westerly and the northerly directions. Furthermore the northern side of the hillock is a steep cliff, which provides natural protection from the north and gives the hillock a domineering appearance (Figure 35).

It would be surprising if a location with such natural attributes had not been utilised in later prehistory, especially as there is clear evidence for enclosures, hut circles, duns and hillforts on most of the elevated locations in the surrounding landscape. The majority of these locations, however, were probably less attractive settlement sites in the subsequent periods than Airigh Ghuaidhre with its central location, gentler south-facing topography and fertile limestone-based rich soils. It is feasible that the higher intensity of the historic occupation at Airigh Ghuaidhre has contributed to a relatively poor preservation of later prehistoric remains.

35 Airigh Ghuaidhre hillock from the northeast showing the steep cliff on the north side and the extensive views towards Loch Indaal beyond.



Nevertheless, a certain amount of evidence can be deduced from the inspection of the ground surface features, which appear unrelated to the remains of the township. The western part of Airigh Ghuaidhre hilltop shows evidence of being partly enclosed along the western and south-western side of the summit by at least one or possibly two ditches with the corresponding internal banks (Figure 4). The banks and ditches follow the topography of the western side of the summit, which was split into two separate sections by the construction of the north wall of the post-township enclosure.

The inner ditch is considerably clearer. It cuts into the bedrock outcrop creating a natural sheer rock face, which is up to 2m high, along the southwest side of the summit (Figure 36). Part of this rock exposure

is undoubtedly natural as similar striated geological limestone features occur on roughly N-S orientation across the top of the summit and especially along the eastern slopes of the hillock, as well as in the wider landscape. Nevertheless, the ditch bends around the summit following the topography of the natural ridge to the east (Figure 37), before petering out among the small group of irregular negative features, which might be signs of later quarrying. A low grassed-over stone bank accompanies the course of the ditch along the top of the ridge and becomes more prominent as the natural ridge disappears. The ditch and bank continue north, where they are first crossed by a township boundary perpendicular to them and then by the post-township enclosure wall (Figure 38).



36 Inner ditch at the base of the natural limestone ridge with a bank on top at the southwest side of the summit. View from the southwest.



37 The bend of the inner ditch around the summit from the south. The ditch peters out to the east.



38 Continuation of the inner ditch and bank northwards showing crossing of the township turf bank and the post-township stone wall behind it. The scale is on top of the ditch just in front of the crossing boundary.

The inner ditch and bank continue on the north side of the post-township wall (Figure 39). There is a double bank on either side of the inner ditch in this area. The outer bank could in fact be the inner bank of an outer ditch, which might have existed along the flatter area to the west side of the inner ditch, but which has completely silted up. The existence of the outer ditch is more speculative, but it is supported by the differences

in the vegetation along its suspected course (Figure 40). While the attempts to enclose the summit from the west are relatively clear the southern slope is unbroken and does not show any signs of possible enclosure. There are no visible traces of either ditches or banks, which might continue the line of the inner or the outer ditch across the most approachable part of the hillock. Aerial photography, however, indicates that

39 Continuation of the inner ditch and bank north of the post-township wall. The shooting hide structure was built in the spot where the ditch and bank meet the cliff. The lower flat area might contain silted up lower ditch. Top: view from the south; Bottom: view from the north.



there might be a possible return to at least one of the ditches in the north direction from the area where they disappear as negative features (Figure 41). This would certainly explain the absence of any enclosure to the east and would suggest that only a small portion of the hilltop was enclosed. Geophysical investigation accompanied by targeted trenching across the line of the suspected ditches would provide necessary

confirmation or rejection of the proposed extent and character of the enclosure. The excavation of one or more trenches along the course of the ditches and corresponding banks would most likely be able to provide dating material either in the form of diagnostic artefacts or samples suitable for C14 dating.

40 Green grassy crop mark of the possible outer ditch bending around the summit parallel with the inner ditch visible to the right. View from the south.

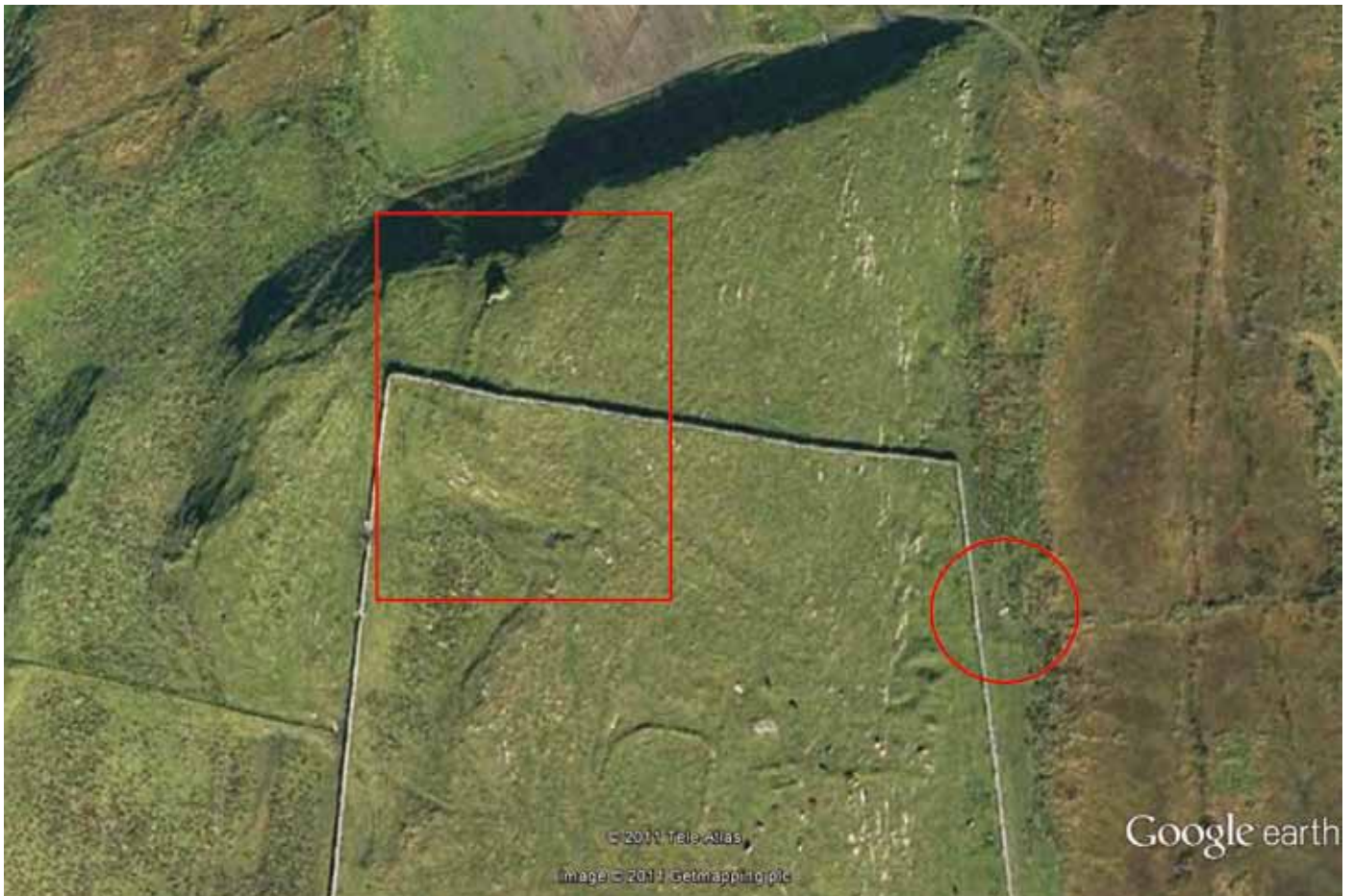


Another feature similar to the inner ditch at the western side occurs at the very base of the eastern slope some 150m to the east. Here a possible ditch was also cut into the bedrock and runs along the base of the natural ridge, but at much lower elevation than the western ditch and bank. This possible ditch is intermittent with the breaks which resemble causeways, but could equally be a product of localised quarrying. The best preserved line of the ditch is on the north side of the post-township enclosure wall, which is showing signs of collapse in the place where it crosses the ditch

(Figure 41). This suggests that this part of the wall was built on top of the soft fill and that the ditch in this area might be genuine. However, it is difficult to follow its course either northwards towards the cliff or southwards towards the remains of Kiln 2, which was built against the same slope of the hillock. In both directions there are intermittent signs of possible quarrying rather than a continuous linear feature. It is therefore unclear whether these negative features are likely to be later prehistoric or much later in date.



41 Left: Line of possible ditch at the base of the eastern slope running towards the post-township wall; Right: Part of the ditch on the north side of the post-township wall, which is collapsing into the soft fills below.



42 Google Earth image of the hilltop with visible signs of ditched enclosure inside the red rectangle, overlapped by the western part of the post-township wall. Diagonal township boundary is also visible. Red circle marks the position of a possible fallen standing stone described below.

3.2 Fallen standing stone

Two fragments of a large smooth stone lie loose on the ground on the outside of the eastern side of the post-township enclosure at NR39911 62811 (Figure 4). The stone appears to have been deliberately split in two, but originally it would have been 3m long and 1m wide.

Its current recumbent height is 0.5m (Figure 42). The stone is lying on the southwest-northeast orientation. If it represents a fallen standing stone next to its original position, then the likelihood is that it has fallen down the slope from the southwest to the northeast.

43 Possible fallen standing stone at Airigh Ghuaidhre from the northwest.



A continuous cleft or a ledge, if its current position is considered, runs along the southern side of the stone (Figure 43). The stone has signs of possible working on either side of the break and it is possible that the intention might have been to reuse part of the stone for some other purpose. Alternatively, the standing stone might have been seen as an inappropriate pagan symbol and therefore deliberately desecrated. There are couple of small stones wedged between the two split parts of the stone, but these were probably inserted at a later date.

There is no visible discolouration at either end which would suggest which side of the stone might have been interred, but if the shape alone is considered than the more likely base end would be at the southwest. Geophysical survey and/or small area excavation around the stone might be able to pinpoint a possible stone-hole and any other prehistoric features which might have been associated with the monument.

44 Possible fallen standing stone from the southwest showing the cleft along one of its sides. The possible burial mound, which is described below, can be seen on the left edge of the barley field in the mid distance.



3.3 Burial mound

A large oval grassy mound situated at NR40035 63045, 300m northeast from the possible recumbent standing stone and 200m directly north from Kiln 4 (Figure 4), might be the mound mentioned in the 'Preliminary handbook of Islay' (Celoria 1959), but which the OS surveyors either missed or considered it to be a natural feature, as recorded on the RCAHMS' online database <http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/90273/details/loch+fada+islay>. However, the distinctive shape of the mound in comparison to the natural features in the surrounding landscape are suggestive of a possible pre-historic burial mound and merited closer investigation and survey (Figs. 44-46). Topographic and electrical resistance surveys were carried out over its full extent and the immediate surrounding on the 1st of September 2011.

The mound's orientation is NNE-SSW and it is 25m long, 15m wide and 3m high. It is ovate in shape, but with a relatively straight north side (Figure 47). The lateral profile of the mound is conical, while the longitudinal profile shows a plateau along its top (Figs. 45 and 46). The northern slope is the longest and the least steep one. The mound is covered with grassy hummocks, most of which represent grassed-over rocks protruding at the top of the main body of the mound. Rocky makeup of the mound can be observed through the breaks in the grass at several other places on the sides of the mound, but there was no obvious indication whether the core of the mound is a bedrock outcrop or a stone-built cairn.



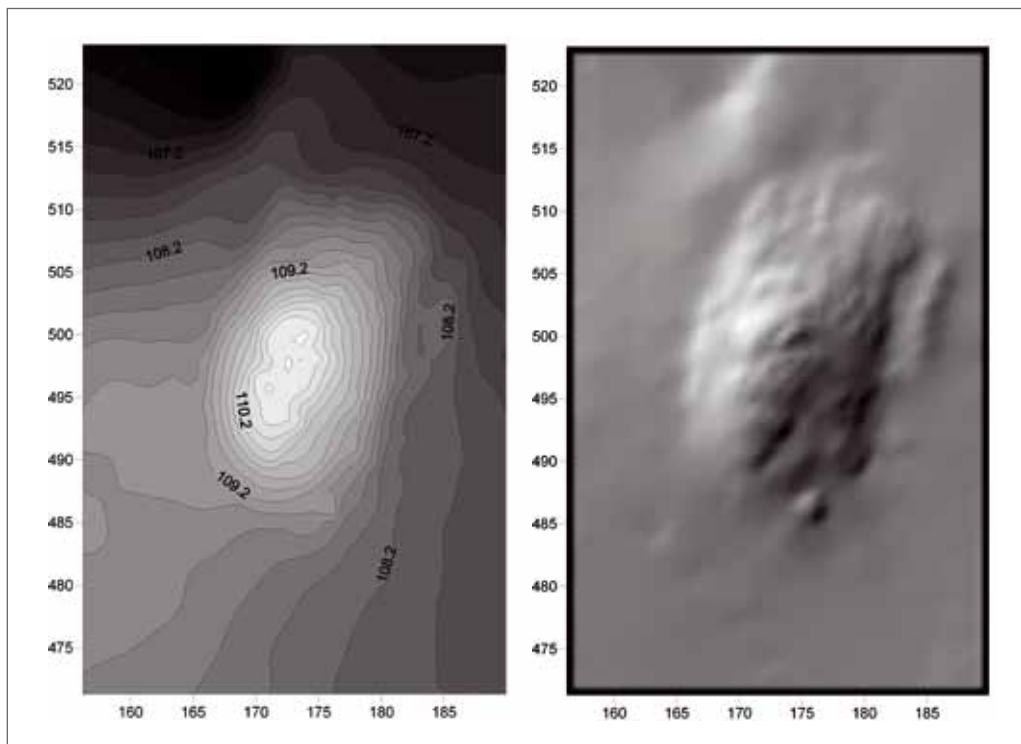
45 Possible burial mound from the southwest with Loch Fada and Beinn Dubh in the background.



46 Longitudinal profile of the mound from the west-northwest



47 Lateral profile of the mound from the north-northeast



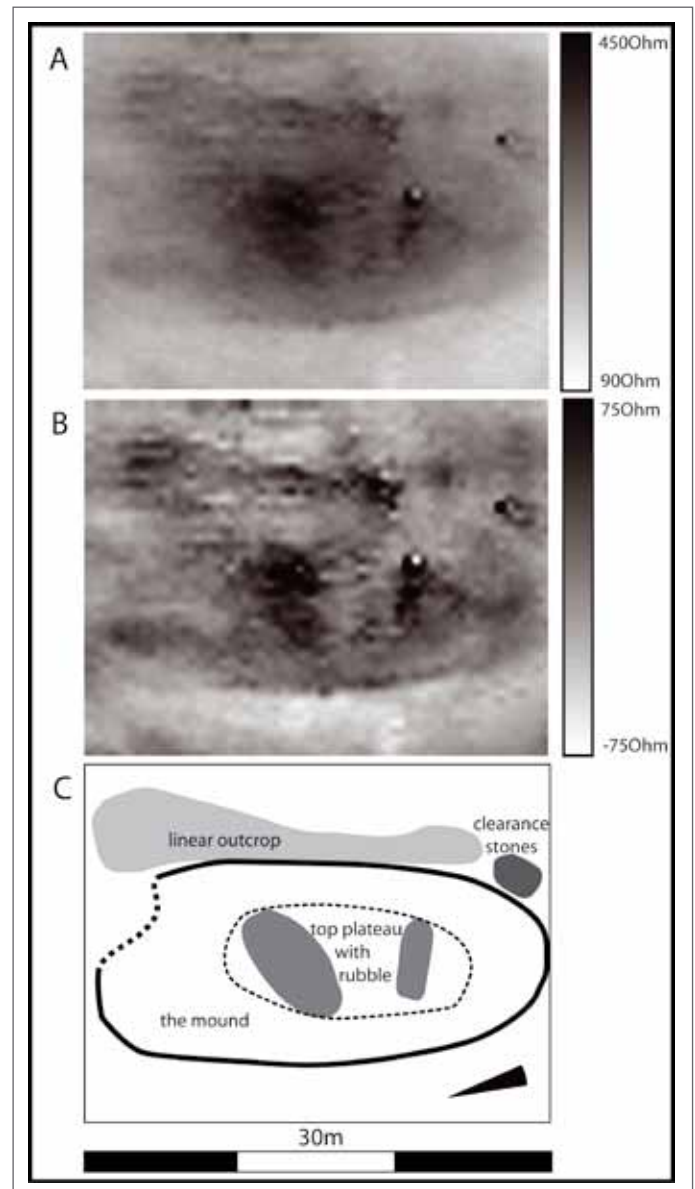
48 Contour survey and the shaded relief of the mound

The mound is situated on the flat ground near the edge of a ridge, which drops to the north and north-east. This ridge is the continuation of much higher cliff, which forms the north side of Airigh Ghuaidhre hillock (Figure 4). The stream connecting Loch Fada with Loch Bharradail runs below the ridge in the north-westerly direction towards Loch Bharradail. A low linear limestone outcrop runs parallel with the mound along its eastern side and one part of it might be underlying the mound. This natural feature is one of many such limestone striations, running roughly on a N-S alignment in this part of the landscape. Similar but much more numerous striated outcrops are covering large part of the summit of Airigh Ghuaidhre hillock. The resistivity survey grid was orientated along the mound and it measured 30m by 25m. The instrument

used was Geoscan's RM15 resistivity meter with twin probe configuration and 0.5m spacing between the mobile electrodes. The survey was conducted with 0.5m traverse spacing and 0.5m sample intervals. The most obvious feature of the results is the generic high resistivity of the mound's core in comparison to the surrounding areas, especially to the west where the resistivity values are the lowest (Figure 48). The smoothness of the western and the southern edges of the mound and the regularity of its oval shape are striking, strongly supporting the argument for the artificial nature of the mound's construction. The regular oval edge continues along the eastern side of the mound, but it is not as clear due to the relatively higher resistance of the adjacent linear outcrop. The results are the most ambiguous in the north where

the high resistivity of the mound gradually peters out and blends into the surrounding response. The highest resistance was detected at the top of the mound and this mainly corresponds to the rubble lying directly under the hummocky grass.

The results cannot be used to infer any potential structural information from within the central highest part of the mound due to the insufficient penetration capabilities of the instrument, but the regularity of the high resistive response along the western edge suggests that a possible kerb might be present. Overall, the results strongly suggest that the mound is artificial and it most likely constitutes a prehistoric burial cairn. The elongated oval shape is typologically much more common in the Neolithic than any other subsequent period, although more structural information from the interior of the cairn is needed to ascertain whether we are dealing with a previously unrecorded chambered cairn. Ground penetrating radar survey would be advisable in this regard before any potential excavation, although a smaller intervention at the side of the cairn to ascertain presence of the possible kerb would be minimally intrusive and could be undertaken in conjunction with a GPR survey. In this way any potential underlying deposits would be easier to reach, providing a good opportunity for recovering stratified dating material, both from the body and from below the cairn.



49 Results of the resistivity survey: A – raw interpolated data; B – High Pass Filter applied; C – interpretation diagram.

Summary

Detailed archaeological survey was undertaken of the remains of the 19th century township Airigh Ghuaidhre and the identifiable later prehistoric features in its immediate vicinity. This work was simultaneous to the excavation of the Mesolithic occupation horizon located in the immediate vicinity of the chapel enclosure (Figure 4) and the palaeoenvironmental fieldwork at Loch Bharradail, both of which are reported on separately (EIMP reports 1 and 2).

The survey recorded in detail the remains of the township consisting of nine long houses, two subsidiary buildings, six limekilns and a string of interconnecting stock enclosures and boundaries. Some, but by no means all, related historic documentation was consulted to try to reconstruct demographic picture of the township during the 18th and especially the first half of the 19th century. The attempt was also made to link the size and the structure of the population to the remains of the houses on the ground.

Furthermore, the evidence of a possible Iron Age enclosure was identified on the western side of the hilltop. A possible Neolithic burial mound at the edge of the township and a possible fallen standing stone near the very heart of the 19th century settlement offer glimpses of an even earlier human presence. Finally, the Mesolithic hunting camp, which is being investigated a mere stone throw away from the chapel enclosure, completes this sequence. The mounting evidence is for a near continuous occupation sequence on the hilltop and the hillsides of Airigh Ghuaidhre throughout the last seven thousand years.

This survey provides a valuable addition to the archaeology of Islay by substantially expanding our previous understanding of one of the island's many cleared townships and by introducing a number of previously unknown later prehistoric monuments. All archaeological remains covered by this report would benefit from further fieldwork and historical research. The later prehistoric monuments, in particular, require clarification in terms of their morphology, stratigraphic sequence and dating and the recommendations concerning the best way of achieving these goals have been hereby given.

Bibliography:

Caldwell, D.H. 2010. Finlaggan report 2: archaeological survey of area around Loch Finlaggan. National Museums Scotland. Accessed at <http://repository.nms.ac.uk>, September 2011

Maričević, D., Mithen, S. and Wicks, K. 2011. Airigh Ghuaidhre – geophysical survey, Kilarow and Kilmeny, Islay. *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland, New Series* Volume 11, 2010

RCAHMS 1980. *Argyll: An Inventory of the Monuments. Volume 3: Mull, Tiree, Coll and northern Argyll (excluding the Early Medieval and later monuments of Iona)*. Edinburgh: HMSO Press

RCAHMS 1984. *Argyll: An Inventory of the Monuments. Volume 5: Islay, Jura, Colonsay and Oronsay*. Edinburgh: HMSO Press

RCAHMS 1988. *Argyll: An Inventory of the Monuments. Volume 6: Mid Argyll and Cowal: Prehistoric and Early Medieval Monuments*. Edinburgh: HMSO Press

Report and Minutes of Evidence, Royal Commission – Highlands and Islands 1892 prepared by Gordon Booth for the Museum of Islay Life and accessed at: www.islayinfo.com/islay_clearances.html September 2011

Storrie, M.C. 1962 The census of Scotland as a source in the historical geography of Islay, *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 78:3, 152–165

Storrie, M. 2011 (1981). *Islay. Biography of an island*. Third edition. Isle of Islay: The Oa Press

Thomas, R.N. Capt. 1882. On Islay Place-names. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 16: 241–76

<http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk> Accessed September 2011

<http://homepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com>

Accessed September 2011

<http://maps.bgs.ac.uk> Accessed September 2011

Images:

Cover bottom left: ©RCAHMS

Cover and p23 (map): © Islay Estate Ltd

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the Schroder family for their permission to work at Airigh Ghuaidhre and for their continued interest. Our thanks to David Gillies, Islay Heads, John Morris, Islay Campbell and Donald James MacPhee at the Dunlossit Estate for their advice and help, (and especially for the storage of equipment over the winter period). Malcolm Ogilvie of the Islay Natural History Trust, Kathleen Johnston at Keills Primary School and Stephen Harrison & Freddie Bell at Islay High School all kindly enabled us to share new understanding of Islay's heritage with the island's community. The project has been supported financially by the University of Reading, the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and Mrs Leonie Fane. The fieldwork was undertaken by a team from the University of Reading with support and advice from the Dunlossit Estate.

Airigh Ghuaidhre

 For more information, please contact:

Karen Wicks

University of Reading

Whiteknights

Reading, RG6 6AB

k.wicks@reading.ac.uk

Tel (0118) 378 7973

www.reading.ac.uk