The Friends of Portencross Castle

Portencross Castle, Portencross
Conservation Management Plan

PRELIMINARY

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APPENDICES

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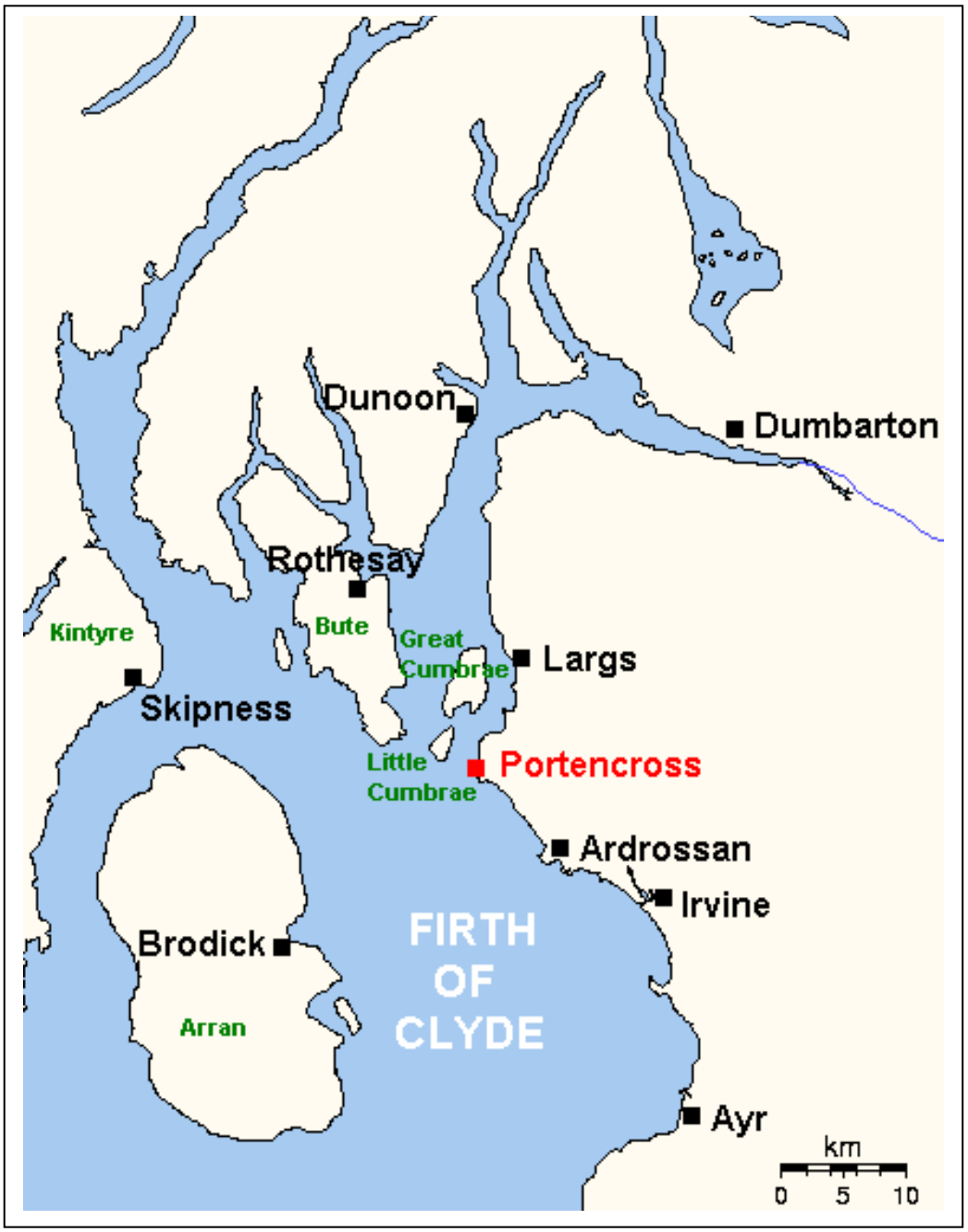

Figure 1: Location Map of Portencross (iCosse)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Figure 2: West Elevation from the sea (SCRAN)

1.1 Portencross Castle (NS 175 489) is located 2 miles north-west of West Kilbride on the foreshore of Portencross village, North Ayrshire. The castle, an A listed Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM), is believed to date from the middle of the 14th century.

1.2 With outstanding panoramic views of the Firth of Clyde and the creation of a larger public car park to the east of the site the area continues to be a popular destination for both walkers and cyclists. At present public access to the interior of the castle and the entrance pathway has been restricted to authorised persons only. The remainder of the site including the foreshore and harbour has unrestricted access.

1.3 Following the loss of its original roof and subsequent abandonment in 1739, the castle has remained in a semi ruinous state. Although in a deteriorating condition the masonry walls remain mainly intact to the wallhead. Gables and garret apartments suffer from collapse with extensive ivy growth covering the western gable. Modern additions to the castle have seen the introduction of a temporary concrete beam and fill roof to the east wing, concrete lintels and an internal timber staircase providing access to the roof.

1.4 Originally forming part of the Hunterston Estate, the castle was purchased by the South of Scotland Electricity Board (SSEB) as part of the redevelopment of the existing nuclear power plant. On the transfer of ownership from SSEB to British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL), the Friends of Portencross Castle (FoPC) were invited to develop preliminary proposals for the future restoration/conservation of the scheduled ancient monument. During 2003 a preliminary assessment commissioned by the FoPC was undertaken by ARP Lorimer and Associates, Arup Scotland, and Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD) to assess the condition of the fabric and develop an options appraisal for the castle.

The FoPC identified three main options for further consideration; reroofing of the castle, consolidation as a ruin and introduction of interpretation and limited public access, and the full restoration of the castle into domestic or holiday/timeshare use.

1.5 In 2006 a multi-disciplinary team led by Austin-Smith: Lord were commissioned by the Friends of Portencross Castle (FoPC) to further develop the opportunities identified in the Feasibility Study. The proposals envisage the restoration of the currently derelict castle to provide civic function rooms/reception rooms and interpretative facilities. Initial survey work was undertaken between October 2006 and June 2007.

Figure 3: South elevation (SCRAN)

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1.6 Recognising the historic and architectural value of the site, this is to include a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) in accordance with Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) recommendations. This includes:

- A comprehensive desk assessment of historical and archival information in order to draw together, for the first time, a thorough understanding of the site's past and present importance.
- An architectural appraisal of the building, including a room-by-room gazetteer in order to identify the extent of surviving features, key areas of significance, and assist in the identification of phasing.
- The drawing together of previous archaeological assessments of the castle, and archaeological potential of the entire site.
- A series of preliminary condition and structural surveys which in turn inform an assessment of vulnerability

These various studies are then brought together in assessment of importance, often referred to as a statement of cultural significance, which in turn guides the development of strategic objectives.

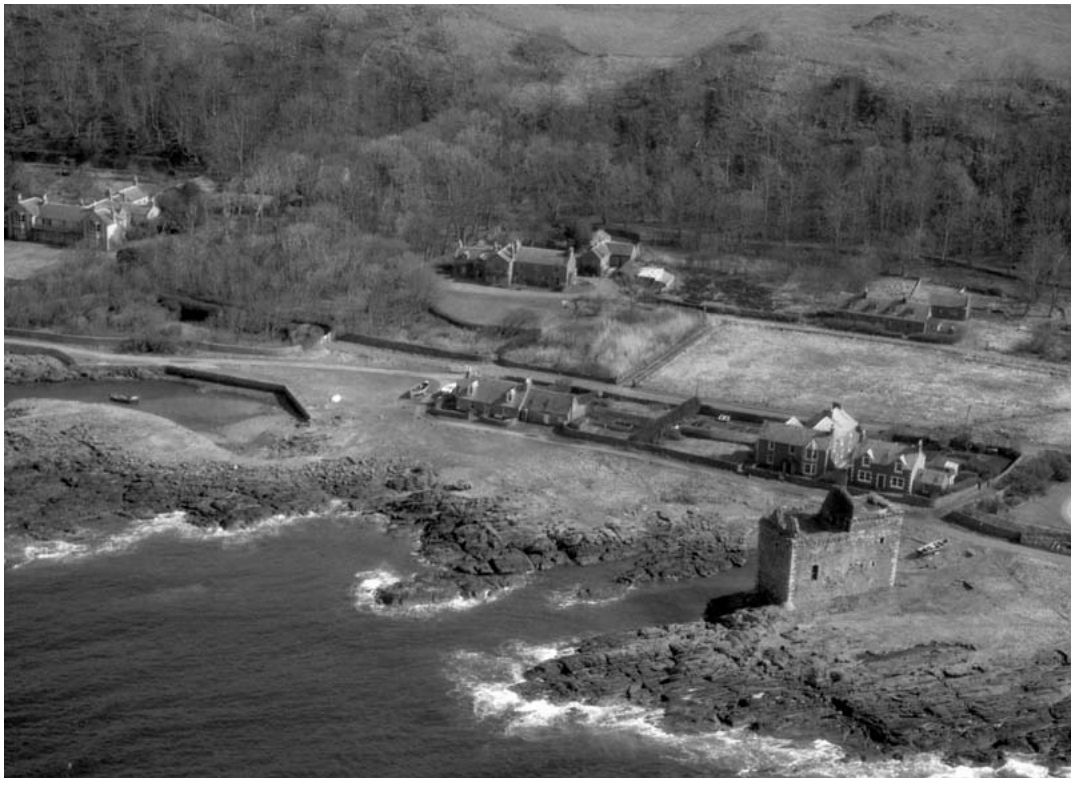

Figure 4: Aerial view of the site (RCAHMS)

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Description

1.7 For ease of reference the site has been divided into two parts; the castle, dating from the 14th century, and the surrounding landscape including shoreline and harbour that are all of particular archaeological/historical interest.

1.8 It is believed that the existing L-plan castle comprised of an original two storey hall house (located in the ground and first floor of the west wing) dating from the mid to late 14th century. The castle is constructed from random un-coursed local red sandstone with a combination of red and buff dressed sandstone quoins and margins. It is thought that a two storey extension was introduced to the east of the building in the late 14th – early 15th century and the creation of the barrel vaulted ceiling and subsequent heightening of the west and east wing followed in a third building phase in the late 15th century (Caldwell, Ewart & Triscott).

1.9 Following the departure of the castle by its lordly residents, and subsequent loss of the original roof during a storm in 1739, the original interior has been lost/removed. In its current state the west wing comprises of a vaulted cellar on the ground floor, large vaulted grand hall with gable fireplace to the first floor and remnants of the garret apartment at roof level. Originally comprising of four floors and garret apartment the east wing has lost a large proportion of its original floor plan. Internal compartments from the first to third floor have been lost due to internal collapse. The former kitchen with remnants of the original oven openings is positioned off the ground floor staircase that links the ground and first floor. Access to the upper levels of the castle would originally have been made by a centrally located wheel stair, now collapsed. During the installation of the concrete flat roof in east wing of the castle by British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) a modern timber staircase was erected to enable access to the roof level for general maintenance.

1.10 Portencross Castle stands on an area of undeveloped shore land within Portencross village. The land surrounding the castle consists of rocky bedrock with shallow turf covering. Situated to the south-east of the castle is an area of raised ground containing a selection of random and dressed rubble. Positioned between the north elevation of the east wing and the harbour is a narrow pathway leading to the main entrance of the castle. Constructed mainly of rubble the path shows evidence of modern day repair and installation of inappropriate materials such as brick.

Terms of Reference

1.11 The purpose of a conservation management plan is to guide those safeguarding our historic sites. It explains why the historic site is important and sets out what should be done to look after it as part of any proposals for its future use, alteration, development, management or repair. It is different to business plans because it focuses on heritage rather than financial management.

1.12 This process follows guidance set down by the Heritage Lottery Fund in ***Conservation Management Plans – Helping Your Application*** and also takes account of a range of wider heritage policy documents including ***BS7913 Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings***, the ICOMOS ***Burra Charter***, and (in the absence of formal CADW recommendations) Historic Scotland's ***A Guide to the Preparation of Conservation Plans***.

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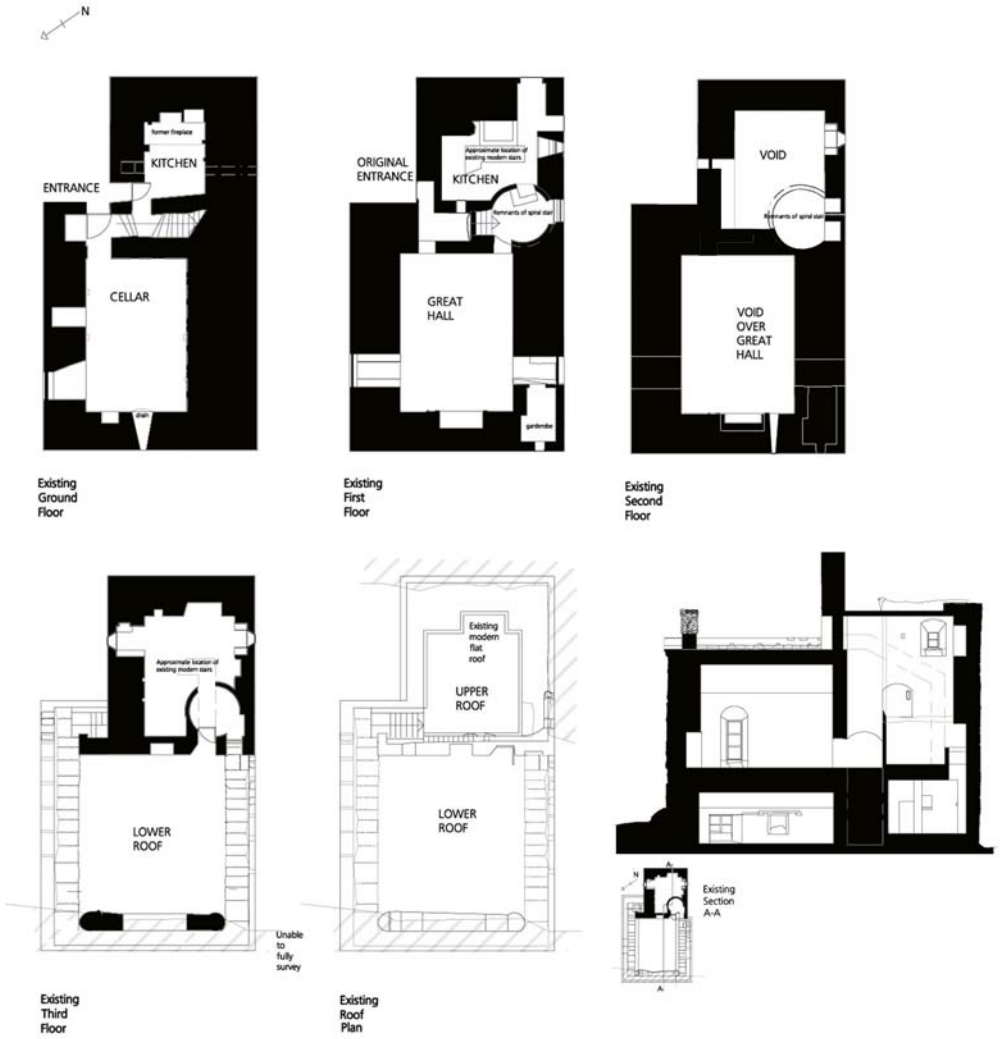

Figure 5: FLOOR PLANS

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1.13 The plan has been undertaken to a level commensurate with the development of outline proposals. It is anticipated that it will be reviewed and enhanced as the project develops and further information becomes available through, for example, additional consultation and investigative works.

1.14 As part of this process, extensive research has been undertaken – particularly as regards the historical significance of the site. The purpose of the plan is to provide a manageable, easily accessible document to guide the conservation process and we have therefore summarised the key points arising from each specialist study. The full reports nevertheless remain of great importance, especially as the detail design develops and are appendiced for reference.

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2.0 STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

2.1 Maintaining and enhancing the quality of the historic environment and preserving the country's heritage are key functions of the planning and land use control system. A series of statutory designations have therefore been developed to help safeguard the historic environment from inappropriate development whilst allowing change that respects the character of and provides for the needs of people within these areas. The starting point in any appraisal of heritage value is therefore a review of these existing statutory and, where appropriate, non-statutory designations.

Listed Buildings

2.2 **Portencross Castle, Portencross**

HB NUM:	14280	Item Number:	7
Map sheet		Category:	A
Group Category		Date of Listing	14-APR-71

A 14th century Scottish hall house constructed in an unusual L-plan with an east jamb placed at the end of the building rather than on the side as more commonly found in Scotland. Two entrances providing access to ground accommodation. A former forestair would have provided direct access to the Great hall on the first floor. All ground floor apartments and the large Grand Hall situated on the first floor have vaulted ceilings. Light to the great hall is provided by two large windows with stone window sets. Former compartments in the east jamb contain remnants of fireplaces and garde-robes. A full description of the Listing can be found in Appendix Two.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

2.3 Portencross Castle is Scheduled as an Ancient Monument under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Ares Acts 1979. The protected area is restricted to the upstanding fabric and its immediate footprint. A full description of the scheduling can be found in Appendix Two.

Conservation Areas

2.4 North Ayrshire Council has advised that the castle and surrounding shoreline does not form part of any Conservation Area's (CA) or Outstanding Conservation Area's (OCA).

Natural Heritage Designations

2.5 Scottish Natural Heritage has advised that the castle and immediately surrounding land is currently not subject to any Natural Heritage Designations. It should however be noted that to the north of the site at the southern boundary of the Hunterston Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) a designated area has been assigned for bird life.

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3.0 HISTORY AND CONTEXT

3.1 Any assessment of the value of a heritage site must be based on a full understanding of its history and context. Although significant background information already existed from a variety of sources, and a number of attempts made to draw this together including work carried out by the FoPC …. such an important historical site.

3.2 The first step in the development of this plan was therefore a wide ranging desk assessment of historical and archival information in order to draw together, for the first time, a thorough understanding of the site's past and present importance. Work was undertaken by specialist research consultant iCosse and Jura Consultants, and included research with a wide range of sources including local archives and RCAHMS, A copy of the full reports are appendiced, and summarised here for ease of reference.

The Early Historic Period

3.3 The district around Portencross was once part of the Brythonic kingdom of Strathclyde (Srath Chluaidh, Gaelic for Valley of the Clyde), one of the regional powers that evolved during the post-Roman period. It occupied the south-west corner of modern Scotland and appears to have evolved from the territories of the tribe identified by the Romans as the Damnonii, and at its greatest extent may have stretched from the Firth of Clyde down to the river Derwent in Cumberland. Strathclyde was bordered by the Northumbrians to the south and east, the Picts to the north and north-east, and the Scots of Dal Riata to the west and north-west, and much of the history of early historic Scotland is that of the power-struggles that occurred between these nations.

3.4 It seems that from at least as early as the 5th century AD the caput of the kingdom was Alt Cluid (Clyde Rock, now known as Dumbarton [fort of the Britons] Rock), e.g. in AD 450, the soldiers of Ceredig of Alcluith, king of Strathclyde, were admonished in a letter written by St Patrick for attacking places in Ireland that he had converted to Christianity. Alt Cluid retained its pre-eminence until AD 870 when it was besieged and sacked by the forces of Olaf, king of the Viking kingdom of Dublin, who is recorded as having returned home with two hundred ships laden with slaves and looted property: recent research has indicated the possibility that, as a result, the power-base moved up the river to the religious centre at Govan and the royal residence to the north of this at Partick.

3.5 Following the siege of Alt Cluid, Arthgal f Dyfnwal, king of Strathclyde, was executed in Dublin, and his son, Rhun f Arthgal, brother-in-law of the Scots king, Constantine I, became the new ruler, although apparently as a sub-king owing fealty to the king of Scots. Exactly what this meant in reality is difficult to ascertain, but Strathclyde appears to have continued to operate as a distinct entity in some form until sometime in the 11th century when the royal lineage died out and it was effectively subsumed into the greater kingdom of Scotland. It has been argued that it was not actually fully absorbed into the kingdom of Scotland until the early-12th century, when the future David I founded the cathedral at Glasgow dedicated to Kentigern (Mungo), apostle of Strathclyde.

3.6 The fate of Strathclyde was reflected in the Scots' kingdom's relationships with the other powers of the early historic period. Moray (notwithstanding its ruler, the famous Mac Bethad mac Findláich (1040–1057), taking the Scottish throne in 1040) was subjugated by the Scottish kings around 1130, followed by Galloway between 1185 and 1235, but Argyll evolved into the Lordship of the Isles and flourished as a powerful entity in its own right until the title was forfeited by James IV in 1493.

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3.7 How these macro-political changes in the early historic period were reflected in localities such as Portencross is difficult to ascertain without considerable further research. Excavations carried out at Auldhill indicate that as well as a timber-framed fort dating from the first millennium BC, the site appears to have been re-occupied during the iron age and/or the early historic period. Finds indicate a date range between the 7th and 10th centuries, and there is some structural evidence that may suggest that there was a contemporary stone-built dun here, possibly of a type found 'on similar summits around the Firth of Clyde' (Caldwell,1998, 31).

3.8 Locally there is another, undated fort at Seamill, occupying *'a tongue of land projecting from the end of the S. bank of the ravine of Kilbride Burn, a situation comparable with that of a number of like structures along the Ayrshire coast'* (RCAHMS; NMRS Number: NS24NW10), and inland to the south-east there is another on the summit of Knock Jargon (NMRS Number: NS24NW 21). Whether either of these was occupied during the medieval period is not known as yet. A date in the 10th century for the end of occupation at Auldhill would, however, appear to conform to recent research findings which indicate that similar sites across Scotland were abandoned around this time (Driscoll, 1998, 40).

Although the site is known as Auldhill, this name does not appear on any maps until 1820, and it appears more likely that it was originally known by the name of Ardneil (alternatively spelt as Arnele and Arneil, the title that appears on several medieval charters):

The name Ardneil is Gaelic for Neil's hill. The Ordnance Survey maps now identify the summit of the cliffs about half a mile to the north of Auldhill as Ardneil Hill but it is likely that it was Auldhill which was the original Ardneil, the fort being Neil's residence. When this Neil lived is impossible to say with any certainty. Gaelic may have been spoken in these parts from the 8th century A.D., and the name cannot be later than the 13th century. (Caldwell et al, 1998, 33)

Who this historic figure (or family) may have been and what their relationship was with the rulers of Strathclyde is virtually impossible to define, but it would appear likely that whoever lived on the site during this period also controlled the land around their hill-top settlement. If so, it seems likely that it was the caput of an estate that analysis of later charters and landholdings indicate at one time may have consisted of the whole peninsula of land to the west of the modern road from Seamill to Fairlie (Caldwell, 1998, 33).

3.9 The location on the coast would also have given the inhabitants of Auldhill a vital access to the sea, which by the 5th and 6th centuries was the predominant routeway for trade and communication. The importance of naval power can be seen as early as AD 681 when the fleet of the northern Pictish king, Bridei, is recorded as having 'devastated' the Orkney Islands. However, the most significant manifestation of sea power was provided by the Norse who became the dominant political force in the waters around north and west Scotland during the 9th and 10th centuries, taking control of the Hebrides and establishing kingdoms in Dublin and the Isle of Man. Their assault on Alt Cluid in 870 was probably only the most visible of their attacks on the coastal sites of Strathclyde, and Ardneil's location overlooking the channel into the upper Firth of Clyde would obviously have made it well known to the Vikings.

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3.10 One other significant element of the area's history during the early medieval period is the Hunterston Brooch:

It was discovered, in 1826, by two labourers engaged in quarrying. It lay close to the surface, nearly at the foot of a precipitous cliff on the Hunterston Estate, called the "Hawking Craig", a small spur of the Goldberry Hill to the northward of the Ardneill Banks, which form the extreme western point of Ayrshire. Between the Hawking Craig and the sea is a level piece of ground, where local tradition affirms that a skirmish took place shortly before the celebrated battle of Largs, fought on Tuesday 2nd October, 1263… It was in this preliminary combat that this beautiful brooch is assumed to have been lost. (Paterson, 307, 1866)

3.11 Whatever the circumstances of its loss and subsequent rediscovery, it is the largest and most sophisticated of this type of brooch to have been found so far and was in all probability made at a royal site such as Dunadd:

The brooch, now in the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland (NMAS) Accession Number: FC 8) is a fairly massive casting of silver, mounted with gold, silver and amber insets; it is datable to the later 7th century. It bears secondary 10th century runic inscriptions reading 'Melbrigda owns this (brooch)' and 'This brooch belongs to Olfriti'. (RCAHMS; NMRS Number: NS15SE 5).

3.12 The skill of its craftsmanship and the value of its materials mean that the Hunterston brooch was an object of the highest quality and the owner of such an object, whether he was local or an incomer, must have been of a very high status in society and its loss would have been considerable. Although its origin is obscure, its beauty and sophistication provide us with a rare glimpse into both the aesthetics and values of the society which produced it, and may give us a hint as to the status of the area around Portencross at the beginning of the second millennium.

The Post-Norman Period - The Sheriffdom of Ayrshire

3.13 The introduction of feudal structures into Scotland is identified as having been begun under the influence of Margaret, the second wife of Malcolm III (1057-93), and sister of Edgar Atheling, one of the claimants to the English throne of Edward the Confessor in 1066. She is credited by historians through the ages with introducing the language (she never learned Gaelic) and many of the customs of England to the Scottish court.

3.14 Possibly the most important part of this process was the introduction of the feudal system of landholding: this had political, social and economic implications not only for the power of the crown, but also for the development of Scotland from that time on. The feudal system was predicated by the basic tenet that the king was the universal landowner and fountain of justice. With its origin in the political and military requirements of medieval society, the principal relationship in feudal landholding was that between superior (or lord) and vassal (or tenant). It was of primary importance to the superior that the land was granted to men who were loyal to him, and capable of supplying the military service required where the duty in the tenure was military. The process of granting property to loyal vassals in order to exert military and political control became common practice, particularly in areas where the crown's influence was marginal or under threat.

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3.15 From the late-11th century onwards the Canmore kings encouraged the settlement of barons into Scotland from England and even directly from France and Flanders. Most of these settlers were established in small fiefs of one knight's fee, but some larger feudal estates were created in areas which were not directly under crown control. An important date in this process was 1124, the date when Malcolm and Margaret's youngest son, David I, ascended to the throne following the death of his brother Alexander I.

3.16 David had spent much of his youth in the English court of William II Rufus (1087-1100) and Henry I (1100-35), along with his sister Matilda (Henry's wife from 1100), and was known there as the 'flower' of English chivalry and princeliness. As well as issuing the first Scottish coinage, founding burghs and establishing new-style sheriffdoms, David speeded up the process of Anglo-Normanisation in Scotland by increasing grants of land to English and French families such as the Huntingdons, the Lindsays, the Somervilles and the Bruces.

3.17 The history of the Bruce family illustrates the complex nature of society during this process of feudalisation of Scotland and England. Originally from Brix (or Brieux) in Normandy, they were kinsmen of the Duke of Normandy and heirs of the kings of Brittany. They appear to have acquired their first land in Britain in 1101 when Henry I granted lands in Yorkshire to Robert de Brius, son of Adam, Lord of Brius (Brix). Robert de Brius met David I at Henry's court, and, following his enthronement in 1124, David I enfeoffed him in the Lordship of Annandale in the troublesome area of Galloway. It was through the line of Robert the Bruce's great-grandmother (the daughter of David of Huntingdon who was a grandson of David I) that he was able to successfully prosecute the Bruce claim to the Scottish crown in 1306.

3.18 Alongside the construction of a centralised system of government based on Anglo-Norman barons holding sway over large areas of the country, the crown developed a feudalised bureaucracy to service his possessions. The great offices of state such as Chancellor, Chamberlain, Constable, Justiciar, and the King's Council dealt principally with national concerns, while local matters were the responsibility of Courts of Barony and Sheriffs.

3.19 The Courts of Barony were in the power of the Barons, i.e. the 'great men' who held lands direct of the Crown by a grant in liberam baroniam. Barony tenure established an administrative unit, and baronial rights included a responsibility for keeping ordinary public justice within the confines of the barony. To assist in this endeavour the baron had the rights of fossa and furca - the ditch and the gallows - interpreted as the power of life and death over anyone living in his barony.

3.20 The conversion of the kingdom of Scotland from a Celtic system traditionally based on custom to the strictly organised and regulated Anglo-Norman feudal model did not happen in one revolutionary act, but developed over a period of time. The granting of land by the Crown to stabilise and control a region also created a decentralised but strong form of government which provided local magnates with both the legal status and the power to establish themselves and - disasters aside - to continue to operate successfully within the structures of the feudal model.

3.21 Around the same time as he was enfeoffing the de Brius family in the Lordship of Annandale (the late-1120s), David I gave the Lordship of Cunninghame to another Anglo-Norman baron, Hugh de Morville. His family came from lands in Normandy that had been given to David by his brother-in-law, Henry I, and Hugh was a member of the young prince's military retinue when he acquired the lands in the south of Scotland from his brother, Alexander I. As well as Cunninghame, David granted de Morville the barony of Lauderdale and a number of estates in

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England, and also made him Lord High Constable of Scotland sometime after 1138.

3.22 It is probable that Cunninghame was a pre-existing district, possibly a sub-kingdom of Strathclyde, although it too could be subdivided into two distinct lordships - Cunninghame and Largs - both of which belonged to the de Morvilles and their heirs. Later in the 12th century when William the Lion (1165-1214) created the sheriffdom of Ayr, it was through the amalgamation of Cunninghame with two other historic districts (or baileries), Kyle and Carrick (see Fig 6).

3.23 Kyle was also sub-divided into two parts: to the north of the River Ayr was 'Kyle Stewart', lands held by the Fitzalan's (the future Stewart Kings of Scotland) since the 11th century; to the south was 'Kyle Regis', or 'King's Kyle', lands historically retained by the monarch under royal authority from the royal castle at Ayr. This had been erected by William at the mouth of the river Ayr in 1197, shortly before he created a Royal Burgh there at the junction of the principal land route from the south to the west coast (from the royal burgh of Dumfries to Ayr) and the road north.

3.24 The name Carrick comes from the Gaelic word for 'a rocky place', and it is believed that it was actually part of Galloway until 1186 when Donnchad mac Gillai Brigte (great-grandfather of Robert the Bruce) became the first mormaer (or earl) of Carrick. Maybole was the historic capital and later a stronghold of the Kennedy family who built the castle on the High Street sometime in the 16th century.

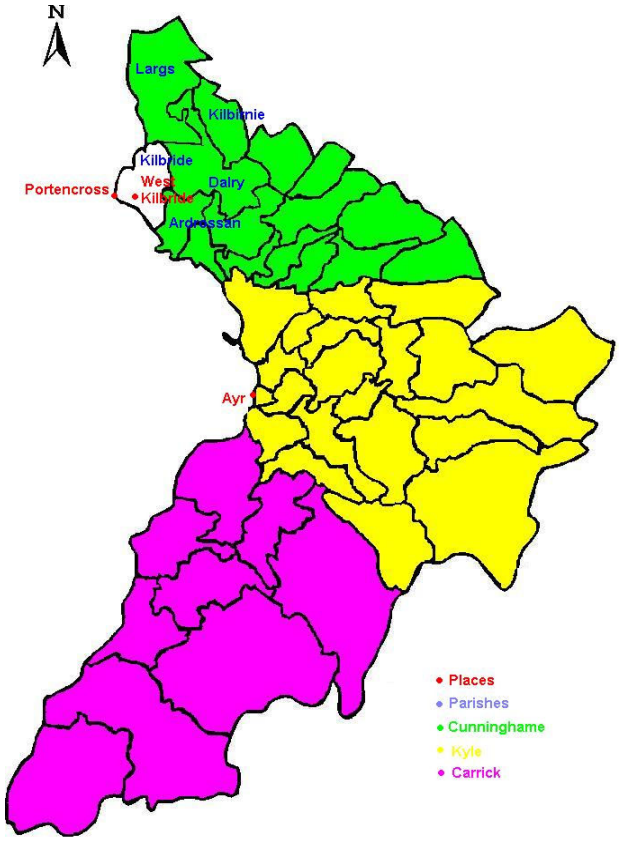

Figure 6: – The Sheriffdom of Ayr (after McLure, 2002)

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The de Ros Family

3.25 In common with the general policy of feudalisation across the country, the de Morvilles .themselves granted tracts of land to incoming families in return for their loyalty and service. Amongst these were the de Ros family:

The earliest supposed member of the family is Godfrey de Ros who witnessed charters by Richard de Morville, Lord of Cunninghame from 1162 to 1189, and his son William, Lord from 1189 to 1196…(Caldwell, 1998, 32)

3.26 It is not known when the de Ros family arrived in Cunninghame, where they came from, or what relation they were to other families of that name:

There were several landowners called de Ros (Ross) in Cunninghame and elsewhere in southern Scotland by the 13th century. It is most probable that they were all descended from a family which originated in Normandy and held the important border fortress of Wark-on-Tweed. It should be said, however, that there is a lack of surviving evidence to prove the relationships of the Cunninghame Rosses and it is not impossible that they were a separate family, perhaps of local origin, or even related to the Earls of Ross.(Caldwell, 1998, 32).

3.27 This branch of the family may indeed have come from Normandy, but there are also records for families of that name in Dol in Brittany in the 11th century. Their feudal superiors there were the Fitzalans, the Stewards or Dapifers of Dol, and the 4th Dapifer, Alan Fitz Flaald had come to England with William the Conqueror in 1066, becoming the Sheriff of Shropshire. His second son, Walter FitzAlan, was invited to Scotland by David I and was given lands in East Lothian, Renfrewshire and Ayrshire, including Dundonald. In the 1150's he was appointed Lord High Steward of Scotland, the highest position in the country below the Crown. His grandson, the 3rd High Steward, adopted the title as the name of his family (the Stewarts), and the 7th to hold the title became King Robert II in 1371. Further research may uncover a link between the Dapifers of Dol and their vassals in Brittany, the de Ros family, in the settlement of Ayrshire by Norman families in the 12th century.

3.28 Another possible origin for the family in Britain is the Battle Roll which recorded four knights of that name as having fought with William I at Hastings - Anquetil de Ros, Golsfrid de Ros, Serlon de Ros, and Guillaume de Ros. By the mid-13th century de Roses are recorded as holding estates at Belvoir Castle, Wark on Tweed, and Hamlake (Helmsley or Helmesley), the latter believed to be descended from Guillaume de Ros. William de Ros, 2nd Baron de Ros of Helmsley, was one of the unsuccessful candidates for the Crown of Scotland 1291 by reason of his descent from Isabel, an illegitimate daughter of William the Lion.

3.29 In Scotland there were de Roses in Moray sometime before 1219, originally in the lands of Geddes, but by 1280 at Kilravock, where the family became known by the surname of Rose. In Cunninghame, by the end of the 13th century, families called de Ros held the lands of Stewarton and Ormesheugh, and probably others as well, such as Dunlop and Giffin (Caldwell, 1998, 32). They also possessed Arnele and Kilbride, and it was in the former that they erected a castle (possibly in the form of a motte-and-bailey) on the site of the dun on Auldhill, sometime in the 12th or 13th centuries.

3.30 Excavations carried out by Caldwell et al (1998) in 1987-89 produced evidence that indicated that a rectangular, timber building surrounded by a palisade had been erected first, overlain by a rectangular, stone-built platform some 16.6m by 12m that has been dated to the late-13th or early-14th century:

> In the interior of the stone enclosure on the motte is a rectangular building, identified as a hall. … As first built it measured about 6.5m by 4.5m internally and had rounded corners. (Caldwell, 1998, 39)

It appears, however, that 'not too many years after…the hall was extended eastwards to give it an internal length of about 10m.'

The evidence indicates that the structures on Auldhill are the remains of a first-floor hall-house, or a small enclosure castle:

3.31 Our preferred interpretation is that the stone walls are the remains of an enclosure castle (see Fig 7) containing a hall… … There is in Scotland a series of rectangular stone enclosure castles dating to the late twelfth and the thirteenth century, the majority of them being situated in the Highlands and Island. (Caldwell, 1998, 69)

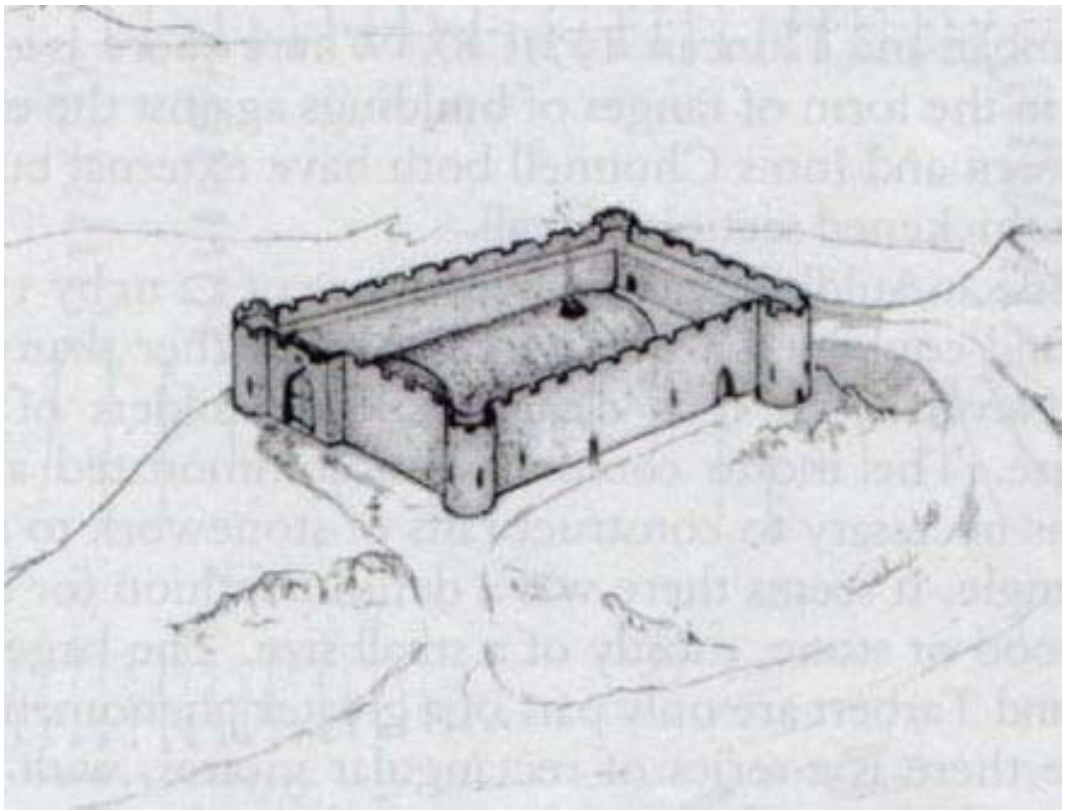

Figure 7: – 'Reconstruction drawing of the stone castle, Auldhill' (Caldwell, 1998, 69)

3.32 The construction at Auldhill of a post-Norman castle on the site of an earlier fortification appears to be paralleled at other sites in the locality:

A number of medieval castles in Cunninghame seem to be built on earlier residences. Within sight of Auldhill are Montfode Mount and Ardrossan Castle. The former appears to be the motte of the Montfode family, and the latter is a stone castle of the late 13th century, both on earlier forts or homesteads. A few miles to the east, Dalry Courthill has been identified as a motte built over the burnt remains of an early historic or medieval hall. (Caldwell, 1998, 69)

Recent excavations at Dundonald Castle have revealed a similar pattern of occupation, dating, like Auldhill, back to prehistoric times. There appears to have been a motte-and-bailey of timber construction which probably dates from the mid-12th century (when David I granted the lands to Walter FitzAlan) built over an earlier hill-fort that appears to have been abandoned sometime around 1000 AD. Also paralleling Ardneil ('Neil's Hill'), Dundonald is Gaelic for 'Donald's Fort', and again this may refer to one of the sub-kings or regional rulers in the area during the hegemony of the kingdom of Strathclyde. It was probably Alexander, the 4th High Steward of Scotland (c.1214-c.1283), who built the stone enclosure castle over these earlier structures sometime in the late-1200s.

All of these may be examples of sites being re-used simply because they were deemed the most suitable (defensively or otherwise) during each period, but this could also be evidence of the deliberate re-use of existing estate centres by the new landowners, implying continuity of land forms and boundaries between the pre- and post-Norman periods.

3.33 The Lordship of Cunninghame passed by marriage from the de Morvilles to the Lords of Galloway in 1196, and from them to the Balliol family in 1234. As a result, by the time the Wars of Independence began at the end of the 13th century the de Roses owed allegiance directly to John Balliol:

3.34 The most prominent member of the Ayrshire Rosses, Sir Godfrey, and his two sons Godfrey and William, were amongst the Scottish prisoners rounded-up from the castle of Dunbar in 1296 immediately after the battle there. All three are later found in the service of the English with others of their name. Sir Godfrey was Sheriff of Ayr for Edward I by 1305. His son Godfrey was later to be Sheriff of Ayr for Edward Balliol in the 1330s. The inevitable result for many of the family was forfeiture and exile in England. The Godfrey de Ros who held West Kilbride and Ardneil appears to have belonged to another branch of the family. A Robert, son of Robert de Ros of Cunninghame, was arrested in London in 1314 and was imprisoned in the Tower of London. He was described as a scholar, studying at the schools of Paris, and may have been one of the Ardneil branch of the family. (Caldwell, 1998, 32-33)

3.35 The date of 1296 for the capture of the de Roses at Dunbar is of interest when compared with the archaeological evidence that posits a date sometime in the late-1200s or early-1300s for the construction of the stone enclosure and hall building on Auldhill. Notwithstanding their capture and apparent change of allegiance, it would seem that the family retained their possessions in Cunninghame (and may even have enhanced them) as Sir Godfrey was given the high status position of Sheriff of Ayr nine years later. Some sources record that Robert I gave the estate of Arnele and other lands in Cunninghame to Sir Robert Boyd in the year of his coronation, 1306, while others state that this was done in 1315. Both dates could be correct, with the latter a confirmation of the earlier grant.

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3.36 Whatever was the date of the transfer of tenure, following the campaigns of 1332 and 1333 Edward Balliol successfully won the crown back for his family and the younger Sir Godfrey de Ros was appointed to the position of Sheriff of Ayr at which time he would have, no doubt, reclaimed his ancestral possessions.

Edward Balliol's tenure as king was brief and in reality he held power only tenuously throughout most of the country, with the result that his appointees also were under constant threat from those who opposed the English-backed puppet king:

3.37 Sir Godfrey was attacked in Cunninghame by supporters of the Bruce cause led by the Stewart and the Earl of Moray, and was persuaded to throw in his lot with them – but only briefly. When Edward III invaded Scotland in force in 1335, Sir Godfrey returned to his original allegiance after Cunninghame had been overrun by the English. It is not clear how long the Rosses held onto their Cunninghame possessions but it could have been as late as 1340 or 1341. In May 1342, four of the English king's 'vallets' – Godfrey, Thomas, Robert and Jack de Ros are noted as having lost their lands in Scotland. Sir Godfrey was killed in English service in Scotland sometime before April1344 when his two sons petitioned Edward III for aid in recompense for their lands they had lost in Scotland. They continued to get English support but not the restitution of their lands, despite an Act of the Scottish Parliament to that effect in January 1364. (Caldwell, 1998, 34)

3.38 It appears that the stone hall and enclosure at Auldhill could have been built at any time during this sequence, and it is just as possible that these changes were effected by the Boyds in the period 1306/15-1333 as it is that they were carried out by the de Roses prior to this. Further research would be required to illuminate this matter, but archaeological evidence does indicate that occupation of the site ended sometime in the mid-1300s and that the buildings were dismantled and their stone removed, possibly for re-use at Portencross Castle on the coastline below Auldhill (Caldwell, 1098, 41).

The Boyds of Kilmarnock

3.39 The origins of the Boyd family are not known, and there is disagreement about whether they were an incoming family like the de Morvilles and the de Roses, or a native family who became successful under the feudal system. The first record of the family is for a Robert Boyd who witnessed a contract for land in Irvine as Dominus Robertus de Boyd, Miles in 1205. As such, they would appear to have been vassals of the de Morvilles at this time.

In a charter in 1262 another Robert Boyd is mentioned as having distinguished himself against the forces of the Norwegian king Haakon in the Battle of Largs and, as a result, was granted lands in Cunninghame by Alexander III:

It is said that, at the Hill of Goldberry, a detachment of the Norwegians was attacked and defeated by a detachment of Scotsmen under Sir Robert Boyd, ancestor of the noble family of Kilmarnock, for which services he received a grant of land in Cuninghame.(Paterson, 304, 1866)

3.40 Following the defeat of the Scots' forces at the Battle of Dunbar in 1296, a Robert Boyd is recorded as having sworn an oath of allegiance to Edward I on the 28th of August, but afterwards joined the cause of independence. It was probably the same Sir Robert Boyd who served alongside Robert I at Bannockburn in 1314 and was rewarded with various parcels of

land, as recorded in a charter of 1316:
Robertus, etc. Sciatis nos dedisse concusisso et hae presenti carta nostra confirmasse Roberto Boyde militi dilecto et fideli nostro, pro homagio et servicio suo, omnes terras de Kylmernoc, de Bondingtone et de Hertschaw, que fuerent Johannis de Balliolo in dominico, totam terram de Kilbryde et totam terram de Ardnel, que fuerant Godfridi de Ros, filii quondam Reginaldi de Ros, et totam terram que fuit Willelmi de Mora in tenemento de Ardnel, cum pertinenciis. Tenendas et habendas dicto Roberto et heredibus suis de nobis et heredibus nostris in feodo et hereditate, et in unam integram et liberam baroniam, per omnes rectas metas et divisas suas, cum libere tenentibus predictarum terrarum, videlicet de terra de Meneforde, de terra Ricardi Brune, de terra Johannis de Kylmernoc, de terra Willelmi de Gobenskethe, de terra Jacobi de Templetone, de Achendolosk, de terra Roberti Scot in Ralphistone, de terra Laurencii de Mora in tenemento de Dalry, et de terra de Yngles Ardnel, libere quiete plenary et honorifice, in boscis planis viis semetis moris maresiia pratis pascuis et pasturis in aquis stangnis vivariis, molendinis et multuris, in aucupacionibus piscacionibus et venacionibus, cum furca et fossa soc et sac thol et them et infangandthefe, et cum omnibus aliis libertatibus commoditatibus aysiamentis et justis pertinenciis suis tam non nominatis quam nominatis. Preterea concessimus predicto Roberto Boyde ut ipse et heredes sui habeant teneant et possideant predictam terram de Hertschaw per omnes rectas metas et divisas suas tantum in liberam forestam firmiter prohibentes ne quis sine licencia dicti Roberti vel heredum suorum speciali infra dictam terram de Hertschaw secet aucupet aut venetur super nostrum plenariam forisfacturam Faciendo nobis et heredibus nostris dictus Robertus et heredes sui pro omnibus terris supradictis servicium unius militis in exercitu nostro, et unam sectam ad curiam nostram de Are ad singula placita nostra ibidem tenenda. In cujus rei, etc.

This document specifies that Robert Boyd received:

- all the lands of Kylmernoc (Kilmarnock), of Bondingtone and of Hertschaw that had belonged to John Balliol;
- all the lands of Kilbryde and all the lands of Ardnel which had belonged to Godfridi de Ros, son of Reginaldi de Ros;
- all the lands of Willelmi de Mora in the tenement (lands) of Ardnel.

It also details that he should hold in free barony the lands of:

- Meneford
- Ricardi Brune
- Johannis de Kylmernoc
- Willelmi de Gobenskethe
- Jacobi de Templetone
- Achendolosk
- Roberti Scot in Ralphistone
- Laurencii de Mora in the tenement of Dalry
- Yngles Ardnel ('English Ardneil').

3.41 Sir Robert Boyd was captured at Halidon Hill in 1333 and died soon afterwards. He was succeeded by his son, the first Sir Thomas Boyd who died in 1365 and was in turn succeeded by his son, also Sir Thomas, who himself died in 1410. It was one of these two who were responsible for the construction of the towerhouse at Kilmarnock (Dean) Castle sometime after 1360. The younger Sir Thomas had two brothers: William being the progenitor of the Boyds of Badenheath, near Kirkintilloch, and Robert the first of Portencross.

3.42 Sir Thomas' great-grandson, Robert, was raised to the peerage as Lord Boyd of Kilmarnock in 1454 and became one of the most important men of his age. He was created a regent of the realm in 1460 during James III's minority and in 1466 he took possession of the young king and was made the sole governor of the realm. It was during this period that he built the high status palace wing at Dean Castle. In 1469, he negotiated the marriage between James and Margaret of Norway and in the process secured the Orkney and Shetland islands for Scotland as part of the wedding dowry. His son, Thomas, married the king's sister Mary in 1467, and was given the titles of Baron Kilmarnock and Earl of Arran in the same year.

3.43 The family's great power was to lead to its downfall, however, and in 1469 Robert, his brother Alexander, and Thomas were summoned to Edinburgh to answer charges of treason against the king. Robert and Thomas fled to England and Denmark respectively, but Alexander was executed. Robert died in the same year, and was succeeded as Lord Boyd by his grandson, James.

3.44 The family continued to take part in national life, but never again at such an exalted level. The 10th Lord, William, was created the 1st Earl of Kilmarnock in 1661, but his great-grandson, also William, chose to support Prince Charles Edward Stuart in the 1745 Rebellion and, after being captured at the Battle of Culloden, was executed in London in 1746. His son, James, however, fought on the Government side and so was able to claim back the family estates: by this time they were living in their townhouse in Kilmarnock, Dean Castle having been largely destroyed in a fire in 1735. In 1758, James inherited the Earldom of Erroll on the death of his mother and as a consequence he changed his name to Hay and sold the Kilmarnock estates to his cousin, the Earl of Glencairn., thus ending the connection between the Boyds and Kilmarnock after almost 450 years.

The Boyds of Portencross

3.45 Robert, third son of Sir Robert Boyd of Kilmarnock, tempore Robert II obtained the lands of Ardneil and others, probably in patrimony, from his father; and consequently was the first of the Boyds of Portincross.(The Maitland Club, 1858, 160)

As referred to above, the progenitor of the Boyds of Portencross was Robert, the third son of Sir Thomas Boyd, the grandson of Sir Robert Boyd:

He appears as a witness to a charter dated 1372, and was still alive in 1444 when a charter was given him of the lands of Ardneil by his nephew, Thomas Boyd of Kilmarnock. (Caldwell, 1998, 34)

He was succeeded by his son, also Robert, who married 'Giles Craufurd of the house of Auchinames, and by whom he had his successor, also named Robert.'

This Robert married Giles, daughter of Campbell of Stevenston, and who was recorded as 'his relict in 1531.' His son, the fourth Robert, married Isobel, the daughter of John Mure of Rowallan: he had a charter from his father, dated 6th June 1520, for the lands of Knockindale in Kyle-Stewart. Their son and successor was the fifth Robert, who married Elizabeth, the third daughter and one of the co-heiresses of David Fairlie of that Ilk (all data about the Boyds of Portencross from Boyd, 1924).

3.46 His successor was his son, Archibald, and both of them fought beside Queen Mary at the Battle of Landside in 1571, the year before Robert died. Archibald was succeeded by his eldest son, Robert, who was a signatory of the will drawn up by his brother Hew who died in October 1610 where he was designed as 'Ard. Boyde, vnder ye hill.' This document states that Hew was a 'burges of Irwen' ('burgess of Irvine'), and the contents show us what kinds of 'guids and gear' belonged to a respectable merchant during this period:

Ane gray naig, by the airschipe hors
Item, tway ky, with the stirks
Item, thrie zoung ky in Ireland
Item, in the borne and borneziard, Ten bolls beir, pryce of the boll, with the foddir
Item, sex bolls salt, pryce of the boll
Item, twa kists of hogheidswith als mony rungis to set thame vp
Item, auctein fir daills
Item, auch dussane of Ireland buirdis, at fourtie shillings ilk dussane
Item, twa stanes of woll, pryce of the stane
Item, sax feddir beddis, by the airschipe…with their furnitour
Item, Tuentie twa pair of scheittis, by the airschip
Item, buird claithes, and five dussane of serveitts, by the airschip
Item, thrie dussane and ane half of pewdir plaits, with twa dussane and thrie trunscheouris
Item, an brasin basen
Item, thrie pynt stopis and thrie choppein stopis
Item, twa brasyne chandleris
Item, thrie little kists and ane chyre
Item, sax sylwir spwnis..with twa brokin spwnis
Item, thrie auld gunis
Item, the abuilzement of the defunct's bodie
(Paterson, 1866, 317)

3.47 The seventh laird was another Robert, and he married Jean, second daughter of Sir Robert Montgomerie of Skelmorlie, who died in December 1621:

… in an inventory of the effects within the fortalice of Portincross, taken in 1621, it appears, inter alia, to have contained 'ten fedder beddis, with their furnishings, which is so far illustrative of the manners of these times; for it is clear two or three of these must have belonged to each chamber.' (Paterson, 1866, 310)

3.48 Jean's will also includes details of other property and, more interestingly, provision for her children:

After listing much property and gear including *'ane quhyt hors, pryce xl lib; Item ane dvne horspryce xl lib; Item, four auld pleughe naigis, pryce of the piece x lib; Item aucht tidieky, pryce of thame all lxxxvi' she makes these legacies: '…to help our bairnes Nans, Elspeth and Barbara Boyds, eftir this maner, viz, to Nans 800 merks, to Elspeth 700 merks and to Barbara 500…' etc. Adding this proviso: 'And I leif my brother Sir Robert Montgomerie of Skelmorlie, and George our brother, to be overseers to my bairnes; and ordanes thame with my husband, to gif the portion that is left to ony of my dochteris to the rest of our bairnes, incais, as God forbid, ony of thame abuis their bodeys in harlotrie.'* (Tranter, 1965, 58)

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He had five sons and three daughters, who survived their mother, the eldest of which, Robert, predeceased his father in March 1634. By his marriage to Elizabeth, daughter of Alexander Cunningham of Carlung, he left a son, Robert, who succeeded his grandfather on 19th July 1658 in the lands of Ardneil and others in Cunninghame and Kyle-Stewart:

… in the five merk land of Ardneill within the parochin of Kilbryde and Bailyiarie of Cunninghame; to the 30 shilling land of the Maynes of Hellingtown; the 2 merk land of Muir of Hellingtown; the half of the Myln of Hellingtown; the 46 shilling 8 pence land of Knockindaill; the 4 merk land of Harrickhill of old extent, within the Bailyiary of Kyle- Stewart.

He married a daughter of Gavin Blair of Auldmuir, son to the Laird of Blair, and died sometime between March 1694 and September 1695. He was succeeded by his only son,Robert, who married Antonia, second daughter of Sir Robert Montgomerie of Skelmorlie, but both of their children, Hew and Lilias, died young. As a result, the estate passed to their cousin Robert, the son of their father's sister Grizel.

3.49 Robert Boyd of Portincross, the 11th Laird, married Antonia Montgomery, daughter of Sir Robert Montgomery of Skelmorlie sometime prior to 1694, but again both of their children, Hugh and Lillias, both died in infancy. When Robert died sometime before 1714 he left no direct heir and the titles and estates passed to his sister's son, William Fullarton. He took the surname of Boyd, and in 1714 he married Grizel Campbell by whom he had a son, John, and four daughters. In 1746 (also reported in some records as 1737) he alienated the ancient family estate of Arnele/Portincross to Patrick Crauford, Esq. of Auchnames, and afterwards acquired the lands of Balnakill, in Kintyre, where he died. He was succeeded by his only son, John Boyd, who died without issue at Skipness sometime around 1784.

The Parish of Kilbride

3.50 There are the ruins of five houses or castles in the parish, viz., Portincross, Law, Corsbie (sic), Hunterstoun and Southanan. (Paterson, 1866, 309)

The subdivision of the post-Norman landscape around West Kilbride into a number of smaller estates took place over a long period, as areas of the major landholdings like Arnele and Hunterstoun were granted or sold off. Further research is required to define the detail of this process, but an examination of the history of the principal castle sites in the parish can provide an outline chronology for the development of the area (see Fig 8).

Examination of documentary sources can also provide information relating to other elements of the landscape:

3.51 Between Portencross and Hunterston there is a property called Thirdpart. In 1547, John Cuninghame of Glengarnock was given sasine of the five merk land of old extent of Third part of Ardneil. Adjacent to Thirdpart is the Campbelton already mentioned. Writing at the beginning of the 17th century the topographer Timothy Pont quotes an *'old comon Rithme'* to the effect that Campbelton was one of the properties gifted by Alexander III to one of the Crawfurds for service at the Battle of Largs in 1263. In 1535, this five merk land of old extent was sold to Robert Hunter of Hunterston by Sir William Cuninghame, Lord of the fee of the Earldom of Glencairn. (Caldwell, 1998, 33)

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The Hunters of Hunterston and Little Cumbrae

3.52 The official listing for Hunterston Castle records that the 3-storey tower-house dates from the 15th or early-16th centuries, and has a 17th century house abutting it. However, Davis (1991, 287) states that it is 'maybe much older', probably because of the antiquity of the estate and of the Hunter family themselves:

> The Estate of Hunterstoun, comprising Hunterstoun and Campbeltoun, two coterminous properties…is situated on the coast to the westward of Southannan. It is the only portion of the parish which, from its earliest division in the C12, has remained unalienated, and is the seat of the Hunters of Hunterstoun, or of that Ilk, a family of great antiquity. (Paterson, 327, 1866)

3.53 Some authorities believe that the Hunter family arrived in Ayrshire with the de Morvilles and that they settled at Hunterston in the 12th century, but documentary evidence appears to indicate otherwise:

> In 1374, Robert II granted William Hunter a charter of that land of Ardneil formerly given up by Andrew Campbell, Knight, to be held of the Crown for one silver penny at Ardneil at Whitsunday. Later documents in the Hunter charter chest show that this was not the property known as Campbelton but the five pound land of old extent of Ardneil Hunter, known since the 16th century as Hunterston. Earlier genealogists would have us believe that the Hunter family was settled here as early as the 12th century but this seems incapable of proof on the basis of the surviving documents. There was certainly an Aylmar de Huntar of Ayrshire who did homage to Edward I in 1296. (Caldwell, 1998, 33)

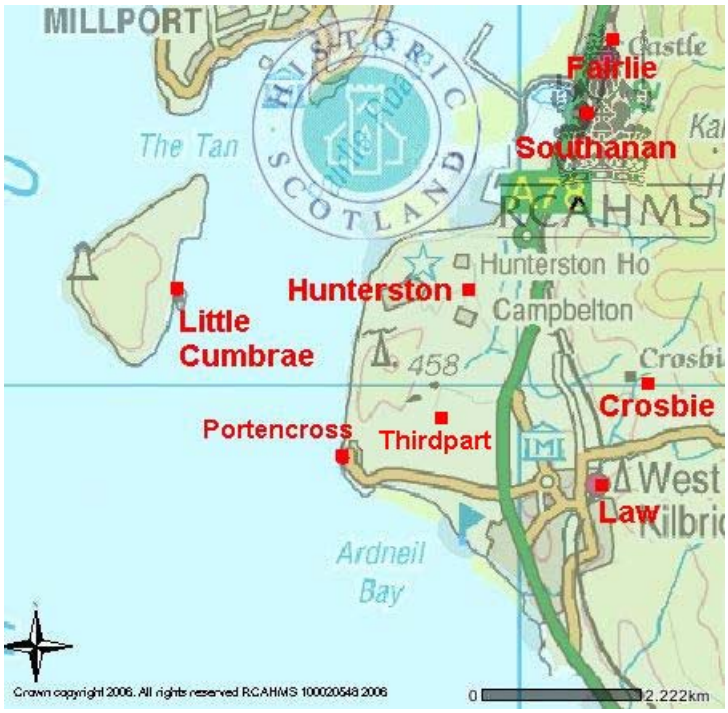

Figure 8: – Location map of castle sites in and around the parish of West Kilbride (Crown copyright 2006)

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3.54 Their name (from the Latin 'Venator') derives from their position as keepers of the local Royal Forests, but the date of elevation to this high office is not actually known:

The last mention of it is in a grant by James V, dated 31st May 1527, in which the island of Little Cumbrae was conferred on Robert Hunter of Hunterstoune and his spouse, Janet Montgomerie, and their heirs, "of which island and lands, with pertinents, the said Robert and his predecessors were in times past for us and for our predecessors the hereditary keepers." (Paterson, 334, 1866).

Exactly when Little Cumbrae was designated as a Royal Forest is not known, but it was apparently in existence at least as early as the late-14th century:

The Auld Castle was built prior to the year 1375, for in the spring of that year King Robert II made it his place of abode for a season. The fact is proved by a charter which the king, in the midst of his hunting and fishing expeditions, found time to seal and authenticate by the royal sign manual. Again, in the spring of 1384, the king is sojourning in the same island, and from his royal residence there dates another charter.(Lytteil, 1886)

It is presumed that the king would have had a suitable place to stay on the island, but it is not entirely clear whether the tower-house on Castle Island dates from this period, or whether it was a replacement for an, earlier 14th century (or earlier) structure built by Robert II or one of his Stewart ancestors. The official listing only states that it was 'occupied by Robert II in 1375 and 1384', but recent research has produced an alternative date for this structure:

A category of its own is formed by licences issued by the king or Parliament for reasons of national security or as a safeguard against pirates or enemy invasion. … Some of them refer to the small but sturdy tower house of Little Cumbrae; several times over, the king demanded of the tenant that a mansionem be built there: in 1527 of Robert Hunter of Hunterston, in 1532/33 of Robert Semple, and in 1534, again of Robert Hunter. In 1537, finally, the fief was granted to Hugh, Earl of Eglinton, with the explicit permission that a tower, too, could be built (see below). In 1545, at long last, there stood a tower on the island; it was built, hence, between the years 1537 and 1545. (Zeune, 1992, 113)

Further research is required to clarify this matter, but we are left with the possibility that the castle is 16th century in origin and that the earlier structure was demolished to make way for it or has been incorporated into the later fabric.

3.55 Hunting was a vital part of a noble life for medieval royalty and aristocracy across Europe, and was seen as far more than simply a pastime: it was an important arena for social interaction, essential training for war, and a privilege and measurement of nobility.

Controlled areas like Royal Forests and deer parks were also important elements of the manorial economy for the supply of food, wood and other resources.

Charlemagne, king of the Franks and Holy Roman Emperor, was known for his pack of hunting dogs, and it was during his reign that the concept of the 'Royal Forest' became law. This created tracts of land where game (the venison) was protected and the cutting of wood and vegetation (the vert) was controlled too. As a result, permanent game parks recognisably similar to those in medieval Britain existed in mainland Europe from at least as early as the 9th century.

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3.56 William the Conqueror brought the infamous 'Forest Laws' to England after the Conquest. This was a distinct legal system with its own courts and royal officials which operated alongside the common law and under which controlled lands could fall under several designations:

i. Forest
This was the highest level of land, normally in the ownership of the King and only hunted on by his servants or by royal licence. The four animals covered by forest law were red deer, fallow deer, roe deer, and wild boar. These animals could be hunted outside the forest by others but not pursued through the King's lands.

ii. Chase
A chase was similar to a forest but the right of hunting was granted to some nobleman other than the King. Transgressions, principally poaching, were punishable by common law rather than forest law. The beasts of the chase included fallow deer, roe deer, fox, and marten.

iii. Park
A park was an area enclosed by a fence or pale, used to contain the beasts of the forest. The principle function was to provide meat for the table and transgressions were again treated under common law outside the forest. The animals were similar to those in the chase.

iv. Warren
The public had the right to hunt any beast over common land unless such right had been restricted by some special royal grant, usually a 'right of free warren' over a specific area, giving the holder exclusive rights over the nominated animals within the area rather than an enclosure like a park. The animals of the warren were principally the hare, coneys (rabbits), pheasants, partridge, woodcock, etc., plus beasts of vermin and the chase such as fox, badger, martin and otter.

Punishments for breaking the Forest Law could be severe. In 1087 the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle recorded of William that:

He made many deer-parks; and he established laws therewith; so that whosoever slew a hart, or a hind, should be deprived of his eyesight. As he forbade men to kill the harts, so also the boars; and he loved the tall deer as if he were their father. Likewise he decreed by the hares, that they should go free.

His son, William Rufus, also a keen hunter, increased the severity of the penalties for various offences to include death and mutilation, including being blinded, or having hands or testicles cut off. Usually, however, transgressors were fined or imprisoned, although for severe cases you could be outlawed (which in reality was a form of death penalty).

The most famous of these controlled 'forests' is the New Forest in Hampshire, which William created in 1079. Another is Sherwood Forest, which by the 13th century covered nearly 100,000 acres, almost a fifth of the entire county of Nottinghamshire. There were a number in Scotland, the most famous possibly being Holyrood Park.

3.57 As a Royal Forest, therefore, Little Cumbrae was a place of high status where only royalty and those they favoured were allowed to hunt and even to visit and the position of Keeper of the Forest was one of great importance. When William Huntar, of Arnele-Huntar, was recorded in the Exchequer Roll of 1453 as Custos or Hereditary Keeper of the Forest of the Little Cumbray, it was said to be well stocked with deer and rabbits, but by the early-16th century, however, the incumbent, the minor Robert Huntar, apparently found himself unable to cope with serious trespassers and poachers. As a result, the Regent Albany, representing the young James V, granted, on the 28th October 1515, a charter to Hugh Montgomerie, first Earl of Eglinton:

that the ile of Litill Comeray, liand within our baillerie of Cunynghame, and schirefdome of Are is waistit and distroyit be divers personis that slais the dere and cunyugis thairof, and pastures bestis thairintill maisterfully be way of dede without licence, tolerance, or consent of Robert Huntare of Huntarstoun, forestar of heritage of the said ile the quhilk personis the said Robert may nocht resist, because he is nocht of substance and power without supple and help:- Tharefor we, with advise and consent of our said tutour ands governour for reformacion, gud reule, and saufte of the said ile in tyme cummyng, hes maid constitut and ordanit…Hew Erle of Eglintoune and his assignais ane or maa, our fearis, correkaris and supplearis of our said ile of Litill Comeray… (Paterson, 1866, 341-2)

When the Earl died in 1545 he left *'all and hale the ile of Litel Cumrays, with the tour and fortilage'* to his heir. In 1565 Queen Mary, on her marriage to Darnley, conveyed *'The isle of Cumry'* to the Semples of Belltrees, but it was later returned to the Eglinton family (Brotchie, 1911, 174).

In his Description of the Western Isles of 1594, Bishop Donald Munro was still able to observe that:

Besides this (the Greater Cumbray*) lyes ane iyle callit Cumbray of the Dais* (deer*), because there is many Dayis intill it.* (Brotchie, 1911, 174)

3.58 The age of the Royal Forest was coming to an end by this time, and the removal of James VI to England in 1603 probably meant that Little Cumbrae's traditional role was over and the role of Keeper was to become, in time, purely ceremonial.

The Craufurds of Crosbie and Auchenames

3.59 Corsbie Castle stands amidst some fine old wood, about a mile east of the village of Kilbride. It was inhabited at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when Timothy Pont made his survey. He says: "Crosby toure is the habitatione of William Craufurd of Auchnaims, by divers thought to be chieffe of the Craufurds. He holds the same of the Earls of Glencairne. This surname is very ancient, and did memorable service under King Alexander 3d, at the batell of Largis, by quhome their good service was recompensed with divers great lands and possessions. According the old common rithme:-

'They had had Draffen, Meithweine, and rich erth Stevinstone, Cameltoune, Knockawart, and fair Lowdoune.' (Paterson, 311, 1866)

The current Crosbie Tower dates from the 17th century, but the estate is much older: The first Craufurd of Crosbie appears to have been Sir Reginald de Craufurd, uncle of William Wallace… (Paterson, 322, 1866)

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3.60 Thomas Craufurd of Auchinames appears in a charter of confirmation by Robert II, dated at Arneil, on the 24th October 1401, and at the beginning of the 17th century Timothy Pont describes 'Corsby-Toure' as 'the habitatione of William Craufurd of Achnaimes.' This must refer to an earlier building on the site, possibly the one in which William Wallace was sheltered.

By the 1820s the Craufurds of Crosbie and Auchenames had abandoned Crosbie in favour of a 'neat cottage residence' at Portencross, but in 1837 Edward Craufurd of Crosbie and Auchenames had the castle 'restored in good taste' (Davis, 1991, 224).

Law Castle

3.61 Law Castle - also known as Kilbride Castle - is a tower house that stands on a hill just to the east of the village of Kilbride. It is said to have been built in 1468 by Thomas Boyd for his bride, Mary, sister of James III (see 3.4.1. above), and appears to have been completed by 1510.

In the early-17th century, Timothy Pont described Law as 'a strong grate Dounjon' (Davis, 1991, 317), but it later fell into ruin before being fully restored in 1998.

Southanan

3.62 Southanan was one of the mansions of the Sempill family, to whom the property belonged from the time of Bruce. It is situated close upon the sea; and though it has long been in a state of decay, it still bears evidence of its former splendour. The site is beautifully wooded and is altogether one of the most delightful on the coast. (Paterson, 314, 1866)

The original castle at Southanan dates from sometime before 1596 when it was enlarged by Robert, 4th Lord Sempill:

The ruins standing close to the later mansion represent one of the former seats of the Semphill family. … William Harvey tells us the *"It was erected by a Lord Semple from a design which he procured in Italy, and was one of the most ambitious buildings built during the reign of James VI."* (Davis, 1991, 376)

The castle appears to have been dismantled and mostly pulled down in the late-18th century and the materials used to build dykes and farm buildings.

Portencross Castle

3.63 Fine example of a 14th century Scottish stronghold and a conspicuous object to all voyagers on the Clyde. Unusual L-plan, the wing being placed at the end of the oblong keep and not at the side as is usual; entrance doorway on ground floor and another on 1st floor, both in the re-entering angle but on different faces; whole of ground floor is vaulted, as well as the hall on 1st floor; a peculiarity is that such a small building as this should have two kitchens; arrangement of stairs allowed servants entering by the lower door to reach upper floors and battlements without going through the hall and disturbing its occupants; hall is lighted by two large windows with stone seats; rooms in tower were evidently bedrooms and are provided with fireplaces and garde-robes. (Official Listing Citation, HB NO.14280)

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The Pre-Castle Landscape

3.64 Very little is known about the origin or the development of Portencross Castle. There is no surviving charter or other document granting permission to build a castle, and no references in any later documents to a date of foundation. Further research in the form of archaeological excavation or a standing building survey would undoubtedly add valuable knowledge to the discussion on the history and development of the site, but, for the purposes of this study, extrapolation from other sources is the only available method of enquiry.

As discussed above, the lands of Arnele held by the de Ros family from sometime in the 12th or 13th centuries, during which time they built a series of fortified dwellings on the site of earlier structures on Auldhill. The final phase of these developments appears to have been a first-floor hall-house or a small enclosure castle dating from the late-13th or early-14th centuries. The end of the de Ros family's period of tenure at Arnele seems to have been protracted, starting with the capture of Sir Godfrey de Ros in 1296 and his return as Sheriff of Ayr in 1305. Some records indicate that Robert I gave the lands of Arnele to the Boyds in 1306, the year of his coronation, while others indicate that this happened in 1315, the year after Bannockburn. The son of Sir Godfrey was back in 1333, however, when he served as Sheriff of Ayr, but it seems that by 1340 or 1341 their claim to the land was effectively over.

The lands of Arnele became the patrimony of a branch of the Boyds of Kilmarnock, the progenitor being Robert Boyd, the youngest brother of Sir Thomas Boyd who was baron from 1365 to 1410. As discussed above, it was either this Sir Thomas or his father who began construction of Dean Castle sometime after 1360.

3.65 It is evidence from Royal charters signed at Arnele that seem to provide some of the strongest evidence for the earliest construction date for Portencross Castle:

There are no authentic references to a castle at Ardneil prior to the 1370s though various writers have averred that Robert Bruce granted a charter at Ardneil in 1307. The charter in question is actually one of 1400 by Robert III, confirming to John Fullerton the lands of Kilmichael in Arran. The error of dating copied by so many historians seems to have been perpetrated originally by Sir Walter Scott in a note to canto 6 of Lord of the Isles. The charter of Robert II to Fergus Fullerton, dated Ardneil 1372, and cited by Lamb is evidently a misreading of a charter of 1391 by Robert III. These two documents apart, there are fifteen acts of Robert II dated at Ardneil, covering the period from March 1371 to the year of his death in 1390. The Ardneil of these documents is not likely to have been the castle on Auldhill but the castle of Portencross. (Caldwell, 1998, 34)

There are also documents recording payments made in connection with royal visits to the castle in 1382, 1387, and 1388. The occurrence of so many charters and other documents from this period has previously led to the assertion that Portencross was the site of a royal castle such as Dundonald or Rothesay, but it appears that the frequency of visits made by the first Stewart king may actually have been because it was 'a convenient resting place for the king on his travels between his castles of Dundonald and Rothesay, or when hunting on Little Cumbrae, three miles across the water' (Caldwell, 1998, 34

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3.66 The evidence from the excavation on Auldhill appears to indicate that the hall or castle there was dismantled sometime in the mid-14th century, and this would seem to corroborate Caldwell's assertion that the charters of 1371 onwards were issued while the king was staying at Portencross Castle. This would provide an earliest time-frame of construction of pre-1371, and, taking into account the archaeological data from Auldhill and the evidence that construction work was begun at Dean Castle in the 1360s, it would appear that the likeliest date for construction of the first phase of Portencross Castle lies between the late-1360s and 1370. This would also indicate the probability that it was the first Robert Boyd of Ardneil/Portencross who was responsible for the work.

3.67 The use of Portencross Castle as a departure point for journeys to other locations in the Firth and Clyde (and possibly beyond) raises the issue of why the site of the principal dwelling- house was removed from Auldhill down to the coastline, and whether the late-14th century phase discussed above was the first development of the site. As discussed above, a location on the coast would have given the inhabitants of Auldhill a vital access to the sea, which by the 5th and 6th centuries was the predominant routeway for trade and communication. The growth in power of the Norse kingdoms of Man and Dublin in the 9th and 10th centuries, and the consequent rise of the Lordship of the Isles in the Hebrides in the mid-12th century were all based on maritime power.

As such, it seems unlikely that the people who lived in an important coastal location such as Auldhill would not have had access to their own vessels, and this raises the issue of how the coastline at Portencross was utilized and from what period. The inhabitants of 'Neil's Hill' in the early medieval period would almost certainly have used boats to fish and to travel, either along the coast or across open water to Little Cumbrae, Kintyre or even Ireland.

3.68 The Old Harbour at Portencross is situated beside the castle, and it is listed as late medieval because of this, i.e. it was constructed to serve the castle. However, it may be equally valid to argue that the castle is sited where it is because of the existence of the harbour, i.e. the latter pre-dated the late-14th century development. If so, then the harbour could date at least from the period when the de Ros family built and occupied Auldhill, and therefore should be seen as an element of that pre-14th century landscape and land use pattern. This would also raise the possibility that the location of Portencross Castle was chosen to respect this pre-14th century landscape, and may indeed have formed an important part of it, i.e. the site of an earlier phase of development relating to the harbour and its role in the use of the sea. However, the possibility that there was an earlier building on the site of the castle or near to it could only be investigated using archaeological excavation.

Interpretation of the Castle Fabric

3.69 The first analysis of Portencross Castle was provided by MacGibbon and Ross in 1889:

A ruin, situated on a rough but level rocky platform, which juts into the Frith of Clyde about two miles from West Kilbride Railway Station. Although on a low situation (the rocks being only a few feet above high-water level), it is a conspicuous object to all voyagers on the Clyde. On the land side the site is overshadowed by the high and precipitous cliffs of Ardneil, densely covered with coppice-wood. The castle is a fine example of an early Scottish stronghold, and, although entirely neglected, is in a fair state of preservation. The plan is somewhat peculiar, the wing being placed at the end of the oblong keep and not at the side, as is usual with buildings of the L plan.

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The main block measures 58 feet 1 inch from east to west by 31 feet in breadth, and is about 35 feet 6 inches high to the parapet walk, above which it rises about 15 feet more to the top of the existing masonry of the smaller limb, which is higher than the main portion. There is an entrance doorway on the ground floor, and another on the first floor, both being in the re-entering angle, but on different faces. The whole of the ground floor is vaulted, as well as the hall upon the first floor.

In approaching the castle it is apparent that there has been a wall containing an outer gateway between it and the edge of the rock; the checked rybat of the jamb being wrought on one angle of the building. A path about 8 feet 6 inches wide leads to the door, inside of which a steep and dark straight flight of steps leads in the thickness of the wall to the first floor, where it terminates, and from the landing a wheel-stair in the south wall leads to the top. The central wall containing the staircase divides the castle into two parts. The large apartment on the ground floor has the rock for its pavement, and seems as if it had at one time been a stable. The large window at the north-west angle (which, however, is doubtless an insertion), is protected by being opposite a place where the water is deep. All the other windows on this floor are easily accessible, but they are mere slits.

A peculiarity of this structure is that such a small building should have two kitchens, one on the ground floor and the other on the first floor. It may have been considered necessary, in a castle which was frequently inhabited by royalty, that a kitchen should not only be conveniently placed for the hall, but also that another kitchen should be provided for the servants and retainers, who would probably be somewhat numerous. It will further be observed from the plans that servants or others entering by the lower door could reach the upper floors and battlements without going through the hall and disturbing its occupants; while all entering by the upper door had to go through the hall. The dark lower kitchen is 8 feet 8 inches wide by 6 feet 9 inches long, or, with the arched fireplace, 11 feet 2 inches long. A rough doorway has been slapped into this kitchen from the outside. That an opening should have been cut through here during the later occupation of the castle is not to be wondered at, as the original entrance to this kitchen off the stair, with steps up and down in the dark passage, is very awkward. At the top of the stair to the first floor, a door on the right hand leads into the hall and another on the left into the upper kitchen. The hall is 24 feet long by 16 feet 6 inches wide, and 19 feet 4 inches to the top of the vault. There seems to have been an upper room in the vault, reached by a doorway from a landing in the wheel-stair, but it is now built up. A large window over the hall fireplace gave light to this apartment in the vault. The hall itself is lighted by two large windows with stone seats that, on the south side, having evidently been enlarged at a later date. A mural chamber at the south-west angle enters off one of these windows. A service window opens from the kitchen into a recess adjoining the entrance passage. At the top of the wheel-stair there are two doorways, both leading into the main block, one into a chamber in the roof space over the hall, and the other into the parapet walk which runs round the building. After passing round this walk, a flight of steps about 6 feet wide is reached leading up to the parapet walk of the wing, which is about 8 feet higher than the walk of the main block. This additional height permits of the introduction of two floors above the kitchen, and there was besides a place in the attic, which has evidently been enlarged at some later period by raising the parapet on the south side and including the walk in the room. These rooms in the tower were evidently bedrooms, and are provided with fireplaces and garde-robes. (MacGibbon and Ross, 1889, 151-156)

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3.70 Having compared the fabric of Portencross with other structures in their study, they surmised that it belonged to what they defined as 'castles of the Second Period', i.e. 1300-1400. As such, they thought that, alterations and additions aside, it was largely constructed in one principal phase and seemed to bear close comparison to three other L-plan castles of the Second Period, i.e. Cessford Castle in Roxburghshire, Dalhousie Castle in Midlothian, and Ravenscraig Castle in Aberdeenshire.

However, Caldwell (1998, 74) posited that the fabric contains evidence for four distinct phases of development of the castle (see Fig 9):

- Phase 1 – '…as originally built in the mid- or late-14th century, it consisted of the present main block, measuring 9.5 m by 12.1 m, with walls over 2 m thick. It had a hall at first floor level over a vaulted cellar, and probably an attic above, and may conveniently be called a hall-house.'
- Phase 2 – 'The wing at Portencross was added prior to the mid-15th century…'
- Phase 3 – '…the whole structure significantly modified after that, probably in the later part of the C15, by the heightening of the jamb and the creation of the present attics and battlements'
- Phase 4 – 'In the late-17th century further alterations were made to provide accommodation for more than one family of local fishermen.'

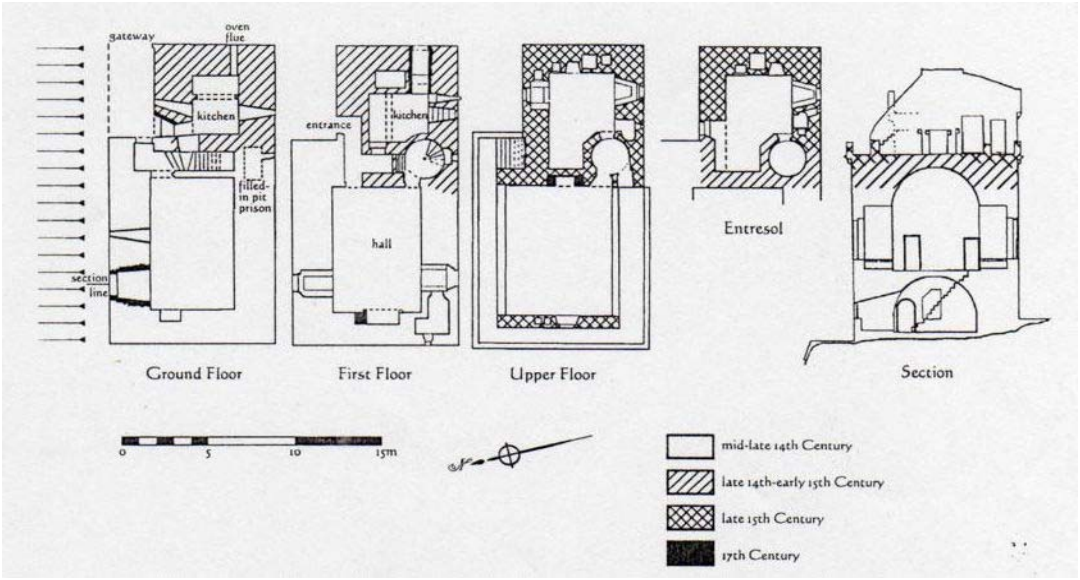

Figure 9: – 'Plans of Portencross Castle, based on MacGibbon and Ross (1889)' (Caldwell, 1998, 74)

PRELIMINARY

Phase 1 – The Hall-House

3.71 The original hall-house is built of large cut blocks of purplish-red sandstone which could well have been quarried from the outcrops around the castle. They are mostly rectangular and laid in rough courses with lime mortar. The quoins and dressed stones around doorways and embrasures are of a white sandstone that occurs two miles away in a quarry at Kaims Hill. The ground-floor entrance doorway at the north-east corner has a segmental arch and a cavetto moulding. … It is checked on the interior to take a door but there are no signs of the slots which might have been expected to secure a main entrance with heavy beams. Its jamb stones are set in an amtrix of small packing stones, suggesting they may have been tampered with. It gives access to a vaulted passage with stairs up the floor above, and another finely executed doorway with a segmental arch, checked both inside and out for doors, giving access to the ground floor. The vaulted ground-floor chamber is ventilated rather than lit by a narrow loop overlooking the harbour. The floor appears to be a mixture of bedrock and paving slabs and there is a small wall cupboard low in the back wall.

3.72 The steps of the stair leading up to the first floor have obviously been replaced. … At the top the vaulted passage over them has been cut back to provide head-room. The east wall of the hall is built of small slab-like stones different in character to the rest of the walls and would appear to be largely a rebuild, but the doorway off the stair incorporates several jamb stones which are probably from the original entrance. There was probably a small lobby here in the thickness of the wall, prior to the construction of the circular stair. A hatch in the floor gave access to a small pit prison below, with its own ventilation loop in the south wall. The debris which now completely fills it would have been packed in when the construction of the circular stair made continued use impossible. The hall is a spacious chamber, 7.7 x 5 m, originally unvaulted. In its west wall was a large fireplace, one jamb of which survives, and it was flanked in the north and south walls by windows with ample stone seats lining the recesses. Off the southern window recess is a large cupboard or garde-robe in the south-west corner of the building, with its own small window facing west. Above the hall was an attic, the floor of which was supported on beams slotted into the side walls. Access to it may have been by ladder.(Caldwell, 1998, 74-76)

3.73 The identification of a possible hall-house phase at Portencross places it within one stream of current theory which suggests that many of the complexes identified as tower-houses may actually have begun as first-floor hall-houses of a type found across England following the Norman Conquest:

> At Aros on Mull, Carrick on Loch Goil, and Skipness in Kintyre are rare examples of 'hall castles'. There were doubtless more, but being less substantial structures they have not survived so well the rigours of time. … The present structure at Skipness Castle looks on first examination to be a mighty enclosure castle dating from the close of the 13th century, but embedded in the fabric are substantial remains of an earlier hall castle. This comprised two free-standing buildings, one a two-storey residence, with the lord's hall on the upper floor - hence the generic name - and the other a single-storey chapel. There may well have been other structures as well, and everything would probably have been enclosed by a defensive wall of earth and timber. (Tabraham, 1997, p.37)

PRELIMINARY

3.74 The single best survival of a hall-house in Scotland which has not been incorporated into a later development is Rait Castle in Nairnshire. The manor of Rait first appears on record in 1238, but on architectural grounds the hall castle appears to have been built towards the end of the 13th century by either Sir Gervaise de Rait, the Constable of Nairn Castle, or his younger brother, Sir Andrew (Tabraham, 1997, p.55). The site is not naturally defensive, being low-lying and overlooked by a steep hillside on the south, and 'the house itself appears more of a dacha than a castle' (Gifford, 1992, p.284):

> Rait, like Skipness, is a two storey building, measuring about 20 by 10m (66 by 33 ft), with an unvaulted basement and an upper hall. The hall was entered from the outside through an impressive doorway, protected by a portcullis and a drawbar. There would have been a screen, closing off this end from the hall itself and forming a lobby; it may have had a minstrels' gallery above it. At the far end of the hall from the screen would have been the high table, the 'hie burde', where the lord and his family took their meals, bathed in sunlight streaming through the large windows confined to this end of the hall and heated by the handsome hooded fireplace. A projecting round tower, entered from the 'hie burde' end housed the lord's private apartment and a narrow rectangular projection on the other side of the building was the latrine. The basement, unheated and indifferently lit, was probably used for storage. There seems also to have been an attic in the roof space, from which access was gained to a defensive wall-walk. The kitchen and other service rooms were probably housed in timber buildings outside in the barmkin or courtyard; the remnant of one such structure is visible attached to the gable beside the doorway. All were enclosed within a perimeter wall.
> (Tabraham, 1997, 54-55)

3.75 As it is possible that the putative first phase hall-house at Portencross was built to replace the final phase building on Auldhill, further comparison between the two sites could be of interest both locally and nationally, especially with regard to the development of the tower-house type across Scotland as a whole:

> There is still no consensus of the emergence and early development of the tower-house type in Scotland, though its roots could lie in the later 13th century. (Fawcett, 1994, 20)

Placed within this context, Portencross may be part of a nationally insignificant group of small, hall-house type structures, or maybe provides a good example of a much wider phase of development of the tower-house type across the country as a whole:

> It remains to be seen whether other hall-houses of similar size, style and date to Portencross can be identified. Portencross might be a special case, a miniature, simplified version of the enormous hall-house (normally, but misleadingly, called a towerhouse) built by King Robert II at nearby Dundonald. On the other hand, the RCAHMS have recently identified a small unvaulted hall-house incorporated into a towerhouse at Torthorwald in Dumfries and Galloway. Perhaps more await discovery. (Caldwell, 1998, 74)

PRELIMINARY

Phase 2 – The East Wing

3.76 At a later date the hall-house was remodelled, principally by the addition of a jamb to provide extra accommodation and kitchen facilities. The resultant towerhouse was typical of several others in having an L-plan, but different from them in having its wing off a short, rather than a long face of the main block… Choice of position for it was limited by the sea on two sides and the need not to block the south hall window. By placing it to the east it was also possible to make the entrance more secure. The rocky ledge alongside the harbour was built up with rubble to provide a path to the door set in the re-entrant angle at ground floor level. Access was further restricted by a gate at the north-east corner of the new wing, as evidenced by the rebate cut in the quoins of the wing and the springing for an arch.

Apart from the gaucheness of the design the evidence that the jamb was not part of the original scheme of building is the treatment of architectural details, for instance the use of lintels on doors and passages. There is no obvious evidence for dating it, but we can suggest it was built sometime in the late-14th or first half of the 15th century. The erection of the jamb must have involved the removal of most of the east wall of the hall- house. The stone used is mostly the same purplish sandstone as in the main block, with white sandstone for the quoins. There is no obvious joint in the masonry of the south wall as the quoins of the south-east corner of the hall-house have been taken out, but the eastern portion is less weathered and the blocks of stone are laid more regularly. A circular stair was inserted at the junction between main block and wing, starting at first floor level and providing access to the upper storeys and roof. There is a corbel in the south face near the south-east corner, between the first-floor and the entresol, which may be a relic of a timber gallery at this point.

3.77 The ground floor of the wing is entered by a door off the stairs from the ground floor entrance. This is contrived very awkwardly with a window embrasure in the wing wall to provide enough width for access. The room is vaulted, has two loops for ventilation in stepped embrasures to raise them well clear of the ground, and a third loop positioned to command the ground floor entrance. A capacious fireplace in the east wall with a large flue was obviously intended for cooking. The front of the fire is now marked solely by two corbels in the side walls, positioned to support a hood. Low in the back wall is a small blocked opening for an oven. …
The room in the first floor of the wing was supposed by MacGibbon and Ross to have been a second kitchen. On the assumption that the castle all dated to the time of Robert II, they reasoned that two kitchens would have been necessary, one to cater for the requirements of the royal guest and his retinue, the other for the laird and his family. The evidence for this second kitchen on the first floor is confined to a hatch in the west wall which would have served well for passing food into the hall and a corbel adjacent to the hatch, identified as the support for a hood of an enormous fireplace taking up the northern third of the chamber. There are no signs of a flue in the wall above…and the serving hatch would have, most inconveniently, been in the fireplace itself. Nevertheless, the identification of this chamber as a kitchen with a large fireplace does not appear unreasonable. It should also be pointed out that several other Scottish L-plan towerhouses like Craigmillar, Neidpath and Cessford were planned with a kitchen in the wing adjacent to the hall. We might assume that it was the desire to have such a conveniently located kitchen which was one of the main motives behind the development of the L-plan.

The main entrance to the remodelled castle was the door at first-floor level in the north wall of the wing. Two slots below it were for supporting a timber platform and steps. Access to the hall was along a short passage, and to the private accommodation above from the mural stair leading off the hall. In the original arrangement of the wing there would have been at least one storey above this kitchen.

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The hall was now vaulted and it is probable that the attic floor was done away with, thus creating an impressive chamber, almost 6m high, with an extra window high up in its west wall.. The vault is made of bright red sandstone blocks and the exterior walls corresponding level to its haunches are predominantly of basalt.(Caldwell, 1998, 76-77)

3.78 As with the putative hall-house phase, the addition of a service wing may be just one example of a developmental sequence that was quite common throughout the corpus of early stone-built castles in Scotland, helping to define what later on became what we recognize as a tower-house.

Phase 3 – The Tower-House

3.79 In a third and final rebuilding the upper part of the wing, from above the first floor, was remodelled and heightened. A fourth storey was added to it, and attics and battlements created or rebuilt on top of both blocks. The walls of the fourth storey of the wing include many blocks of red and white sandstone and several of the quoins are of red sandstone. The new walls are thinner…thus creating a significantly larger floor area for the new rooms. The window openings are not chamfered like earlier ones in the castle, but are checked for shutters. A window lighting the circular stair above the entresol is a narrow slit with eyelets top and bottom. It must date to the mid-15th century at earliest, when such loops make an appearance in the artillery work at Threave Castle. (Zeune [1992, 74], however, uses typology to estimate the date of the dumb-bell gun loop at Portincross Castle to the period 1500-1550)

3.80 A date in the later part of the 15th century would also be appropriate for the battlements, with a parapet projecting only very slightly on a continuous cavetto moulding supported by a course of corbelling. The corbels, and the slabs they support, are a mixture of red and white sandstone, perhaps because several of the elements are reused from an earlier scheme. With the rebuilding of the north wall of the wing the first-floor kitchen fireplace disappeared. Perhaps the kitchen on the ground floor now sufficed for the needs of the lairds of Portencross. The first floor may have served for storage. Above that were two storeys with fireplaces, relatively large windows with seats in their embrasures and wall cupboards or garde-robes. At the very top was an attic, also accessed from the circular stair, now all but disappeared. Above the hall vault there was another attic with a fireplace, reduced in width sometime after its creation. It reused corbels from the parapet as supports for its mantle- piece. The battlement walk surrounded both attics, with steps up from the main block to the wing. There were doorways off the circular stair to both levels. (Caldwell, 1998, 77)

3.81 The addition of the extra floors would have completed the transformation of the hall-house into a recognizable tower-house. What should not be forgotten, however, is that the castle at Portencross would not have stood in isolation:

The towerhouse was only one element of a larger complex which, according to the inventory of the deceased wife of the laird of Portencross in 1621, included a barn and barnyard. There are now no traces of these on the ground, but the impression of a substantial gable of a building can be traced in the harling remaining on the south face of the castle. At the south- west corner of the towerhouse a lump, of masonry, traces of mortar on the bedrock and the deliberate cutting back of some of the quoins, suggests the former existence of a barmkin wall extending from this point westwards before returning to enclose the level grassy area to the south of the castle. (Caldwell, 1998, 77)

Excavations at Threave Castle, which dates from the later-1300s, revealed the foundations of a number of contemporary structures:

Except when they had to take refuge in the tower in times of siege, most members of the earl's household, his servants and guests would be housed in the scattering of less substantial but still carefully built structures beneath its walls. One of these was probably the main hall of the castle, a more public room than the hall in the tower. Also found through excavation was a walled harbour, immediately to the west of the tower, a reminder – if any were needed on an island site – of the importance of communications by water at a time when roads tended to be execrable. (Fawcett, 1994, 22)

3.82 Apart from the features identified by MacGibbon and Ross, there are no obvious indications for the locations of ancillary buildings or for a barmkin wall at Portencross. As discussed above, the principal landscape feature near to the castle is the Old Harbour, although recent research has identified three potential fish-traps in Ardneil Bay, some 0.5km to the south-east, which could possibly be part of the economic hinterland of the site.

Phase 4 – The Post-Boyd Period

3.83 The castle is said to have been abandoned by the lairds shortly after 1660, after which it was occupied by local fishermen and other tenants. It was probably at this time that an extra doorway was made in the ground floor of the wing and many of the windows were enlarged. In some cases lintels and jambs of red sandstone were used, in other the lintels are made of wood. The present hall fireplace also dates from this time. The castle was unroofed in a storm in 1739, and has been in ruins ever since. (Caldwell, 1998, 77)

As is the case with the interpretation of Phases1-3 above, the evidence for the alterations made post-1660 by the new tenants are based on observations made by Caldwell during and after the excavations on Auldhill. As such, they provide an invaluable template for our understanding of the fabric and development of Portencross Castle, with the identification of a 14th century hall-house phase in particular elevating the site's importance as an example of early tower-house development in Scotland. The next step would be to commission a full standing building survey and, where appropriate, a fabric analysis to confirm (or otherwise) this sequence so that a more complete understanding of this nationally important complex is arrived at.

3.84 ARP Lormier's 2003 study reaches similar conclusions, the more recent work undertaken as part of this however the CMP identifies a slightly alternative model. This would suggest the raising of the east jamb in two separate phases, and is discussed at greater length in section 4.0.

Early-Modern and Modern Portencross –The Map Evidence

3.85 As discussed above, the name given to the estate from the earliest historic records is Arnele, but by the time the earliest maps were being produced this title – where it is used at all - had been reduced to a lesser designation of a place rather than the area as a whole. The name Portincross does not appear in documents until 1572 when it was referred to in a contract between Robert Lord Boyd and Robert Boyd of Portincross for the sale of the lands of Portincross. This document refers to 'the ten merk land of Portincroce and Ardneill with the toure fortalice maneir place and thair pendiclis and pertinentis land' (James, 2003, 5).

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3.86 The earliest surviving map which shows the area (Fig10) dates from ca.1636-52, and was produced by Robert Gordon of Straloch as part of the project to complete (and correct where required) the mapping of Scotland begun by Timothy Pont in the late-1500s. The map is little more than a hand-drawn sketch and the inscriptions are not the most legible, but he clearly records the castle as Paincors and the headland as the Poynt of Paincors.

3.87 When Blaeu's Atlas novus was published in 1654, however, the area is inscribed with the more familiar terms of Porten kross and Ardnel (Fig 11). Some thirty years later, when John Adair produced his Mape of the west of Scotland (Fig 12), the headland is again denoted as Pencors, as is also the case in General Roy's military map of 1747-55 (Fig 13) where it is spelled as Pencorse.

3.88 From that point on, however, the use of any variation on Pencors ceases, and only varieties of Portincross appear. Andrew Armstrong's New Map of Ayrshire of 1775 (Fig 14) records it as Porting Cross, while both Thomson's 1820 Northern Part of Ayrshire (Fig 15) and Aitken's Map of the Parish of West Kilbride (Fig 16) use the slightly more recognizable Portin Cross.

3.89 The first use of the modern spelling of Portencross does not appear until the 20th century in J.G. Bartholomew's 'Survey Map of Scotland' of 1912 (Fig 17) and this appears to have been the accepted form of spelling from that point on in all maps.

3.90 There appears to be an element of contradiction between the documentary source of 1572 and the cartographic evidence as, apart from Blaeu's map of 1654, the available mapping evidence appears to indicate that the name of the site until the mid-18th century was Pencors. The use of this term by Roy in 1747-55 is especially interesting as his maps were by far the most accurate and well-researched to be produced in the period before the Ordnance Survey began publishing in the mid-19th century. Further research would be required to determine if Pencors is used in any documents during this period or whether the two terms are complementary or interchangeable, e.g, Portincross could be a reduction through usage of the phrase Puirt Pencors, 'puirt' being the Gaelic term for a well-sheltered beach suitable for small boats to be launched from.The entry produced by the Rev Mr Arthur Oughterson for the Parish of West Kilbride in the Old Statistical Account of 1796 (Vol.XII, pp.404-424) uses Portincross and provides an alternative interpretation of the history of the name:

3.91 The promontory, near to which, this port and castle are situated, is the extreme point of land directly W. from Edinburgh. To this day, the track of a line of road can be distinctly traced through the country, leading from the capital to this port. From this circumstance, as well as from the very name, we conclude it mist have been a place of some importance. In these barbarous and remote times, there could be no trade carried on in it, to give it that consequence. Neither can it be imagined, there was so much communication between the Highlands and the main land, as that this place might be converted into a mere ferry port, for the conveniency of passengers, who, we may believe, would hardly be induced, either from profit or curiosity, to visit these inhospitable regions.

The most probable account, therefore, of the matter, seems to be, that this was the place where they took a boat to go over to the celebrated monastery of I. Colm Kill, the most ancient foundation of the kind in Scotland, and which, it is well known, was for many ages, the burial-place of our Scottish Kings. And, as this monastery was established long before any other in this country, it may be supposed that, in that period of the gloomy reign of superstition, many pilgrimages were made to it.

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Hence the name Portincross, being a compound of Portis and Crucis; because, from this port, was the nearest and most direct passage over to the royal cemetery, and from it too, the pious travellers took their departure to do penance, or make their offerings at the sacred place. What corroborates this conjecture somewhat is, that at Lochranza at the N. end of Arran, there is an old castle, where, tradition reports, the companies passing to the western isles (whether these funeral or pilgrimage processions, is uncertain), were wont to stop and refresh; and then, as may be concluded, crossing over the narrow Isthmus of Cantire, and again taking boat, after sailing through the sound between Islay and Jura, were immediately at Iona, the object of their destination. Unfortunately there is absolutely no evidence to corroborate the Rev. Oughterson's 'conjecture' about the Portis Crucis or the connection to Iona.

Armstrong's map of 1775 shows a drawing of the castle and denotes it with the term, 'ruins' (as is the case with Fairley, Southannan, Tarbett, and Monfodd). This would appear to reflect the loss of the roof of the castle in 'the windy January' of 1739 (Paterson, 321, 1866).

It is reported that the Boyds continued to live in the castle 'until after the restoration of Charles II (i.e. post-1660) when it was relinquished for a mansion-house of a very different style of building, where they resided until the alienation of the property' (Paterson, 1866, 318). This is presumed to be Auchenames House that is sited to the north-east of the castle, but unfortunately none of the 17th and 18th century maps record any buildings there, including the Roy map of 1747-55 which is usually assiduous in noting down even the smallest dwelling-houses.

It is also reported that 'Robert Boyd of Portincross, having lost his eldest son, disponed the barony of Portincross and Ardneill to his grandson, William Fullarton Boyd, eldest son of Grizel Boyd, his only daughter', and he 'alienated the ancient family estate to Patrick Craufurd of Auchinames on 19th November 1737' (Paterson, 1866, 319). Again there is no record of this in any of the 18th century maps, and it is not until Aitken's map of 1827 that two 'cottages' are recorded alongside the name, 'J. Crawford of Auch names Esq.'.

Figure 10: – Detail from Cuningham, ca.1636-1652, Robert Gordon (National Library of Scotland)

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The Portencross Cannon

3.92 An old rusted cannon lies on the green by Portincross Castle. It is one of five fished up in 1740 from a vessel of the Armada, which lies beneath the waters a few yards off the point on which the castle stands. Defoe in his tour tells us – *"Now we are upon the western coasts, I shall mention that an attempt was made by diving to come at one of the largest ships of the Spanish Armada, stranded in 1588"* near Portincross. Captain Rae, who dived down, *"found the vessel to be very entire, to have a great company of guns aboard, but to be full of sand."* A company was formed to recover the treasure supposed to be in the hold, but, as the chief promoter died, it came to nothing, and the silver bar and Spanish doubloons of the old galleon are still ten fathoms deep a few yards beyond the rocks of Portincross Castle. (Brotchie, 1911, 85)

In August 1740 Sir Archibald Grant, 2nd Baronet of Monymusk, in company with a Captain Rae, began diving operations off the shore beside Portencross Castle:

3.93 The divers dragged a lead weighted line along the sea floor, diving whenever the rope was disturbed. At ten fathoms and about a quarter of a mile from the shore, Captain Rae, submerging in a dive bell, found something. It was a warship! By means of powerful iron tongs several brass cannons and an iron one were raised. The exact number recovered is problematical. One authority gives five brass and the aforementioned iron one; another estimates twenty. According to the latter source one of the partners in the diving venture died and operations ceased, leaving, it is said, about sixty guns unrecovered. (Hewitt, 1966, 53)

While the last figure must be an exaggeration, the account of the operation also records that one of the brass cannons had a Tudor Rose with the inscription 'Richard and John Phillips brethren made this piece, 1584.' These men are historically attested as gunfounders during the Elizabethan period. By contrast, the iron cannon is recorded as having a Spanish Crown and Coat of Arms just below the touch-hole. Unfortunately, the five brass cannon were sent to Dublin to be smelted down, and only the iron cannon was left at Portencross:

More accurately it is what is known in Elizabethan times as a demi-cannon. There is little difference in length between it and the cannon but the latter had a larger bore and fired heavier shot. It is nearly eight foot long with a six inch bore and would have fired thirty pound of iron shot. Its exact age is almost impossible to determine but it would appear to be a type of gun in common use, and carried by large ships, for over a century after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Traditionally it came from *"one of the large ships of the Spanish Armada which sank in about ten fathoms of water at no great distance from the shore."* (Hewitt, 1966, 53)

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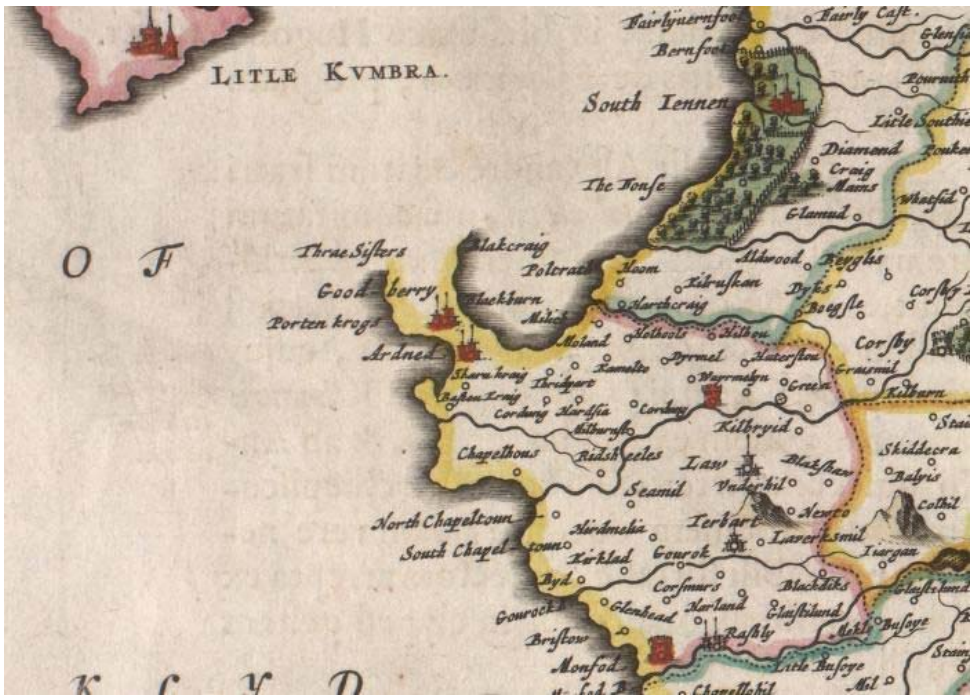

Figure 11: – Detail from Cuninghamia ex schedis Timotheo Pont Blaeu, 1654 (National Library of Scotland)

Figure 12: - Detail from A mape of the west of Scotland containing Clydsdail, Nithsdail, Ranfrew, Shyre of Ayre, & Galloway, by John Adair, ca.1685 (National Library of Scotland)

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Figure 13: – Detail from Ayrshire, General William Roy, 1747-55 (British Library)

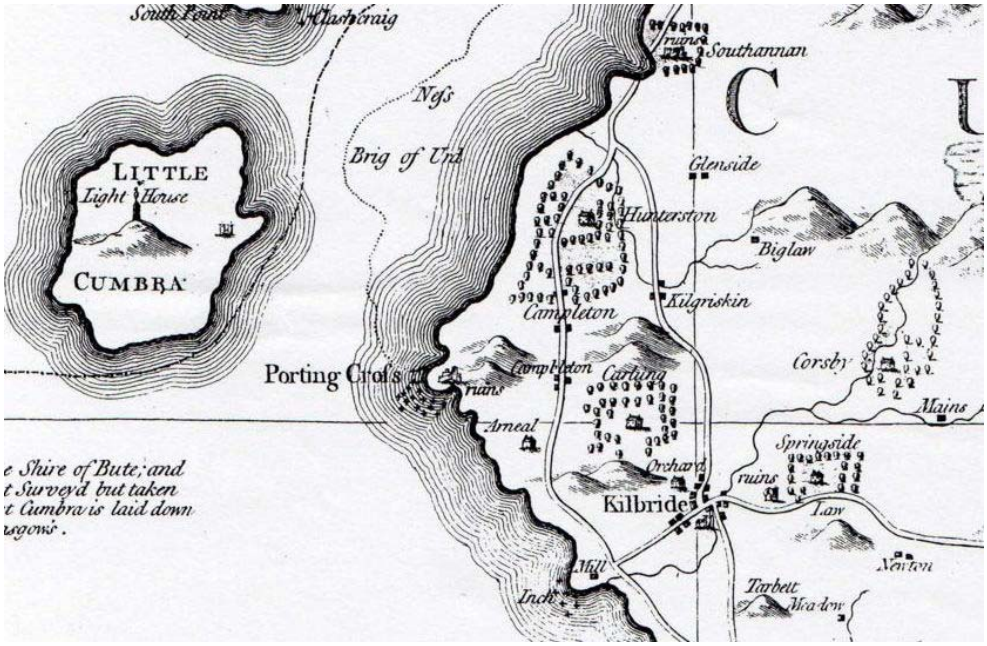

Figure 14: – Detail from A new map of Ayrshire, Andrew Armstrong, 1775 (National Library of Scotland)

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Figure 15: – Detail from Northern Part of Ayrshire, J. Thomson & Co., 1820 (National Library of Scotland)

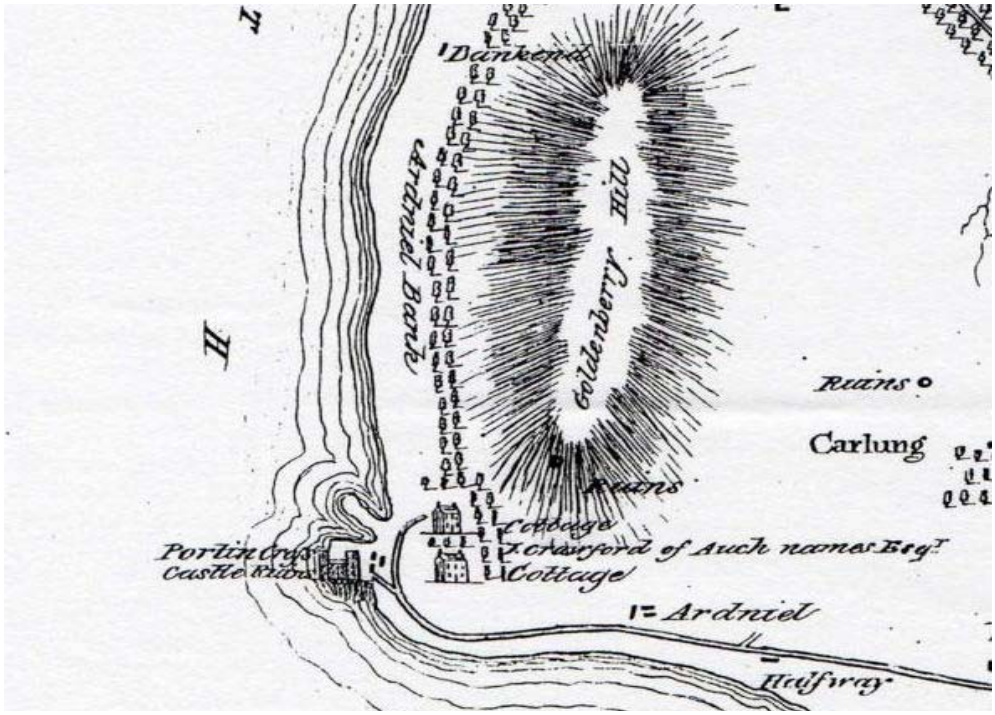

Figure 16: – Detail from Map of the Parish of West Kilbride, Robert Aitken, 1827 (North Ayrshire Archives)

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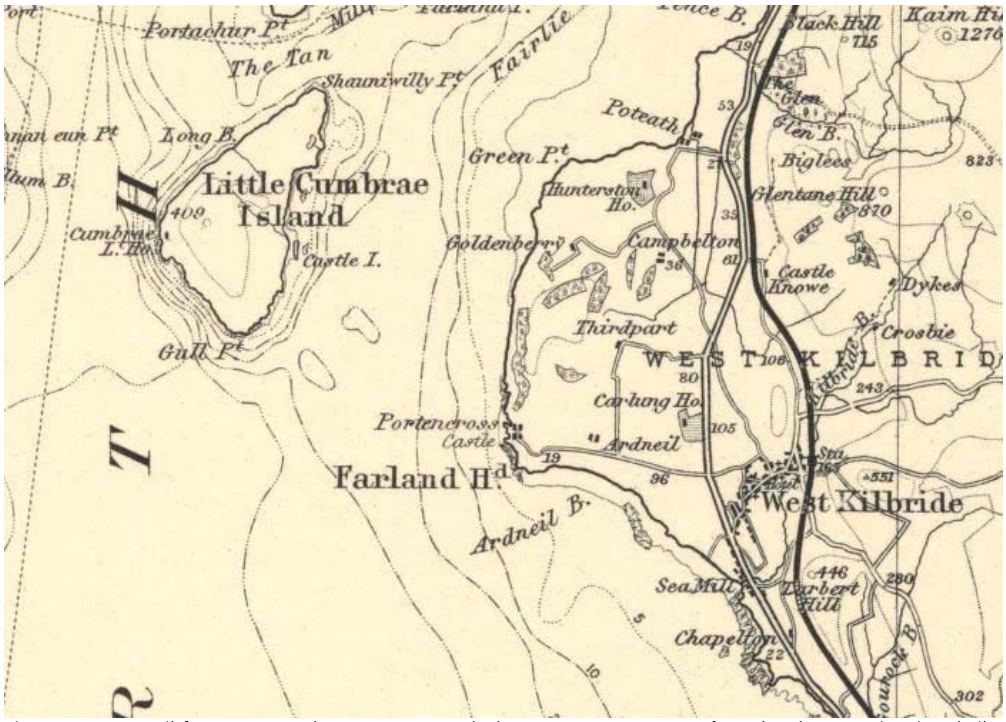

Figure 17: – Detail from Bute and Arran, J.G. Bartholomew's 'Survey Map of Scotland', 1912 (National Library of Scotland)


Figure 18: – The 'rock compass' at Portencross (March 2007)

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The attribution of the wreck as an Armada ship of 1588 relies almost entirely on local tradition and the evidence from the Portencross cannon. Most of the ships lost by the Armada were actually wrecked by severe weather conditions as they attempted to return home via the north and west coasts of Scotland and Ireland. Unlike the Irish examples where Spanish ships foundered at various points along the coast there, there are no contemporary accounts in Scotland of an actual Spanish wreck on the Clyde. Two ships were definitely wrecked on the Scottish coast: the El Gran Griffon was lost on Fair Isle and the San Juan de Sicilia became the famous 'Tobermory Galleon.'

3.94 On 23rd September 1588, the 800 ton San Juan de Sicilia dropped anchor in Tobermory Bay and made a deal with the local chieftain, Maclean of Duart, whereby he would supply provisions for their voyage home in return for a company of Spanish troops to assist him in settling some local feuds. The ship remained at anchor in Tobermory for more than a month, but on the 5th of November a Dumbarton merchant who was apparently involved in the replenishment of the ship, but who was actually an agent of Sir Francis Walsingham, fired the powder on the ship and sank it (Martin and Parker, 1999, 223).

The route chosen by the Armada ships was far to the west of the Irish coastline, but some of the worst storms in recorded history blew them eastwards, back towards land. Although some of the ships did come ashore to replenish their water and food supplies, it seems unlikely that any would have strayed as far into the Firth of Clyde as the Portencross peninsula. Having said that, there are sixteen large ships still unaccounted for, and it is possible that the Portencross wreck is indeed one of these. If not an Armada ship, it could have been the wreck of another Spanish ship as their navy was frequently in Scottish waters after 1588.

3.95 According to the records, the wreck site has not been dived by professional archaeologists so definitive answers may still be produced if this is done in the future. The location of the site is said locally to be indicated by a directional compass cut into the rock on the seaward side of the castle (see Fig 18).

The site is complicated by the fact that there is another, later wreck on the same location:

'Within the very same place where the Spanish ship went down, a fine vessel belonging to Glasgow, the richest that ever was fitted out from this country, and the property of Glassford and Company, was also lost, in the spring of the year 1770. This disaster was occasioned, not by stress of weather, but through the inadvertency of the ship's company, in allowing the vessel to drift too far in during night, ere the light-house was perceived, and in endeavouring to put her about, she missed stays, and went upon the rocks.' (RCAHMS: Lady Margaret: Portencross, Firth Of Clyde; NMRS Number: NS14NE 8002)

3.96 The Lady Margaret was a three masted wooden sailing ship launched in 1769. She left Greenock on 17th January 1770 destined for the James River, Virginia, under the command of Captain James Kippen but was hit by a violent storm. The captain decided to return to Greenock but on 23rd January she was swept eastwards onto the rocks just south of Portencross Castle.

3.97 Whatever the truth behind its origin, the Portencross cannon remained at the castle from 1740 onwards, protected from rust and decay by a coating of tar (Fig 19). In 1990, the castle's owners, Magnox, took the cannon away for conservation works and re-sited it outside the Hunterston Power Station. At some point after this it was passed onto the National Museums in Edinburgh, and it was recently returned to Portencross where it is now in the care of the Friends of Portencross Castle (Fig 20). However, at some point while it was away from

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Portencross, it appears that the tar which had protected the cannon since its recovery in 1740 was removed and, as a consequence, it is now suffering badly from rust and decay.

Modern Portencross

3.98 The renting out of Portencross Castle to fishermen in the late-17th and early-18th centuries appears to have been a reflection of the importance of the industry at that time: In the districts of the parish, situated upon the shore, fishing was pursued to an extent that ought not to be overlooked in this account. It appears, from the best information, that, at the beginning of this century, upwards of 30 boats, belonging to the place, were employed annually in the herring and cod fishery: each boat had four men, when at the herring-fishing. From the month of July to October, they were all occupied in this branch. In the months of February and March, about a dozen of these boats, doubly manned, stretched away to the coasts of Galloway, Ireland, and Cantire, in search of cod, ling, and oysters. The number of men employed in these fisheries, when in their most flourishing state, could not be less than 150… It has declined and been lost.
(The Statistical Account of Scotland, 1796)

The Rev. Oughterson also records that there were about forty farms in the parish at the end of the 18th century, but it was at this time that the population began to increase as urban dwellers began to move to the area for its fresh air and coastal location:

On the narrow strip of flatter ground between the Clyde and the peaty, inhospitable hills which run from the archaeologically rich Knock Ewart above West Kilbride…lie a string of towns: West Kilbride, Seamill, Fairlie, Largs, Skelmorlie. This is Glasgow merchants' get- away-from-it-all country: an idyllic retreat from the city. The first flowerings of this new economy began in the 1790s, as Gilpin successfully changed our perception of wild places from fearful and awesome to picturesque. The peak of this trade was the years either side of 1900… (Close, 1992, 78)

As discussed above, it seems that it was the two cottages built by John Craufurd that were the first new private residences in Portencross in the early-19th century:

3.99 *As early as 1829, John Craufurd of Auchenames and Crosbie had two cottage residences at Portencross, Auchenames House being then known as North Cottage. In 1845 the residence of the Craufurds of Crosbie and Auchenames was described as a "neat cottage residence" close to Portencross Castle ruins. The present mansion incorporates in its main garden elevation an early 19th century house, slightly altered in fenestration, with additions (in the form of gabled bays at either end) built in 1904. The walled garden is dated 1839, and the rearward additions to the house (including a belfry) may date in part from this period. The remodelling and additions of 1904 were to the designs of Fryers & Penman, Largs, for W. Adam of Overton, following his purchase of the estate from Craufurd of Auchenames.* (Davis, 1991, 153; see Fig 21)

The exact sequence of the development of the village requires further research, but map evidence indicates that by 1899 and 1926 (see Fig 22) most of the present village had been constructed, e.g. Rose Cottage, the Post Office, West Cottage and Castle Cottage (Figs 23 and 24). The latter two are listed as Category C9S) by Historic Scotland as picturesque Victorian estate dwellings dating from sometime around 1860. Auchenames House, however, is not listed. It also appears that the North Harbour was developed sometime in the early- to mid-19th century. It is recorded that it was known as Port Crawford in 1846, and there is a tradition that there was a regular ferry service to Skipness at this time for both cargo and passengers, the latter paying one shilling each for the trip.

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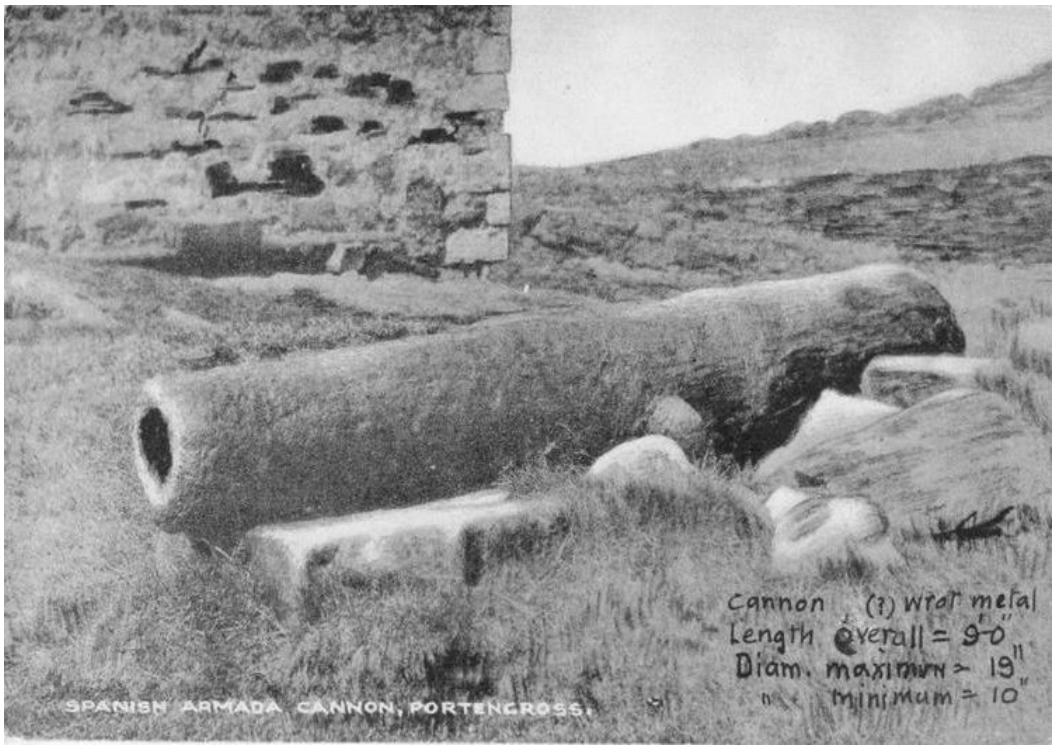

Figure 19: – 'Spanish Armada Cannon, Portencross', n.d. (North Ayrshire Archives

Figure 20: – The Portencross Cannon (March 2007)

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Figure 21: – Auchenames House, Portincross, n.d. (North Ayrshire Archives)

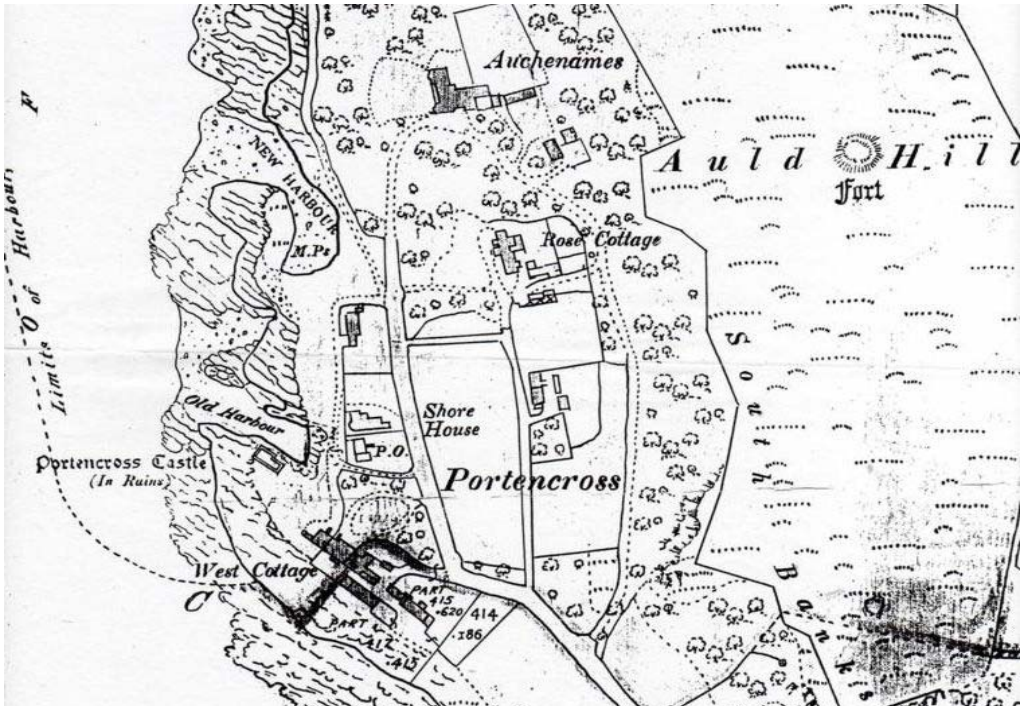

Figure 22: – Ordnance Survey, 3rd Edition, 1926

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Figure 23: – General View of Portincross, n.d. (North Ayrshire Archives)

Figure 24: – Post Office,Portincross, n.d. (North Ayrshire Archives)

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Figure 25: – Portincross Castle, William Young, 1886 (Dick Institute FAA242)

Figure 26: – Portincross Castle, 1886 (Ayr Public Library AY/2396)

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Figure 27: – The Pier, Portincross, n.d. (North Ayrshire Archives)

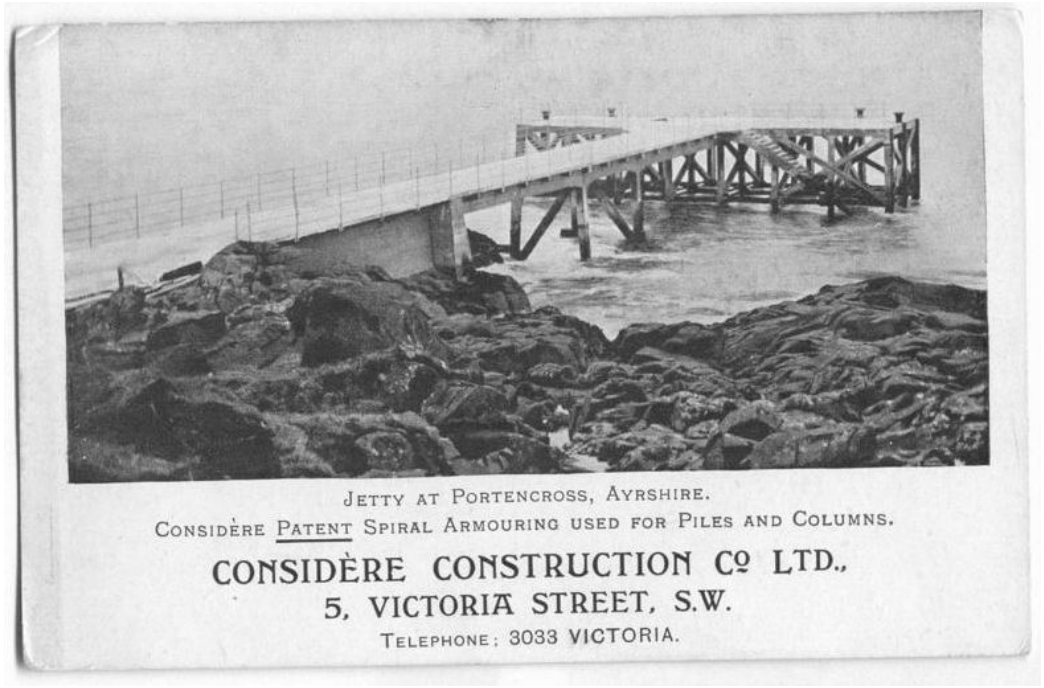

Figure 28: – Jetty at Portincross, Ayrshire n.d. (North Ayrshire Archives)

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The picturesque nature of the castle and the village also attracted artists and early photographers who looked to capture the rugged and romantic scenery (Figs 25 and 26)

3.100 The growth of the towns and cities in the 19th century impacted upon Portencross in another way as it gradually became a tourist destination:

Thanks to individual enterprise, Portincross is thinking of "birsin' yont." A pier at which steamers may call is in process of building. Feuing ought to follow, and indeed betwixt the fine sandy beach of Ardneil Bay and the Portincross pier there is room and to spare for a future holiday haunt. (Brotchie, 1911, 84)

The pier is said to have been able to accommodate vessels of up to fifty tons, and was used both for tourist boats and for the shipping of local produce to markets further up the Clyde (Figs 27 and 28).

For most of the 20th century Portencross was owned by William Adam, who lived in Auchenames House and charged only modest rents to his tenants in the cottages surrounding his walled garden. A farm on his estate also employed several men and they lived in tied-houses. In 1935 it was reported that 'Today Portincross village consists of only about half a dozen cottages and a few larger houses set in beautiful gardens' (Colvilles Magazine, June 1935, 119-120).

3.101 In 1976, the South of Scotland Electricity Board (S.S.E.B.) bought the entire Hunterston Peninsula, including Portencross, to build the Hunterston A and B power stations. Portencross was not developed, but its site apparently was earmarked for the development of the Hunterston C power station which, in the end, was never built. As a result, the village was put up for sale again in 1983, at which time only ten of the seventeen houses were occupied and the population was down to ten people. The sitting tenants were offered first options to buy their homes, but the castle was kept in the ownership of the electricity board. It was during this period that a number of works were carried out to the fabric of the castle, including the insertion of a concrete roof.

3.102 Portencross Castle was designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument in 1955 and as a Category A Listed Building in 1971. Auldhill was designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument in 1993 and both of the harbours were listed as Category B in 1996.

In 1998, British Nuclear Fuels (B.N.F.L.) decided to sell the castle and the Friends of Portencross Castle was formed to prevent the property becoming a private property and to keep it a freely accessible public amenity. After almost seven years of negotiation, B.N.F.L. passed the title of the castle and associated land to the Friends.

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4.0 ARCHITECTURAL APPRAISAL

4.1 The fabric of any historic site is of value for two reasons; it embodies tangible, physical evidence of its development (for example separate phases of work or differing constructional techniques), and for aesthetic reasons (essentially the architectural, or stylistic value).

4.2 The second step in the development of this plan was therefore an assessment of the castle, its positing within the landscape and its relationship with the neighbouring iron age Auldhill site, the main objectives of which were to:

- Review available historic evidence for the construction of the castle.
- Identify key design features including principal elevations and apartments.
- Assess the extent and location of historic features.
- Based upon these features, to determine the general phasing and development of the castle.
- Assess the relative importance of the castle and its constituent parts
- From this, develop guidelines which will ensure the building's significance is maintained.

4.3 For ease of reference the site can be divided into two parts; the castle, followed by the adjacent land including shoreline, harbour and neighbouring Auldhill site.

Overview – Phasing and Development

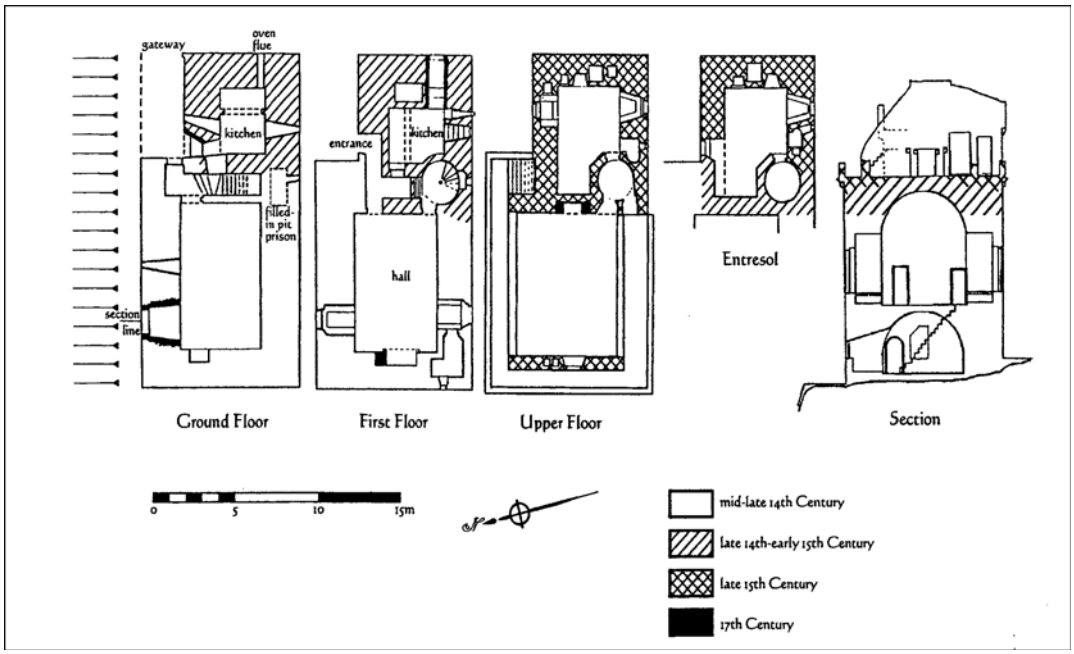

Figure 29: Phasing (Caldwell, Ewart and Triscott)

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Figure 30: Phasing after Caldwell, Ewart and Triscott A-S:L

4.4 Previous analysis of the castle by MacGibbon & Ross and in later years by Cruden (Cruden,1963, 139-140), suggested that the building was constructed in one main phase with only the eastern wing wallhead being raised at a later date. Subsequent investigation carried out by Caldwell, Ewart, and Triscot has produced an alternative four key construction phases;

- **Phase 1:** Mid to late 14th century. Basic two storey hall house comprising of an unvaulted first floor situated in the west wing.
- **Phase 2:** Late 14th – early 15th century. Construction of ground and first floor accommodation in the current eastern wing. Vaulting of the Great Hall and introduction of new first floor entrance to the hall.
- **Phase 3:** Late 15th century. Raising of west wing and construction / rebuilding of attic space and battlements to both wings.
- **Phase 4:** 17th century. On abandonment of the castle as a lordly dwelling a series of minor alteration took place, this included, the creation of a ground floor doorway to the kitchen, enlargement of windows, and alterations to the hall fireplace.

(Proposed by Caldwell, Ewart and Triscott)

The initial building survey undertaken by Caldwell, Ewart and Triscott (See Figure 30) provides a preliminary analysis of the building and its proposed phasing. However, as areas of uncertainty remain unresolved, a full standing building survey and recording exercise is required.

4.5 An area of stonemasonry situated on the south elevation of the east wing has raised a level of uncertainty into the castles previously proposed phasing. The variation in stone size, colour and construction method may be the indication of an addition construction phase during the transition from hall house to tower house. The use of red sandstone quoins (Fig. 32 Section IV. A) on the south-east corner would also support the later remodelling of this section of the building.

4.6 Based upon the physical evidence and the cartographical data available during the walk round survey undertaken by the design team, an initial phasing of the structure has been proposed;

- **Phase I:** Mid to late 14th century. Two storey stone hall house (west wing) possibly replacing an earlier timber built structure. Vaulted room to the ground floor, unvaulted hall to the first floor.
- **Phase II:** Late 14th – early 15th century. Removal of a large proportion of the East elevation and creation of the east jamb to accommodate ground and first floor apartment.
- **Phase III:** Late 15th century. Raising of the west and east wing to form the vaulted Great Hall, second floor apartment within the east wing and creation/repositioning of battlements to both wings. Introduction of first floor entrance to Great Hall and enlargement windows.
- **Phase IV A:** Late 15th century. Partial dismantlement of the east wing including a section of west wing on the south elevation. Retention of stonework including moulded corbels and string course for future reuse. Raising of the east wing to form third floor apartment, stair and cap house. Reinstatement of moulded corbels and string course during the heightening of the east wing.
- **Phase IV 5:** 17th century. On abandonment of the castle as a lordly dwelling a series of minor alteration took place, this included, the creation of a ground floor doorway to the kitchen, enlargement of windows, and alterations to the hall fireplace.

Description

4.7 The North elevation comprises of a large two storey west wing with former garret to the right and three storey east jamb with former garret apartment to the left. The North elevation is constructed predominantly from large uncoursed local red sandstone with buff coloured quoin stones and margins. Large areas of the stonemasonry on the North elevation has suffered from extensive erosion, with areas measuring from between 200 - 300 mm. Remnants of the moulded corbelling, string course, drainage outlets and battlements remain intact in the west wing. However, due to extensive collapse of the east jamb garret, masonry above string course level has been lost. Key areas of interest on the North elevation include;

- The fossilisation line running the full length of the elevation.
- The enlarge / altered windows on the west elevation
- Variation in stone selection, colour and construction method in the east jamb
- The positioning / relationship of the ground floor doorways
- Evidence of the first floor entrance way

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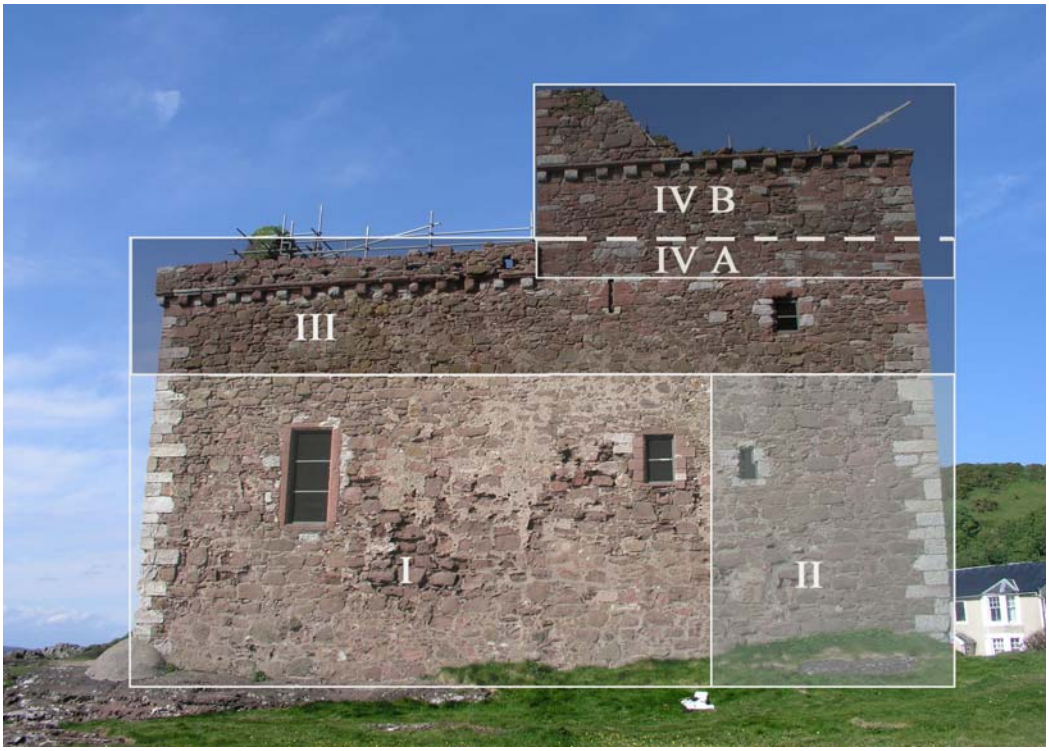

Figure 31: South elevation Proposed phasing A-S: L

Description

4.8 The North elevation comprises of a large two storey west wing with former garret to the right and three storey east jamb with former garret apartment to the left. The North elevation is constructed predominantly from large uncoursed local red sandstone with buff coloured quoin stones and margins. Large areas of the stonemasonry on the North elevation has suffered from extensive erosion, with areas measuring from between 200 - 300 mm. Remnants of the moulded corbelling, string course, drainage outlets and battlements remain intact in the west wing. However, due to extensive collapse of the east jamb garret, masonry above string course level has been lost. Key areas of interest on the North elevation include;

- The fossilisation line running the full length of the elevation.
- The enlarge / altered windows on the west elevation
- Variation in stone selection, colour and construction method in the east jamb
- The positioning / relationship of the ground floor doorways
- Evidence of the first floor entrance way

4.9 Of particular interest on the North elevation is the evidence of a fossilisation line that runs the length of the elevation including the east jamb. This is of particular importance as it illustrates the proposed original height of the west wing and east jamb before the introduction of the vaulted ceiling and subsequent heightening of the structure.

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4.10 Located in line with the ground floor vaulted cellar is the remains of a small slit window now blocked. To the right of this feature is a medium sized window and directly above a large window providing light to the Great Hall. It is believed that both windows have undergone later alterations that have seen the enlargement of the features. The introduction of red sandstone margins, cills and lintels would support this theory as earlier window positioned elsewhere in the castle retain the same buff sandstone used within the quoin stones.

4.11 Variation in stone selection and construction method is also evident in the east jamb above the former second floor apartment. The variation in masonry and introduction of red sandstone quoins provides an indication of an additional construction phase during the heightening of the east jamb.

4.12 The entrance into the ground floor of the east wing is made along a short pathway between the North elevation and adjacent harbour. It is believed that this doorway would have provided sole access into the castle before the creation of the east jamb (creating an additional two entrances). Although badly eroded the remains of the segmental arched door remains largely in tacked. Extensive erosion has resulted in the loss of any carved detailing previously incorporated within the original construction. The original doorway was slighted on the creation of the east jamb, it is believe to be at this point that the original doorway forming part of the 14th century hall house became secondary to a much grander first floor entrance with timber forestair. Evidence to support the introduction of a timber forestair remains in the form of joist pockets within the masonry directly below the first floor entrance.

4.13 Positioned on the second floor at the far right of the east jamb is a small window that provides light to the former second floor bedroom chamber. Situated within the former third floor of the east jamb providing light to a bedroom chamber is a larger window with cill, lintel and margins all constructed from red sandstone.

Figure 32: North elevation A-S: L

PRELIMINARY

4.14 The entrance into the ground floor of the east wing is made along a short pathway between the North elevation and adjacent harbour. It is believed that this doorway would have provided sole access into the castle before the creation of the east jamb (creating an additional two entrances). Although badly eroded the remains of the segmental arched door remains largely in tacked. Extensive erosion has resulted in the loss of any carved detailing previously incorporated within the original construction. The original doorway was slighted on the creation of the east jamb, it is believe to be at this point that the original doorway forming part of the 14th century hall house became secondary to a much grander first floor entrance with timber forestair. Evidence to support the introduction of a timber forestair remains in the form of joist pockets within the masonry directly below the first floor entrance.

4.15 Positioned on the second floor at the far right of the east jamb is a small window that provides light to the former second floor bedroom chamber.

4.16 Situated within the former third floor of the east jamb providing light to a bedroom chamber is a larger window with cill, lintel and margins all constructed from red sandstone.

4.17 The west elevation follows the same construction method as that found in the North and South elevations. Areas of particular interest include;

- Fossilisation line
- Remnants of the west gable
- Two unidentified features below the corbelled moulding
- Evidence of a previous window opening
- Formation of a drainage outlet at ground level

4.18 Although not as prominent as the North elevation, the continuation of a fossilisation line can be seen on the west elevation. Again, this has been taken as an indication of the original height of the Great Hall before the introduction of the vaulted ceiling.

4.19 At garret level, the partial remains of the western gable are clearly visible. The collapse of the west gable and continual deterioration of masonry has resulted in the loss of a large proposition of the parapet wall. It is possible however, from the evidence remaining, to draw together the possible roof alignment for the west wing. Although affected by erosion areas of the corbelled moulding and string course remain in-situ.

4.20 Situated directly below the corbelled moulding are two features which have yet to be identified and therefore required further investigation. As evident within other elevations of the castle, the formation of the drainage outlets for the garret apartments are positioned directly above the moulded corbelling and string course. It is therefore yet to be established why there would be the need for additional drainage outlets at this level.

4.21 Positioned slightly off centred in line with the upper compartment of the Great Hall is a small window believed to be situated in place of an earlier more central window. To the left of the window are the remains of window margin constructed from buff sandstone. The positioning of this earlier feature would have been in line with the fireplace in the Great Hall.

PRELIMINARY

4.22 Located at the base of the west elevation, following the line of the natural bedrock is the formation of a drainage outlet. The date of the feature has yet to be established however from the information gathered from the internal survey it is believe to be linked to the floor drain within the vaulted cellar.

Figure 33: West elevation A-S: L

Figure 34: Remnants of previous window A-S: L

4.23 Situated directly below the corbelled moulding are two features which have yet to be identified and therefore required further investigation. As evident within other elevations of the castle, the formation of the drainage outlets for the garret apartments are positioned directly above the moulded corbelling and string course. It is therefore yet to be established why there would be the need for additional drainage outlets at this level.

4.24 Positioned slightly off centred in line with the upper compartment of the Great Hall is a small window believed to be situated in place of an earlier more central window. To the left of the window are the remains of window margin constructed from buff sandstone. The positioning of this earlier feature would have been in line with the fireplace in the Great Hall.

4.25 Located at the base of the west elevation, following the line of the natural bedrock is the formation of a drainage outlet. The date of the feature has yet to be established however from the information gathered from the internal survey it is believe to be linked to the floor drain within the vaulted cellar.

Figure 35: South elevation A-S: L

4.26 The South elevation comprises of a two storey west wing with former garret that is now in a fully ruinous state. To the right hand side of the South elevation is a large five storey east jamb again retaining remnants of a garret apartment.

4.27 Constructed predominately from red sandstone the South elevation provides significant evidence relating to the phased development of the building, the formation of the east jamb and later heightening off the west wing and east jamb. Particular areas of interest within the South elevation include;

- The fossilisation line running the full length of the elevation.
- Variation in stone selection, colour and construction method
- Remnants of traditional lime harl
- Creation / alteration of windows
- Possible reinstatement of salvaged material

PRELIMINARY

4.28 A clear fossilisation line runs the length of the South elevation. This again has been linked to the extensive remodelling of the castle during the mid 14th and 17th Century. As previously documented by Caldwell, Ewart, and Triscott, it is believe that this line indicates the original ceiling height of the Great Hall before the raising of the west and east wing and formation of the vaulted ceiling. Although no evidence of the original roof construction currently exists it is possible that a battlement construction may have be in-situ before the heightening of the castle at a later date. Located to the far right of the east jamb, immediately below the fossilisation line, is a single stone that stands proud of the surrounding masonry. The reason for such a feature has yet to be established however it may have a connection with the original roof line of the hall house.

4.29 From the initial walk round survey the design team observed the high level of extensive redevelopment and phased construction to the South elevation. Situated in the east jamb in line with the battlements of the west wing lies an area of masonry showing a variation in stone selection, colour and construction method to that found out with the east jamb. Where earlier phases of the building contain large buff coloured quoin stones this area has been predominately constructed from red sandstone. The inclusion of red sandstone is also evident below the moulded corbels in the west wing. As the masonry would have originally been covered by traditional lime harl this may have been seen as an opportunity to salvage and reinstate material set aside during previous alterations to the building.

4.30 Corbelled moulding, continuous string course and battlements containing drainage outlets remain largely intact on the west wing. The combination of red and buff sandstone corbelled moulding continues on the east wing at garret level. Although a largely majority of the garret apartment in the east jamb has collapse, the corbelled moulding and string course remains in-situ. The collapse of the garret apartment has resulted in the loss/excessive deterioration of remaining drainage outlets within the east jamb.

Figure 36: Corbelled moulding A-S:L

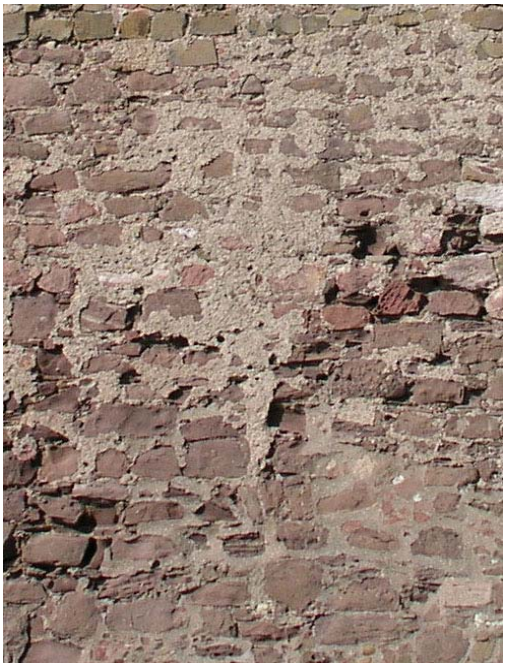

Figure 37: Harl remnants A-S:L

PRELIMINARY

4.31 Excessive deterioration and weathering has resulted in the failure and subsequent loss of the traditional lime harl. An area of undisturbed lime harl remains in-situ within the centre of the south elevation.

4.32 Due to the extensive redevelopment undertaken during the development of the hall house into the tower house that stands today particular attention should be taken when interpreting the windows positioning within this elevation. Located on the west wing in line with the grand hall apartment is a large window with red sandstone cill, lintel and margins. The use of red sandstone within the formation of the window is an indication of later alterations and possible enlargement of the original window.

4.33 Positioned on the first floor of the east jamb are two windows. In line with the first floor landing is a medium sized window with dressed red ashlar sandstone. It is believed that the window is a later insertion created during the formation of the east jamb and possible repositioning of the staircase. Unlike the first floor landing window, the small first floor kitchen window has been constructed from buff masonry as like the other earlier features found in the castle.

4.34 A further two windows are positioned in the second floor of the east jamb. Positioned within the spiral stair case is former slit window that has been blocked. The margins have been constructed from large red sandstone margins with buff stone used for the lintel and cill. To the right of the slit window sits the opening for the large window seat within the master chamber. Similar to the construction of the slit window this window is constructed from a combination of buff and red sandstone.

4.35 The third floor houses the remains of a window in similar size to that found on the second floor. Positioned slightly further to right, has been block be a series of small pieces of red sandstone. It remains unclear at what time the window was blocked.

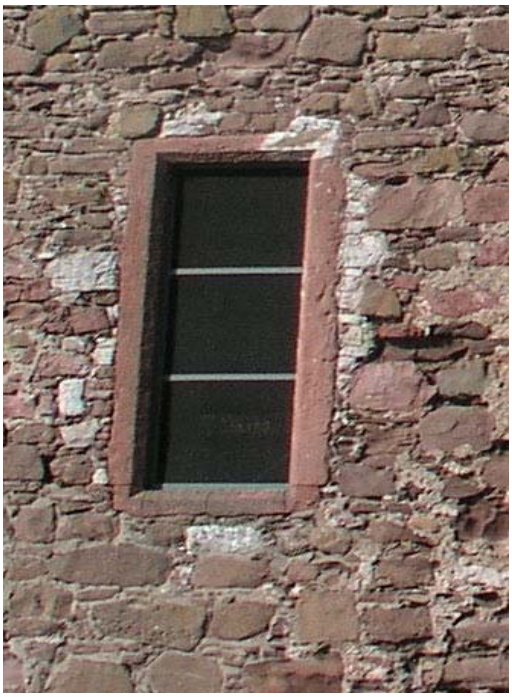

Figure 38: Great Hall window A-S: L

Figure 39: Former Slit window A-S: L

PRELIMINARY

Figure 40: East elevation A-S: L

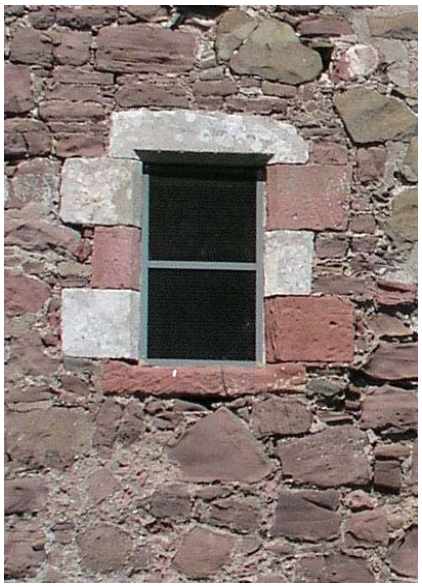

Figure 41: First floor kitchen window A-S: L

4.36 As with the previous elevations the East elevation has been constructed predominately from red sandstone with large buff quoin stone. Corbelled moulding and string course continues at battlement level however due to extensive collapse and deterioration the original battlements have been lost.

4.37 Particular areas of interest within the South elevation include;

- Variation in stone selection, colour and construction method
- Remnants of traditional lime harl
- Remnants of drainage outlets

4.38 Also evident in the East elevation is the variation in stone selection, colour and construction method as found in the North and South elevations. The introduction of red sandstone quoins within this area of stone masonry is also evident.

4.39 Although large areas of original mortar and traditional lime mortar have been lost to on going deterioration and the introduction of inappropriate repair materials such as cement pointing, a small area of harling is still evident on the bottom left of this elevation.

4.40 The extensive collapse and subsequent loss of the east jamb garret apartment and battlements to stringcourse level has resulted in the loss of a large proposition of this elevation. Only three of a possible five drainage outlets remain in-situ, all suffering from extensive deterioration and erosion.

4.41 Portencross Castle is a fine example of mid 14th century Scottish architecture. Believed to be of original hall house construction the castle illustrates an important period in Scottish architecture. At present little is known about the development of hall houses to tower houses and as a result Portencross Castle is of both regional and national importance.

PRELIMINARY

Gazetteer

4.42 A key aspect in the development of the conservation management plan was an assessment of the extent and location of historic features together with the identification of key design elements such as principal elevations and apartments. A further key aspect studied was the evidence of earlier phases of construction. This was based on a walk-round inspection of the property, seeking to identify:

- The extent of surviving historic finishes in each part of the castle.
- Key design features and finishes.
- Construction methods, for example identification of stonemasonry.
- Composition of elevations – uniformity of construction, abutments and rybats, and scarring.
- Blocked and altered openings such as blind windows or doors and enlarged or new jambs.
- Where possible evidence of earlier layouts

4.43 The ground floor level comprises of a small internal lobby, vaulted cellar and kitchen. Access to the kitchen and first floor level is via a steep flight of stairs.

4.44 Entry into the vaulted cellar is through an arched doorway similar to that of the main entrance doorway. The vaulted ceiling of the cellar is constructed from a series of small red sandstone stones bedded on there edge with large areas of mortar remaining in-tacked. Positioned on the north elevation are two windows. The first is the remains of a small window which is followed by a larger window currently supported with 11 softwood timber lintels. Located on the north elevation is evidence of a now blocked narrow slit window. On the west gable, close to the apex of the vault, evidence of a previous opening/window remains visible in the form of a cill, lintel and left hand side margin. Large areas of the floor construction is currently hidden by a build up of sand and debris, however original red sandstone slabbing remains visible.

4.45 It is feasible that unless the original hall house was extensively remodelled during the proposed phase II and phase III construction, absence of a fireplace and the surviving remnants of a floor drainage outlet on the west gable would suggest that the cellar was not used as a kitchen before the introduction of the east jamb. As with many hall house constructions it is believed that accommodation was often restricted to lordly use with cooking facilities, storage, etc often being housed in smaller ancillary structures on nearby land. To the author's knowledge there is currently no evidence supporting the use of neighbouring land to house such ancillary buildings. An excavation of adjacent land and collation of archaeological evidence would be required to support this theory.

Figure 42: Ground Floor Cellar A-S : L

Figure 43: Cupboard Feature A-S: L

PRELIMINARY

4.46 Situated on the ground floor of the east wing are the remains of a modest sized kitchen. Entry to the kitchen can be made by an independent external access to the left of the main entrance or internally from the main staircase situated off the lobby. Although current lighting conditions prevent a detailed inspection of this area key features such as its original fireplace, flue and ovens are visible along with former ovens openings.

4.47 Access to the first floor level is via a steep set of stairs, the original date of the stairs is yet to be determined however it is believed that they may have been repositioned during the formation of the east jamb. From here access to the Great Hall, first floor kitchen and upper floors could be gained.

4.48 Direct access to the great hall, as in many tower house castles of this period appears to have been from a timber forestair located on the north elevation. From this entrance (as indicated in Fig.49) guests would have entered into a short corridor before entering into the Great Hall. By entering the castle at this elevated position guests would have avoided castle staff and any unpleasant smells from the kitchens. Evidence of joist pockets on the north elevation gives an indication into the level of the original forestair. At present the original detailing of the forestair and its relationship with the ground floor entrances/pathway is unclear. Today the entrance pathway is relatively narrow and shows signs of progressive erosion, however during the creation of the forestair it is not unlikely that the path would have been somewhat wider, providing easy access to the ground floor apartments.

Figure 44: Ground floor entrance A-S: L

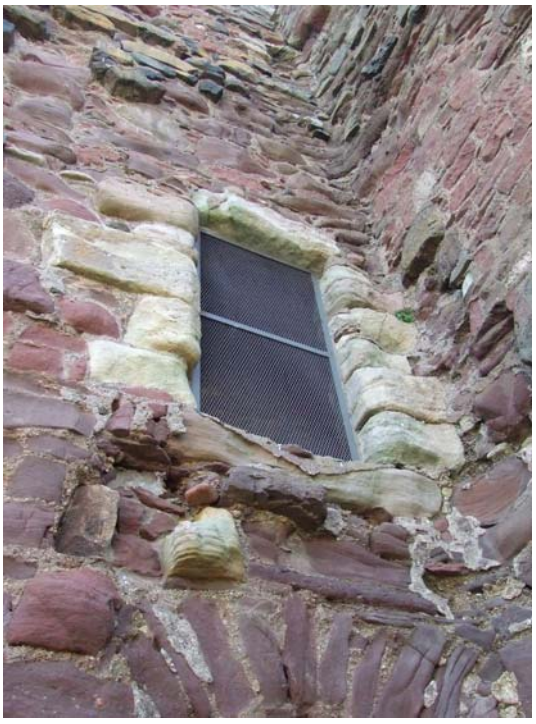

Figure 45: First floor entrance A-S: L

PRELIMINARY

Figure 46: Great Hall A-S: L

Figure 47: Great Hall Fireplace A-S: L

PRELIMINARY

4.49 The first floor of the west wing comprises of a large hall with vaulted ceiling and 14th century fireplace to the gable. Two large windows with stone seats provide light to the large hall. The original development of the windows within the grand hall in difficult to determine without further investigation however, evidence of pinning within several areas would suggestive the later introduction of the plain margins. Positioned directly off one of the windows at the south-west corner is a mural chamber with small window to the west elevation. Although believed to have comprised of one single chamber current evidence supports the positioning of an upper room within the vault, of which light was directed into by a gable window situated above the fireplace. Entry into this room is believed to have been from the centrally located wheel-stair. The exposed positioning of joist pockets along the base of the current vaulted ceiling are believed to be an indication of the original level of roof timbers in the Great Hall before the later heightening and creation of the vaulted ceiling. It is possible however, that this is the remnants of a floor that was introduced at a later date.

4.50 The east wing (now one large open chamber) is believed to have originally comprised of three apartments all with independent access from the wheel-stair. There is some uncertainty in the need for a large proportion of the newly created east wing to have been dedicated to the creation of a second kitchen when the accommodation on the ground could have catered quite easily for a castle of this size. This therefore causes some doubt that the kitchen was used solely for the preparation of food for royal guest dinning in the Great Hall. It is therefore possible that the castles kitchens had the responsibility of catering for not only the castles guest but also a laigh or outer hall. Evidence of fireplaces and garde-robes in the subsequent floors support the use of these levels as bedrooms. Both the second and third floor apartments retain their

Modern additions have seen the introduction of a beam and filler concrete roof to the east jamb and the insertion of modern red sandstone lintels at a reduced height to both the west wing and east jamb.

4.51 Later alterations and heightening of the castle has resulted in some uncertainty into the original configuration of the west wing attic. Access to the now mainly collapsed battlements and garret apartments were made by the sandstone wheel-stair. Now lost due to prolonged water ingress and deterioration, a temporary timber staircase has been positioned in its place in order to provide access to the roof. The battlements consist of a corbelled parapet with saddle and trough red and buff coloured sandstone slabbing. The surviving gables of the west wing, although in a deteriorating condition, illustrate the ongoing phasing/redevelopment that occurred on completion of the heightening of the castle.

Phasing

4.52 Portencross Castle is a complex monument of both regional and national importance. Based on our appraisal of the building, it is advised that a full standing building record and analysis programme should from part of any future conservation / consolidation project. Base on our extensive appraisal of the building we would suggest that the following model for phased development of the hall house be considered:

Phase I Constructed of a two storey hall house possibly on the site of an earlier timber structure. This would have consisted of a vaulted cellar room on the ground floor and large hall (unvaulted) on the first floor. Architectural features such as the repeated segmental arched doorway in the cellar room, grand hall and main entrance, along with the regular construction method including stone selection on the South elevation would indicate that this area of the building was undertaken in one phase.

PRELIMINARY

There is currently no evidence of the ground floor cellar room containing a fire place, the original use for this room therefore remains uncertain. It may have been possible that a series of auxiliary buildings situated within close proximity of the castle would have provided kitchen facilities for the hall house.

Phase II Phase 2 sees the construction of the ground floor kitchen, first floor kitchen and proposed realignment of the ground floor staircase within the east jamb. The construction of the ground and first floor kitchens have been associated with a Phase 2 construct as it is not believed that the accommodation within the east jamb would have originally been positioned to slight the main entranceway. The use of smaller stonework within this area would also suggest that the ground and first floor of the east jamb was constructed in an additional phase to the Great Hall and ground floor cellar room. The full extent of redevelopment undertaken during the construction of the east jamb (Phase 2) is not yet known, however it is feasibility that this may have resulted in the partial or full demolition of the former east elevation to make way for the new accommodation.

The lack of visible joint lines on the South elevation would also suggest that the process involved the reconstruction of a large area of the South elevation in order to avoid scaring of the building. The area of fossilisation running the length of the South elevation has been associated with the original height of the hall house before the introduction of phase III. There is at present no descriptive or illustrative material available to support the original construction method or style of roof before the heightening of the hall house in phase III.

Phase III Following the enlargement of the original hall house in phase II, the building was then heightened to create a vaulting ceiling within the Great Hall and additional apartment in the east jamb in the form of a second floor bedroom chamber. It is believed to be at this stage that the moulded corbelling and string course detailing (still visible on the west wing) was introduced to the hall house.

Phase IV A An area of stonework not in keeping in construction method, stone size or colour (See Fig 32 section IV.A.) with the surrounding masonry would suggest the inclusion of an additional phase during the transition from hall house to tower house. It is believed that during the final heightening of the east jamb, the original stone masonry constructed in Phase III was removed and set aside for future reinstatement. The variation in stone construction and introduction of red sandstone quoins in section IV.A. may be as a result of using salvaged material from other areas of the building.

Phase IV B Phase IV. B saw the heightening of the east jamb and creation of a third floor apartment. It is proposed that the corbelled stonework and string course detailing removed during Phase IV. A. was reinstated at this point section IV. B. Due to extensive collapse and deterioration, the original style of roofing is not known however, the presence of gables within the west wing and remnants of the spiral staircase within the east jamb provide evidence of formation of the garret apartments.

Phase V Phase V saw the abandonment of the castle by its lordly residents and future tenancy by fishermen. During the habitation of the castle by fishermen, a number of small alterations took place, this included the introduction of the ground floor kitchen doorway and enlargement of windows.

PRELIMINARY

Recommendations

4.52 There is much that is unknown about the architecture and development of Portencross Castle. Nevertheless it is clear that what we have here is an important piece of our heritage:

- a rare survival of an extended 14th century Scottish hall house
- an unusual example of an extended hall house into an L-plan castle
- the possible incorporation of elements from an earlier structure
- a rare and early example of Scottish architecture
- a central element within the Portencross landscape

4.53 Against this background it is essential that any changes are based on a full understanding of the historic fabric and retain, as far as is practicable, the key elements which have the power to inform and educate our understanding of the site.

4.54 This understanding must be reviewed and enhanced as the project develops. In particular it is absolutely essential that a comprehensive archaeological standing building recording programme be implemented, with the findings fed in to the development of detailed design proposals and used as a tool for understanding one of the most important buildings in this part of Scotland.

PRELIMINARY

5.0 LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL

Figure 48: Portencross from Auldhill (Friends of Portencross Castle)

5.1 The assessment of the importance of Portencross Castle and the implications which this will have for any conservation management plan requires an understanding of the landscape character at present in the area surrounding the Castle.

5.2 The general landscape value of the Castle cannot be in doubt, particularly in the immediate to local views and for those travelling on the Firth of Clyde, where it is a dominant landscape element. This section of the conservation management plan seeks to explore this landscape value at immediate, local, and wider levels through a review of key issues including statutory designations. It includes consideration of wider ecological issues, where appropriate.

Statutory Designations

5.3 Portencross Castle is not included on the Historic Scotland Register of historic parks and gardens of national importance.

5.4 The Castle and village sit immediately outwith the southern boundary of the Portencross Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which was designated in 1949 for its geological interest and is also notable for the breeding bird assemblage which it supports (source: Scottish Natural Heritage).

Designed Landscape

5.5 There is no evidence of a designed landscape with the Castle as a key component; a walk round inspection of the village failed to identify any significant designed vistas in historic garden grounds which might require further investigation, nor were any such features noted on Ordnance Survey maps.

Historical Value

5.6 There are no significant historical images, written accounts, or other documents which would suggest that the Castle had been perceived as an important ruin in the landscape.

PRELIMINARY

Landscape Character Assessment

5.7 The national programme of Landscape Character Assessments commissioned by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) in the 1990s aimed to improve knowledge and understanding of the contribution that landscape makes to the natural heritage of Scotland, and is intended as a strategic tool in the management of our landscape heritage.

5.8 Landscape assessment can focus on identifying either landscape character types or landscape character areas (or both). Landscape character types, which are the focus of the Ayrshire study, are landscapes with a range of distinctive but nevertheless generic characteristics – in theory a particular landscape character type can occur in more than one area of a particular region. It is therefore not concerned with evaluation or designation of particular areas of high quality landscape. Landscape character areas, on the other hand, are unique to a defined area and reflect the distinctiveness only of that particular zone.

5.9 Portencross lies within what is identified as the Inner Firth of Clyde regional zone (SNH, 78):

Inner Fifth of Clyde: Although comprising only a small part of the study area, the Inner Firth of Clyde comprises a distinctive regional character area, characterised by medium distance views across semi-sheltered water to steeply rising shorelines, often backed by wooded slopes. Many of the coastal fringes are settled. It is a constantly changing landscape reflecting changing light and weather. The combination of settled and unsettled coastlines, open water, pleasure craft and commercial shipping gives this area a distinctive character.

Key landscape issues include:

- *pressure for urban development and expansion in constrained locations ;*
- *recreation pressures ;*
- *woodland management.*

5.10 Landscape Character Type is identified as raised beach (SNH, 81-83):

The raised beaches probably provided fertile areas for the earliest forms of settlement in the area, though nothing survives today . The defensive nature of this coastal landscape and the importance of the raised beaches in providing a corridor for communications are reflected in the presence of a number of hillforts and castles . Examples of the former include one immediately north of Largs, the fort and dun on the hill above Portencross , and a site on Dow Hill to the south of Girvan . Castles include the Old Castle at Knock (17C), Portencross Castle (14C), Dunure Castle (15C) and Carlton Castle, Lendalfoot (15C). Several of these historic sites formed the centre of later designed landscapes (eg . Knock Castle), adding richness to the wooded landscape .Other examples include Skelmorie Castle and Kelburn Castle.

5.11 The value of Portencross as a whole is specifically identified:

South of Hunterston, the raised beach widens, forming an area of coastal lowland between the main area of upland to the east and an outlier (Goldenberry Hill 140 metres AOD) to the west. This hill would once have stood as an island. At Portencross the raised beach and cliffline are particularly evident. Amongst the most dramatic of former cliffs are the steep hills which rise along the north Ayrshire coast near Largs. This wall of hills forms an escarpment, providing a dramatic setting for Largs and designed landscapes such as Kelburn.

5.12 There is no detailed analysis or comment in respect of the Castle itself.

PRELIMINARY

5.13 The assessment recommends that the overall aim should be to conserve and maintain the predominantly small scale, agricultural nature of this landscape type, and to retain the integrity of the related landform features. The following specific recommendations are particularly pertinent to Portencross:

- support for small scale, low-key tourism or recreational development;
- discouraging isolated developments in the more open parts of the landscape;
- encouraging new development which reinforces the existing settlement patterns .
- a general presumption against large scale developments within a small scale landscape;
- minimising upgrading or improvement of roads, particularly where this involves the creation of cuttings and embankments, the loss of characteristic rock outcrops, or the introduction of additional signage, road paint or features such as concrete kerbing ;
- avoiding the use of suburban features, for example concrete kerbing in a rural setting unless absolutely necessary, and exploring more appropriate alternatives .

Visibility and Views

5.14 The project team sought to identify the importance of views obtained by people within the vicinity of the site, whether by those living or working in the area or other simply visiting by road or passing through on foot. For the purposes of this study we identified three visual envelopes:

Immediate	-	the immediate environs of the site
Local	-	the village and surrounding areas
Distant	-	more remote vistas from roads, principal public areas, settlements, etc.

5.15 The appraisal was carried out during the spring period. Screening by vegetation, the effect of growth on backdrops, etc. may be seasonal and allowance has been made for the fact that views may vary throughout the year.

5.16 In the immediate area, comprising the area of the old harbour southwards, the Castle is the principal landscape feature and dominates all views. This is emphasises by its visual separation from the adjoining village houses, the low and largely undeveloped grass and rock promontory surrounding it, and open space at the harbour itself.

5.17 Locally, views vary significantly. The castle is not visible from the principal road approach from the east until the bend circa 150m north of the existing car park, where the topmost portion (around 2 storeys) rises above the lower house roofs. From the north, on the coastal path from Hunterston, the Castle stands separately from the village and dominates the headland; the broken and fragmented nature of the wallhead is particularly prominent as views are parallel to the surviving gables. Also of note is the view from the summit of Auldhill, where the flat nature of the raised beach is particularly stark and the height of the Castle together with its isolation from the village give it emphasis.

5.18 Because of the exposed location on a rocky promontory, the zone of visibility extends a considerable distance from the Castle. Distant views are available from the beach and coastal roads south of Seamill and from Little Cumbrae. Definition is currently poor when set against the backdrop of the cliff, due to similarity of colour/texture, and these are not key views at present.

PRELIMINARY

Figure 49: Portencross from the North (SCRAN)

Figure 50: Portencross from the Sea (Friends of Portencross Castle)

PRELIMINARY

6.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK ASSESSMENT

6.1 In 2002 Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD) was commissioned on behalf of FoPC to undertake an archaeological desktop assessment to consider the significant archaeological issues associated with Portencross Castle and the surrounding landscape. As part of a separate but linked programme GUARD were also commissioned to undertake a watching brief in 2006 in association with the proposed installation of a temporary roofing structure.

Archaeological Desk and Building Assessment

6.2 The archaeological desk-based study identified the archaeological potential of the site. A walk-over survey was carried out to better inform a course of action for a conservation management plan.

6.3 During the site visit in 2002, initial observations, photographs and notes were made of Portencross Castle and the surrounding landscape. This work involved the general appraisal of the key archaeological, historical and architectural features within the castle and surrounding landscape. The chief aim of the assessment of the site was to take the opportunity to prepare an opinion on the possible extent of the original or early fabric of the building and to attempt to trace the development of additions and alterations.

6.4 The archaeological desk-based study of the castle examined and identifying key features and any visible evidence of phasing (although this was limited by current scaffold, crash decks, and other access difficulties). This was then used to develop a detailed assessment strategy which could be implemented as part of any future conservation works. Areas of particular archaeological / historical interest included;

- The L-shape plan
- The presence of kitchens
- A pit prison – (not inspected during site visit)
- Two entrances
- Two stairs
- Blocked apertures
- Redundant architectural features

On completion of survey it was documented that, once fully recorded, areas of post-Medieval and later modern additions / alterations would be less sensitive than features incorporated within the Medieval construction phase.

6.5 The area adjacent to the castle was also recorded as being of archaeological interest. Although yet to be fully researched GUARD highlighted several key areas within the landscape. This included the possible remains of a barmkin, Medieval garden and outbuildings including barn and barnyard dating from the 17th Century. Without further investigation and trail trench analysis it is difficult to ascertain the level / quality of archaeological evidence remaining on site. Any future development work within this area should therefore take into consideration its potential archaeological sensitivity.

6.6 The setting of the castle and its relationship with the iron age Auldhill site was also taken into consideration. Both were recorded to be of great interest due to the likelihood of their histories being closely connected. Any proposed future development within this sensitive area should take into account its relationship with the Scheduled Ancient Monument, the impact on its setting within the wider landscape and already existing relationship between Portencross castle and neighbouring Auldhill site.

Excavations

6.7 In September 2006 Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD) were commissioned on behalf of the FoPC to undertake a watching brief during the excavation of 6 test pits on the roof of the west wing. Information gathered during the excavation was used in the development of an appropriate conservation strategy for the proposed installation of a temporary roof. During the excavation undertaken by Cummings and Co. it was established that only three of the initial six test pits would have to be undertaken.

6.8 The general aim of the evaluation was to record and investigate, by means of trial trenching, all architectural features and archaeological deposits uncovered during the excavation along with the spatial and temporal relationship between them. This also offered an opportunity to gather any available information relating to archaeological deposits. The specific objectives were to:

- To clear, by hand, an area of topsoil around the wallhead to reveal stonework
- To clear, by hand, any overburden to reveal all archaeological deposits and stonework
- To record all exposed features and structures in plan
- To record all archaeological features during and after the excavation
- Sample all deposits and features found during excavation, collating information on the contemporary environment and soil formation and gather material for dating.

6.9 During the excavation of the three test pits a detailed record of the buildings historic fabric was assembled. The accumulated debris primarily consisted of a mixed layer of sandy clay, small stone rubble and fractured slate. Previously estimated at approximately 0.8m the excavation established that the level of debris did not exceed 0.30m above of the original historic fabric.

6.10 A layer of lime mortar was revealed during the excavation of all three test pits. From this a partial assessment of the structural composition of the vaulted ceiling was made. On the removal of the accumulated debris, a thin layer of lime mortar was exposed. Although unable to confirm without undertaking extensive excavation of the site, it may be possible that this lime mortar screed continues over the entire attic space forming a flat floor surface. Situated beneath the decaying lime mortar loose stone packing was recorded. From this level no further excavation was undertaken as this would have resulted in the disruption of the historic fabric.

6.11 It was believed that the excavation of an additional three test pits would have resulted in an unnecessary level of intrusive work and potential damage to the historic fabric. From the findings recorded during the watching brief, the construction team and GUARD confirmed that the proposed installation of a temporary steel roof covering was not viable due to the lack of sound masonry. Installation of the temporary roofing structure was deferred until a less intrusive solution was developed.

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Recommendations

6.12 Due to the castles A-listed Scheduled Monument status and high level of national importance GUARD have identified an outline methodology for the investigation and preservation of these features. In general terms these anticipate an appropriate, comprehensive programme of building recording of key features (below) in conjunction with a watching brief for any significant works:

- Monitoring of all conservation works that effect the fabric of the building
- Recording of all repair or alterations undertaken
- Detailed recording of areas to be rebuilt
- Monitoring of intervention to minimize damage to the historic
- Recording of any hidden features revealed during works
- Detailed analysis and recording of any parts of the building due to be irreversibly altered
- Recording of the building prior to and during the consolidation of the castle
- Recording of Post-Medieval deposits before removal from the site

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7.0 SOCIAL VALUE

7.1 It must be recognised that the importance of a site goes beyond academic assessments of historical, archaeological, or architectural importance. In assessing Social Value, we seek to identify the qualities for which a place has become a focus of spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment. Being subjective by its very nature, there are many different aspects and it is perhaps most challenging aspect of any conservation plan.

7.2 The importance of Portencross historically has not been widely recognised, and despite its attractively prominent coastal location it appears to have escaped the attention of the 19th century picturesque movement. It is therefore not widely known outside of the immediate area in stark contrast to sites such as Culzean or Kilchurn.

7.3 For the purposes of this Plan we are therefore concentrating upon the value of the Castle and surrounding area today; to those who use and enjoy the site today.

Modern Use and Value

7.4 In order to assess views of those who used the Castle and surrounding area, a series of face-to-face interviews were undertaken over the last two weekends in September 2006 with visitors to Portencross. In total 106 interviews were undertaken with visitors to obtain information on why people currently come to the area, what they do and how they think the area could / should be enhanced. Research also focused on how the Castle could be more effectively used and how this may enhance a visit to the area; a fuller discussion can be found within the audience development plan (Jura, 2007).

7.5 The survey indicated that:

- Almost 90% of visitors are categorised as repeat visitors
- 80% of visitors visited Portencross to view the wildlife / scenery
- 57% of respondents indicated that they visit Portencross to go walking
- 36% indicated that they visited to use the surrounding grounds
- 50% of visitors visited as they had an interest in the history of the area
- 85% of respondents would support the introduction of internal interpretation at the Castle
- 90% of respondents would support the introduction of interpretation in the areas surrounding the Castle
- 92% of respondents would like access to the interior of the Castle
- 89% of respondents would like access to the roof of the Castle
- 64% indicated that they felt that the Castle should be made available for community use

7.6 Visitors stressed the need to maintain the character of the area and to ensure that development did not affect the appearance or feel of the area and to also ensure that the village and site was not overrun with visitors.

7.7 Only 2 visitors thought that the Castle should remain "as is", without any conservation or interpretation.

7.8 Additional consultation was taken with a range of statutory and amenity bodies including local community groups; all identified the importance of the castle, but in a relatively modest way and primarily as a place of public resort rather than as a significant visitor draw in its own right.

Conclusions

7.9 Care must always be taken when addressing any limited sampling group, and visitor surveys are a comparatively blunt tool however a key theme seemed to be that Portencross was important as a whole; people visited to go walking, enjoy the views, or appreciate wildlife. The Castle was an important, but nevertheless comparatively minor, reason for visiting the area.

8.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

8.1 This section of the report seeks to summarise the detailed analyses and assessments undertaken, setting out what makes Portencross Castle of value and should therefore be protected. The assessment of significance listed below, is presented as "work in progress" and is not yet complete or comprehensive. It has been provided to give an initial guidance on the proposals for the Masterplan. It should be further reviewed and developed as the project progresses and more becomes known about the site.

8.2 Most historic sites are significant for a range of reasons, and it is important to understand all of its values in order that informed, balanced decisions can be made. For the purposes of this study we identified four key areas of significance:

- Historical value
- Architectural value
- Archaeological Value
- Landscape Value

8.3 In considering the relative value of the various factors identified in our research, the project team has adopted a broad grading system. Each was assessed on a sliding scale of very high value, through high and medium, then low and none. Examples include:

Historical To what extent is the site (or part of a site) associated with, or evidence of, important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural, or military history and/or closely associated with important people or events? Are these events – and thus the site – of international (very high), national (high), regional (medium), or local (low) significance?

Architecture Is the design by an architect of national, regional or local importance of the architect? How do we defines the importance and interest of the building in terms of its intrinsic architectural merit (architectural design, plan form, decoration, and craftsmanship, building types and technological innovation or virtuosity)?

Completeness To what extent is the site and its elements entire in terms of external characteristics, internal features and plan form. The completeness is referred to the original design of the building for each phase. Are later alterations a detrimental factor? This criterion will contribute to understand.

Age & Rarity How old are the features or buildings? Is the site, or this aspect of the site, an unusual or rare feature? Does it recommend an unusual or particularly level of survival, or alternatively is the design in itself rare or unique?

Group value Defines the extent to which an element of the site contributes to the architectural or historic interest of the wider group? How does it relate to any wider grouping such as the planned development of the town? Where does rest as part of the much wider group of such sites found nationally?

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Historical Value

8.4 The continual habitation of the Portencross (including the Auldhill site) as a high-status site from the 12th century onwards has resulted in an area of high historical value. The strategic positioning of the early hall house beside a natural harbour and the then main transport link, the Firth of Clyde, is of particular interest as it provides an important insight into the development of early settlements within the area.

8.5 Between the mid 14th century and late 17th century the importance of the Castle is centred upon its lordly residents and its connection with the de Ross family and Boyds of Kilmarnock, both of whom were of regional importance. Links to the royal household are of great interest.

Architectural Value

8.6 Portencross castle is an important example of mid 14th century Scottish architecture as it illustrates the transition from early stone Scottish hall houses to tower house construction. The continued phased development of the castle throughout this time is illustrated in the architectural detailing within the castle.

8.7 The external elevations of this castle are of extremely high architectural value as they provide vital information on the phased development of the castle. As little evidence is currently known about the development of the castle, the elevations play a key role in the interpretation of the building.

8.8 The key space within the medieval building and therefore of the highest value is the Great Hall. Forming part of the primary fabric, the Great Hall is of high architectural value. The cellar and kitchens within the east jamb are also central to our understanding of how the castle functioned and are therefore are also of high importance.

8.9 The introduction of modern repairs within the building are of little to no interest to the architectural value of the building. Modern lintels introduced at a lower height have distorted the available evidence and current interpretation of the castle.

8.10 At present, relatively little remains known about the transition for hall house structures to tower houses therefore, Portencross Castle is of both regional and national importance. Implementation of a full standing building survey would provide valuable knowledge into the development of the castle.

Archaeological Value

8.11 The unique phasing of the castle and continual habitation of the site between the mid 14th to 17th centuries has created an area of archaeological importance. Areas of particularly high archaeological value include the floor of the cellar and ceiling of the Great Hall as they contain important primary fabric.

An opportunity therefore exists to recorded archaeological deposits / fabric remnants during future conservation work. The undertaking of a full standing building survey and chronological analysis of the castles development should therefore be undertaken.

8.12 The current archaeological value of the land surrounding the castle remains uncertain however, as it is possible that the surrounding land may have accommodated ancillary timber structures there is the potential for further archaeological finds within the area.

PRELIMINARY

Landscape Value

8.13 Situated on a rocky promontory within the heart of Portencross village, Portencross Castle is the principal landscape feature within the local area. The castle's high landscape value extends to neighbouring beaches and coastal road views including the village of Seamill and the island of Little Cumbrae. Distant views of the castle's fragmented wallhead and its positioning within the landscape can also be found from the Firth of Clyde.

8.14 The castle's visual separation from the nearby village houses is also of high importance. Its isolation both physical and visual serves as a potential indicator of the castle's historical importance and serves to highlight the building in immediate views, and in maintaining an undeveloped aspects emphasises the ruinous and abandoned character of the site.

Social Value

8.15 Situated within an attractive prominent coastal location the castle and surrounding landscape forms part of an attractive coastal walk popular with locals. During the production of this report an Audience Development study was undertaken in order to record and examine the present use and value of the site.

8.16 Although the castle itself was seen as a comparatively minor reason for visiting the area, it is understood that the castle contribution to the wider landscape could be seen of relatively high value. Both local villagers and day visitors to the site continue to benefit from walks along the coast, panoramic views of the Firth of Clyde and the wildlife associated with the SSSI.

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9.0 VULNERABILITY AND RELATED ISSUES

9.1 This section of the Conservation Management Plan identifies those issues which have affected the significance of the site in the past, and more importantly might affect it now or in the future, in order that policies can be brought forward to retain and enhance its value. Broadly speaking these fall into five main areas:

- Ownership, management, and use – is the current regime affecting the significance of the site? Is it appropriate? Are public and community expectations leading to conflict? Are there sufficient resources?
- Physical condition – the current state of the fabric, previous inappropriate alterations, and conservation needs.
- Development and change – how might the site be vulnerable to change in future? What impact will statutory requirements have?
- External factors – are there any issues which adversely affect the site through visual intrusion, inappropriate development or uses, and traffic?
- Understanding – is a lack of understanding of the site's significance leading to inadvertent damage or missed opportunities?

Ownership and Use

9.2 It is generally recognised that in the medium to long term the best way of ensuring the means of ensuring the preservation of historic buildings is through continuing, economically sustainable uses in order that there is an incentive to repair the structure and sufficient revenue stream to meet the costs so arising. Such uses need not necessarily be conversion or adaptation; presentation to the public is equally acceptable, provided that it ensures a sufficient income stream to care for the site.

9.3 The building is currently vacant and unused, however prior to the transfer of ownership to FoPC BNFL undertook a programme of temporary propping/repair and it is understood that an endowment was made in order to ensure that FoPC could meet short term repair costs. The property is secure from unauthorised access and there is no evidence of vandalism or deliberate neglect which would place the property at immediate risk.

9.4 In the medium to long term it is essential that a business plan be brought forward which makes provision for an adequate income stream for maintenance, insurance, cyclical repairs, and other costs. The new use(s) must be compatible with the historic nature of the site and minimise the level of intervention required. It is particularly important that this take a realistic view of the financial commitment involved, and make provision for future costs.

9.5 The care of any important historic site is an onerous undertaking, requiring significant skills and resources. Inappropriate repairs can irretrievably damage irreplaceable historic fabric. FoPC has recognised these issues and is addressing them through the appointment of an experienced project manager and study team, together with implementation of this conservation management plan. It is important that this is an ongoing and sustained process, using suitably skilled staff and building upon the extensive work already carried out.

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9.6 It is recognised that there are varied views within the village as to the level of public access/use which might be acceptable following consolidation and which may not be based on a full understanding of grant funding requirements; unrealistic expectations would affect the likelihood of securing assistance and hence FoPC's ability to adequately conserve the fabric.

Physical Condition

9.7 The Castle is in poor condition and without significant work in the short term it is likely that important historic fabric will be damaged or even lost completely. Particular areas of concern include:

- Loose and unsound masonry to the remaining sections of the west garret gable, where there is a significant risk of dislodgement in the immediate to short term. Loss of this part of the fabric would be particularly regrettable as it provides valuable evidence as to the form and function of the garret room(s).
- The dangerous condition of the east jamb roof; although temporary propping is in position, this is not a long term solution and collapse of the concrete slabbing could cause significant damage to the underlying kitchen vault together with surviving high level interpretative features.
- Water ingress over the west jamb roof/great hall vault is leading to erosion of the lime mortar which, if left unchecked, will cause the collapse of early fabric and make interpretation of the most important space within the Castle impossible.
- Erosion of exposed facework is leaving isolated areas of facework poorly supported, leading to a risk of dislodgement. Elsewhere the open and friable nature of the mortar joints is allowing large quantities of water to enter the historic fabric, accelerating the ageing process.

9.8 An appropriate programme of conservation and repair is essential if as much as possible of this historic fabric is to be passed on to future generations in good order. In general terms we would recommend that this is carried out no later than 5 years hence, with emergency making safe of the west gable no later than 3 months hence.

9.9 Consolidation of wall footings, vaults, and roof/floor surfaces will require excavation of ground surfaces and infill which may contain archaeologically sensitive deposits; all work will require to be preceded by an appropriate programme of archaeological mitigation in order to minimise the risk of damaging irreplaceable evidence.

9.10 Modern repairs such as the incorrectly placed lintels to door openings distort the evidence presented by the fabric and make interpretation difficult, however repair/reconstruction might also be misleading unless accuracy can be assured.

The rebuilding of the east jamb east elevation fireplace and the upper section of the separating wall to the great hall are more problematic, as there is little or no evidence as to the original form of the masonry. Speculative reconstruction would risk further misinterpretation of historic forms and hence an additional adverse impact on the authenticity of the building.

Modern (i.e. 20th century) fixtures and fittings such as the window grilles, doorways, and timber staircase are of little or no value and their removal would not have an adverse impact on the integrity of the site.

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9.11 In the longer term erosion of bedrock to the harbour is likely to become a significant problem, and could lead to destabilisation of primary fabric. The impact on the integrity of the monument would be catastrophic. However remedial works in this location also have the potential to damage underlying archaeological deposits and will require to be undertaken with great care.

9.12 A specialist assessment undertaken at the time of the 2003 study did not identify rising sea levels as a significant risk factor at the present time, however it has been suggested that this process may lead to accelerated erosion of the underlying bedrock and/or the exposed masonry footings.

Development and Change

9.13 Works involving the conservation, alteration, maintenance, and re-use of all historic sites have to be carried out in a careful, sympathetic manner if an adverse impact is to be avoided. Historic fabric is valuable because it is authentic; once rebuilt it is but a facsimile of far lesser value. A balance has to be sought between the conservation value and finding a new economic use which is viable over the longer term with minimal impact on the special interest of the site.

9.14 Scheduled ancient monuments can be particularly vulnerable to change. A conservative approach to repair is therefore fundamental to good conservation. No part of a building or monument should be repaired before such repair is strictly necessary or unless there is a good reason; for example in order to ensure a robust and sustainable use and hence ensure the building has a viable future. The objective should therefore be to conserve, as far as is practicable, the building in its current condition.

9.15 Perhaps the most difficult issue is the extent to which reconstruction might have an adverse impact on the value of the site.

There is no evidence that the castle is or has been generally understood as an important picturesque ruin in the landscape and it is therefore difficult to reach a clear view on such grounds as to whether reroofing *per se* should be considered unacceptable if it is required in order to establish a viable business plan.

Visual impact is a different matter; it is important to understand that the roof line is particularly important in defining the form and massing of the structure within the immediate and local visual envelopes. A new roof would have a significant impact on both immediate and local views, notably from the north, although whether this impact would necessarily be *adverse* would be open to debate.

A presentational strategy which envisages use of the existing roof platforms rather than full reroofing would also require the greatest care in order to manage impact. Features such as handrails, display boards, etc. can have a disproportionate impact as they are commonly silhouetted against the open sky.

Another area of significant visual impact would be restoration of the original harling, large fragments of which survive (notably on the south elevation). It is submitted that such a finish would be consistent with and perceived as a habitable and fully restored structure. A light colour would have a significant impact on all views, and significantly increase the visibility of the building in distant views where it is seen against the backdrop of the cliffs or sea.

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The final area of debate would be the accuracy (or otherwise) of any restorative proposals. Sufficient evidence remains to identify all key elements such as gables, roof pitches, parapet heights, and floor positions with a sufficient degree of accuracy however some questions remain including the form of the stair roof and treatment of post-abandonment alterations.

Under such circumstances we believe that a precautionary approach is most appropriate, and that consolidation of the building in (or close to) its current form should be the preferred solution in order to ensure that there is no adverse impact on its character.

9.16 All external elevations are of central importance to our understanding of the architecture and development of the castle; they define the character of the property and also provide primary evidence of phasing, fossilised features, and previous uses. Surviving lime harl fragments are the only evidence of the original finish. These would be especially vulnerable to change, whether through excessive consolidation or more significant alterations.

9.17 Likewise the interior is particularly vulnerable to any alterations to layout or finishes. These could result in the loss of important primary fabric, and just as importantly would undermine legibility of the early phases of the building's history. These areas need to be preserved and repaired on an "as found" basis, saving for minor restorative works where there have been insensitive alterations or the reinsertion of internal floors to the east jamb where original joist pockets can be identified.

9.18 Little is known about the wider use of the site and the range of ancillary structures which must have been contemporary with the principal phase(s) of habitation. The only evidence for these important remains is likely to be archaeological deposits. Any ancillary works within the site boundary may have an impact on these deposits; excavation must be minimised an in all events (including temporary disturbance as part of conservation works) must include for an appropriate programme of archaeological mitigation in order to ensure that there is no adverse impact.

External Factors

9.19 The setting of the castle, comparatively isolated on what is now an open platform, is of critical importance in defining its setting and also defining the area which once might have included outbuildings. This would be particularly susceptible to development, most notably large structures (whether fixed to the building or within the boundaries) but also through excessive hard landscaping, viewing platforms, or other similar features.

9.20 Views to the castle from the access road to the village and the car park would be susceptible to inappropriate backlands, gap-site, and loft development. Although out with the scope of this CMP, the local authority should be urged to exercise the greatest care in considering the character and setting of the immediate area including principal approaches.

Understanding

9.21 One of the most important ways of ensuring the protection of our built heritage is ensuring that the wider public understand the value and significance of historic sites. Research undertaken during the development of the audience development plan has indicated that Portencross Castle is poorly understood, and there is currently no effective interpretation available.

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10.0 CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT POLCIES

10.1 Despite the application of measures for the protection of the historic environment, as well as greater public awareness and support for heritage issues, the historic environment can still be threatened by inappropriate development. Historic areas are not immune to the effects of economic decline and population change, which can result in obsolescence, neglect and deterioration of the physical fabric and erosion of their character and distinctiveness. Historic places are a product of a process of refinement and change over generations to meet the needs of existing populations. Pressure for change can, however, present difficult issues.

10.2 Having identified the value of Portencross and how it might be vulnerable to change, the next step is the development of policies guiding its development and setting out the actions necessary to preserve the cultural and historic significance of the site. This will allow us to reconcile the need to protect our built heritage with the need to accommodate suitable opportunities for change. This section of the plan is divided into three main sections: a brief overview of the conservation philosophy and approach as it applies to this project, a review of the key strategic objectives identified by the study team, and detailed conservation policies including:

- General Policies – Management and Use of the Site
- Understanding the Site – Further Investigation, Research, and Archaeology
- Conservation and Alteration of Historic Fabric
- Development Proposals
- Access and Interpretation

Conservation Philosophy

10.3 Conservation policy is set out in a broad range of national and international guidance including PPG 15 and 16 (England), NPPG5 and NPPG 18 (Scotland), Welsh Office Circulars 60/96 and 61/96, BS7913: 1998 *Guide to the Principles of the Conservation of Historic Buildings*,, the ICOMOS *Burra Charter*, and the Historic Scotland *Stirling Charter*. Although there are differences between the various documents, there are a number of underlying common themes.

Understanding and Knowledge

10.4 A historic building, townscape or landscape setting together with its fixtures and fittings can be regarded as a composite work of art and historical document. They are often extremely complex, comprising different elements and phases of build which may reflect the development of the heritage site and changing society over time. All significant work should be preceded by thorough documentary research and physical investigation in order to ensure that the site is full understood and informed decisions regarding the best way of caring for it can be made.

Economic Sustainability.

10.5 Historic areas are not immune to the effects of economic decline and population change, which can result in obsolescence, neglect and deterioration. The most appropriate way to ensure the care of our built heritage is to ensure that sites have a sustainable, viable, ongoing use. This may not be the most profitable use; the aim should be to find a new economic use that is viable over the long term with minimum impact upon the special architectural and historic interest of the site. Achieving best viable use may require adaptation of the fabric. This should be undertaken carefully and sensitively having regard to its architectural and historic interest, character and setting

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Minimum intervention.

10.6 The stock of historic buildings is finite and every loss significant. The destruction, alteration or renewal of parts of a building can be similarly damaging and should always be carefully considered and properly justified. A conservative approach of minimal intervention and disturbance to the fabric of an historic building is therefore fundamental to good conservation.

Restoration

10.7 A presumption against restoration is an important theme of the British approach to building conservation, particularly in England and Wales. Restoration can diminish the authenticity and thus the historic value of a building and the aesthetic value of a building or site. A case for restoration can be made in certain circumstances, particularly cases where there it forms an incomplete or destroyed aspect of a design and where there exists known or proven design for the missing building, element, feature or detail.

New Work

10.8 The design of new work should not damage, mask or devalue the old, either physically or visually. It should be of appropriate quality and should complement the old. It should be reversible and, whether carefully matched, blended or contrasted with old work, should combine to form a composite building or group of buildings of overall architectural and visual integrity. There is a general presumption that new work should be in a contemporary style, rather than a pastiche of the original styles.

Key Strategic Objectives

10.9 The primary objectives of any management strategies and future proposals for Portencross Castle should therefore :

- be based on a thorough understanding of the site's heritage value.
- learn from the site and gain further knowledge of those periods and cultures about which it contains evidence.
- protect and conserve those material assets which are of historic, scientific and cultural significance for this and future generations and ensure that their value is not diminished by unsympathetic alteration or new development.
- present the historic assets of the site in an integrated manner so that they can be enjoyed, appreciated and understood within the context of Ayrshire and the Firth of Clyde.
- preserve and enhance the special landscape character and ecology of the site.
- ensure that existing and future uses within the study area contribute to the business case for the Castle in ways which do not conflict with but make best use of its historic fabric, historic associations and wider landscape assets.
- be mindful of existing legislation, national planning guidance and local planning policy.
- support the understanding, interpretation and conservation of the study site through the sustainable and efficient use of the financial resources of the site owners, grant aid and any finance for those purposes that could be generated through planning agreements, disposals or income generating uses.

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General Policies – Use and management

10.10 Having identified the value of Portencross Castle and how it might be vulnerable to change, the next step is the development of policies guiding its development and setting out the actions necessary to preserve the cultural and historic significance of the site. For ease of reference this follows the general headings identified in the foregoing sections:

- Ownership, management, and use – finding a sustainable future for the site.
- Physical condition – the repair objectives and priorities
- External factors – wider initiatives and works.
- Development and change – general strategies development and or adaptive reuse
- Understanding – interpretative strategies and objectives

Ownership and Use

10.11 Maintaining and enhancing the architectural and historical fabric of Portencross Castle is vital if it is to be conserved and thereafter passed on to future generations. Identifying a sustainable end use for the castle must be the first step in and conservation proposals.

With care and design expertise it should be possible to do this in a manner which retains the form, important detailing, and historic interest of the castle. This may not be the most economically advantageous; the aim should be to identify the best viable use that is compatible with the fabric, setting, and character of the site.

Policy 1	Identify a sustainable, new use for the building which minimises the level of intervention required and is compatible with the fabric, setting, and character.
Policy 2	The proposed use should maintain a substantive degree of public access to the castle and surrounding shoreline.

Management / Ownership

10.12 Whichever use is selected, it is important to realise that the conservation will be an onerous undertaking which will require significant project-specific staff resourcing and expertise. It is therefore recommended that FoPC put in place suitable qualified member(s) of staff (whether internally or externally) in order to manage the project. These individuals should have a suitable conservation qualification (IHBC, AABC, IFA, or similar) and an understanding of financial/grant funding/business plan issues.

Policy 3	Put in place suitably skilled volunteer staff or resources to manage the project and thereafter the running of the castle.

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Physical Condition

10.13 At present the castle is in a deteriorating condition and not fully wind and watertight. The installation of temporary roofing structures to the west and east wing will act to greatly reduce the percentage of water penetrating the fabric of the building. Nevertheless there are some concerns about the current condition of west wing gable, eroded masonry to the west and north elevations and the erosion of the bedrock within close prominently of the entrance path.

The condition of barrel vaulted Great Hall ceiling gives much greater cause for concern. This area has been badly affected by prolonged water saturation that has lead to extensive erosion of masonry, washing out of mortar joints and potential weakening of the structure. Repair work to this area should be a priority.

10.14 The west gable is in extremely poor condition, and in risk of serious collapse in the short to medium term. It is recommended that a programme of careful downtaking be undertaken in order to make this safe.

Policy 4 Loose / unstable masonry on the western gable and isolated facework elsewhere must be made safe immediately.

A full scheme of conservation and consolidation is need in order to secure and maintain the historic fabric of the building.

Policy 5 The following sections of the building are a priority and must be addressed in the immediate to short term:

- The great hall vaulted ceiling
- The west garret gable
- The modern roof on the east jamb
- Heavily eroded masonry to the West and North elevations
- Deterioration of lime mortar both externally and internally
- General high level maintenance/repairs and improve ventilation
- Corrosion of steel lintel within third floor apartment of the east jamb

10.15 Some of the previous employed repairs techniques are not appropriate for historic buildings and in the medium to long term will require replacement; examples include the replacement of traditional lime mortar with inappropriate cement substitutes.

Policy 6 As soon as practicable, and certainly within the next 5 to 10 years, remove and replace poor quality repairs including modern mortars.

PRELIMINARY

10.16 Previous repair attempts have seen the alteration of original features such as the positioning of lintels within the east jamb. The introduction of modern lintels at a lower height than the originals may lead to the misinterpretation of the space. Therefore the repositioning / improvement of inappropriate modern materials is recommended.

Policy 7 It is desirable although not essential that previous modern sandstone lintel introduced at a lower height than the originals b e replaced. This would also see the replacement of the modern timber staircase.

Development and Change

10.17 Works involving the alteration, maintenance, and re-use Portencross Castle will have to be carried out in a careful way in order to maintain historic interest, balancing the new use with those areas of greatest value. Proposals must be based on a full understanding of value and reviewed as the detailed design develops.

10.18 Therefore, it is seen that a precautionary approach is the most appropriate under these circumstances and that consolidation of the building in (or close to) its current form should be the preferred solution. This ensuring that there is no adverse impact on the character of the building.

Policy 9 Detailed proposals should include a further analysis and heritage impact assessment, however, in general terms the development approach should be:

- No significant alterations to any of elevations should be permitted as this may result in the loss of or misinterpretation of the phased development of the castle.
- The Great Hall, ground / first floor kitchen and cellar should all be conserved on an "as found" basis and intervention minimised.
- Areas within the East jamb above first floor level can accommodate modest change but surviving finishes should be analysed and generally reinstated wherever feasible.

Policy 10 If a greater degree of intervention is required for sustainability there maybe scope for sensitive redevelopment to the upper accommodation within the east jamb and at garret level of the East / West.

10.19 It is important that the visible separation between castle and adjoining village houses is maintained in order to safeguarding the castles historic setting within the landscape and its distant coastal views.

PRELIMINARY

Policy 11 There is a need to conserve and restore the landscape scheme; modern alterations have had a significant detrimental impact which in turn has an adverse impact on the setting of the historic buildings within the site. In broad terms, the period of greatest interest is between the mid 14th and 17th century and this should serve as a primacy date. Key features of the landscape scheme should include:

- Landscapes that play a key role in the settings of a significant historic building or monument should be protected and enhanced.
- Previously introduced landscape features which are inconsistent with the original landscape should be either phased out or relocated to more sympathetic locations within the site.
- Historic boundaries should be retained in their historic form and any repairs and maintenance should involve similar materials, construction and soft landscape.
- The existing soft landscape and any new features should be designed and managed to enhance the character of the area and appreciation of its significance.
- Close views and long vistas that are important to the character and appreciation of the area should be protected.
- The soft landscape features should be managed so as to mitigate damage to the site's archaeology. Landscape management regimes should be carefully designed to be sympathetic to the context and character of the whole area.

10.20 Despite extensive walk-round inspection and survey work, much remains unknown about the building – phasing, overall development, encapsulated earlier structures, and extent of surviving historic finishes. It is essential that a full archaeological standing building survey and re-appraisal of the preliminary findings be undertaken at key stages as the project develops. This would include opening-up and archaeological excavations.

Policy 12 Provision should be made for a full programme of archaeological and architectural building recording and analysis as the project develops, and the proposals revised accordingly.

Understanding

10.21 The history of the site is generally poorly interpreted and understood. An opportunity exists at Portencross Castle to develop an interpretation programme that is both accessible and easily understood by the visiting public.

PRELIMINARY

Policy 15 Provision should be made for an appropriate/sensitive interpretative and presentation scheme for the castle and its role/importance in the wider history of the area.

10.22 Portencross Castle is currently an A listed Scheduled Ancient Monument of both regional and national importance.

- Scottish architectural style
- Limited knowledge of the site
- Relationship of the castle with neighbouring Auldhill site
- Historical links with Robert II, the de Ross and the Boyd family
- Archaeological sensitive site

Policy 16 Portencross Castle is one of the most important surviving 14th century castles on the western coast of Scotland. It is of both regional and national importance as it demonstrates the transition from traditional Scottish hall house to tower house construction.

Approaches should be made to North Ayrshire Council to ensure that this is taken into account in considering any future proposals for change in the surrounding area.

PRELIMINARY

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

11.1 This Conservation Management Plan forms just the first stage in the development of proposals for the restoration and re-use of this important historic site. At the present there is much potential importance about the site which requires further investigation and will only become known as the project develops. It is therefore important that the Conservation Management Plan is regularly reviewed and revised as more becomes known about the site, and at key stages in the design project.

11.2 It is also important that the views of stakeholders such as the FoPC and statutory authorities are taken fully into account in the Plan. Appropriate mechanisms must be put in place to ensure that such consultation takes place and the results fed back into the plan.