

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



FIELD MONUMENTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

1 SITE CODE									
H	N	C	2	2	S	W	0	0	2
2 NGR									
N	C	2	3	9	8	2	3	6	3
3 QUAL									
CE									
6 SITE NAME									
A	R	D	V	R	E	C	K	C	A
S	T	L	E						
10 GENERIC TYPE									
CASTLE									
14 PERIOD/DATE					15 DATING METHOD				
16th CENT.					TYP				
18 SHAPE									
19 THREAT AND DATE									

4 DISTR:CT		5 PARISH	
SUTHERLAND		ASSYNT	
7 AREA STATUS	8 SITE STATUS	9 REGIONAL STATUS	
	SCHEDULED + LISTED 'B'		
11 CONCORDANCE	12 FORM	13 DIMENSIONS	
OS NC 22 SW 2	STANDING STRUCTURE		
NMR			
16 RELATIONSHIP OF ELEMENTS		17 CONDITION	
		RUINED	

20 LAND USE		21 GEOLOGY	
ROUGH PASTURE			
22 SOILS		23 VEGETATION	
24 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE		25 RELIEF	
		PROMONTORY	
		26 ASPECT	
		NW=W=S	
		27 ALTITUDE	
		69=76m OD	

28 EXCAVATION (EXCAVATOR: DATE: EXTENT: QUALITY)	
29 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR: DATE: TITLE: JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER: VOLUME: DETAIL)	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ORDNANCE SURVEY: 1967: 6" MAP. 2. R.C.A.H.M.S.S.F.: 1911: SUTHERLAND INVENTORY: H.M.S.O.: p 1, No. 2. 3. MACGIBBON & ROSS: 1889: CASTLE & DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE OF SCOTLAND: 3: pp 631/3. 4. le N. NOBLE, D.J.R.: 1969: DISCOVERY & EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND: C.B.A. (SCOTLAND): p 48. 5. : 1967: ANCIENT MONUMENTS OF SCOTLAND: D.o.E.: p 46. 6. HBM (SDD): 1985: LIST OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS 7. HMB (SDD): 1985: BSAHI LIST, SUTHERLAND. 	
30 GROUND PLAN NO.	31 GROUND PHOTO NO.
	87/05/01/35,37 87/05/03/26-28
32 SLIDES NO.	33 HR. AP. NO.
34 NMR. AP. NO.	35 OTHER AP. NO.: SOURCE
36 ARCHIVE AND LOCATION	
37 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY	38 SAMPLES
39 PALYNOLOGY	40 NUMERICAL DATES: RANGE: LAB NO.
41 SMALL FINDS	42 MUSEUM/LOCATION
43 OTHER	

44 NAME & ADDRESS OF OWNER		45 ATTITUDE OF OWNER	
46 NAME & ADDRESS OF TENANT		47 ATTITUDE OF TENANT	

48 ACCESS & RESTRICTIONS					
49 NAME & ADDRESS OF FINDER/RECORDER: DATE		50 RECORDER: DATE		51 CHECK: DATE	
		HAR: 8.1.1985		HAR: 4-2-1985	

52 TEXT

See continuation card for text.

'NC 239.236. Ardvreck Castle'. (6)

' Ardvreck Castle' (7)

29. 8. CLOSE-BROOKS, J: 1986: EXPLORING SCOTLAND'S HERITAGE, THE HIGHLANDS: HMSO: p93

(HC 2398 2363) Ardvreck Castle (NR) (remains of)

(1)

Ardvreck Castle, now in a ruinous state, is situated on the N side of Loch Assynt, on the neck of a long rocky peninsula. Formerly the residence of Neil Macleod, Laird of Assynt, it is said to have been built towards the end of the 16th c, and the place to which the Marquis of Montrose was taken in 1650.

It has been a simple rectangular keep with a round staircase tower at the SE angle, corbelled out on the upper floors to form square rooms, the small stair turret to these upper rooms being carried on corbelling in the re-entrant angle. The ground floor was divided into 3 compartments, all vaulted, and there seems to have been 4 floors, the first of which is also vaulted, the remainder simply joisted.

The remains are fragmentary; the N wall has entirely disappeared and much of the E and W walls also.

(2) (3) (OSFI:cw:8.9.1960)

Generally as described above. No trace of the N wall remains. Lying in one of the ground floor compartments are two iron cannons without carriages.

No date stone could be found, the only inscription being the date 1515 marked on some modern cement facing. S and E of the castle is a level platform with traces of stone walling, possibly representing the remains of an outer court. Extending from the SW corner of the keep are traces of a wall running in a SSW direction, but the truncation is narrow and it may be modern. About 90.0m SSW of the keep is a rectangular building foundation. The walls are almost completely grassed-over but appear to have been of considerable thickness. On the W edge of the promontory is a rectilinear enclosure bounded by the foundations of a stone wall.

The promontory is connected to the mainland by a narrow strip of sand.

(OSFI:RDL:22.5.1962)

The line of a rampart and ditch to the landward of the castle can be traced across the neck of the peninsula just within the modern stone dyke.

(4)

To the NNW of the castle the remains of a wall run to the flat saddle-area between two hills. This area has been walled to form a rectangular yard.

To the S of the castle on the very point of the peninsula stands a long, semi-rectangular structure

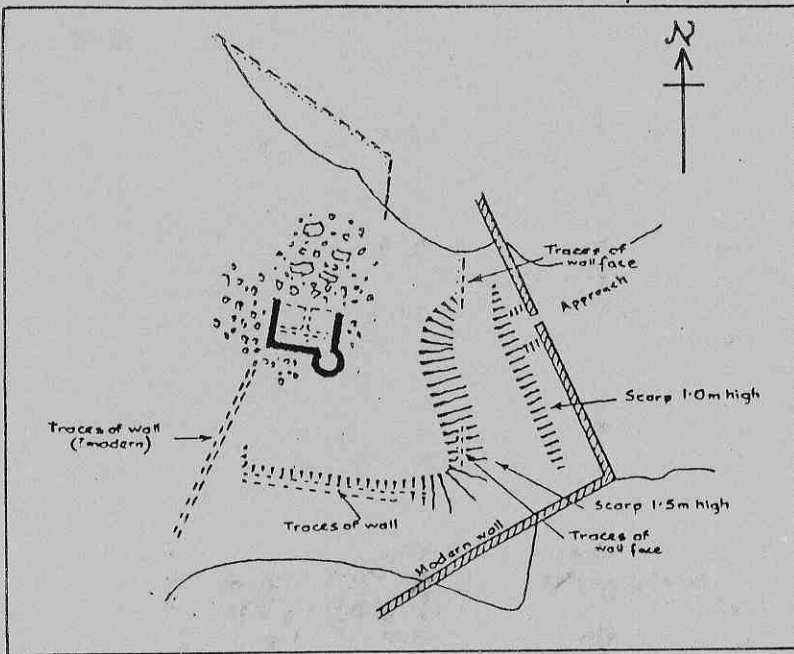
It is divided into two compartments one c. 9' long, the other 24' to 30'. The S end is distinctly rounded.

Scheduled.

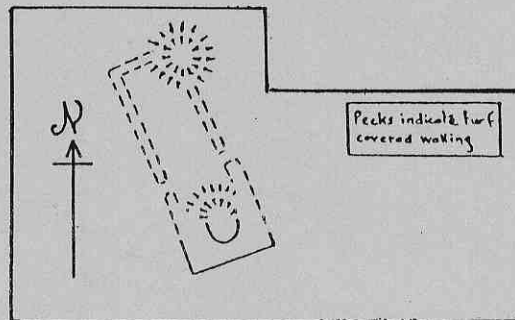
"Ardvreck Castle" is generally as described. The line of the rampart noted by Noble is the most easterly one surveyed by F.2. There is no definite sign of a ditch fronting it though a modern causewayed approach perhaps gives the effect of one. The building to the S of the castle appears to be a barn and kiln of uncertain date although it is possible both it and the rectilinear enclosure are contemporary with the castle. It seems likely the wall to the S and E of the castle represents a contemporary forecourt, and the remains of another strong wall to the N, now mainly under water, may also be of the same period.

(OSFI:JM:15.8.1974.)

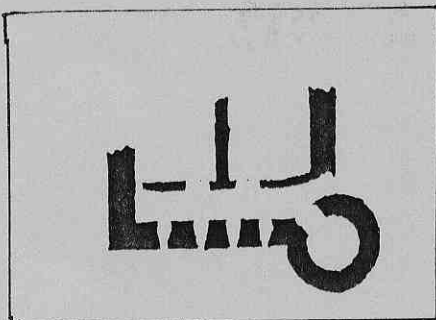
O.S. 495 The iron cannons are now preserved at Lochinver.



Authy F.3



Authy F.3



Authy F.3

**Ardvreck Castle and Calda House,
Sutherland**



*Castle 15th-16th century AD;
house c 1720.*

NC 239236 and 243233. Beside Loch Assynt, just N of Inchnadamph on A 837.

Standing in empty countryside against a backdrop of loch and mountains, Ardvreck Castle and Calda House must be counted amongst the best romantic ruins. The castle stands on the neck of a promontory jutting out into Loch Assynt. It seems to be of two phases, probably built in the 15th century and altered in the 16th. An old record of a 1591 or 1597 date-stone may relate to the alteration. The circular angle tower was an addition to the original oblong block, once four-storeys high, of which one end remains. The basement of the main block contained two stone-vaulted rooms, and a passage with several gun-ports, while above it would have been the hall, originally also vaulted. The lower part of the tower is round and held a spiral stair communicating with the first-floor hall, while its upper part is corbelled out to the square in typical 16th century fashion to form rooms, one of which can be seen to have a fireplace of its own. A stair turret built across the angle between the tower and the hall gave access to the upper floors. This castle was the residence of the Macleod Lairds of Assynt, and here Montrose was held prisoner after his capture in 1650.

The ruins of Edderchalder or Calda House stand beside the road a short distance south of the castle. Built for the Mackenzies in the 1720s, its domestic style of architecture is in complete contrast to its predecessor. The house was a double block two storeys high with an attic, each half having a pitched roof, and it probably had a central staircase. There were chimneys in each of the four gables and another chimney stack, now fallen, in the centre of the house, so some sixteen rooms had fireplaces. It was gutted by fire in 1737. It has been suggested that this commodious house, which has some resemblance to contemporary barracks such as Bernera (no. 36), may have served as a garrison post, if need be, as well as a domestic residence.

Beside Loch Assynt and near Elphin are outcrops of limestone rock and the soil is unusually fertile, a fact appreciated by farmers since prehistoric times. Neolithic chambered cairns can be found scattered along the line of the A 837 from Loch Assynt south to Loch Borrolan.

