

**SALMON STATION
PORT ERROLL
CRUDEN BAY
ABERDEENSHIRE**



**- Standing Building Survey -
Carried out 21ST October 2010
by
Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2010-23
by
H K Murray**

H K Murray BA, PhD, MIFA, FSA Scot
J C Murray BA, MIFA, FSA Scot, FMA
Hill of Belnagoak, Methlick, Ellon, Aberdeenshire AB41 7JN
Telephone: (01651) 806394 e-mail: cmurray@btinternet.com

SALMON STATION
PORT ERROLL
CRUDEN BAY
ABERDEENSHIRE
- Standing Building Survey -
H K Murray

1. Background

- 1.1 A standing building survey was required prior to the renovation of the Salmon Station, Port Erroll, Cruden Bay, Aberdeenshire.
- 1.2 The archaeological condition was applied in the context of planning conditions PAN 42, para 34, 36, SPP 23, SHEP, which state that it is necessary for developers to arrange for archaeological work to take place prior to development, in appropriate circumstances.
- 1.3 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Stephen Brown Architect Ltd to undertake the survey on 22nd October 2010.

2. Desk-top survey

- 2.1 A search was carried out in the Sites and Monuments Record, Archaeology Service, Aberdeenshire Council and in the Sites and Monuments Records of the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments in Scotland (RCAHMS) through Canmore and Pastmap.
- 2.2 The 1st Ordnance Survey map of Aberdeenshire (surveyed 1868, published 1872) was consulted.

- 2.3 Site plans and elevations of the site were kindly supplied by Stephen Brown Architect Ltd and have been annotated and used as a basis for detailed plans of the observed areas.

3. The Site

- 3.1 The site comprises a bothy, now restored, an ice-house and ramp and a workshop/store which is due for demolition. They lie on the shoreline, just N of the harbour at Port Erroll on the S side of Cruden Bay.

Parish: Cruden. NGR: NK 0933 3581

Fishing station: NMRS No: NK03NE 49 Aberdeenshire SMR No:
NK03NE0035

Ice-house: NMRS No: NK03NE 40 Aberdeenshire SMR No: NK03NE0035

The ice-house is a category C (s) listed building (HB No: 3070)

4. Documentary evidence

- 4.1 The 1st Ordnance Survey map of Aberdeenshire of 1868 (published 1872) shows the bothy as an L-shaped building with the ice-house and the ramp down to it lying to the north of the bothy. A structure, which may be an earlier version of the workshop/store, lies adjacent to the ramp and the ice-house, on part of the footprint of the present timber workshop/store.

5 Methodology

- 5.1 The ground plans were supplied by Stephen Brown Architects Ltd (Appendix 2, Illus 10 & 11).
- 5.2 The areas recorded were photographed. As the bothy has already been renovated, some features had been changed prior to the survey, so additional photographs, taken in 2008, were supplied by Stephen Brown. Both sets of photographs will be supplied on CD for the archive and annotated plans in the present report indicate the position of those taken by MAS Ltd (Appendix 1 and Illus 8 & 9)

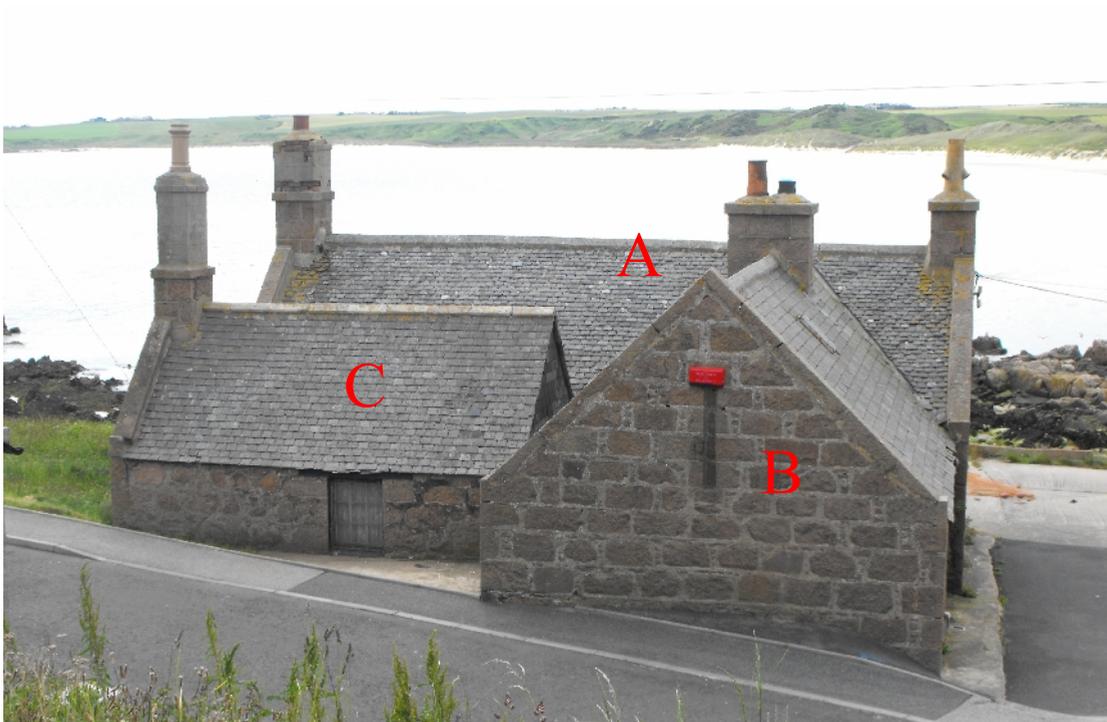
6. The Building

- 6.1 The Bothy

At the time of survey the bothy buildings had been substantially altered with new linings etc and no internal details could be recorded.

Plan

By 1868 the bothy was an L-shaped building, the longer and possibly earlier arm of the L (A) lying parallel to the shore with the shorter arm of the L (B) abutting the N end of the E wall. A third element (C), parallel to and abutting A is secondary; this used the E wall of A as an internal wall and a central door flanked by two windows had been blocked (pers comm Stephen Brown. These could not be planned as behind new cladding.)



Illus 1 The bothy - looking W from across the road

Walls The external walls of all three elements of the building are of roughly squared pink granite rubble set in very even courses with small stacked pinnings between the blocks. It was originally lime mortared.

The gables of structures A and B (but not C) had slit vents (since blocked) into the loft space.

Roof Each element has a separate pitched roof with slate cladding and ceramic ridge tiles. Both gables of structure A, the S gable of structure C and the E gable of structure C have stone skewes. Originally there were stone chimney stacks with single ceramic pots at either gable of structure A, a stone chimney stack with

paired ceramic pots off-centre in structure B and a stone chimney stack with a single ceramic pot on the S gable of structure C. Both the S chimneys had been raised to improve the draught.

6.2 The Workshop/store

The ground floor had been used primarily as storage, with the loft used for net making and repair (pers comm Stephen Brown).



Illus 2 Workshop/store from across the road, showing extension of roof covering the roof of ice-house

Plan The workshop/store is a slightly irregular rectangle in plan, internally c 8.6 x 9.1m. The ground floor incorporates the upper side of part of the domed roof of the ice-house, restricting headroom at the N end and forming an area which appears to have been edged with timber for use as a large storage shelf for nets, boxes etc. The remainder of the floor is concrete. The SE corner has been partitioned off as a toilet and has a separate external door.

The upper, loft floor within the roof is accessed through a hatch with a well-worn wooden ladder. The floor is wooden, propped with a fairly random arrangement of vertical timbers, many appearing to be cut-down from net drying poles.

Walls The walls are of vertical planking. The main door is a wooden sliding door on a metal rail. There are four windows in the ground floor and one either end

into the loft. They range between c 630 x 700mm and 880 x 740mm and are covered in plastic.

Roof The roof is sarked and has tarred felt cladding which continues down over a secondary concrete cladding over the ice-house roof (Illus 2).

6.3 The Ice-house

Plan The ice-house is a single-storied arched structure with a rectangular ground plan c 8 x 3.7m internally. It is partially below ground and is approached on the W by a stone-walled ramp leading from the direction of the bothy.



Illus 3 W wall of ice-house



Illus 4 detail of W wall of bothy for comparison of stonework

Structure The W wall facing the ramp is of pink granite rubble. The size of the stones are variable and it is distinctly different from the even stonework of the bothy and also lacks the stacked pinnings; this may suggest that it was built

before the bothy or at the least built by a different person (cf illus 3 & 4). The wall is c 650mm thick with a door and a small window. The window (620 wide x 700 high) appears to have been enlarged or replaced, with some modern yellow bricks around the window opening. The sill is however original being of pink granite as is the lintel over the door. The door (1.05 wide x 1.77m high) is planked.

The E wall is now totally obscured on the outside, but has a single high level hatch which would have opened at ground level beside the road for ice to be tipped in from above (Illus 5).



Illus 5 Ice hatch

All the walls are of rubble stone to the base of the arch at c 2.5m above the present floor. The internal corners at the E end are rounded. The floor is concrete and higher to the E for drainage. There is a manhole cover for a drain outside the door.

The arch of the roof is of brick with a double row of end-on (header) bricks at the centre and then alternating rows of headers and stretchers. The bricks are hand made irregular bricks orange/red in colour (Illus 6). Externally a secondary angle of concrete has been built up over the arch and the tarred felt roof of the workshop/store extended down over it.



Illus 6 Detail of brick arch of ice-house

Internal fittings

2.15m from the inside of the W wall there is a steel beam (two H sections with concrete between) across the width of the building at the level of the tops of the walls. This is thought to have held lifting pulleys. Above it, the arc between it and the roof has been infilled with different, more modern bricks than those used in the roof. A wooden pole crossed the interior at wall top height at the E end of the building.

A raggie in the side walls 3.09m from the W end and another raggie on the roof and associated holes in the walls for wooden stobs at 4.35m from the W end suggest there have been partitions at different times.

A concrete base beside the N wall had formally held an ice machine after the use of natural ice ceased.

6.4 External features

Photographs of the fishing station in the 1970s (RCAHMS John Hume Collection of Industrial Archaeological Images of Scotland. SCRAN id 000-000-187-641-C) show net drying poles and a net boiling tub with a brick chimney and a tripod and block and tackle for lifting. This tar boiler was extant until recently when it was stolen for scrap.



Illus 7 Remains of tar boiler (photograph Stephen Brown)

7. Discussion

McKean (1990, 171) describes the Salmon Station as 18th century in date but the Historic Scotland listing dates it to the 19th century. It clearly existed, more or less in its present form, by the 1st OS map of 1868 before the development of the harbour in the 1870s. It may be part of the development of Cruden Bay from c1830 by the Earl of Erroll.

There is no direct reference prior to the 1st OS map. However, the 1st Statistical Account of Scotland (1791-99) refers to 8 boats working out of Cruden Bay and the tradition of fishing from here, if not the actual structures, clearly pre-dates the 19th century (<http://stat-acc-scot.edina.ac.uk/link/1791-99/Aberdeen/Cruden/5/434/>).

The bricks of the ice-house are clearly hand-made early bricks. There was a brickworks in Cruden Bay from 1882 but this is clearly too late for the ice house (which certainly existed in 1868). The nearest known contemporary brickworks at Tippetty (12 miles away) was in production from c 1850 – or perhaps as likely would be the Blackpotts brickworks at Whitehills which was in production from the late 18th century and the products of which could have come by boat.

The ice-house is one of many along the villages of the Aberdeenshire coast. It is perhaps more unusual in that it has continued in use as a salmon fishery

until the present and that the present owners are the current generation of the same family which has worked there for many years.

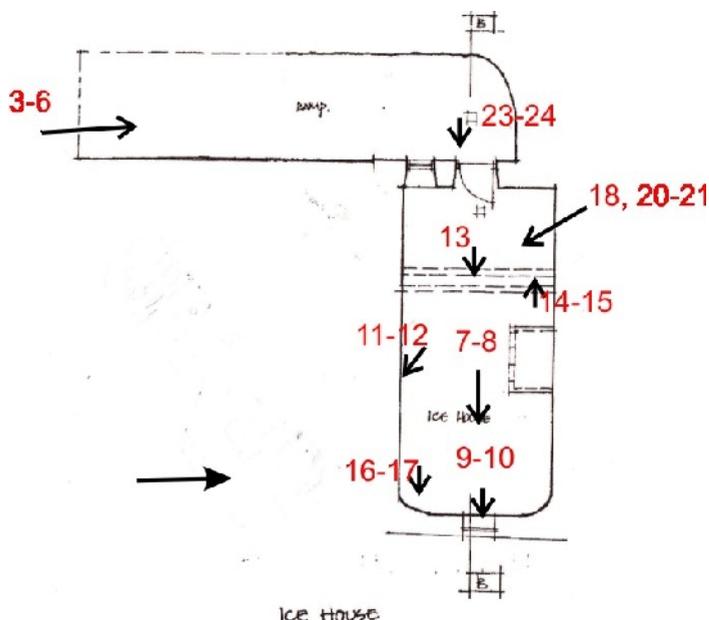
Sources

Large scale Ordnance Survey map of Aberdeenshire sheet xl (surveyed 1868, published 1872) www.nls.uk

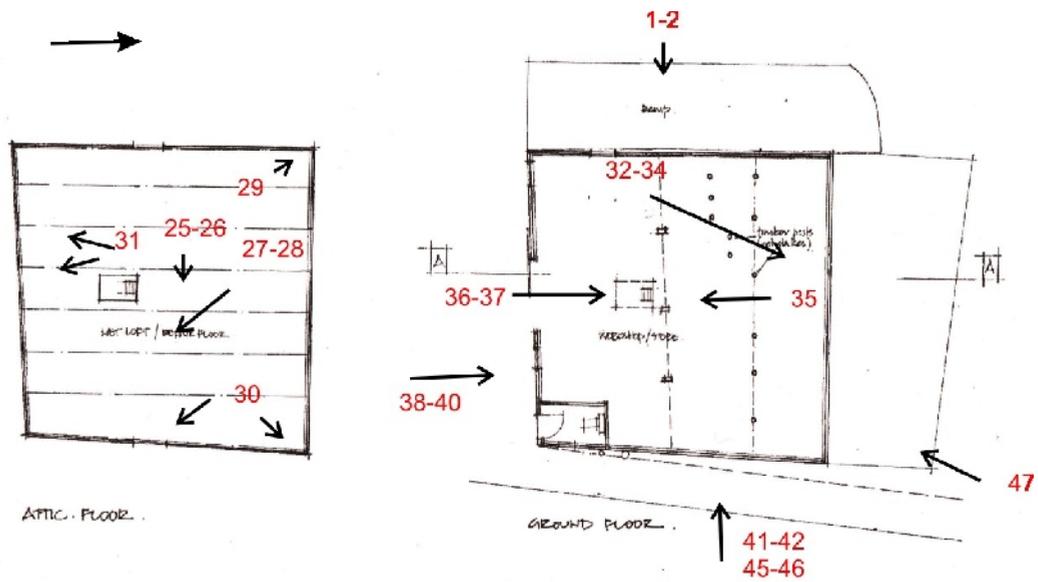
McKean, C 1990 Banff and Buchan: An illustrated architectural guide.
RIAS:Edinburgh.

Appendix 1: Photographic archive

A full set of photographs taken in 2010 by MAS Ltd with the photo location plans will be supplied on CD to the Aberdeenshire SMR and to the NMRS. An additional set of photographs taken by architect Stephen Brown (c2008) before work began on the bothy are also catalogued and will be added to the CD.



Illus 8 Key to digital photographs of ice-house



Illus 9 Key to digital photographs of workshop/store

Photographs taken by Murray Archaeological Services Ltd 22/10/2010	
Photo No	Content
1-2	workshop/store W end across ramp
	ICE-HOUSE
3-6	ramp to ice-house
7-8	E wall ice-house
9-10	detail ice hatch
11-12	raggles in roof and walls
13-15	beam for lifting pulley
16-17	E wall and pole beam
18	detail arch brickwork
19	raggle in wall
20-21	detail arch brickwork
22	bench
23-24	W wall
	WORKSHOP/STORE

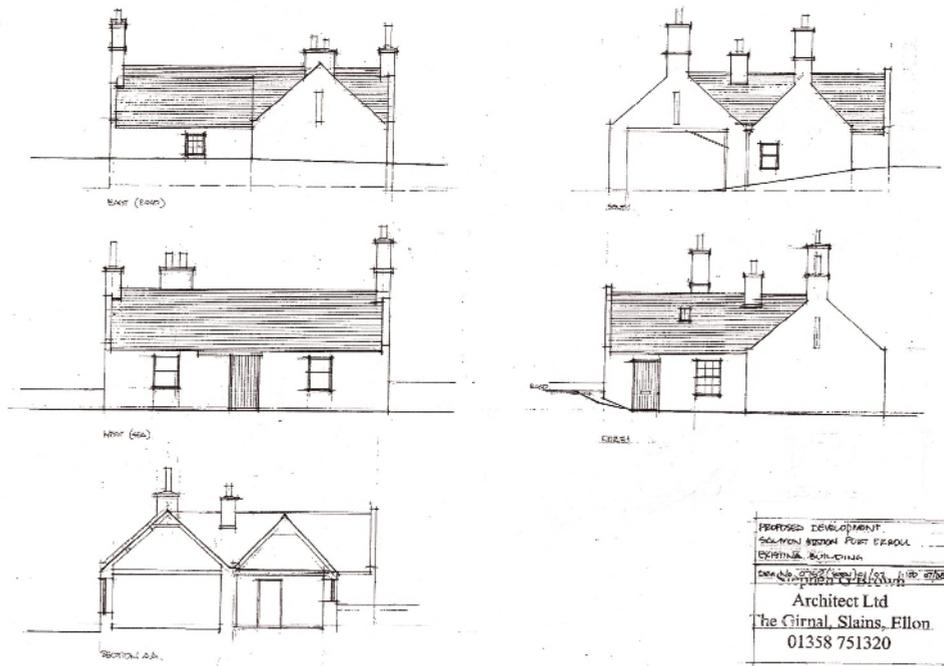
25-26	Attic looking E
27-28	Attic looking SE
29	Attic looking NW
30	Attic looking E
31	Attic looking S
32-34	ground floor looking NE shows roof of ice-house in floor
35	Ground floor looking S
36-37	ladder and hatch
38-42	exterior
43-44	Renovated bothy exterior from across road
45-46	Workshop/store from across road
47	Workshop/store looking S
48-49	Renovated bothy from W
50-52	Renovated bothy from S

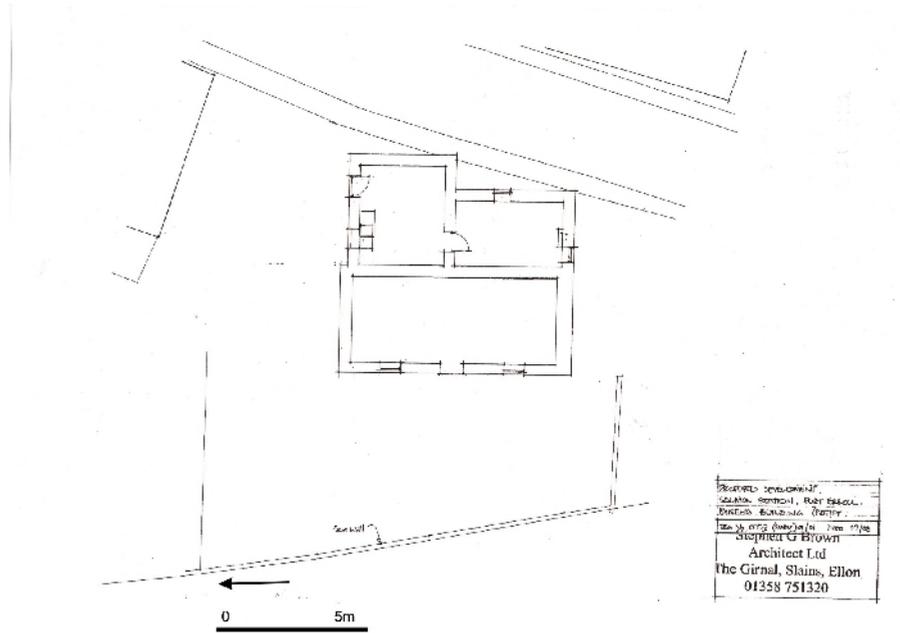
Photographs taken by Stephen Brown before renovation	
Photo No	Content
	BOTHY BEFORE RENOVATION
124-127	Front room
128-129	Lounge ceiling
130	front door
131-132	tar boiler
133	back door
134	now porch inner door (window opening)
135 -136	existing back door
137	back room ceiling
138	attic space
139	fireplace
140	back hall to bothy

141	bothy
142	bothy fireplace
143	bothy window
144	bothy back to window in back room
145-146	bothy internal wall
147	back room fireplace
149	bothy window
	SALMON STATION 2008 (0752-)
1	Workshop/store exterior
2	ramp
3	entrance
4-6	workshop/store from road
7-8	workshop/store/ice-house roof external
9	pill box
10-11	workshop/store from seaside
12-13	workshop/store from hill above
14	bothy from hill above
15	workshop/store and bothy from hill above
16	workshop/store and pill box from hill above
17	bothy entrance from road
18	bothy and workshop/store from road on harbour side
19	bothy from harbour side
20	bothy from sea side
21	bothy and nets from sea side
22	bothy from top of ramp
23	tar boiler
24-30	workshop/store ground floor
31-32	workshop/store ladder
33-34	upper floor workshop/store

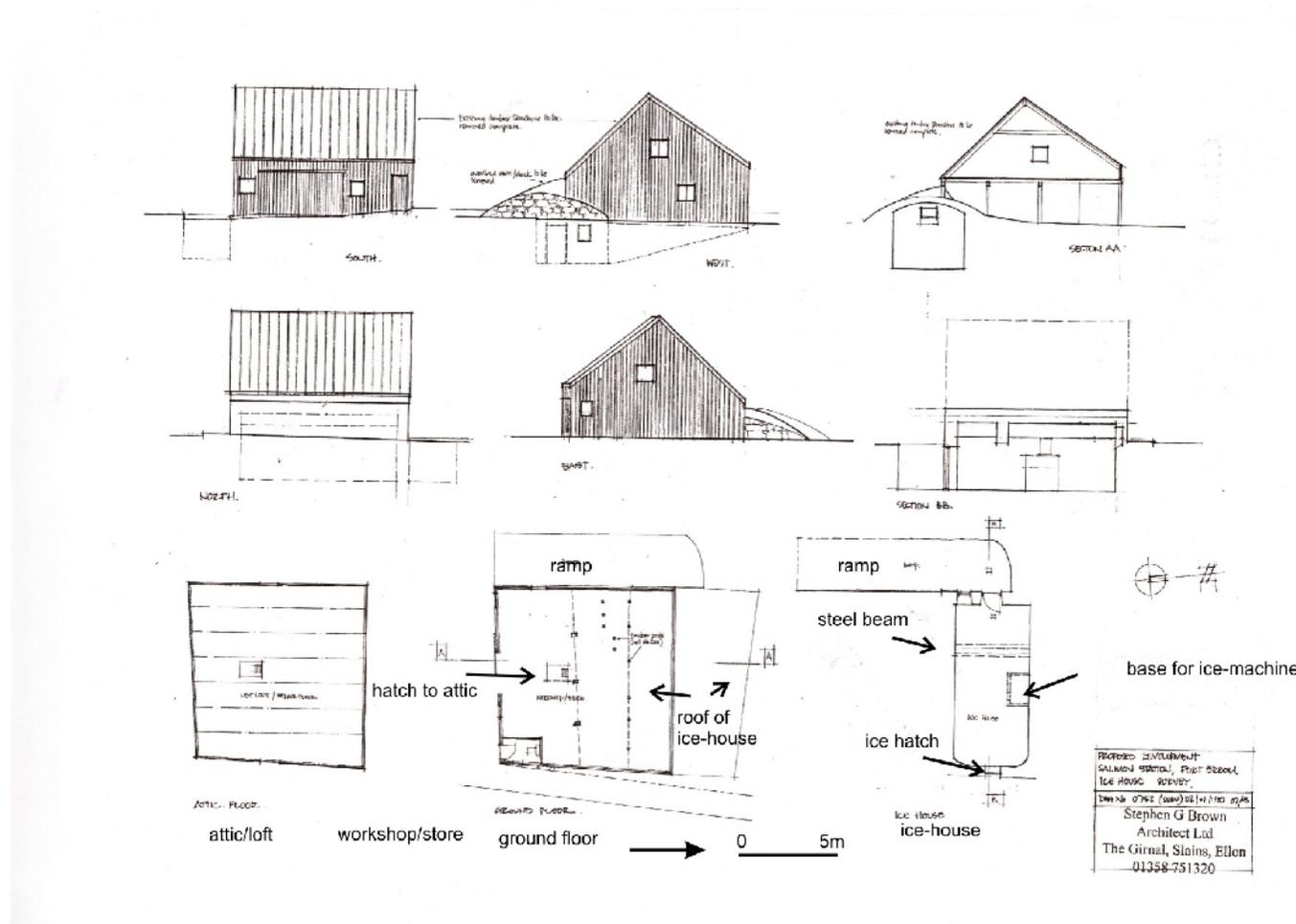
35	upper floor workshop/store, creels, baskets
36	upper floor workshop/store, nets
021	view of fishing station across sand 2007.

Appendix 2. Plans supplied by Stephen Brown Architects Ltd





Illus 10 Elevations and plan of bothy before renovation. 2008. Courtesy of Stephen Brown



Illus 11 Plan and elevations of workshop/store/store and ice-house. 2008. Courtesy of Stephen Brown Annotated by MAS Ltd