

CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

October 2008

Commissioned by Historic Scotland on behalf of Transport Scotland

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| Approved by: | Date |
| Draft/Final Report Stage: | FINAL |

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**Standing Building Survey:
A96 Fochabers - Mosstodloch Bypass**

Report No. 1566

CONTENTS

| | | |
|----|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Introduction | 3 |
| 2. | Methodology | 4 |
| 3. | Standing Building Survey Results | 5 |
| 4. | Conclusion and Recommendations | 8 |
| 5. | References | 9 |

Appendices

| | | |
|------------|--|----|
| Appendix 1 | Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry | 10 |
| Appendix 2 | Digital photograph register | 11 |

List of Figures (bound at rear)

| | |
|---------|--|
| Fig. 1 | Location Map |
| Fig. 2 | Ground Plan of Tank Shed (Unit A) |
| Fig. 3 | Ground Plan of Engine Shed (Unit B) |
| Fig. 4 | Ground Plan of Footbridge (Unit C) |
| Fig. 5 | Unit A Exterior, general shot |
| Fig. 6 | Unit A Exterior, north-west facing elevation |
| Fig. 7 | Unit A Exterior, south-west facing elevation |
| Fig. 8 | Unit A Exterior, south-east facing elevation |
| Fig. 9 | Unit A Interior, south-east facing elevation |
| Fig. 10 | Unit A Interior, north-west facing elevation |
| Fig. 11 | Unit B, visible remains of northern footings |
| Fig. 12 | Unit B, visible remains of southern footings |
| Fig. 13 | Unit C, south-east facing elevation |
| Fig. 14 | Unit C, general shot of bridge arch |
| Fig. 15 | Unit C, arch detail showing blockwork |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

1.1.1 This report presents the results of a Level 1 Standing Building Survey (English Heritage, 2006) of the standing remains of a tank shed, engine shed and footbridge associated with the disused Fochabers Branch line at Mosstodloch, Moray (NGR NJ 336 596, Fig. 1) carried out by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) in October 2008. The work was commissioned by Historic Scotland on behalf of Transport Scotland.

1.1.2 The proposed development comprises an extension to the A96 between Fochabers and Mosstodloch.

1.2 Objectives

1.2.1 The objectives of works were as follows:

- A site visit to record information on site including basic descriptions, ground plans and a photographic record of the existing structures.
- Reporting of the above.

1.3 Background

1.3.1 Fochabers Station (NMRS No. NJ35NW 56) was opened in 1893 by the Highland Railway. It was the terminal station of the Highland Railway Branch line from Orbliston to Fochabers.

1.3.2 The station and Branch line were closed to regular passenger traffic by the London, Midland and Scottish Railway in 1931.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

2.1.1 CFA follows the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidelines.

2.2 Building Survey

2.2.1 All survey records were maintained according to the IFA's Standards on Building Recording and CFA's in-house methodology.

2.2.2 CFA uses a Digital Nikon D100 SLR to take 35mm digital photographs of structures and specific architectural features. An appropriate photographic record was made of the structures.

2.2.3 A written descriptive record and ground plans of the structures were made in line with a Level 1 standing building survey (English Heritage 2006).

3. STANDING BUILDING SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 General

3.1.1 Three structures, a tank shed, an engine shed and a footbridge, were recorded along the disused Fochabers Branch line at Mosstodloch. These were separated into three units (A-C) for the purpose of recording and description, and are described in turn below.

3.2 The Tank Shed (Unit A) (Fig. 2)

3.2.1 The tank shed is situated approximately 12m south of the existing fence line to the south of the A96, and approximately 6m to the south of the disused railway line. The railway line and surrounding area are now heavily overgrown with trees and shrubbery. The structure was rectangular in shape and orientated north-west to south-east. It was 3.7m by 6.6m and 3.5m high, and had a sloping roof (Fig. 5).

3.2.2 The exterior south-east-facing elevation of the tank shed comprised large dressed sandstone blocks with bevelled relief, dressed quoins. The wall was two courses and 0.6m thick and 3.7m wide, and twelve courses and 3.5m high. An arched doorway served as the only entrance to the building (Fig. 8). This was located centrally in the exterior south-east-facing elevation and was 1.1m wide by 2.9m high. The arched doorway was surrounded by bevelled relief, dressed quoins, with the keystone standing proud of the rest of the archway. The door was no longer in place, but the remains of a wooden doorframe suggest that the door would have been wooden. An iron link and chain, likely to be the original locking mechanism for the door, was situated to the south side of the archway and penetrates through the exterior course of sandstone and around the wooden door frame.

3.2.3 The exterior north-east-facing elevation of the tank shed comprised large dressed sandstone blocks with bevelled relief, dressed quoins. The wall was two courses and 0.6m thick and 6.6m long. Iron fittings for a probable iron drainpipe were located at the centre of the wall with two iron drain pipes running through the wall into the interior of the structure (see Fig. 9). The external drainpipe does not survive.

3.2.4 The exterior north-west-facing elevation of the tank shed comprised large dressed sandstone blocks with bevelled relief, dressed quoins (Fig. 6). The wall was two courses and 0.6m thick and 3.7m wide. An arched window was located at the centre of the wall and was 1.1m wide on the exterior and 1.2m wide on the interior. The window was 2m in height. The original window appears to have been wooden framed but is now blocked up by 0.7m of breeze blocks from the base of the window. The elevation was heavily covered by vegetation (see Fig. 6).

3.2.5 The exterior south-west-facing elevation of the tank shed comprised large dressed sandstone blocks with bevelled relief, dressed quoins. The wall was two courses and 0.6m thick and 6.6m long. Close examination of the wall was

not possible due to it being obscured by heavily overgrown vegetation (see Fig. 7).

- 3.2.6 The interior of the tank shed showed that the interior walls comprised rough-hewn red sandstone blocks to a height of approximately 2.2m, with the upper courses of the building comprising rough-hewn yellow sandstone blocks (see Figs. 9 & 10). The floor of the tank shed appears to have originally comprised a sandstone floor that was later covered over with concrete. A drain hole is located in the east corner of the floor. The drain pipe that joins the interior with the exterior of the building is sticking out of the interior south-west facing elevation at approximately head height (see Fig. 9). A metal iron bar was found across the window frame but appears to have been a later addition, possibly along with the breeze blocks that are more visible from the interior. Pieces of rubble were present on the floor of the tank shed, but these had not come from the structure of the building, and are likely to have made their way into the building after the tank shed fell into disuse.
- 3.2.7 The northern elevation of the tank shed was lower than the southern elevation allowing for a sloping, corrugated iron roof that was supported by five wooden truss beams. The wooden truss beams were supported by dressed sandstone blocks.

3.3 The Engine Shed (Unit B) (Fig. 3)

- 3.3.1 The visible remains of what may be the engine shed lie approximately 13m to the south of the existing fence line to the south of the A96. The remains of the structure were heavily overgrown with trees and shrubbery allowing limited access and visibility of the structure. The general size and shape of the structure recorded here matches that of the engine shed shown on the Ordnance Survey maps but the remains are so poorly preserved and so heavily obscured by vegetation that it proved impossible to clarify any architectural details. In places, particularly on the south and south-east, the route of the wall footing is conjectural based upon the portions that are visible.
- 3.3.2 The majority of the northern footing is slightly visible amongst the vegetation, as is the south-east corner of the structure. It comprised a concrete wall footing 0.35m wide and 15.8m long and stands to a height of 0.2m (see Fig. 11). It is not apparent where the entrance to the structure might have been.
- 3.3.3 Only the north-western half of the southern footing was visible, and as with the northern elevation this comprised a concrete wall footing 0.35m wide and 0.2m high. The remainder of the structure was inaccessible and not visible due to the heavily overgrown vegetation (see Fig. 12).
- 3.3.4 The concrete footings that remain were possibly once the base for a wooden superstructure that no longer remains.

3.4 The Footbridge (Unit C) (Fig. 4)

- 3.4.1 The stone-built arched footbridge crosses the disused Fochabers Branch line. The remains of the railway were no longer present beneath the bridge, and was heavily overgrown. It comprised large, dressed sandstone blocks with four basic elements (Fig. 13).
- 3.4.2 The northern and southern abutments of the bridge are 5m to 5.75m wide and 6.75m in length and were set into the built embankments on either side of the disused railway (Fig. 14). The bridge was 5.75m wide at the base and 4.7m wide at the top. The bridge ran for a length of 18m with the arch being 4.5m wide.
- 3.4.3 The arch barrel comprised roughly dressed sandstone blocks. The underside of the arch barrel comprised smaller sandstone blocks, with the archway being approximately 3-4m high (Fig. 15).
- 3.4.4 The deck of the bridge was separated from the abutments and the arch barrel by a course of thin sandstone lintels approximately 0.05 to 0.1m thick. The deck was heavily overgrown with trees and shrubbery impairing visibility as to the make-up of the deck.
- 3.4.5 The parapets comprised sandstone lintels along the length of the bridge and were 0.5m wide. Access to the bridge had been closed off to the general public but was still accessible for surveying purposes.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 A Level 1 Standing Building Survey of the tank shed, engine shed and footbridge on the disused Fochabers Branch line, Mosstodloch has provided a written and photographic record of the standing remains of the three structures, prior to their removal during construction of the A96 Fochabers to Mosstodloch Bypass.
- 4.2 The structures were erected in the late 19th century following the construction of the Fochabers Station as part of the Highland Railway Branch line from Orbliston to Fochabers in 1893. The Branch line and station came into disuse following the closure of Fochabers Station in 1931.
- 4.3 An entry in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* will disseminate the results of the survey (Appendix 1) and no further recording work is recommended.

5. REFERENCES

Cartographic

Ordnance Survey, 1878-83, *Elginshire*, XIV Sheet 1

Ordnance Survey, 1878-83, *Elginshire*, XIV Sheet 5

Bibliographic

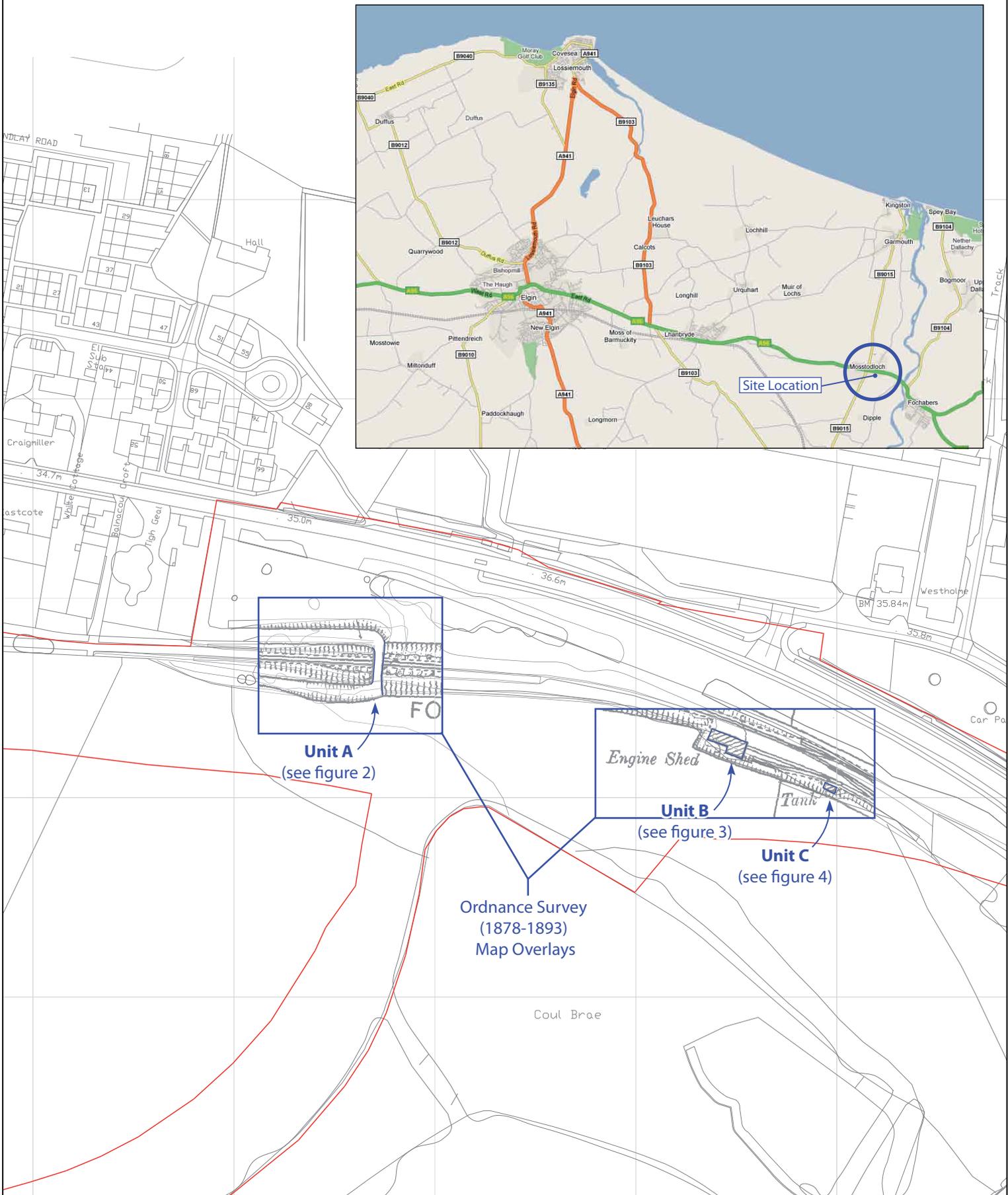
English Heritage, 2006, *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*

APPENDIX 1: DES ENTRY

| | |
|---|--|
| LOCAL AUTHORITY: | Moray |
| PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME: | A96 Fochabers to Mosstodloch Bypass |
| PROJECT CODE: | FOMO |
| PARISH: | Speymouth |
| NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR: | I Hill |
| NAME OF ORGANISATION: | CFA Archaeology Ltd |
| TYPE(S) OF PROJECT: | Building Survey (Level 1) |
| NMRS NO(S): | N/a |
| SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S): | Tank Shed, Engine Shed, Footbridge |
| SIGNIFICANT FINDS: | N/a |
| NGR (2 letters, 6 figures) | NJ 336 596 |
| START DATE (this season) | October 2008 |
| END DATE (this season) | October 2008 |
| PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.) | None |
| MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields) | A level 1 standing building survey was conducted to record the visible remains of the tank shed, engine shed and footbridge on the disused Fochabers Branch line at Mosstodloch prior to their demolition for the construction of the A96 Fochabers to Mosstodloch Bypass. The tank shed was a rectangular structure comprising large, dressed sandstone blocks with an arched doorway and arched window. It was 6.6m long by 3.7m wide. The engine shed was heavily overgrown and inaccessible, with the visible remains comprising concrete plinths 0.2m high and 0.35m wide. The footbridge that spanned the disused Fochabers Branch line was arched and stone built comprising large, dressed sandstone blocks and smaller sandstone brickwork beneath the arch. The bridge was heavily overgrown and continued to a length of 18m. |
| PROPOSED FUTURE WORK: | None |
| CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS: | N/a |
| SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY: | Historic Scotland |
| ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR: | CFA Archaeology Ltd, Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ. |
| EMAIL ADDRESS: | ihill@cfa-archaeology.co.uk |
| ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited) | Archive to be deposited in NMRS, Reports lodged with SMR and NMRS. |

APPENDIX 2: DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPH REGISTER

| Shot | Description | From | Conditions |
|------|---|------|------------|
| 1 | Unit A – Internal East-facing | E | Overcast |
| 2 | Unit A – Internal general shot | SE | Overcast |
| 3 | Unit A – Internal general shot | NE | Overcast |
| 4 | Unit A – Internal West-facing | W | Overcast |
| 5 | Unit A - Exterior, general shot | NE | Overcast |
| 6 | Unit A - Exterior, North-facing | N | Overcast |
| 7 | Unit A - Exterior, general shot | NW | Overcast |
| 8 | Unit A - Exterior, Detail of Iron fittings for drainage | NW | Overcast |
| 9 | Unit A – Exterior, General shot. Vegetation cover over window opening. | NW | Overcast |
| 10 | Unit A – Exterior window detail | NW | Overcast |
| 11 | Unit A – Exterior, General shot of south side | SW | Overcast |
| 12 | Unit A – Exterior, general shot of entrance | NE | Overcast |
| 13 | Unit A – Exterior, general shot of entrance | NE | Overcast |
| 14 | Unit B – remains of the north wall footings running east-west | E | Overcast |
| 15 | Unit B – remains of wall visible (north wall) | S | Overcast |
| 16 | Unit B – East end of building remains | NE | Overcast |
| 17 | Unit B – North section of wall | E | Overcast |
| 18 | Unit B – South section of wall | N | Overcast |
| 19 | Unit B – Part of the north wall visible through the vegetation. | S | Overcast |
| 20 | Unit B – South wall | W | Overcast |
| 21 | Unit B – general shot to show vegetation cover | SW | Overcast |
| 22 | Unit B – Length of building as seen from the west towards ranging rod | W | Overcast |
| 23 | Unit C – East wall on footbridge | SW | Overcast |
| 24 | Unit C – East wall on footbridge | SW | Overcast |
| 25 | Unit C – West wall on footbridge | NE | Overcast |
| 26 | Unit C – West wall on footbridge | NE | Overcast |
| 27 | Unit C – Footbridge as seen from the disused railway line. | E | Overcast |
| 28 | Unit C – Footbridge as seen from the disused railway line. | E | Overcast |
| 29 | Unit C – General shot of bridge arch | SE | Overcast |
| 30 | Unit C – General shot of bridge arch | SE | Overcast |
| 31 | Unit C – General shot of bridge arch | NE | Overcast |
| 32 | Unit C – General shot of bridge arch | NE | Overcast |
| 33 | Unit C – Footbridge as seen from the disused railway line. | W | Overcast |
| 34 | Unit C – Wall remains, possible platform?/ shoring to the west of the bridge on the south side. | N | Overcast |
| 35 | Unit C – Arch detail showing brickwork | S | Overcast |
| 36 | Unit C – Arch detail showing brickwork | SW | Overcast |
| 37 | Unit C – Arch detail showing brickwork | S | Overcast |
| 38 | Unit C – Entrance to the bridge from the North. | N | Overcast |



Key:
— Development Area



Scale: 0 100 m

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| Fig. No: | 1 | Revision: | A | Client: | Historic Scotland |
| Title: | Location Map | | | | |
| Project: | Standing Building Survey: A96 Fochabers - Mosstodloch Bypass | | | | |

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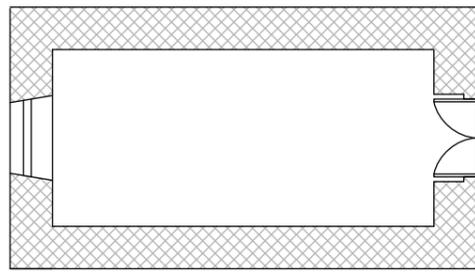


Fig 2 - Ground Plan of Tank Shed (Unit A)

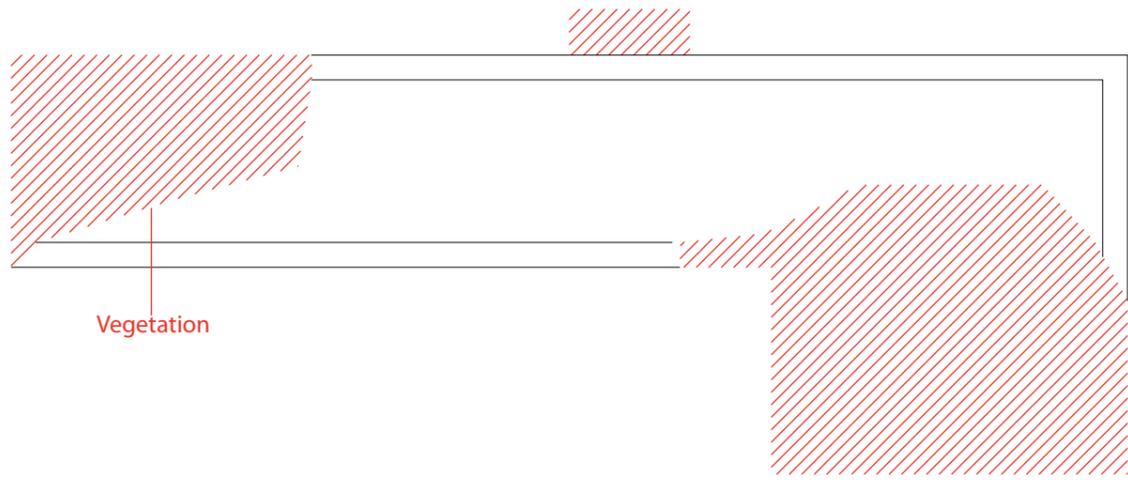


Fig 3 - Ground Plan of Engine Shed (Unit B)

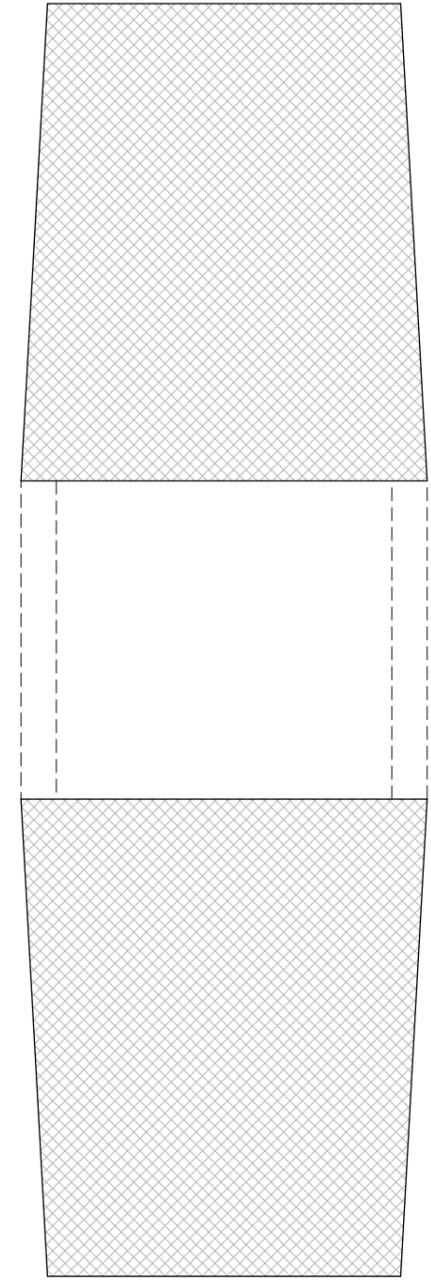


Fig 4 - Ground Plan of Footbridge (Unit C)



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Fig. No: 2-4 Revision: A

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Fig 5 -Unit A Exterior, general shot



Fig 6 -Unit A Exterior, north-west facing elevation

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Fig 7 -Unit A Exterior, south-west facing elevation



Fig 8 -Unit A Exterior, south-east facing elevation

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Fig 9 -Unit A Interior, south-east facing elevation



Fig 10 -Unit A Interior, north-west facing elevation

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Fig 11 -Unit B, Visible remains of Northern footings



Fig 12 -Unit B, Visible remains of Southern footings

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Fig 13 -Unit C, south-east facing elevation



Fig 14 -Unit C, general shot of bridge arch



Fig 15 -Unit C, arch detail showing blockwork

Key:

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| Fig. No: | 13-15 | Revision: | A | Client: | Historic Scotland |
| Title: | | | | | |
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