

**Report on the standing building survey
6 Balgownie Road, Bridge of Don
Aberdeen AB23 8JP**



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Cover Air raid shelter facing south east

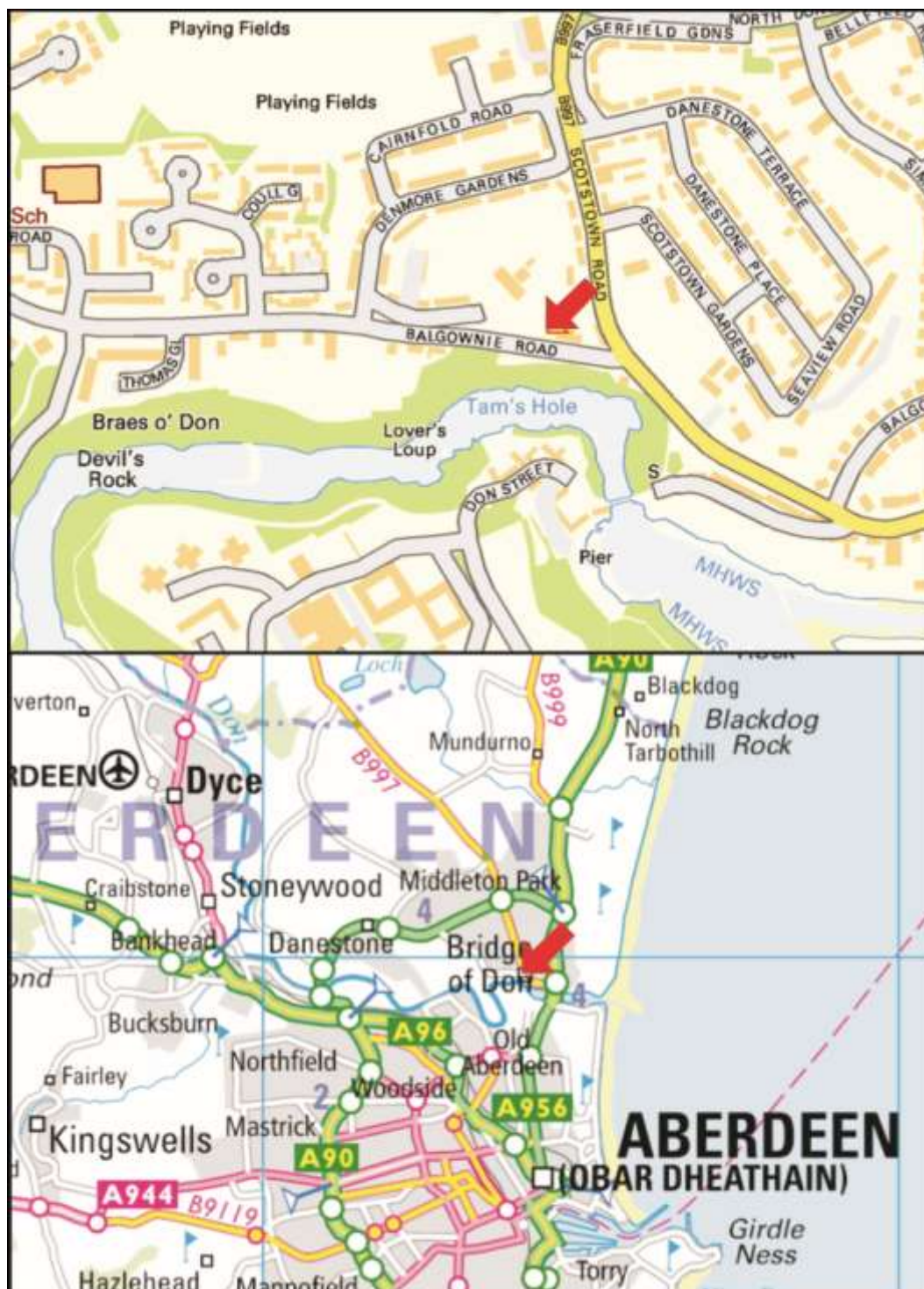
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SUMMARY

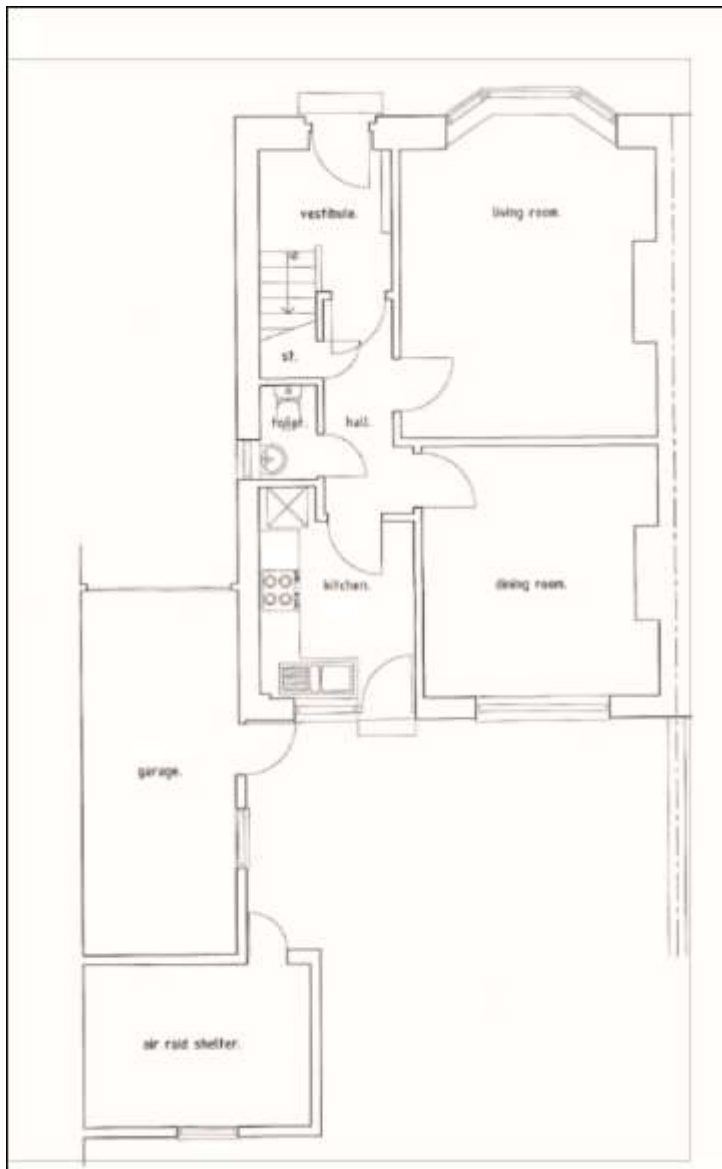
A Level 2 standing building survey was carried out at an air raid shelter which is to be demolished during the construction of an extension to the house. It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required at this site during the current development although the final decision remains with Aberdeen City Council.

1 INTRODUCTION

A planning application for a house extension (P11169) was passed by Aberdeen City Council on 5 January 2012 with an archaeology condition (condition 1). The work includes the demolition of a domestic WWII air-raid shelter and this report details the Level 2 standing building survey which was required by Aberdeen City Council. The site is in Old Machar parish, at NJ94061 09765 and 15-20m OD.



Illus 1 Location plan (Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2010).



Illus 2 Plan showing ground floor of house, garage and air raid shelter (copyright Raymond Simpson Associates Limited)

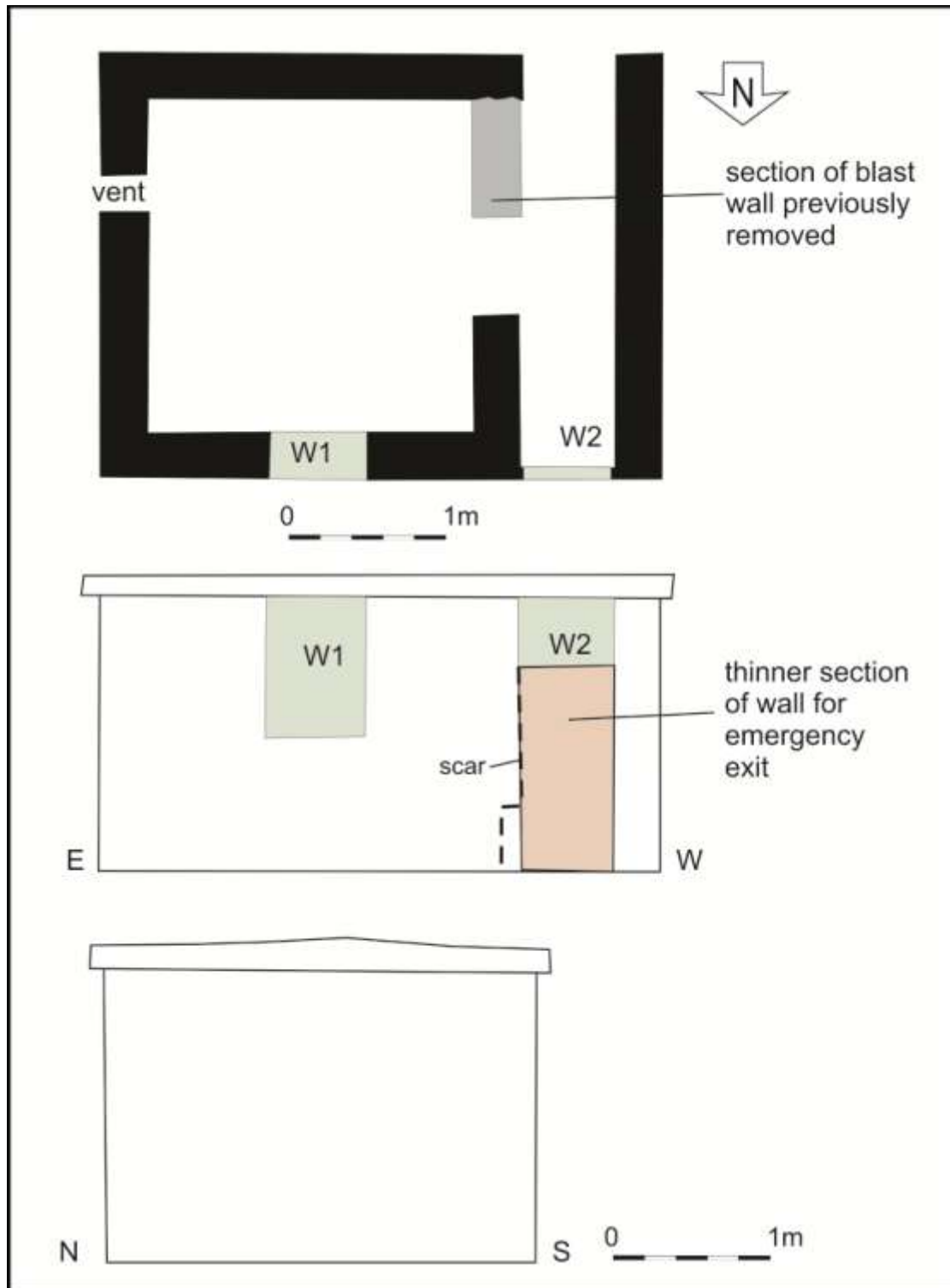
2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Air-raid shelters would have been common in this area of the city in World War II but many have since been demolished. The Aberdeen City Council SMR records that examples are still extant at 22-24 Balgownie Crescent, 25 Donmouth Crescent but there are probably other unrecorded examples still standing. Plans survive for these shelters which were generally similar throughout the country but using local materials.

In neighboring Seaton Park there is a surviving pillbox (NJ90NW 389) and one survives on the links. There is a defended site in Seaton Place east (NJ90NW 392) where gun slits in a wall surrounding Seaton School survive. Just to the north of Balgownie Road is the Gordon Barracks (NJ90NW 409).

3 THE STANDING BUILDING SURVEY

The standing building survey took place on 7 March 2012 at 6 Balgownie Road, Aberdeen. The air raid shelter is 3.6m x 2.75m in size and the walls stand to 1.9m high.



Illus 3 Top Plan of the air raid shelter; middle north elevation; bottom west elevation

The main room is 2.1m x 2.1m in size with a 0.6m wide door leading to the interior corridor; most of the walls are 0.29m thick. Two windows in the north wall are probably not original although fittings for shutters survive internally. The north wall is constructed from concrete blocks (0.52 x 0.17cm) whilst the remainder of the walls and roof are constructed of concrete poured into wooden shuttering (0.15m wide and 1.1m long).



Illus 4 The shelter from the SW showing entrance into corridor



Illus 5 The shelter from the NW

The outer western room is 0.7m wide and formed an inner corridor along the west side of the structure; it was divided from the main shelter room by a 0.29m thick blast wall which had been partially removed after the shelter went out of use. The north wall of this corridor is 0.07m thick and forms a kick-out panel. Where only one entrance was supplied, an emergency exit was provided in the form of a thinner section of wall which allowed people to escape if the main door became blocked. A scar on the north wall (Illus 3) indicates the line between the thinner and thicker sections of wall.



Illus 6 Entrance to the shelter in south wall



Illus 7 Main shelter facing NE showing Window 1 and shuttering marks on roof

There is no evidence of benches or other fittings although one light fitting may be Bakelite and therefore possibly an original light fitting. Sanitary and other fittings were sparse and it would be unusual for a small domestic shelter to have an electricity supply but this has been seen in larger shelters.



Illus 8 Window 1 (left) Window 2 (right) in north wall



Illus 9 Vent in east wall of shelter

Fittings survive where both the inner and outer door would have been hung. A vent in the east wall (Illus 9) would have been the only source of ventilation when the shelter doors were closed.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required at this site; this is subject to advice from Aberdeen City Council.

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Peter Ewen, 6 Balgownie Road and Judith Stones, Aberdeen City Council.

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APPENDIX 1

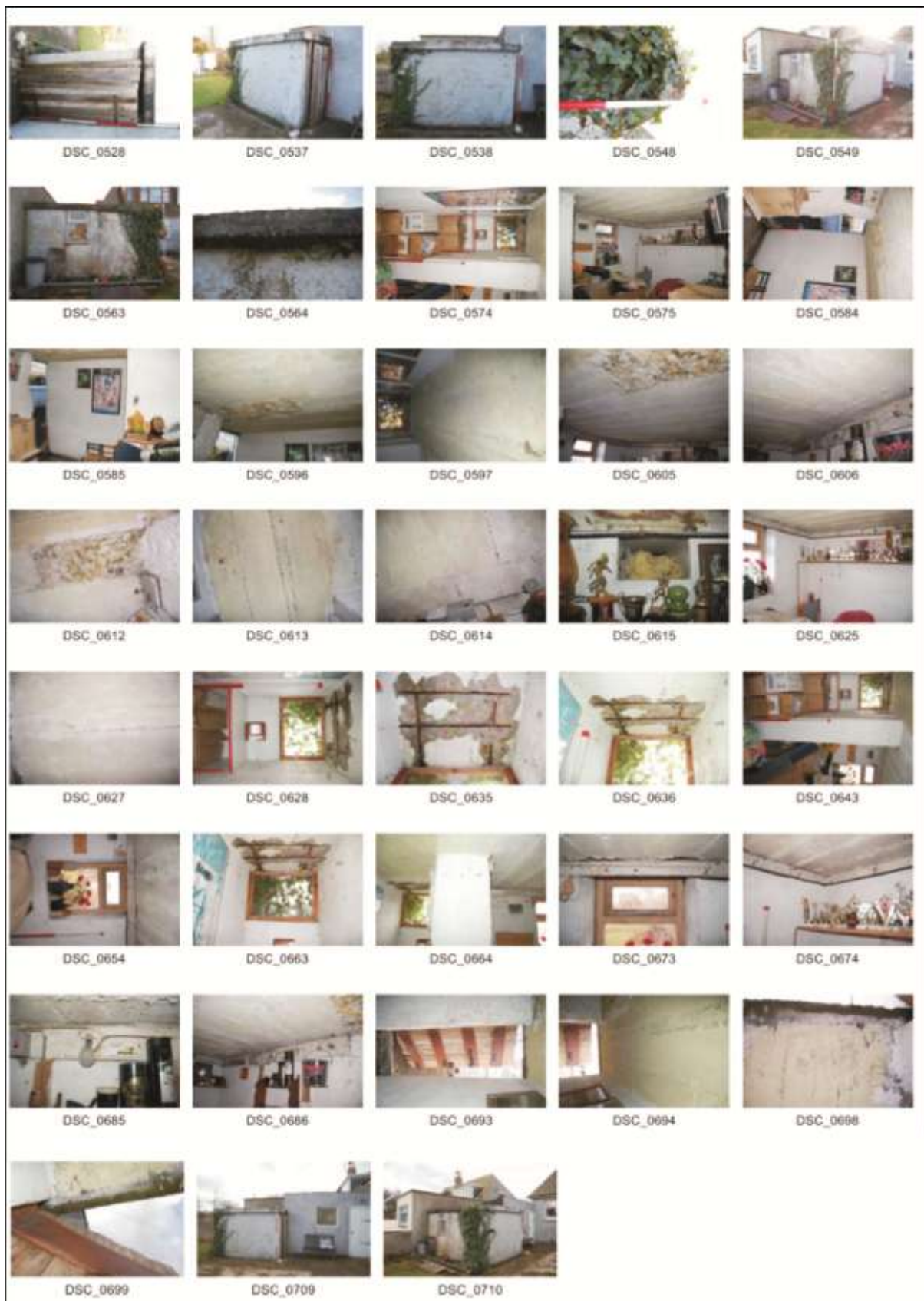


Photo no	Description	Facing
DSC_0528-532	Door in south wall	N
DSC_0533-537	West wall	NE
DSC_0538-542	West wall	E
DSC_0543-548	NW corner showing concrete	SE
DSC_0549-553	NW corner	SE
DSC_0554-563	North wall	S
DSC_0564-569	North wall detail of poured concrete roof	S
DSC_0570-574	Corridor at west	N
DSC_0575-579	Interior room	NE
DSC_0580-584	Door from inside showing scar where blast wall removed (top)	SW
DSC_0585-590	Door from inside showing scar where blast wall removed (top)	SW
DSC_0591-596	Detail of scar on roof where blast wall removed	SW
DSC_0597-601	Detail of corridor roof showing shuttering marks	S
DSC_0602-605	Roof detail	NE
DSC_0606-609	SE corner roof	SE
DSC_0612	Scar on roof	S
DSC_0613-614	Shuttering on ceiling	S
DSC_0615-620	Vent in east wall	E
DSC_0621-625	NE corner	NE
DSC_0627	Shuttering on ceiling	
DSC_0628-632	Window 2	N
DSC_0633-638	Detail of reinforcing adjacent to Window 2	N
DSC_0639-644	Window 2 (left) window 1 (right)	N
DSC_0645-646	Detail of scar on roof where blast wall removed	S
DSC_0647-648	Detail of reinforcing adjacent to Window 2	N
DSC_0649-658	Window 1	N
DSC_0659-663	Window 2	N
DSC_0664-668	Window 2 (left) window 1 (right)	N
DSC_0699-673	Window 1	N
DSC_0674-677	NE corner	NE
DSC_0678-681	SE corner	SE
DSC_0682-685	Light fitting	S
DSC_0686-689	South wall	S
DSC_0690-693	Door in south wall	S
DSC_0694-697	Door in south wall showing ceiling	S
DSC_0698	Ceiling above door showing roof	
DSC_0699-704	Ceiling above door showing roof	S
DSC_0705-709	From west	E
DSC_0710-714	Shelter from NW	SE