

Land to North East of Whiteknowes,
Craigievar, Alford, AB33 8LT
Standing building survey and watching brief



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Land to North East of Whiteknowes (Piperwell), Craigievar, Alford, AB33 8LT Report on Standing Building Survey

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Summary

A Level 2 standing building survey was carried out on 23 August 2012. The poorly preserved ruins of a 19th-century farmhouse and steading not lived in since the 1940s was recorded. It is recommended that no further work is carried out at this site during the current development but this is subject to advice from Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service.

1 INTRODUCTION

The applicants Mr & Mrs Graeme Robertson received Full Planning Permission for Erection of Dwellinghouse and Change of Use of Land to Domestic Garden Ground on 28/06/2012 with standard archaeology condition (APP/2012/1434 condition no 5). A Level 2 standing building survey was required prior to removal of the foundations to create the new house. The site is in Leochel-Cushnie parish, the NGR for the site is NJ 53922 09125 which lies at 260-270m OD.

The standing building survey was carried out in the context of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) Planning Advice Note (PAN 2/2011) and Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), which state that archaeological remains should be regarded as part of the environment to be protected and managed.



Illus 1 Location plan (Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2012).

2 BACKGROUND

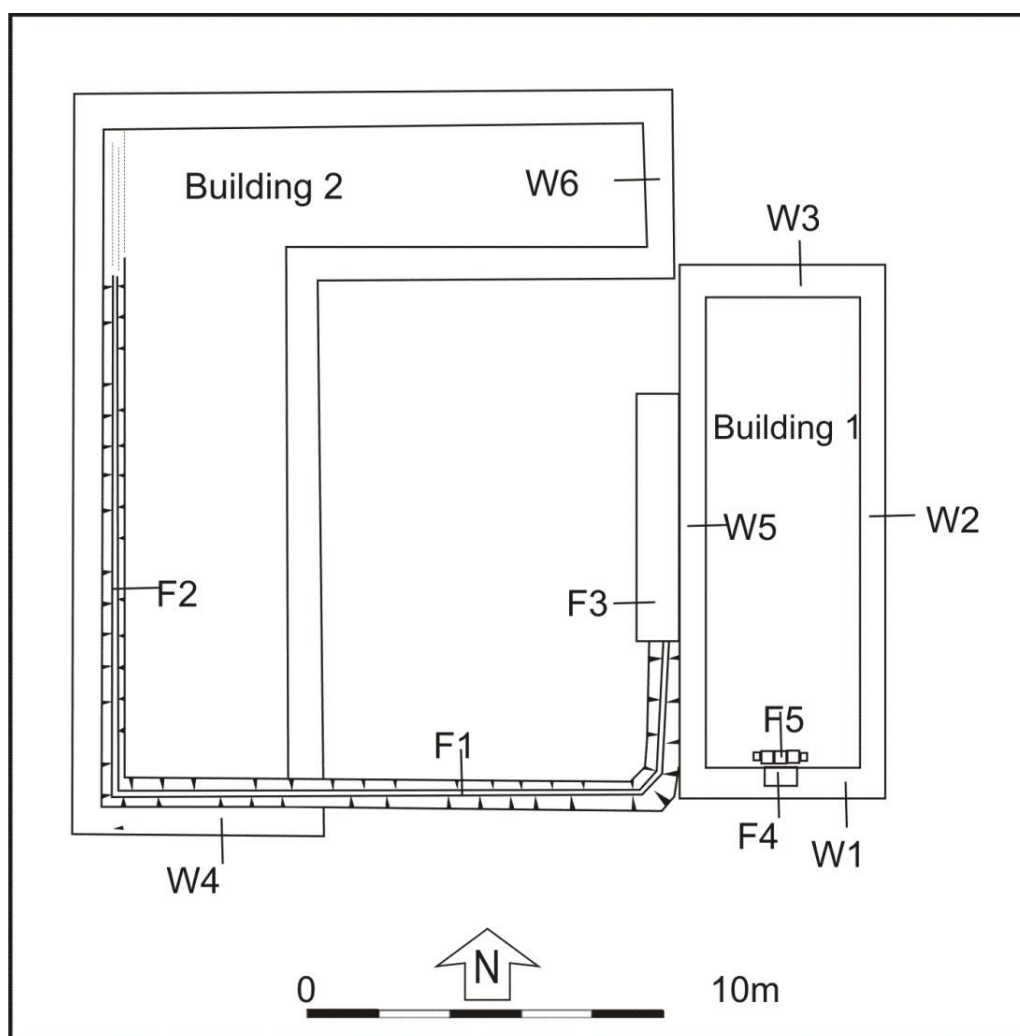
Piperwell (NJ50NW18; Illus 1) is a small complex of farmhouse on the east side of a courtyard with an L-shaped steading on the north and west and with an enclosed garden to the east. It lies east of Whiteknowes and 1km east of Hallhead a late medieval Laird's House and 2km NNW of Corse Castle and was in the Corse Estate. In the field immediately to the north of Piperwell is a complex including a ring ditch, other linear cropmarks and also possible rig and furrow overlying earlier rigs (NJ50NW52) survive as cropmarks.

The McLaren family lived in the house at Piperwell until the 1940s when they moved to Whiteknowes and the roof was removed from the house. At that time the steadings had already been removed (Mr McLaren, Whiteknowes, pers comm).

3 THE STANDING BUILDING SURVEY

A standing building survey was carried out on 23 August 2012. The buildings were being removed for the construction of a new house and stone had been removed from on top of the walls and the site scraped within the footprint of the proposed building. The remainder of the plot is remaining undisturbed during this building project.

The remains of the house stood to 1.4m high and the building was 5.8m wide and 12.8m long. The walls were c 0.7m wide and the foundations c 1m wide. The walls were constructed of large grey granite quarried blocks and the quoins of pink granite blocks (Illus 5).



Illus 2 Plan showing main structures recorded in standing building survey



Illus 3 Wall 1 the south wall of Building 1; facing north

In the centre of the south wall is a fireplace (F4) with stone hearth (F5) and this room latterly had a concrete floor (Illus 5). All the walls of Building 1 were poorly preserved with no surviving mortar which had been replaced by soil from plant growth and the use of the ruin as a stone dump. The east and west walls survived as 1m wide large stone foundations only.



Illus 4 Building 1 floor F6 (foreground) and wall 1 with fireplace F4 (top); facing south



Illus 5 Fireplace (F4) in centre of Wall 1, the north wall of Building 1 with stone hearth (F5); facing south



Illus 6 Wall 3 the north wall of Building 1; facing SE

The south wall of Building 1 (Wall 3; Illus 6) survived as one course of large grey granite blocks only and the large stone foundation was clearly visible. The building had been divided into at least 2 rooms with a smaller kitchen at the south end and a larger room at the north which may have been divided into two.



Illus 7 Byre floor showing runnels (greep) F1 (right) and F2 (left); facing NE



Illus 8 Greep F1 showing stones lining the edge of the runnel (bottom) and smaller stone base (top); facing north

Building 2 had been the byre; the wall foundations survived as soil filled trenches c 1m wide with some stone surviving in the base of the trenches indicating that this building had been systematically demolished and the stone removed from the site prior to the 1940s (Mr McLaren, Whiteknowes, pers comm). The floor of the byre (greep; Illus 7) survived as a series of stone-lined runnels F1 along the interior face of the south wall and F2 along the

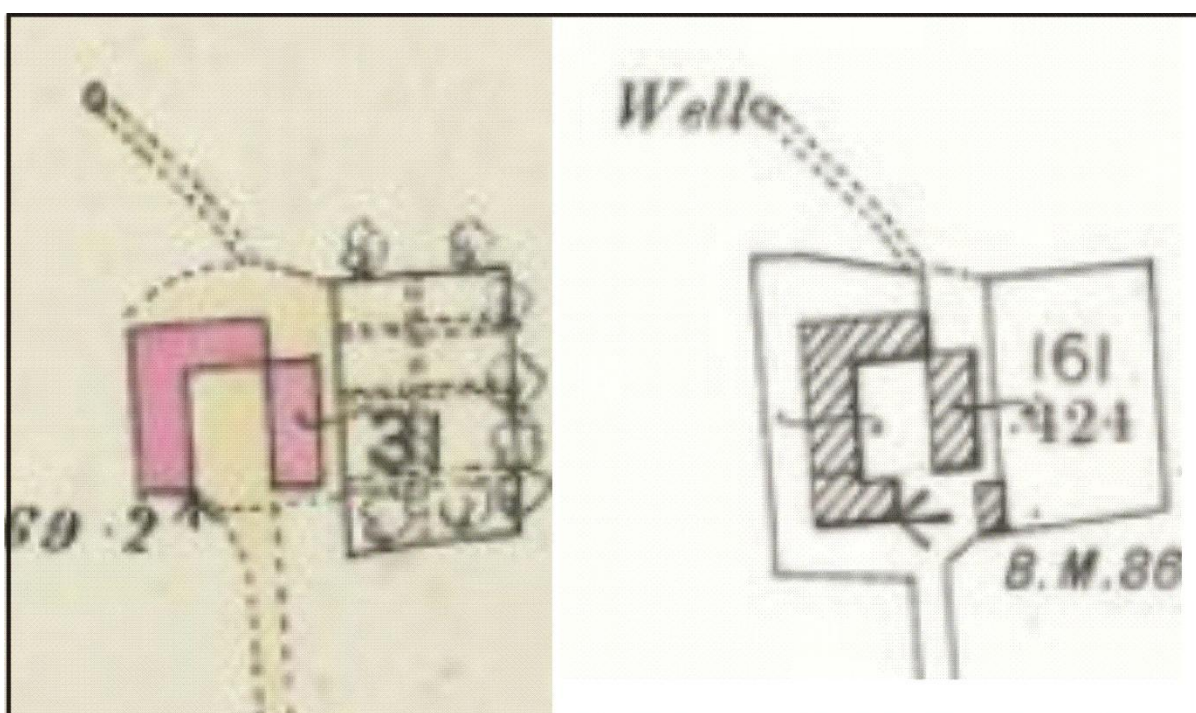
interior of the west wall. These were 0.85m wide lined with larger flat granite field stones and the base lined with small pebbles (Illus 8). F2 sloped down to the north and presumably out through the north wall into the midden whilst F1 ran down to the east across the courtyard and into a stone drain F3 (not excavated). A layer of demolition material on top of this floor included grey slates and sherds of pottery of 19th or early 20th-century date.

The garden area was not being disturbed during the current development

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This small farmstead showed no evidence of being earlier than the 19th century and no earlier archaeological remains were uncovered during this work. No evidence of an extension at the south end of the byre (on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map; Illus 9) was uncovered.

It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the current development subject to agreement by Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service.



Illus 9 First Edition Ordnance Survey map (left) and Second Edition (right)

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

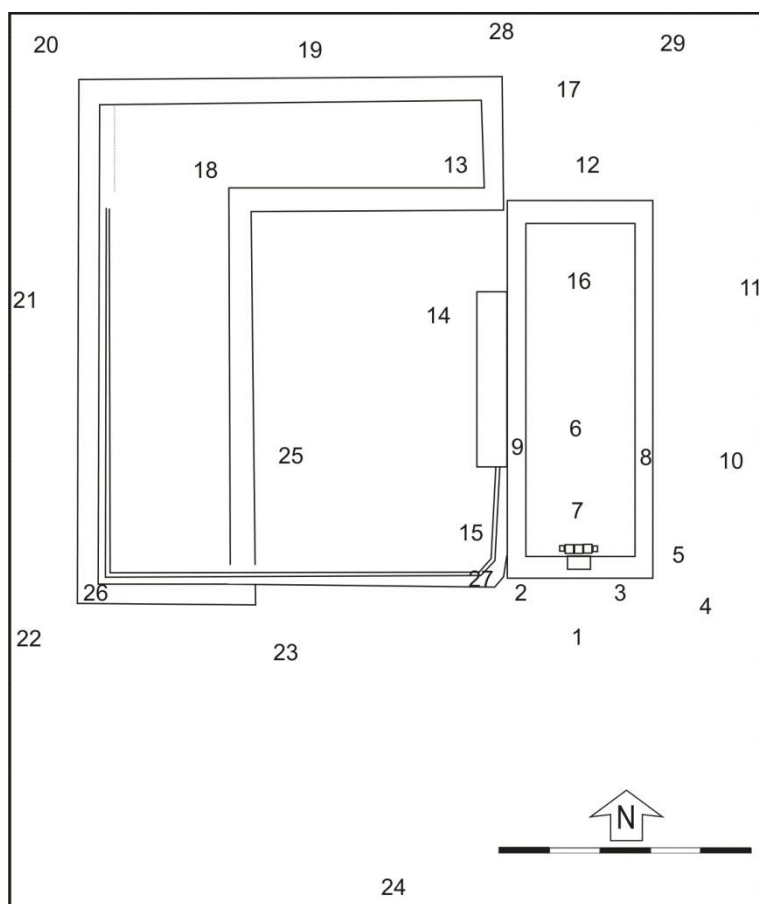
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APPENDIX 1 FEATURES

Feature number	Description
F1	Stone lined runnel (gweep). 0.85m wide with central runnel 0.35m wide. Small stones in centre with larger stones at edge. Drains downwards to east and into stone drain F3.
F2	Stone lined runnel (gweep). 0.85m wide with central runnel 0.35m wide. Small stones in centre with larger stones at edge. Drains downwards to north.
F3	Stone drain parallel and immediately adjacent to Wall 5. 0.7m wide
F4	Fireplace
F5	Stone hearth, 3 pink smooth square stones and 2 other smaller stones
F6	Concrete floor
F7	Concrete floor
Wall 1	south wall house up to 1.4m high, 0.65m wide and 5.8m long; foundation 0.5m wider consisting of large stones
Wall 2	East wall house foundation only
Wall 3	North wall house stones survive to one course high, 0.6m
Wall 4	South wall byre 1m wide foundation trench completely robbed
Wall 5	West wall house large stone foundation and dark grey soil
Wall 6	East wall byre, foundation only 0.8m wide

APPENDIX 2 PHOTOGRAPHS



Illus 10 Plan showing camera points used in this survey

Photo no	Description	CP	Facing
DSC_0327-0332	Wall 1	1	N
DSC_0333-0338	Wall 1 west end external face	2	N
DSC_0339-0345	Wall 1 east end external face	3	N
DSC_0346-0352	Wall 1 SE corner	4	NW
DSC_0353-0359	Wall 1 SE corner	4	NW
DSC_0360-0365	Wall 1 SE corner	4	NW
DSC_0366-0371	Wall 1 SE corner	5	W
DSC_0372-0376	Wall 1 internal with fireplace F4 (centre) and stone hearth F5	6	S
DSC_0377-0381	Wall 2 south end at junction with Wall 1, fireplace F4 (right)	8	S
DSC_0382-0391	Wall 1 internal with fireplace F4 (centre) and stone hearth F5	7	S
DSC_0392-0396	Wall 1 (left) junction with Wall 5 (right)	9	S
DSC_0397-0401	Wall 1 (left) with fireplace F4 (left) and concrete floor F6	10	W
DSC_0402-0406	Wall 1 (left) with fireplace F4 (left) and concrete floor F6	10	SW
DSC_0407-0411	Wall 1 (left) with fireplace F4 (left) and concrete floor F6	11	SW
DSC_0412-0416	Wall 3 (foreground) Wall 1 background	12	S
DSC_0417-0421	Wall 3 (foreground) Wall 1 (right background)	13	SE
DSC_0422-0426	Floor F6 (foreground) Wall 1 background	14	SE
DSC_0427-0431	Floor F6 (left) Wall 1 (right)	15	E
DSC_0432-0437	Floor F6 (foreground) F7, Wall 3 (background)	7	N
DSC_0438-0443	Wall 3 interior	16	N
DSC_0444-0452	Wall 3 exterior	17	S
DSC_0453	Robertson and McLaren families clearing grepe floor of byre	17	S
DSC_0454-0458	Wall 3 exterior	17	S
DSC_0459-0464	Wall 3	13	SSE
DSC_0465-0469	Building 2 floor	18	N
DSC_0470-0475	F1	27	W
DSC_0476-0480	F1 (left) F2 (right)	25	SW
DSC_0481-0485	F1 detail	25	S
DSC_0486-0490	F1 detail	26	E
DSC_0491-0500	F1 (foreground) F2 (background)	27	W
DSC_0501-0505	F1 detail	23	N
DSC_0506-0510	F2	26	N
DSC_0511-0516	F1 east end near wall W1	27	W
DSC_0517-0520	F1 east end near wall W1	27	N
DSC_0521-0525	F1	26	E
DSC_0526-0530	Whole site from near road	24	N
DSC_0531-0535	Building 1 (right)	24	N
DSC_0536-0540	Building 1 (right)	24	N
DSC_0541-0548	Building 1 (right)	24	N
DSC_0549-0553	Building 1 (background) Building 1 (foreground)	21	E
DSC_0554-0558	Building 1	18	SE
DSC_0559-0564	Building 2 (left) with F2	22	NE
DSC_0565-0575	F2 (left) F1 (right)	26	NE
DSC_0576-0580	Wall foundation W6	13	N
DSC_0581-0585	Wall foundation W6	12	W
DSC_0586-0590	Wall foundation W6 with W3 (background)	28	S
DSC_0591-595	Building 1 with W3 (foreground)	19	SE
DSC_0596-0600	Building 1 with W3 (foreground)	29	SW
DSC_0601-0606	Building 1 with W3 (foreground)	12	S



DSC_0332



DSC_0333



DSC_0345



DSC_0347



DSC_0359



DSC_0360



DSC_0371



DSC_0372



DSC_0381



DSC_0382



DSC_0391



DSC_0392



DSC_0401



DSC_0402



DSC_0411



DSC_0412



DSC_0421



DSC_0422



DSC_0431



DSC_0432



DSC_0443



DSC_0452



DSC_0453



DSC_0454



DSC_0464



DSC_0465



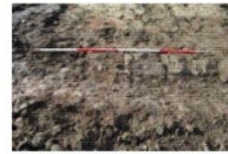
DSC_0474



DSC_0475



DSC_0476



DSC_0485



DSC_0486



DSC_0500



DSC_0505



DSC_0506



DSC_0516



DSC_0517



DSC_0525



DSC_0526



DSC_0535



DSC_0536



DSC_0548



DSC_0549



DSC_0558



DSC_0559



DSC_0570



DSC_0571



DSC_0580



DSC_0585



DSC_0586



DSC_0595



DSC_0596



DSC_0606