Mergie House, Rickarton, Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire, AB39 3TH Report on Level 1 Standing Building Survey and watching brief



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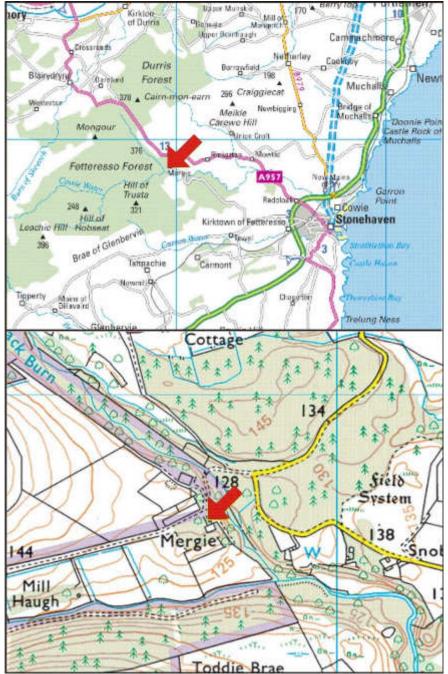
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SUMMARY

A Level 1 standing building survey was carried out on 7 and 11th August 2015 and the watching brief on 11th and 26th August 2015. At least three phases of development of the house were recorded but the area around the house had been disturbed previously and the watching brief revealed no further structures. It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the current planning application.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site (Illus 1) is located on the south side of the A957 Stonehaven to Banchory (Slug) Road WSW of Rickerton. It is centred on NGR NO 7963 8864, at 135-140m OD (Illus 1) and in the parish of Glenbervie.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by Vic and Pearl Peterkin. A planning application APP/2015/0989 and 993 for Alterations and Extension to Dwellinghouse, Demolition of Outbuilding and Erection of Ancillary Accommodation was approved on 22 July 2015. There is a requirement for a Level 1 standing building survey and a watching brief during ground disturbance.
- 1.3 All the archaeological work 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 2015)

2 BACKGROUND

Mergie House (NO78NE2) was originally built in the 16th or 17th century (Tranter 1962-70, 164-6). It may originally have been a rectangular plan of three rooms over three floors but an extension on the ENE façade appears to be original or built in the style of the earlier structure with pink and grey ashlar door and window mouldings. The house is 'Margy' on the 17th and 18th-century maps (Illus 34, 35), 'Margie' on Moll's map of mid 18th-century date and 'Mergie' from Thomson 1822 and through the OS maps (Illus 39-42).

The interior has original panelling with bolection mouldings (Geddes 2001) and there is an 18th-century *plaisance* or garden, terraced with pavilions/garden houses, one in poor condition.

3 THE LEVEL 1 STANDING BUILDING SURVEY

A Level 1 standing building survey was carried out on 7 and 11th August 2015; architects plans and elevations were checked and annotated, measurements taken and a full photographic survey carried out.

3.1 Building 1 Mergie House

This is a rectangular plan house 16.2m long and 6.5m wide with possible tower attached off-centre on the ENE façade (Illus 2-4). The walls are of rubble and the window and door mouldings of grey and red sandstone. The internal lintels are wood and the ground floor surfaces are concrete slabs (to mimic stone slab) with a layer of concrete beneath (see watching brief below). The ground and second floor walls are plastered and whitewashed and the first floor is wood panelled.

Phase 1/2

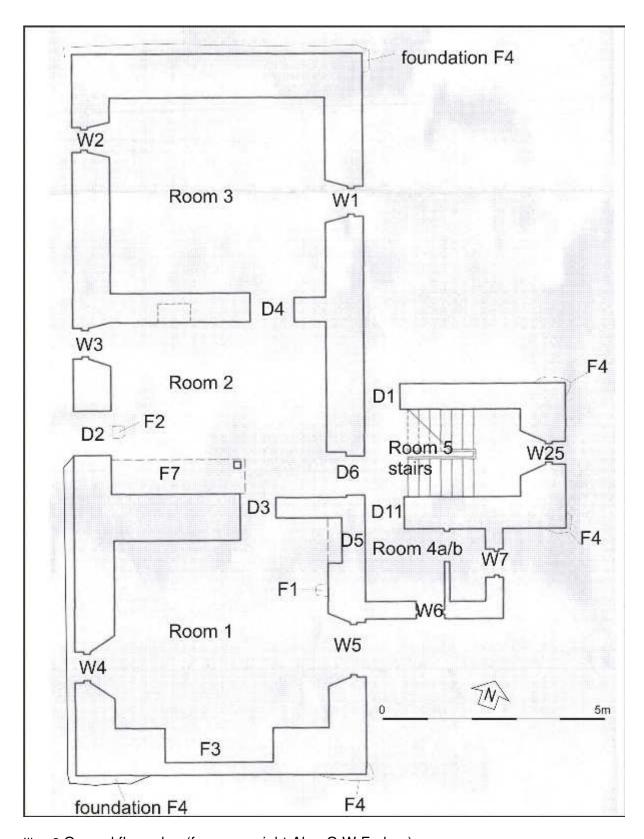
The tower (Rooms 5/6/11) has doors and windows with chamfered grey and red sandstone typical of the 16th-century period. Door D1 on the NNW wall of the tower allows access to the exterior and is in the same style as the other 'original' doors in the building (eg D5, D6, D2). The mouldings on the windows on the ENE wall (W25, W14, W23) also have chamfered red and grey sandstone mouldings. It has been suggested that these are shot holes which have been converted to small windows (CANMORE).

There is also a corbelled turret stair on the WSW façade (Room 10; Illus 4, 5) and a similar one on the ENE wall (F8; Illus 7-8) although if F8 is original to the 16th/17th-century house it has been heavily rebuilt with new stairs and the exterior completely harled.

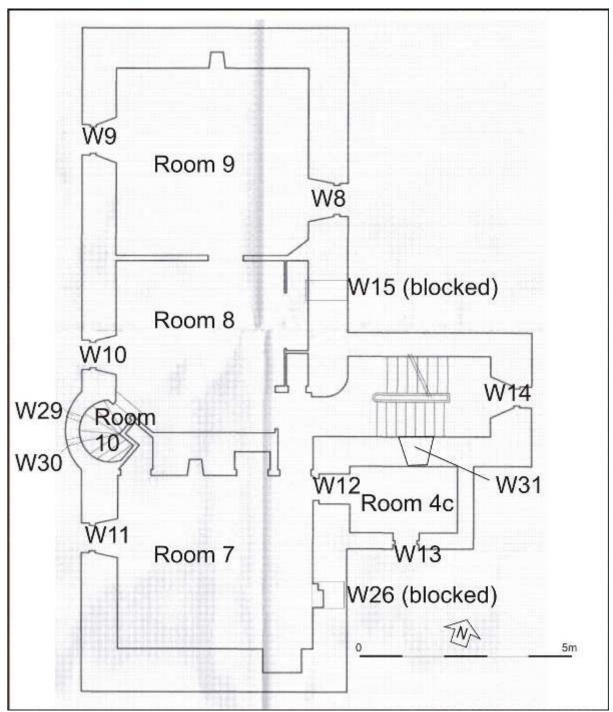
The ground floor rooms have low ceilings with wooden beams; there are stone corbels in Rooms 1 and 2 (F1, F2; Illus 6) from an earlier ceiling.

The large foundation stones (F4) can be seen on all elevations (Illus 10) and during the watching brief the foundation of the walls was observed but not fully investigated. The wall foundations of Building 1 had been built into trenches in the natural clayey sand subsoil. The original exterior walls are 0.85m thick (Illus 13).

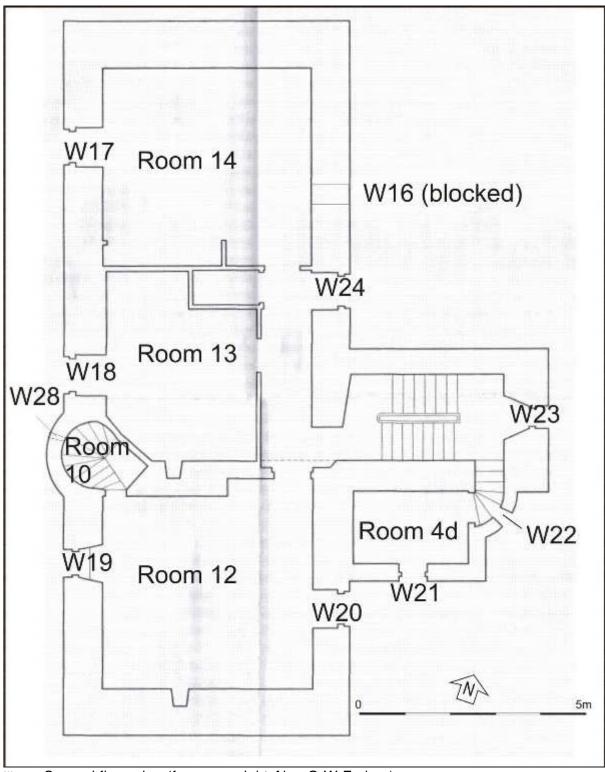
A large fireplace on the SSE wall of Room 2 has sandstone lintel with holes for fittings (Illus 14, 15). It has been heavily altered and infilled.



Illus 2 Ground floor plan (from copyright Alan G W Forbes)



Illus 3 First floor plan (from copyright Alan G W Forbes)



Illus 4 Second floor plan (from copyright Alan G W Forbes)



Illus 5 WSW façade with turret stair Room 10 with three small windows or shot holes (W28, 29, 30); facing ENE

In Phase 2 the first floor was panelled in wood (Illus 16). It is presumably at this time that windows W27 on the WSW façade and WE15 and W26 on the ENE façade were blocked. These are infilled and harled on the exterior and covered with wood panelling on the interior. The corbelled turret stair Room 10 (Illus 5) originally leading from Room 8 on the first floor to Room 12 on the second floor was covered with the wood panelling. The small access door on the second floor survives in the NW corner of Room 12. The rectangular platform supported by a beam (F7) in the SW corner of Room 2 is presumably where the stair turret originally accessed the ground floor but this stair has been removed when the later stair was added into the tower (Room 5/6/11) probably in Phase 2.



Illus 6 Room 2 Stair turret blocking F7 (left), Door D2 (left centre) and window W3 (right); facing WSW



Illus 7 Stair turret F8; is this an original feature or a 19th-century addition?; facing SSE



Illus 8 Exterior of corbelled turret stair F8 with W22 (top); facing NW



Illus 9 Grey sandstone corbelling Room 10; facing SE



Illus 10 Large grey sandstone foundation (F4) at SW corner Phase 1 house; facing ENE



Illus 11 Door D6 ENE face leading from WSW door to gardens with grey sandstone moudlings; facing WSW



Illus 12 Door D5 the original exterior door on ENE façade with grey sandstone mouldings; facing WSW



Illus 13 Detail of wooden beam lintel above window W3 showing thickness of wall; facing WSW



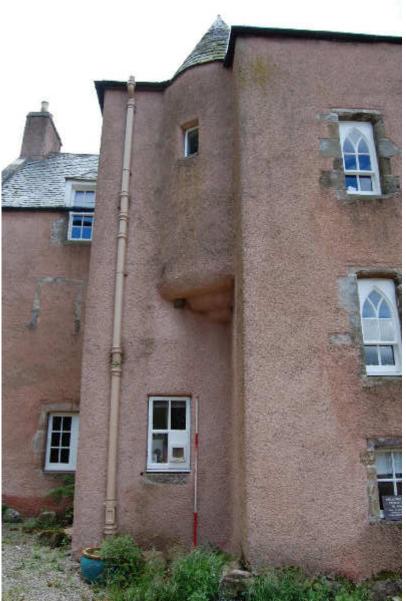
Illus 14 Inglenook fireplace F3; facing SSE



Illus 15 Inglenook fireplace F3 detail of central lintel of grey sandstone and recess for fittings; facing SSE



Illus 16 Painted wood panelling throughout the first floor bedrooms



Illus 17 ENE façade showing original house (left), 19th-century extension with windows with narrow granite sills (centre) and entrance stair probably added 19th century (right)



Illus 18 Blocked window W27 on first floor WSW façade; facing ENE



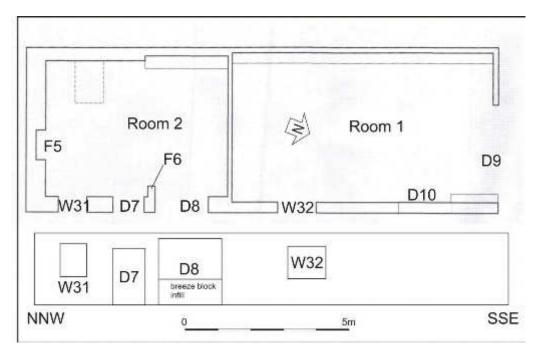
Illus 19 Window W31 on the stair between 1st and 2nd floors. This would have opened to the exterior of the SSE wall of the tower

Phase 3

A main stair was added into the ENE extension of the original house. An extension was also added to the ENE façade to house bathroom facilities. The windows have thin granite lintels and sills.

3.2 Building 2 the steading

This building was recorded prior to demolition. It was 15.3m long and 5.1m wide with two rooms. Room 1 at the SSE was $8.35 \times 4m$ internally and accessed by a large door in the SSE gable, a window (W32) and a door (D10) on the WSW wall; the door had been infilled and harled over on the outside. The NNW room (Room 2) was $5.7 \times 4.2m$ internally and had a door (D7) and window (W31) as well as a door (D8) which had been converted to a window with breeze blocks. The remains of a room partition survive on the S side of door D7 (F6) and there was a small fireplace (F5) on the NNW wall and it is likely that this room had been a bothy.

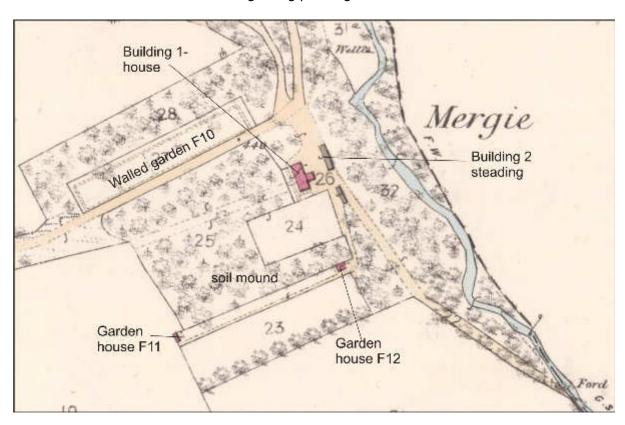




Illus 21 Building 2 WSW façade; facing ENE

3.3 Walled Gardens and garden houses

A brief photographic record was made of the Garden Houses and walled gardens following discussion with the current owner regarding phasing.



Illus 22 1st Edition Ordnance map Kincardine Sheet XI.12 (with inset XI.8) (Glenbervie) Survey date: 1864 Publication date: 1868 (copyright National Library of Scotland)



Illus 23 Chamfered pink sandstone gate jamb NE end SE wall of walled garden F10; the other jamb has been removed



Illus 24 Garden House F11; facing SSE



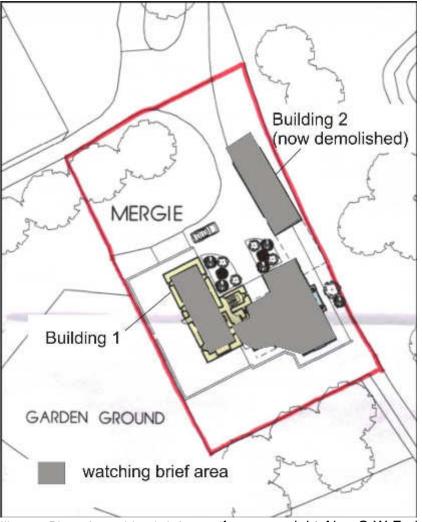
Illus 25 Garden House F12; facing WNW



Illus 26 Overgrown and dilapidated terraced walled gardens between F11 and F12; facing NW

4 WATCHING BRIEF

The watching brief was carried out on 11th and 26th August 2015. The soil strip following the demolition of Building 2, the area for the new extension and the interior of ground floor Rooms 1-3 was subjected to a watching brief (Illus 27). The exterior areas were very disturbed by services and previous disturbance and the interior areas were covered with two layers of concrete flooring on top of natural subsoil. No features or finds were recorded.



Illus 27 Plan of watching brief area (from copyright Alan G W Forbes)



Illus 28 Stone and soil filled sump for ceramic drain (right) on the edge of the modern formal lawn; facing SSE



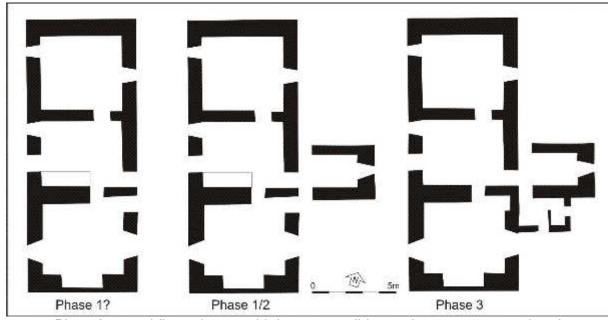
Illus 29 Shallow foundation trenches for the new extension; facing NW



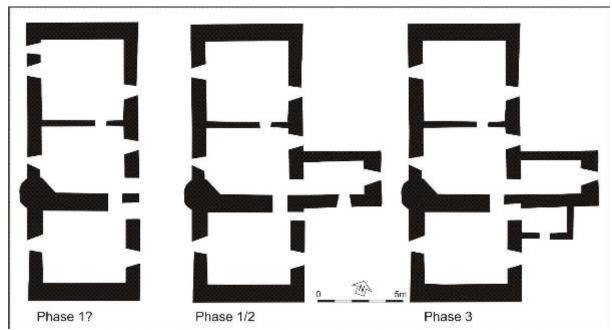
Illus 30 Room 2 concrete floors removed to reveal natural subsoil with fireplace F3 (top); facing SSE

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

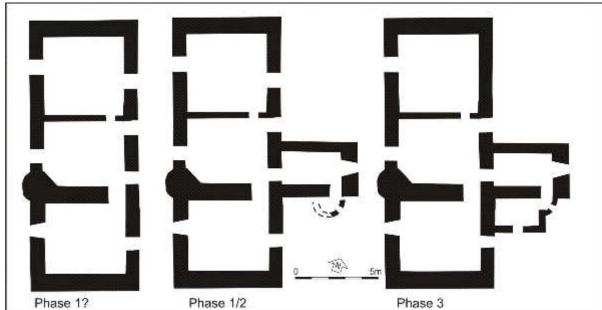
A Level 1 standing building survey was carried out on 7 and 11th August 2015 and the watching brief on 11th and 26th August 2015. At least three phases of development of the house were identified and it is possible that the house was originally built as a T-plan house with tower on the ENE façade and two turret stairs. Later the tower was reused as a main staircase and in the 19th-century a further extension added bathroom facilities which have been heavily modernized.



Illus 31 Plan of ground floor phases with house possibly starting as a rectangular plan with added tower and 19th-century extension (from copyright Alan G W Forbes)



Illus 32 Plan of 1st floor phases with house possibly starting as a rectangular plan with added tower and 19th-century extension (from copyright Alan G W Forbes)



Illus 33 Plan of 2nd floor phases with house possibly starting as a rectangular plan with added tower and 19th-century extension showing both stair turrets (from copyright Alan G W Forbes)

6 REFERENCES

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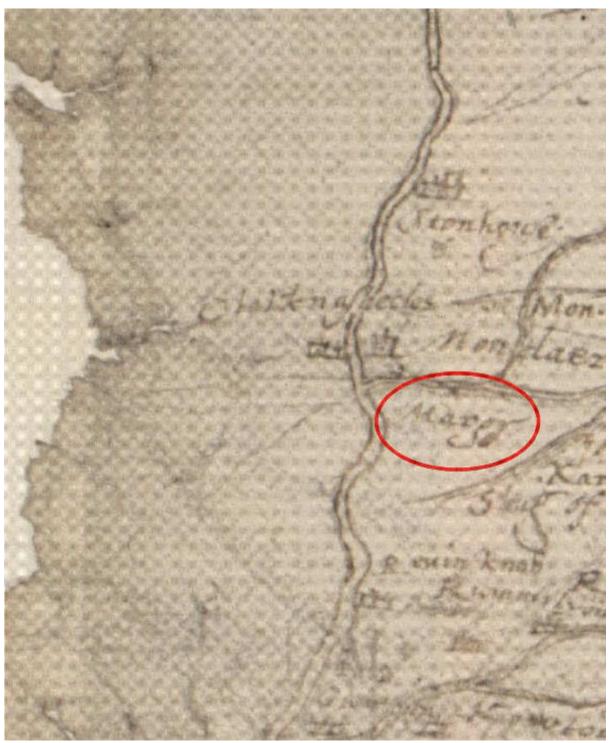
Tranter, N. (1962-70) *The fortified house in Scotland'*. Edinburgh. Page(s): Vol. 4, 164-6 RCAHMS Shelf Number: F.5.21.TRA

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX 1 MAPS



Illus 34 Pont map showing 'Margy' c1783-96 (copyright National Library of Scotland)



Illus 35 Gordon map of c1636-52 showing 'Margy' (copyright National Library of Scotland)



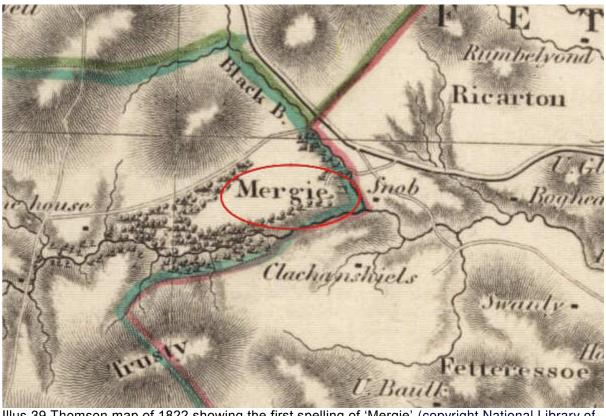
Illus 36 Blaeu 1654 showing 'Margie' (copyright National Library of Scotland)



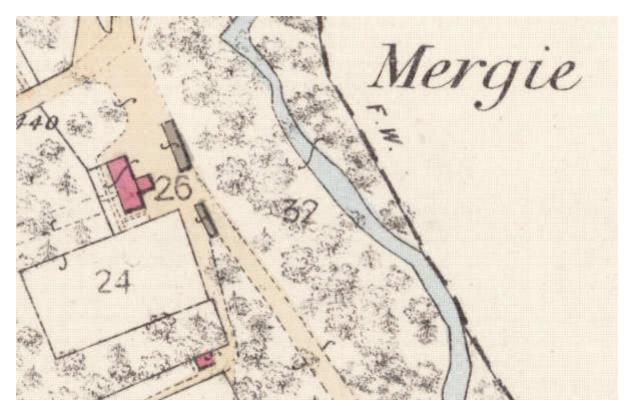
Illus 37 Moll map of 1732 showing 'Margie' (copyright National Library of Scotland)



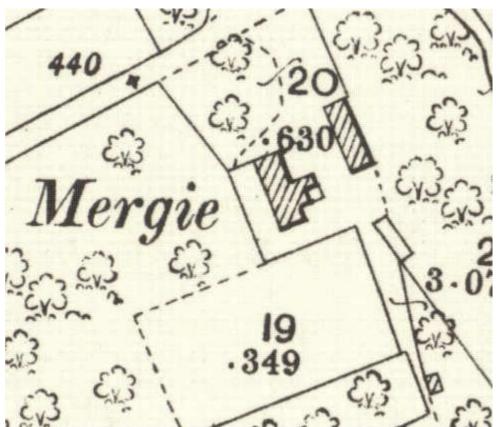
Illus 38 Roy Military Survey of Scotland, 1747-55 showing the estate of 'Margy' (copyright National Library of Scotland)



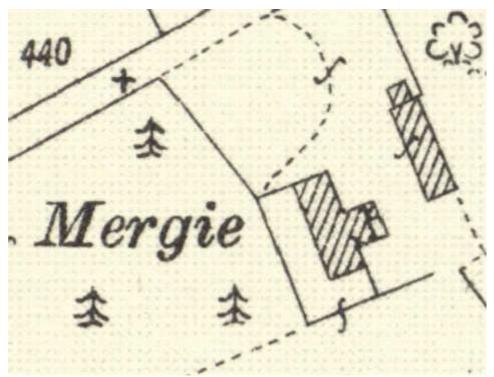
Illus 39 Thomson map of 1822 showing the first spelling of 'Mergie' (copyright National Library of Scotland)



Illus 40 1st Edition Ordnance map Kincardine Sheet XI.12 (with inset XI.8) (Glenbervie) Survey date: 1864 Publication date: 1868 (copyright National Library of Scotland)

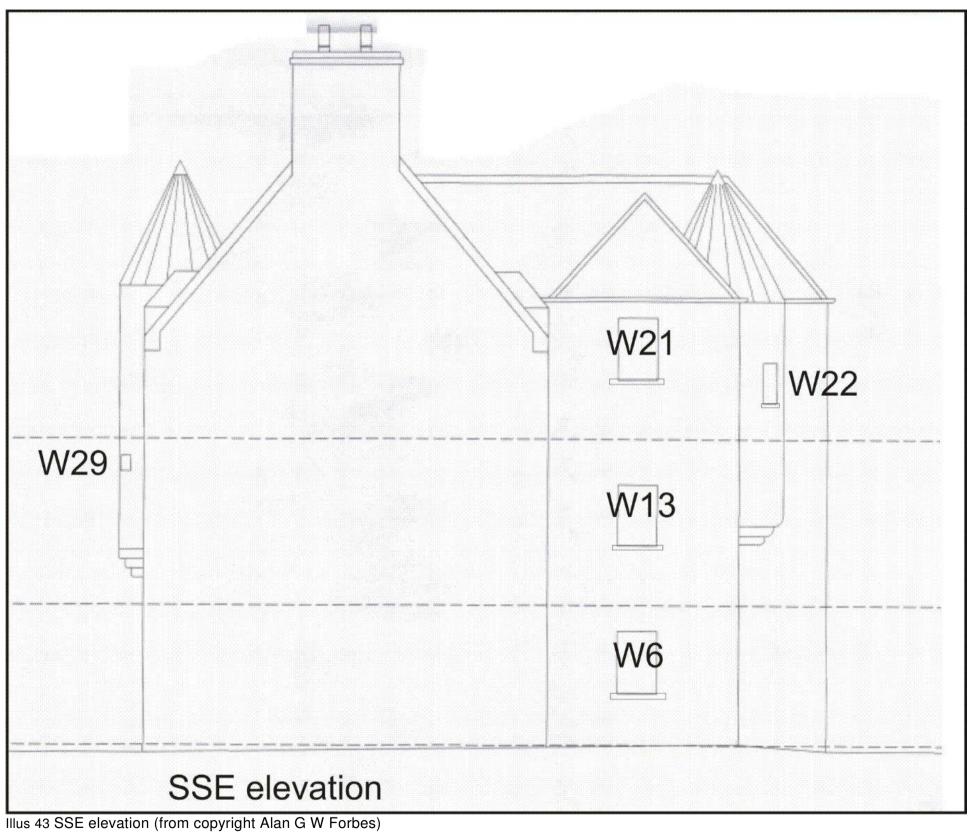


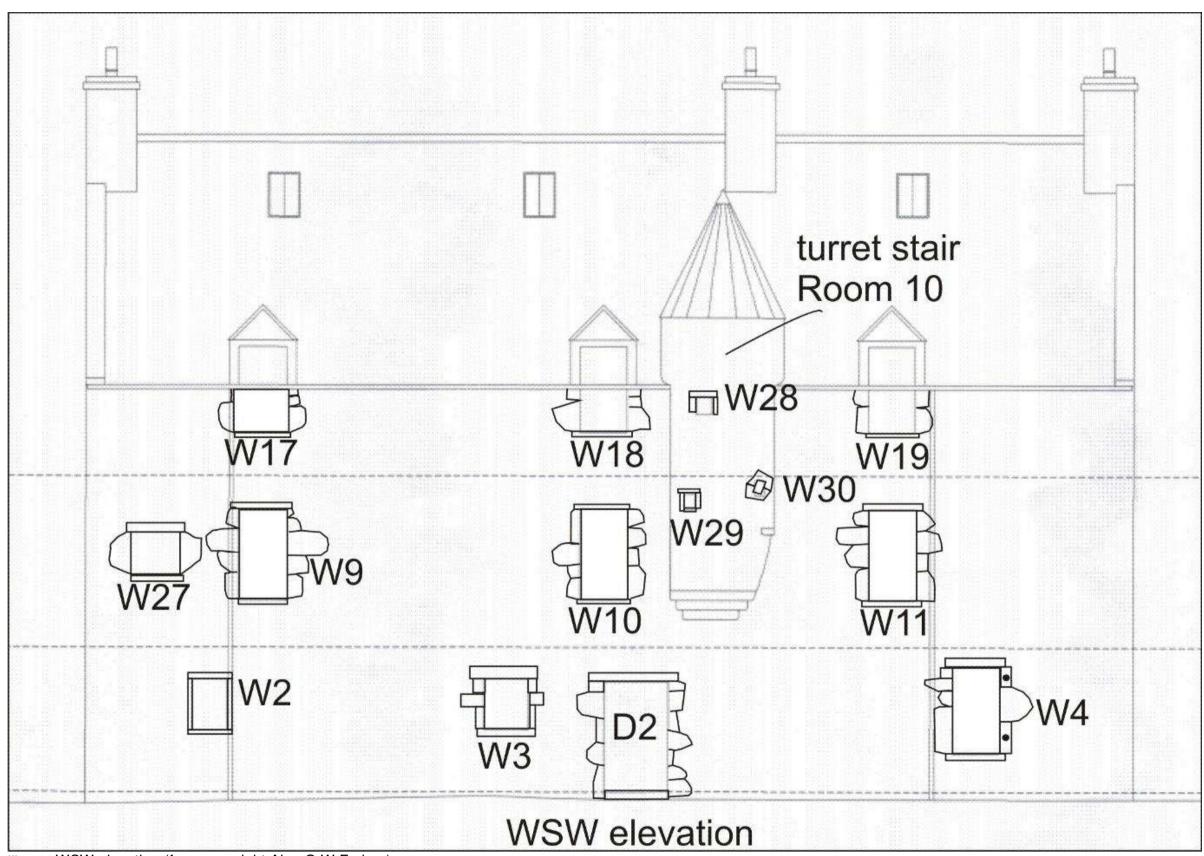
Illus 41 Second Edition OS map Kincardineshire 015.05 (includes: Fetteresso; Glenbervie) Publication date: 1903 Revised: 1901 (copyright National Library of Scotland)



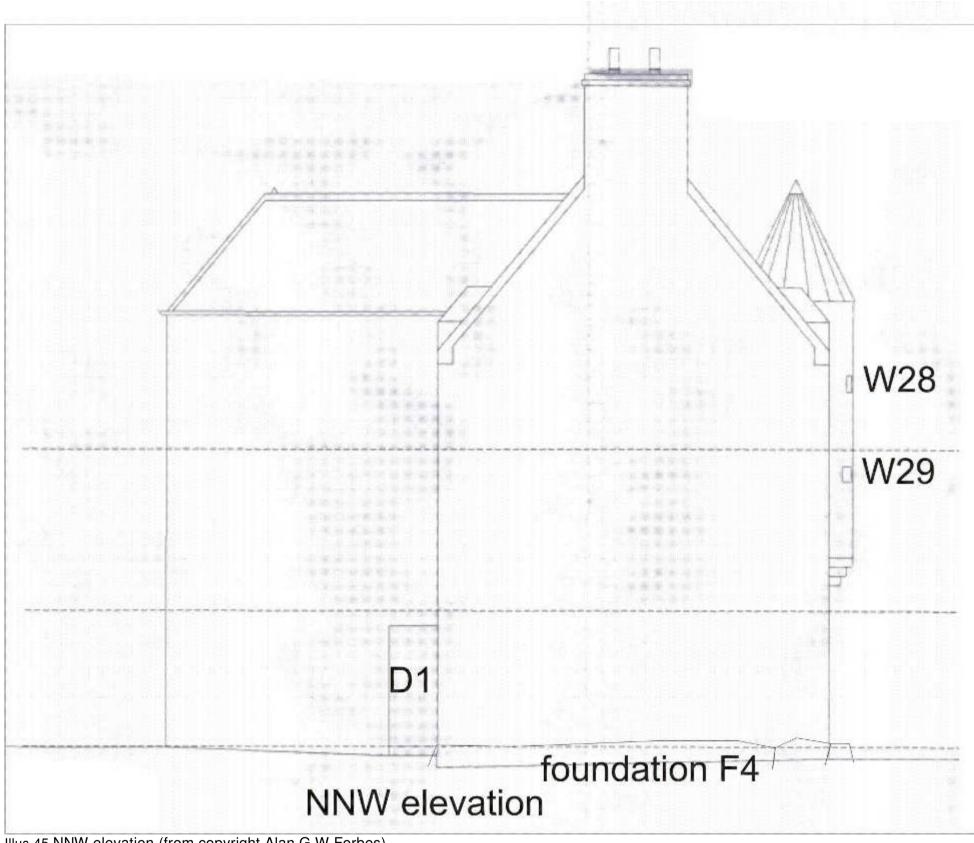
Illus 42 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey map Kincardineshire 015.05 (includes: Fetteresso; Glenbervie) Publication date: 1925 Revised: 1923 Levelled: 1902 (copyright National Library of Scotland)

APPENDIX 2 ELEVATIONS ANNOTATED WITH SURVEY NUMBERS

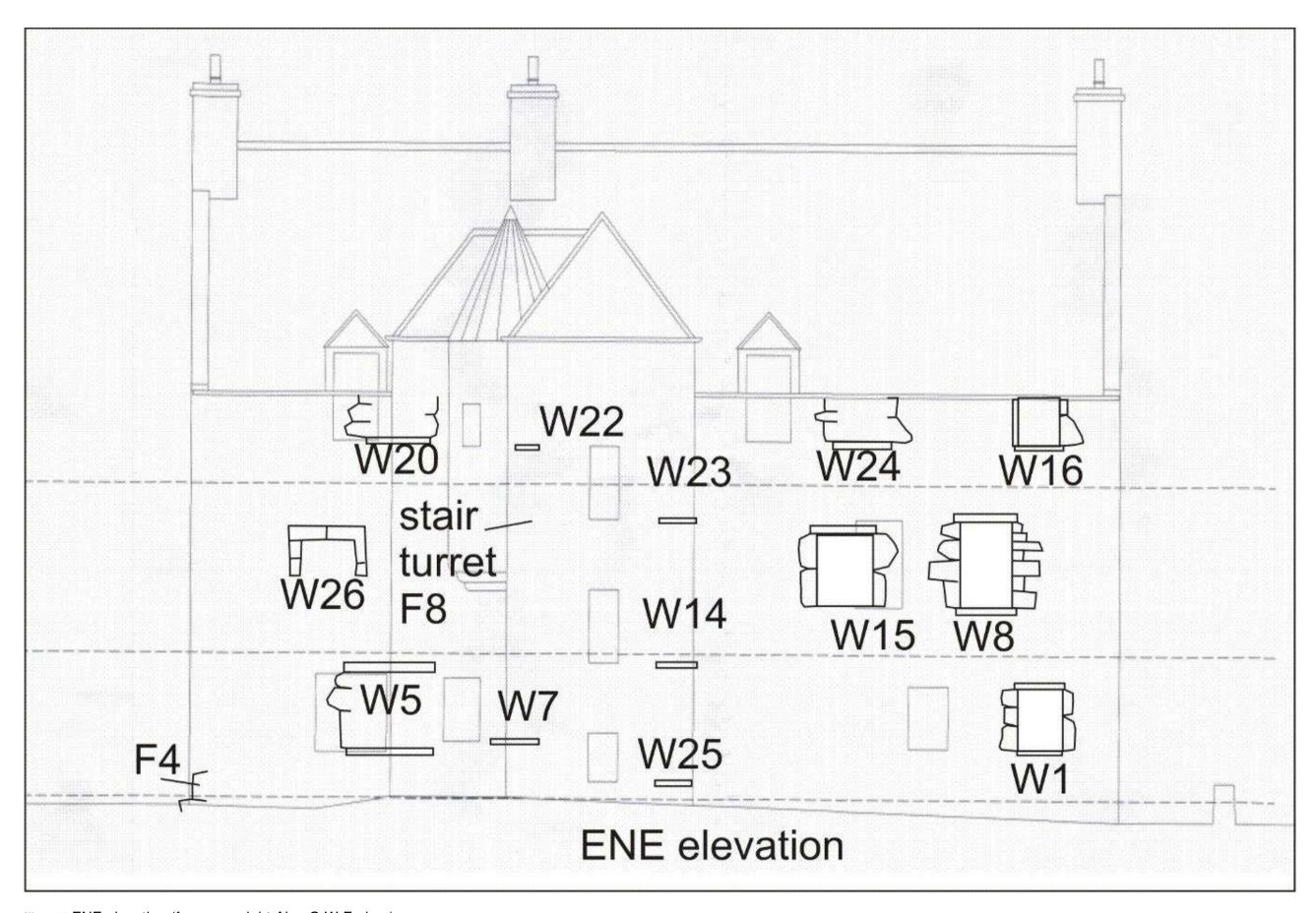




Illus 44 WSW elevation (from copyright Alan G W Forbes)

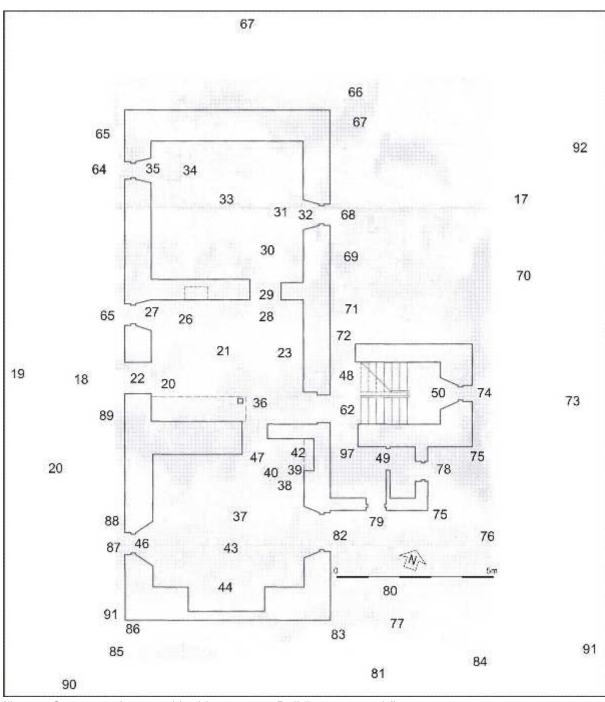


Illus 45 NNW elevation (from copyright Alan G W Forbes)

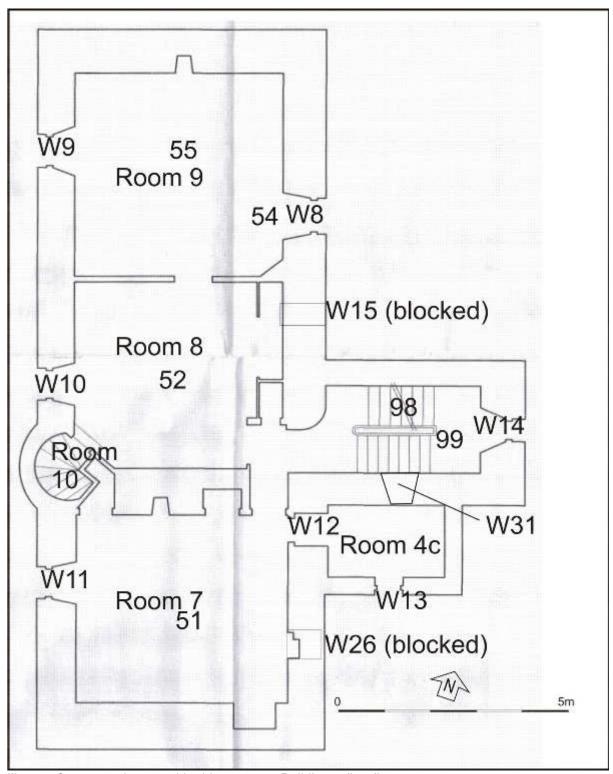


Illus 46 ENE elevation (from copyright Alan G W Forbes)

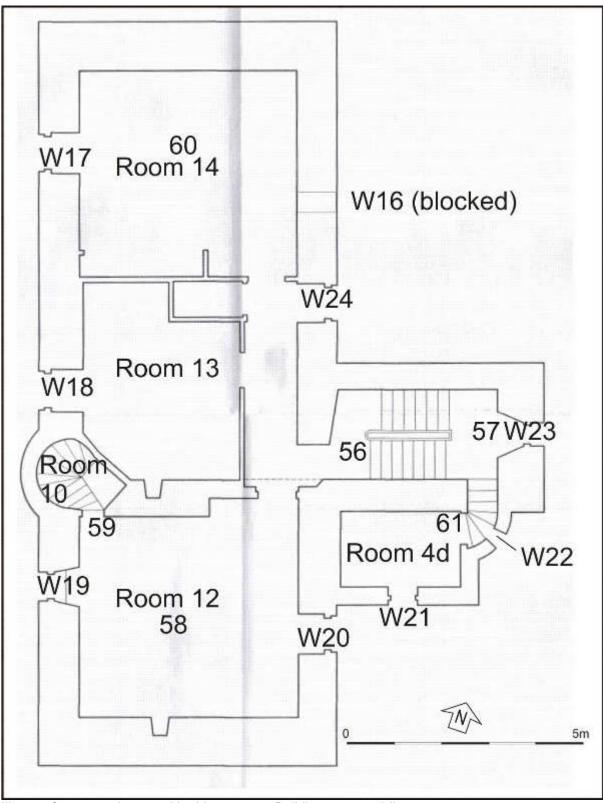
PHOTOGRAPHS



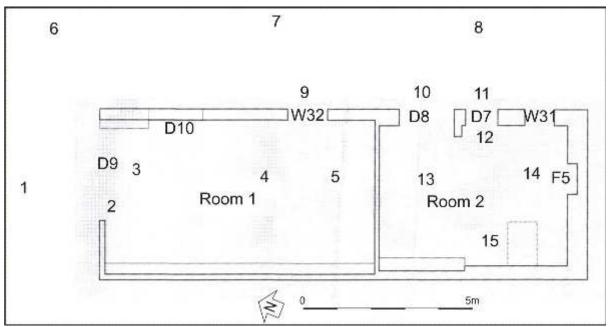
Illus 47 Camera points used in this survey – Building 1 ground floor



Illus 48 Camera points used in this survey - Building 1 first floor



Illus 49 Camera points used in this survey - Building 1 second floor



Illus 50 Camera points used in this survey – Building 2

Photo no	Description	Facing	Camera point
DSC_0489	Building 2 SE wall with D9	NNW	1
DSC_0490	Building 2 Interior SW wall with blocked door D10 (behind shelving) Building 2 Interior SW wall with blocked door D10	NW	2
DSC_0491	(right)	WSW	3
DSC_0492	Building 2 Interior SW wall with blocked door D10 (left) and W32 (right)	WSW	4
DSC_0493	Building 2 SW wall W32 (left)	NW	4
DSC_0494	Building 2 SW wall W32 (left)	NW	5
DSC_0495	Building 2 ENE wall	ENE	4
DSC_0496	Building 2 ENE wall	SE	4
DSC_0497	Building 2 SSE wall	SSE	4
DSC_0498	Building 2 NNW wall	NNW	4
DSC_0499	Building 2 from S	N	6
DSC_0500	Building 2 WSW wall	ENE	7
DSC_0501	Building 2 Room 2 WSW wall	ENE	8
DSC_0502	Building 2 W32	ENE	9
DSC_0503	Building 2 D8 blocked to form window	ENE	10
DSC_0504	Building 2 D7	ENE	11
DSC_0505	Building 2 Room 2 interior ENE wall	SE	12
DSC_0506	Building 2 Room 2 interior ENE wall	NE	12
DSC_0507	Building 2 NNW wall with fireplace F5	NNW	13
DSC_0508	Building 2 F5	NNW	14
DSC_0513	Building 2 WSW wall	SW	15
DSC_0515	Building 2 WSW wall	WSW	15
DSC_0516	Building 2 SSE wall	SSE	14

	Building 2 D7 (right) with former partition wall stump		
DSC_0517	F6	SW	16
DSC_0518	Building 1 from NE	SW	17
DSC_0519	Building 1 steps to garden outside D2	WSW	18
DSC_0520	Building 1 WSW façade	ENE	19
DSC_0521	Building 1 turret stair Room 10	ENE	20
DSC_0522	Building 1 Door D2	ENE	18
DSC_0523-5	Building 1 turret stair Room 10	ESE	18
DSC_0526	Building 1 Room 1 NNW wall with D4 (right)	NE	20
DSC_0527-8	Building 1 Room 1 ENE wall with D6 (right)	ENE	20
	Building 1 Room 1 SSE wall with D3 (left) and support		
DSC_0529	for turret stair F7 (top)	SSE	21
DSC_0530-33	Building 1 D2 wood beam lintel	WSW	22
DSC_0534	Building 1 D2 (left) W3 (right)	WSW	23
DSC_0535	Building 1 D2 (left) W3 (right)	WSW	24
DSC_0536-8	Building 1 corbel F2	WSW/SW	24
DSC_0539	Concrete slab floor Room 1	SSE	25
DSC_0540	Building 1 W3	WSW	26
DSC_0541-5	Building 1 W3	WSW	27
DSC_0546	W3 stone slate sill	WSW	26
DSC_0547	D4	NNW	28
DSC_0548	D4	NNW	29
DSC_0549	D4	NW	29
DSC_0550	Room 3 with window W2 (right)	NW	30
DSC_0551-3	W1	ENE	31
DSC_0554-5	W1	ENE	32
DSC_0556	W1 stone slate sill	ENE	31
DSC_0557-8	Room 1 roof beams	WSW/NW	31
DSC_0559-61	Room 1 NNW wall	NNE	33
DSC_0562	W2	WSW	34
DSC_0563-4	W2 stone slate sill	WSW	34
DSC_0565-6	W2 woden lintel	WSW	35
DSC_0567	W2	WSW	34
DSC_0568	D4	SSE	30
DSC_0569	D4	SSE	30
DSC_0570	D3	SSE	36
DSC_0571	Room 1 ENE wall with D5 (left) W5 (right)	ENE	37
DSC_0572-3	Corbel F1	ENE	38
DSC_0574	Corbel F1	SSE	39
DSC_0575	Corbel F1	SE	40
DSC_0576	D5	ENE	41
DSC_0577	D5	SSE	42
DSC_0578	Inglenook fireplace F3 with sandstone surround	SSE	37
DSC_0579	Inglenook fireplace F3 with sandstone surround	SSE	43
DSC_0580	Inglenook fireplace F3 with sandstone surround	SE	44

			44a, b,
DSC_0581-3	F3 details of sandstone arched lintel	SSE	c
			44a, b,
DSC_0584-6	F3 details of rear and side walls constructed of rubble	SSE	С
DSC 0507.0	F2 details of stone slate base	CCT	44a, b,
DSC_0587-8	F3 details of stone slate base	SSE	33
DSC_0589	Room 1 WSW wall with W4	WSW	33
DSC_0590	Room 1 ceiling beams W4		45
DSC_0591 DSC_0592	W4 stone slate sill	WSW WSW	45
DSC_0592 DSC_0593-6	W4 wooden lintel	WSW	46
DSC_0593-6	Room 1 NNW wall with D3	NNW	43
_			
DSC_0598	D3	NNW	47
DSC_0599	D6	ENE	36
DSC_0600	D1	NNW	48
DSC_0601	Under stairs ground floor	ENE	48
DSC_0602	D11 to extension Room 4	SSE	48
DSC_0603-4	Blockwork extension Room 4b/4a	SE/SSE	49
DSC_0605	W25	ENE	50
DSC_0606-8	D6	WSW	50
DSC_0609-13	First floor panelled bedroom Rm 8	N/S/E/W	52
DSC_0614-16	Rm 9	N/S/E/W	55
DSC_0617-20	Building 1 from W8	ENE	54
DSC_0621-23	Room 7	N/S/E/W	51
DSC_0624	Rm 4c	ENE	53
DSC_0625-28	Room 7	N/S/E/W	51
DSC_0629	Stairs to 2nd floor with W23	ENE	56
DSC_0630	W23	ENE	57
DSC_0631-34	Room 12	N/S/E/W	58
DSC_0635-7	Turret staircase Room 10	NW	59
DSC_0638-41	Room 14	N/S/E/W	60
DSC_0642-45	Turret staircase Room 10	NW	59
DSC_0646	Turret stair F8 to Room 4d (bathroom)	SSE	57
DSC_0647-50	Room 4d	SW/WSW	61
DSC_0651-3	D6 wood lintel and jamb details	WSW/NW/SW	62
DSC_0654	W3	ENE	63
DSC_0655	W10, W18 above and starir turret Room 10	ENE	63
DSC_0656	W2	ENE	64
DSC_0657	W2 (left) and WSW façade	SE	64
DSC_0658	W9 and W17 above	ENE	64
DSC_0659	Blocked W27	ENE	65
DSC_0660	Building 1	SE	66
DSC_0661-63	NNW gable	SSE	67
DSC_0664	Foundation F4	SSE	66
DSC_0665	Foundation F4	WSW	67

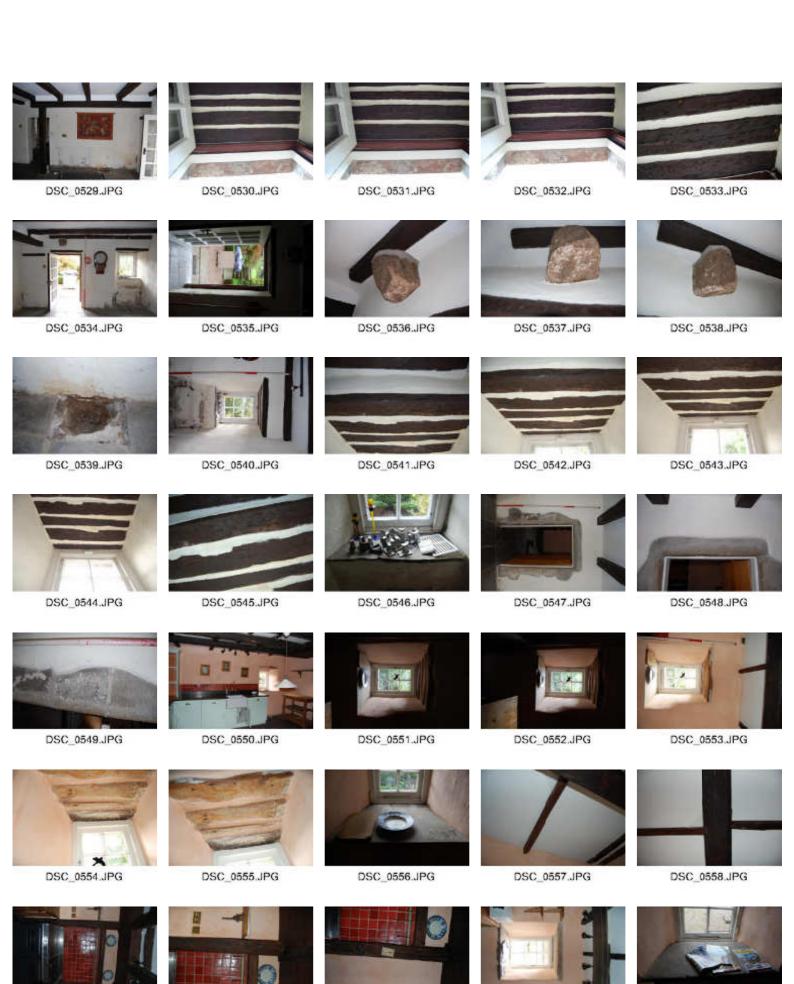
DSC 0666	W1	WSW	68
DSC 0667-8	W8	WSW	68
DSC_0669	W15 with W24 above	WSW	69
DSC_0670-72	ENE wall W1, W8, W15, W16 and W24	WSW	70
DSC_0673-4	D1	SSE	71
DSC_0675	D1 sandstone lintel detail	SSE	72
DSC_0676	D1 (bottom right)	SSE	69
DSC_0678	Foundation F4	SW	72
DSC_0679-83	Room 5 staircase with stair turret F8 (left)	WSW/SW/NW	73
DSC_0684	W25	WSW	74
DSC_0685-6	W14 with W23 above	WSW	74
DSC_0687	Foundation F4	NW	75
DSC_0688-89	Room 5 (right) with stair turret F8	NW	76
DSC_0690	stair turret F8	NW	77
DSC_0699	W7 granite sill 19th-century extension Room 4	WSW	78
DSC_0700	W7 granite sill 19th-century extension Room 4	WSW	76
DSC_0701	stair turret F8	NW	77
DSC_0707	W6, W13, W21 19th century extension	NNW	81
DSC_0708	W6	NNW	79
DSC_0709	W13 with W21 above	NNW	79
DSC_0710	W5	WSW	82
DSC_0711	W26 with W20 above	WSW	82
DSC_0712	W5, W26 with W20 above	WSW	76
DSC_0713	Foundation F4	NW	83
DSC_0714-19	Room 4 (left) turret stair F8, Room 5 (right)	NW/W	84
DSC_0720-22	SSE gable	N	85
DSC_0723	Foundation F4	NNW	86
DSC_0724	W4	ENE	87
DSC_0725	W11 with W19 above	ENE	88
	Turret stair Room 10 with windows W28, W29, W30		
DSC_0726-9	and corbelling	ENE	89
DSC_0730-4	WSW façade	N/NW	90
DSC_0735	Foundation F4	ENE	91
DSC_0736-9	W4 details	ENE	87
DSC_0740-4	ENE façade	NW	91
DSC_0745	Building 2 NNW gable	SSE	92
DSC_0746-7	Building 1 from driveway	S	92
DSC_0748	Building 2 NNW gable	SSE	92
DSC_0749	gateposts F9 and boundary wall	NNW	93
DSC_0750-3	gatepost F9 with stone slate coping	N	94
DSC_0754-65	Soil strip after removal of Building 2		
DSC_0766	House from SE		
DSC_0767	Soil strip after removal of Building 2		
DSC_0768	House and drive	SSE	95
DSC_0769	Boundary wall and gateposts F9		
DSC_0770	Boundary wall and gateposts F9	S	96

DSC_0771-81	Soil strip after removal of Building 2		
DSC_0782-6	House and garden		
	Soil strip on SE side of house showing service		
DSC_0787-90	trenches		
DSC_0791-6	House WSW façade		
DSC_0797-814	Walled garden F10 details		
DSC_0815	Soil strip on SE side of house showing service trenches		
DSC_0816	Turret stair Room 10 with windows W28, W29, W30 and corbelling	ENE	89
DSC_0817-29	Strip trenches for extension showing service trenches and disturbance		
DSC_0830-44	Garden house F11 and terraced walled garden		
DSC_0845-75	Garden house F12		
DSC_0876-84	Strip trenches for extension showing service trenches and disturbance		
IMG0758, 59, 808	Buildings 1 and 2 from driveway		
IMG_0812	D5	WSW	97
IMG_0813	W31	SSE	98
IMG_0814	Turret stair F8 with W22	SE	57
IMG_0815	Turret stair	SSE	57
IMG_0816	W14	ENE	99

Watching brief

DSC_0119-126	Room 3 concrete floors removed
DSC_0127-132	Room 1 concrete floors removed
DSC_0133-150	Room 2 concrete floors removed
DSC_0151-155	Room 4a/b





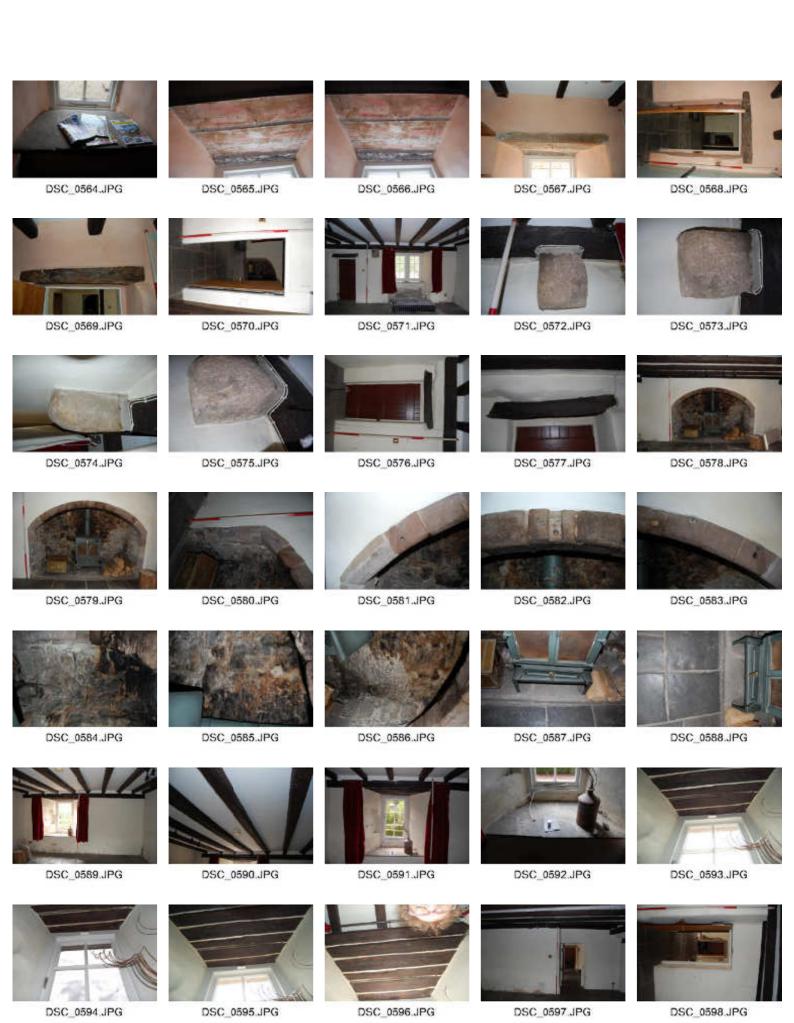
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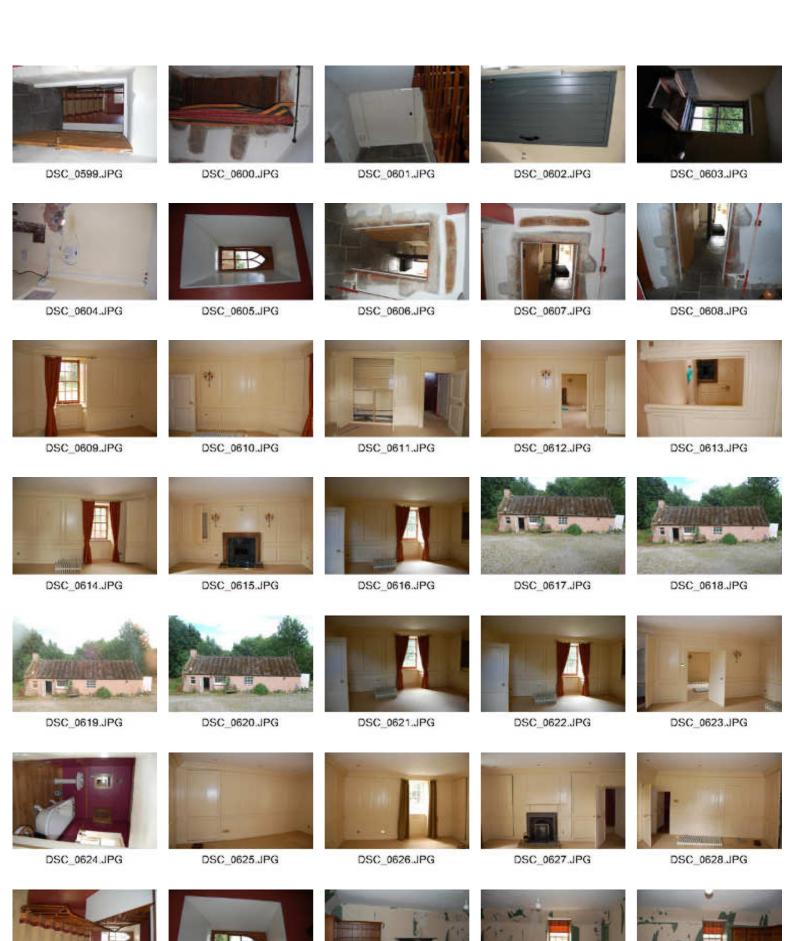
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DSC_0560.JPG





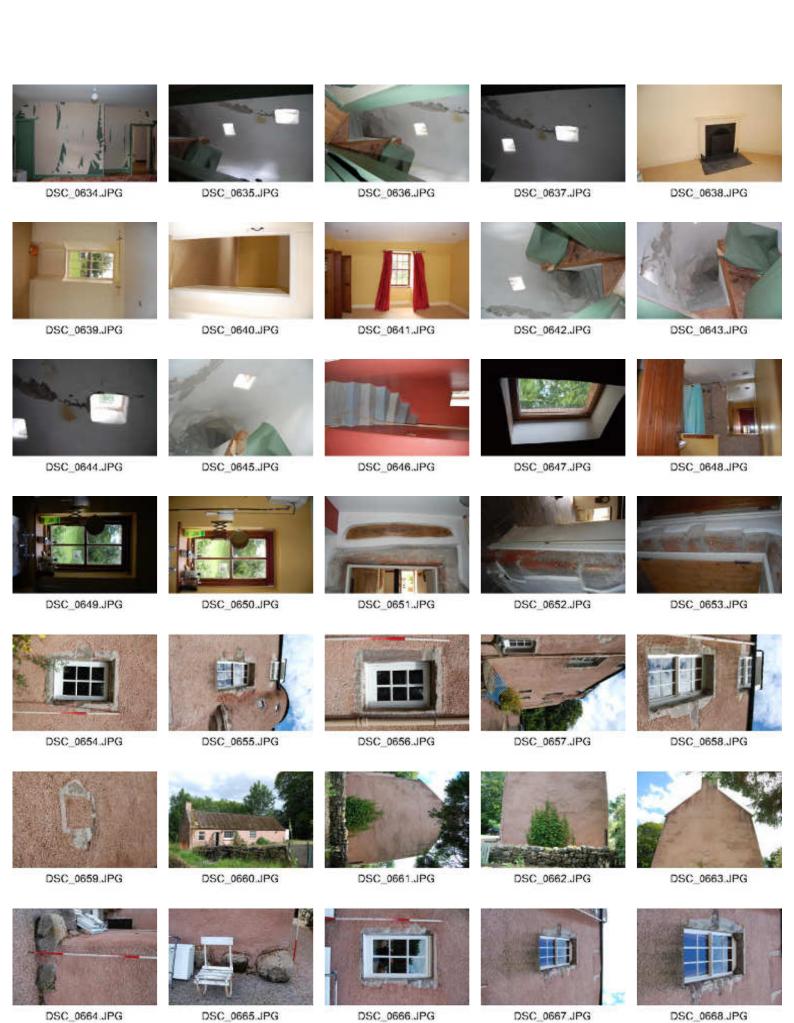
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DSC_0629.JPG

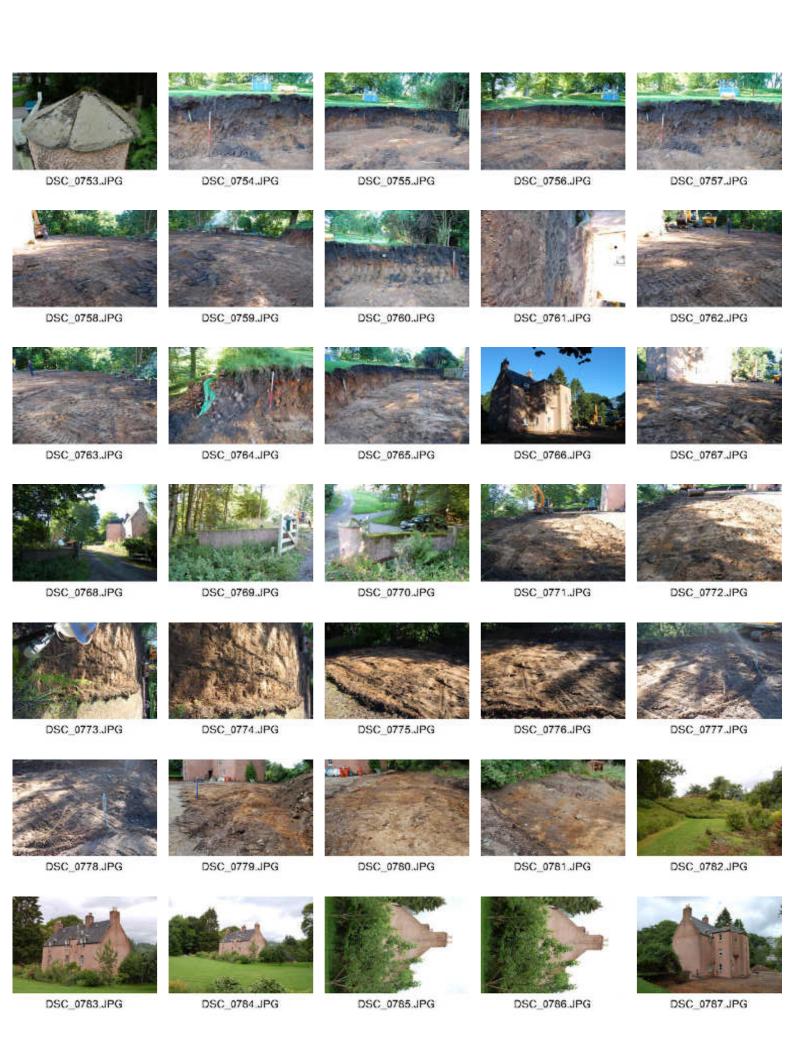
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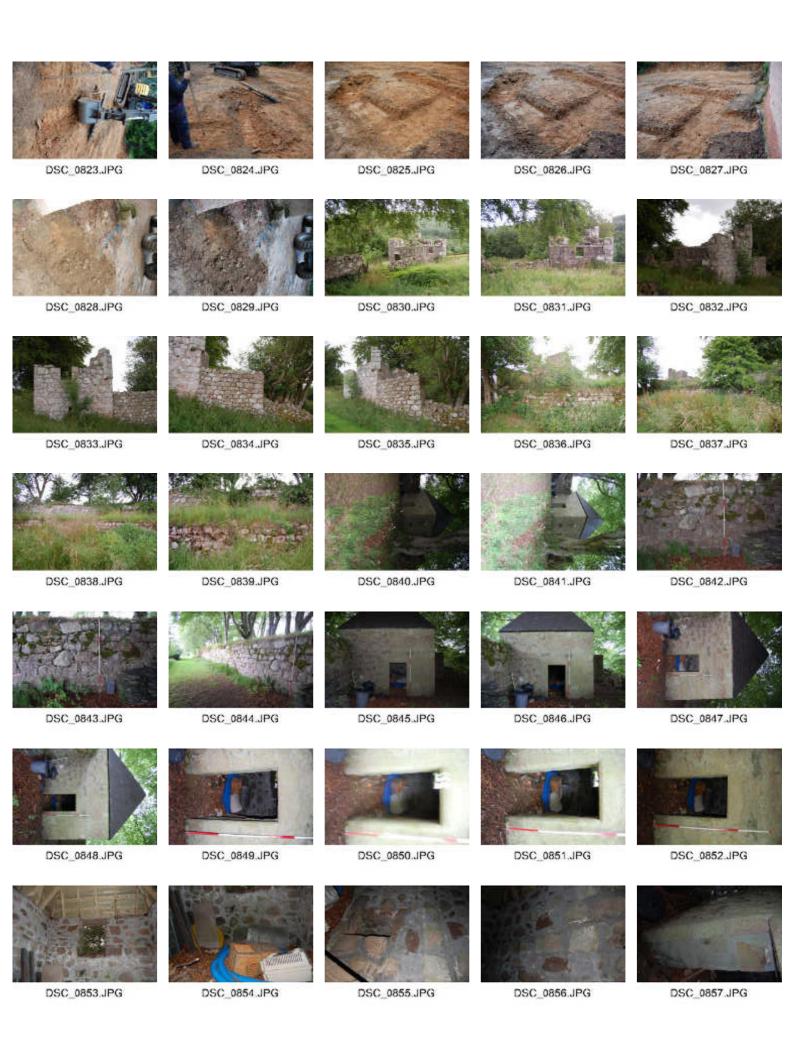


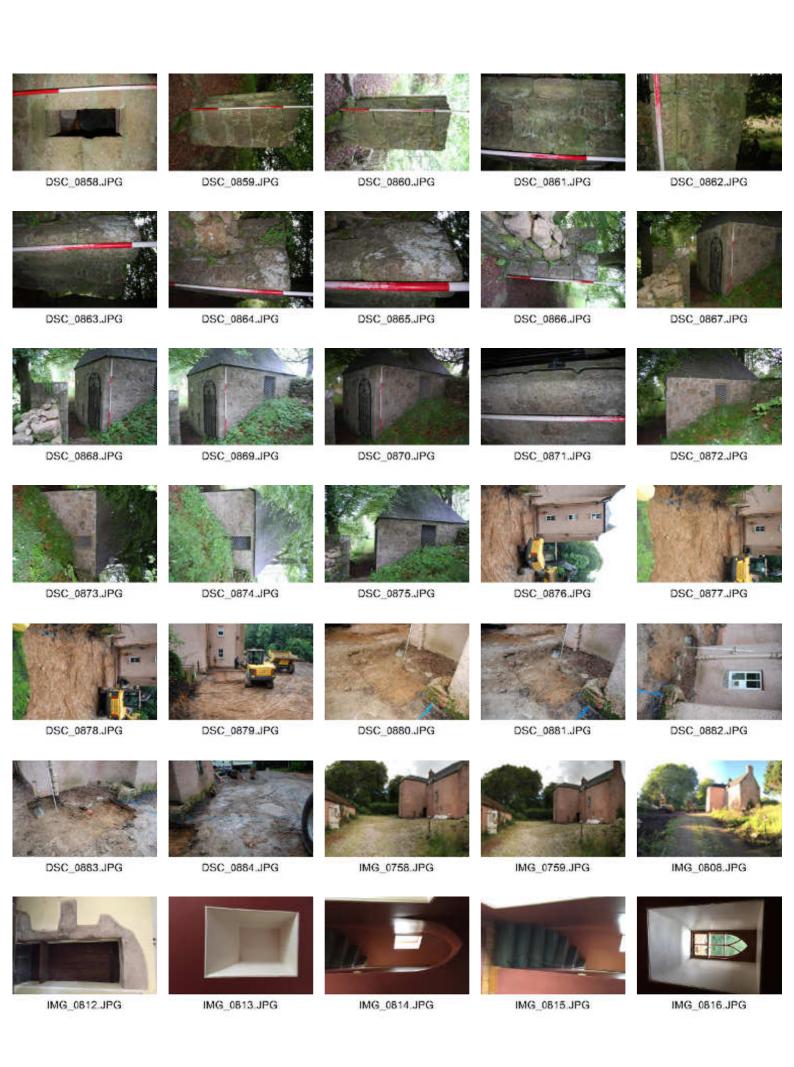
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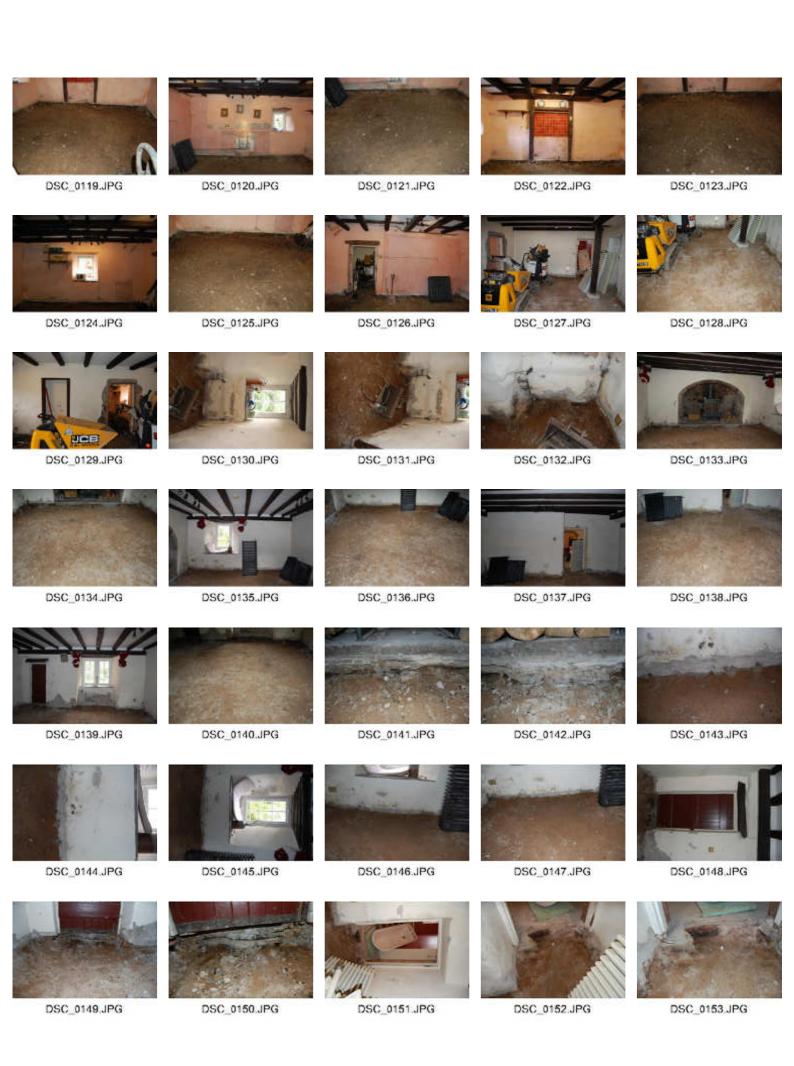
















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