

STANDING BUILDING SURVEY  
PARK HOUSE,  
120 WESTBURN ROAD, ABERDEEN



CAMERON  
ARCHAEOLOGY

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# Standing Building Survey

## Park House

### 120 Westburn Road, Aberdeen

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## 1 BACKGROUND

This report on the standing building survey of Park House, 120 Westburn Road, Aberdeen was commissioned by Mike Grattidge, Portico Design on behalf of CLAN, Cancer Link Aberdeen and North. The work relates to Aberdeen City Council planning application reference P100578. The house is situated on the north side of Westburn Road on the west side of its junction with Cornhill Road. It is bounded on the north and west sides by Westburn Park. The site is located at NJ 92770 06913, 120 Westburn Road, Aberdeen, AB25 2DF in Aberdeen Parish.

Consent was granted on 17 June 2010 for demolition of the existing building, erection of a cancer support centre including office and visitor accommodation, car parking and landscaping.

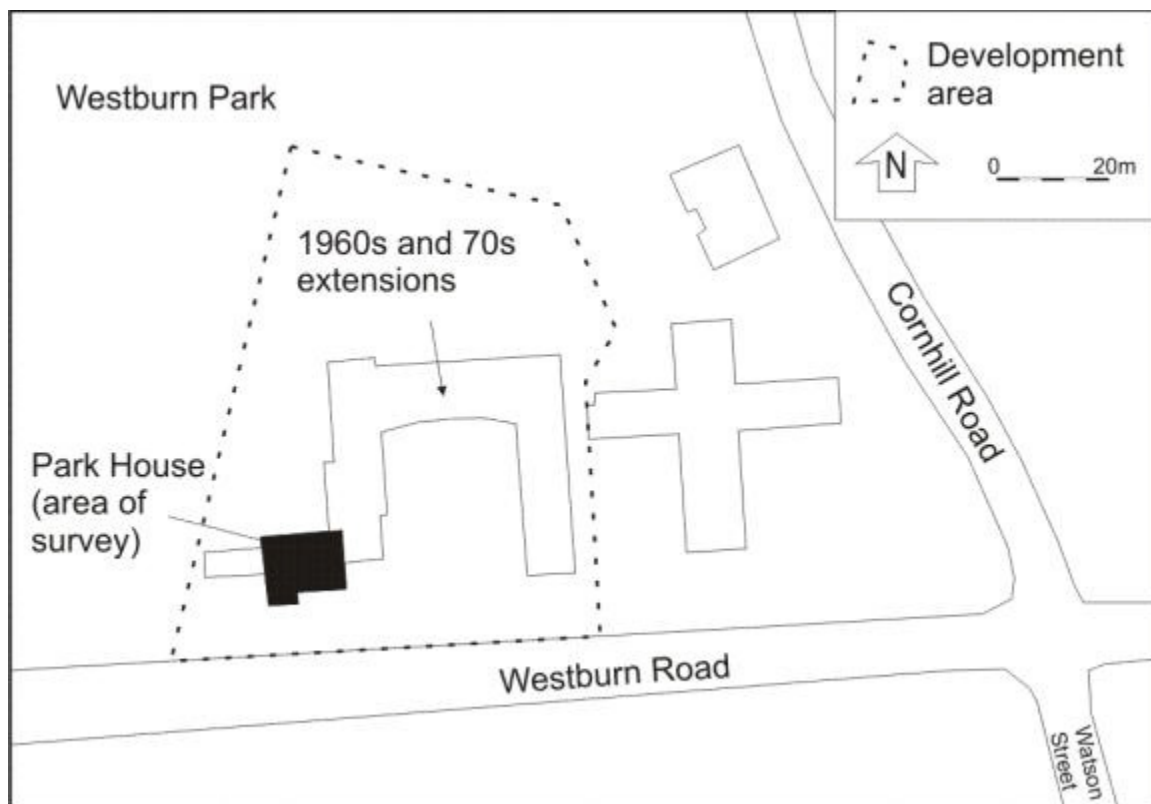


### III 1 Site location

## 2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Park House is probably mid 19th-century in date and a house appears in this location on the first Ordnance Survey maps (surveyed 1867). Buildings do appear on the late 18th and early 19th century maps but not in the position of the current house.

Late 18th and early 19th-century maps show Loch-head House (NJ90NW 1719.00) and Loch-head Lodge (NJ90NW 1719.01) on the site. Loch-head House was renamed Park House. Park House was used during the Second World War to provide shelter for people whose homes had been bombed (Morgan 2009, 21).



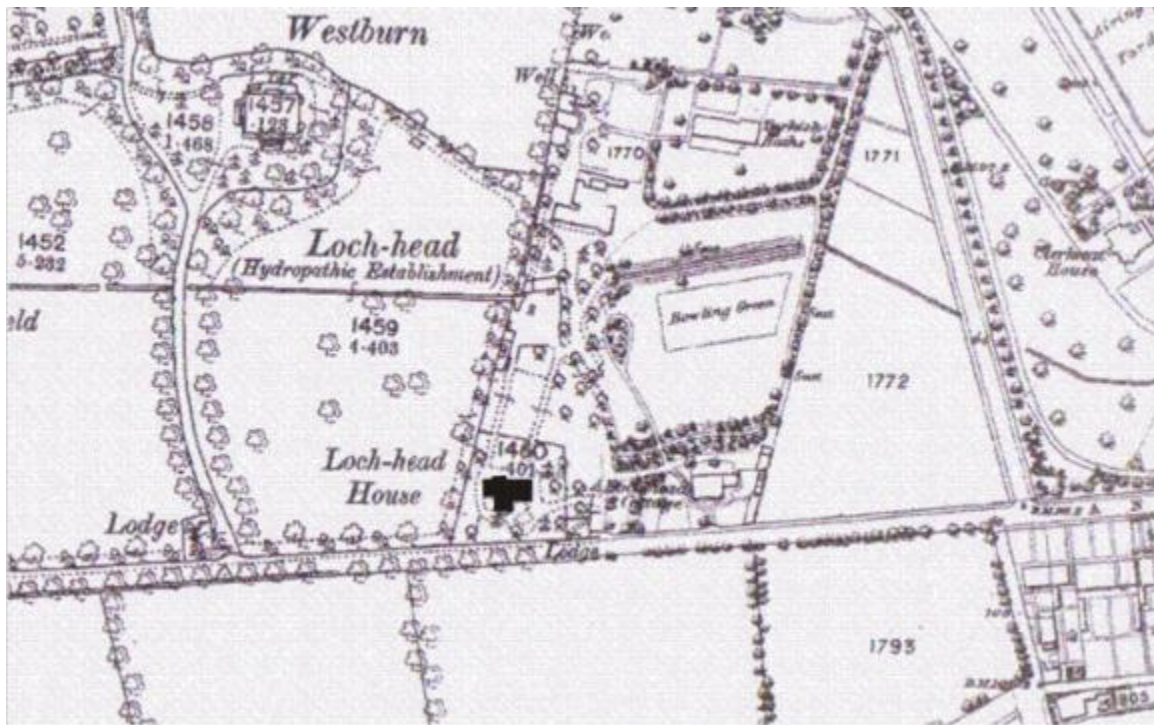
III 2 Plan of site showing Park House

Planning permission to use Park House as an 'occupational centre for the mentally handicapped' (Press and Journal 23.3.1965) was granted in 1962 and the cost of that work was £42,420. The Press and Journal (*ibid*) reports that 'the existing house will be reconstructed and new buildings erected'. This work may have hidden older features of the house which may only be visible during the soft



strip prior to demolition of the building. Extensions to the building were approved in 1965 and 1971.

Immediately north of Loch-head House was Loch-head hydropathic establishment (NJ90NW 1720) although nothing remains of these buildings. In 1851 the Reverend Alexander Munro bought the mansion and grounds at Loch-head, and opened the hydropathic establishment there ([www.victorianturkishbath.org](http://www.victorianturkishbath.org)). There were however at least four buildings named Loch-head in this area between the 18th and 20th centuries (Morgan, 2009, 19). In 1873 Loch-head House [north of the current site], with 3 acres of ground, was purchased for £2250, to serve as a convalescent hospital (<http://www.scottish-places>). It was demolished by 1923 to incorporate the area in Westburn Park ([www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk)).



III 3 First Edition Ordnance Survey (1867) showing Loch-Head House (renamed Park House)

### 3 THE STANDING BUILDING SURVEY

A Standing Building Survey was carried out from 12-19 July 2010. Restrictions on the recording included the external façades of the upper floors which were surveyed from the interior and restricted access to the roof space because of a water tank and objects blocking access particularly the north side. Heavy foliage particularly trees on the west and south sides and bushes on the east also restricted access. In the opinion of the author the restrictions did not affect the results of the survey. A photographic survey of the interior and exterior was carried out and measured plans and façades were created. Appendix 2 contains the photographs and Appendix 3 a photographic catalogue; the photograph locations are on each of the plans - ground floor, first floor and roof space (Ills 9, 12, 13).

#### THE EXTERIOR

Park House is a substantial 2-storey building with harled walls, a slated pitched roof and double height bay window on the ground and first floors facing onto Westburn Road. The windows and front door have plain granite quoins and there is a rustic low-level string course around the front and rear façades of the building at the level of the front door and under the bay window. This string course only extends along the gables as one stone at each corner (Ill 15). The windows with plain quoins in the front façade are all original. The front door has a small unsupported portico over the front door in the form of a granite sill with two granite supports below. The frontage (Ill 4) has had a disabled ramp added to allow access to the front door. Extensions have been built on at the NE corner including a corridor to the 1960s extension, and a boiler house to the west.

The gable ends of the original house had similar windows to the façades and most of the walls were harled. Each has a small arched window below the roof to allow light into the attic space (Ill 14).



III 4 Front south façade



III 5 East façade



The rear north façade of the building (Ill 6) has had several alterations. A ground floor a corridor has been added to the NE corner and a new window associated with this corridor presumably replaced an old window. At ground floor level one of the bathroom windows was reduced in height, possibly to accomodate bathroom fittings. The upper floor windows with plain quoins are all original. Original cast iron vents are present in the north and west façades.

The house has been built on ground sloping down to the north and as a result the rear garden is lower than the front. This can be seen on the façade drawings (Ill 15): at the rear an extra 1.5m of granite blockwork is present at the base of the building and this incorporates a door for what was originally an access to the cellar for the delivery of coal. No access to the cellar area was attempted during this survey.



Ill 6 North rear façade





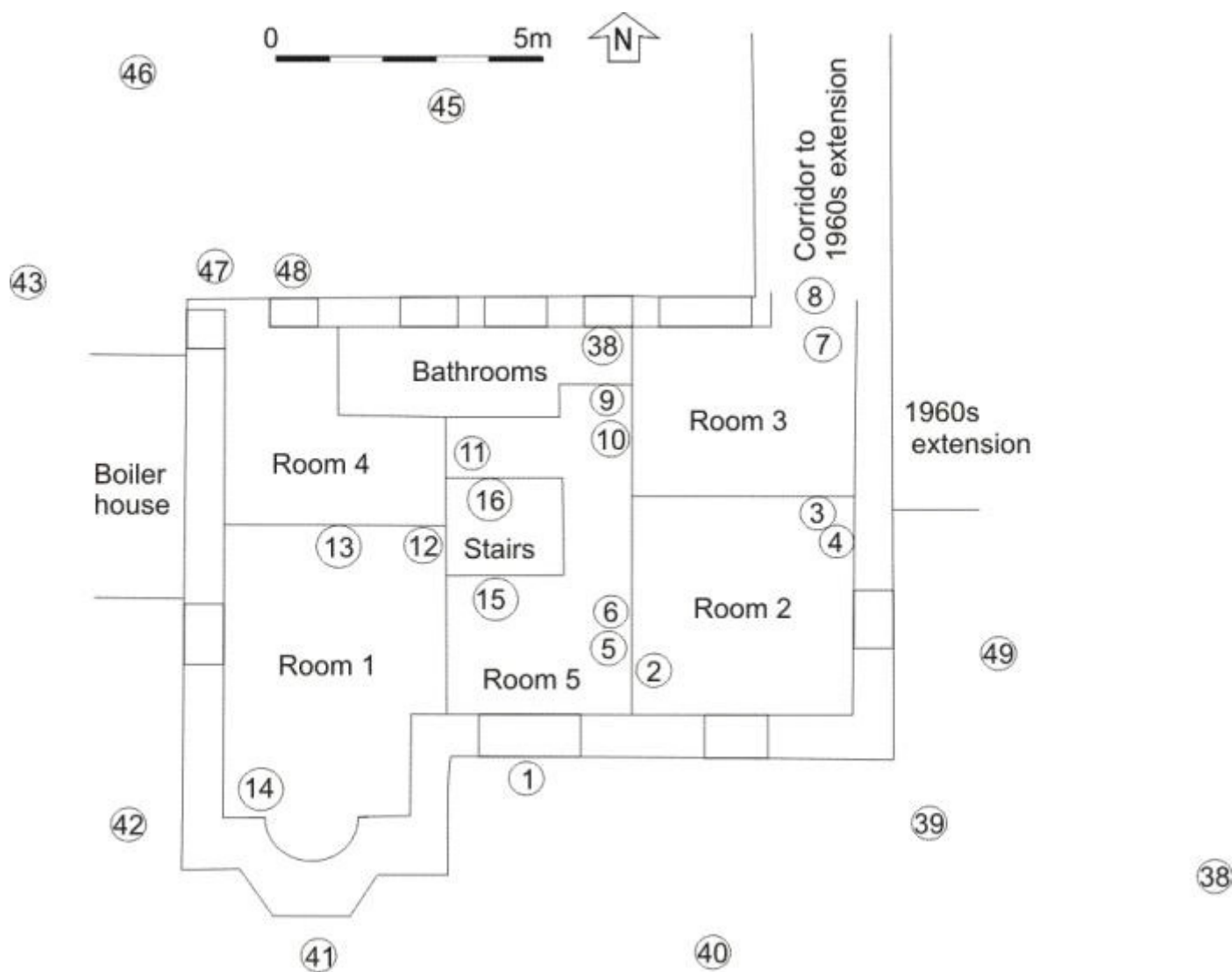
III 7 Detail of original window with plain granite quoin and lintel, rustic granite string course and cast iron vent (bottom right)



III 8 West façade (left north end; right south end)

## THE INTERIOR

The house is of a traditional type with two large reception rooms at the front of the ground floor and two smaller family rooms at the rear. Rooms 1, 2 and 3 have original cornices; Room 4 has been altered presumably in the 1960s and the cornice removed at that time. The house has a central stairwell with an original wooden handrail and cast iron balluster. No original fireplaces are present as all have been removed to install modern heating.



III 9 Ground floor plan showing photography locations (see Appendix 3)



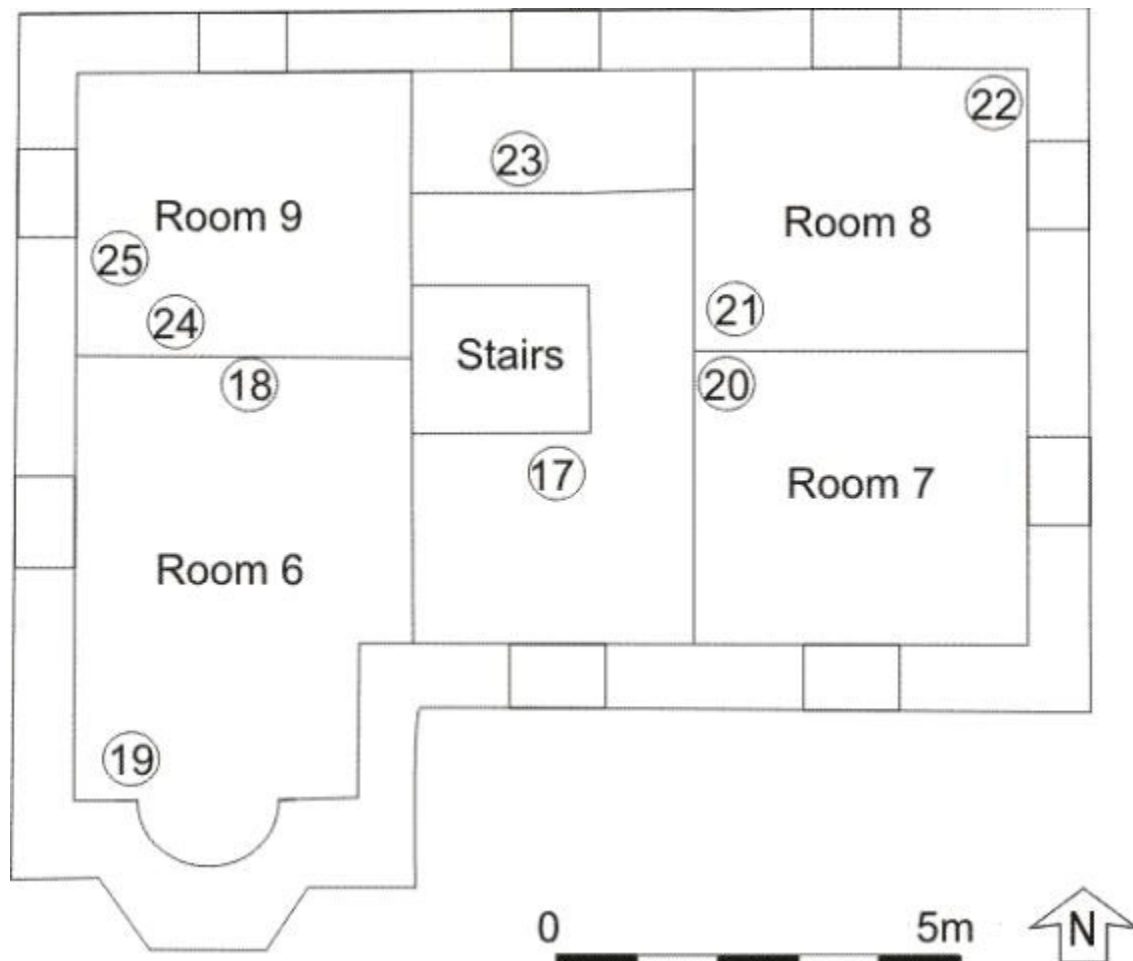


III 10 Room 1 bay window, cornice and double skirting boards



III 11 Room 5 ground floor hallway with central staircase

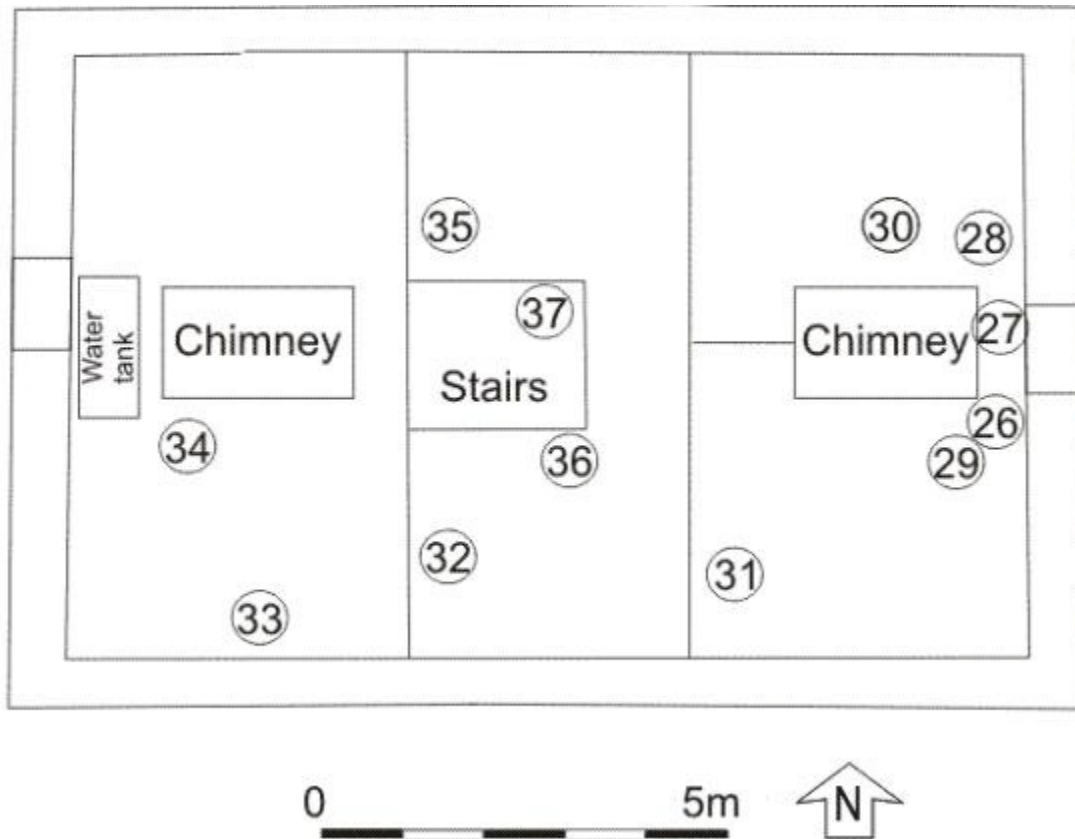




III 12 First floor plan showing photography locations (see Appendix 3)

The first floor follows a similar layout to the ground floor with Room 6 being of a similar grand style to Room 1 but without the cornice. Rooms 7, 8 and 9 all have original corncicing. In Room 9 plaster has been removed from one wall and and the original lathe and plaster construction can be seen.

The roof space and eaves contain two chimney breasts and water tank. The walls have been plastered and there is no access to examine the structure of the roof. Arched windows in the west and east gables allow light into this space.



III 13 Eaves and attic floor plan showing photography locations (see Appendix 3)



III 14 Arched window in the east end gable façade



### III 15 Façade drawings

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

This house was probably built in the mid 19th century and there is no evidence of an earlier house within the current structure. If an earlier structure stood on the site it may be detectable as a buried feature or have been completely removed during the building of the current structure.

A number of other similar buildings with wall-head gables and arched windows in the roof space survive on the south side of Westburn Road between its junctions with Mount Street and Watson Street and it is likely that this group of houses were designed by one architect or constructed by one builder.

## 5 REFERENCES

Morgan, D 2009 'Lost Aberdeen: The Freedom Lands', Edinburgh.

Press and Journal 23 March 1965.

Scottish Places <http://www.scottish-places.info/towns/townhistory617.html> (accessed 8th July 2010).

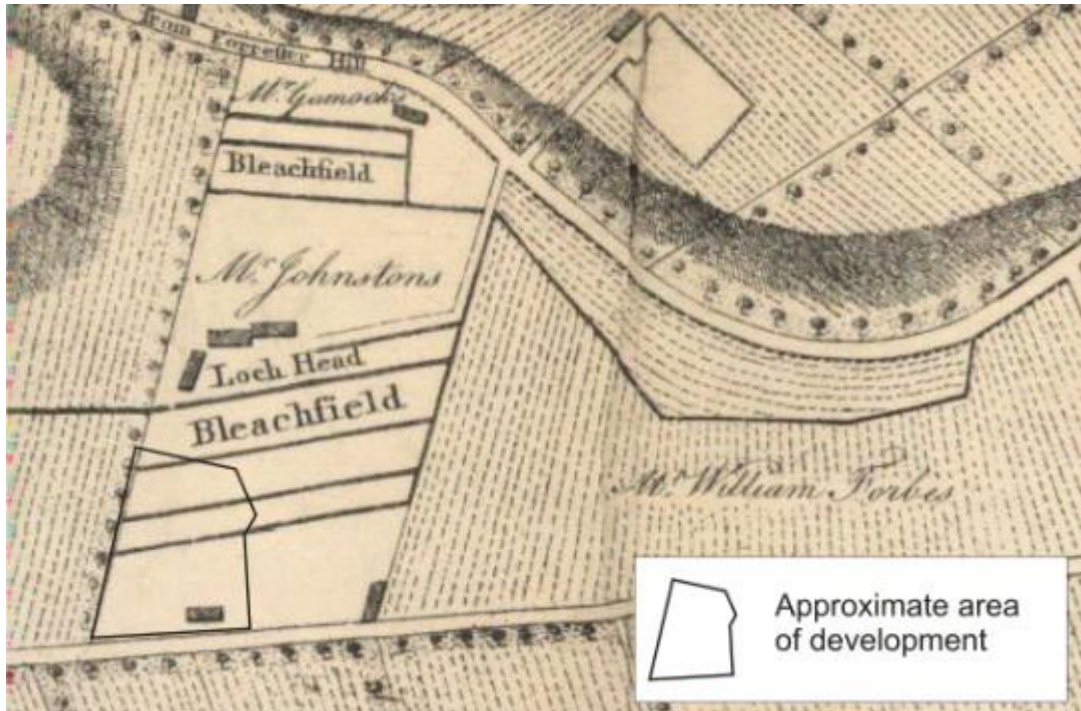
SCRAN <http://www.scran.ac.uk> (accessed 8th July 2010).

Victorian Turkish Bath.org <http://www.victorianturkishbath.org/6DIRECTORY/AtoZEstab/Hydros/AbHydroLockSF.htm> (accessed 8th July 2010).

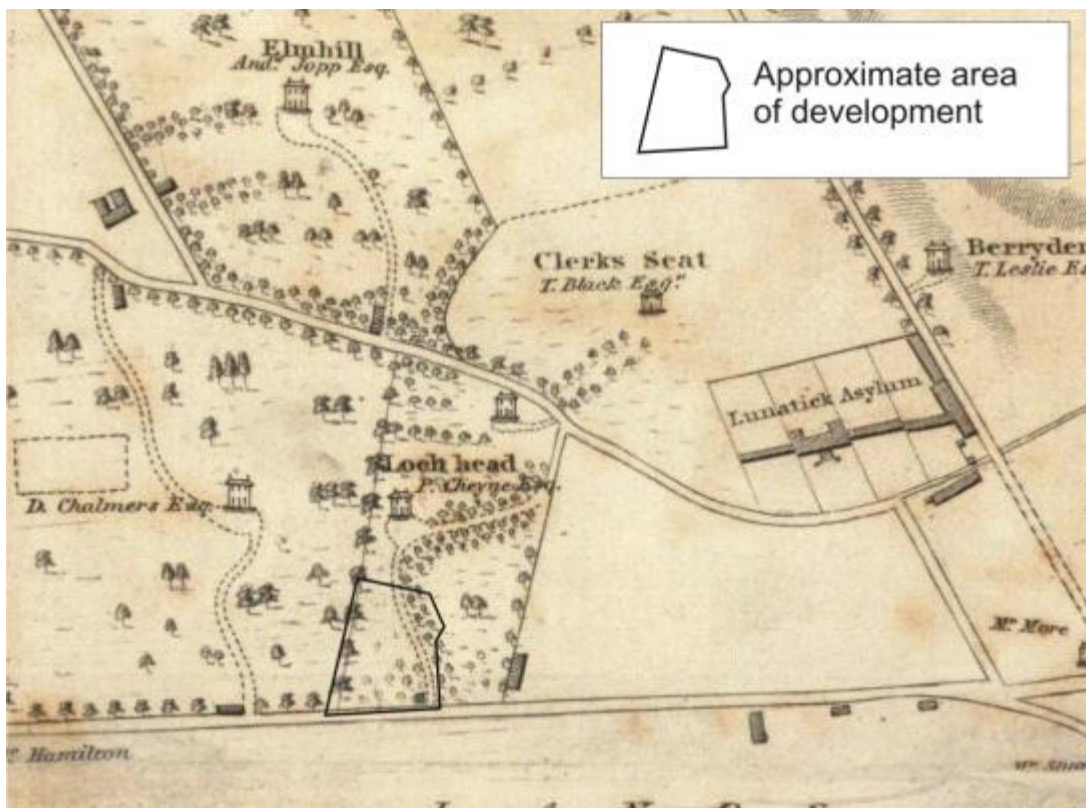


## APPENDIX 1

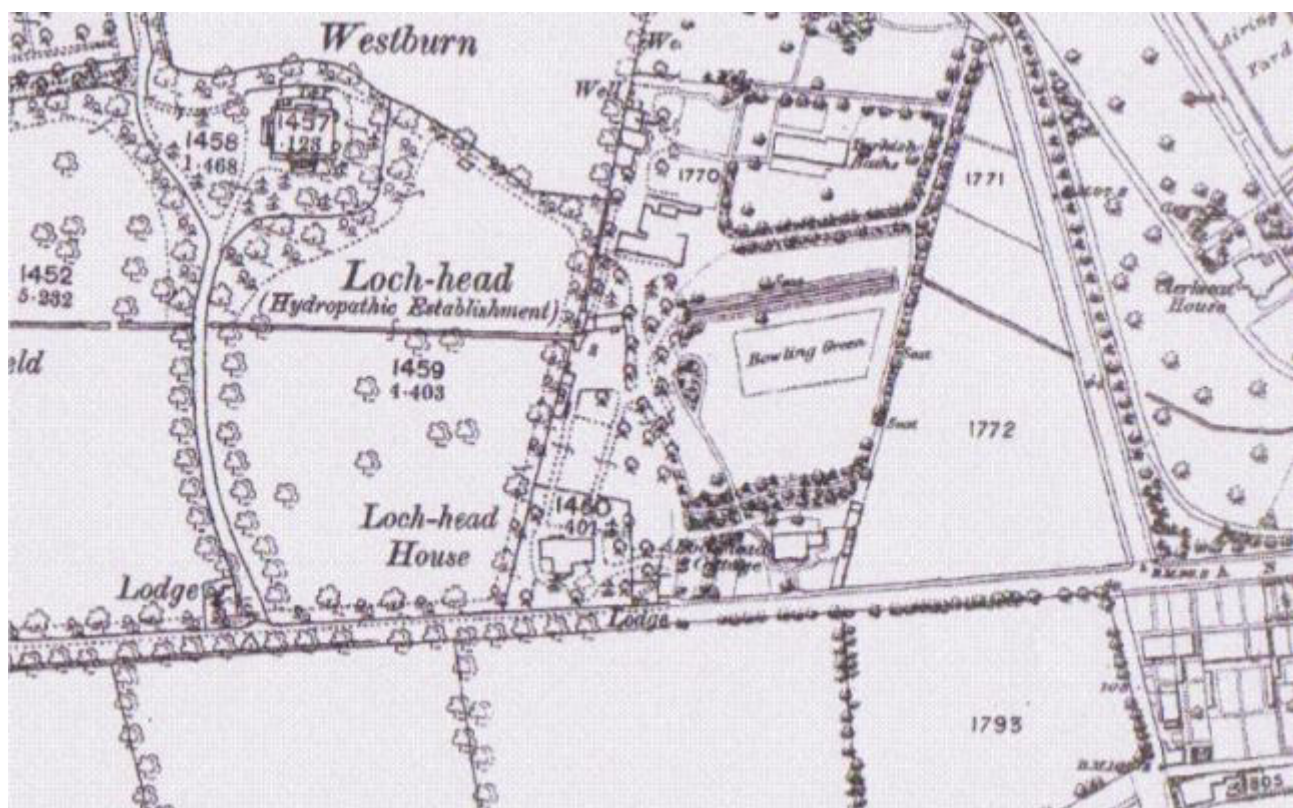
### MAPS



Alexander Milne Plan of the City of Aberdeen, 1789



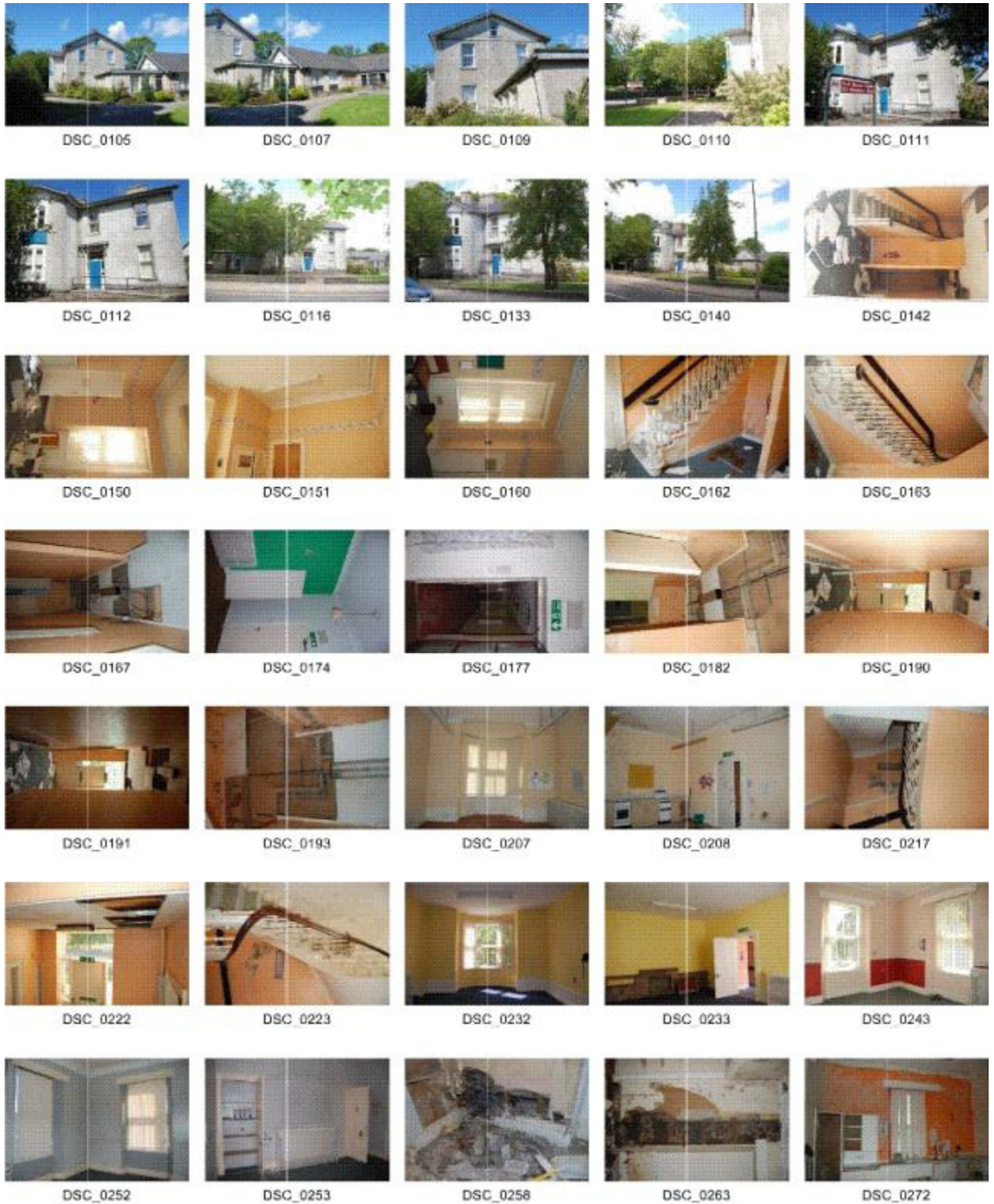
John Wood Plan of the Cities of Aberdeen, c 1828



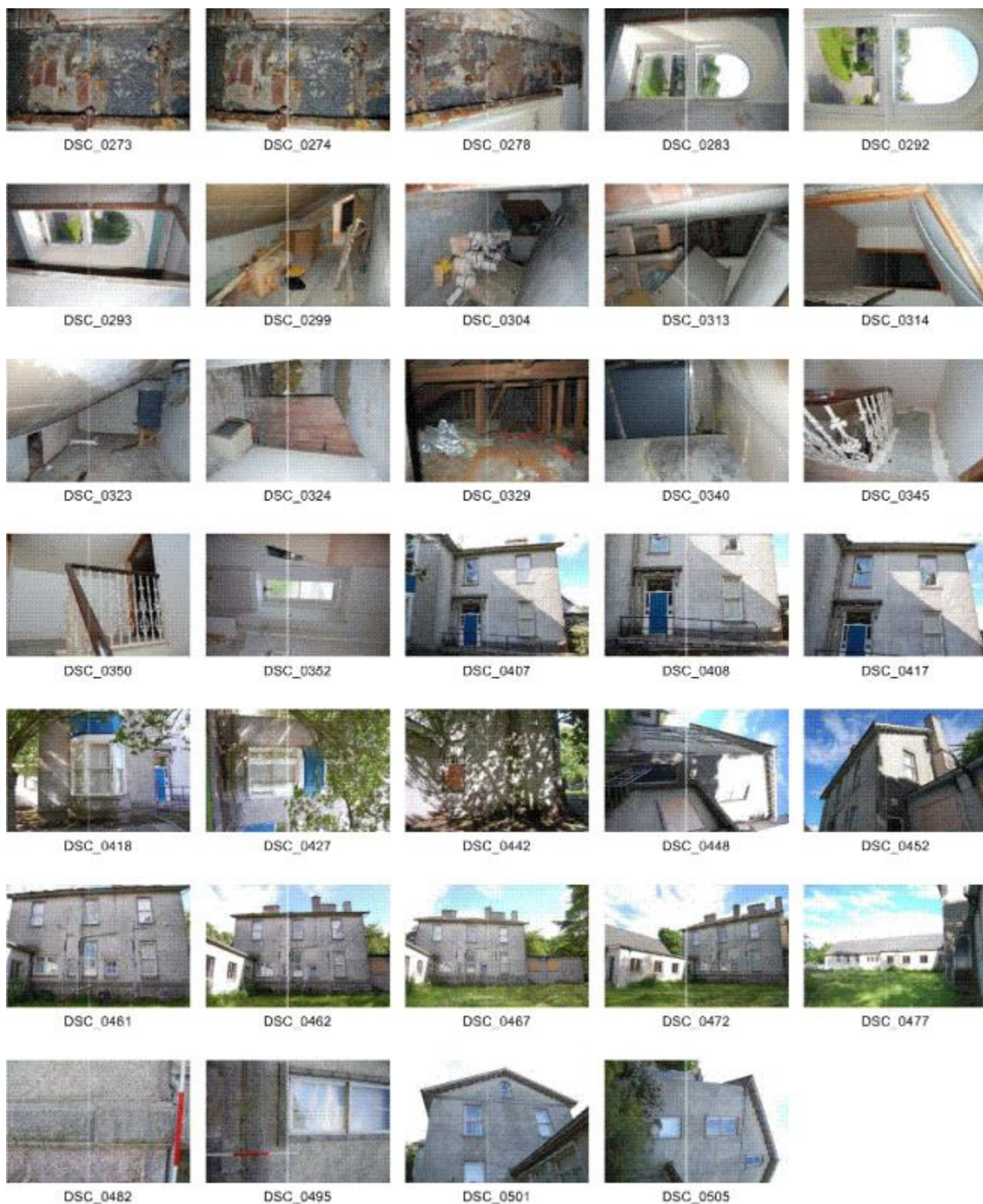
1867 First Edition Ordnance Survey



## APPENDIX 2 PHOTOGRAPHS









## APPENDIX 3 PHOTOGRAPH LIST

Photo number	Description	Camera position	Camera facing
DSC 0105	East façade showing bay window (left) and 1960s extension (right)	38	W
DSC 0107	East façade showing bay window (left) and 1960s extension (right)	38	NW
DSC 0109	Detail of east façade showing bay window (left) and 1960s extension (right)	39	W
DSC 0110	Front garden showing bay window	39	W
DSC 0111	Front south façade	40	NW
DSC 0112	Front south façade	40	NNW
DSC 0116	Front south façade, Westburn Road (foreground)	Westburn Park	N
DSC 0133	Front south façade, Westburn Road (foreground)	Westburn Park	NW
DSC 0140	Front south façade, Westburn Road (foreground)	Westburn Park	NW
DSC 0142	Room 5 and stairwell	1	N
DSC 0150	Room 2	2	NE
DSC 0151	Room 2	3	SW
DSC 0160	Room 2	4	SSW
DSC 0162	Room 5 stairwell	5	NW
DSC 0163	Room 5 stairwell	5	NW
DSC 0167	Room 5 corridor to north	6	N
DSC 0174	Room 3	7	SW
DSC 0177	1960s corridor from NE corner Room 3	8	N
DSC 0182	Room 5 ceiling	9	W
DSC 0190	Room 5 stairwell (right), front door (centre)	10	S
DSC 0193	Room 5 ceiling showing cornice covered with new lowered ceiling	11	up
DSC 0207	Room 1 showing bay	13	S
DSC 0208	Room 1	14	NE
DSC 0217	Stairwell from base of stairs	15	N
DSC 0222	Lowered ceiling Room 5 from up stairs	16	S
DSC 0223	Stairwell from 1st floor up to attic	17	SE
DSC 0232	Room 6	18	S
DSC 0233	Room 6 showing replacement fire surround	19	NE
DSC 0243	Room 7	20	SE
DSC 0252	Room 8	21	NE
DSC 0253	Room 8 showing built in cupboards and replacement radiator on chimney breast	22	SW
DSC 0258	Wall construction bathroom First floor	23	NW

DSC 0263	Room 9 wall construction with lath and plaster	24	W
DSC 0272	Room 9	25	NNE
DSC 0273	Room 9 wall construction with lath and plaster	24	W
DSC 0278	Room 9 wall construction with lath and plaster	24	W
DSC 0283	Attic arched window east facing gable	26	ENE
DSC 0292	Attic arched window east facing gable	27	E
DSC 0293	Attic arched window east facing gable	28	ESE
DSC 0299	Eave south side of attic	29	W
DSC 0304	Eave north side of attic	30	W
DSC 0313	Eave NW corner	35	W
DSC 0314	Eave top of stairwell	32	W
DSC 0323	Eave SW corner showing water tank (right)	33	W
DSC 0324	NW eave filled with rubble and inaccessible	33	N
DSC 0329	NW eave filled with rubble and inaccessible	35	W
DSC 0340	Top of arched window in west façade behind water tank	34	W
DSC 0345	Stairwell	36	N
DSC 0350	Top of stairwell	37	S
DSC 0352	South front façade	40	N
DSC 0407	South front façade	40	N
DSC 0408	South front façade	40	N
DSC 0417	South front façade	40	N
DSC 0418	South front façade bay window	41	N
DSC 0427	South front façade bay window	41	N
DSC 0442	West façade (south end) boiler house (left)	42	E
DSC 0448	NW corner showing back door and boiler house (right)	43	ESE
DSC 0452	NW corner showing chimney and upper window on West gable and boiler house (right)	44	ESE
DSC 0461	North rear façade	45	S
DSC 0462	North rear façade	45	S
DSC 0467	North rear façade	45	S
DSC 0472	North rear façade and 1960s extension (left)	46	SE
DSC 0477	1960s extension; back door (right)	43	E
DSC 0482	Detail of rustic string course	47	S
DSC 0495	Detail of window quoin (top), rustic string course (centre), cast iron vent (bottom right)	48	S
DSC 0501	East façade upper floors showing wall-head gable and arched window in roof space and 1960s extension (right)	49	W
DSC 0505	East façade upper floors showing wall-head gable and arched window in roof space	49	W