

REDCRAIGS STEADING
BRIDGE OF DEE
ABERDEEN



Standing Building Survey

Carried out November 14th 2012

by

Murray Archaeological Services Ltd



Report No: MAS 2012-32

by

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REDCRAIGS STEADING BRIDGE OF DEE ABERDEEN

- Standing Building Survey -

1. Background

1.1 A standing building survey was required for a small steading at Redcraigs, Bridge of Dee, Aberdeen, prior to its reconstruction as part of the development of four holiday units.

1.2 The archaeological condition was applied in the context of planning legislation (PAN 2/2011, SPP, SHEP), which states that it is necessary for developers to arrange for archaeological work to take place prior to development, in appropriate circumstances. Planning Application Number: P111334.

1.3 A Level 2 Standing Building Survey was required. A Level 1 survey includes measured floor plans, a written account of the building's plan, form, function, age and development sequence in addition to a photographic survey. Level 2 in addition includes a fully analytical record which will include detailed photographs of decorative and structural elements, a detailed written description and account of the building's origins, development, use and the evidence on which this has been based.

1.4 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned to undertake the work by Cobban Architecture Ltd on behalf of their client Mr Graham Cheyne. The site element of the survey was completed on the 14th November 2012.

2. Desk-top survey

2.1 A search was carried out in the Sites and Monuments Record, Archaeology Service, City of Aberdeen Council and in the Sites and Monuments Records of the

Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments in Scotland (RCAHMS) through Canmore, Canmap and Pastmap.

2.2 The 1st edition and later 25"/mile Ordnance Survey maps and earlier historic maps were consulted.

2.3 Site plans of the site were kindly supplied by Cobban Architecture Ltd and have been annotated and used as a basis for detailed plans of the observed areas.

3. The Site

3.1 The site lies in farmland to the W of the A90 Aberdeen to Stonehaven road, alongside the now by-passed section of the old A90, approximately 1.5 miles S of the Bridge of Dee.

Parish: Nigg (City of Aberdeen) (the parish boundary appears to lie just W of the steading)

NGR: NJ 9290 0160

RCAHMS No: Not recorded.

Aberdeen SMR: Not recorded.

3.2 The development refers to the small stone-built steading to the NW of the farmhouse. It does not include the modern agricultural shed built against the W wall of the steading. The standing building report is confined to the steading although the development of the whole Redcraigs complex is discussed.

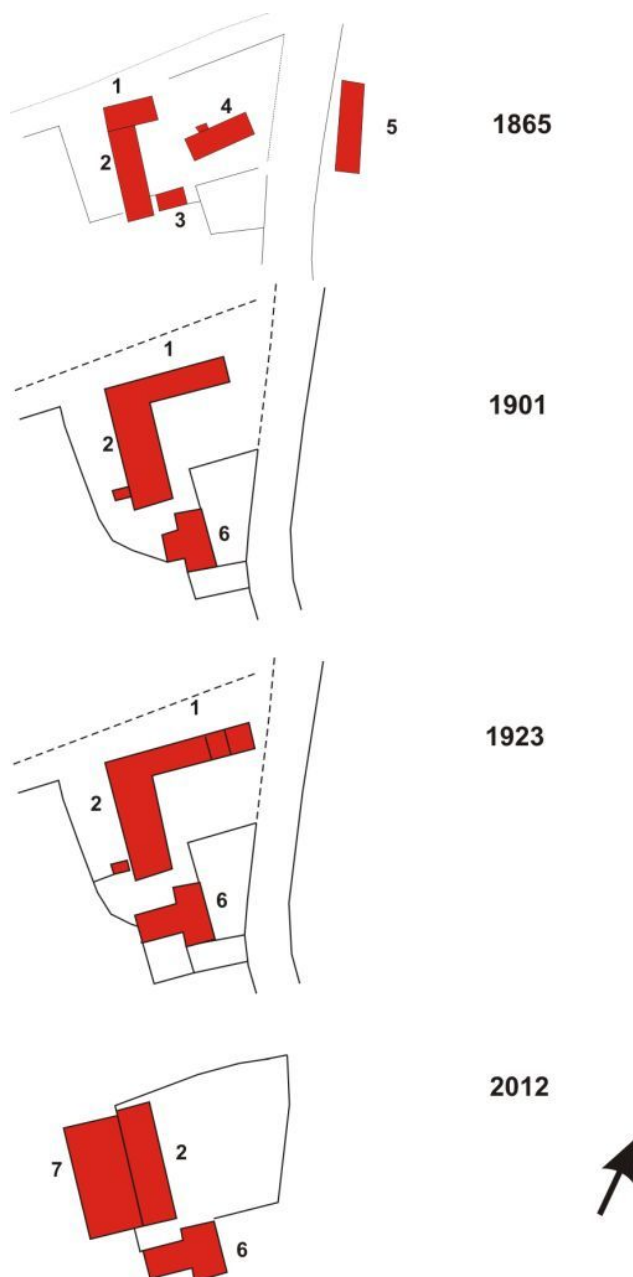
4. Documentary evidence

4.1 Roy's *Military Map* of 1747/55 does not show or name Redcraigs.

4.2 William Garden's *Map of Kincardineshire*, surveyed in 1774 (published 1797) names Red Craigs (sic) and marks the site with a dot on the E side of the Aberdeen-Stonehaven road.

4.3 John Thomson's *Atlas of Scotland*, published in 1822, names Redcraigs and marks the site with a dot on the E side of the Aberdeen-Stonehaven road.

4.4 The 1st edition Ordnance Survey 25" map, surveyed in 1865 (published 1868. Kincardine Sheet IV.10) shows a building (Illus 1: 5) on the E side of the road named Drumforskie. To the W of the road, on the present site, there was a narrow L-shaped steading with a short N range (Illus 1: 1) and a longer W range (Illus 1: 2). A small detached building (3) formed a partial S side of the complex. To the E of the steading a detached building (4) lay roughly NE/SW asymmetrically placed in relation to the other buildings. The yard appears to have been enclosed with a rectangular enclosed area of possible garden ground to the SE, beside the road.



Illus 1 Development of the farm as depicted on Ordnance Survey maps.

4.5 By the 1901 edition 25"/mile Ordnance Survey (published 1903. Kincardineshire Sheet 007.07) the site is named as Redcraigs. Buildings 3, 4 and 5 have been demolished and a freestanding building (Illus 1: 6) with a central extension on the W side, built to the S of the steading. This is the existing farmhouse. Enclosed garden ground is shown on the E and S sides of the house.

The N and W ranges of the steading remain but the N range (Illus 1: 1) has been extended to the E and the W range (Illus 1: 2) may have been partially rebuilt as it is wider on plan. A small outshot is shown on the S end of the W wall of the W range.

4.6 By the 1923 edition 25"/mile Ordnance Survey (published 1925. Kincardineshire Sheet 007.07) the N range (Illus 1: 1) has been extended further to the E and the W wing of the house (Illus 1: 6) has been extended.



Illus 2 Aerial photograph c. late 1980s. (Photograph supplied by Cobban Architecture Ltd, courtesy of the owners).

4.7 An aerial photograph of the farm (Illus 2) shows the complete steading with the addition of a large agricultural shed abutting the W wall of the W range. The date

of the photograph is unknown but appears to pre-date the A90 widening in the late 1990s - this section of road was formerly part of the A92. (Photograph supplied by Cobban Architecture Ltd, courtesy of the owners).

This is useful as it predates the insertion of new doors and windows in the surviving range and shows some details of the now demolished N range.

The W range (building 2) is shown as abutting the narrower N range (building 1). Both are clearly stone-walled with slate roofs.

In the W range, door D3 is shown at its original width below the raised part of the roof (see below). Door D4 is shown in its present form. There appear to be two possible windows/blocked doors to either side of D4. One of these has subsequently been replaced by window W1.

The S wall of the N range is shown with three small doors (comparable to D4) and a wider, possible cart door near the E end. There are three vents/windows. At 1st floor level in the E end of the N range there is a door that would have given access to the grain loft. The small walled yard at this end of the steading may have been a stack yard.

4.8 At some point between the date of the photograph and the present, the N range has been demolished. The present owner does not remember the N range and thinks the demolition must have occurred around 20 years ago (pers. comm. G. Cheyne).

5 Methodology

5.1 The ground plans have been annotated to show details and to indicate differences in the building materials which may help in understanding the development and history of the building.

5.2 The areas recorded were photographed. The full set of photographs will be supplied for the archive and an annotated plan in the present report indicates the position of each (Appendix 1).

6 The Buildings

6.1 *The House*

The farmhouse was not part of the present survey. It is shown on the 1st edition OS map with a fairly formal garden. It has a main 1 ½ storey block facing E with a W wing forming a T-plan. It is not shown on the 1st OS map of 1865 but is on the 1901 map and therefore dates from the second half of the 19th century.

6.2 The Steading

At the time of the survey, only the W range of the steading remains with few original features and substantially altered in places. The interior had been concrete rendered, obscuring details of blocked openings on the inner faces of the walls. The roof of the S end above door D3 has suffered recent collapse, limiting access to part of this area (Illus 3).

The N end of the building incorporated the W end of the demolished N range, a concrete block wall having been built across the gap, along the line of the E wall of the W range (blue on plan and section Illus 7).



Illus 3 E facade of steading

Description

Dimensions Width of whole building: 8.4m externally. Length 28m externally

Walls The steading had good horizontally coursed rubble with some granite rybats remaining at the SE corner. The N end of the E wall had been rebuilt with concrete blocks when the N range was demolished (Illus 4 & 7: blue on plan and section)



Illus 4 N wall of steading showing concrete block work where the N range had been demolished

Roof The roof is hipped with a cladding of slate with a ceramic tile ridge and ventilators. At the S end the timbering has collapsed but in the central area is clearly A-couples with timber sarking. The N end timber has clearly been replaced when the N range was demolished.

S wall

D1 W: 1.07m H: 1.96m internally with step up to yard (Illus 5). Granite lintel and rybats. Inner lintel timber.



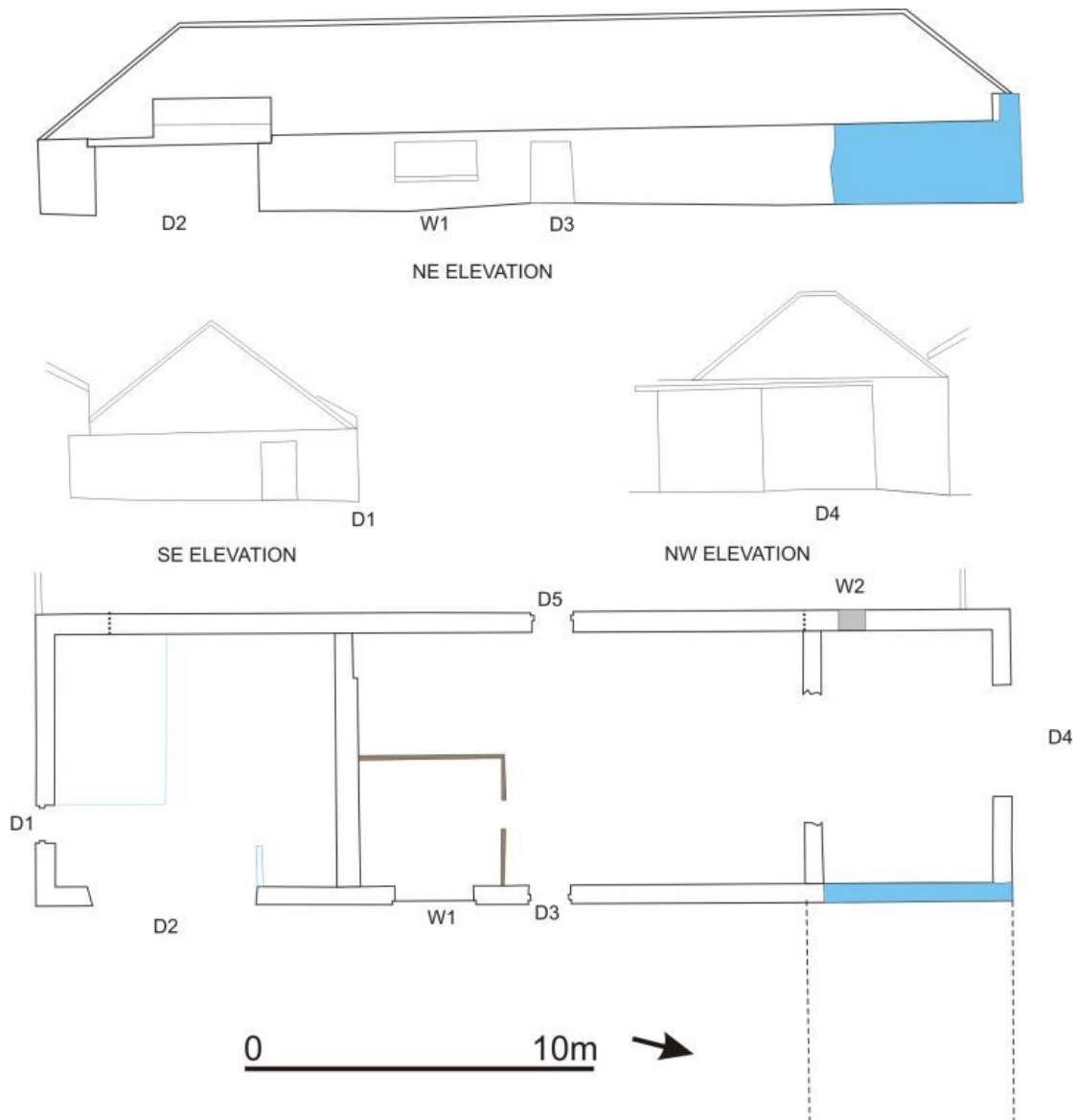
Illus 5 S wall and door D1

E wall

- D2** W: 4.75m H: 1.90m with steel lintel (Illus 6). This appears to replace two doors but is a modern widening. To the N there had been a cart door with raised roof over the lintel W 2.95m. This can be seen on the late 1980s photograph (Illus 2) with double wooden swing doors. The granite rybats of the N side of this door remain. Granite rybats on the S side of the present opening probably indicate the former position of a narrower door at this point. This area is masked on the aerial photograph.
- W1** W: 2.4m. H: 1.09m. Modern insertion with brick and concrete surround. The late 1980s photograph appears to show an original narrower window at this point.
- D3** W: 1.23m H: 1.93m with step c. 250mm up from yard. Granite lintel and rybats. Modern door.



Illus 6 E wall door D2 showing the higher roof over original cart door.



Illus 7 Main plan and elevations. Based on plans supplied by Cobban Architecture Ltd. Blue denotes concrete blocks.

N wall

D4 W: 3.20m H: 3.10m with concrete lintel and modern sliding door.

W wall

A modern agricultural building has been constructed against the back of the steading and the outside of the W wall can be seen from inside the modern shed (Illus 8).

D5 W: 1.23m H: 2.13m. Granite lintel and rybats. Inner lintel timber.

W2 W: 0.67m. H: 1.06m. Base of window 0.93m above the modern shed floor. Blocked with stone. This would originally have opened into the W end of the N range. (Illus 9).



Illus 8 W wall from inside modern shed. Ranging rod in foreground beside W2. Ranging rod in centre beside D5

The rybats of the original SW corner of the N range can be seen beside the blocked window W2 (Illus 10). They demonstrate that the N range was built before the existing W range.

A second blocking at the S end of this wall (11.9m from the S side of D5) is unclear due to concrete rendering over the stonework (Illus 11) but appears to coincide with the position of a small outshot shown on the 1901 and 1923 Ordnance Survey maps. There is no indication of its function.



Illus 9 Detail of blocked window W2



Illus 10 Detail of rybats of original SW corner of N range



Illus 11 Blocking at S end of W wall

Interior

The interior was divided into three areas by two stone walls- the northernmost of which was the original S wall of the N range and has clearly been broken through. *S compartment*: This could not be examined in detail due to the collapsed roof. There appeared to be a scar of a small concrete-walled area in the SW corner. Function unknown. There was also a butt of a concrete block wall to the N of the present door. A sliding door in the dividing wall could not be examined. Unlike the other two areas of the building, this end had not been concrete rendered and may most recently have been a garage/general shed. It may originally have been in part a cart shed as the N side of D2 was wide.

The central and N areas of the interior (Illus 12) had been concrete rendered and a concrete floor had been laid. The central area appeared to have been concrete slats- possibly over a slurry pit but this could not be verified as the slats had been filled in with concrete. Alongside both the long walls there were traces of fittings for troughs/waterings. Ventilators had been inserted through the walls at intervals. This would suggest the building had been used for cattle. At some later time a timber and plasterboard walls had been put in (over the infilled slats) to make a small room or office.



Illus 12 Interior looking S

7 Discussion

Redcraigs is a fairly typical example of a fairly small Aberdeenshire improvement farm, in its present form probably dating from the later half of the 19th century (Glendinning and Wade Martins 2008, 119-120). The map evidence suggests it was substantially rebuilt between 1865 and 1901. There is some evidence that there had been an earlier farm as the place name can be seen on maps from 1774- the buildings shown on the 1st Ordnance Survey map of 1865 may belong to a late 18th or early 19th century stage of development.

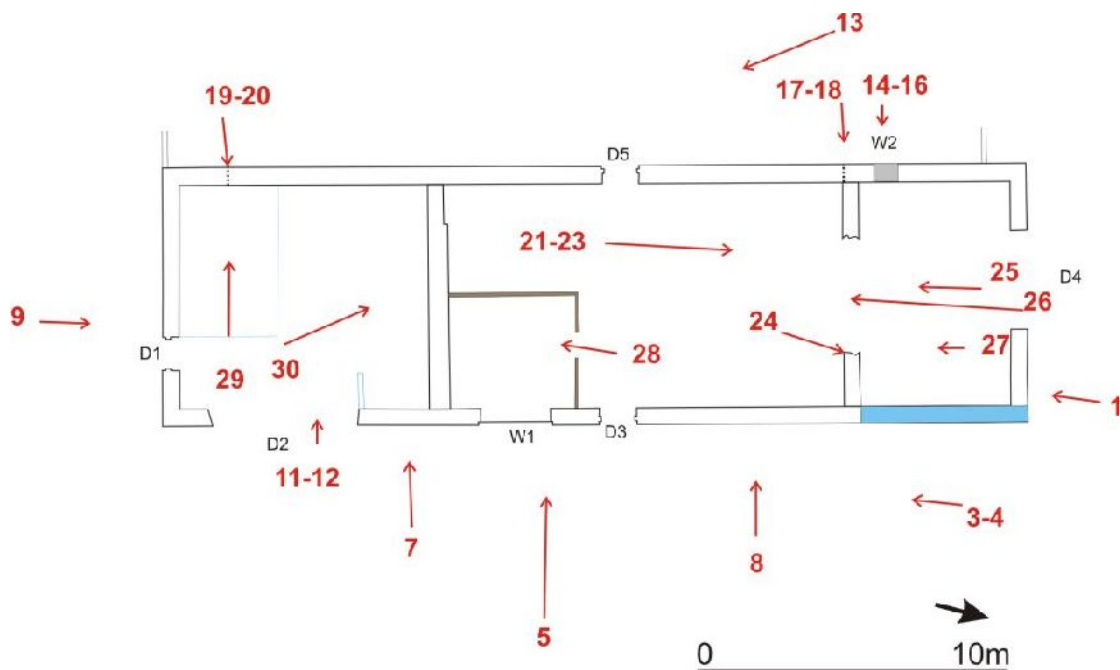
8. References

Glendinning, M and Wade Martins, S 2008 Buildings of the Land: Scotland's Farms 1750-2000 Edinburgh: RCAHMS.

All maps were viewed online at <http://www.nls.uk/maps>

Appendix 1: Photographic archive

A full set of photographs with the photograph location plan will be supplied to the City of Aberdeen SMR and to the NMRS. The positions of all photographs are indicated on Illus13 and in table 1.



Illus 13 Location of photographs

Photographic catalogue	
Digital frame no	Content
001	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. N wall
003-004	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. E wall, looking S
005	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. E wall, looking W
007	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. E wall S end detail
008	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. E wall N end detail
009	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. S wall
011-012	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. Door D2 detail
013	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. W wall looking SE
014-016	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. Details of blocked window W2
017-018	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. Detail of rybats of SW corner of original N range
019-020	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. Blocking at S end of W wall
021-023	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. Interior of central and N compartments, looking N
024	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. Detail of break-through in S wall of former N range
025	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. Interior of central and N compartments, looking S
026	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. Detail of main roof structure
027	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. Detail of roof structure N end
028	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. Office
029	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. Interior of S compartment looking W
030	Redcraigs steading, Aberdeenshire. Interior of S compartment looking W

Table 1. List of photographs