

**19-21 HIGH STREET  
STRICHEN  
ABERDEENSHIRE**



**Standing Building Survey**

Carried out 15<sup>th</sup> August 2015

by

**Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2015-29**

by

**H K Murray and J C Murray**

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**19-21 HIGH STREET  
STRICHEN  
ABERDEENSHIRE**

**- Standing Building Survey -**

1. **Background**
  - 1.1 A standing building survey was required for a cottage behind 19-21 High Street, Strichen, prior to its demolition and the proposed future use of the site for an extension of the premises on the veterinary practice at 19-21 High Street.
  - 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: APP/2014/3462
  - 1.3 A Level 1 Standing Building Survey was required which includes measured plans and elevations, a written account of the building's plan, form, function, age and development sequence in addition to a photographic survey of the interior and exterior of the building.
  - 1.4 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned to undertake the work by Baxter Design, Architectural and Building Consultants on behalf of their clients, Buchan Veterinary Clinics. Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2015, after considerable demolition had already been undertaken. The site element of the survey was completed on the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2015.



**Illus 1 Cottage looking towards High Street**



**Illus 2 Cottage looking towards High Street prior to partial demolition (Photograph courtesy of Baxter design)**

## 2. Desk-top survey

2.1 A search was carried out in the Aberdeenshire Sites and Monuments Record, Archaeology Service, Aberdeenshire Council and in the Sites and Monuments Records of the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments in Scotland (RCAHMS) through Canmore and Pastmap.

2.2 The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey maps were consulted.

### 3. The Site

3.1 The site lies on the N side of High Street, Strichen, behind Nos 19-21 High Street, on a lane at right angles to High Street.

Parish: Strichen

NGR NJ 9476 5510 GPS: 394774,855109

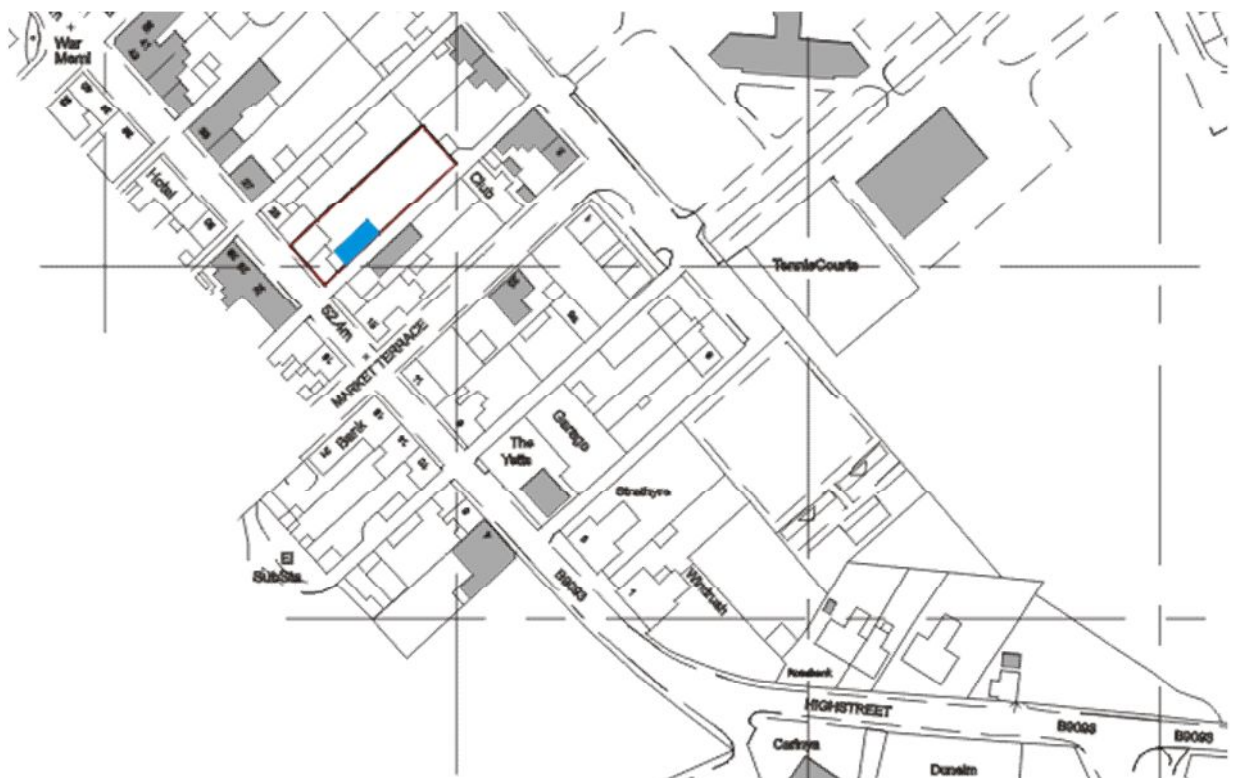
RCAHMS No: NJ95NW77

Canmore id: 316677

Aberdeenshire SMR No: NJ95NW0063 (19-21 High Street and outbuildings)

It lies within a Conservation area: Strichen, which is defined as a historic planned village.

Aberdeenshire SMR: NJ95NW0060.

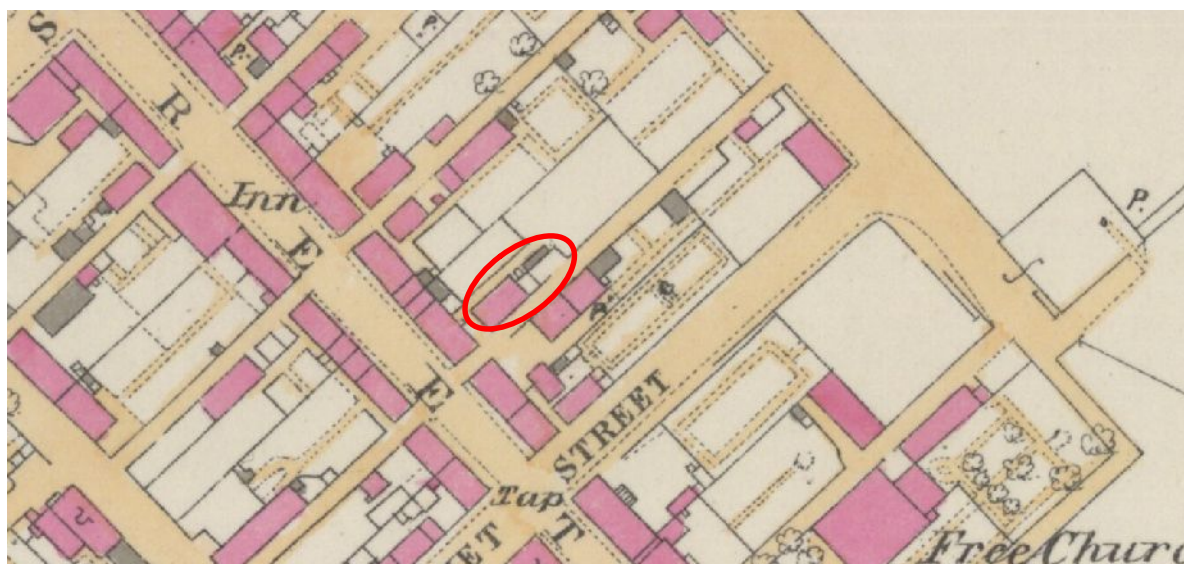


**Illus 3 Site location. Courtesy of Baxter design (Crown copyright. Licence number 100020449). Site outlined in red. Building shaded blue.**

- 3.2 The building, described as Vacant Cottage, off High Street, Strichen, was on the Buildings at risk register for Scotland. Reference No: 3377 since 2008.
- 3.3 Conservation area consent for demolition had been granted after a demolition statement (anonymous: dated 6/11/2014 and revised version dated 27/11/2014), which describes the building as a steading, and concludes ‘The construction methods used and the quality of stone in the out building is not dissimilar to hundreds of other outbuildings across the north east. The out building does not merit retention because it has no distinctive features. It is too far from the original traditional form and appearance it was build (*sic*) in’

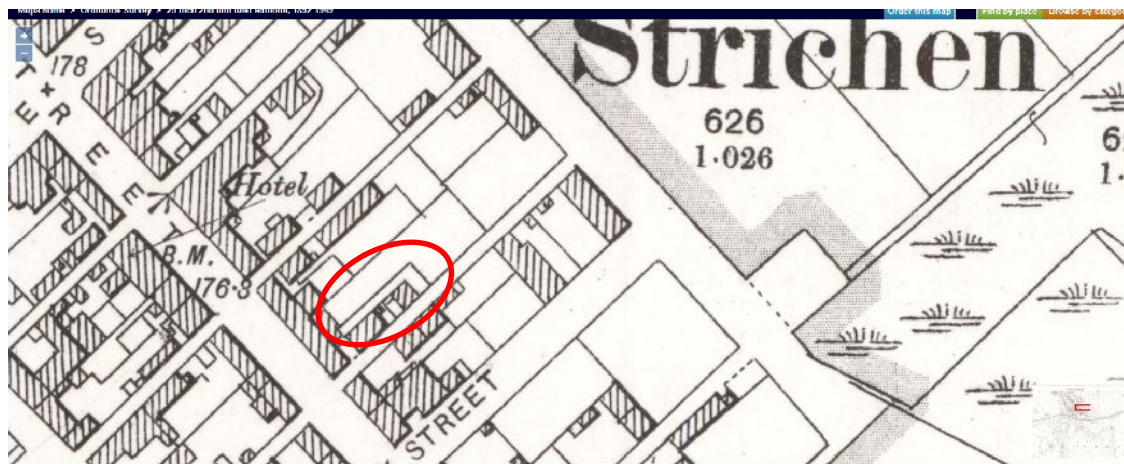
#### 4. Documentary evidence

- 4.1 **1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey 25”/mile Aberdeen sheet XIII.3 (Strichen) 1870 (published 1874)** shows a rectangular stone building lying parallel to the lane leading from High Street and at right angles to the frontage property. The line of the NW wall appears to have been extended N by a narrow ? wooden (grey on map) structure.



Illus 4 Detail of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey 25” map, surveyed in 1870 (published 1874. Aberdeen sheet XIII.3 (Strichen) [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk) Red oval indicates the building.

4.2 The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 25"/mile Ordnance Survey of 1901 (published 1902.  
Aberdeenshire 013.03 (includes Strichen).

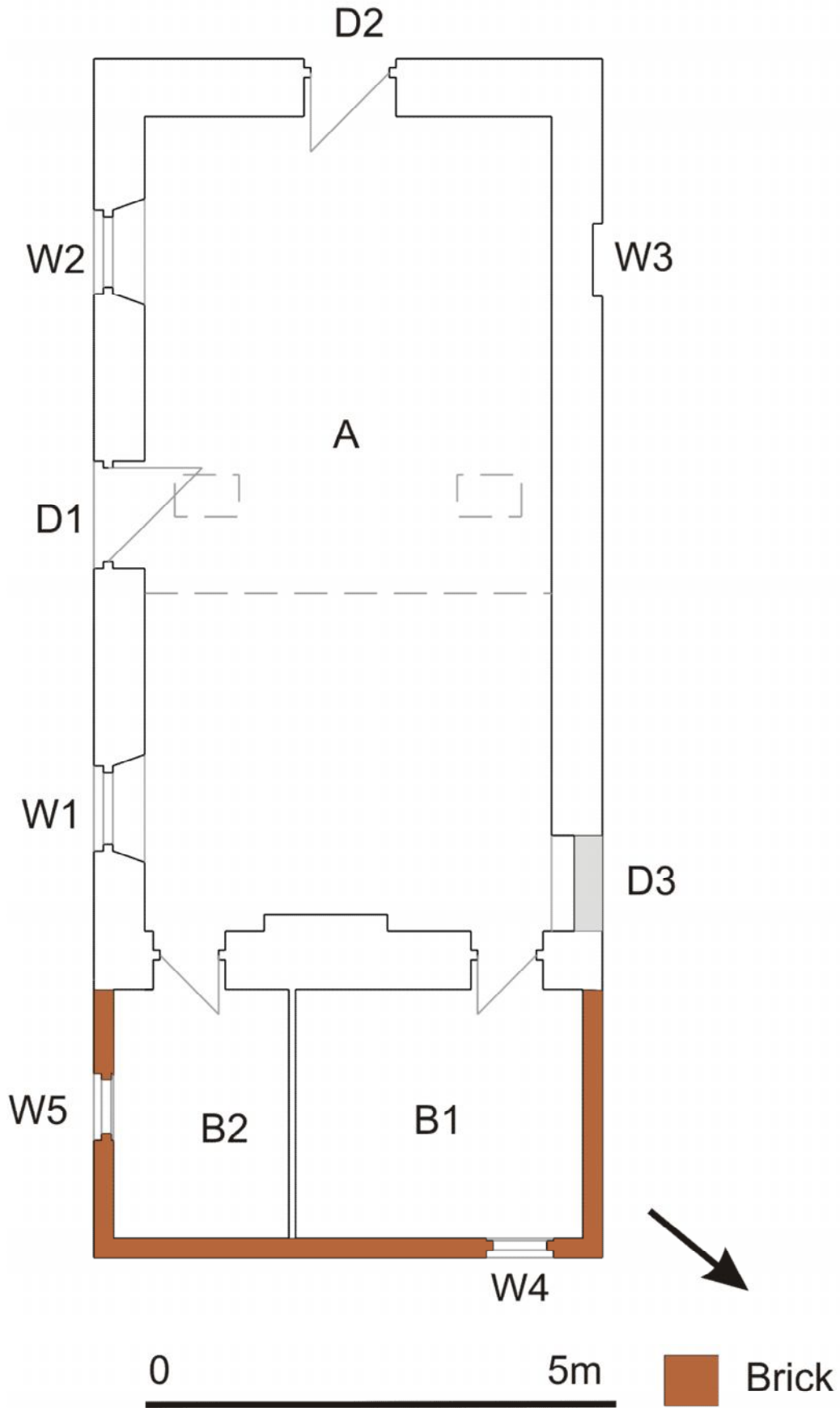


Illus 5 Detail of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 25"/mile Ordnance Survey of 1901 (published 1902.  
Aberdeenshire sheet 013.03) [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk) Red oval indicates the building.

In 1901 the original building remained but had been augmented by a small, almost square, structure to the N.

## 5 Methodology

- 5.1 The plan (Illus 6) and elevations (Illus 18) 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 (Illus 17) indicates the position of each.



Illus 6 Plan. Adapted from plan courtesy of Baxter design (roof lights dotted grey)

## 6 The Building

- 6.1 At the date of survey considerable demolition had already been undertaken. Some details have been augmented by photographs taken at an earlier date by Baxter Design and by those in the Buildings at Risk Scotland Register.
- 6.2 Condition 15<sup>th</sup> August 2015. All roof slates had been removed. Chimney stacks and pots had been removed. Most openings had been broken out and dressed stone removed.
- 6.3 The building comprised a rectangular stone walled structure 9.9m long x 5.35m wide, with a brick walled extension, 2.8m long x 5.35m wide, at the E end, giving a total length of 12.7m.



Illus 7

### 6.4 MAIN BUILDING

Roof Photographs show a pitched slate roof. It lay over A-frame couples with timber sarking.

Chimneys Photographs and elevations show rectangular chimneys of dressed granite with flat tables. Ceramic pots.

Wall Rubble stone, 0.53m thick, with granite rybats at corners. Part concrete rendered.

Doors and windows



W1 Broken out. Could not be measured. Splayed internally so was an original opening. Broken sash window on floor probably from this window.



**Illus 8 Window W1**

D1 W: 1.17 (at base). Broken out but height measured between internal wooden lintel to granite sill. H: 1.98m. Photographs show granite rybats.

W2 Broken out. Could not be measured. Splayed internally so was an original opening. Photographs show secondary concrete sill and brick at margins.

D2 Secondary door. This had been punched through S gable, removing S fireplace. W: 0.94m. H: 2.07m. Concrete margins.

W3 Shown on photographs as blocked. Appears to have stone margins. At survey it had been broken out. Could not be measured.

D3 Broken out. Could not be measured. Shown on photographs to have had granite rybats and lintel. It was stone blocked.



**Illus 9 SW gable and secondary door D2**



**Illus 10 NW wall looking W. Arrow indicates D3. Photograph prior to partial demolition  
(Photograph courtesy of Baxter design)**

Roof lights Two roof lights are shown on plan and elevations.

Interior (A on plan) Much of floor stripped to 260mm below level of D1 threshold.

Surviving fireplace at N end. Cast iron grate with mottled yellow tile surround.

Stone mantelpiece and surround. Yellow tiles on floor in front of fireplace.

Stone chimney breast 1.27m wide.

On either side of fireplace there are secondary doors into NE extension, rooms B1 and B2.



**Illus 11 Interior looking NE**



**Illus 12 Fireplace**

6.5 NORTH EAST EXTENSION

Roof Photographs show lean-to against NE gable of main building.

Demolition survey records roof as having asbestos tiles.

Doors and windows

W4 W: 0.76m H: 1.17m Concrete sill. Wooden lintel. Wooden blocking.

W5 W: 0.77m H: 1.25m Concrete sill. Wooden lintel. Blocked with bricks.

Interior (B on plan). Internally divided into two rooms. Both were lined in vertical pine planks and had horizontal pine plank ceilings. B2 had tap and sink.



Illus 13 NE extension.



Illus 14 Interior NE extension. B1.

## 6 Discussion

Strichen is a planned village, first established in 1764. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century it was well developed. *The New Statistical Account* (NSA, 1842, vol 12, 689) notes that ‘A good number of the houses are slated, and are neat and commodious’.

It is built on a grid pattern with small lanes leading off either side of High Street towards both North Street and Water Street. Single storey cottages aligned along these lanes are part of the early layout as can be seen on the 1870 OS map.

The present building, although having altered function over the years, appears to have started as a small domestic cottage with a central door and two windows facing the lane (Illus 16). The two chimneys suggest at least two rooms, the NW room probably being the main room with its fairly elaborate fireplace. The position of window (W3) suggests it was an original window to a small third back room but this could not be verified. The cottage was certainly built prior to 1870 when it is shown on the OS map. It could easily date to the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century- or possibly even the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

At some point a door was built in the back wall (D3). This had stone lintel and rybats and is likely to be of 19<sup>th</sup>-century date but appears awkward in relation to the fireplace and may be secondary after some change in the function of the property. It was later blocked.

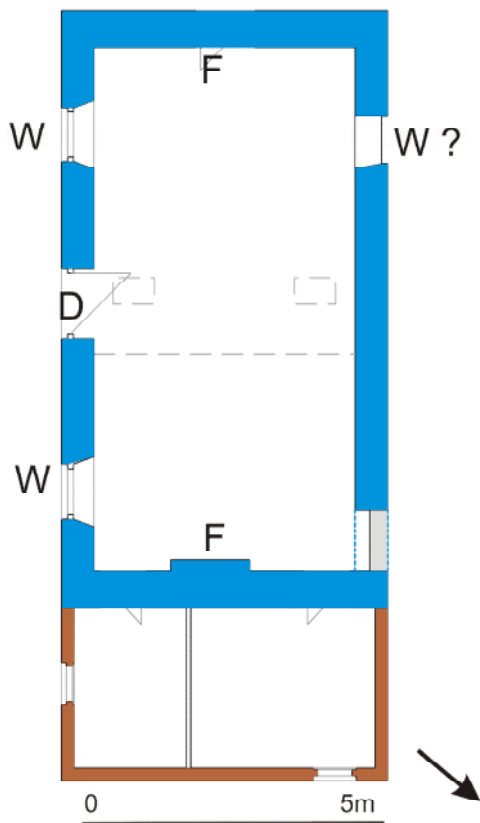
The brick extension is clearly secondary but the careful timber lining suggests it was still used for primarily domestic purposes.

At some stage the front windows of the original cottage had been slightly narrowed with brick to insert new window frames.

The door in the SW gable (D2) is recent, presumably for ease of access as a store. Although in very poor condition this was an interesting example of the smaller homes that were probably common in many Aberdeenshire villages throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



Illus 15 Looking from High Street up lane with cottage on LHS.



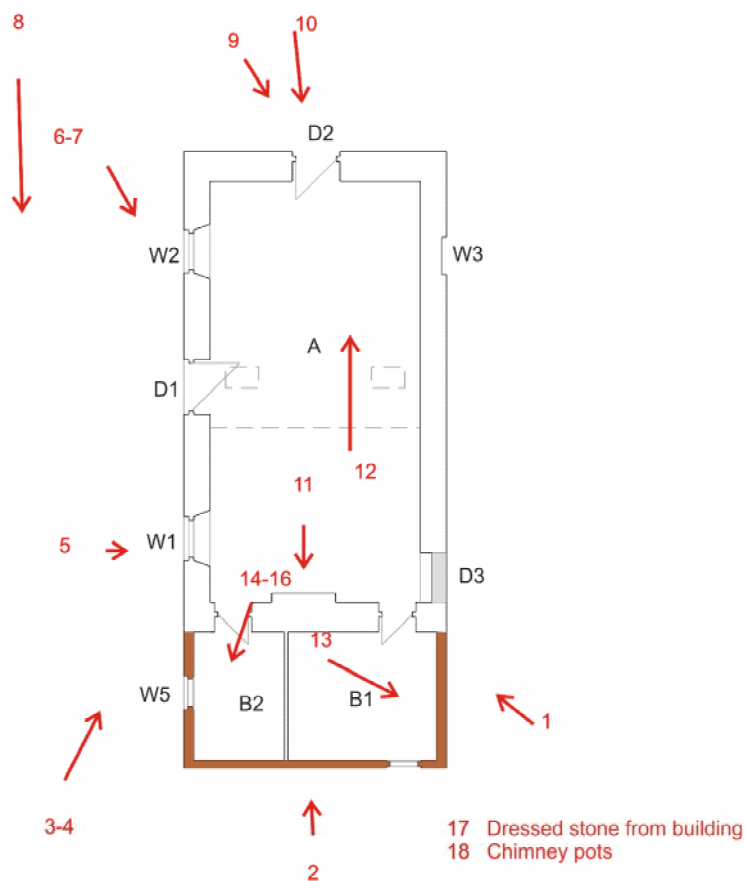
Illus 16 Interpreted plan. Blue indicates the original cottage. The window at the back (W3) may be original but in its present state this was not verifiable. The door (D3) in the back wall may be a secondary feature so is shown dotted.

## References

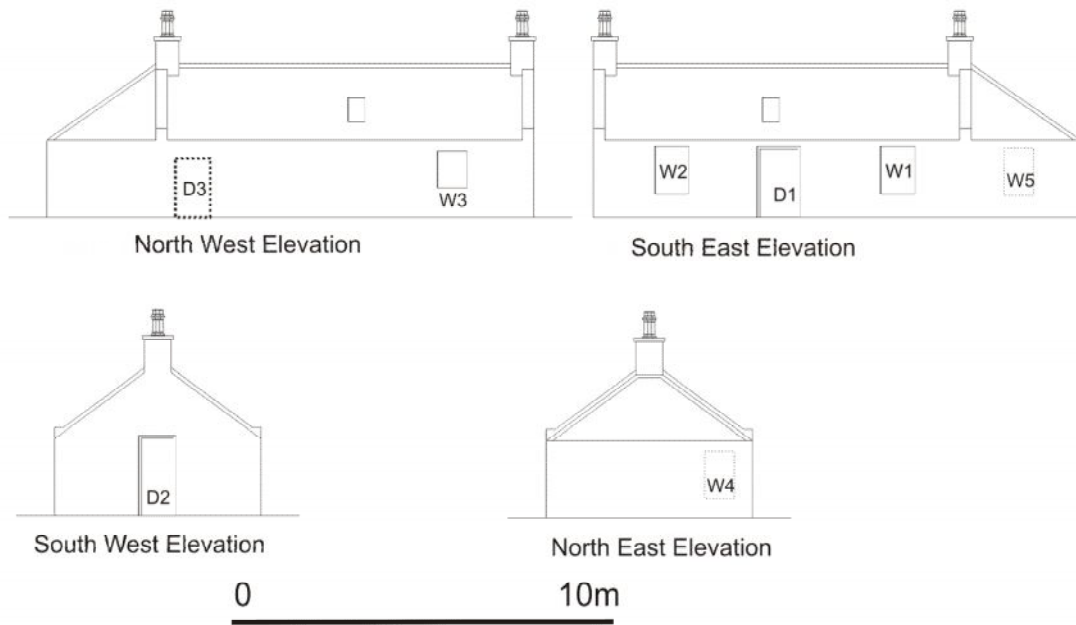
NSA New Statistical Account. Strichen. <http://stat-acc-scot.edina.ac.uk/link/1834-45/Aberdeen/Strichen/12/689/>

## 9 Archive

A full set of photographs with the photo location plan (Illus 17) will be supplied to the Aberdeenshire SMR and to the NMRS.



Illus 17 Location of photographs. Adapted from plan courtesy of Baxter design



**Illus 18 Elevations. Adapted from plan courtesy of Baxter design**