

**COLDWELLS STEADING**  
**INVERURIE**  
**ABERDEENSHIRE**



**Standing Building Survey**  
Carried out 14<sup>th</sup> January 2016  
by  
**Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2016-06**  
by  
H K Murray and J C Murray

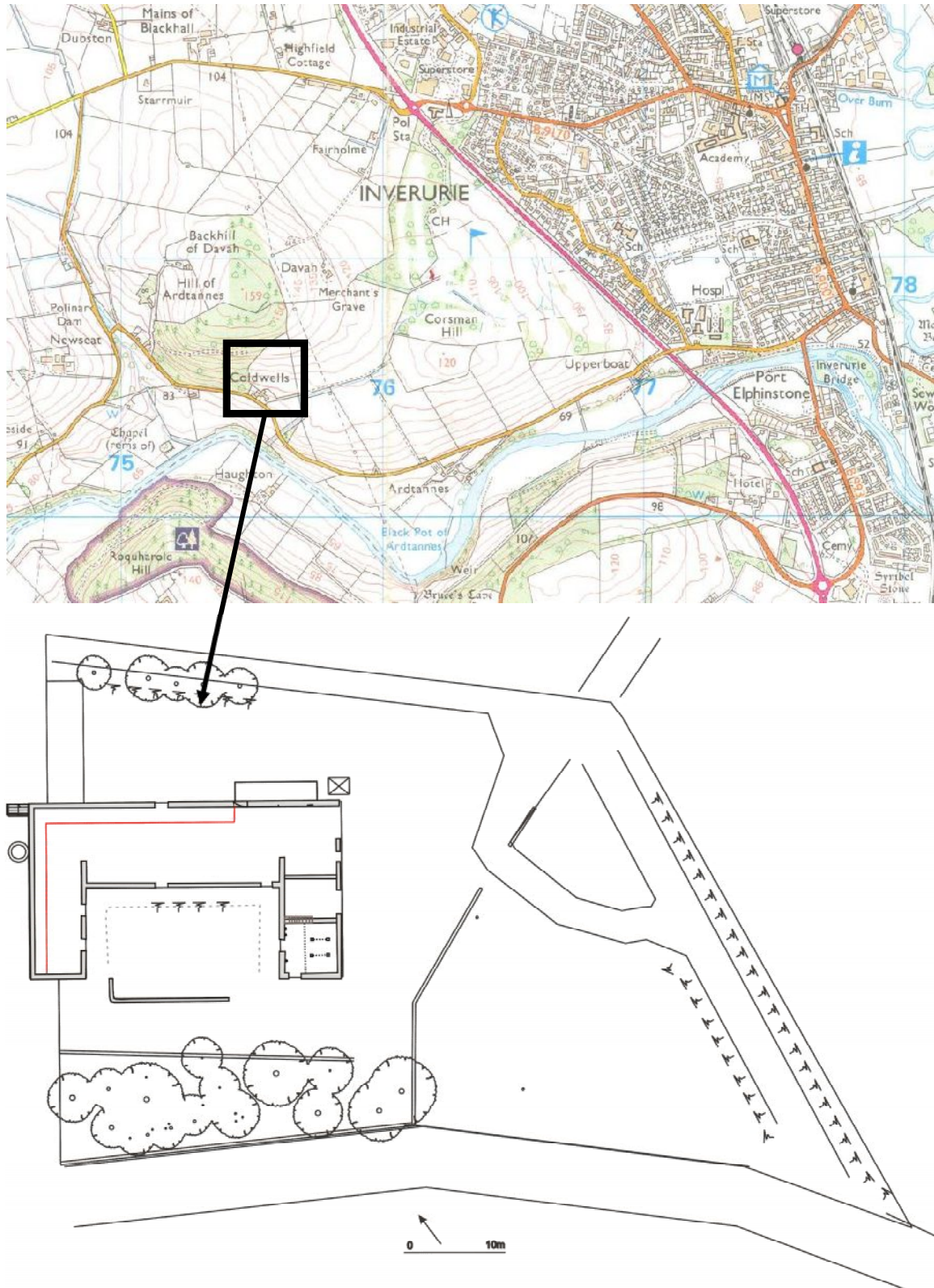
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# **COLDWELLS STEADING INVERURIE ABERDEENSHIRE**

## **- Standing Building Survey -**

1. Background
  - 1.1 A standing building survey was required for the steading at Coldwells Farm, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire, prior to its demolition. A new dwelling house is to be erected elsewhere on the site.
  - 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/2015/3028
  - 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 William Lippe Architects Ltd, on behalf of their clients. The site element of the survey was completed on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2016.
2. Desk-top survey
  - 2.1 A search was carried out in the 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, now HES) through Canmore and Pastmap.
  - 2.2 The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey maps were consulted.

- 2.3 A site plan was supplied by William Lippe Architects Ltd and detailed plans and elevations were drawn and annotated by MAS Ltd.



**Illus 1** Detail of OS map. Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright (2002) All rights reserved. Licence number (100049810). Site indicated by black square. Site plan William Lippe Architects Ltd.



### 3. The Site

- 3.1 The site lies to the N of a minor road which runs along the N side of the Don from Inverurie to Burnhervie. It is approximately 1km SW of Inverurie. The buildings to be demolished lie directly to the E of the existing farmhouse, which is not part of the present site. It has broad views along the Don valley (see title page).

Parish: Inverurie NGR: NJ 7554 2046

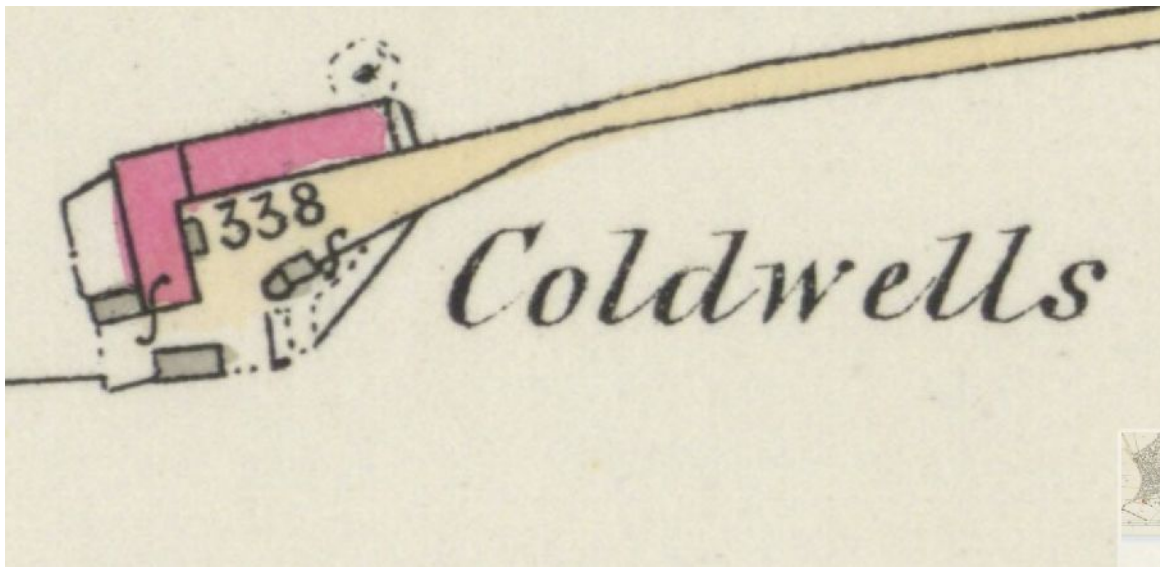
GPS in front of steading: 375541, 820461

Aberdeenshire SMR: NJ72SE0297.

RCAHMS: NJ72SE 284

- 3.2 The loft was not entered on safety grounds.

### 4. Documentary evidence



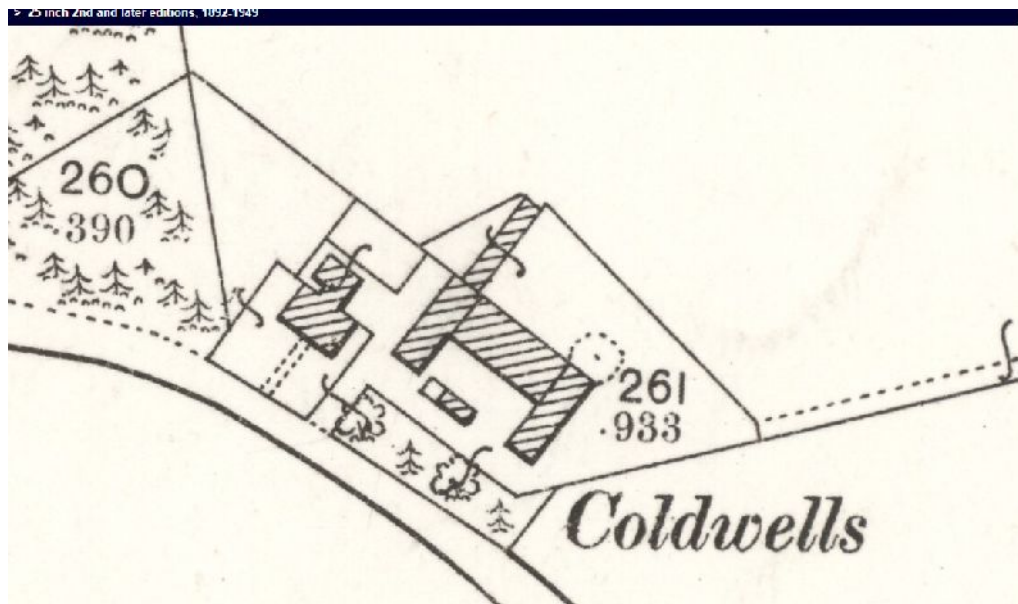
Illus 2 Detail of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey 25" map, surveyed in 1867 (published 1869)  
Aberdeen sheet LIV.7 (Inverury) [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

4.1 **Aberdeen Sheet LIV.7 (Inverury)** shows an L-shaped steading with N and W ranges facing S towards the Don. A horse mill is shown on the E end of the N wall of the N range. A number of small unroofed buildings or pens lie S and W of the building.

4.2 The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 25"/mile Ordnance Survey of 1899 (published 1900).

**Aberdeenshire Sheet 054.07** shows an enlargement of the steading. A new E range makes it into a U-plan, with a small building across the open S side. A narrow building has been built at right-angles to the NW end of the N range.

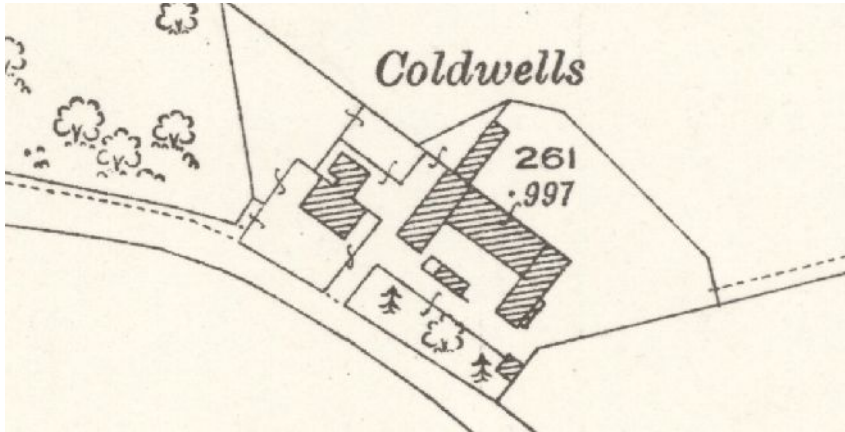
The house has been built to the W of the steading, with a track between the two.



Illus 3 Detail of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 25"/mile Ordnance Survey of 1899 (published 1900). Aberdeenshire Sheet 54.07 [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

4.3 The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 25"/mile Ordnance Survey of 1924 (published 1926).

**Aberdeenshire Sheet 054.07** shows little change from 1899. Some sort of narrow structure is built alongside the S end of the E wall of the E range. The horse mill has been removed. A very small square structure stands S of the steading, near the road.



Illus 4 Detail of the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 25''/mile Ordnance Survey of 1924 (published 1926). Aberdeenshire Sheet 054.07 [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

## 5 Methodology

- 5.1 The ground plan (Illus 5) and elevations (Illus 27) have been annotated to show details which may help in understanding the development and history of the building.
- 5.2.1 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 28) indicates the position of each.

## 6 The Buildings

Building 1 (Main steading): W range

Orientation NE/SW

Dimensions 5.3 x 17m externally

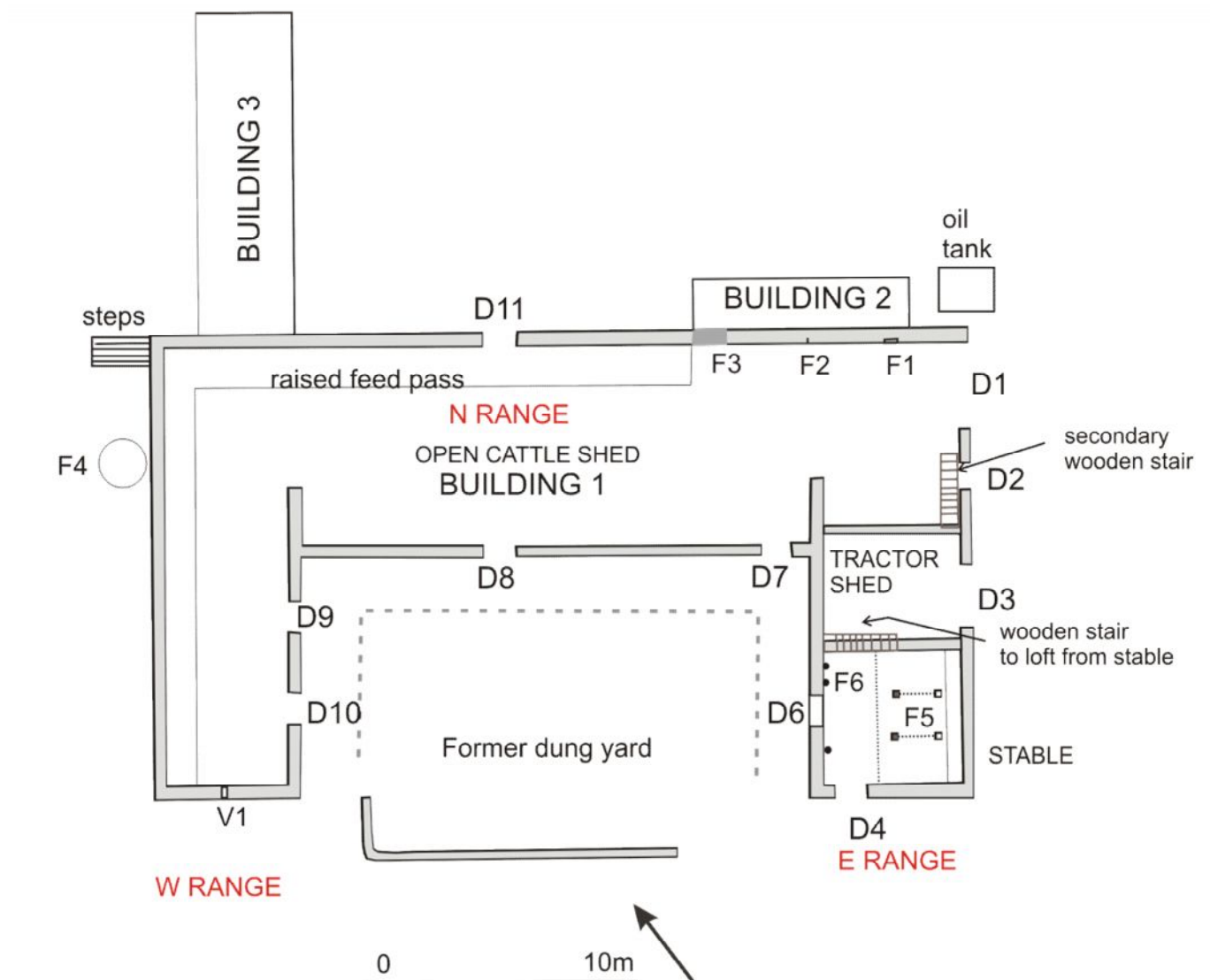
Present/recent use Derelict.

Original use Byre for tied cattle. More recently the trevise had been cleared and the N part of the E wall of W range knocked through into N range for open cattle byre.

Walls Rubble stone with granite rybats and skews

Roof Slate with skylights and ceramic ridge. A-frame with sarking.

Interior Concrete feed pass built along W wall. Floor cobbled with original drain visible (Illus 6). Marks of tied cow stall trevise along W wall; they would have made 8 double pens, each approx 2m wide.



Illus 5 Plan.



**Illus 6** Looking S along W range

#### Doors and windows

##### *E wall*

D9 W: 1.23m H: 2.45m. Granite lintel and rybats. Wooden door.

D10 W: 1.23m H: 2.45m. Granite lintel and rybats. Wooden door.

##### *S wall*

V1 W: 800mm H: 150mm (estimated). This emphasises the original livestock use of the building.

F4 Mill stone- not in situ (Illus 7, 8). This was removed from garden of house during present owners' occupancy. It may or may not derive from the steading- although it probably does.

It appears to be a runner stone, probably for grinding oatmeal. It is formed of a number of individually cut quartzitic stones set in an iron band. Diameter of iron band: 1.36m. Diameter of stone setting: 1.32m. The stones vary in depth from 115-120mm.

Central socket square : 280mm x 280mm with three radial slots each c100mm long 50mm wide and 30mm deep. There are also three roughly triangular chamfers. The tops of the outer stones are grooved. A close parallel to this stone is



recorded from New Cumnock Mill, Ayrshire (Scran id: 000-299-993-600-C at [www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk) and RCAHMS Canmore id 44711).



**Illus 7 Oatmeal grinding stone (F4)**



**Illus 8 Detail of F4**



## Building 1: N range

Orientation NW/SE

Dimensions 8 x 17m externally

Present/recent use Derelict.

Original use Byre for tied cattle.

Walls Rubble stone

Roof Slate with skylights and ceramic ridge. King post from tie beam to ridge, flanked by diagonal braces; roof structure probably reflects greater width of this range (Illus 9).



**Illus 9 Detail of roof of N range**

Doors and windows

*S wall*

D7 W: 1.20m H: 2.28m

D8 W: 1.22m H: 2.10m

*N wall*

D11 W: 1.4m H: 1.45m (full height uncertain as ground high on outside and raised feed pass across it on inside).

F2 Raggle of N end of W wall of E range

F3 Concrete blocked opening. Wooden lintel on inside. W: 1.30m H: 1.20m

(Not visible on outside as behind Building 2)

Interior Traces of raggles from trevices between cattle stalls visible on walls (Illus 10, 11). Cobbles show central drain with outlet to drain below floor. More recently the trevices had been cleared and the N part of the E wall of W range and the N part of W wall of E range knocked through into N range for open cattle byre with a feed pass and concrete trough along the N wall (Illus 12).



**Illus 10** Looking E along centre and S of N range. Arrow indicates drain in cobbles. A= trevis raggles. B= cobbles change at back of stalls



**Illus 11** Detail of trevis scars (A) of cattle pens on S wall of N range (For position compare to preceding photograph). Note drinker brackets (B)





**Illus 12 Looking E along N range. Stub of E range wall on RHS. Concrete feed trough and pass on LHS**

### Building 1: E range

Orientation NE/SW

Dimensions c 6.1 x 17m externally

Present/recent use Derelict.

Original use Stable, cart bay (later tractor shed) and (?) mill (S to N). More recently the N part of the W wall of E range has been knocked through into N range for open cattle court. Originally there had been a loft over the whole E range but this had been removed at the N end and now only survives over the cart bay and stable.

Walls Rubble stone with granite rybats and skews

Roof Slate over A-frame with sarking





**Illus 13** E wall of E range showing cart bay (D3) in centre, windows into loft above (W1, W2) and 3 stable vents

**Stable** at S end c 5m x 4.8m.

Doors and windows

*S wall*

D4 W: 1.22m H: 2.46m Granite rybat, lintel and sill. Wooden half doors.

D5 W: 1.10m H: 2.000m. Granite rybat, lintel and sill Wooden door into loft.



**Illus 14** General view of S side/ On RHS = E range with stable door D4 and loft door D5 above.

*W wall*

D6 W: 0.92m H: 1.40m. Sill 0.77m above ground. Granite rybat, lintel and sill. Wooden blocking. Not clear if this was originally a window or an opening for mucking out direct to the dung court.



**Illus 15 W wall of E range with 'door' D6**

*E wall*

W1 & W2 into loft above stable and cart bay. W: 0.80m H: 0.60m. Granite rybats, lintels and sills. Wooden slats.

V Three vents in top of wall above stalls. Each c 100 x 250mm.

Interior

An opening at the NW corner gives access to a wooden stair that leads up, on the line of the wall between the stable and the cart bay, to the loft above. The framework of this stair projects into the cart bay (Illus16).





**Illus 16 Stair framework visible in cart bay**



**Illus 17 Looking up stair from stable**

F5 Three horse stalls against E wall (Illus 18-20). Although the present divisions are recent, the original trevis hind posts survive (posts roughly squared 160mm, on base stones 230mm diameter. Inner (E) side of posts grooved to hold trevis timbers), as do the sockets for the central trevis supports.

The original stalls were 1.65m wide. The cobbling shows a drain at the back of the stalls. The wooden hay rack survives on the E wall.

F6 Three harness supports for the work horse harness survive on the W wall.



**Illus 18 Stable looking E/NE. Although plywood doors are modern, the hind posts of trevises are original. Not hay rack and air vents.**





Illus 19 Looking N in stable.. Arrows indicate the central supports of trevises



Illus 20 looking NW in stable. Arrow indicates harness supports. A= opening to stair to loft

**Cart bay** c 5 x 4m with opening to E.

Doors and windows

*E wall*

D3 W: 2.28m H: 2.4m. Granite rybats and lintel. Modern metal sliding door.

W1 Into loft above stable and cart bay. W: 0.80m H: 0.60m. Granite rybats, lintels and sills. Wooden slats.

**N end of range**

Doors and windows

*E wall*

D1 W: 3.6m H: 2.85m . This is a modern widening and raising with steel lintel.

D2 W: 1.10m H: 2.00m. Granite rybats and lintel. Wooden door. On the inner side this door is now blocked by wooden stair running N/S to the remaining part of loft, this stair may originally have been accessed from this door, but going up to W into loft.



**Illus 21** Loft looking S



*N wall*

W3 Blocking at attic level. W: 0.80m. H: 1.20m (estimated)

*N wall- interior*

F1 3 rectangular sockets in a vertical stack set into *inner* face of N wall, c3m from E end of building (Illus 22).

- a) 300x300mm Depth into wall: 280mm. Base 1.71m from floor
- b) 300x300mm Depth into wall: 130mm. Base 1.25m from floor
- c) 300x350mm Depth into wall: 130mm. Base 0.23m from floor.



**Illus 22 Mill fittings F1**

## Building 2

Orientation NW/SE. Lean-to against back wall of main steading.

Dimensions 2 x 8m externally

Present/recent use Derelict.

Original use Not known

Walls Walls and roof corrugated iron.

## Building 3

Orientation NE/SW Abuts N gable of original W range (Illus 23).

Dimensions 12 x 3.5m externally

Present/recent use Derelict.

Original use Not known

Walls Wood and corrugated iron, apparently on concrete block foundation.

Corrugated iron roof, sloping down from W to E.



**Illus 23 Building 3- looking E**

### Court/dung court

A lower dung court some 15 x 9m was enclosed between the ranges at the S side of the buildings (Illus 24, 25). On the N, E and W it was surrounded by a raised cobbled path some 2m wide. On the S and SW there was a stone wall 1.2m high and 290mm wide with a domed coping. This may be a remnant of the wall of a building shown in this position on the 1899 and 1924 OS maps.





**Illus 24 N and W range with house behind. Note lower level of dung court. Cobbled path around.**



**Illus 25 Looking NE into court. Note wall at S side- possibly re-use of part of wall of earlier building**

## 7 Discussion

In its earliest form, the steading comprised the W range and a narrower version of the N range; these elements are on the 1867 OS map and are likely to have been built between 1800 and 1850.

At some point between 1867 and the second OS map of 1899, the farmhouse was built and the steading was considerably extended. The S wall of the existing N range was rebuilt some 3m further S, allowing for an increase in cattle accommodation. The N wall was unchanged as the horse mill was retained at the E end. The widening of this range resulted in the need for the more complex king post roof structure.

At the same time a new, two-storey E wing was built, with a stable, cart bay and mill with a loft above.

Although the interior had been partially stripped out in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, scars of the trevise and details of drains surviving in the largely intact cobble flooring give significant detail of its late 19<sup>th</sup>-century form.

In the W range there had been 8 double tied cow stalls along the W wall, with a pass and drain behind and doors to the dung court. In the widened N range there were 12 double tied cow stalls- 6 each against the N and S walls with a drain and pass along the central axis. (Before this was widened it would appear likely that the N stalls already existed). There was no evidence of trevise at the E end of this range and this may have been a bull pen or possibly a turnip shed.

In the E range, there was a stable for 3 horses (possibly a pair of plough horses and a horse or pony for the horse mill and other lighter work). The stable appears to have been mucked out through the W opening (D6). The single cart bay retains its original doorway, although with a modern metal door.

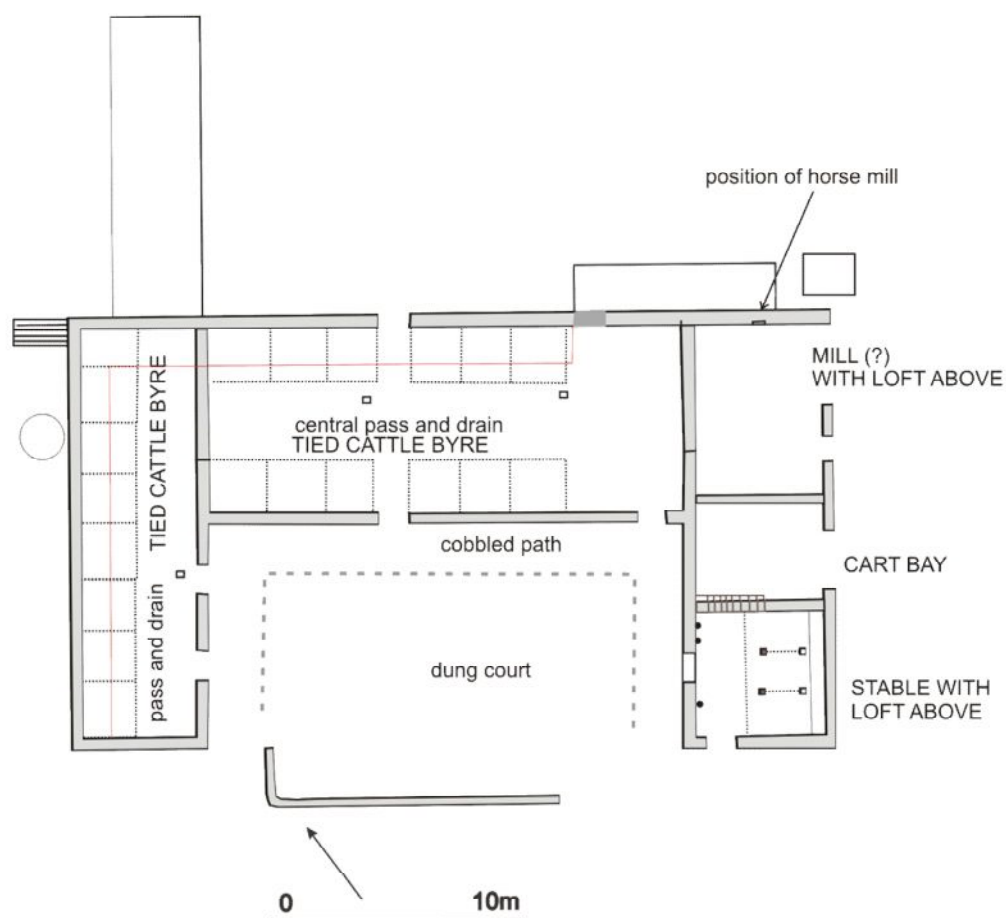
At the N end of this range, the sockets (F1) coincide with the position of the horse mill shown on the OS maps from 1867- 1899 so it is probable that the mill was inside, with its framework supported in these sockets- and possibly using the oatmeal grinding stone now repositioned outside the W range (F4). A shaft would have gone through the wall to the horse mill outside but this part of the wall was obscured by the modern lean-to Building 2. The horse mill has been removed by the 1924 OS map- reflecting the change from horse power after the loss of horses in WW1.

The small building shown across the S end of the dung court on the 1899 and 1924 OS maps no longer exists but the wall on this side may be its S wall. This structure is likely to have been a pig shed.

Building 2 appears to be a recent addition. However, Building 3, although in its present condition appearing to be recent, is on the footprint of a building that is shown from 1899 onwards. It was not possible in its present condition to ascertain if any of the structure was original.

In summary, this was a good example of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century farmstead, originally accommodating some 28 tied cattle in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and increasing in size in the period between 1867 and 1899 to accommodate 40 tied cattle. Glendinning and Wade Martins (2008, 51) quote a 19<sup>th</sup>-century surveyor in Aberdeenshire, suggesting that a 15ha farm should carry some 24-30 cattle. On this basis Coldwells would have been a reasonably profitable medium sized farm of the time. The fairly substantial farmhouse (not part of present survey) was also built in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century and equally reflects the increase in prosperity at this period.

The loss of the horse mill by 1924 reflects the beginnings of the changes wrought by loss of men and horses in WW1 and the movement of labour away from agriculture. The opening out of the N and W ranges to open cattle accommodation that could be mucked out by tractor through the widened and raised door D1 was a later continuation of the same trend.

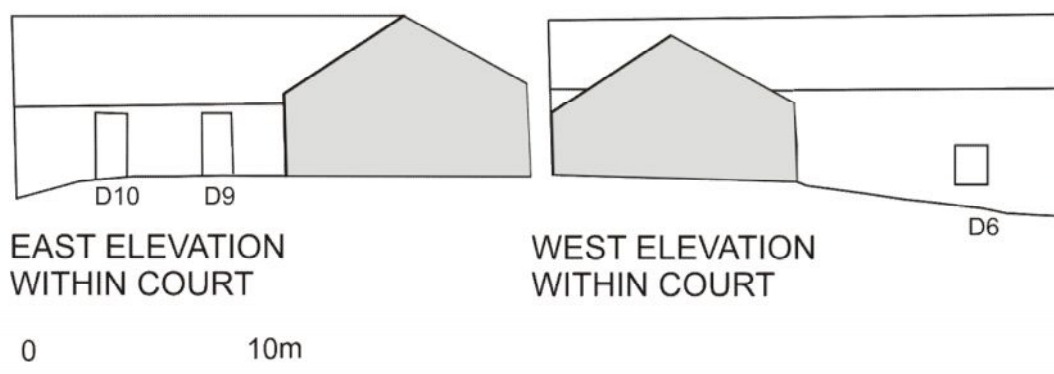
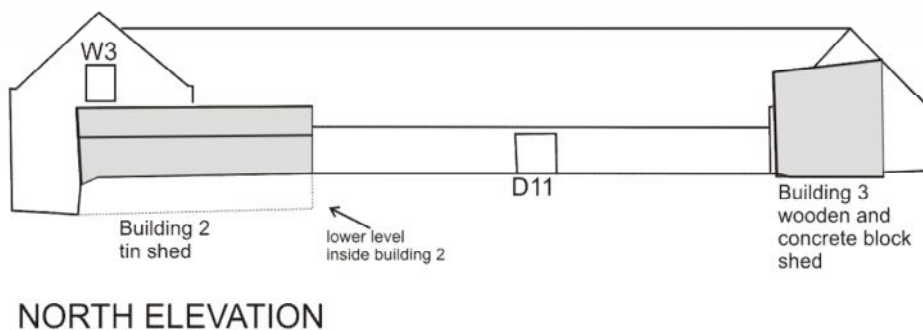
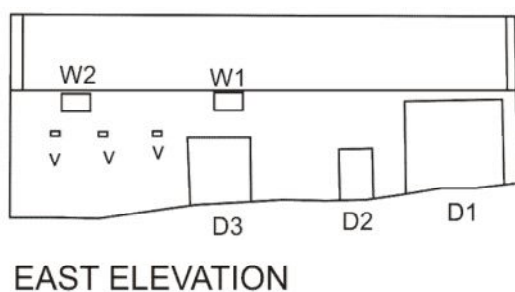
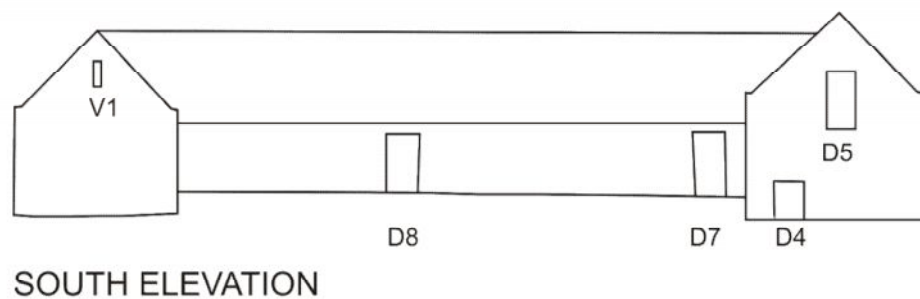


**Illus 26 Plan with interpretation of surviving features**



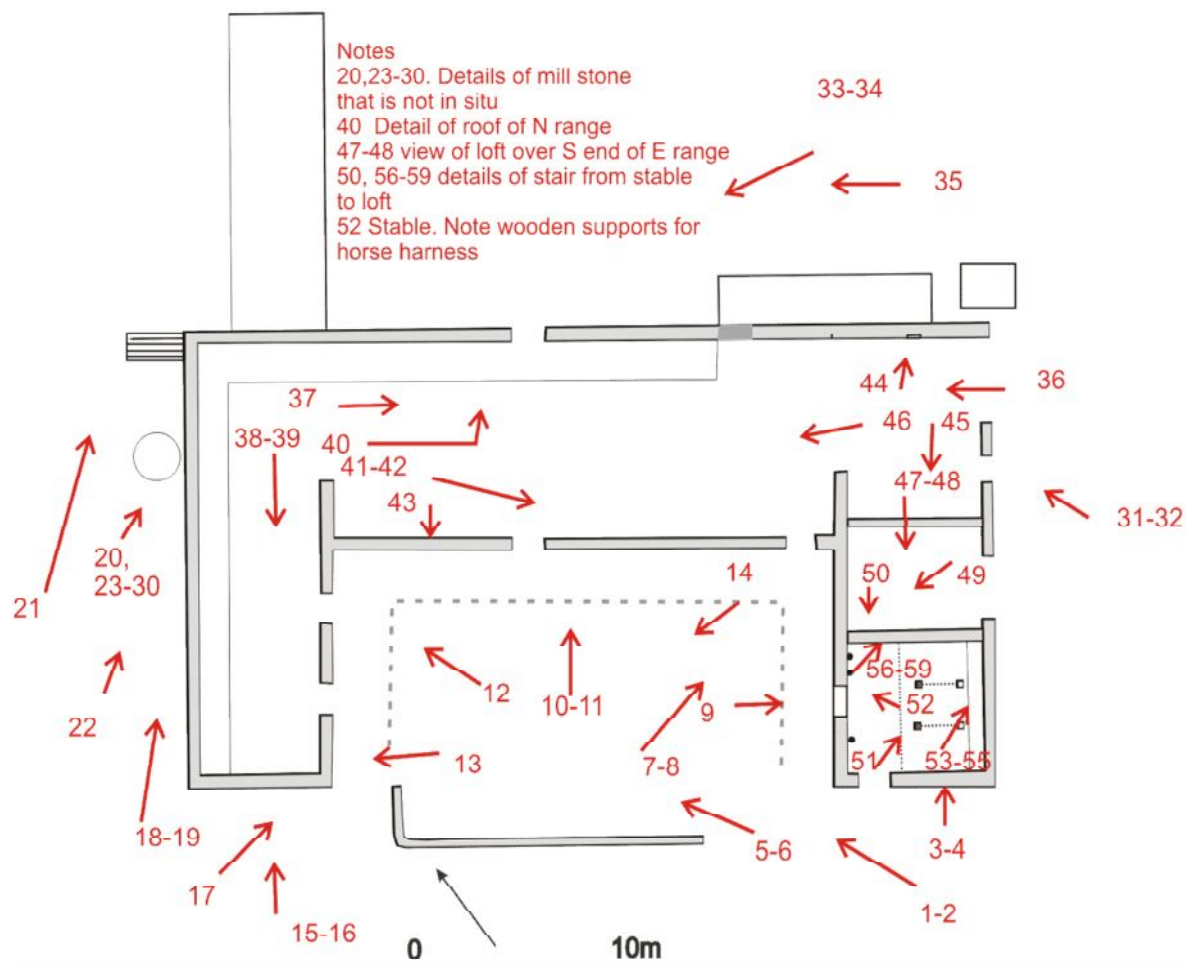
## References

M Glendinning and S Wade Martins 2008 Buildings of the Land. RCAHMS:  
Edinburgh.



Illus 27 Elevations

8 Archive: A full set of photographs with the photo location plan (Illus 28) will be supplied to the Aberdeenshire SMR and to the HES archive.



Illus 28 Photo reference plan