

**HOWE OF ANGUSTON  
PETERCULTER  
ABERDEEN**



**Standing Building Survey**  
Carried out 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017  
by  
**Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2017-11**  
by  
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# **HOWE OF ANGUSTON**

## **PETERCULTER**

### **ABERDEEN**

#### **- Standing Building Survey -**

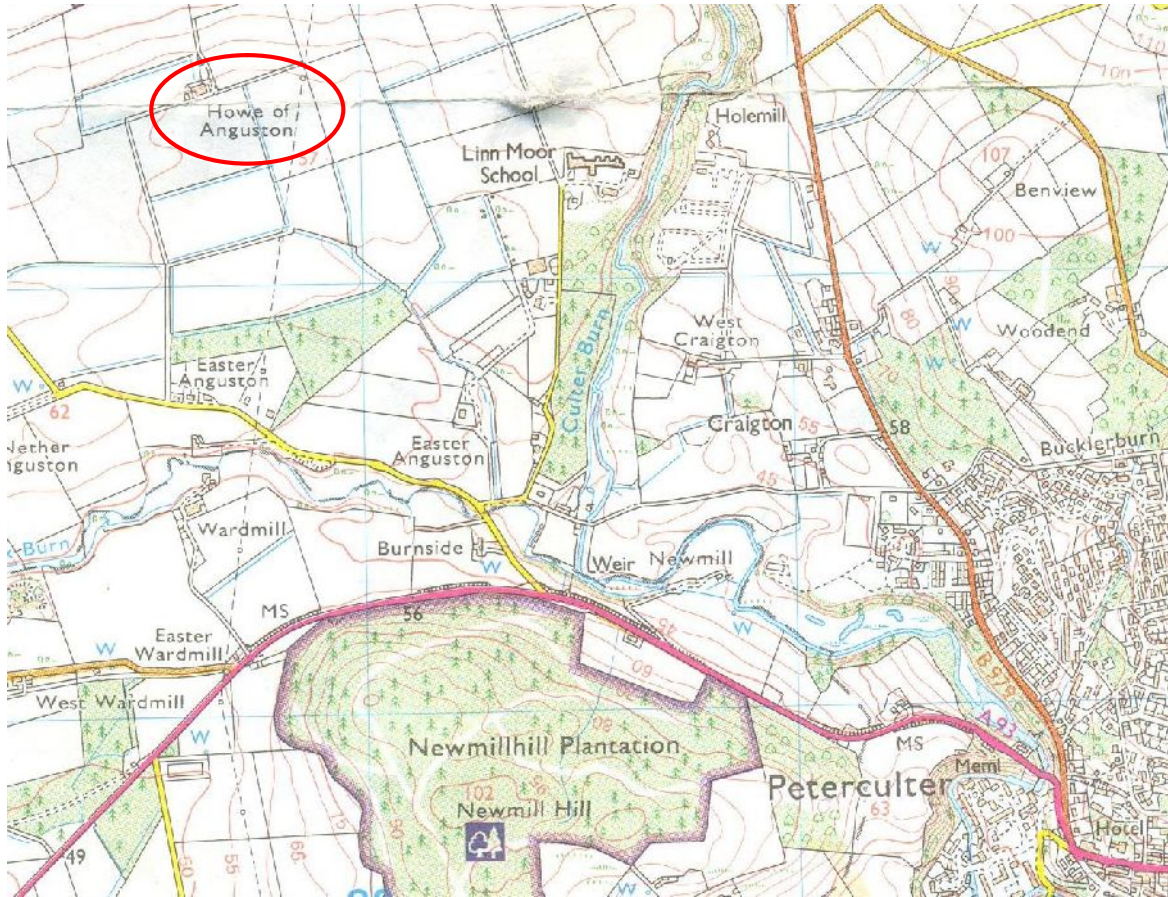
#### **1. Background**

- 1.1 A standing building survey was required for a steading at Howe of Anguston, Peterculter, Aberdeen, prior to its conversion to dwelling houses.
- 1.2 The archaeological condition (Condition 1) 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: P141381
- 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 Mark Robson. The site element of the survey was completed on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

#### **2. Desk-top survey**

- 2.1 A search was carried out 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 Plans and elevations were supplied by DWR Architecture and annotated as necessary by MAS Ltd.



**Illus 1 Detail of OS map. Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright (2007) All rights reserved. Licence number (100049810). Site indicated by red circle.**

### 3. The Site

- 3.1 The site lies in open farmland some 2km NW of Peterculter, on a private road to the N of the A93. It lies on a slope with higher ground to the N so the N range is cut into the slope (illus 1).

The farmhouse, which is not part of the survey, is in use as a dwelling (illus 2).

Parish: Peterculter NGR: NJ 8162 0245(farm general)

GPS in front of Steading: 381629, 802449

HES No: NJ80SW 43 Farmstead and farmhouse



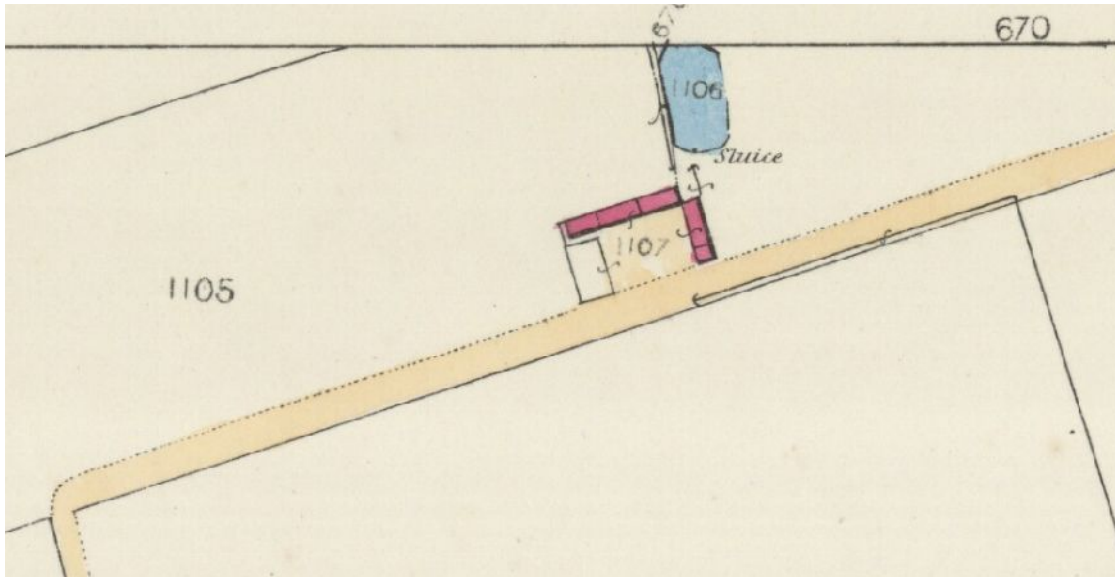


**Illus 2 Farmhouse from W**

#### 4. Documentary evidence

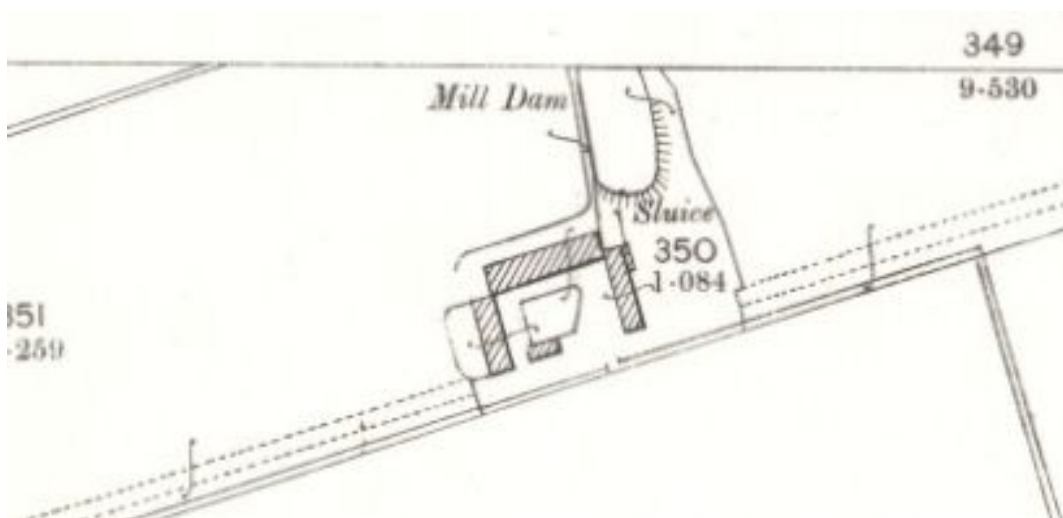
**1865** The 1<sup>st</sup> OS map of 1865 (Aberdeen sheet lxxxv.6 (Peterculter) 1865(pub 1869) shows a U-shaped steading facing S onto a road. The W range building appears to have been unroofed at the time. A mill pond lies to the N of the E range, with a lade to the NE corner of the E range. The E range is shown divided into two- a longer N area and a smaller S area. The N range was divided into three roughly equal compartments.

It is not named on the map (or on subsequent maps) and cannot be traced in the *OS Name Book* vol 71 (1865-71) ([www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)). However, according to the OS Name Book, the other Anguston properties nearby all appear to have been owned by the Irvine of Drum estate.



Illus 3 Detail of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey 25" map, Aberdeen sheet lxxxv.6 (Peterculter) 1865 (pub 1869) [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

1899 On the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 25"/mile Ordnance Survey of 1899 (published 1900. Aberdeenshire sheet 085.06) the N and E ranges remain unchanged, with the mill dam and lade still shown, with the wheel along the N end of the E wall of the E range. The W range (the house) is shown roofed. A small rectangular building has been added across part of the S side of the dung court.



Illus 4 Detail of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 25"/mile Ordnance Survey of 1899 (published 1900. Aberdeenshire Sheet 085.06) [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

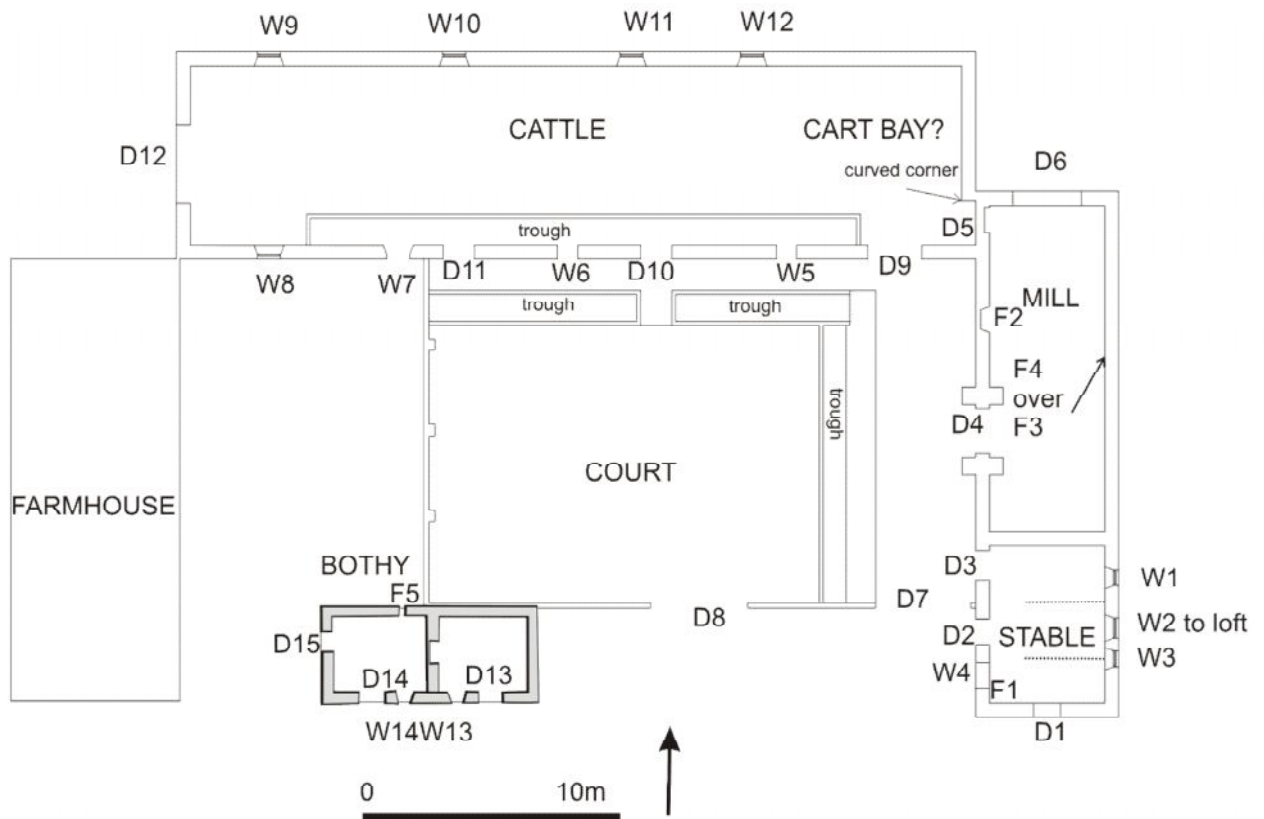
- 1935** The name Howe of Anguston was used in a newspaper account of a Trespass case. *Aberdeen Press and Journal* 11 Jan 1935.  
([www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk) ). The account makes it clear this was part of the Drum estate.
- 1943** Sale of household furniture belonging to William Fraser at Howe of Anguston. Apart from 20 hens and 3 ducks, no livestock or agricultural equipment was noted in the sale. *Aberdeen Press and Journal* 1 Feb 1943.  
([www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk) )
- 1943** Notice of death on active service of Alastair Fraser, 3<sup>rd</sup> son of Mr and Mrs Fraser, late of Howe of Anguston. *Aberdeen Press and Journal* 29 April 1943.  
([www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk) )

## 5 Methodology

- 5.1 The ground plan (illus 6) and elevations (illus 26) 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 27) indicates the position of each.



**Illus 5 General view from SW**



Illus 6 Plan. Annotated from drawing courtesy of DWR Architecture.

## 6 The Buildings

### E Range

The map evidence shows that this range was built by 1865 and that the N end had been a mill. In 1865 it is shown as divided into the two compartments that remain today.

Orientation N/S

Dimensions 5.48 x 20.5m externally

Present/recent use Derelict.

Original use . Stable with hay loft at S end and mill with grain loft at N end.

Walls Rubble stone- well faced fairly squared

Roof Slate- thin, probably Welsh slate

Doors and windows



*S wall*

**D1** W: 1.14m H: 1.9m grey granite rybats, lintel (with rounded ends) and sill.  
Loft door

*E wall*

**W1-W3** W: 0.63m H: 0.35m Grey granite rybats, lintels and sills. W1 & W3 into stable. W2 into loft. Traces of tilting windows.

A revetting against much of the lower half of the outside of this wall obscured any external indications of the blockings associated with the mill wheel shown on the historic maps. The lade is still visible to the N of the steading but the mill pond has been filled in.



**Illus 7 E elevation of E range.**



*N wall*

**D6** W:2.67 H: 2.78 Granite rybats. External lintel concrete (replacement)

*W wall*

**D2** W:1.15m H:2.28m Granite rybats and lintel. Traces of wooden door. Opens into stable.

**D3** W:1.13m H:2.28m Granite rybats and lintel. Traces of wooden door. Opens into stable. Window above D3. W: 720mm H: 360mm Granite rybats, lintel and sill. Opens into loft.

**D4** W: 1.76m H: roof level. Stone rybats on N side indicate an original opening but restructured with concrete and raised to roof level with steel lintel.

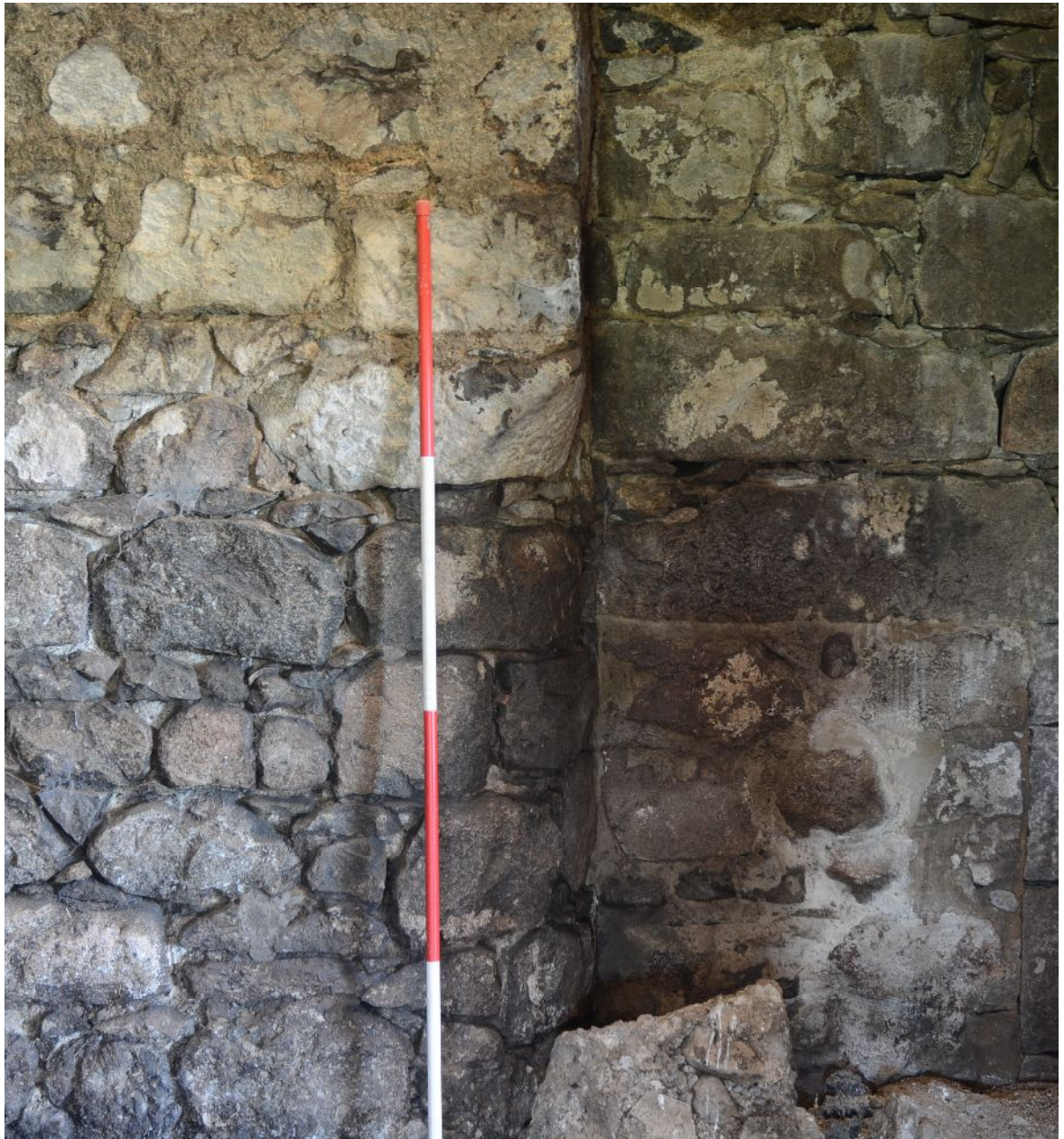
**D5** W: 0.98m H: 1.65m External lintel and rybats granite. N side curved with angled top. Opened between mill and N range. Stone blocked. (illus 8 & 9)

**W4** W:0.78m H: 1.32m Granite rybat, lintel and sill



**Illus 8** D5 N side (LHS) curved at top (arrow)





**Illus 9 Detail of rounded and angled N side of doorway D5**

Interior

*Stable (S end)*

The stable (4.45 x 6.2m internally) was divided into 3 stalls with original wooden trevices (illus 10) which had metal strip along tops to discourage chewing. From S to N stalls W: 1.98m, 1.68m and 2.5m. Trevis H at tail: 1.46m, H at head: 2m. There was a surviving cobbled floor with a drain behind the horses (illus 11).





**Illus 10 S and central stalls in stable with wooden trevis**



**Illus 11 Drain in cobbles in stable- behind N stall**





**Illus 12** Harness support on inside of W wall of stable. Hay chute from loft (arrow) in background

**F1** Alcove 280mm deep and 0.93m wide in W side of S wall. Wooden lintel above level of loft floor. Can be interpreted as hay chute from loft to stable (illus 12).

Harness support on inside of W wall S of D2 (illus 12).

*Loft* External access through door D1. Access unsafe.

#### *Mill (N end)*

The grain loft over mill (12.6m x 4.45m internally) was accessed from gable door D6. No loft floor remained. A window with ventilation slats (could not be measured) was at loft level between the mill loft and the hay loft above the stable (illus 13).



**Illus 13 Interior S wall of mill showing slatted window to hay loft. Pale rectangle on mid wall RHS (a) appeared to be render/patching rather than a blocking**

Mill fittings F3 and F4 on inside of E wall (illus 14) were not visible on the outer face of the wall because of external buttressing; however they coincide with wheel position shown on 1899 OS map.

At ground level there was a (blocked) window (F2) into the court and a blocked door (D5) into the N range.

**F2** window from court. Splays internally. W: 0.64m H: 0.88m Ext granite lintel. Brick blocked.

**F3** Opening into loft of mill. Not measured. Concrete and brick blocked.



**F4** W: 0.60m H: 0.80m Brick blocked. Large triangular lintel and heavy granite sill. 0.25m from ground to top of sill. Recess (filled) in floor in front of F3. Can be interpreted as having held mill shaft. (illus 14)



**Illus 14 Mill. Inside of E wall showing blockings for mill shaft**



## N Range

The map evidence shows that this range was built by 1865 and at that stage it appears to have been divided into three roughly equal compartments.

Orientation E/W

Dimensions 29.9m x 7.05m internally

Present/recent use Derelict.

Original use . Cattle



Illus 15 View looking N across court to S wall of N range



Illus 16 N wall of N range, cut into slope

Walls Rubble stone 0.45m thick

Roof Corrugated asbestos

Doors and windows

*S wall*

**D9** W:2.29m H: 2.10m (to present raised floor). Wide granite lintel. Granite rybats, curved by lintel. Can be interpreted as original cart bay. (illus 17)



**Illus 17 D9 from S looking into N range**

**D10** W: 1.18m H:2.06m to level of feed pass. Granite rybats and lintel. Frame of wooden door. Now there are steps up to feed pass in N Range.

**D11** W: 1.17m H: 2.05m Granite lintel and rybats. Now there are steps up to feed pass in N Range.

**W5** W: 0.75m H: 1.25m Granite lintel. Rybats granite at top, concrete at base. External shutter fittings

**W6** W: 0.67m H: 1.21m Granite lintel. Rybats granite at top, concrete at base. External shutter fittings

**W7** W: 1.0m H:0.4m Splays internally. Granite lintel and rybats. Traces of wooden window frame.

**W8** W: 1.0m H:0.4m Splays internally. Granite lintel and rybats. Traces of wooden window frame.



*E wall*

**D5** W: 0.98m H: 1.65m Ext. lintel and rybats granite. N side curved with angled top. Opened between mill and N range. Stone blocked.

*W wall*

**D12** W: 3m H: c.2.5m Enlarged door for mechanical mucking out after range converted to open cattle court.

*N wall*

**W9- W12** W: 1.06m H: 0.4m

Interior

The interior had been opened out to form an open cattle court with a concrete trough and feed pass. Most of the floor was concrete but cobbles showed at the E end (illus 18).



**Illus 18 Interior of N range looking W. Cobbles in foreground**

There was no evidence of raggles to indicate the position of the cross walls drawn on the 1865 map, but the position of doors D10 and D11 suggests each door led into a different part of the cattle byre.



There was no evidence of cattle stalls. However this building is likely to have had tied cattle stalls with ventilation from windows W5-W12.

Door D9 indicates that the E end was a cart bay.

Door D5 from the mill had a curved side which may have been intended to make an easier access for men carrying grain sacks.

## Court

The original dung court extended across to the farmhouse in the N range, with the bothy added across part of the S side between 1865 and 1899. More recently a concrete block W wall and S wall were added to make an enclosed cattle court (illus 19).



**Illus 19 S wall of court built against and using N wall of bothy.**



**Illus 20 Interior of court looking W. Note concrete roof trusses.**

Dimensions 21m x 13.4m

Present/recent use Derelict.

Original use . Dung court, later cattle court

Walls W and S walls concrete blocks. Incorporated bothy N wall as part of S wall. N and W sides formed by N and W ranges with concrete pillars at D4 and steel frame onto N range roof.

Roof Corrugated asbestos on precast concrete roof trusses (illus 20).

Doors and windows

*S wall*

**D7** W: 3.67m H: to roof

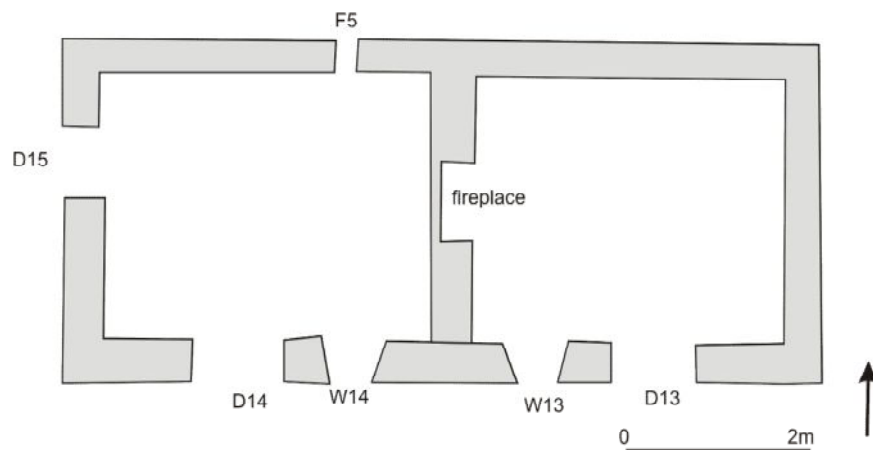
**D8** W:3.75m H: to roof

Interior Concrete feed troughs and pass.

**Bothy in S Range**

The map evidence shows that the bothy was built between 1865 and 1899.





**Illus 21** Plan of bothy in S range



**Illus 22** S wall of bothy

Orientation E/W, facing S

Dimensions 8.25m x 3.68m externally

Present/recent use Derelict.

Original use . Bothy at E end. W end possibly later used for hens.

Walls Rubble stone

Roof Corrugated asbestos. Square granite chimney with flat table.

Doors and windows

*S wall*

**D13** W: 0.90m H: 1.85m Granite rybats and lintel

**D14** W: 0.90m H: 1.85m Granite rybats and lintel



**W13** W: 0.45m H: 0.80m Granite rybats, sill and lintel

**W14** W: 0.45m H: 0.80m Granite rybats, sill and lintel

*W wall*

**D15** W: 0.76m H: 1.83m Granite rybats and lintel. Wooden door with a framed opening in it.

*N wall*

**F5** W: 0.33m H: 0.38m Granite surround wooden framed. Base c. 400mm above internal floor level.



**Illus 23** N wall of bothy. Arrow marks F5 opening

Interior

The E room had a fireplace with a granite mantel and granite sides. There did not appear to be any evidence of a fireplace in the W room-although as it was being used for storage the central wall was not easy to see. It is possible that this was originally an unheated bedroom. The low opening (F5) at the base of the back wall may suggest it was later used for hens. The large window in the front wall makes it unlikely that this W room was a privy.



**Illus 24** Fireplace in E room of bothy

## 7 Discussion

Howe of Anguston is an example of a medium-sized mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century Aberdeenshire Improvement steading. Later modifications to open up both the N range and the dung court as open cattle courts have removed much of the original internal arrangement in these areas. Good detail survives in the stable. Some details of the stonework, such as the nicely arched stones either side of the lintel over cart bay D9, or the rounded side on the doorway from the mill to the N range (D5) illustrate that this was originally part of the Irvine of Drum estate with access to skilled masons.

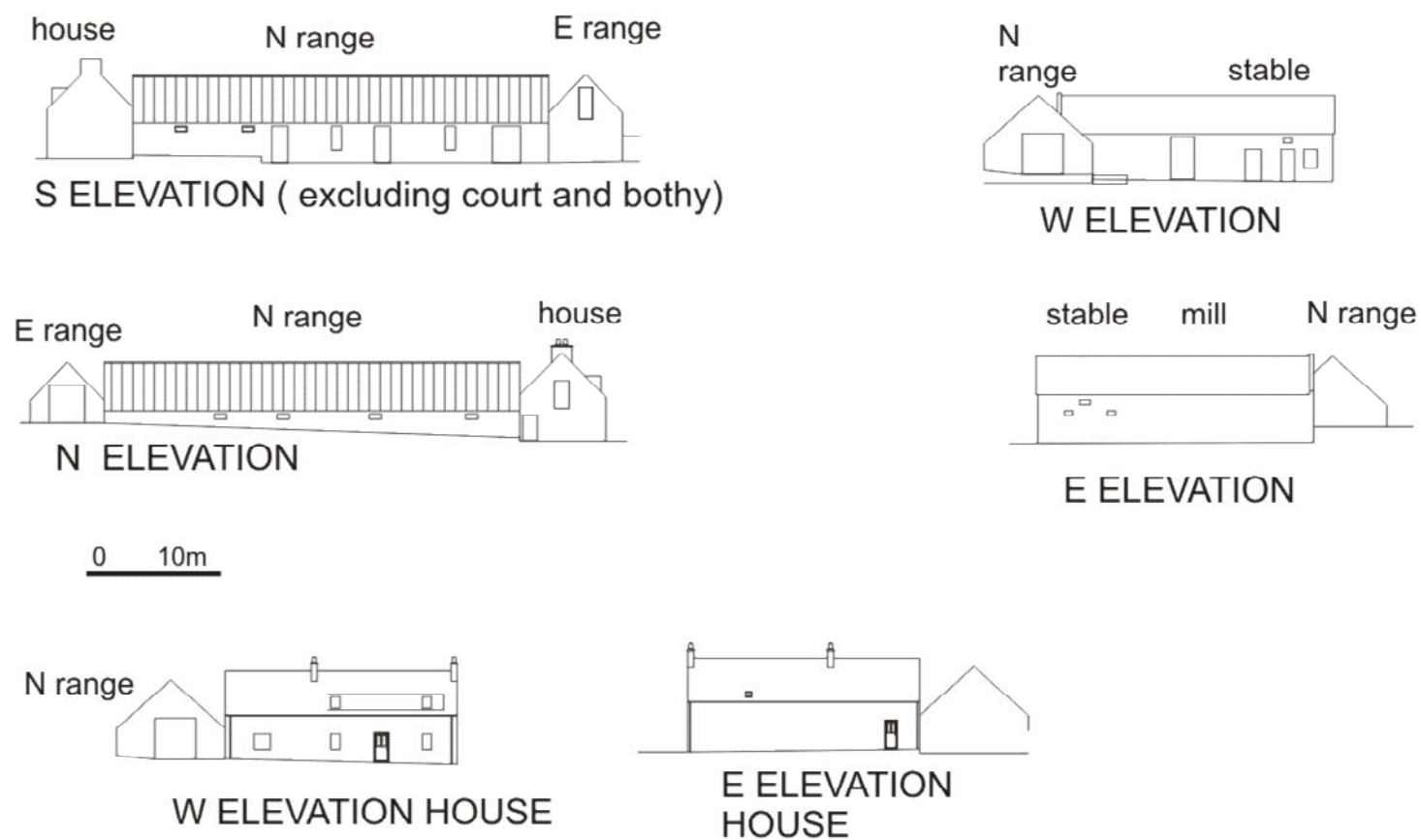




Illus 25 Detail of arch over cart bay

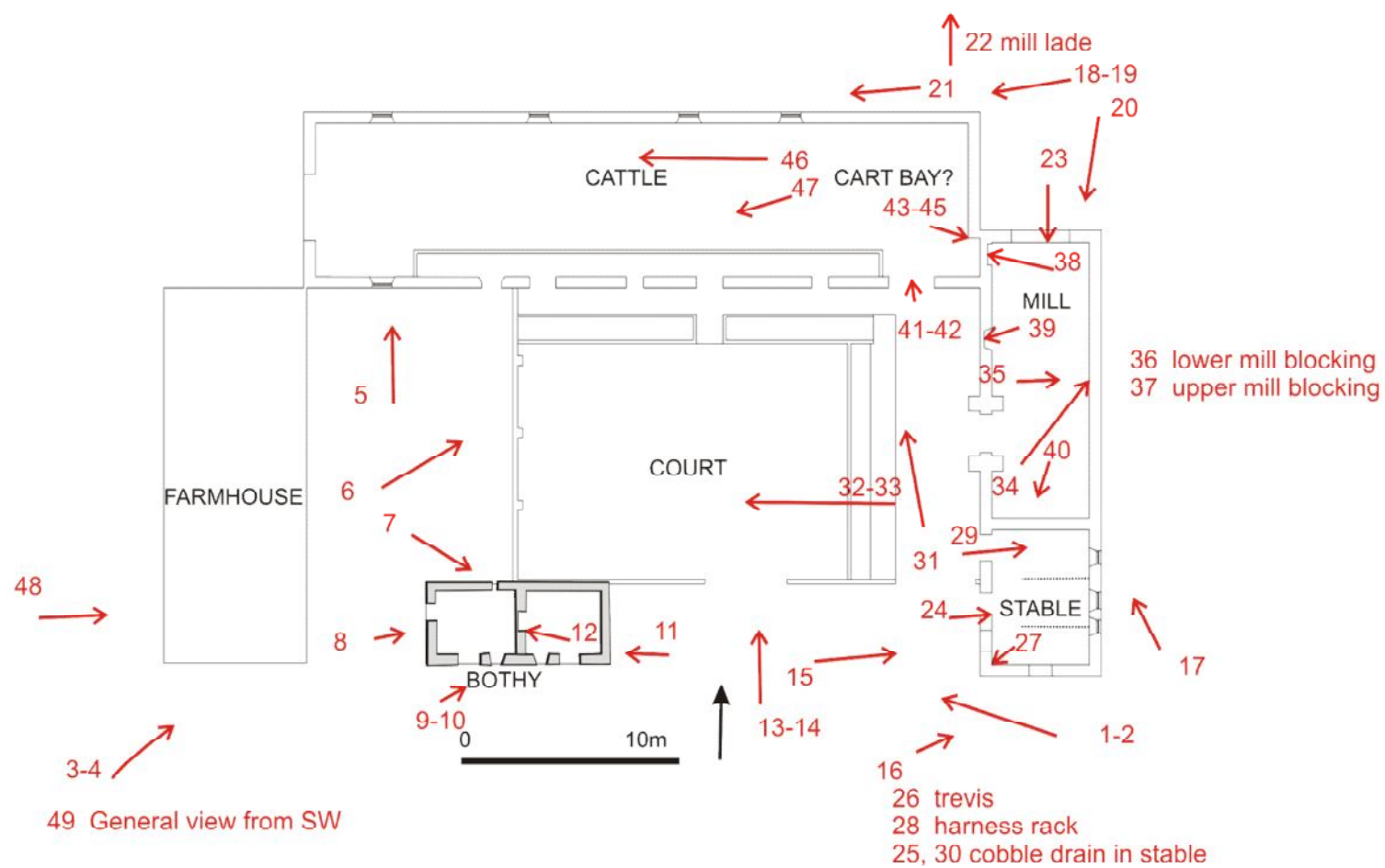
## 8 Archive

A full set of photographs with the photo location plan (Illus 27) will be supplied to the Aberdeen SMR in Aberdeen and to the HES archive.



Illus 26 Elevations. Annotated from plan courtesy of DWR Architects





Illus 27 Photo location. Annotated from plan courtesy of DWR Architects