

**GORDONSHILLOCK  
ROSEHEARTY  
ABERDEENSHIRE**



**Standing Building Survey**

Carried out 7<sup>th</sup> October 2017

by

**Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2017-14**

by

**H K Murray and J C Murray**

H K Murray BA, PhD, MCifA, FSA Scot

J C Murray BA, MCifA, FSA Scot, FMA

Hill of Belnagoak, Methlick, Ellon, Aberdeenshire AB41 7JN

Telephone: (01651) 806394 e-mail: cmurray@btinternet.com

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**GORDONSHILLOCK**  
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**ABERDEENSHIRE**

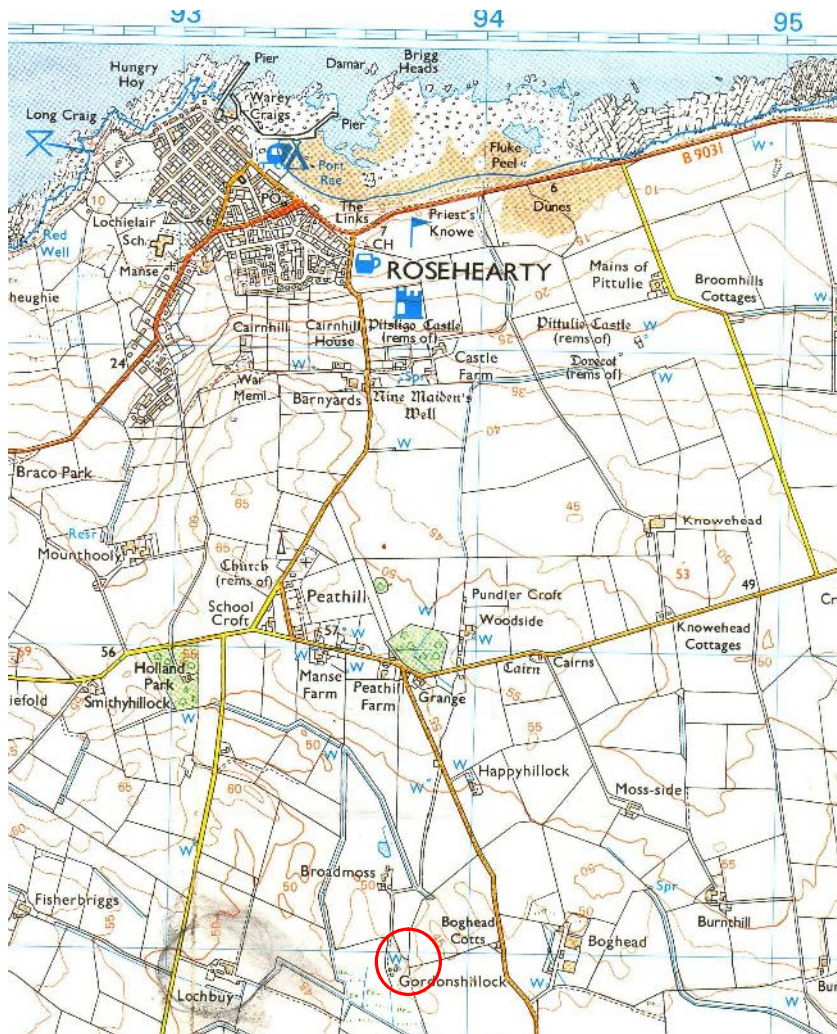
**- Standing Building Survey -**

1. Background

- 1.1 A standing building survey was required for a farm steading at Gordonshillock Rosehearty, Aberdeenshire, prior to its demolition and replacement by a new dwelling house.
- 1.2 The archaeological condition (Condition 9) was applied in the context of planning legislation (PAN 2/2011, SPP, HESPS), which states that it is necessary for developers to arrange for archaeological work to take place prior to development, in appropriate circumstances. Planning Application Numbers: APP/2014/0542
- 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 Stuart Rennie. The site element of the survey was completed on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

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 Plans and elevations have been drawn and annotated as necessary by MAS Ltd.



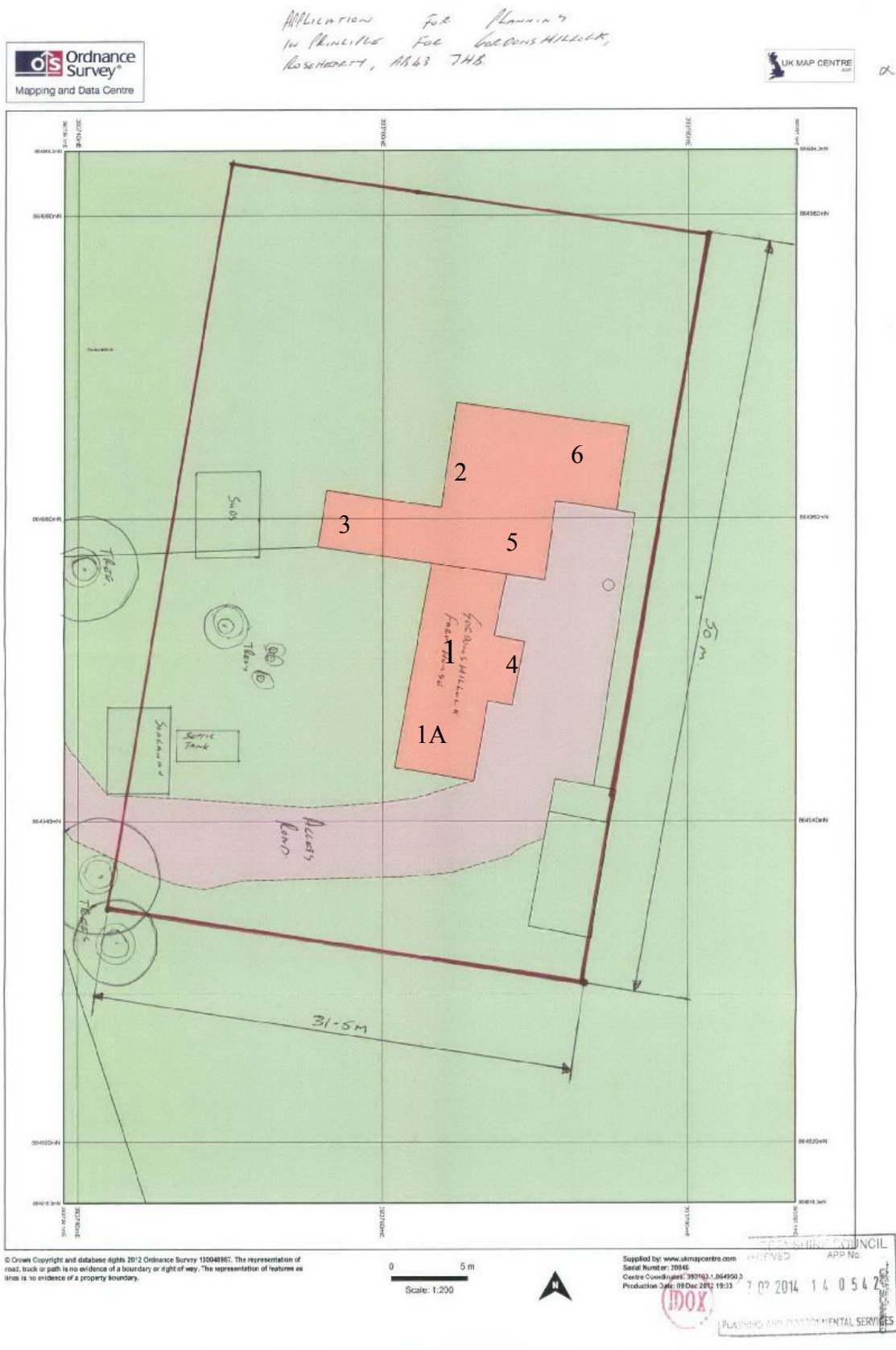
**Illus 1** Detail of OS map. Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright (2007) All rights reserved. Licence number (100049810). Site indicated by red circle.

### 3. The Site

3.1 The site lies some 2.5km S of Rosehearty and S of Peathill, to the W of a minor road in the middle of grass fields.

Parish: Pitsligo NGR: NJ 9377 6495

GPS 393775, 864951 (front of house)



Illus 2 Site plan courtesy of Stuart Rennie, annotated with the building numbers used in this report

#### 4. Documentary evidence

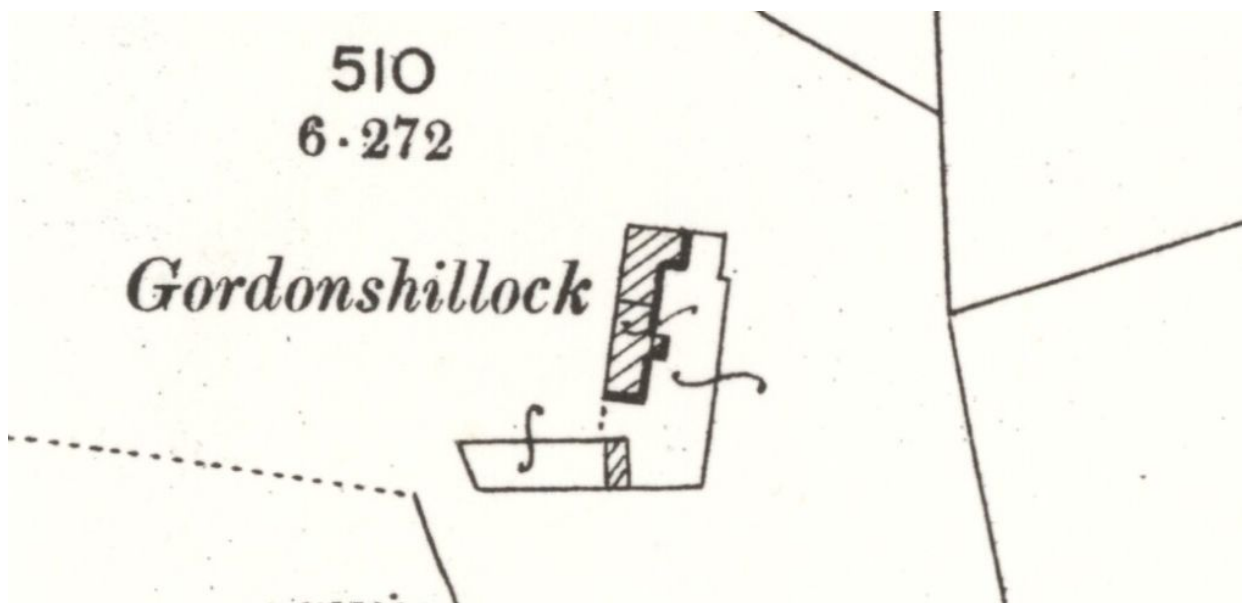
**1871** 25" OS map Aberdeen sheet II.11 (Pitsligo) surveyed in 1871, published in 1874



Illus 3 Detail of 25" OS map Aberdeen sheet II.11 1871, published 1874 [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

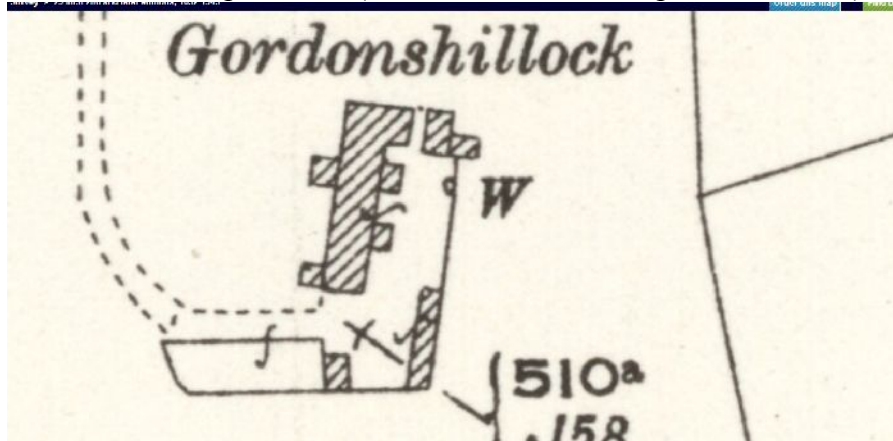
**1865-1871** The OS Name Book describes Gordonshillock as 'A small croft with houses thereon the property of WD Fordyce Esqr. Brucklay' (OS1/1/74/39 <https://scotlandspplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/ordnance-survey-name-books/aberdeenshire-os-name-books-1865-1871>)

**1900** The OS map of 1900 (Aberdeenshire 002.07 published 1902)



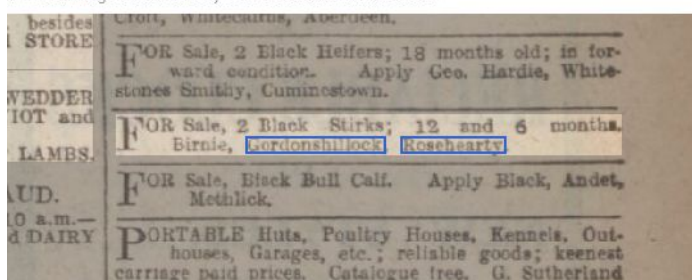
Illus 4 OS map of 1900 (Aberdeenshire 002.11 published 1902) [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

**1925** The OS map of 1925 (Aberdeenshire 002.07 published 1926)



**Illus 5** Detail of 25" OS map of 1925 (Aberdeenshire 002.11 published 1926) [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

**1930** Tenant (?) Mr Birnie advertised cattle for sale *Aberdeen Press and Journal* 27<sup>th</sup> October 1930 and again on the 13<sup>th</sup> April 1931. Hens were being sold from the croft at Turriff Poultry sales (*Aberdeen Press and Journal* 16<sup>th</sup> February 1934) and two young store cattle were being sold in October 1930. [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk) (Illus 6).



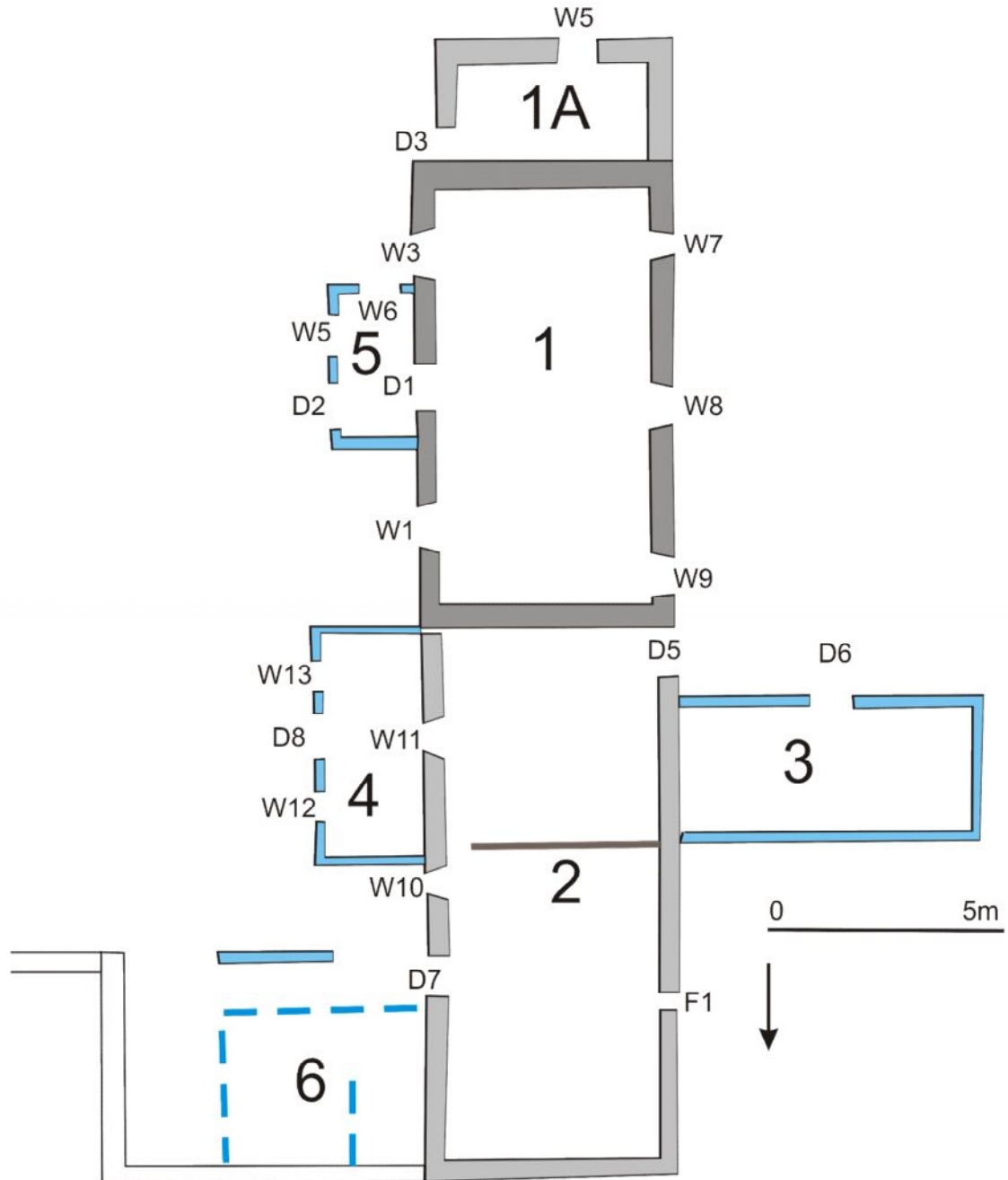
**Illus 6** Aberdeen Press and Journal 27<sup>th</sup> October 1930 [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

## 5 Methodology

- 5.1 The ground plan (illus 7) and elevations (illus 19) have been annotated to show details 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 annotated plans in the present report (illus 20) indicates the position of each.

## 6 The Buildings

Orientation Long axis approximately N/S with house (1), house extension (1A) and main byre (2) in a line facing E. Later concrete block porch (5), pig shed (6), back byre (3) and 'smithy' (4) abut the main block.



Illus 7 Plan

## Building 1: The House

Dimensions House 11 x 5.5m. 1 ½ storeys

Present/recent use Derelict

Original use . Dwelling

Walls Rubble stone with rubble quoins

Roof Slate with ceramic ridge. Dormers in front (E) facade. Metal skylights above stair front and back.

Rectangular stone chimneys to N and S, with flat table and two ceramic pots to each. Skews possibly concrete.

Doors and windows

*E wall*

**D1** W: 0.95m H: 1.88m. Concrete lintel, rubble rybats.

**W1** W: 0.86m H: 1.45m. Concrete lintel, rubble rybats.

**W3** W: 0.87m H: 1.41m. Concrete lintel and rybats on S side.

**W2** **Into 1<sup>st</sup> floor** W: 0.86m H:1.45m (estimate) Dormer with wooden frame, slate sides and canopy.

**W4** **Into 1<sup>st</sup> floor** W: 0.86m H:1.45m (estimate) Dormer with wooden frame, slate sides and canopy

*W wall*

**W7** W: 0.71mm H:1.04m. Concrete rybats one side, rubble the other. Stone lintel. 2/2 pane sash..

**W8** W: 0.80m H:1.40m. Concrete rybats. 2/2 pane sash..

**W9** W: 0.73mm H:1.07m. Mixture of concrete and stone rybats. Stone lintel. 2/2 pane sash.

Interior Not safe to enter

## Building 1A: The House extension

Dimensions 5 x 2.5m. 1 ½ storeys

Present/recent use Derelict

Original use . Dwelling, possibly bothy (with ladder access?) above a milk house or pantry.

Walls Rubble stone

Roof Slate with ceramic ridge.

Doors and windows



*E wall*

**D3** W: 0.82m H:1.80m. Rubble lintel and rybats. Plank door.

**D4** **Into 1<sup>st</sup> floor** W: 0.82m H:1.80m. Dormer with wooden frame, slate sides and canopy.

*S wall*

**W5** W: 0.88m H:0.92m. Concrete lintel, sill and rybats.

Interior Not safe to enter but a wooden plank partition visible through door D4

**Building 2: Main byre**

Dimensions 11.5 x 5.5m

Present/recent use Derelict

Original use . Livestock

Walls Rubble stone. Abuts N wall of house. Structures 4 and 6 built against front (E) wall.

Roof Corrugated asbestos. Hipped over N end. Plastic roof lights.



**Illus 8 Building 2 in background, with buildings 4 and 6 abutting its E wall.**



**Illus 9 Building 2 from N with Building 6 abutting it on LHS beside ranging rod.**

Doors and windows

*N wall*

Ceramic pipes through wall for ventilation.

*W wall*

**D5** W: 1.14m H: 1.80m. Wooden lintel, rubble rybats. Plank door.

**F1** W: 0.42m H: 0.42m. Rubble surround, shutter on inside.



**Illus 10 Building 2. W wall with F1.**

*E wall*

**D7** W: 1.06m H:1.65m+. Stone lintel rubble rybats.Plank door.

**W10** W: 0.51m H: 0.78m. Granite lintel and sill, rubble rybats. Splayed internally.

**W11** W: 0.59m H: 0.71mm. Rubble lintel, sill, and rybats. Splayed internally.

Interior

Divided into two by wooden partition. Wooden hay hake along inside of N wall.



**Illus 11 Building 2. Interior looking N, in N room**



**Illus 12 Building 2. Interior from door D5 looking N to partition.**

### Building 3: Back byre



**Illus 13 Building 3 looking N**

Dimensions 6.5 x 3.1m

Present/recent use Derelict

Original use . Livestock, possibly pigs.

Walls Concrete blocks. Abuts W wall of byre (Building 2).

Roof Single pitch, sloping down to N. Corrugated asbestos.

Doors and windows

*S wall*

D6 W: 0.88m H:1.85m. Concrete sides, wooden lintel.

Interior

Remains of low concrete walls, probably pig pens.

### Building 4: 'Smithy'

Dimensions 5 x 2.3m

Present/recent use Derelict

Original use Possibly workshop or smithy.

Walls Concrete blocks. Abuts front (E) wall of Building 2.

Roof Corrugated asbestos. Single pitch sloping down to E.



**Illus 14 Building 4. E wall.**

Doors and windows

*E wall*

**D8** W: 0.90m H:1.80m. Concrete lintel and rybats.

**W12** W: 0.79m H:0.65m. Concrete lintel, sill, and rybats.

**W13** W: 0.79m H:0.65m. Concrete lintel, sill, and rybats.

Interior

In SW corner, the wall had been broken through and a small, brick-built canopy appears to have formed a smoke vent. No chimney pipe survived.

In the NE corner there was a small portable blacksmith's forge with integral bellows.

The size of the forger would have been suitable for farrier's work or small items.



**Illus 15 Building 4, Interior SW corner. Window into byre at RHS.**



**Illus 16 Building 4, Interior. NE corner. Portable blacksmith's forge**

## Building 5: Porch

Dimensions 3.4 x 1.8m.

Present/recent use Derelict

Original use . Porch

Walls Concrete. Abuts E wall of house, sheltering the main door (D1).

Roof Corrugated asbestos, low pitch lean-to, sloping down to E.

Doors and windows

*S wall*

**W6** W: 0.99m H:0.98m. Concrete surround, metal frame window.

*E wall*

**D2** W: 0.99m H:1.85m. Concrete surround

**W5** W: 0.99mm H:0.98m. Concrete surround, metal frame window.

Interior

No features



**Illus 17 Porch from E.**

## Building 6

A stone wall had continued the line of the N wall of Building 2, turning S to form a rectangular stone-walled yard in front of the house and byre. The W end, in front of Building 2 had at some point been divided of with a concrete block wall and the outer stone walled raised with concrete blocks. This area had been roofed (now missing) and internally divided by low concrete walls into what were probably pig pens.



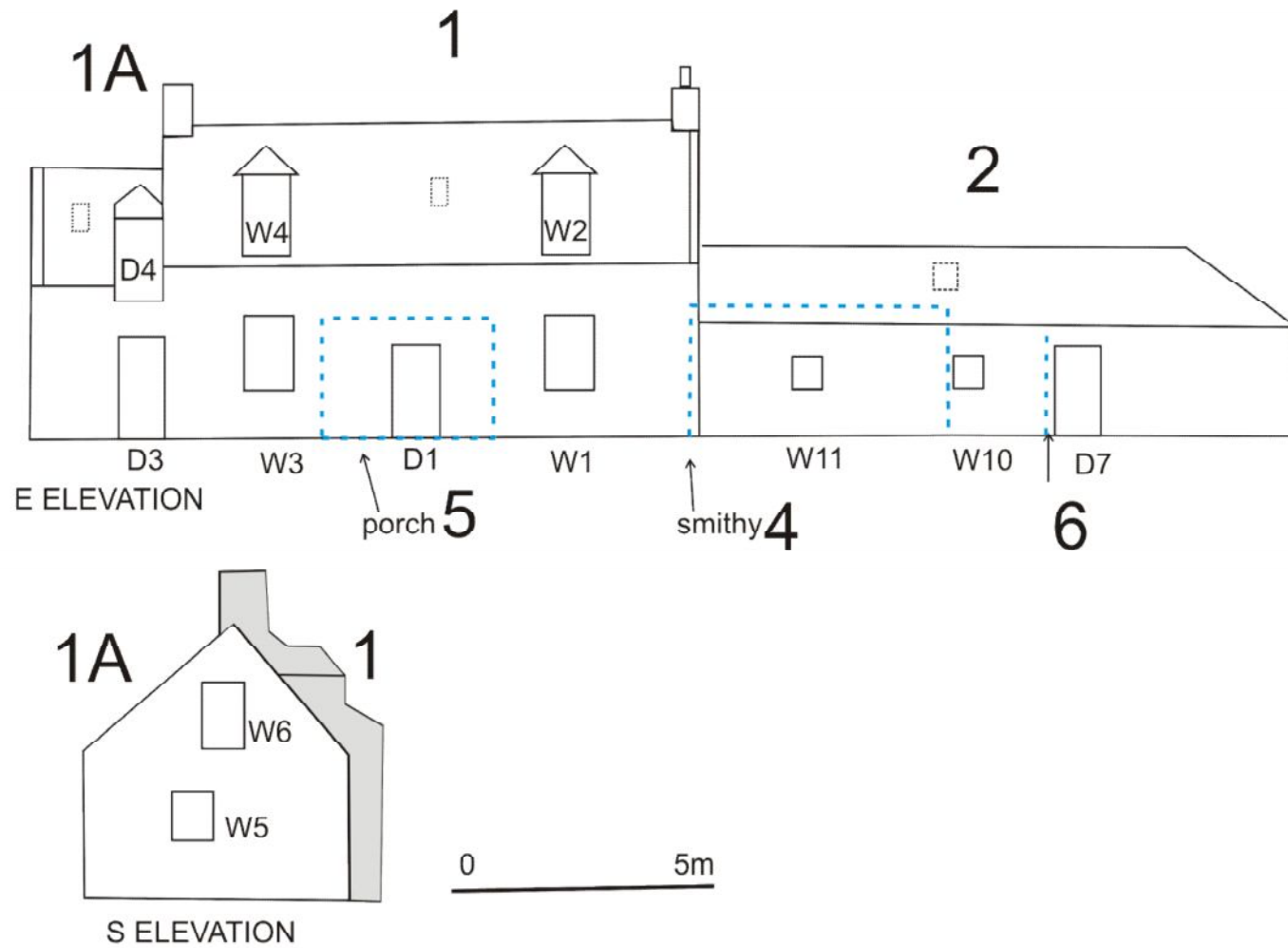
**Illus 18** Looking W to Building 6

## 7 Discussion

The house (B1) and byre (B2) had been built by 1871, with the porch (B5) added by 1900 and the 'smithy' (B4) by 1925.

The unusual feature of this farmstead is the relatively small size of the steading compared with the house. It would be more usual for the house to be single storey in a croft of this size with conjoined house and byre.

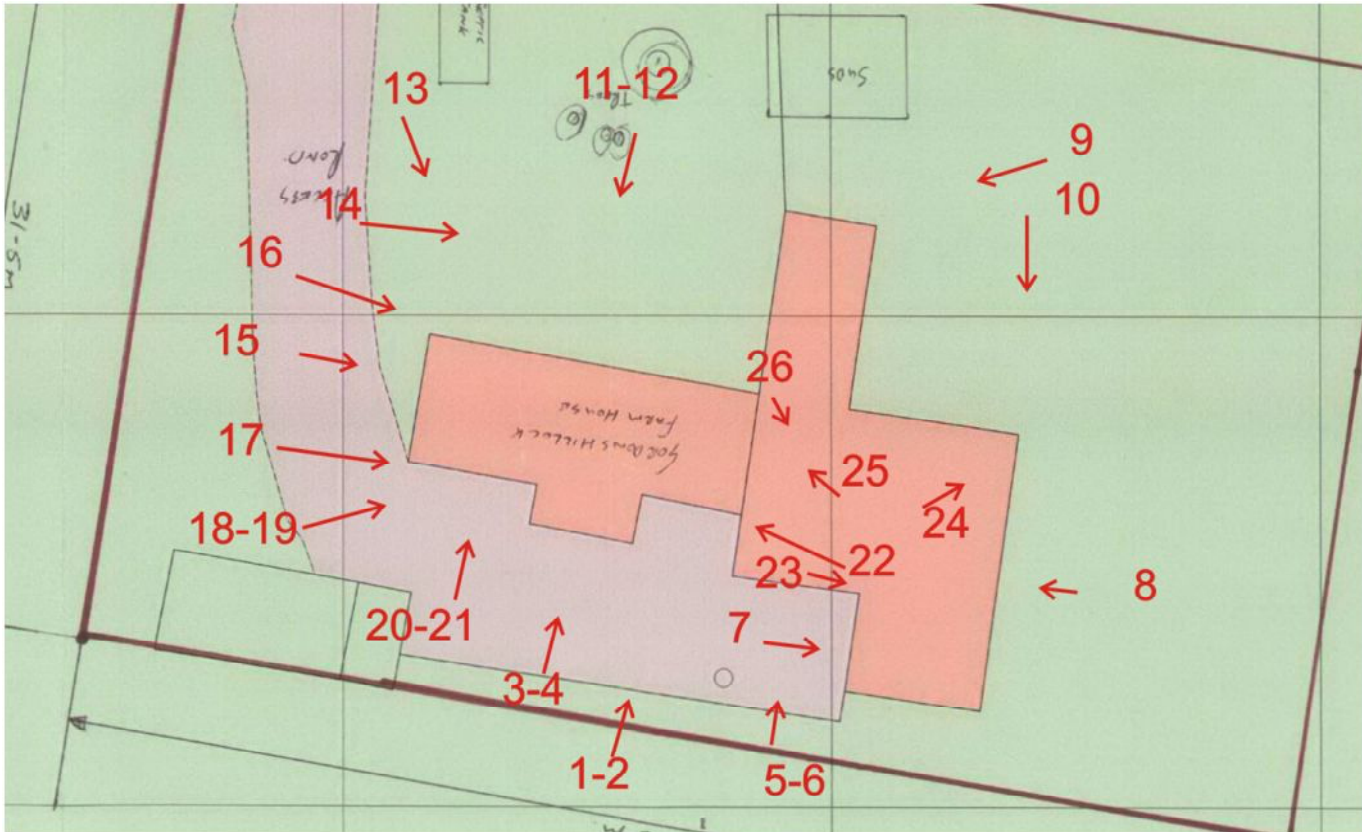




Illus 19 Elevations. The S elevation has been drawn with the later concrete structures shown as dotted blue outlines to avoid obscuring the 19<sup>th</sup>-century facade

## 8 Archive

A full set of photographs with the photo location plans (Illus 20) will be supplied to the Aberdeenshire SMR and to the HES archive.



**Illus 20 Photo location plan**

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<b>Photo number</b>	<b>Content</b>
1-2	General view from E
3-4	House and extension from E
5-6	Byre (Building 2) and 'smithy' (Building 5) from E
7	Looking N to remains of Building 6
8	N end of Building 2 (RHS) wall of Building 6 and yard (LHS)
9	General view from W
10	W wall Building 2, F1.
11-12	W wall of house (Building 1, 1A) . Building 3 on LHS
13	General view looking NE
14	Building 3, looking N
15-16	Building 1A S wall
17-19	General view of E elevation looking N
20-21	Building 1A E wall
22	Building 5 'Smithy', fume/smoke vent in SW corner
23	Building 5 'Smithy', portable forge in NE corner
24	Building 2, byre, N room looking N
25	Building 2, S room looking S
26	Building 2, S room looking N