

0. NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

0.1 A programme of archaeological works was conducted at Alva House, Clackmannanshire on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009. The works comprised building recording of the largely demolished Alva House and a machine excavated evaluation by trial trenching. Structural remains associated with Alva House, as well as sediments associated with levelling the site prior to the construction of the house were recorded. A second phase of archaeological works was undertaken from 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011 and comprised the machine excavation of a large open area within the confines of the demolished Alva House. Further structural remains associated with Alva House were recorded in addition to a dump of midden that overlay a demolished stone wall. Below the midden, but later than the demolished wall was a bright red silt from which a piece of pottery dating to the 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century AD provides a *terminus post quem* date for this deposit and the overlying midden material and *terminus ante quem* for the demolished wall. This wall may be the remnants of a former tower house reputed to have once stood on the site prior to the construction of Alva House.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The development area was located on the east side of Alva and lies within Clackmannanshire Administrative Area, which with respect to archaeological issues is subject to the advisory services of Lorna Main. The site is centred on NS 90104 97503 at approximately 90 m OD (Fig. 1). The site is currently under rough grass and scrub (small trees, bushes, brambles etc).

1.2 Mr and Mrs McEwan commissioned the programme of archaeological works with respect to the outline planning application 05/00174. The archaeological works were carried out in accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* which was prepared by Clare Ellis and approved by Lorna Main.

1.3 Within the boundary of the proposed development is located the ruins of Alva House. Alva House may have its origins in the 16<sup>th</sup> century when it is reputed a tower house stood on the site. This tower house may have been incorporated into a house built around 1636, although there is no physical evidence of this from surface observations. However, a later plan of the basement/semi-basement level shows an over thickened wall on the east and southern sides of the lobby which may just possibly be due to the incorporation of an older, pre-existing structure (Fig 5). A modest sized square structure surrounded by formal woodland and gardens is shown on Roy's map (1747-1755) and labelled House of Alva. In 1789 John Johnstone commissioned Robert and James Adam to redesign the front southern elevation as well as incorporating other changes and additions to the existing building. Many of the proposed ancillary buildings were never built, but it appears from the appearance of Alva House in 19<sup>th</sup> century photographs that the front façade was rebuilt in accordance with Adams' design. An additional wing was constructed on the western end of the house in the early 1800s; this wing is also visible in the 19<sup>th</sup> century photographs. The building has largely been demolished, although a

Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.

few low walls survive; the greatest height of surviving wall dates to the last major building phase carried out by Johnstone's son, James Raymond Johnstone in the early 1800s. The house was demolished to its present state in the 1950s.

- 1.4 The site is located on a relatively flat terrace near to the base of a steep south facing scar. The juxtaposition of the Ochils with the relatively flat plain to the south is a product of the Ochil fault.

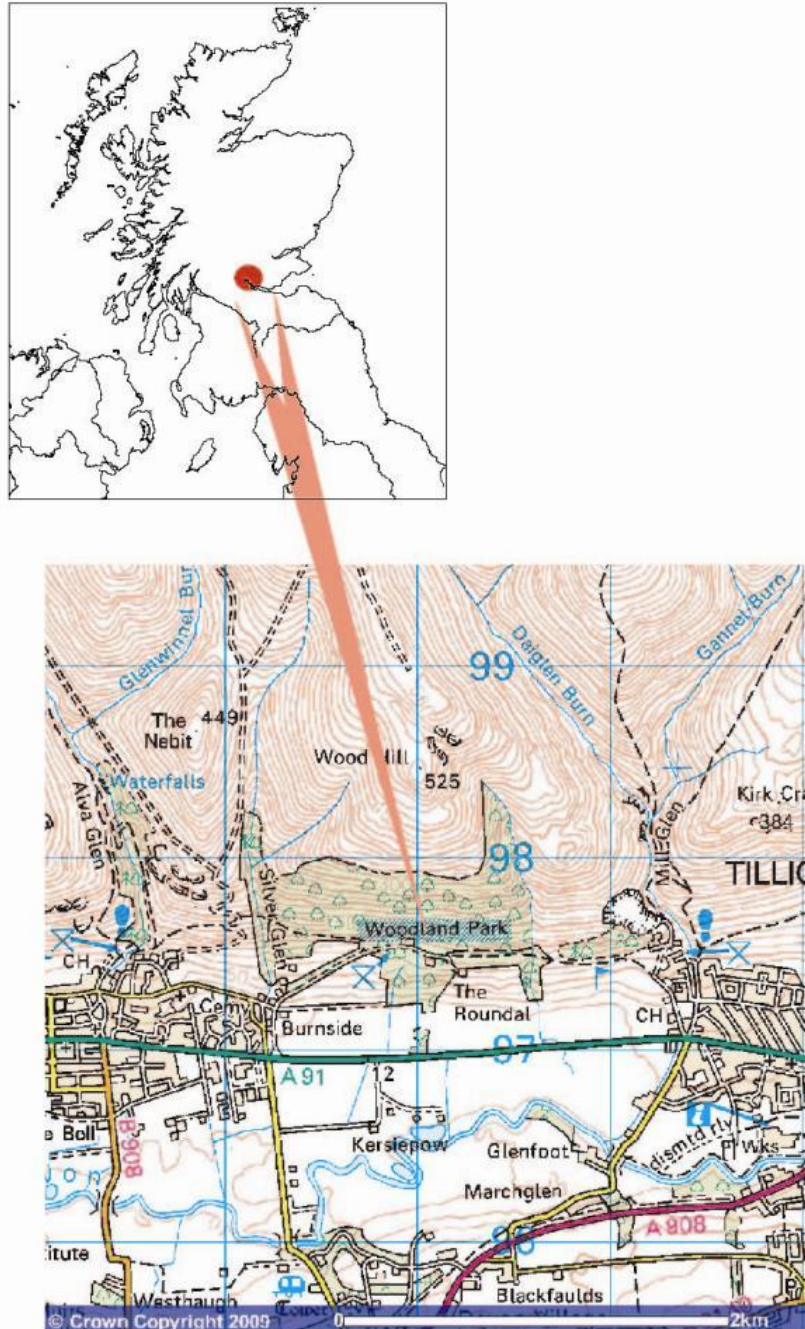


Fig. 1. Location of Alva House, Alva, Clackmannanshire.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 The archaeological objectives are:

- a. to allow for an accurate appreciation of all upstanding archaeological features within the proposed development area;
- b. to allow for an accurate appreciation of the appearance, purpose and date of the extant ruin (RCAHMS level 2);
- c. to determine the presence or absence of earlier architectural elements;
- d. to determine the presence or absence of a surviving basement level;
- e. to determine the character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality of any archaeological features;
- f. to propose further stages of work as required

3. METHOD

3.1 *Photographic record, ruined building*

3.1.1 A photographic record of the external elevations and the limited internal architectural features of the extant ruined building were undertaken following the principals of RCAHMS (2004). Note was taken of the direction of each photograph and this was recorded on an accompanying scaled plan (Fig. 2). The written record comprised note of: the condition; construction method; nature of materials; and other architectural features.

3.3 *Visual inspection and trial trenching*

3.3.1 A visual inspection of the site was undertaken. Note was taken of the topography and the presence or absence of any ground breaking activities.

3.3.2 Three trial trenches were machine excavated, two on the south-eastern side of the house and one in the central southern portion of the house (Fig. 3). Each trench was backfilled following the completion of the evaluation.

3.3.3 The second phase of fieldwork comprised the opening up of a larger area over Trench 1 and part of Trench 2 (Fig.2 and Fig 3). The rubble from this area was removed by machine utilising a toothed bucket. The area was backfilled on completion of the fieldwork.

4. RESULTS

4.1 *Building recording*

4.1.1 A list of the photographs of the roofless ruin is included within Appendix 4 (images are provided on cd-rom); the location of the photographic points are shown in Fig. 2. The whole ruin, as visible, was roughly L-shaped, with the greatest height of walls surviving at the western end. Prior to trial trenching only three interior spaces were readily definable, Area 1 and Rooms 2 & 3, (Fig. 2). The area to the north of the visible walls comprised rubble mounds

some 2 to 3 m high and it is very likely that structural features, such as walls and cellars survive beneath the rubble in this zone.

- 4.1.2 The south-eastern corner of the south facing façade (W1) is not visible; the exterior wall disappears into rubble and dense scrub. The surviving length of (W1) is approximately 35 m. A single possible window aperture (A1) was observed in the façade to the east of the central pedimented bay; it appears to be 0.40 m wide (Photo 3) (Fig. 2). This section of walling comprises four courses of mortared natural stone. The stone blocks are mostly rectangular, although there are some irregular shaped blocks; the blocks are generally between 0.15 m to 0.40 m. Smaller packing and levelling stones occur occasionally between the larger stone blocks. Occasional patches of harling were observed. To the west of the central pedimented bay two probable window apertures were recorded (Photos 6 & 7), (A2) one is 1.10 m wide but one side of the second (A3) could not be defined. The wall in this section is not readily visible due to the density of scrub.
- 4.1.3 The central pedimented bay projects 0.60 m from the main wall (W1), with a further central projection, some 4.40 m long and some 0.20 m southward of the latter (Photos 1, 4, 5, 36 & 37) (Fig. 2). On the south-eastern side, the corner block work of the central pedimented bay is chamfered and steps back slightly with increased height (Photo 2); the south-western corner is not visible (Photo 5). The central pedimented bay is constructed from roughly shaped rectangular blocks of igneous stone with a line of neatly cut, elongated (1.60 m x 0.14 m), rectangular sandstone blocks which occur three courses above (0.80 m) the current ground surface (Plate 1). Above this the stone blocks are darker in colour (igneous), with occasional slates between to maintain level. The wall survives to approximate 2 m above the current ground surface. Where visible the central projection is harled.



*Plate 1. Wall construction of central pedimented bay of south facing façade, showing band of dressed sandstone blocks, Alva House (Photo 36).*

Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.

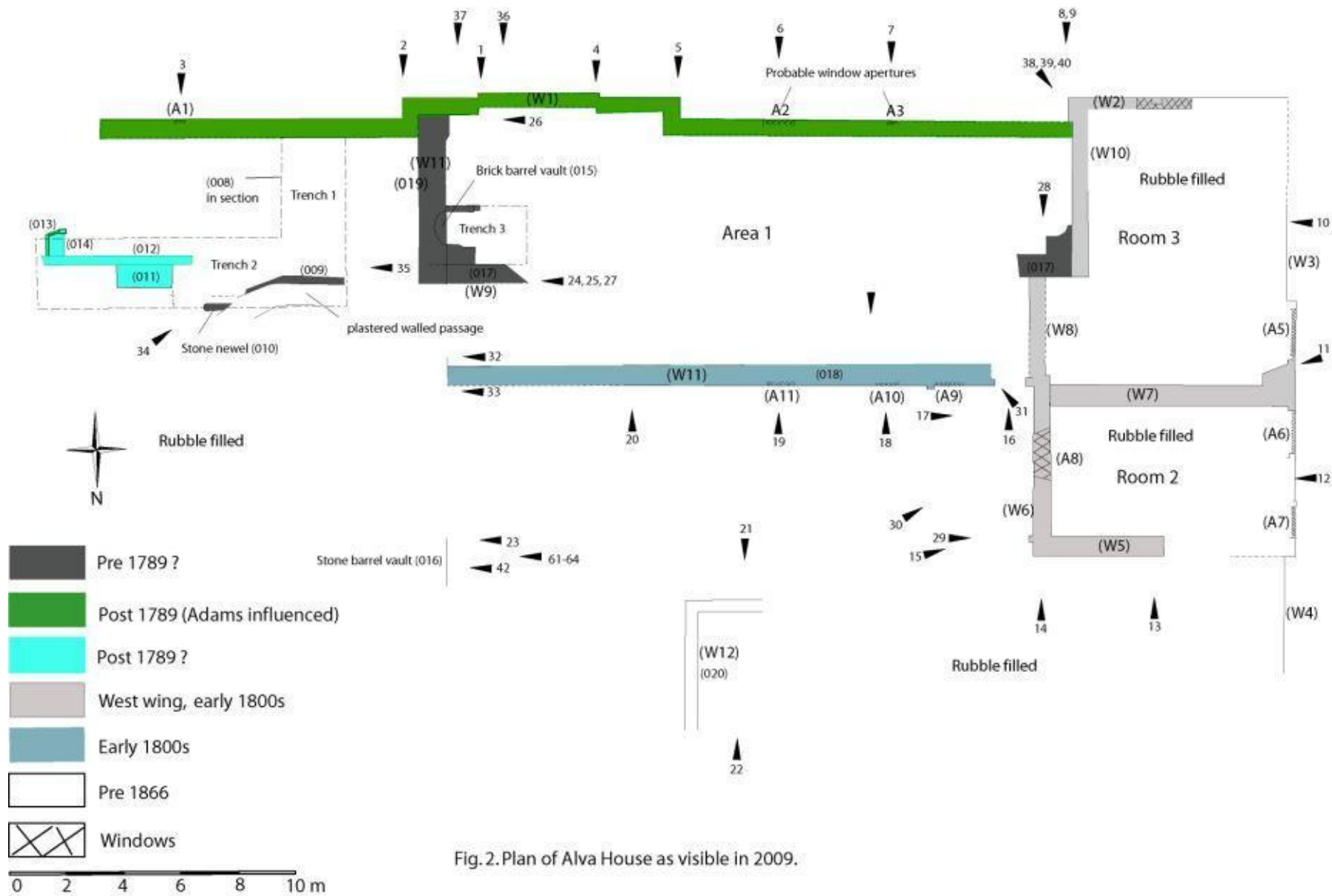


Fig. 2. Plan of Alva House as visible in 2009.

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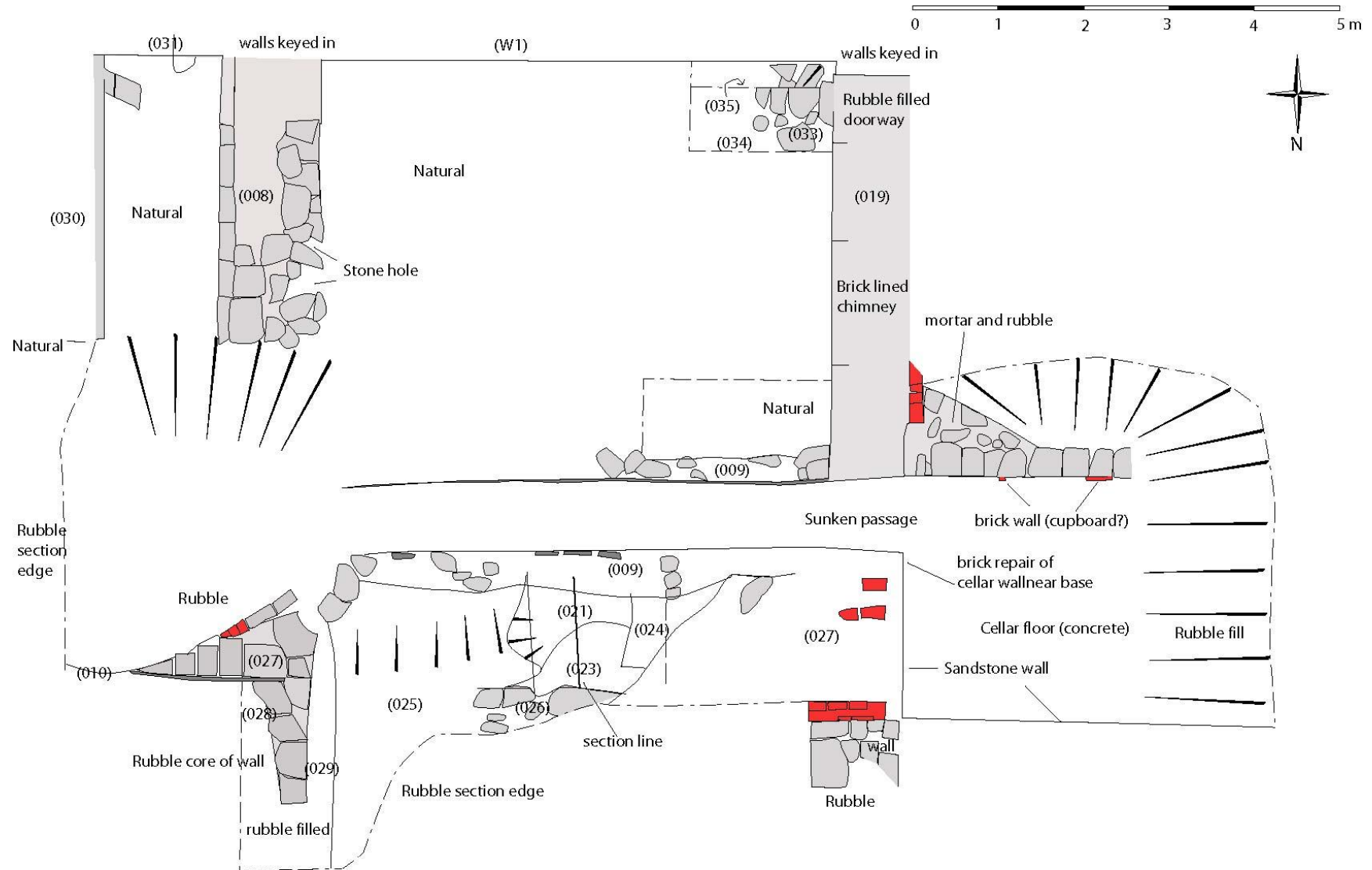


Fig. 3. Plan of large trench of the second phase of fieldwork, located over Trenches 1 and 2 of the first phase of fieldwork (see Fig. 2), Alva House.

- 4.1.4 The western wing, south facing elevation (W2) projects 0.90 m from the main façade wall. The corner stone work comprises rusticated quoins above a lower panel of dressed cream sandstone that was once plastered ('simple stylobate') (Photos 38, 39 & 40) (Plate 2). The stone work of the main wall comprises rectangular blocks that were originally harled. 2.5 m from the south-eastern corner of this western wing the wall above the dressed stone 'simple stylobate' is inset; this is possibly a blocked, three framed window (A4) (Fig. 3 & Photo 8). The wall at this location survives to around 4 m and is approximately 8 m in length.



*Plate 2. Rusticated quoins of west wing, south facing façade with flat, dressed stone 'simple stylobate' visible at the base, Alva House (Photo 39).*

- 4.1.5 The southern half of the west facing elevation (W3) is largely obscured by thick scrub (Photo 10). The slight projection of the pedimented bay (0.40 m) occurred approximately 7 m from the south-western corner of the building (Fig. 2). The wall (W3) survives to approximately 3 m height (Plate 3). There are three windows that reduce in size towards the back of the house; (A5) 1.80 m, (A6) 0.80 m and (A7) 0.70 m wide respectively. All three windows have dressed stone jambs and sills. The largest window, which is set within the pedimented bay, widens into the interior, with a wall width of 1.10 m. At the northern end of the west façade is an inset wall (W4) (inset by 0.40 m) which marks the end of the pedimented bay; this wall can be traced for around 4 m northwards, although the northwest corner of this façade was not visible.

Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.



Fig. 4. Alva House, taken prior to its demolition. Taken from southwest.





*Plate 3. Western façade, window jambs either side of surviving wall, Alva House (Photo 11).*

- 4.1.6 The western portion of the north facing façade was not visible; it is probably located somewhere to the north of Room 2, being demolished and buried beneath rubble. The central portion of the north facing façade is interpreted as (W11)/(018). However, an interior wall is visible; the northern wall of Room 2 (W5) (Photos 13 & 14). A doorway was probably located at the eastern end of this wall, as the latter is keyed into the adjacent wall on its southern side (W6) but extends to a corner on its northern side (Photo 14).
- 4.1.7 An east facing, plastered wall (0.60 m wide), with a dressed stone door jamb at its northern end lies to the south of the above and forms the eastern wall of Room 2 (W6) (Fig. 2) (Plate 4 (Photos 29 & 15)). A window (A8) in this wall has dressed stone jambs and is 1.5 m wide; it widens into the interior (Photo 30). A further dressed stone door jamb occurs at the southern end of this wall, with a matching stone door jamb on the opposite north facing wall (W11) (Photos 16 & 31). The door opening is 1.10 m wide. On the other side of this east facing wall, roughly opposite the door, an inner wall, (W7), 0.70 m wide, spans the width of the west wing. The line of the east facing wall (W8) extends southwards, although it is slightly off-set and appears to abut a fragment of wall running in an eastwardly direction (017) (W9). Abutting the latter is a further north/south oriented wall (W10) that appears to be keyed in with the wall of the south facing façade (W2).



*Plate 4. East facing plastered/harled wall with stone door jamb at its northern end, Alva House (Photo 15).*

4.1.8 An additional north facing stone wall runs from the doorway (described above) eastwards for approximately 12 m (018) (W11) (Photos 18, 19 & 20) (Fig. 2). The wall is 0.70 m wide and survives to a height of 1 m above the current ground surface. The blocks of stone are more uniform (0.45 m x 0.35 m) than those of the south facing elevation (except for the west wing). Fragments of harling are visible on the north facing side of W11. Within this wall three window apertures are just discernable (A9, A10 & A11) (Plate 5). Two of the windows are 1 m wide (A9 & A11), one side of the third (A10) is not visible. All the windows have dressed stone jambs and sills.



*Plate 5. Northernmost, north facing wall with window aperture, Alva House (Photo 18).*

4.1.9 A second north facing stone wall (W9) (017) occurs some 3 m to the south of the above. This wall is only visible at its eastern and western ends and is 0.80 m wide. The western fragment of wall is between 0.80 m and 1.90 m wide and has a short, curvilinear south facing portion (Plate 6). A brick built barrel vaulted niche (015) abuts this wall at its eastern end (Plate 7). Only the west side of the abutting north/south oriented wall (W11) (019) was visible; its width could not be determined.



*Plate 6. Curvilinear wall, Alva House (Photo 28).*



*Plate 7. Brick barrel vaulted niche, Alva House (Photo 65).*

- 4.1.10 A thin (0.40 m) stone wall (W12) (020), surviving as a L-shape, occurs to the north of the main building. The stone blocks of the wall are narrow, 0.10 m x 0.50 m and set in a concrete mortar. The wall survives to a height of 0.40 m.
- 4.1.11 The internal diameter of Area 1 is 22.80 m x 4.20 m (minimum) and 8.20 m (maximum). The highest surviving wall is approximately 2 m and the wall widths vary from 0.60 m to 1.90 m. The walls are all constructed from stone blocks, some roughly shaped and others are precisely dressed. No doorways are visible. Three windows are visible in northernmost elevation and two in the southern elevation.
- 4.1.12 The internal diameter of Room 2 is 8.5 m x 4.8 m. The wall widths vary from 0.60 m to 0.80 m. No doorways are visible. One window occurs on the east elevation and two on the west. All window jambs and sills are constructed from dressed stone. The east and west 'external' walls have been harled/plastered; the room itself was infilled with rubble.
- 4.1.13 The internal diameter of Room 3 is approximately 9 m x 9 m. The room appears to be wider towards the back (north side) of the house. The walls are up to 1.10 m wide. One window occurs on the west elevation with stone jambs and sill. There is a possible blocked window visible on the south elevation. The external walls were harled, except for the dressed stone window jambs, sills and rusticated quoins. The interior of the room was infilled with rubble.

## 4.2 *Trial trenching*

- 4.2.1 Technical trench descriptions are given in Appendix 2.

4.2.2 Trench 1 was oriented north to south. The southern end of the trench comprised the inner face of the south facing elevation. The stone foundations of this wall comprise two stepped tiers of stone blocks; the lowermost extends some 0.40 m from the main wall. The foundations rests upon natural red silt (007) and in one section brown silt (006). The east facing section revealed an interesting sedimentary sequence (Fig. 4). At the base, some 0.20 m of natural red silt (007) is overlain by 0.40 m of brown silt (006) in which are mixed numerous fragments of coal (approximately 30%) and rare fragments of animal bone. There are occasional short, discontinuous bands of coal fragments within this deposit. The brown silt (006) is capped by a series of thin bands of sediment. The first is (005), a thin band (0.02 m) of bright red clay with occasional small pebbles. This is capped by a thin (0.01 m) brown sandy silt with charcoal fragments (004). On top is another red clay (003) some 0.03 m thick, which is very similar to (005). Directly below the rubble back fill is (002) a dark brown silt with coal fragments; this layer is 0.03 m at its thickest. Above this lies 2.28 m of rubble back fill (001). On the western side of Trench 1 the made ground of re-deposited silts extends back to (009), a thin wall. On the eastern side of Trench 1 the natural silt (007) extends back to (009), some 5 m north of the inner face of the wall of the south façade.



*Plate 8. East facing section showing natural silt (007) and various sedimentary deposits above, Alva House (Photo 47).*

4.2.3 The west facing section revealed a roughly built wall of natural stone (008) with lime mortar (?); the wall is set directly upon the natural red silt (007) or brown silt (006). The wall survives to a depth of approximately 0.50 m.

Scale 1:20

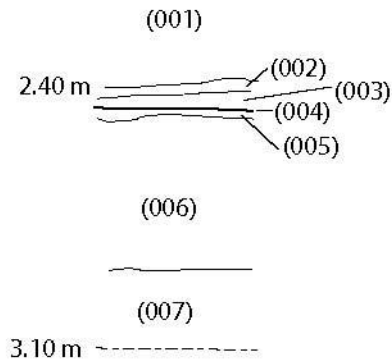


Fig.5. Trench 1, east facing section, Alva House.

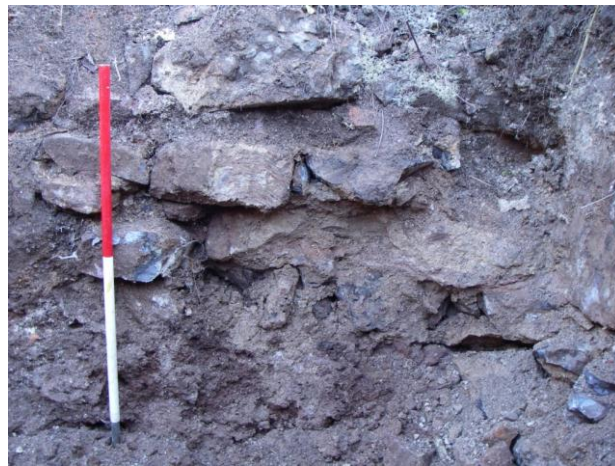


Plate 9. West facing section showing lower courses of wall (008) oriented north/west, Alva House (Photo 44).

4.2.4 Trench 2 was oriented east to west and led off Trench 1 in an eastwardly direction. A thin wall (009) was seen in the east facing section and in plan at the north end of T1 running into T2 (Fig. 2). The wall is thin, 0.20 m wide, and stone and brick built; its northern side is lined with plaster (Plate 10) and at the base of the trench its southern side by natural silt (007). The wall curves northwards leading towards a wall of stone (010), the eastern end of which is curved (Plate 11); this structure is interpreted as an elongated stone newel post. Beneath the newel is a stone arch, thought to be a supporting arch for the rising newel. This arch and the newel post are constructed from sandstone; each block about 0.20 m thick, 0.50 x 0.26 m long. The newel was originally plastered and survives to a height of at least 1.80 m. The thin wall (009) forms part of a passage leading from the western side of T1 to the supporting stone arch.



*Plate 10. Thin wall of passage, Trench 1, Alva House (Photo 48).*



*Plate 11. Stone newel post with Supporting arch, Trench 2, Alva House (Photo 52).*

- 4.2.5 To the east of (010) is a rectangular block of mortared stone masonry (011) some 0.80 m x 2.00 m in plan. A wall (012) abuts and runs along the southern edge of (011). The wall is 0.30 m wide and built from sandstone, slate and the occasional brick. The wall disappears into the east section at the end of Trench 2.
- 4.2.6 In the southeast corner of Trench 2 is located a plastered stone wall (013) with an angled corner of about 130° and with a dressed stone jamb (?) at the western end. There is soot on the plasterwork of the west facing portion of the wall. Abutting (013) is a wall of brick (014) that appears to ‘blocked up’ (013). The western face of (014) is also plastered.
- 4.2.7 A brick barrel vaulted niche (015) was revealed in Trench 3, (Fig. 2 & Plate 7). The vault is 1.20 m deep, 1.10 m wide and 0.60 m high. It has a stone floor, upon which is a considerable amount of soot. The brick work abuts the east/west oriented structural wall (017), extending the wall width at this point by 1 m. A further stone barrel vaulted cellar (016) (Plate 12) was recorded to the north of (015). The machine cleared back rubble from the collapsed entrance. This cellar is partially collapsed and was not entered, although the back (eastern) wall was discernable. The cellar is 3 m wide, with 3 brick built compartments at its eastern end. A lower brick barrel vault was just visible below the northernmost brick compartment; the depth of this was not ascertained.



*Plate 12. Stone barrel vaulted cellar with brick compartments, Alva House (Photo 61).*

### 4.3 Excavation

- 4.3.1 The excavation area ran from wall (W11) located on the west, to the east side of wall (008) and from the southern wall at the front of the house (W1) to some two metres northwards beyond that area exposed by Trenches 1 and 2 in 2009 (Fig 3). A blocked door and chimney were recorded in (W11); the doorway had a brick foundation and the chimney was brick lined. A gap (036), roughly 0.25 m wide, depth not ascertained, filled with a few large stone blocks was recorded near the base of (W1). To the east of this a sandstone stone wall (008) was fully exposed. This stone was set on natural red silt, with a protruding foundation course visible on the eastern side but not on the western. The upper courses of this wall were set in a lime mortar. A flat stone with a linear groove in its upper surface may be the remnants of flag flooring. On the east side of (008) another stone wall (030) was only observed in section. Between (008) and (030) the plaster on the south facing wall (W1) was set on broken red pantiles; this material adhered to the sandstone blocks. The floor (031) between (030) and (008) was concrete.



*Plate 13. Blocked doorway in (W11) and levelling layers (033), (034) and (035) below. (Photo 87)*



*Plate 14. Wall (008). (Photo 89)*

- 4.3.2 The stone stair (027) revealed in the evaluation was re-revealed, with broken sandstone treads of a curving (spiral ?) staircase ascending in a clockwise direction and with a lower curving concave wall extending to the east (Fig. 3). The stair was supported by a substantial stone supporting wall (028), with a cement mortar; the stone work of the western side of this supporting structure was dressed. To the north of (028) there appeared to be a rubble filled doorway. The construction trench for (028) was clearly visible cut into (025) a red silt. The passage (009) revealed in the evaluation was also re-exposed. The passage clearly cut the red silt (025) and the overlying midden deposit (021). The walls of the passage were roughly constructed from cobbles and stone with a weak cement mortar. The walls had been built up against the silt and midden deposits on the north side and natural red silt on its south side. To the west was a large, deep cellar. The south, east and northern walls of the cellar were exposed. The walls were constructed from sandstone and originally plaster, although later repairs were apparent as red brick had been utilised to fill gaps left by collapsed sandstone blocks. Holes for thin joists were visible near the top of the cellar wall. The remnants of a possible brick built cupboard was recorded on the southern wall. To the south of this the over thickened wall of the brick oven (015) revealed in the evaluation was just visible.





Plate 15. Stone staircase (027). (Photo 96).

4.3.3 Below a concrete floor (027) was a compact red clay into which coal ash had been trampled/mixed (Fig. 3). Part of this was excavated to reveal an irregular dump of black silt midden material (023) containing many animal bone fragments (chicken and pig) and below this a brown silt midden (021) also containing many animal bone fragments (including chicken and pig) (Fig. 6). Both midden deposits overlay wall (026). Below (021) was a compact angular gravel and silt (022) which contained rare animal bone fragments; this material extended underneath wall (026). On the eastern side of the sondage was a bright red silt (025) which lay under the brown silt midden (021) but over the gravel and silt (022). (025) had also been cut by the later passage (009).

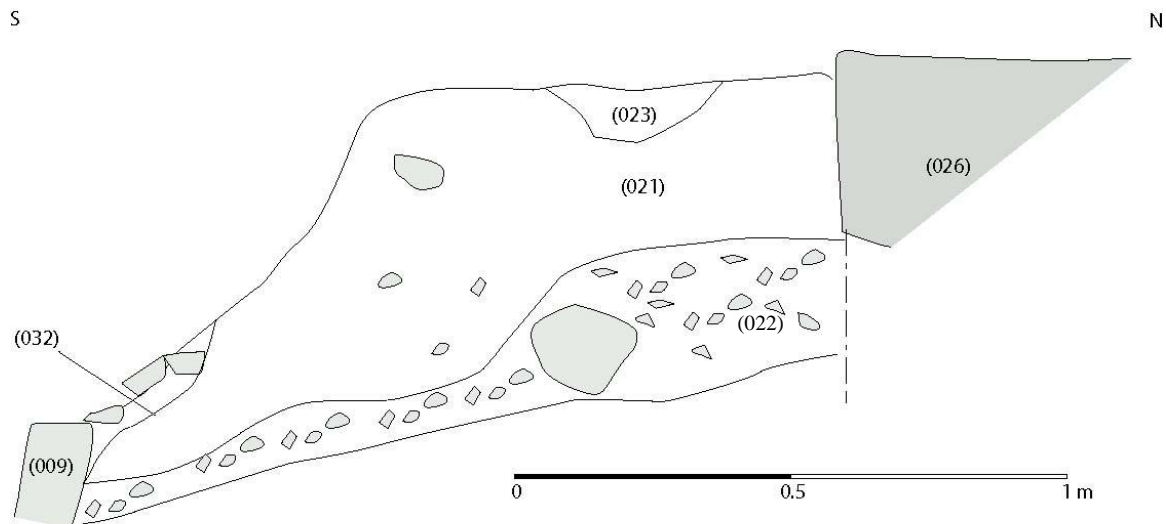


Fig.6. Section through midden deposits.



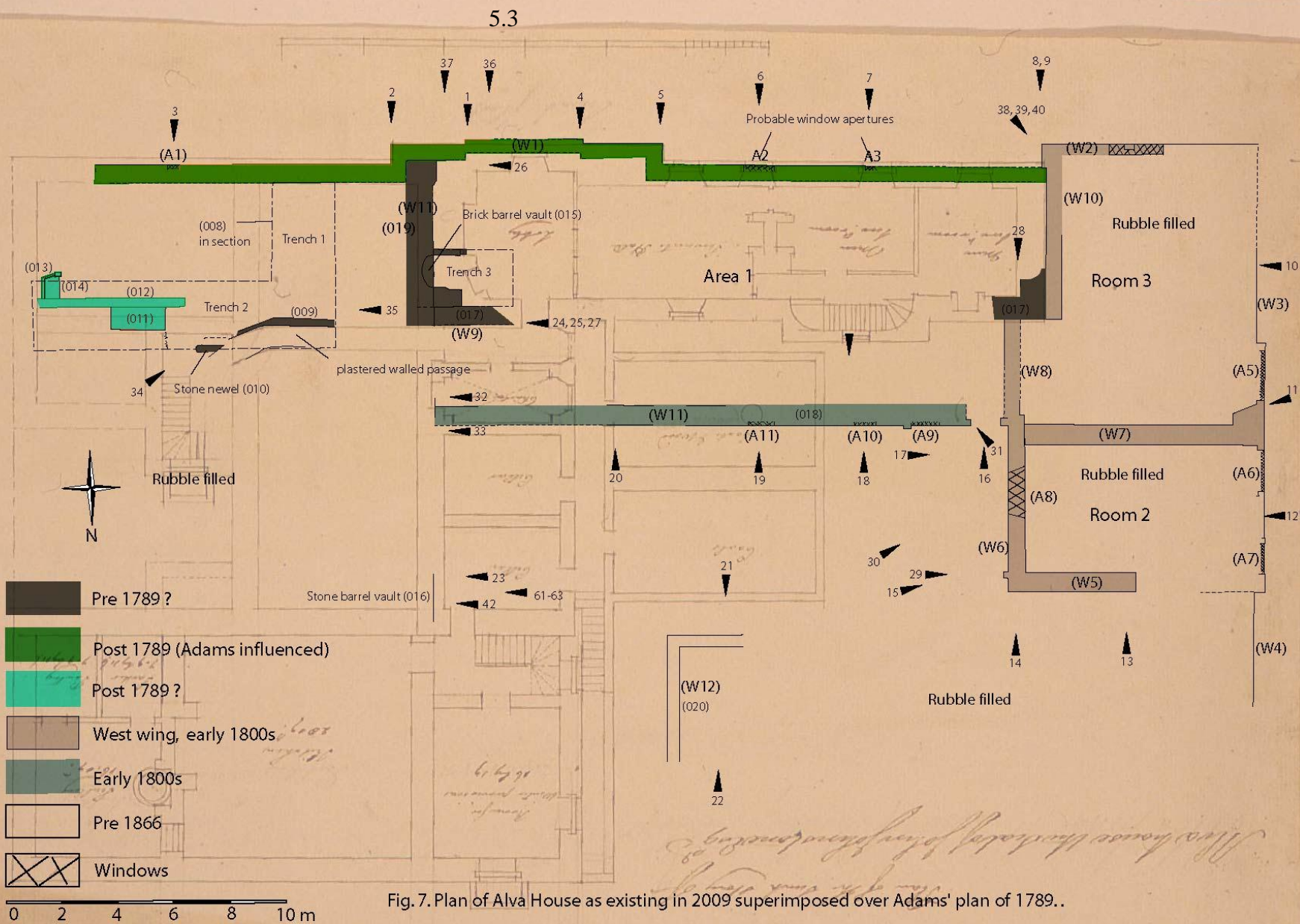
*Plate 16. Sondage through middens (023), (021) and material (022), with wall (026) visible on the right. (Photo 112)*

- 4.3.4 In the corner where (W11) met (W1) a layer of sandstone blocks (033) formed the northern side of the ventilation gap (036) (Plate 13). Below (033) was a brown silt midden (035) which had clearly been disturbed and sandstone blocks added to it.

## 5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1 An overlay of the plan of the currently visible and surviving walls, with the plan produced by Adams' in 1789 reveals some duplication (Fig. 5). Based upon this evidence it would appear that the south facing façade had been modified in accordance with Adams' plan, with only a few minor differences between the 1789 plan and that actually recorded in 2009. The southernmost internal wall (017) also coincides with a relative thick wall shown on Adams' plan. This wall is of a similar thickness to other external and internal, presumably load bearing walls and one possible interpretation is that was in existence prior to any modification made after 1789. The curvilinear western end of wall (017) may mark the location of a former staircase; although the staircase on Adams' plan is depicted to the east. The barrel vaulted brick niche (015) is interpreted as an oven. It roughly coincides with the over thickened wall and niche shown on Adams' plan. On Adams' plan this room is called a lobby, but given the presence of the oven it may have been part of the original kitchen/bakery prior to any modifications made after 1789.
- 5.2 To the east of (015) it appears that the wall (008) running along the east side of Trench 1 roughly coincides with the structural wall depicted on Adams' plan. The northern end of this wall was not observed during the machine excavation of Trench 2. The curved, plastered lined passage (009) matches exactly with a passage on Adams' plan, although is unclear what happens to the end of this passage on Adams' plan. The evaluation revealed that the passage led under what appears to be an elongated stone newel post supported by an arch. It is possible that this stone newel is part of the structure of the staircase as depicted on the 1789 plan. The wall (012) appears to be a thin internal wall leading to a possible blocked up stone window or fireplace (013); this feature

Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.



is not depicted on the 1789 plan and therefore may post-date 1789. The function of (011) is unclear. The stone barrel vaulted cellar (016) roughly coincides with the cellar depicted on the 1789 plan.

- 5.3 At the southern end of the building, Trench 1, there was no evidence of a cellar or cellar floor. Rather it appears that natural silt was cut into and hollows infilled with mixed silts and clays for the first five metres northwards from the south facing façade in order to provide a level area into which the foundations were built. It is unclear whether the re-deposited silts and clays represent consecutive infills designed purely to level the site or are midden deposits which had been dumped into hollows prior to the construction of this portion of Alva House. The passage to the north of this area had been cut into the natural silt to create a subterranean passageway, as had the foundations for wall (012). However, the presence of a blocked up window or fireplace at the east end of Trench 2 indicates that there is accessible cellarage on this side of the building, perhaps dating to work undertaken in the early 1800s.
- 5.4 To the north of wall (017) is wall (018); the fabric of these two walls is significantly different, that of (018) sharing the architectural characteristics of the west wing. Wall (018) is not depicted on Adams' plan, the implication being that it belongs to a later phase of alterations, presumably carried out at the same time as the west wing was constructed. If wall (017) was in existence when wall (018) was built the internal area between the two walls would have been around 3 m in width.
- 5.5 It is likely that the thin walled feature (020) belongs to a later phase of construction. The house, as depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey map is complex in form. The front façade appears to be similar to what has been recorded, although there is an additional part on the east side, set back from the main façade. Wall (018) may coincide with the back wall of the main portion of the house and wall (020) may coincide with the northern most east/west projection.
- 5.6 Apart from (016), the stone barrel vaulted cellar, there is no field evidence for the presence or absence of the suite of rooms depicted behind and to the northeast of the 'lobby' and servants hall depicted on the 1789 plan or on the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1866. This northern zone is 2 or 3 metres higher than the ground immediately around the house and it is very possible that beneath the rubble further walls and architectural features survive.
- 5.7 The corner of W1 and W11 are keyed in, demonstrating that they had been constructed at the same time. The blocked doorway in W11 as well as a brick lined chimney are shown on Adam's plan of the first storey of the house. (008) is as depicted on Adam's plan but wall (030), only seen in section, is not; it is likely that this wall belongs to a later phase of construction and alteration of the house. The stair (027) coincides with that shown on Adams' plans, and clearly extended to quite a depth to allow access to the cellar down the subterranean passage (009).

5.8 Layers of re-deposited midden material mixed with large sandstone blocks (033), (034) and (035) are interpreted as levelling layers, used to flatten out the ground before the front and earliest (?) portion of Alva House was constructed. A large fragment of redware recovered from (035) is dated to 1450 AD (Haggarty pers. comm.). Similar, but undisturbed midden deposits (023) and (021) survive between the subterranean passage (009) and the demolished sandstone wall (026). It is thought likely that the midden material of (035) and (034) may have been dragged from the same midden heap that comprises (021) and (023) and perhaps the sandstone blocks from wall (026). A piece of pottery recovered from the red silt (025) that lay under (021) had been dated to 1400s AD (Haggarty pers. comm.). The midden material was dumped up against the stone wall (026), suggesting that the stone wall is earlier in date. However, some of the dumping may have occurred after all but the first course of the wall was removed, as the top of the wall was covered by a thin layer of midden, although later building activity may have spread the midden over the wall. The wall comprised three large sandstone blocks arranged in a line, with smaller stones possibly forming the core of the wall; unfortunately its northern edge was not observed as it lay beneath nearly two metres of rubble. The wall (026) is likely to date to around or just before the 15<sup>th</sup> century and may be a surviving fragment of a former structure, perhaps even the illusive tower house.

#### 5.9 *Summary*

5.9.1 The presence of re-deposited silts and clays, many with coal fragments and the thickest deposit containing animal bone fragments, beneath the foundation level of the south-eastern side of Alva House demonstrates that there was domestic activity on the site prior to the construction of this portion of the house. Excavation revealed further re-deposited midden material that had been mixed with building stone to level the ground prior to the construction of Alva House. A large fragment of redware dates this material to pre 1450 AD. Similar but undisturbed midden deposits about a fragment of an earlier stone wall, which appears to pre date the 1400s AD. It is postulated that this wall may have been part of a former tower house that was reputed to have sat on the site prior to the construction of Alva House. The presence of coal within the midden and red silt deposits indicates that coal was being extracted locally and utilised at a relatively early date.

5.9.2 Basement levels survive at Alva House and these appear to occur some five metres or so to the north of the southern elevation in the south-eastern portion of the house, behind the central pedimented bay and at the back, central portion of the house.

5.9.3 Although Alva House has been partially demolished the evaluation and excavation has demonstrated that many structural, architectural features and sedimentary deposits survive beneath the rubble backfill, all in a moderate state of preservation. At least four phases of construction/alteration have been recorded. Although some walls and features shown on Adams' plan have been identified during the archaeological works, in many cases it was not possible to determine whether these date to a pre-Adams' phase or a post Adams' phase.

**Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.**

6 APPENDICES

*Appendix 1: Contexts descriptions*

Area	Context	Context type	Description	Interpretation	over	under	cuts	cut by	filled by
T1	1	Layer	Rubble fill - demolition material from Alva House and reportedly from the stables when it was converted.	Rubble backfill	2				
T1	2	Layer	Dark brown silt with coal fragments. Max width 0.03 m.	Levelling deposit, beaten earthen floor ?	3	1			
T1	3	layer	Red clay	Deliberate levelling or floor.	4	2			
T1	4	layer	Thin, max 0.01 m, brown sandy silt with charcoal fragments	Levelling or floor	5	3			
T1	5	layer	Bright red clay with occasional small pebbles. 0.02 m thick	Levelling or floor deposit	6	4			
T1	6	layer	Brown silt with fragments of coal and occasional bone. 0.40 m thick.	Levelling deposit.	7	5			
T1 & T2	7	layer	Red silt	Natural silt.		6			
T1	8	structure	Wall in west facing section of T1. Roughly built stone wall, blocks natural stone 0.50 m x 0.40 m. Lime mortar. Set on natural red silt (007) and in places re-deposited silt (006)	Foundation portion of N/S oriented internal wall.	7, 6	1			
T1 & T2	9	structure	Brick and stone built wall, cut into (007) on south side. Wall 0.20 m thick, plastered coated on north side.	Thin wall of passage, passage oriented E/W.		1	7		1

**Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.**

Area	Context	Context type	Description	Interpretation	over	under	cuts	cut by	filled by
T2	10	structure	Stone arch and cut sandstone wall with curved eastern end. Survives to 1.80 m high. Wall blocks 0.20 m thick, 0.50 m x 0.26 m. Evidence of plaster.	Stone newel post for staircase		1			
T2	11	structure	Block of mortared stone masonry, 0.80 m x 2.00m seen in plan only.	? Structural.					
T2	12	structure	East- west oriented stone, slate and brick wall. 0.30 m wide, seen in plan only. Abuts (012).	Wall, probably internal.					
T2	13	structure	Stone wall on south and east side, angled at 130 degrees. Dressed stone door/window/fireplace jamb ? On southern side. Plastered. Soot on plaster on west facing plaster work.	Fireplace ? Base of bay of window ?					
T2	14	structure	Brick built wall, with red sandstone and plastered western face. Brick barrel vault set at base of internal wall (019). 1.20 m deep, 1.10 m wide and internal height 0.80 m. Bricks mortared. Stone floor, soot covered. Some soot adhering to bricks. Bricks 0.22 m x 0.05 m x 0.40 m. Bricks abut wall (017) and form over thickened wall on north side.	Blocking brick work within 013					
T3	15	structure		Oven.					

**Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.**

Area	Context	Context type	Description	Interpretation	over	under	cuts	cut by	filled by
1	16	structure	Stone barrel vault cellar 2 m wide (internally), length unknown as most has collapsed. 3 brick built compartments at eastern end, with further barrel vaulted brick niches just visible below. Not entered as too dangerous. Wall 0.70 m to 1.90 m wide. Oriented E/W. Over thickened at west end, possibly for staircase. Mostly demolished. Appears to extend beyond (019). (019) abuts (017). Not seen in T1.	Cellar					
	17	structure	Wall, 0.70 m wide with 3 window apertures visible, each 1 m wide. Dressed stone sills and jambs. Wall survives to height of 1 m. Blocks of stone make up wall, well cut, 0.45 x 0.35 m.	Wall, probably dating to pre 1789, as it appears on Adams' plan and clearing forms an external wall.					
	18	structure	Wall, on surface at least 1.10 m wide, full width not ascertained due to dense vegetation. At base (015) is built into/against it. Abuts (017).	Wall. Possible same date as west wing, early 1800s.					
	19	structure	Thin stone wall, 0.40 m. Stone blocks 0.10 x 0.50 m, concrete mortar. L-shaped piece of wall surviving in northern portion of site. 0.40 m high.	Wall.					
	20	structure		Wall, possible pre 1866 in date, but possibly post early 1800s construction phase.					



**Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.**

Area	Context	Context type	Description	Interpretation	over	under	cuts	cut by	filled by
	21	Layer	Brown friable silt, small fragments of mortar. Lots of animal bone, occasional clumps of red clay with coal fragments. Occasional large stones. Clay pipe stem, redware.	Midden	25, 22	23			
	22	Layer	Mixed gravel (0.05 m) and brown silt, occasional fragments of coal, and occasional fragments of bone. 0.23 m max thickness.	Re-deposited, dirty natural.		26, 21, 25			
	23	Layer	Black silt with much coal. Animal bone.	Dump of ash with midden material mixed in.	21, 26			009	
	24	Layer	Compact red clay with coal ash. Layer up to 0.07 m thick	Dump of red clay - compacted	23, 21	29			
	25	Layer	Red clay/silt with occasional flecks and fragments of coal	Levelling layer	22	21, 33			
	26	Wall	3 large stones aligned in straight line, oriented E/W. Stones 0.30 x 0.20 m, largest not fully exposed. 1 course high. Possible bonded by red clay with coal and limited lime mortar although this material could be secondary and be a dump on the wall	Possible wall - pre-Alva house structure		21, 22			

**Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.**

Area	Context	Context type	Description	Interpretation	over	under	cuts	cut by	filled by
	27	Wall	Curving stone stair, concrete mortar with 5 steps visible. Stone and brick built, plastered walls. Clockwise ascent. 2 m high, although full depth not ascertained. Stair steps made from sandstone 0.45 m x 0.22 m x 0.12 m, curves round to north then curves back again to south. Red paint on plaster.	Spiral or curving stone stair.					
	28	Wall	Pink cement bonding stone block some 1.40 m long N/S. Stone foundations, dressed stone on north edge - possible doorway that is rubble filled. (027) abuts (028).	Support for stair and upper flight.					
	29	Cut	Foundation trench for (028). 0.28 m wide.				25		
	30	Wall	Sandstone wall only seen in section. Lime mortared. Set on natural red silt. Abuts (031). On floor sandstone flag with narrow linear groove, 0.05 m wide and 1 mm deep. Groove parallel to wall.	Supporting wall of Alva House					
	31	Layer	Concrete floor, set on foundation blocks which extend north of wall. Wall plastered on fragments of red tile - probable broken roof tile.	Floor of small room.					

**Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.**

Area	Context	Context type	Description	Interpretation	over	under	cuts	cut by	filled by
	32	Cut	Cut for (009). Irregular U-shaped cut for (009)						
	33	Layer	Large cobbles on top of of which is a red silt with coal fragments. Very similar to (025)	Levelling layer, revetted on south edge to form lining to air gap between it and house wall (south elevation). Large stone dumped.				021, 22	
	34	Layer	Contains large stones, disturbed leveled midden, lower layer	Levelling layer, large stones added		33			
	35	Layer	Brown silt with coal, bone and pottery - redware. Midden same as (021). Contains large stones, disturbed.	Levelling layer, disturbed midden to which large stones have been added.		33, 34			
	36	Cut	Gap if between outer south facing wall of Alva House and (035). Gap loosely filled with angular stone blocks with no fine material.	Air vent between outer south wall of Alva House and levelling material under foundations and beneath floors.					

## Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.

### Appendix 2: Trench Record

Project no	Trench no	Orientation	Length	Width	Depth of topsoil	Depth of trench	Comments
97	T1	N/S	6 m	2.3 m	NA	3.10 m	Minimum of 2.28 m of rubble backfill. Natural blocky red silt.
97	T2	E/W	8.5 m	2.3 m	NA	3.10 m	Rubble overlying stone newel post and various walls
97	T3	E/W	2 m	2.2 m	NA	3.10 m	Rubble fill over brick built barrel vaulted niche.

### Appendix 3: Drawing record

Drawing no	Sheet no	Area	Scale	Contexts	Description
1	1		1:100		Plan of ruin, central and eastern side
2	2		1:100		Plan of ruin, west side
3	3		1:50		Plan of large trench
4	3		1:20		Section through middens

### Appendix 4: photographic record

No.	Description	Elevation	From
1	Southeastern southernmost projection of the central portion of the façade.	South	South
2	Southeastern side of the central portion of the façade.	South	South
3	Collapse or window aperture ? On southeastern façade.	South	South
4	Southwestern side of southernmost projection of the central portion of the façade.	South	South
5	Southwestern side of the central portion of the façade.	South	South
6	Southwestern side of the southern façade, probable window aperture (1).	South	South
7	Southwestern side of the southern façade, probable window aperture (2).	South	South
8	Southwestern side of the southern façade, rusticated quoins.	South	South
9	Southwestern side of southern façade, showing rusticated quoins and dressed corner stone work.	South	South
10	Southern portion of western façade, lower plastered panel at base.	West	West
11	Central portion of western façade, with grooved stonework of the window frames.	West	West
12	Northern portion of the western façade, showing basal portion of two windows.	West	West
13	Interior wall (?) of room 2.		North
14	Northeastern corner of north facing wall of room 2		North
15	Northeastern corner (exterior) of room 2, showing remnants of stone doorway.	East (western wing)	East
16	North façade, groove stonework of westernmost doorway.	North East (western wing)	North
17	East elevation (western wing), plastered.	North East (western wing)	East
18	North façade, window aperture, with groove stonework.	North	North
19	North façade, window aperture (easternmost), with groove stonework.	North	North
20	North façade, exterior wall.	North	North

**Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.**

No.	Description	Elevation	From
21	Thin walled L shaped structure on northern side of site.		South
22	Thin walled L shaped structure on northern side of site.		North
23	Barrel vaulted stone 'cellar'		West
24	Section of east/west wall with interior wall abutting (lobby wall)		West
25	Section of east/west wall with interior wall abutting (lobby wall)		West
26	Southern corner of north/south (eastern) wall of 'lobby'		West
27	Section of east/west wall with interior wall abutting (lobby wall)		West
28	Interior corner of room 1, possible curve of staircase		South
		East	
		(western	
29	East elevation (western wing) groove stonework of doorway.	wing)	East
		East	
		(western	
30	Window opening of east elevation (western wing)	wing)	East
31	Eastern side of doorway (groove stonework) on north elevation	North	North
32	Internal junction of northern elevation wall and internal north/south wall		West
33	Section through northern elevation wall, exterior just visible		West
34	Eastern side of 'lobby' pre-trial trenching		North
35	Eastern side of 'lobby' pre-trial trenching		West
36	South façade, central portion showing stone work	South	South
37	South façade, central portion showing stone work	South	South
38	Lower stonework of south façade of western wing	South	South
39	Quoins of south façade of western wing	South	South
40	Quoins of south façade of western wing	South	South
41	Piece of column		
42	Barrel vaulted stone 'cellar'		West
43	Levelling stone work (T1)		West
44	Levelling stone work (T1)		West
45	Levelling stone work (T1)		West
46	Built up ground below floor level of room at front of building (T1)		East
47	Built up ground below floor level of room at front of building (T1)		East
48	Section through wall with plastered surface (right) and made ground (left) (T1)		East
49	Stone vault and plastered wall (T2) south section		South
50	Stone vault and plastered passageway leading into the vault (T2)		West
51	Stone vault, with angled passageway (T2)		South
52	Curved stone work of possible elongate newel-post (T2)		East
53	Curved stone work of possible elongate newel-post (T2)		East
54	Square of mortared masonry with east/west wall abutting(T2)		East
55	Brick blocked recess with sooting (T2)		West
56	Brick blocked recess with sooting (T2)		North
57	Curved stone work of possible elongate newel post and vault (T2)		South
58	General shot of T2		West
59	General shot of T1		North
60	General shot of T2		East
61	Interior of stone barrel vault showing brick compartments		West
62	Interior of stone barrel vault showing brick compartments		West
63	Collapsed entrance to stone barrel vault		West
64	Collapsed entrance to stone barrel vault		West
65	Brick vault at base of eastern wall of 'lobby' (T3)		West
66	Brick vault at base of eastern wall of 'lobby' (T3)		West
67	Junction of east/west wall and brick vault (T3)		South
68	Junction of east/west wall and brick vault (T3)		South
69	Rubble wall exposed in northern section		South
70	Rubble wall exposed in northern section		South

**Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.**

No.	Description	Elevation	From
71	Top of midden (023) and (021)		West
72	Top of midden (023) and (021)		West
73	Wall (11)		North
74	Wall (11)		North
75	Passage (009)		East
76	Passage (009)		East
77	Passage (009)		South
78	Passage (009)		South
79	Wall of (009) and exposed natural on south side		East
80	Wall of (009) and exposed natural on south side		East
81	Chimney in wall (W11)		East
82	Chimney in wall (W11)		East
83	Rubble levelling material (033)		East
84	Rubble levelling material (033)		East
85	Rubble levelling material (033)		North
86	Rubble levelling material (033)		North
87	Rubble levelling material (033) and blocked doorway above		East
88	Rubble levelling material (033) and blocked doorway above		East
89	Wall (008)		West
90	Wall (008)		West
91	Wall (008)		East
92	Wall (008)		East
93	Stone staircase – (027)		South
94	Stone staircase – (027)		South
95	Stone staircase – (027)		West
96	Stone staircase – (027)		West
97	Construction trench (029)		West
98	Construction trench (029)		West
99	Stone stairs, western facing support		West
100	Stone stairs, western facing support		West
101	Cellar and blocked passage (009)		West
102	Cellar and blocked passage (009)		West
103	Section through midden (023) and (021)		East
104	Section through midden (023) and (021)		East
105	Section through midden (023) and (021)		South
106	Section through midden (023) and (021)		South
107	Section through midden (023) and (021)		South
108	Section through midden (023) and (021)		South
109	Section through midden (023) and (021)		East
110	Section through midden (023) and (021)		East
111	Section through midden (023) and (021)		East
112	Section through midden (023) and (021)		East
113	Ventilation gap (036)		East
114	Ventilation gap (036)		East
115	Cellar walls		South
116	Cellar walls		South

*Appendix 6: Finds*

No.	Type	Context
1	Pottery * 1	(025)
2	Pottery * 1, , clay pipe stem *1	(021)
3	Pottery * 1 redware	(035)

**Archaeological Works at Alva House, Clackmannanshire.**

*Appendix 7: DES Entry*

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	Clackmannanshire
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Alva House
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	97
<b>PARISH:</b>	Alva
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Clare Ellis
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	Argyll Archaeology
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Excavation
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	NS99NW 74.00
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	Country House
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	Walls, pottery, midden
<b>NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)</b>	NS 90104 97503
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	February 28 <sup>th</sup> 2011
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	March 2 <sup>nd</sup> 2011
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	None
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	An earlier phase of building recording and evaluation of the partially demolished remains of Alva House revealed the survival of at least four phases of construction and alteration. Structural remains already in existence when Robert and James Adam prepared plan for altering the south façade have been identified. Later, alterations and additions including the west wing have also been recorded. Beneath foundations, probably pre 1789 in date, were identified a series of thin clay and silt deposits overlying a re-deposited midden material. Excavation in 2011 revealed that the thin clay and silts deposits as well as re-deposited midden mixed with building stone were levelling layers upon which Alva House was constructed. A large fragment of redware, dating to 1450 AD was recovered from the re-deposited midden. Just to the north of these levelling layers a pocket of midden material and underlying mixed red silt with coal fragments remained undisturbed by the construction of Alva House, a fragment of pottery dating to the 15 <sup>th</sup> century AD was recovered from the silt. These deposits abutted and may have covered the remnants of a large stone wall, which had been all but demolished. Unfortunately the wall disappeared into the south facing section beneath 2 m of rubble and could not be traced further. It is postulated that this wall may have belonged to the former tower house.
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Mr and Mrs McEwan
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Davaar Cottage, Campbeltown, Argyll. PA28 6RE
<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>	ellisclare@argyll-archaeology.co.uk
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)</b>	NMRS