

Friars Carse Stable Block West, South and East Wings

Friars Carse, Dunscore, Dumfries and Galloway

Building Record April 2017



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West, South and East Wings
Friars Carse, Dunscore, Dumfries and Galloway
NGR: NGR: NX 92554 84993
DGC HER: MDG20465 within non-Inventory designed landscape MDG25612
Canmore ID: 212684

1 Background

1.1 The Stable Block at Friars Carse is a Category B listed building and is included on the Dumfries and Galloway Council Historic Environment Register. It also lies within a non-Inventory designed landscape.

1.2 A building record of the North Wing was prepared as part of a proposed application to convert this part of the range to form three letting bedrooms (John Pickin Archaeology and Heritage 2017). The building record was extended to include the rest of the Stable Block and the results of that survey are presented below.

2 Methodology

2.1 A Basic Survey of the buildings with additional enhanced elements - as defined in the ALGAO Historic Building Recording Guidance – was undertaken and included a fully catalogued photographic record of the significant elevations, both internal and external, of the west, south and east wings of the Stable Block.

2.2 The fieldwork was carried out in April 2017. A photographic survey with accompanying notes was made of the buildings. An existing floor plan of the buildings (prepared by Richard Little Architectural Services - drawing number 1172) was used to aid fieldwork and annotations made to it as appropriate.

2.3 The Stable Block was divided into three wings or sections (West, South and East) and individual elements or rooms within each section were assigned a code (eg. WW1, SW2 etc.). The locations of the individual units are shown on Figure 3.

2.4 Most parts of the Stable Block were accessible with the exception of:

WW2. This part of the building was inaccessible but it was possible to view the space from over the internal wall separating WW2 and WW1;

WB3. There is currently no access to the roof space and doocot above the pend;

EB 3. Entry to the tower above the pend is via a set of potentially unsafe wooden steps from EW2. Health and safety considerations precluded access.

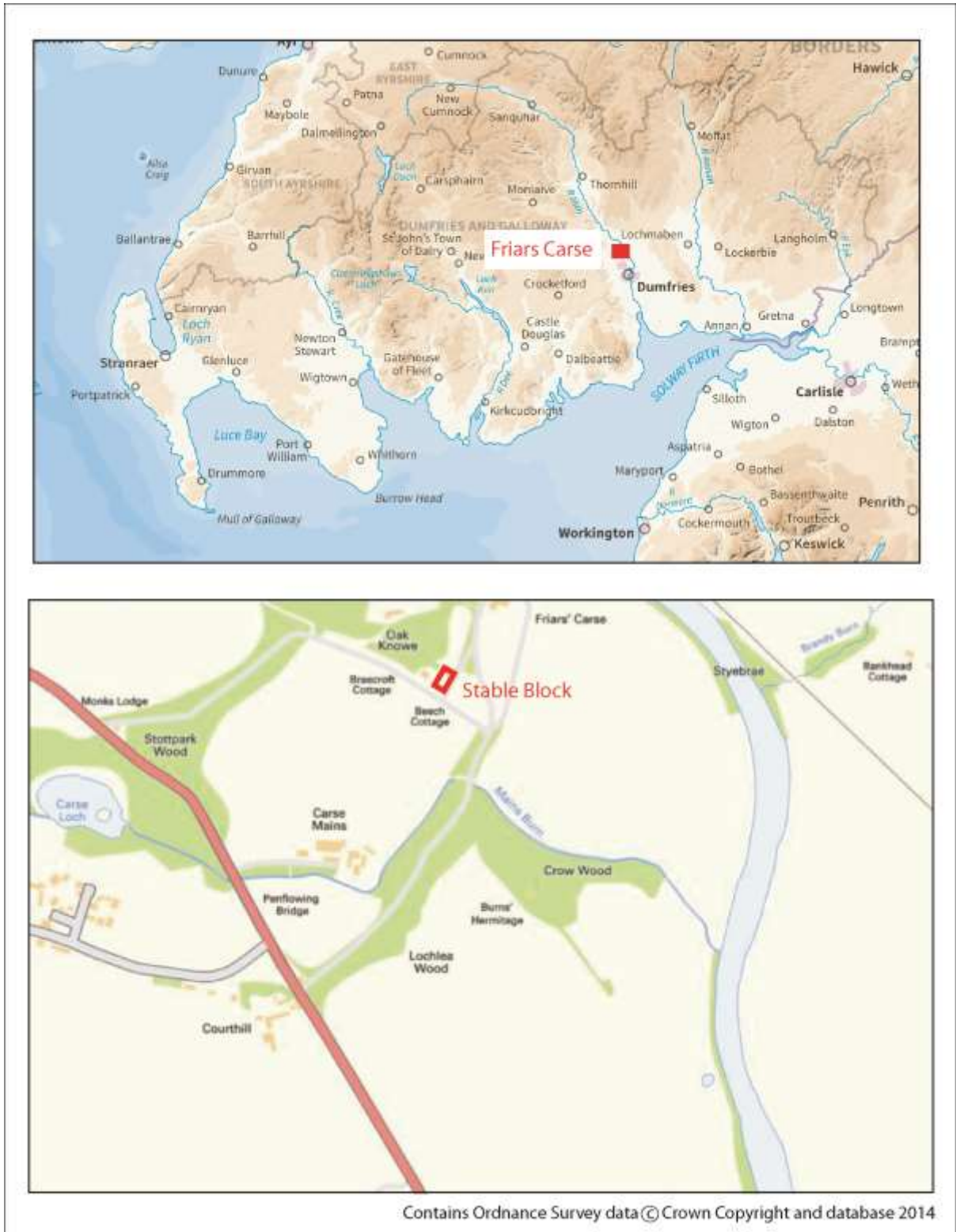


Fig 1. Location of Friars Carse Stable Block

Beech Cottage. This part of the stable block complex is in domestic use and the interior was not included in the survey.

3 Location (Fig. 1)

3.1 Friars Carse is an area of designed landscape located on the west bank of the river Nith some 9 km north of Dumfries.

3.2 The stable block is on the edge of a small plateau south-west of Friars Carse House.

4 Historical evidence

4.1 The listed building description for the Stables Block suggests construction in the early 19th century with the principal (south) range remodelled around 1873 when Friars Carse house was also enlarged. Similar dates for construction and remodelling are given by Gifford (1996: 308) and Hume (2000: 71) although the former suggests an additional remodelling of the east range in 1905.

4.2 Ordnance Survey mapping shows a period of extensive remodelling in the second half of the 19th century (Fig. 2).

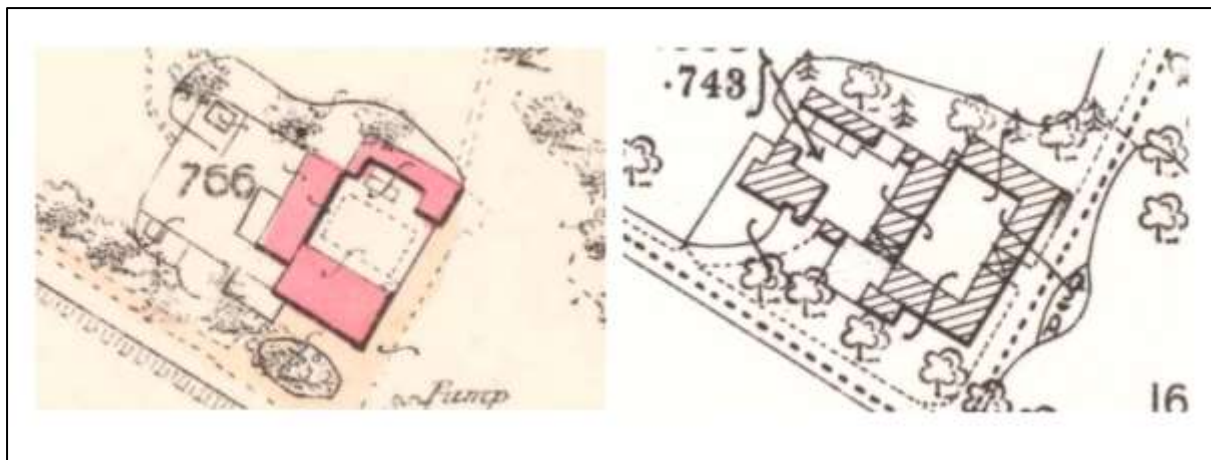


Fig. 2. Ordnance Survey 25-inch to the mile maps. 1861 edition to left and 1900 edition to right.

4.3 The First Edition map, surveyed 1855 and published 1861, shows a courtyard block with an open front facing east. The three wings are different sizes and the north wing is depicted as a rectangular structure with a flanked recess on its internal or south face.

4.4 Extensive remodelling of the stable block is shown on the 1900 edition (surveyed 1899). This includes the infilling of the east section of the courtyard with the construction of a central tower and pend with near-symmetrical flanking buildings. The west wing seems little altered but the north facing wall of the south wing appears to have been rebuilt and repositioned to create a narrower structure. The 1900 map also shows additional buildings to the west of the stable block.

4.5 The Stable Block was designated as a Category B listed building in 1986.

5 Description (Fig. 3)

5.1 The Stable Block comprises four single storey ranges or wings built around a quadrangular cobbled courtyard. There is a pend in the centre of the principal (east) wing with a tower above and there is a secondary pend at the south end of the West Wing.

5.2 The Stable Block is aligned south west – north east. The terms north, south, east and west wings are used in the report for convenience.

5.3 The West Wing (Figs. 6-12)

5.3.1 The West Wing is a rectangular building divided into three units: WW1, WW2 and WW3. The southern unit, WW3, comprises a pend with a loft space beneath a gabled doocot.

5.3.2 The walls are built of random rubble whinstone with sandstone quoins and the roof is a simple king beam construction. The roof is covered with graduated grey slates and grey ceramic ridge tiles and has a series of glazed lights on the east side.

5.3.3 The northern unit (WW1) is a rectangular space with a central entrance or cartway in the outer face and stone ventilator slits in both long walls. The cartway entrance is square-headed with a massive stone lintel beneath a stone relieving arch and on the inner side it is supported by a wooden lintel. Opposite, facing the courtyard, is a single square-headed door. A square-headed door in the north gable leads to a partially covered passageway connecting with the North Wing. Externally, the north gable shows evidence of rebuilding and this is discussed below (6.2). At the north end of the outer wall the scar of a sloping roofline and a rectangular concrete patch mark the location of a now-demolished structure built against the West Wing.

5.3.4 The middle unit (WW2) is a narrow space accessed by a tall two-section door opening into the courtyard. The south side of WW2 forms the inner wall of the pend and the room is separated from WW1 by an eaves-height cross wall. A blocked doorway in the south wall leads to the pend and above is a rectangular opening accessing the pend's loft space and the doocot. It is probable that WW2 once had an eaves-level loft.

5.3.5 The southern unit (WW3) comprises a round-arched pend beneath a loft space and doocot. The doocot has slated flanks and a slated gable roof with a gabled ventilator above. The north facing gable of the doocot is dressed sandstone. There are five rectangular flight holes in the south facing side of the doocot and below, in the upper section of the wing's south gable, is a rectangular window with diamond panes lighting the loft space. At ground level in the south gable wall is an offset door with a brick-arched head leading into the pend and at eaves level are a series of joist holes. At the same level as the joist holes is a single rectangular opening with a stone lintel and a concave base stone – this may be a sluice hole or drain for the doocot.

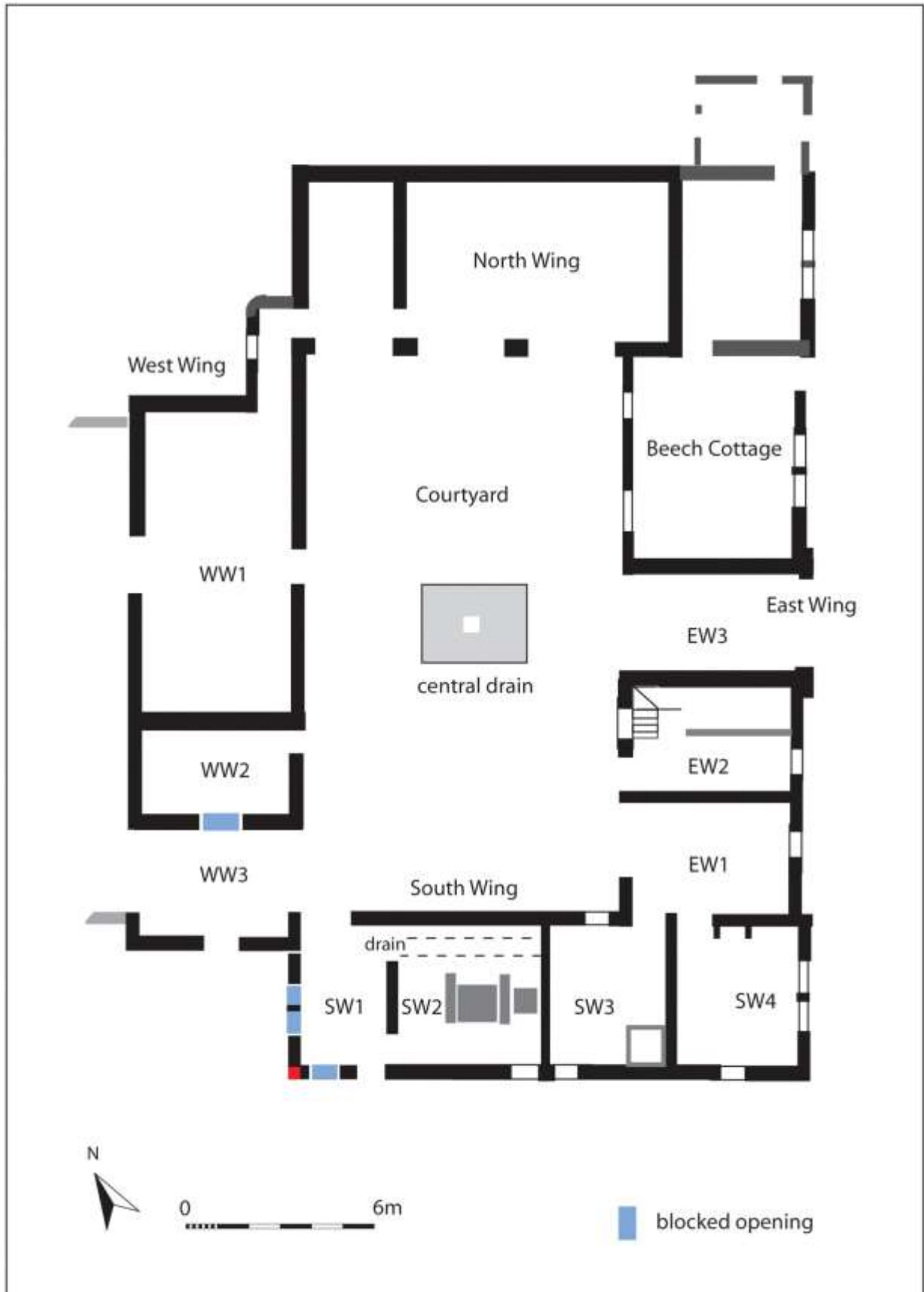


Fig.3. Sketch plan of Stable block showing individual units.

5.4 The South Wing (Figs. 13-18)

5.4.1 The South Wing comprises four units, SW1-4. The outer or south facing wall is dressed whinstone with occasional sandstone blocks set in irregular courses while the east wall of unit SW4 is bullfaced ashlar sandstone and forms part of the architectural design of the stable block's principal face; set in the east face is a reused armorial plaque dated 1598. The west gable is whinstone and sandstone rubble with some brick infill on the south corner and the wing's north facing wall on the courtyard side is small coursed whinstone. The roof is double-frame construction with a grey slate cover on sarking. The east end of the roof is piend with a decorative bargeboard below and echoes the form of Beech Cottage.

5.4.2 Unit SW1 is a narrow rectangular space with a square-headed external door and a second, larger entrance leading into the courtyard. The floor is sandstone slabs. At floor level in the west wall are two parallel rectangular openings with dressed sandstone details. Both openings are blocked, the southern with mortared whinstone and the northern with brick. A third and smaller ground level opening in the west wall appears to be associated with an external drain or sump. There is a rectangular opening with a mortared brick infill in the corner of the south wall.

5.4.3 Unit SW2, accessed via two doors from SW1, is a rectangular space with a cobbled floor. In the centre are the remains of a concrete feeding stall(s) with a drain to the north. The north, south and west walls are lime-washed. The east wall is bare brick and appears to be a later insertion. There are eave-level vents in the north and south walls and a single window in the south wall with ashlar surrounds and cast iron diamond-pattern panes.

5.4.4 Unit SW3 is a rectangular space with a concrete floor and limewashed walls and is accessed via a doorway from room EW1 in the East Wing. Against the south-east corner is a redundant (early 20th century?) timber-framed electricity unit and junction box with some related pencil graffiti on the east wall. In the south wall is a window of the same design as the one in SW2 and there is an eight-pane timber sash window in the north wall.

5.4.5 Unit SW4 is of similar dimensions to SW3 and is also accessed by a single doorway from EW1. The walls are limewashed, the floor is concrete and the ceiling is slatted timber with a central light fitting. Against the north wall is a fireplace with a wooden board above and a wooden coat rack to the right hand side. There is a single window in the south wall and a segmental bipartite window with timber sashes in the east wall.

5.5 The East Wing (Figs. 19-23)

5.5.1 The East Wing is the principal face of the stables block and was designed to present a striking frontage when seen from the road leading to Friars Cars House. The central element is a tower above a pend (EW3). To the south of the tower are units EW1 and 2 and the east unit of the South Wing (SW4); Beech Cottage forms the north end of the East Wing. These units and Beech Cottage share a single architectural style defined by the use of bullfaced ashlar sandstone and a semi-symmetrical arrangement either side of the pend and tower. The central bay (the tower and pend) is slightly advanced as are the matching end bays (SW4 and the final bay of Beech Cottage); these bays also have similar bipartite windows and piend roofs with decorative bargeboards. The other front windows in Beech Cottage – excluding the modern bay addition to the north – are of the same design. The front

windows in units EW1 and 2 are rectangular with ashlar sandstone surrounds and cast iron lights and are the same design as the windows in the outer face of the South Wing.

5.5.2 Unit EW1 is located immediately south of the pend and accessed from the courtyard via a timber half-door. The interior has a concrete floor and against the east wall are two open-ended timber stalls complete with iron feeding troughs. Wooden quarter-turn stairs with a mid and top landing lead to a door in the lower stage of the tower – this appears to be the only means of accessing the tower. Unit EW1 – and EW2 – has a double-framed roof structure with sarking. There is an area of pencilled graffiti (mainly numerical) on the south wall close to the door.

5.5.3 Unit EW2 has a wide entrance opening directly onto the courtyard. The walls are limewashed and the floor has stone flags. In the south wall are two doors leading into units SW3 and 4. There are no other internal features in this unit.

5.5.4 Unit EW3 comprises the pend and tower. The outer face of the pend has a segmental arch with finely finished ashlar surrounds. Internally the pend has a flat timber top and on the inner face are opposing half-round stone corbels support an RSJ lintel. The floor of the pend is cobbled and there is an inset cast iron downpipe on the north wall. The tower is in two stages, the lower stage being the taller. In the outer face of the lower stage is a single rectangular window with iron panes which echoes the windows in EW 1 and 2. On the inner face is a timber door with a hinged sack lift to one side. The tower's second stage is off-set and has a single, narrow round-headed blind opening in the outer face and similar paired blind openings in the side faces. The single opening in the inner face is not blocked but there is no evidence for window framing. The tower has a slated piend roof with stone-bracketed eaves.

5.5.5 The inner or courtyard facing front of Beech Cottage has been refaced with brick and appears to be a modern alteration. The original roofline has been retained.

6 Phasing (Fig. 4)

6.1 As mentioned above (4.2), comparison of the First and Second Edition OS maps indicates substantial alterations and additions to the stable block at some point between the 1850s and 1890s. Physical evidence for some of these changes can be seen in the surviving buildings, especially in the West and South wings.

6.2 The north gable of the West Wing shows clear evidence for the roof having been rebuilt and heightened (see Fig. 5). The main, lower section of the gable is rubble whinstone construction (1) and the later heightening episode is marked by the use of smaller sized rubble sandstone (2). A similar building sequence can be seen on the south gable of the South Wing where the original wall (3) has been rebuilt and heightened in whinstone and sandstone (4); this rebuilding included the construction of the present roof and the erection of the doocot. The adjacent west gable of the South Wing also shows evidence for two building phases (5 and 6) which are probably contemporary with those in the West Wing. There is also evidence here in the form of joist holes and a roof scar for a now demolished structure between the south end of the West Wing and the west end of the South Wing; the position of the roof scar suggests that this structure is contemporary with or later than the main rebuild phase in this part of the stable complex. The relative phasing of the brick infill in

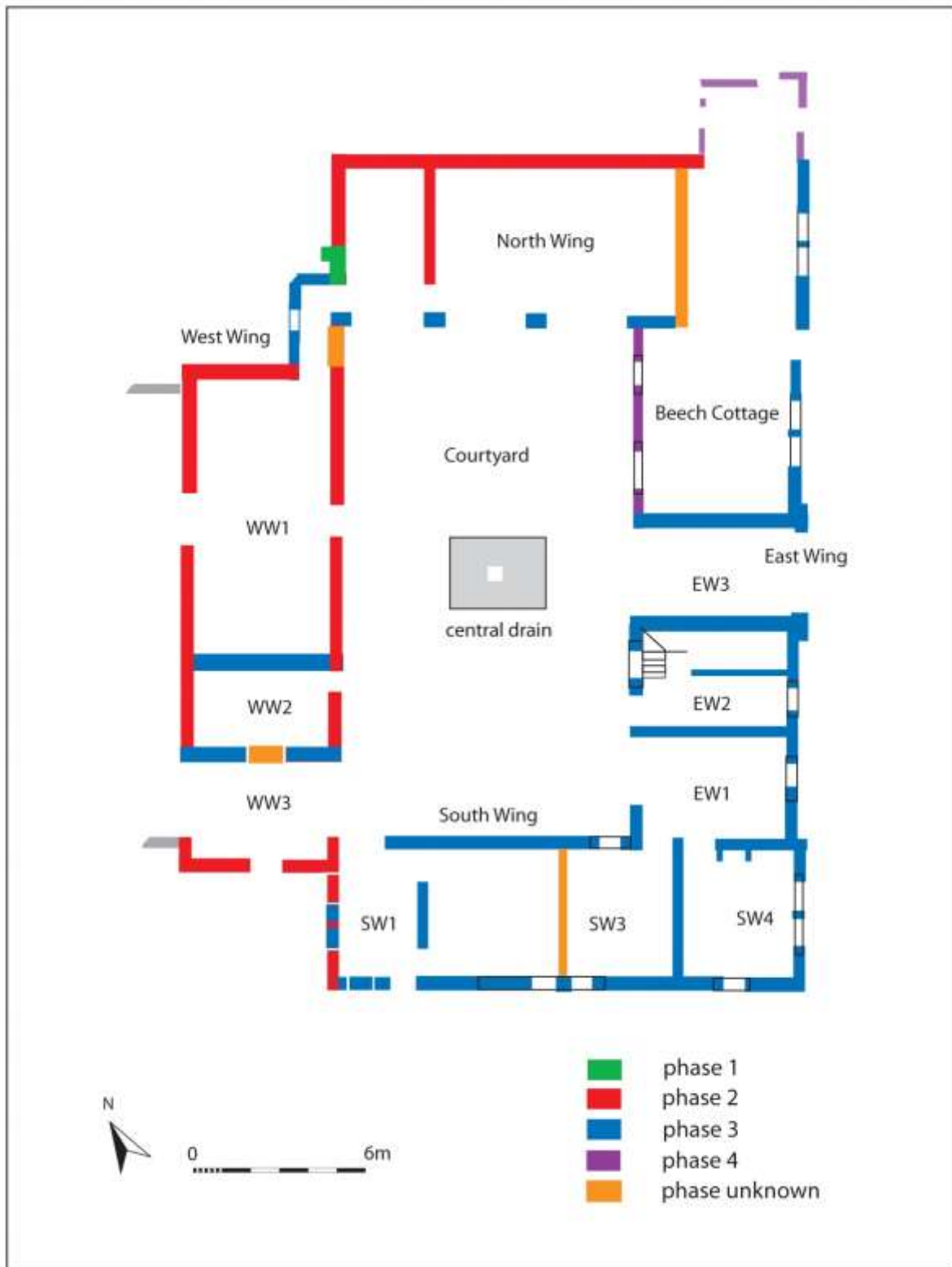


Fig. 4. Possible building phases

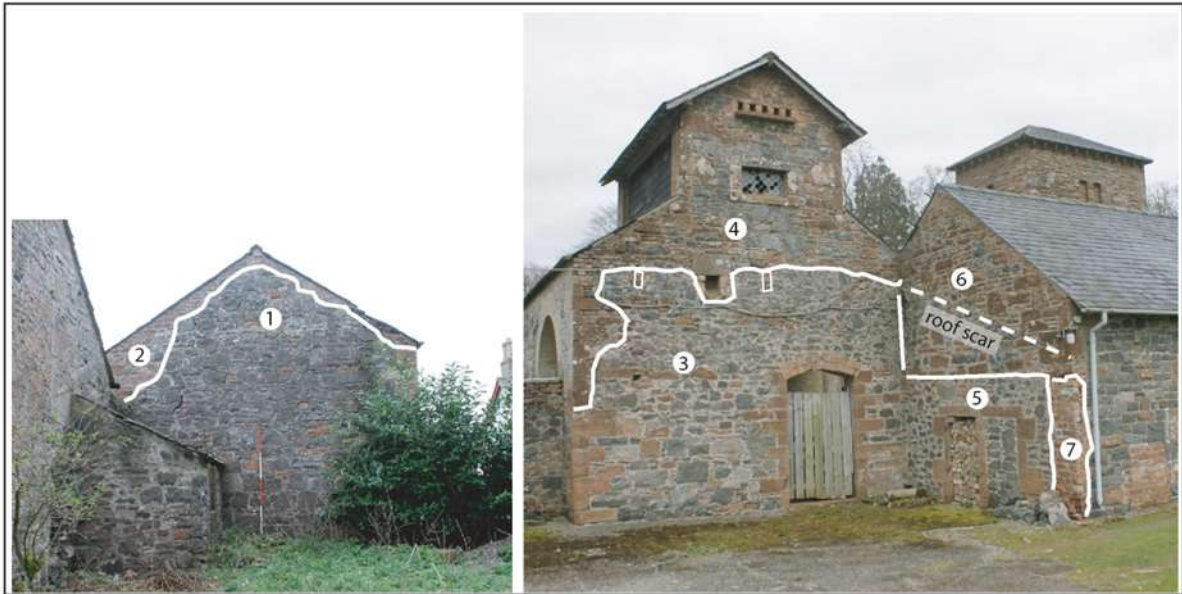


Fig. 5. Wall sections in the West Wing (north gable to left and south gable to right).

the corner of the South Wing (7 in Fig. 5) is unknown but indicates a complex sequence of alteration and rebuild in this area.

6.3 The East and South Wings – with the exception of the South Wing’s west gable - share similar architectural elements and appear to belong to the same single construction phase. This phase also included the remodelling of the North Wing (JPAH 2017).

6.4 A final phase of building is marked by Beech Cottage’s north bay and the refacing in brick of the cottage’s inner wall facing the courtyard.

6.5 In summary, the following building phases can be identified at Friar’s Carse stable block:

Phase 1 (18th century?). Survey of the North Wing identified a section of wall incorporated within but predating the construction of the wing’s west gable. (see JPAH 2017 for details). No other features belonging to this phase were located elsewhere in the Stable Block.

Phase 2 (late 18th or early 19th century?). The buildings belonging to this phase are probably those shown on the First Edition OS map. Some were demolished during Phase 3 but surviving elements include most of the lower part of the West Wing, the west gable of the South Wing and the west and north walls of the North Wing.

Phase 3 (1873). A major remodelling which saw the reroofing and alteration of the West and North Wings including the construction of the doocot. The Phase 2 south range was replaced by the South Wing and the courtyard’s open eastern front was infilled with the construction of the imposing East Wing with its central tower, pend and flanking, symmetrical buildings. It is likely that the pend in the West Wing was added during this phase.

Phase 4 (20th century). This phase includes the additions and alterations to Beech Cottage.

7 Summary

Friars Carse stable block contains evidence for a series of building phases. The surviving evidence for Phase 1 is too small to allow for interpretation and dating but Phase 2 undoubtedly relates to the use of the site as an open courtyard steading complex; this complex is shown on the First Edition OS map of 1861 but may have been constructed much earlier, perhaps in the later 18th century. The only semi-complete structure from this phase is the West Wing which on the evidence of the ventilator slits and large external door was probably used as a cow house. Phase 3 dates from 1873 when Friars Carse House was remodelled and the former steading became a dedicated stable block. Surviving fittings from this period suggest that the main stables were in the North Wing with a smaller two-stall stable in the East Wing (unit EW2). The Phase 3 rebuild included the provision of an office space with a fireplace (SW4), a probable open-fronted cart shed (EW1) and the construction of a domestic range (now Beech Cottage). The buildings remain essentially unaltered although the concrete stalls in the South Wing (SW2) suggest the reuse of this building as an animal barn at some point in the 20th century.

8 REFERENCES

Gifford, J 1996. *The buildings of Scotland: Dumfries and Galloway*. London.

Hume, J R 2000. *Dumfries and Galloway: an illustrated architectural guide*. Edinburgh.

JPAH 2017. *Friars Carse Stable Block North Wing - Building Record*. Unpublished client's report.

9 Appendix 1 – SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Fig. 6. West Wing – pend, slated doocot and entrance to WW2.



Fig. 7. West Wing – slit ventilator and entrance to WW1.



Fig. 8. West Wing – general view across courtyard with South Wing to left.



Fig. 9. West Wing – outer face of WW1 with cartway and slit ventilators.



Fig. 10. West Wing – outer face showing pend and doocot.



Fig. 11. West Wing – north gable.



Fig. 12. West Wing – south gable with doocot and flight holes.



Fig. 13. South Wing with south gable of West Wing to left.



Fig. 14. South Wing – re-used armorial plaque above bipartite windows in SW4.



Fig. 15. South Wing – west gable.



Fig. 16. South Wing – inner face and courtyard



Fig. 17. South Wing – doors to SW3 and 4 from EW1.



Fig. 18. South Wing – stalls and drain in SW2.



Fig. 19. East Wing – outer face of EW1 and 2.



Fig. 20. East Wing – EW3 pend and tower (left: outer face; right: inner face).



Fig. 21. East Wing – Beech Cottage. Bargeboard roof over right bay.



Fig. 22. East Wing – Beech Cottage showing modern bay with brick side wall.



Fig. 23. East Wing – courtyard entrance to EW2.



Fig. 22. East Wing – EW2 with stalls, feed boxes and stairs to tower,



Fig. 23. East wing – EW1.

10 Appendix 2 - DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS (on CD)

Photo number	Description	View from
WW1	West Wing 1 interior view	S
WW2	West Wing 1 interior view showing dwarf wall in front of West Block 2	N
WW3	West Wing 1 interior view showing west double door	E
WW4	West Wing 3, pend and doocot	E
WW5	West Wing 1 and 2 from courtyard	E
WW6	West Wing 1 and 2 from courtyard	E
WW7	West Wing, pend and doocot	NE
WW8	West Wing block and courtyard	SE
WW9	West Wing lock 2 – door detail	E
WW10	West Wing west facing exterior wall	SW
WW11	West Wing west facing exterior wall	W
WW12	West Wing west facing exterior wall	W
WW13	West Wing 1 west facing exterior wall + door	W
WW14	West Wing 1 west facing exterior wall - detail	W
WW15	West Wing west facing exterior wall – detail of pend	W
WW16	West Wing west facing exterior wall and pend	NW
WW17	West Wing south facing wall	S
WW18	West Wing south facing wall – detail of ‘drain’	S
WW19	West Wing south facing wall – detail of doocot gable	S
WW20	West Wing – joining wall west of pend	S
SW1	South Wing – general exterior view	SE
SW2	South Wing – general exterior view	SW
SW3	South Wing – general view from courtyard	N
SW4	South Wing – window to room 3	N
SW5	South Wing – general exterior view	SE
SW6	South Wing – exterior of room 4	S
SW7	South wing- general view of west gable	SW
SW8	South wing – exterior door to room 1	S
SW9	South wing – west gable	SW
SW10	South and West wings – general view	SW
SW11	South Wing room 3 – switch box	N
SW12	South Wing room 3	N
SW13	South Wing room 1 showing blocked ground-level features in gable wall	N
SW14	South Wing room 2	W
SW15	South Wing room 2	E
SW16	South Wing room 4 - fireplace	S
SW17	South Wing – doors to rooms 3 and 4 from East Wing room 1	N
SW18	South Wing room 4 graffiti	N
SW19	South wing north gable	N
EW1	East Wing – southern exterior section	E
EW2	East Wing – southern exterior section	SE
EW3	East Wing – exterior of pend and tower	E
EW4	East Wing – exterior of tower	NE

EW5	East Wing – southern exterior section and tower	E
EW6	East Wing – exterior of Beech Cottage	SE
EW7	East Wing – north corner of Beech Cottage	NE
EW8	East Wing – detail of armorial plaque	E
EW9	East wing – detail of window to room 1	E
EW10	East Wing – Beech cottage, tower, pend and room 2 from courtyard	SW
EW11	East Wing – tower and pend	NW
EW12	East Wing – tower and pend	W
EW13	East wing – detail of tower loading door	W
EW14	East Wing – detail of stonework on pend	SW
EW15	East Wing – detail of recessed down pipe in pend	S
EW16	East Wing – pend entrance	W
EW17	East Wing – rooms 1 and 2 from courtyard	W
EW18	East Wing – detail of room 2 door and window	W
EW19	East Wing – general view from courtyard with South Wing	NW
EW20	East Wing – room 2	W
EW21	East Wing - room 2	W
EW22	East Wing – room 2 stairs	SW
EW23	East Wing – room 2 stairs	SW
EW24	East Wing – room 2 graffiti	E
EW25	East Wing – room 1	W
EW26	East Wing – general view of east-facing front	E

11 Appendix 3 – DISCOVERY + EXCAVATION SCOTLAND ENTRY

Local authority: Dumfries and Galloway

Parish: Dunscore

Site name: Friars Carse Stable Block

Name of contributor: John Pickin

Type of project: building recording

Name of organisation:

NGR: NX 92554 84993

Report: Basic level building recording of the Stable Block took place in advance of a proposal to convert the north wing to a residential unit. The Stable Block was built as a courtyard steading in the late 18th century or early 19th century and was substantially rebuilt the 1870s when the adjacent Friars Carse House was remodelled. The only elements surviving from the original building are the west wing and the lower sections of the north and west walls of the north wing. The west gable of the west wing also incorporates part of an earlier but undated wall indicating that there was a structure on site before the steading was built. The east and south wings of the Stable Block probably date from the remodelling in the 1870s as do the doocot and the pend in the west wing and it seems that that the north wing was substantially rebuilt at the same time. Two wooden stalls

survive in one of the rooms in the east wing and the outlines of four box stalls remain in the north wing.

Archive: National Record of the Historic Environment (HRHE) and Dumfries and Galloway HER.

Funder: Post Office Fellowship of Remembrance

Contact details of organisation: High Weirston House, Leswalt, Stranraer DG9 0RQ