

Friars Carse Stable Block North Wing

Friars Carse, Dunscore, Dumfries and Galloway

Building Record April 2017



John Pickin
Archaeology and Heritage
Services

Tel: 01776 870270

E-mail: info@johnpickinarchaeology.co.uk

Web: johnpickinarchaeology.co.uk

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DGC planning reference (withdrawn): 16/1911/FUL & 16/1913/LBC

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John Pickin Archaeology and Heritage
High Weirston House. Leswalt. Stranraer. Dumfries and Galloway DG9 0RQ
Tel: 01776 870270 Mail: info@johnpickinarchaeology.co.uk

Friars Carse Stable Block North Wing
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 Proposals (16/1911/FUL and 16/1913/ LBC) were submitted to Dumfries and Galloway Council for the conversion of the north range of the courtyard stable buildings at Friars Carse to form three letting bedrooms. The stable block is a Category B listed building, is included on the Dumfries and Galloway Council Historic Environment Register and lies within a non-Inventory designed landscape.

1.2 A condition was applied requiring that no work could take place until the developer had secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, comprising a programme of building recording, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which had been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority (in consultation with the Council Archaeologist). In addition, the developer would afford access at all reasonable times to the Council Archaeologist or a nominated representative and allow them to observe work in progress.

1.3 Proposals 16/1911/FUL and 16/1913/LBC have been withdrawn but are to be resubmitted. A Building Record, meeting the standard required in the original planning condition, has been undertaken in advance of resubmission and is 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 carried out and included a fully catalogued photographic record of the significant elevations, both internal and external, of the north wing of the stable block.

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

2.3 Most of the building was accessible but an external fence at the east end prevented full photography in this section. Items stored within the interior of the building also restricted recording of the floors but it is likely that the principal features were visible.

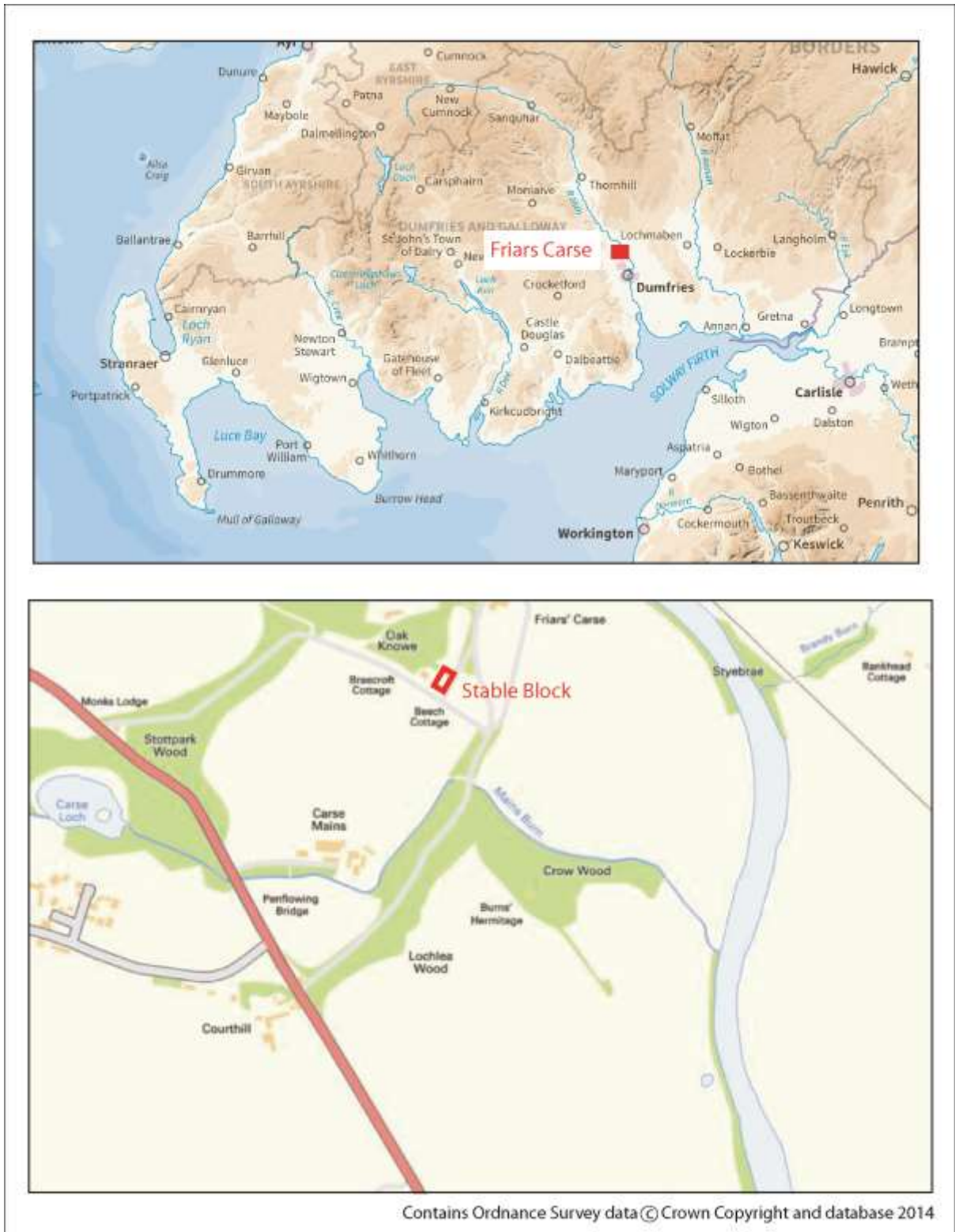


Fig 1. Location of Friars Carse Stable Block

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 east) range re-modelled around 1873 when Friars Carse house was also enlarged. The north range – technically the north east range – is identified as a cart shed or garage. 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 remodelling in the second half of the 19th century (Fig. 2).

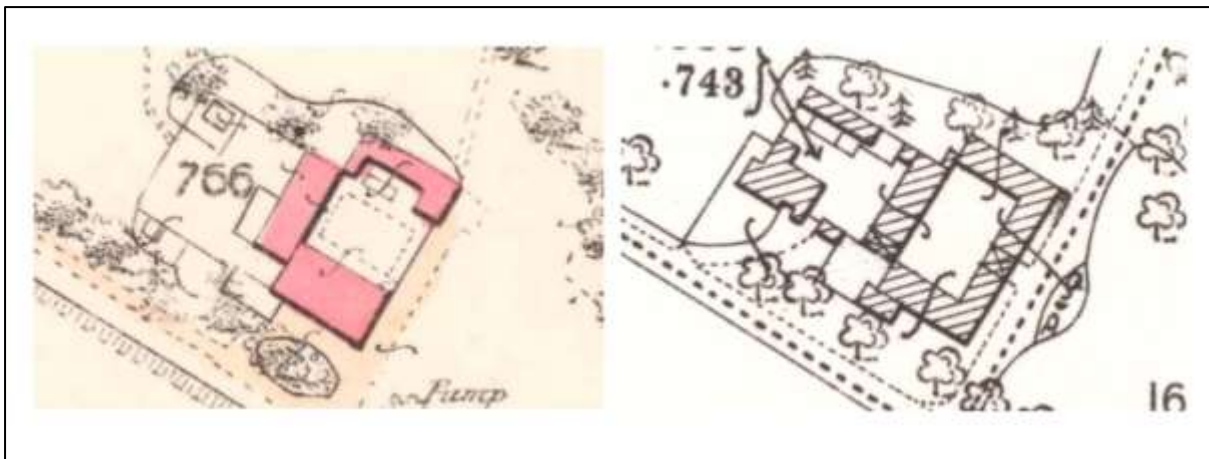


Fig. 2. Ordnance Survey 25-inch to the mile maps. 1861 edition to left and 1900 edition to right.

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

4.4 Extensive remodelling of the stable block is shown on the 1900 edition (surveyed 1899) and includes the infilling of the south-east section of the courtyard block to form an enclosed space. Alterations to the north wing include the infilling of the recess with the construction of a south west facing wall set further to the north east and which no longer connects with the corner of the west wing. The flanking structures shown on the 1861 edition appear to have been removed.

4.5 The stable block was designated as a Category B listed building in 1986.

5 Description (Fig. 3)

5.1 The north wing forms an integral part of an enclosed courtyard complex. To the west is a long barn-like range with a pend at its southern end. The range to the east has a central pend with an ornamental water tower; its northern end, Beech Cottage, is currently occupied and was not included in the Building Record.

5.2 The stable block is aligned south west – north east. The terms north, south, east and west ranges are used in the report for convenience.

5.3 Exterior (Figs. 6-10)

5.3.1 The south wall of the north wing faces the enclosed cobbled courtyard . It comprises three sets of equal-sized wooden slatted double doors with kick boards which open into the courtyard. The doors hang from pillars of pick-dressed sandstone set on whinstone base courses; the external edges of the pillars are chamfered and defined by vertical stripes of red paint. In front of the central and west door and set into the cobbled courtyard surface are remnants of a carved sandstone drain. Above the doors and supported by the stone pillars is a massive three-section wooden lintel which acts as a wall-plate for the roof structure. The roof is in graded grey slate with grey ceramic ridge tiles.

5.3.2 The corners of the south wall are obscured by surrounding structures. The west corner is overlapped by a length of rubble whinstone wall which forms part of a covered passageway between the west wing and a door in the west wall of the north wing. The east corner and the internal east gable are incorporated within the west wall of Beech Cottage.

5.3.3 The north wall of the north wing exhibits two constructional phases. The lower 1.8m of the wall is whinstone rubble in lime mortar with angular blocks towards the base and water-rounded cobbles above; the quoins are square-cut whinstone blocks. The lower section of wall incorporates two rectangular ground-level openings approximately 1m wide and 1.8m high. The western opening has a large whinstone lintel and square-cut whinstone margins and has been infilled with a rough wall of lime-mortared whinstone rubble (the eastern opening lies within the fenced garden of Beech Cottage and could not be inspected in detail but appears to be similar to the western opening). The upper section of the north wall is made with dressed sandstone and occasional whinstone blocks set in rough courses and the quoins are dressed sandstone. The wooden eaves-line lintel seen in the south wall has not been used in the north wall and the roof structure sits in joist holes below the stone wall-head. There are cast iron rhones and, at the west end, a cast iron downpipe.

5.3.4 The west wall, the gable end of the north wing, also has evidence for more than one phase of building. The northern section exhibits the same two-phase construction of random whinstone rubble topped by coursed sandstone as seen on the north wall; the junction between the two follows a diagonal line that may preserve an earlier, lower gable. Towards the centre of the west wall the whinstone rubble section butts against a vertical wall line of dressed sandstone quoins below which is a demolished extension to the west; a diagonal mortar line indicated the position of the roof line above this extension. Built against the south section of the north wall is the external face of a passage way from the west wing

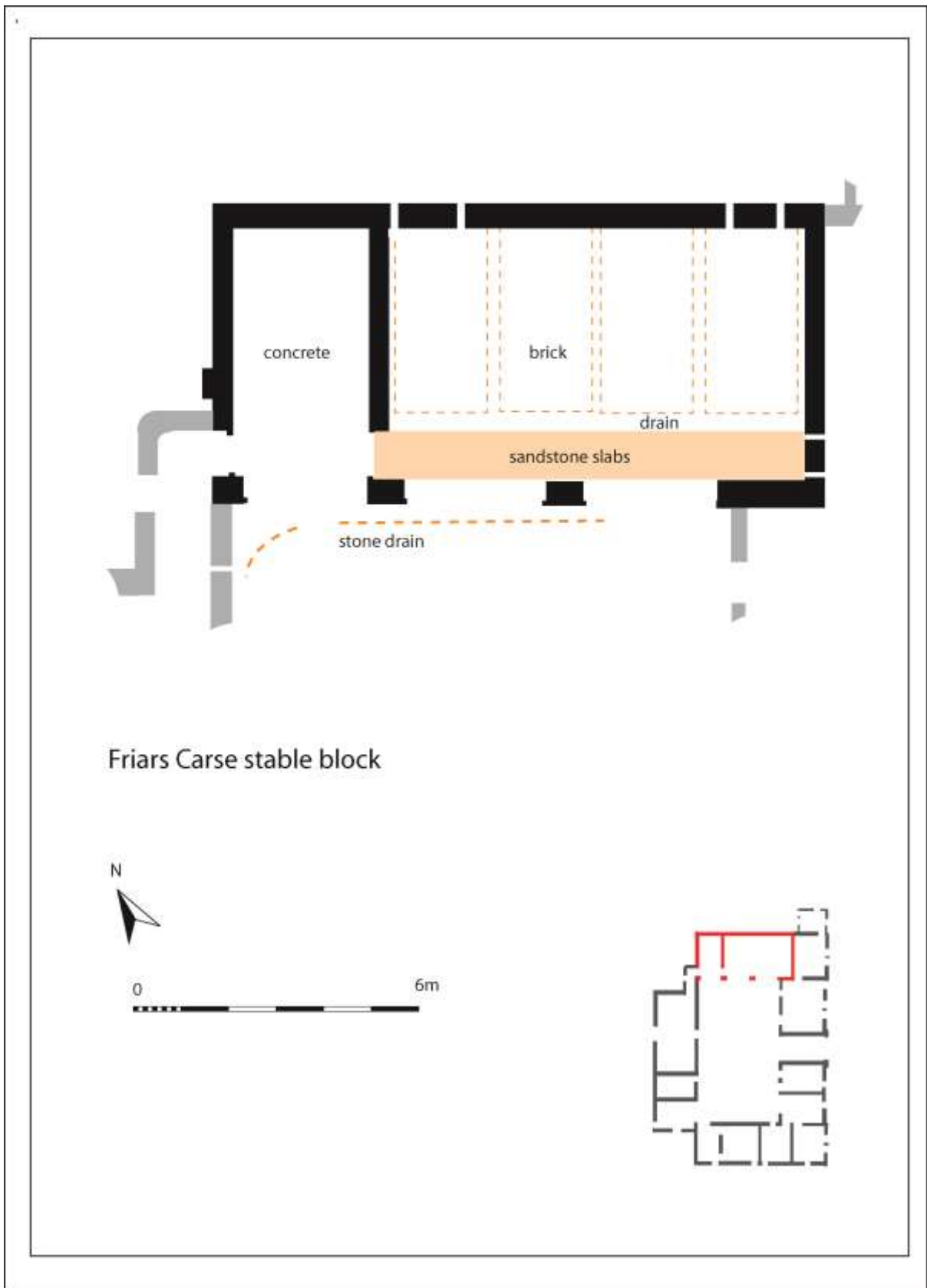


Fig. 3. Sketch plan of north wing showing relationship with the rest of the stable block.

which accesses the north wing via a now blocked doorway. The wall, which has partially collapsed, has a single window and a sloping tiled roof patched with corrugated iron.

5.4 Interior (Figs. 11 - 15)

5.4.1 The central and east doors give access to a single rectangular room measuring 5.4m x 9m internally. The walls are random rubble with a white-painted plaster coat and a series of parallel peg holes show where wall coverings have been held in place. An area of brown varnished narrow-slat panelling survives against the central pillar and it must be assumed that this covering once extended throughout the interior. The curving outline of stall surrounds can be seen at the north ends of the east and west walls. Corresponding cement divisions in the brick floor indicate the position of four box stalls set in front of the north wall. There is an iron box-drain at the south end of the brick floor and beyond this the floor is covered with rectangular sandstone slabs. A blocked ground level opening in the west section of the north wall corresponds with the opening observed on the exterior of the wall (5.3.3) above and there is a door in the south section of the west wall leading to a smaller room to the west. At the south end of the east wall there is a blocked ground level opening with a another opening above at roof level; these openings presumably connect with what now is Beech Cottage. Immediately below the north wall head is a row of vertical ventilator slots. The roof is a wooden kingpost structure with the tie-beams set into joists on the north wall and jointed with the eaves-level lintel to the south. The tie-beams and the lower section of the king posts are exposed but the upper part of the roof structure is concealed by a slat-panelled ceiling. A void in the centre of the ceiling probably held a light fitting.

5.4.2 The west door leads to a rectangular room, 3m x 5.4m, with a concrete floor and whitewashed, plastered walls. Peg holes in the plaster show that the walls once had a wooden covering. A door in the east walls leads to the adjacent room and an opposite door in the west wall leads to the passageway connecting with the west wing. There is a single ventilator slot in the north wall.

6 Phasing and summary (Figs. 4 and 5)

6.1 Three building phases can be identified in the north wing of the stable block.

6.2 The first and earliest phase is represented by the vertical quoined wall with its demolished extension; these are shown as wall sections 5 and 6 respectively in Fig. 5.

6.3 The second phase is represented by the lower parts of the north and west walls and is shown as wall sections 1 and 3 in Fig.5. Wall sections 1 and 3 are part of the same single build but wall section 3 butts against and post-dates Phase 1 wall sections 5 and 6.

6.4 The third phase is represented by the higher parts of the north and west walls and is shown by wall sections 2 and 4 in Fig. 5. These walls are built on Phase 2 wall sections 1 and 3 and on Phase 1 wall section 5. The external wall of the passageway connecting the west and north wings – wall section 7 in Fig. 5 - butts against wall section 5 and probably also belongs to Phase 3.

6.4 Phase 2 is likely to correspond with the initial construction of the three-sided courtyard block shown on the 1861 OS map. Both Hume (2000) and Gifford (1996) date the

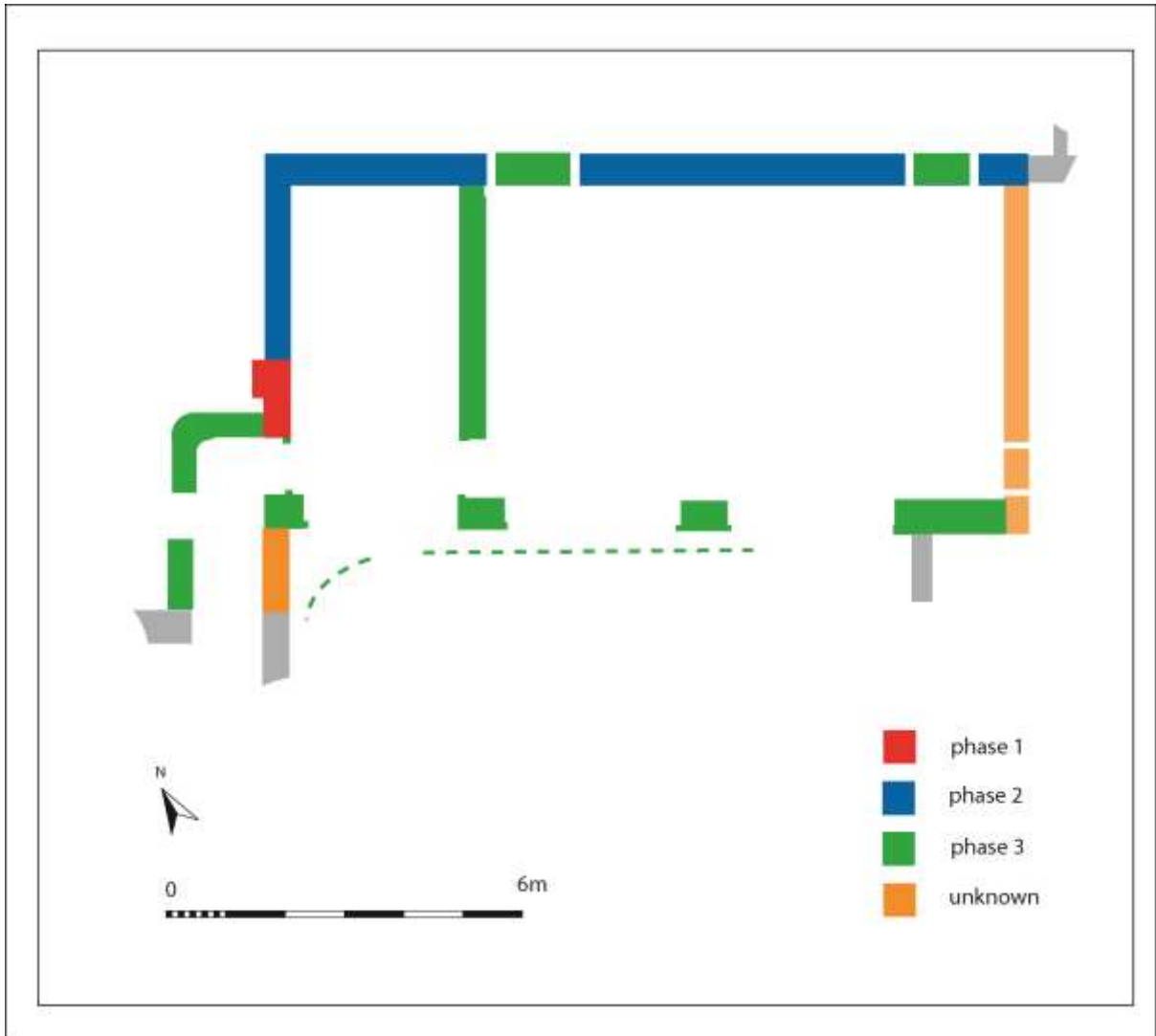


Fig. 4. North wing building phases.

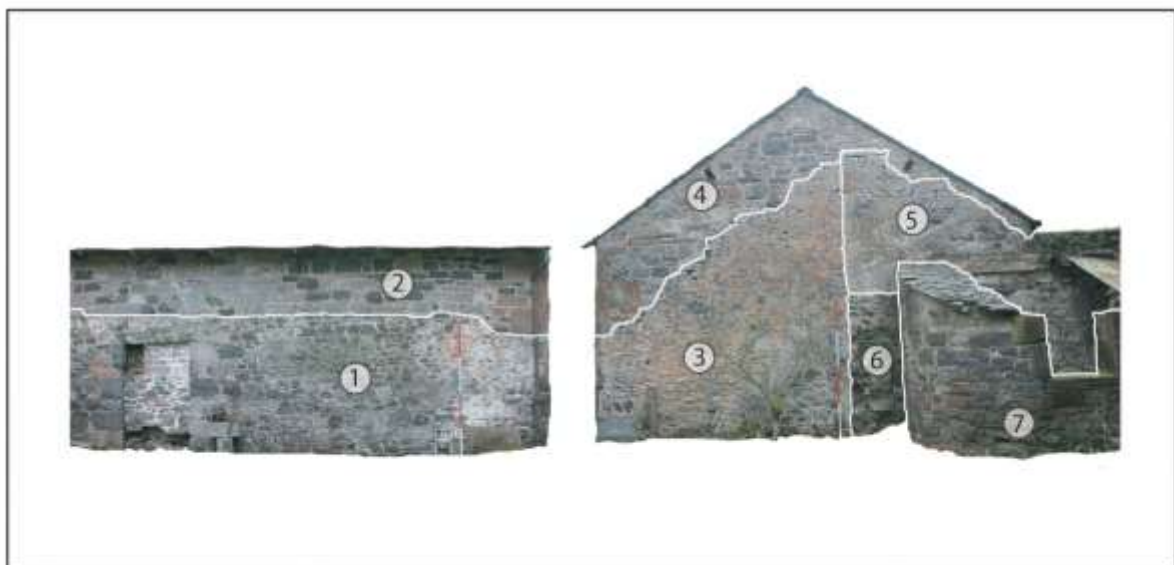


Fig.5. North wing wall sections (north wall to left and west gable wall to right).

building as early 19th century but given the utilitarian nature of the construction and the absence of any definitive architectural features an earlier date (later 18th century?) is possible. The Phase 3 alterations were in place by the time of the 1900 OS map and are likely to relate to the 1870s when Friars Carse house was remodelled. These alterations included the demolition and rebuilding of the south face of the north wing, the heightening of the north and west walls and the infilling of the openings in the north wall.

6.5 Phase 1 is harder to date. The Phase 1 walls appear to relate to a building that predates but was partially incorporated within the Phase 2 courtyard block; the demolished extension – wall section 6 – suggests this building may have extended further to the west and could predate the courtyard's west wing.

6.6 The building(s) may have had different functions during particular phase. So little survives of the Phase 1 building that it is impossible to suggest a function. The Phase 2 building was probably agricultural, part of an integrated courtyard steading associated with Friars Carse House; it is possible that either the Phase 1 or Phase 2 building dates from 1771 when Friars Cars House was erected. The Phase 3 building, probably dating from the 1870s, was a combined four-stalled and single-stalled stable unit. At a later date the stalls were stripped out and the space possibly reused as a garage and cart shed.

7 REFERENCES

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

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

8 Appendix 1 - SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Fig. 6. South face of north wing.



Fig. 7. Joining wall between west wing (left) and north wing (right).



Fig. 8. General view showing north and east wings and pend entrance.



Fig. 9. North wall showing two-phase construction and blocked opening.



Fig. 10. West gable wall showing building phases. The angled slots are for the Phase 3 roof purlins.



Fig. 11. Interior view showing outline of stable stall and support holes for wall panelling.



Fig 12. Roof structure.



Fig. 13. Ceiling void for light fixture.

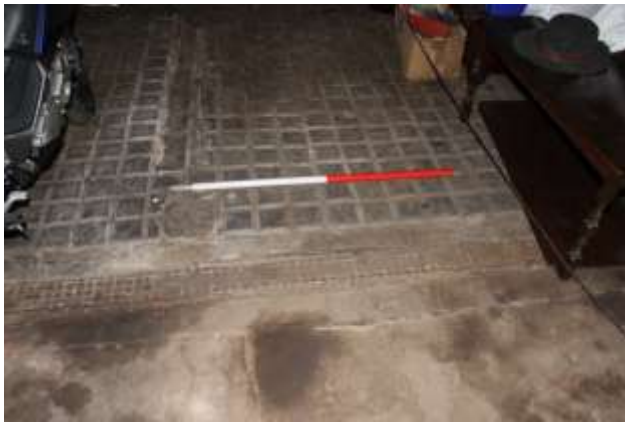


Fig. 14. View of floor showing sandstone slabs, iron box drain and cement outline of stall divisions.



Fig. 15. West room showing door on left to main room.

9 Appendix 2 - DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS (on CD)

Photo number	Description	View from
NW1	General view	NE
NW2	General view	N
NW3	North wall, exterior detail	N
NW4	North wall, general view	N
NW5	North wall, general view	N
NW6	North wall, west corner	NW
NW7	West gable wall, general view	NW
NW8	West gable, general view	W
NW9	West gable and connecting passage	N
NW10	West gable and connecting passage	N
NW11	Drain detail by south wall in courtyard	-
NW12	West room, interior	N
NW13	East room with outline of stall	E
NW14	East room ceiling and roof structure	-
NW15	East room	W
NW16	East room, north west corner – showing blocked opening	S
NW17	East room floor detail	S
NW18	East room, ceiling detail	-
NW19	South wall, exterior view	S
NW20	South wall, east corner	SW
NW21	Joining wall between west and north wings	E
NW22	North and east wings, general view across courtyard	SW
NW23	West wing and west gable of north wing	N

10 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