

Wester Housebyres, Melrose, Scottish Borders

Historic Building Recording Report

AOC 22447

31st March 2014



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Appendix 2: Discover & Excavation in Scotland (DES) Entry

Summary

AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Mr J Murray to undertake a basic historic building survey of two barns as part of the Wester Housebyres farmstead prior to renovation as part of the planning condition on the development.

The barns appear to be probably early 19th century in date, although a settlement at Wester Housebyres goes back as far as at least the 18th century. The two barns consist of a former threshing barn and cart shed respectively, with the threshing machine once powered by a water wheel to the east side, now gone, although remains of the fixings and bearing blocks remain.

No further building recording is recommended.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site background

- 1.1.1 An historic building survey was required as a condition of planning consent prior to development at Wester Housebyres, near Melrose by Mr J Murray (Planning Ref: 05/00302/OUT). The site lies within the administrative area of the Scottish Borders Council, which is advised on archaeological matters by the Scottish Borders Council Archaeology Service. The archaeological works were conducted in accordance with the principles as set out in *Scottish Planning Policy* (2010) and *Planning and Archaeology 2/2011* (2011).

1.2 Site Location

- 1.2.1 Wester Housebyres farm steading is located in a remote area of farmland to the north of the town of Melrose and to the east of Galashiels and is centred on NGR: NT 53013 36492 (Figure 1).

2 OBJECTIVE

- 2.1 The objective of the historic building survey was to ensure that an adequate record of the barns affected by the development was made prior to renovation through written, photographic and drawn record.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Historic Building Survey

- 3.1.1 A 'Basic' level of survey was undertaken on the buildings, which included a written, photographic and drawn record preceded by an element of map-regression. All pre-Ordnance Survey and Ordnance Survey maps were examined to identify the history and development site from post-medieval times to the present day. These have been referenced in Section 4 below and copies of the relevant maps can be found in Figures 2 - 6.
- 3.1.2 A general and detailed interior and exterior photographic survey was taken in black and white print and colour digital using a 35mm SLR and digital SLR to a minimum 10 mpxl resolution. Exterior views were taken of the barns in their setting as well as head on/oblique elevations. Additional detail shots were taken where necessary to highlight areas pertinent to the historic record. A running register of photographs was taken on site and can be found in Appendix 1.
- 3.1.3 A written survey was undertaken of the exterior and interior of the barns, using AOC *pro forma* recording sheets with comment on condition, construction, architectural features, modern interventions, and any evidence for phasing and function.
- 3.1.4 A simple drawn record was also required as part of the survey and measured plans were made on site of the three main barns affected by the development, which have been referenced as A1 (threshing barn), A2 (pig sheds) and B (cart shed).

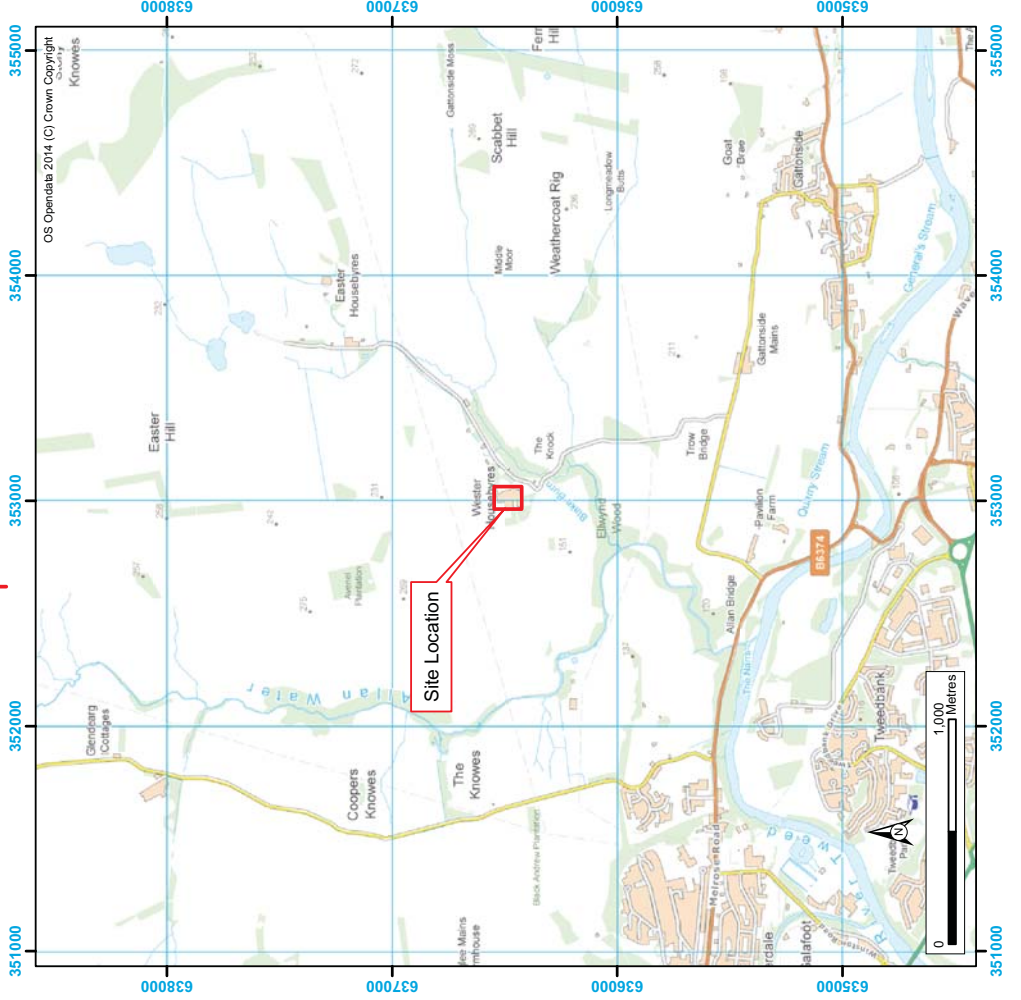
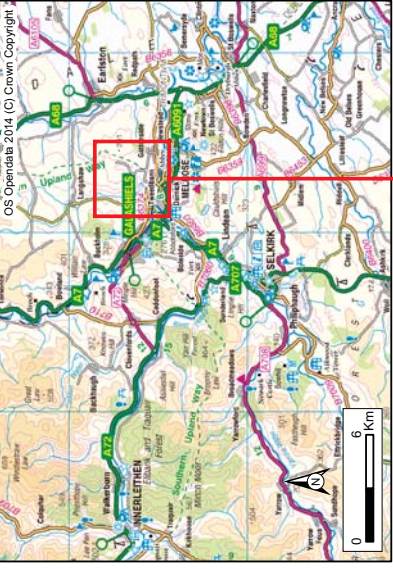
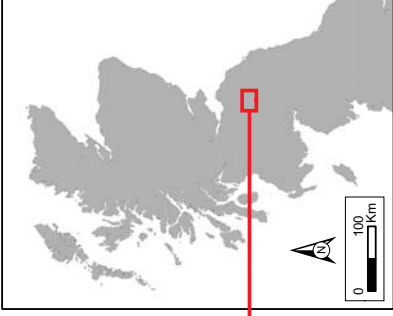
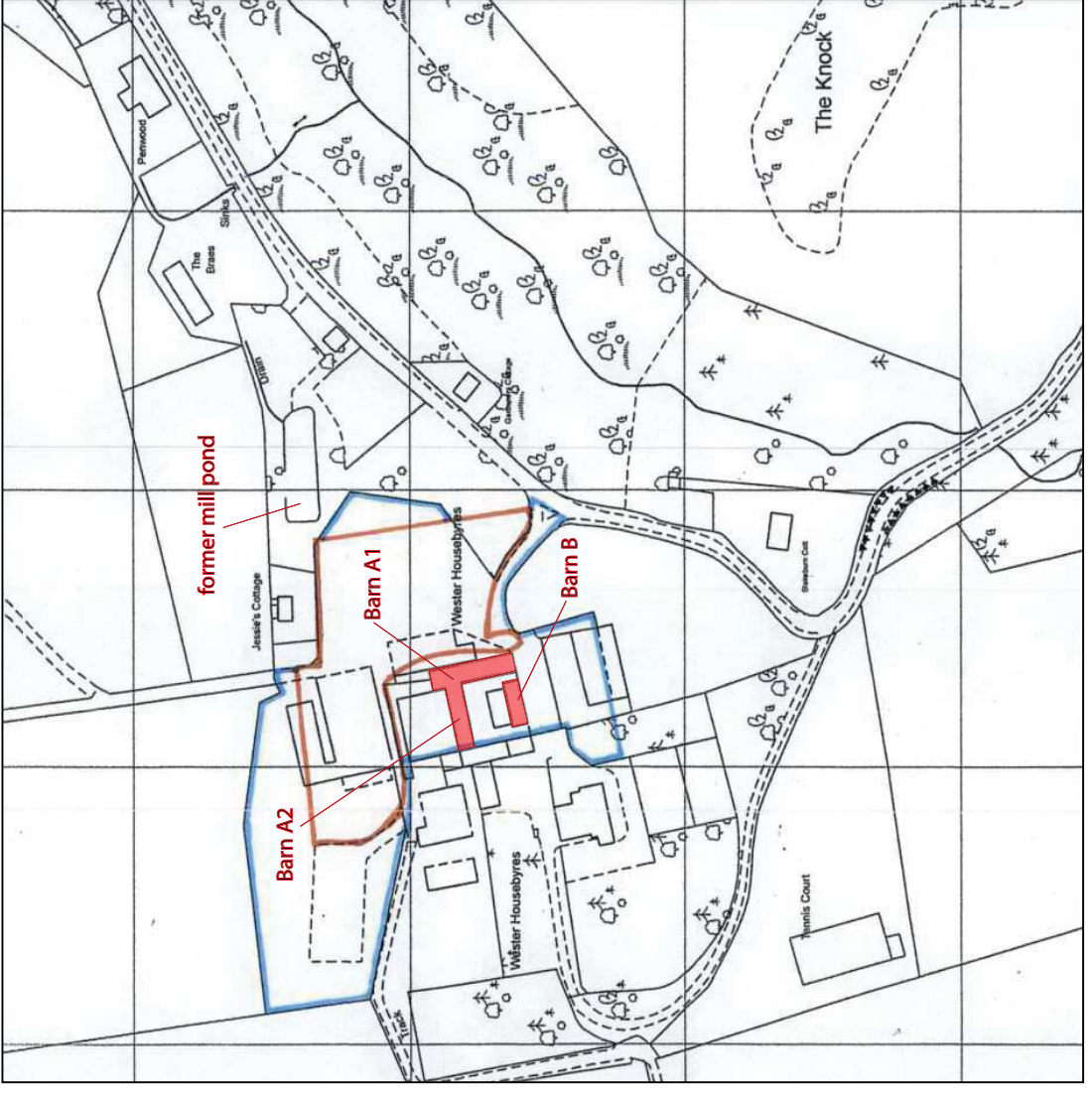


Figure 1: Site location plan

3.2 Archiving

- 3.2.1 The project has been recorded in the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) site (Ref: 174270). An entry has also been submitted to Discovery and Excavation in Scotland (DES) publication for inclusion in the forthcoming 2014 volume (see Appendix 2). A copy of the digital photographs (on CD), together with a hard copy and a pdf digital version on CD of the report, has also been submitted to the National Archives of Scotland held at the RCAHMS building at Salisbury Place, Edinburgh. For all archiving queries, please contact admin@aocarchaeology.com.

4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1 There has been a settlement at Wester Housebyres since at least the mid-18th century, as it first appears on William Roy's Military Map of Scotland (ca. 1747 – 55) (Figure 2). Here it is shown with at least three buildings and several enclosures. By the early 20th century, Tennant's 1840 map shows an enclosed range of buildings with a central barn, although of course this map is quite small scale and schematic (Figure 3). It is not until the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1863 that close detail of the layout of the buildings can be seen (Figure 4). A large group of barns is shown with a central courtyard to the north with another barn to the south, which equates to the schematic representation on Tennant's map. A further range of barns or cow byres are shown to the south of this, with a farmhouse to the west.
- 4.2 Into the late 19th century, the layout has changed little, although there is now a barn to the centre of the courtyard and it is fully enclosed, as can be seen on the 1897 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 5). By the 1925 map, the barn in the centre of the courtyard has gone, and the farmhouse to the west has been largely extended (Figure 6). Today, the layout of the farm still has the courtyard buildings, open to the south, including the barns to the south of this as seen on 1863 map. Hence elements of this steading are still incorporated into the fabric of the farm and probably date to at least the 1840s, as they seem to be on Tennant's map of that date as well.

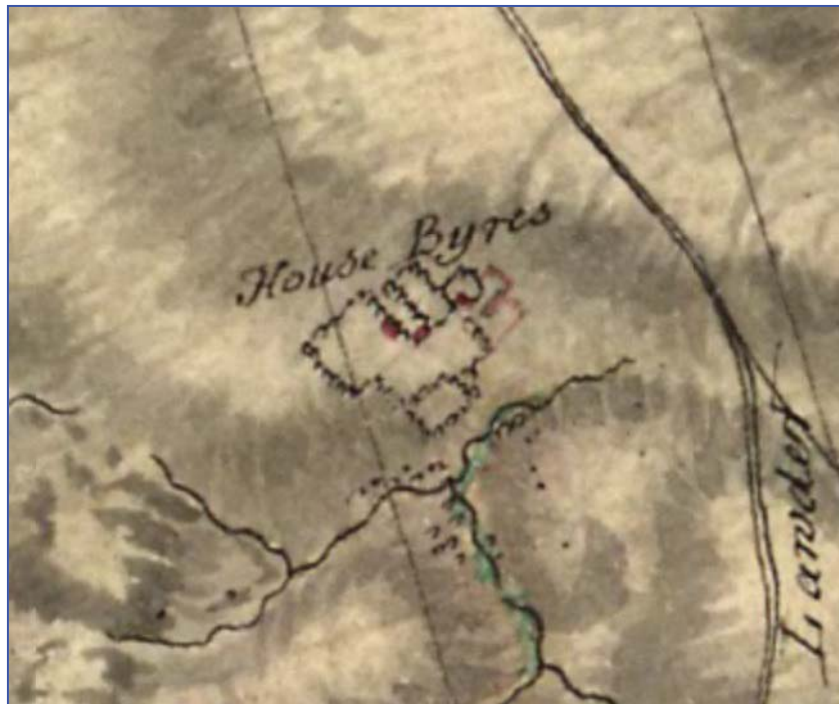


Figure 2: Extract from Roy's map, ca. 1747 – 55

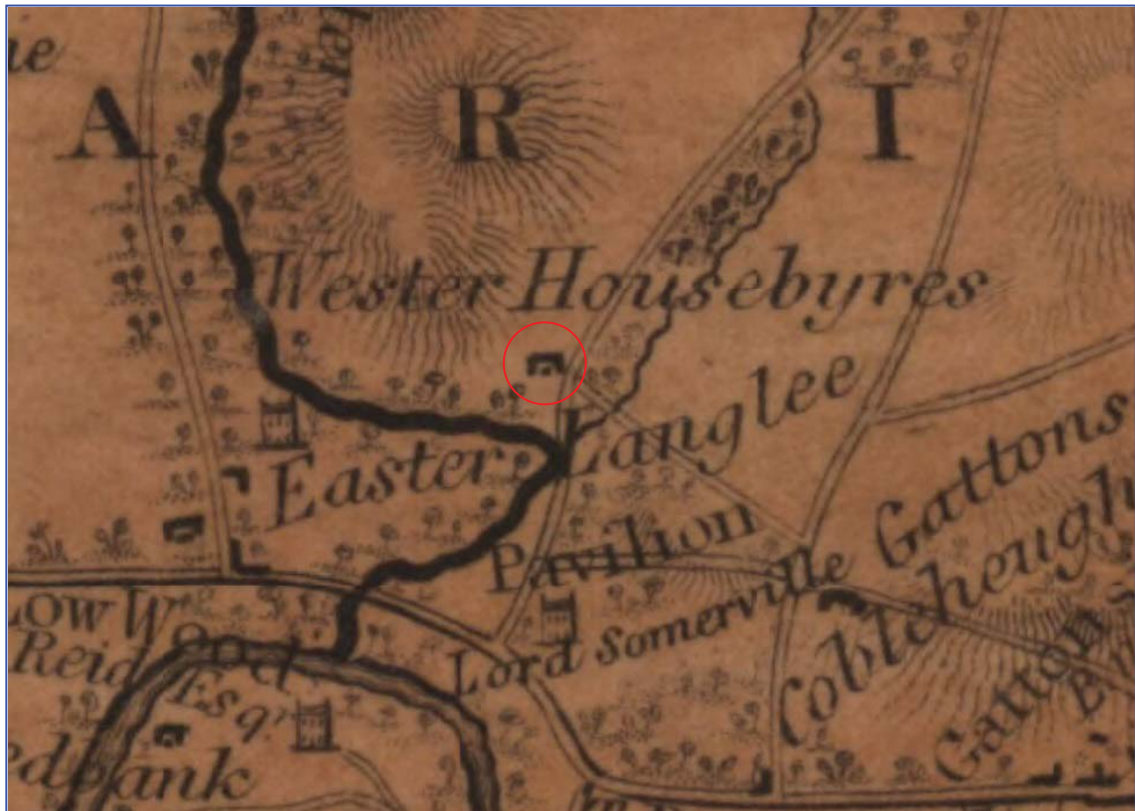


Figure 3: Extract from Tennant's map, 1840

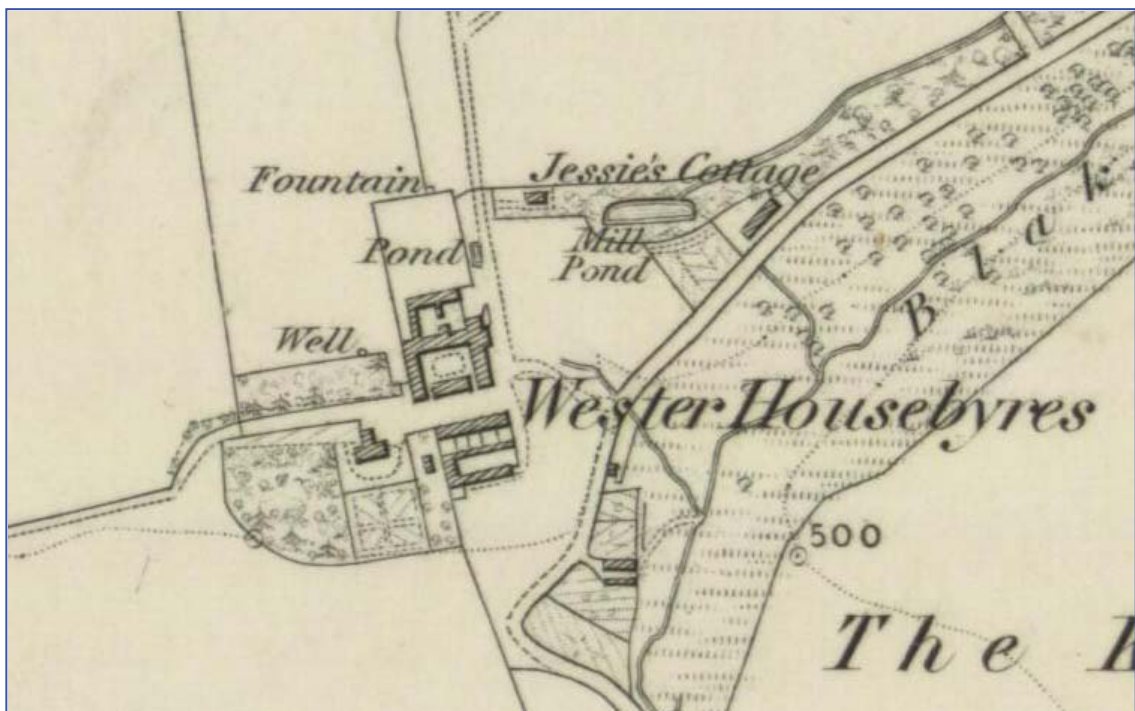


Figure 4: Extract from Ordnance Survey, 1863

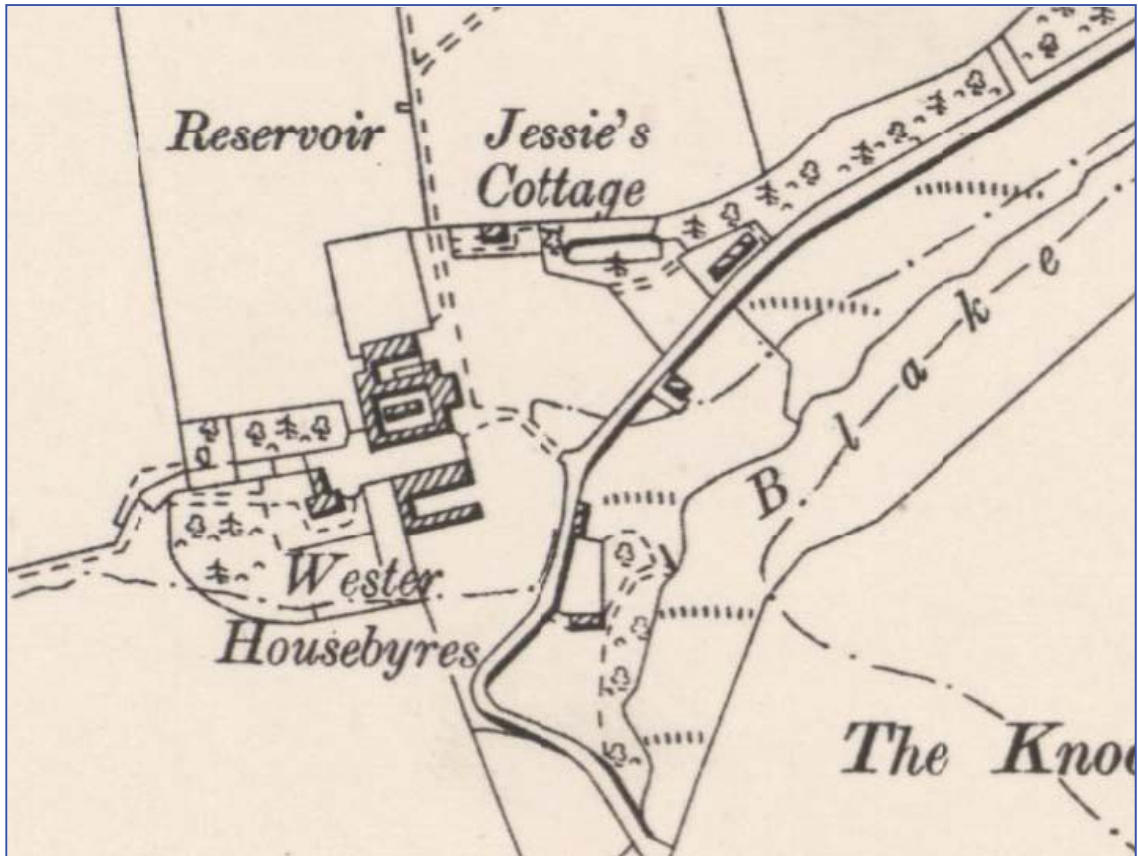


Figure 5: Extract from Ordnance Survey map, 1897

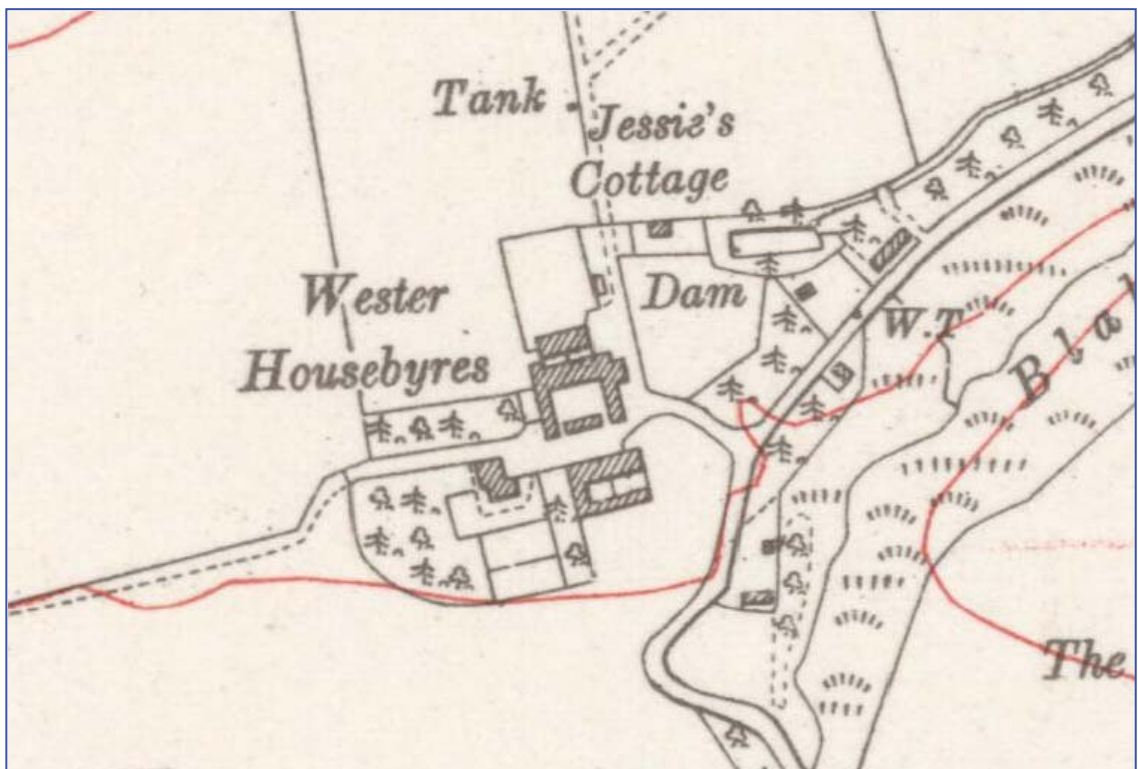


Figure 6: Extract from Ordnance Survey, 1925

5 ARCHITECTURAL DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The barns under investigation as part of this survey consisted of the east and north range of the U-shaped barn (A1 & A2) and the smaller cart shed (B) to the south (Figure 7). The buildings were generally used for storage or left empty and were in poor condition. They are constructed of local whinstone rubble, although dressed sandstone has been used as surrounds to many of the openings, and they all have pitched slate roofs and lead flashings. The original steading would have extended further to the north (see Figure 6) although, as with many farms into the late 20th century, the farming process became streamlined and more geared towards large open steel sheds and therefore much of this has been demolished. The northern barn (A2) is abutted by a large concrete and steel shed (although there is a fragment of stone rubble walling to the north side) with a further steel shed to the north of this. To the south, also, there is a large steel and breeze-block shed.

5.2 Barn A1: Threshing Shed

5.2.1 Barn A1 is a large linear north/south former threshing barn consisting of two main spaces internally (Figure 7; Plates 1 - 3). The main entrance into the barn is to the south elevation (see Plate 3). It is an original cart entrance, although has been broken through up to the top of the gable. The east elevation is a four-bay double-height elevation which would have had a water wheel to the north side (see Plates 1 & 4). The wheel pit can clearly be seen on maps into the early 20th century (see Figure 6), and the fixings and openings associated with the wheel and its operation can clearly be seen (Plate 5). The main hole for the attachment of the water wheel can be seen near the base of the wall, surrounded by brick, so was probably replaced after a time (Plate 6). Set just above this and to the either side is a tall thin opening, the southernmost of which is blocked up. A bearing box in timber casing is set much higher up on the wall (Plate 7). There is also a single window with raised chamfered surround to the north (Plate 8). The southern part of this elevation consists of a central large inserted tractor entrance with the remains of timber sliding door to the exterior, and an upper window to the far southernmost bay with vertical timber boarding (Plate 9).

5.2.2 Moving around to the north, the end gable of this barn has a window to the west side with a large red sandstone lintel (Plate 10). The first floor (forming the main grain store) has a large loading door to the east side adjacent to another smaller window. The west elevation is only partially visible as it abuts Barn A2 here, although is a plain stone rubble wall (Plate 11). The scar of a former lean-to shed is visible on it which would have leant against the rear north elevation of A2.

5.2.3 The west elevation to the south side has an opening to the north end with dressed sandstone surround (Plate 12). To the centre of this elevation, there is also what appears at first glance to be a phase line, marked by a line of larger stones with a straight junction between them. It is unsure, however, whether this forms an area of rebuild or not; there is not an equal feature on the opposing east elevation (Plates 13 & 14).

5.2.4 Internally, the barn consists of two spaces, A1/1 and A1/2 (Figure 7; Plates 15 & 16). However, originally the barn would have consisted of at least three separate spaces, as a broken-away stone partition wall exists to the south end in A1/1 (Plate 17). This barn is relatively open and has two openings to the east and west at the north end, the latter a much larger tractor entrance, probably enlarged from an original. The north dividing wall between A1/1 and A1/2 is a thick stone wall with two large openings (see Plate 16). The easternmost is set over a concrete step with a brick surround and is probably a later inserted entrance with a reinforced steel lintel above. The western entrance is a doorway through to the original threshing barn, although the surround has been re-done at a later date in brick and breeze-block.

5.2.5 Barn A1/2 to the north is a smaller space and would have at one point been cluttered with threshing machinery operated by the water wheel on the exterior east wall. Here are located the internal side of the openings associated with the wheel, including a wheel scar to the south end (Plates 18 & 19). There is also an additional bearing box set high to the centre of the wall (Plate 20). The windows to the north wall and north end of the east wall are also present, heavily spayed with jambs and dressed surrounds (see Plate 19). A large pipe has also been inserted to the base of the east side of the north wall. The main entrance into this barn (as well as through A1/1) is to the south end of the west wall, including a small doorway with adjacent small rectangular opening to the south (Plate 21). A timber stair is located along the west wall also, although there was no access to the upper level as much of the floor there is missing. Adjacent to the stair is a timber cupboard upon which is a large amount of pencilled graffiti, some of it dating to the late 19th century (Plates 22 – 27). Most of this is dated to around the 1890s to the 1900s and consists of dates with names allocated to numbers, probably a supply list or payment list.

5.3 Barn A2: Pig Pens with Hay Loft Above

5.3.1 This barn forms the northern section of the U-shaped barns and latterly consisted of a number of separated pig sheds. The partitions are in stone, so it is likely that these would have formed original separate pens for pigs or cattle, as each appears to have its own separate entrance. The south elevation opens to the rear of the cart shed (B). It consists of a four-bay two-storey barn with three doors leading into the pens together with another much wider doorway, all with chamfered and dressed surrounds (Plates 28 & 29). There are also five upper level hay loft windows, all timber shuttered. As with A1, the roof is a pitched slate roof with additional skylights to further light the hay loft.

5.3.2 The north elevation is now located within a modern concrete barn, although was originally open to a cow yard. It is a very poorly preserved wall, no doubt exacerbated by the insertion of the concrete barn with heavy water and vegetation damage (Plates 30 & 31). It has three doorways into the pens with a window to the westernmost pen (Plate 32).

5.3.3 Internally, the space is divided into four separate pens separated by stone partition walls (Figure 7). Pen A2/1 to the east has doorways to both the north and south walls with a separate angled timber stall to the centre (Plate 33). Pen A2/2 also has doors to both ends, although the southernmost is the wider opening (2.53m). It has a timber stall and trough to the west side. Pen A2/3 is a much smaller pen, again with openings to both sides (Plate 34). The westernmost pen, A2/4, has a doorway to the south and a window to the north side (Plate 35). A concrete floor has been added to the west side and there is a small niche to the east wall. Set high in the dividing gable wall, also to the east side, is a bricked-up loading doorway for the loading and unloading of hay for the hay loft (Plate 36).

5.4 Barn B: Cart Shed

5.4.1 This simple linear cart shed to the south of Barn A2 has its main access to the south elevation (Plates 37 & 38). It consists of five arched openings with voussoirs stones. All openings have a corresponding small rectangular hay loft window above. The east and west gables are plain (Plates 39 & 40) although there are corresponding hay loft windows to the north elevation (Plates 41 & 42). There is a small modern pig pen abutting to this elevation, which does not have any apparent openings to the ground floor, although there are mortar scars in the position of earlier pens.

5.4.2 Internally, the cart shed is divided into two spaces separated by timber panelling, three bays to the east and two to the west (Figure 7). The easternmost space, B/1, has the three cart openings to the south side and the rear of a timber stair to the north-east corner (Plates 43 & 44). The westernmost

space, B/2, was most recently used as a car garage with a concrete floor garage door installed to the east bay (Plate 45).

5.5 Barn C

- 5.5.1 Although not part of this development, this barn is likely contemporary with Barns A & B and it is as well to make at least a brief description of the exterior here, although the interior was inaccessible (it not being owned by the developer in this case). The east elevation consists of a large cart opening on the north side with a dressed surround (Plate 46). The southern part then forms a small cottage, with doorway and adjacent windows and a (replacement) brick chimney to the south gable (Plate 47). The north gable has a bricked-up inserted wide doorway to the west side (Plate 48). The south and west elevations are located in private land at Wester Housebyres Farmhouse.

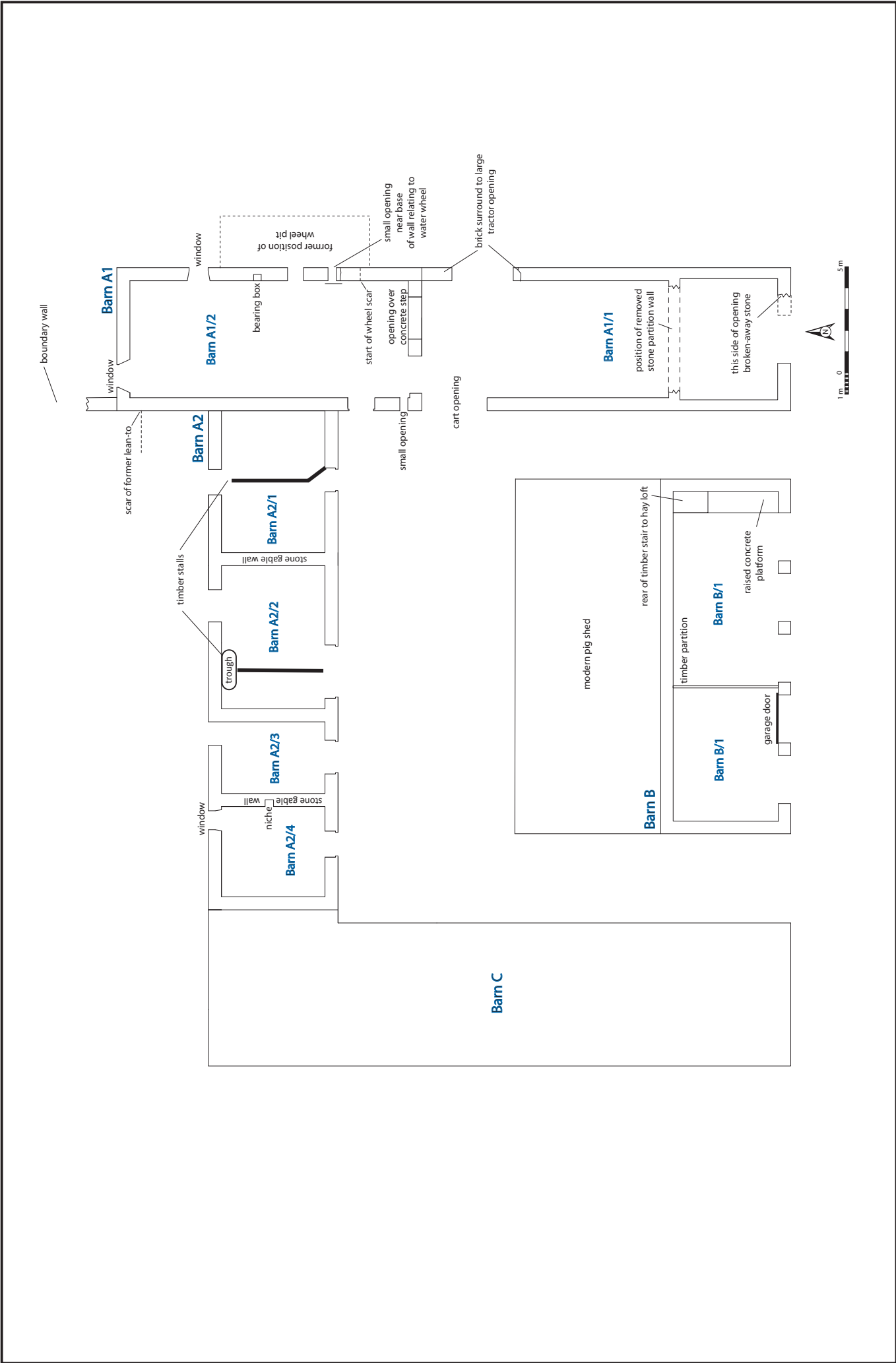


Figure 7: Wester Housebyres Farm, ground floor plan



Plate 1: Barn A1, general view from the SEE



Plate 2: Barn A1, general view from the north-east



Plate 3: Barn A1, general view from the south-east



Plate 4: Barn A1, east elevation, general view from the SEE



Plate 5: Barn A1, east elevation, detail of the openings and features associated with the water wheel from the east



Plate 6: Barn A1, east elevation, detail of the small opening relating to the water wheel from the east



Plate 7: Barn A1, east elevation, detail of the bearing box associated with the water wheel and threshing machinery from the east



Plate 8: Barn A1, east elevation, detail of window in northernmost bay, from the east



Plate 9: Barn A1, east elevation, detail of hay loft window in the southernmost bay



Plate 10: Barn A1, north elevation, general view from the north



Plate 11: Barn A1, west elevation to the north side, general view from the SWW



Plate 12: Barn A1, west elevation to the south side, general view from the west



Plate 13: Barn A1, west elevation to the south side, general view from the north-west

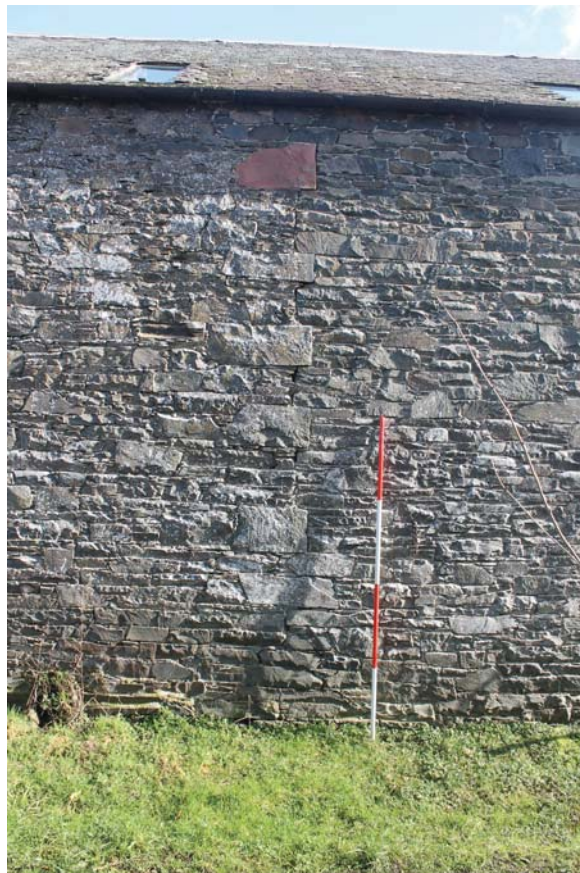


Plate 14: Barn A1, west elevation to the south side, detail of stonework from the west (?a phase line)



Plate 15: Barn A1/1, general view from the north



Plate 16: Barn A1/1, general view from the south



Plate 17: Barn A1/1, detail of broken-away stone partition wall to the west wall, from the north-east



Plate 18: Barn A1/2, general view of the east wall from the south-west



Plate 19: Barn A1/2, general view from the SSE



Plate 20: Barn A1/2, detail of bearing block on the east wall from the west



Plate 21: Barn A1/2, general view from the north-east



Plate 22: Barn A1/2, detail of the pencilled graffiti on the cupboard door to the west wall



Plate 25: Barn A1/2, detail of the pencilled graffiti on the cupboard door to the west wall



Plate 26: Barn A1/2, detail of the pencilled graffiti on the cupboard door to the west wall



Plate 27: Barn A1/2, detail of the pencilled graffiti on the cupboard door to the west wall



Plate 28: Barn A2, south elevation, general view from the south-east



Plate 29: Barn A2, south elevation, general view from the south-west



Plate 30: Barn A2, north elevation, general view from the north-east



Plate 31: Barn A2, north elevation, detail of doorway from the north-west



Plate 32: Barn A2, north elevation, detail of window in westernmost bay, from the north



Plate 33: Barn A2/1, general view from the NNE



Plate 34: Barn A2/3, general view from the SSE



Plate 35: Barn A2/4, general view from the south-west



Plate 36: Barn A2/4, detail of the loading door from the hay loft in the east gable wall, from the south-west



Plate 37: Barn B, south elevation, general view from the south-east



Plate 38: Barn B, south elevation, general view from the south-west



Plate 39: Barn B, east elevation, general view from the south-east



Plate 40: Barn B, west elevation, general view from the south-west



Plate 41: Barn B, north elevation, general view from the north-west



Plate 42: Barn B, north elevation, general view from the north-east



Plate 43: Barn B/1, general view from the NEE



Plate 44: Barn B/1, general view from the west



Plate 45: Barn B/2, general view from the north-east



Plate 46: Barn C, east elevation, general view to the north side, from the east



Plate 47: Barn C, east elevation, general view to the south side, from the south-east



Plate 48: Barn C, north elevation, general view from the north

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 Although a farm undoubtedly existed at Wester Housebyres in the 18th century, Roy's map (see Figure 2) shows a haphazard arrangement of barns around enclosures. Tennant's 1840 map (see Figure 3) shows the arrangement we can see today – hence the existing buildings date from at least this period, which ties in with the emergence by the end of the 18th century and into the early 19th century of many farms in the Scottish Borders region becoming more organised with layouts of barns arranged around a central courtyard.
- 6.2 The existence of the threshing barn is an interesting feature, although the remains of the water wheel have now gone (J Murray, pers comm). The wheel pit was still in existence in the 1920s and possibly remained in use up to the mid-20th century, although now the burn that powered it has long since dried up. The former mill pond was located to the east of Jessie's Cottage to the north-east of the farm and has now been filled in. The graffiti on the cupboard door is an interesting social historical feature to have survived.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 This report has successfully recorded the barns that will be affected by the development. They are interesting as an example of vernacular architecture of the region, not least because of the large use of the local whinstone, and the remains of the water powered threshing mill that was once located to the eastern barn.
- 7.2 No further historic building recording is recommended.

8 REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliography and bibliographical references

Scottish Planning Policy SPP23. 2008 *Archaeology and Planning*. Scottish Government: Edinburgh

Scottish Government 2011 *Planning and Archaeology 2/2011*. Scottish Government: Edinburgh

8.2 Cartographic References

ca, 1747 – 55	William Roy	<i>Military Map of Scotland</i>
1840	N Tennant	<i>Map of the County of Roxburgh</i>
1863	Ordnance Survey	<i>Roxburghshire Sheet III</i>
1896	Ordnance Survey	<i>Roxburghshire Sheet III.SE</i>
1925	Ordnance Survey	<i>Roxburghshire Sheet n4</i>

Appendix 1: Photographic Record

Black & White Print & Colour Digital Film #1

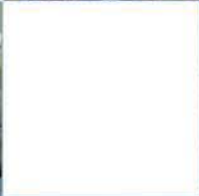
<i>Frame</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Taken From</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Barn A1/2	Detail of the graffiti on the timber cupboard in the W wall	E	07/03/2014
2	Barn A1/2	Detail of the bearing box on the E wall	W	07/03/2014
3	Barn A1/2	Detail of tall thin opening on the E wall associated with the former water wheel	W	07/03/2014
4 – 5	Barn A1/2	General view of E wall (to S side) showing scar in wall and openings associated with the former water wheel	SW	07/03/2014
6 – 7	Barn A1/1	General view	N	07/03/2014
8	Barn A1/1	Detail of scar in W wall to the S end	NE	07/03/2014
9	Barn A1	General view of Room A1/1	S	07/03/2014
10	Barn A1	Detail of the phase line on the W elevation	W	07/03/2014
11	Barn A1	General view of W elevation (S side)	NW	07/03/2014
12	Barn B	General view of the E gable	SE	07/03/2014
13	Barn B	General view	SE	07/03/2014
14	Barn A1	General view of the S gable	SSE	07/03/2014
15	Barn A1	General view	SE	07/03/2014
16 – 17	Barn A3	Detail of E elevation to N side of Barn A2	E	07/03/2014
18 – 19	Barn A2	Detail of window to the W side of the N elevation	N	07/03/2014
20 – 21	Barn A1	General view of the W elevation to the N side adjacent to Barn A2	W	07/03/2014
22 – 23	Barn A2	Detail of doorway to the E side of the N elevation	NW	07/03/2014
24 – 25	Barn A2	General view of the N elevation	NE	07/03/2014
26	Barn A1	General view	NE	07/03/2014
27	Barn A1	Detail of window to N-most bay of E elevation	E	07/03/2014
28	Barn A1	Detail of area relating to former water wheel in the N end of the E elevation	SE	07/03/2014
29	Barn A1	Detail of area relating to former water wheel in the N end of the E elevation	E	07/03/2014
30	Barn A1	Detail of bearing boxes relating to former water wheel in the N end of the E elevation	E	07/03/2014
31	Barn A1	Detail of area relating to former water wheel in the N end of the E elevation	E	07/03/2014
32	Barn A1	Detail of area relating to former water wheel in the N end of the E elevation	E	07/03/2014
33	Barn A1	General view of the E elevation to the N end	SEE	07/03/2014
34	Barn A1	Detail of window to the first floor of the S side of the E elevation	E	07/03/2014
35	Barn A1	General view of the E elevation	SE	07/03/2014
36	-	Registration	-	07/03/2014

Black & White Print & Colour Digital Film #2

<i>Frame</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Taken From</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	-	General view of stone rubble wall remaining to the N of Barn A2	NW	07/03/2014
2	Barn A1	General view	NE	07/03/2014
3	Barn A1	General view	SE	07/03/2014
4	-	General view looking at walls behind Barns C and A2	NW	07/03/2014
5 – 6	Barn C	General view of N gable	N	07/03/2014
7 – 8	Barn A1	General view of N gable	N	07/03/2014
9 – 10	Barn C	General view of centre of E elevation	SE	07/03/2014
11 – 12	Barn C	General view of S side of E elevation	SE	07/03/2014
13 – 14	Barn B	General view of W gable	SW	07/03/2014
15 – 16	Barn B	General view	SW	07/03/2014
17 – 18	Barn B/2	General view	NE	07/03/2014
19 – 20	Barn B/1	General view	SWW	07/03/2014
21	Barn B/1	General view	SEE	07/03/2014
22	Barn B	General view of N elevation	NE	07/03/2014
23	Barn B	General view of N elevation	NW	07/03/2014
24	Barn C	General view of E elevation to N side	E	07/03/2014
25	Barn A2	General view (W end)	S	07/03/2014
26	Barn A2	General view	SW	07/03/2014
27	Barn A2	General view	SE	07/03/2014
28	Barn A1	General view	W	07/03/2014
29	Barn A2/4	Detail of blocked loading door in the E wall	SWW	07/03/2014
30	Barn A2/4	General view	SW	07/03/2014
31	Barn A2/3	General view	S	07/03/2014
32	Barn A2/2	General view	S	07/03/2014
33	Barn A2/1	Detail of door and hay loft door above in the S wall	NW	07/03/2014
34	Barn A2/1	Detail of door in N wall	SW	07/03/2014
31 – 33	Barn A1/2	Detail of graffiti on cupboard door	E	07/03/2014
34	Barn A1/2	General view	NE	07/03/2014
35	Barn A1/2	General view	SSE	07/03/2014
36	-	Registration	-	07/03/2014

Appendix 2: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland (DES) Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Scottish Borders Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	Wester Housebyres Farm
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 22447
PARISH:	Melrose
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Diana Sproat
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Historic Building Recording
NMRS NO(S):	NT53NW 79
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Farm (threshing shed and cart shed)
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None.
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 53013 36492
START DATE (this season)	7 th March 2014
END DATE (this season)	7 th March 2014
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None.
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Mr J Murray to undertake a basic historic building survey of two barns as part of the Wester Housebyres farmsteading prior to renovation as part of the planning condition on the development.</p> <p>The barns appear to be probably early 19th century in date, although a settlement at West Housebyres goes back as far as at least the 18th century. The two barns consist of a former threshing machine and cart shed respectively, with the threshing machine once powered by a water wheel to the east side, now gone, although remains of the fixings and bearing blocks remain.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None.
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None.
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Mr J Murray
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	AOC Archaeology Group, Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Edgefield Road, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	edinburgh@aocarchaeology.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION: (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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