

WBSF12/001



WELLBRAEHEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL, FORFAR

Historic Building Recording

for Taylor-Shepherd Homes

11/00960/FULL

April 2012

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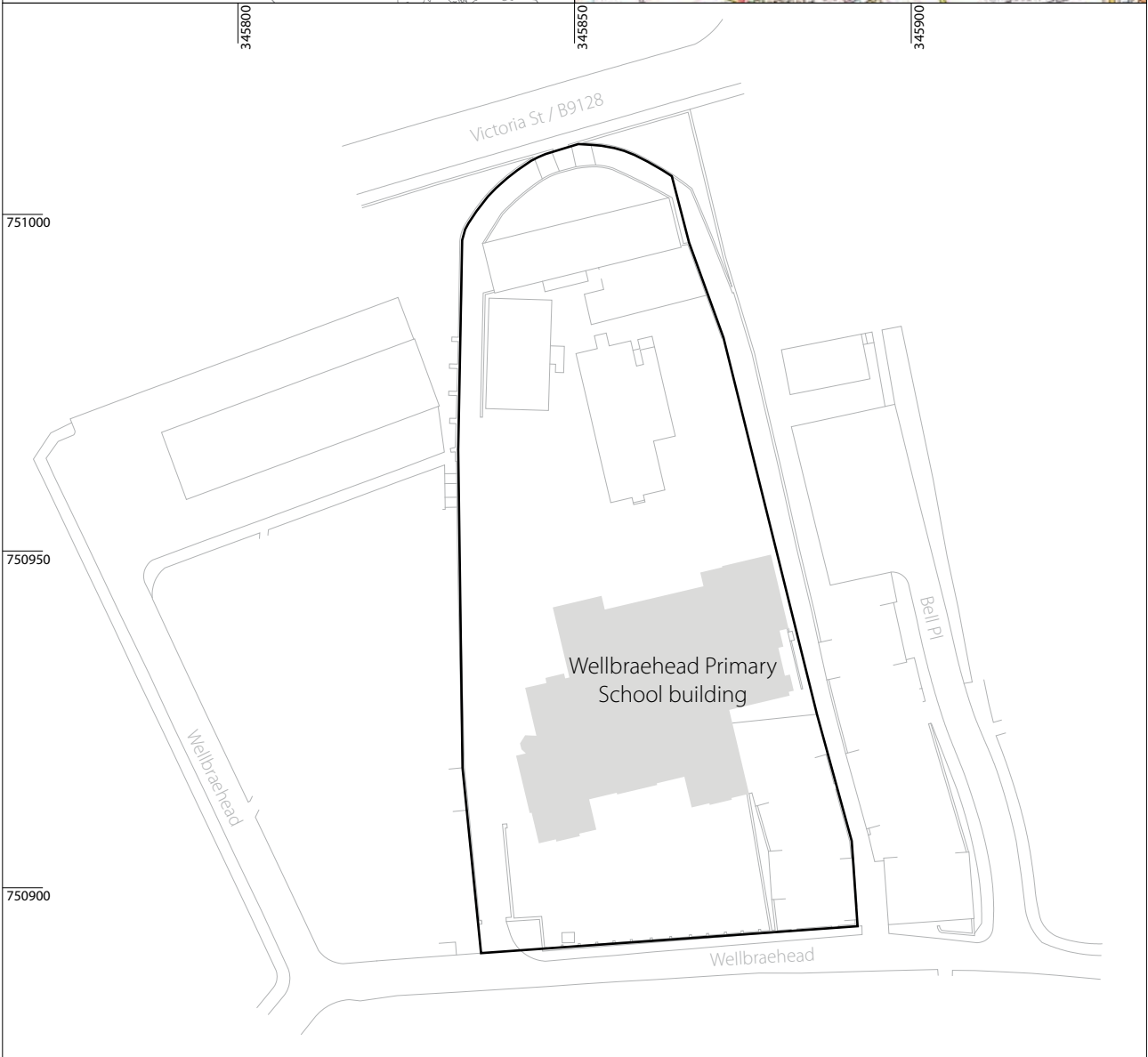
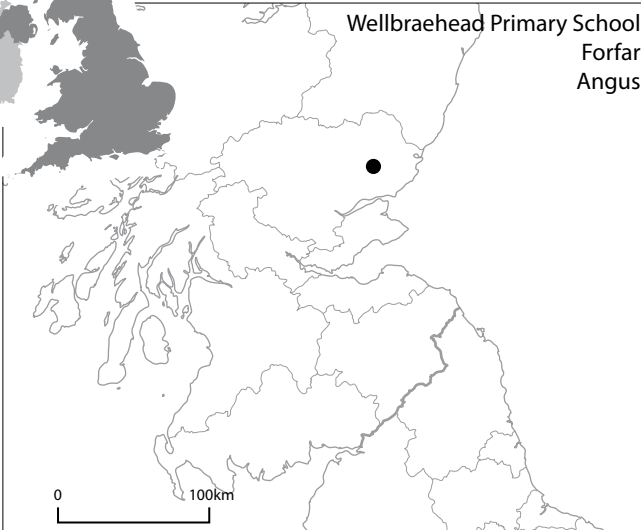
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Scale 1:1,000 @ A4



0 50m

Illus 1
Site location

WELLBRAEHEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL, FORFAR

Historic Building Recording

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Taylor Shepherd Homes to undertake a programme of building recording at Wellbraehead Primary School, Forfar. This report forms a basic written, metric and photographic record of the building.

The school is a Category 'C' listed building dating to the late 19th/early 20th century. The initial construction of circa 1878 formed a small utilitarian single-storey school on a C-plan in the north of the site. The second phase constructed in 1908 adjoins the south side of the original building. This later phase single-storey building included significant Scots Baronial and Arts and Crafts detailing including: a conical roofed round tower style main entrance and decorative motifs on many of the gables fronting the south and west elevations. No significant architectural features were recorded within the building as these had been masked by modern fixtures and fittings.

This report forms a record of the buildings on the site prior to their development in line with the requirements of the Angus Council. The buildings are to be retained in the development and converted into residential dwellings.

1. BACKGROUND

An application for development (11/00960/FULL) by Taylor Shepherd Homes, for a development at Wellbraehead School, Forfar has been granted by Angus Council. Planning permission was granted in accordance with the terms of the application and subject to conditions. A condition (2g) relating to archaeology stated:

That prior to the commencement of the development the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority:

- g. details to show the implementation of an archaeological standing building survey of the extant structures to be carried out by an archaeological organisation acceptable to the planning authority. The scope of the archaeological standing building survey will be set by the Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service on behalf of the planning authority. The name of the archaeological organisation retained by the developer shall be given to the planning authority and to the Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service in writing not less than 14 days before the survey commences. Copies of the resulting survey shall be deposited in the National Monuments Record for Scotland and the local Sites and Monuments Record upon completion.*

Reason: In the interests of recording the archaeological value of the building.

Taylor Shepherd Homes commissioned Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd to undertake a programme of building recording at Wellbraehead Primary School, Forfar, Angus. This involved the creation of a record of the building in line with a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed, in advance, with the Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service.

Existing plans and elevations of the buildings were supplied by the client. Further recording work was undertaken to reach a level consistent with a Level 2 Historic Building Survey (RCHME 1996). The site is located close to the centre of Forfar (NGR: NO 45863 50931; Illus 1). The site forms a sub-rectangular block bounded by Victoria Street to the N and Wellbraehead to the S, with modern housing to both the E and the W. A large tarmac former playground with a number of modern pre-fabricated buildings was located to the N side of the principal school building and a smaller area of playground was located to the S. The building is Category 'C' listed (HB50236) and is in NMRS (NO45SE 375) maintained by the RCAHMS.

2. OBJECTIVES

In general, the purpose of the work was to provide an appropriate level of record to mitigate the loss and alteration of historic standing structures through demolition/conversion (following Scottish Planning Policy, Planning Advice Note 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology The Scottish Government 2011).



Illus 2
Building plan

The resulting archive will be organised and deposited in the NMRS; to facilitate access for future research and interpretation for public benefit.

3. METHODOLOGY

In line with the requirements of a Level 2 record (RCHME 1996) the staged survey included:

- Scale plans of all main floors in historic buildings as existing (as supplied by the client with additional detail added by Headland Archaeology). Plans show the form and location of structural features of historic significance (eg blocked doors & windows, former fireplace openings, masonry joints, changes in internal level).
- General photographic views of the exterior of buildings.
- Photographs that capture the overall appearance of principal rooms and circulation areas.
- Detailed photographic coverage of the building's external appearance.
- Photographs of 19th- early 20th century architectural details (cornices, glazing, decorative pediments etc).

The written or descriptive record includes:

- The precise location of the buildings.
- The date the record was made and the name of the recorders.
- An expanded summary statement describing each building's type, purpose, materials and possible date (s). An outline account of the building's plan, form, function, age and development sequence. The names of architects, builders, patrons and owners if known.
- A note of each building's past and present relationship to its setting: for example, its part in a larger functional group of buildings.

4. RECORDING

Recording followed IfA Standards and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures (IfA 2008). Recording was undertaken on pro forma record sheets. Digital images were taken; a graduated metric scale was clearly visible and a register kept. The photographic register is included as Appendix 1.

Additional detail to existing plans was added using an electronic distance measurer. Historic architectural features were accurately located with reference to existing site plans.

5. ARCHIVE

All aspects of archiving will be undertaken in accordance with guidelines published by the IfA on behalf of the Archaeological Archives Forum (July 2007). On completion of the work Headland will produce a site archive. An online OASIS report (Headland1 – 121802) will be completed and will be accompanied by a pdf report; a summary report will be published in Discovery and Excavation Scotland (Appendix 2).

The archive will be deposited with NMRS, as per standard conditions. Deposition will be undertaken within one year of the completion of fieldwork.

Digital archives (including photographs) will be transferred with the rest of the archive following the NMRS guidelines and packaged appropriately. Metadata forms will accompany all digital archives.

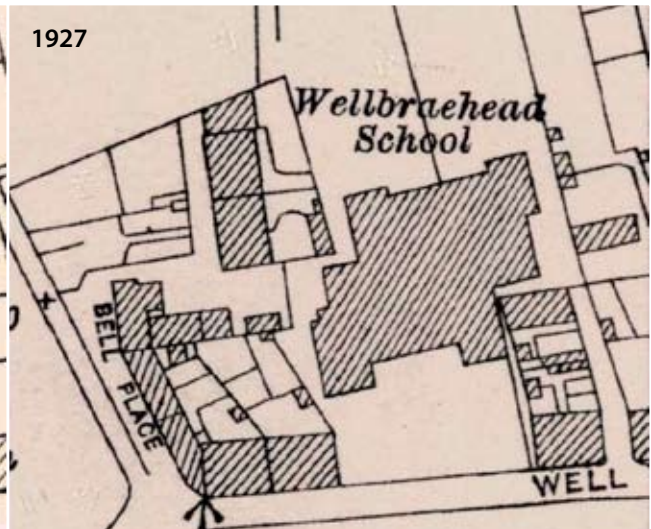
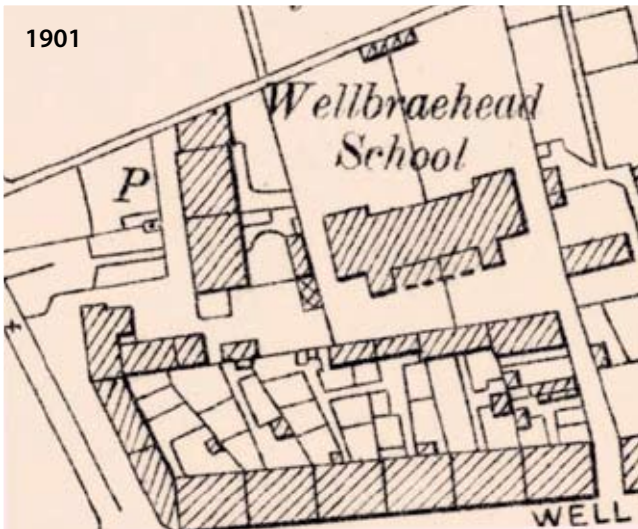
6. RESULTS

This section includes an interpretive summary based on the evidence collected whilst on site. In this description, the buildings themselves are labelled by name, and the subdivisions within them are labelled numerically based on the existing plans. A labelled floor plan is included as Illus 2.

6.1 Development overview

The principal building comprised a sub-rectangular single storey structure formed of three E-W aligned inter-connected blocks with two main phases of construction (Illus 2).

The initial phase, built circa 1878 was first depicted on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey published in 1901 (Illus 3). It was a rectangular building with projecting gabled wings to the N elevation and two short extensions to the S elevation spanned by a roofed area open to the S. By the time of the 1926 Ordnance Survey (Illus 4) the 2nd phase of construction had been completed. This comprised two further inter-connected rectangular blocks. Both these additional blocks are considered to be part of the same phase and comprised a central rectangular block abutting the S side of the original building but stepped slightly to the W. Keyed into the N side but stepped further to the W was a further C-plan block that included slightly projecting gabled wings facing to the S. These two later blocks included a number of Scots Baronial and Arts and Crafts details, although this was much more prominent



Illus 3

Extract from the 2nd ed OS map (1901)

Illus 4

Extract from the 1927 OS map

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on the southern block, presumably as it now formed the principal facade.

6.2 External description

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Phase 1

The initial phase of the school comprised a long rectangular single-storey building located to the N part of the site (Illus 5). This building was constructed of stugged squared masonry in a snecked pattern. This was most clearly illustrated on the main N elevation that comprised two single bay projecting gables flanking a central span that incorporated a row of 13 windows. The stone surrounds to these windows had comb-dressed margins and a chamfered sill flush to the wall. Each of the gabled bays included a large central window to the same design with the addition of a hood moulded round-arched louvered opening/vent high up on the gable. The pitched slate roof included plain stone skews and a central raised louvered timber vent topped with a weather vein (Illus 6).

The W elevation of this early phase block included 2 large windows, one of which included a replaced central stone mullion. This design was repeated on the E elevation along with a small brick-blocked window close to the existing ground level. The S elevation of the original building had been masked by the addition of the central block of the later phase building.

Phase 2

The 2nd phase of the school building comprised two further blocks showing slightly different construction

styles. The main S facing C-plan block was significantly more decorative than the central block of the building. This presumably reflects the differing visibility of the two blocks rather than identifying different building phases.

South block (Illus 2)

The S elevation of the 2nd phase construction was the most prominent aspect of the building (Illus 7). This comprised two projecting gable wings flanking a central span that included a further, slightly advanced central gable. The stonework on this elevation comprised grey bull-faced snecked stonework with smooth ashlar quoins of red sandstone. The projecting base of the elevation was chamfered with a single course of red sandstone inserted forming a string course close to the base of the wall.

The two matching wing gables both incorporated two single windows flanking a slightly raised central 3 light window capped by a moulded lintel. All three windows included the same in-out red sandstone surrounds with tabbed margins and projecting sills. The gables on these two wings included a moulded string course that spanned a stepped rise halfway up the gable sides along with a vertical beaded moulding that rose to the fake stack at the gable apex (Illus 8). The stone skews to each side of the gable were supported on slightly extended curving support corbels.

The main span of the S elevation included a central raised gable flanked by single large 3 pane windows to the same design as those on the wings. The gable showed two windows below a dentil cornice with a corbel table above and a pedimented blank tablet (Illus 9). Further examples of the beaded mouldings recorded on the wing gables were also prominent on this gable. The pitched slate roof over this elevation included toothed terracotta ridge tiles

Illus 5 ▶

Main N facing elevation of the 1st phase block of the school



Illus 6 ▶

Detail of the central roof vent on the 1st phase building



Illus 7 ▶

Main S facing elevation of the 2nd phase building





Illus 8

Detail of the gable on the western wing of the S elevation



Illus 10

View of the W elevation of the southern block

and two raised square louvered vents with conical caps along with two stone chimneys showing two courses of projecting cornicing. The whole elevation showed a degree of design and artistic endeavour that was clearly meant to impress and inspire.

The E elevation of the south block was mostly masked by an earlier dwelling to the E and a tall stone boundary wall. A very small span of this elevation was visible at its junction with the S elevation of the central block. A single large window with replaced mullions was recorded, the whole wall being quite plain. This lack of decoration probably reflects the lack of visibility here.

In contrast the W elevation was as prominent as that seen to the S. The main feature of the W elevation was a slightly projecting gable incorporating the same design features found on the southern elevation gables with two single pane windows flanking a 2 pane central window with a raised decorated lintel (Illus 10). The bull-faced snecked stone walls were also prominent on this elevation.

Linking the south block and the stepped-back central block on the W elevation stood a faux round tower porch with a conical roof and moulded corbelled string course (Illus 11). A NW facing door was inserted into this tower forming the main entrance to the building. This

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Illus 9

General view of the central gable on the S elevation



Illus 11

Detail of the 'tower' entrance

Illus 12 ►

General view of the N elevation of the central block



Illus 13 ►

General view of the East elevation of the central block



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entrance included a 3 pane skylight above. The tower was constructed of the same bull-faced snecked masonry with ashlar door and window surrounds in red sandstone.

A number of the drain pipes on the south block and in particular the S elevation included ornamental hoppers.

Central block

The continuation of the W elevation was set back from the 'tower' entrance and formed the W wall to the central block of the building (Illus 12). Although on initial view this had a similar overall look to the southern block, closer inspection revealed it had a slightly different design. The main difference was that the snecked masonry walls were stugged and not bull-faced and the base of the walls did not project, although it still included the ashlar quoins and window surrounds of red sandstone. Two large double windows with central stone mullions made up the main feature of this elevation, although the stone mullions had been replaced with cement-rendered concrete. The red sandstone surrounds to the windows were similar to those recorded to the S elevation but the sills were chamfered and were not raised; indicating a slightly reduced effort for decoration.

A short length of the S elevation to this central block was visible to the W side of the main 1st phase building (Illus 12). This comprised a projecting gabled doorway with similar moulded decoration to that found on the gables to the south. Above the door was a 6 pane skylight. Again the stonework was not as elaborate as on the south block, but some effort had been undertaken to continue the form of the more decorative elevations. This door formed a secondary entrance to the school.

The E elevation to the central block included 2 projecting gabled single doors flanking two large windows (Illus 13). This elevation displayed the same stugged stonework and ashlar quoins, door and window surrounds as recorded on the W elevation. The gable doors were capped with stone skews with a modest beaded decoration at the apex. The slate roof was also topped with the same toothed terracotta ridge tiles recorded on the south block. A short span of the S elevation of the central block was visible on the E side of the building due to the south block being stepped back at this point. The main features of this elevation were three large windows with red sandstone surrounds, although these looked to have been inserted at a later date as the surrounding stonework appeared to have been replaced.



Illus 14

Detail of modern fittings in Room 5

6.3 Internal description

The building was divided into 18 rooms for the purpose of this report although some of these rooms were subdivided (Illus 2). These numbers do not correspond with any known classroom numbers that the rooms had previously been assigned.

The building as a whole had been furnished with modern flooring, plastered walls, fitted cupboards and dropped ceilings throughout. These masked the majority of any surviving original features although it was thought that the floor plans provided do give a good representation of the original layout.

South block

The south block included 4 large classrooms (Rooms 2, 4, 5 and 6) with two smaller offices/staff rooms to the E and W ends (Rooms 1 and 7). No original features could be seen in these rooms apart from the recessed sash-and-case windows (Illus 14) along the S wall of each room.

Central block

The central block included a number of offices and corridors to the E and W ends bounding a large central space (Room 8) that formed a gym/assembly room (Illus 15). This large room had a pitched timber frame glass roof and included glass and timber panel walls to the E and W ends. The S wall included an arched opening (Illus 16) leading to Rooms 6 and 7. Two similar arches were seen in Corridor (Room) 3, one leading to the main entrance and one leading to Room 2. Corridor (Room) 3 was one of the few places where the original plain cove moulding was visible (Illus 17). This was also visible on the E wall of Room 16 and at the N end of Corridor (Room) 17. The continuation of the moulding around the edges of this central space may indicate that the area to the W of the gym was once a single large room. Two raised skylights were also visible in this area. Similar cove mouldings and skylights were recorded in the rooms to the E of the gym (Rooms 9 and 10). The only wood panelling that was seen was found in the vestibule of the main (tower) entrance with decorated panelling recorded on both the walls and ceiling (Illus 18).



Illus 15

Detail of the central gym/assembly room (Room 8)

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Illus 16

Detail of the arched opening leading to Rooms 5 and 7

North block

The earlier phase north block was divided into 4 large rooms (Rooms 11, 12, 14 and 15) separated by a central corridor (Room 13). As with the rest of the building any original features had been masked by modern fittings and a lowered false ceiling. It is worth noting that the doors to the classrooms to this block were of a different design to the timber panel doors found to the S, although neither of them were of any particularly significant architectural value.

7. DISCUSSION

Until 1873 most schools in Scotland were funded by the church. The 1872 Education (Scotland) Act required the



Illus 17

View of one of the skylights and cove moulding in the central block

local Burgh councils to fund all public schools within their jurisdiction. During this period Forfar was expanding quite rapidly due to the industrialisation of the textile industry and in particular the production of Jute. The increasing population made it necessary for the council to set up a number of schools in the area. The school at Wellbraehead was one of six schools recorded under the Burgh school-board and was thought to have room for 280 pupils although it was recorded as having an average of 250 in 1881 (Groome 1882). In this year the school had a government grant of £177, 7s (*ibid*).

It was clear from both the map evidence and the building itself that it was built in two phases. The early phase was more utilitarian in style with the second phase showing a much more decorative and stylish design. It was unclear if the later phase of building was also funded by the Burgh council or whether a benefactor had paid for it, the latter of which could explain the more decorative style to what was essentially a utilitarian building.

Although it was noted that the two blocks of the second phase construction showed slightly different stonework, and levels of decoration, this was probably linked with their relative visibility rather than any further phasing of construction. The main S and W elevations of the south block were very visible from the main road to the south (Wellbraehead) and were constructed to a high standard with much flair and decoration, whilst the E and W elevations of the central block were not as visible to the public and so received less decoration.

It was clear from the survey that the original layout of the school had mostly been preserved with classrooms to the N and S around a central hall and offices. Although the majority of the original fittings had been masked by modern walls and ceilings, with only a limited view of the original plain cove mouldings and timber panelling, it was considered that the external design of the building was its most important aspect. This design was highly fashionable and had been done with great care and attention to detail. These external features have been well preserved and should not be affected by the redevelopment.

8. REFERENCES

8.1 Cartographic references

- 1901 Ordnance Survey *Forfarshire*, sheet 038 6
- 1926 Ordnance Survey, *Forfarshire*, sheet 038 6

8.2 Bibliographic references

- Groom, FH 1882 *A historical perspective, drawn from the Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland: A Survey of Scottish Topography, Statistical, Biographical and Historical*, edited by Francis H Groome and originally published in parts by Thomas C Jack, Grange Publishing Works, Edinburgh between 1882 and 1885.
- Planning Advice Note 2/2011 *Planning and Archaeology*, The Scottish Government 2011.
- English Heritage 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*, English Heritage: Swindon.
- IfA 2008 *Standards and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings and structures*, Institute for Archaeologists: Reading.
- RCAHMS 2004 *Corporate Plan 2004-2009 Annex: Survey and Recording Policy*.

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Illus 18

Detail of the timber panelling in the tower entrance



9. APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1 – Photographic register

Shot no.	Facing	Description
1	S	External N elevation from the road
2	S	External N elevation from the road
3	NE	External S elevation of the 2nd Phase
4	NE	External S elevation detail of the W gable
5	N	External view of the central span of the S elevation
6	N	External detail of the central gable of the S elevation
7	NW	External view of the E wall of the W wing extension
8	N	External view of the E gable wing on the S elevation
9	N	External detail of the window of the E gable wing of the S elevation
10	N	External detail of the gable roof of the E gable wing of the S elevation
11	NE	External view of the W wall of the E wing extension
12	N	Detail of the Roof vent on the central span of the S elevation
13	N	External detail of the central gable roof line on the S elevation
14	NW	Detail of the drain hopper
15	N	Detail of the roof skew on the W wing of the S elevation
16	N	External detail of the window on the W side of the central span of the S elevation
17	NW	General shot of the external S elevation
18	NE	General shot of the external W elevation at the SW corner
19	NE	Detail of the Chimney and vent on the W side of the roof
20	SE	External general view of the S half of the W elevation
21	SE	External detail of the circular entrance on the W elevation
22	SE	Detail of the window light above the door of the main entrance
23	S	Detail of the faux-window on the main entrance
24	S	External view of the W end of the N elevation
25	SE	External view of the W end of the N elevation
26	S	External detail of the window and gable on the W end of the N elevation
27	SE	External view of the W wing of the N elevation
28	SE	External general view of the N elevation of the 1st Phase
29	S	External detail of the W gable of the N elevation 1st Phase

Shot no.	Facing	Description
30	S	Detail of the recess in the W gable of the N elevation 1st Phase
31	S	External view of the central span of the N elevation 1st phase
32	S	Detail of the roof vent on the N elevation
33	S	External detail of the E gable of the N elevation 1st Phase
34	SW	External general view of the N elevation of the 1st Phase
35	SW	External view of the E elevation of the 1st Phase
36	W	External detail of the brick-blocked window on the E elevation 1st phase
37	W	External detail of the door on the central part of the E elevation 2nd phase
38	NW	External view of the 2 doors on the central part of the E elevation 2nd phase
39	NW	Detail of the roof vents on the central part of the E elevation 2nd phase
40	NW	External view of the S elevation at the E end of the central part 2nd phase
41	NW	Detail of the roof vent on the central part of the E elevation 2nd phase
42	NW	Detail of the roof skews of the central part of the E elevation 2nd phase
43	N	General view of the external buildings to the N of the school
44	N	General view of the external buildings to the N of the school
45	SW	Internal view of Room 2
46	N	Internal view of corridor 3 showing the arched support
47	W	Internal view of Room 1
48	W	Internal view of corridor 3 showing the entrance
49	SE	Internal view of Room 4
50	E	Internal view of corridor 3
51	E	Detail of ceiling in corridor 3
52	N	Internal view of Room 16 office
53	E	Internal view of Room 8
54	SE	Internal view of Room 8
55	E	Detail of panelling on the E wall of Room 8
56	SW	Internal view of Room 5
57	NW	Internal view of Room 5
58	S	Detail of the arched opening on the S wall of Room 8
59	E	Internal view of Room 7
60	SE	Internal view of Room 6
61	W	Internal view of corridor 10

Shot no.	Facing	Description
62	E	Detail of the ceiling cove moulding in Corridor 10
63	SE	Internal view of Room 9
64	E	Detail of ceiling skylight in Room 9
65	N	Detail of ceiling skylight in Room 9
66	N	Detail of door leading to Room 11
67	NE	Internal view of Room 11
68	W	Detail of roof beams in Room 11
69	NW	Internal view of Room 12
70	E	Detail of doors of cupboard in room 12
71	W	Detail of ceiling in corridor 10
72	N	Internal view of Room 13
73	N	View of opening on the N wall of room 8 leading to Room 13
74	NW	Internal view of Room 14
75	N	Detail of cupboard doors on the N wall of Room 8
76	NW	Internal view of Room 15
77	SE	Internal view of Room 15
78		Playground rules
79	W	Detail of the panelling on the walls and ceiling of the main entrance
80	NE	External view of the S side of the W elevation Phase 2
81	E	External view of the main entrance
82	SE	External view of the roof to the central room
83	S	External view of the N elevation phase 1
84	S	External view of the N elevation phase 1
85	S	Detail of the roof vent on the 1st phase building
86	NE	External view of the S elevation Phase 2
87	NE	External view of the SW corner of the S elevation
88	E	External view of the W elevation of the central section of the building phase 2
89	NE	Detail of the decoration on the gable of the W elevation phase 2
90	E	Detail of the decoration on the gable of the W elevation phase 2

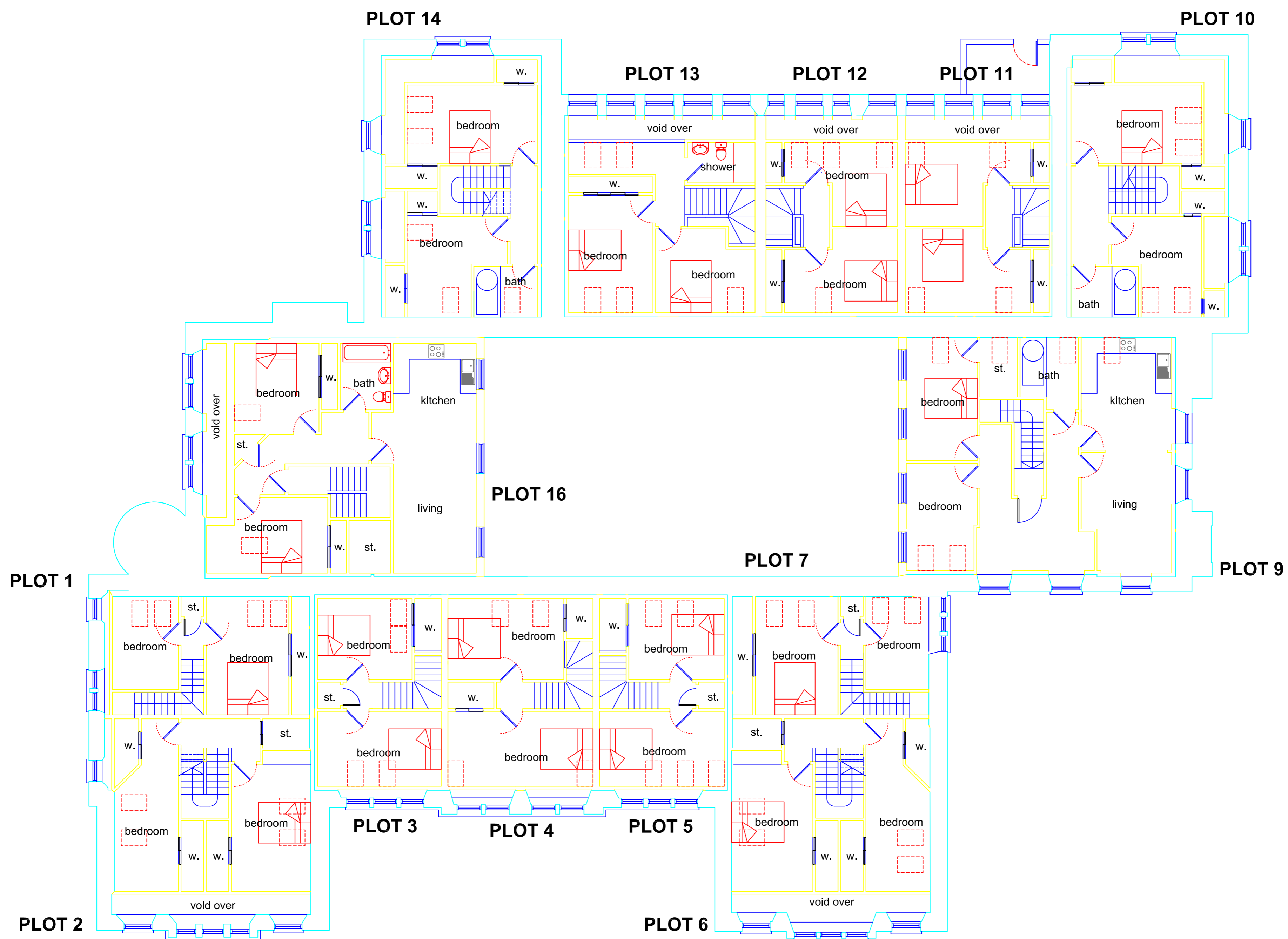


9.2 APPENDIX 2: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND

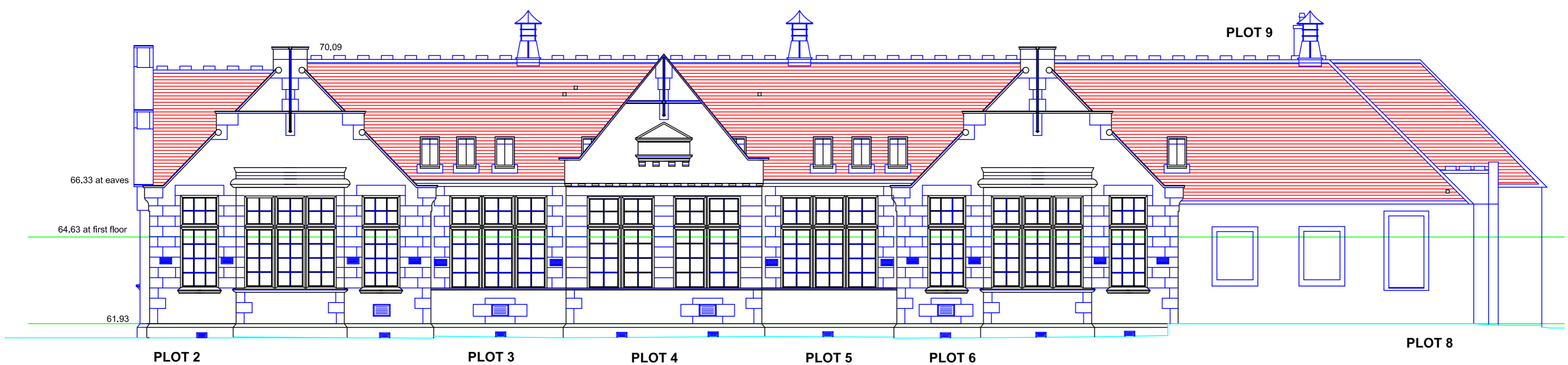
LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Angus
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	A survey of Wellbraehead Primary School, Forfar
PROJECT CODE:	WBSF12
PARISH:	Forfar
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Donald Wilson
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Headland Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Historic Building Recording
NMRS NO(S):	
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	19th/ 20th century school building
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	none
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NGR NO 45863 50931
START DATE (this season)	March 2012
END DATE (this season)	March 2012
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	none
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Taylor Shepherd Homes to undertake a programme of building recording at Wellbraehead Primary School, Forfar.</p> <p>The school building was a category C listed building that had been assigned to two phases during the late 19th/early20th century. The initial phase circa 1878 formed a small utilitarian single storey school building on a C-plan to the N of the site. The second phase constructed in 1908 adjoins the S side of the original building. This later phase single storey building included significant Scots Baronial and Arts and Crafts detailing including a conical roofed round tower style main entrance.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	none
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Taylor-Shepherd Homes
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	13 Jane Street Edinburgh EH6 5HE Scotland
EMAIL ADDRESS:	donald.wilson@headlandarchaeology.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	NMRS

9.3 APPENDIX 3

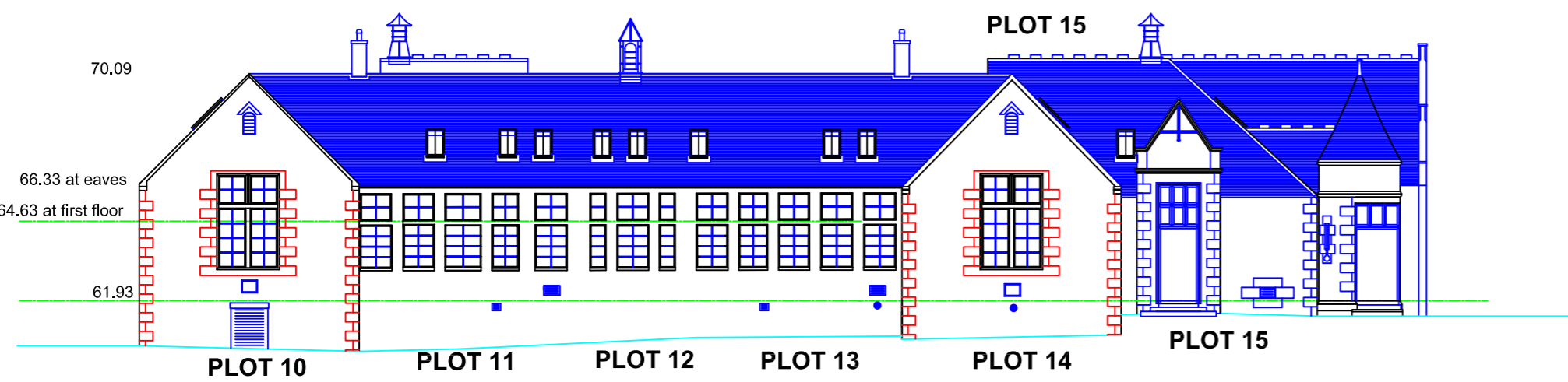
Elevation drawings as supplied by the client



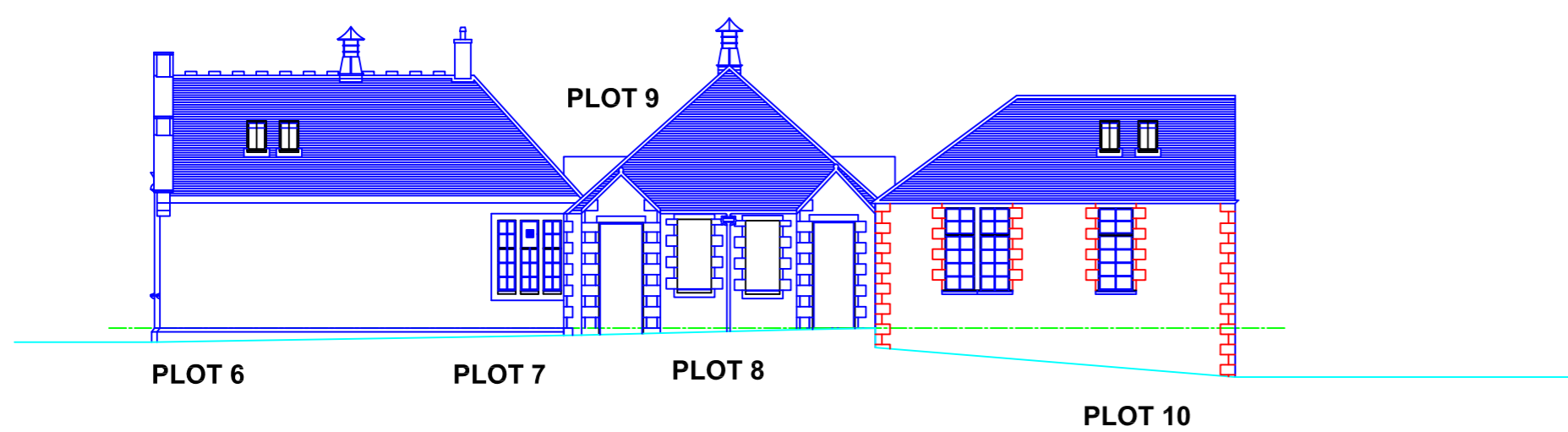
FIRST FLOOR PLAN 1.100



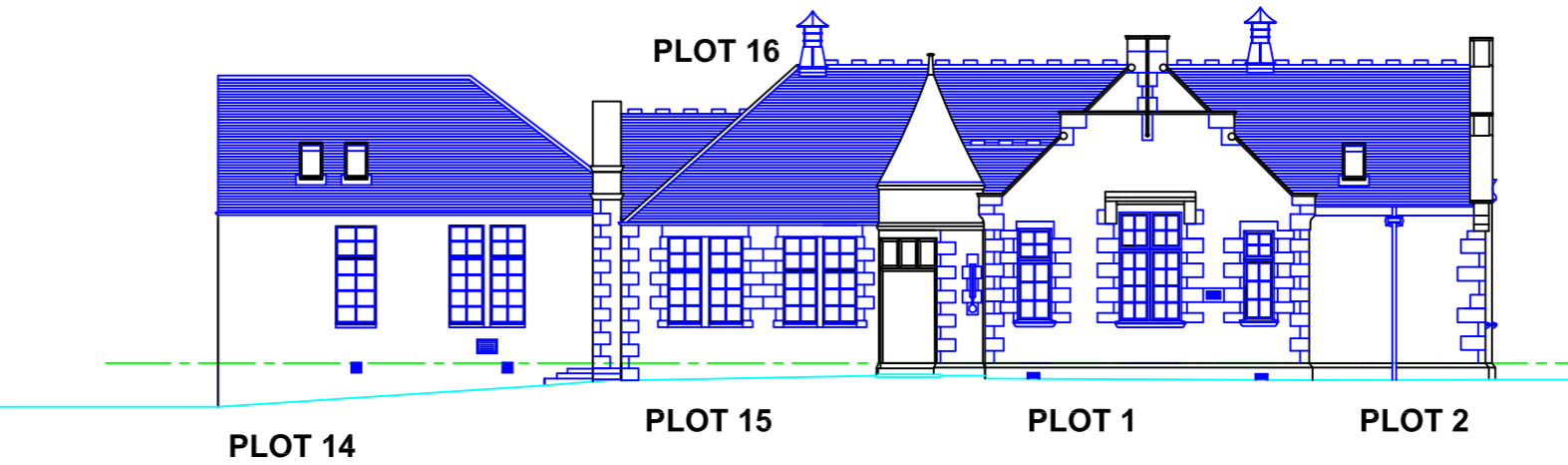
SOUTH ELEVATION 1.100



NORTH ELEVATION 1.200



EAST ELEVATION 1.200



WEST ELEVATION 1.200

Rev.	Description:	Date:
F	Planning	05.12.11
E	Window positions amended	03.11.11
D	Planning Application	29.09.11
C	Minor amends	01.08.11
B	Layout amends	28.07.11
A	First floor level added	19.12.10



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client	Taylor Shepherd Homes	
project	Development of Grounds of Wellbrae School Wellbraehead, Forfar	
drawing title	Existing School Conversion First Floor Plan and Elevations	
job no.	1506	scale 1:100/1:200 (on A1)
dwg no.	1506_D_005_F	by AM / AJF

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