

# CFA Archaeology Ltd

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*Advice on Archaeology & Planning*

*Environmental Impact Assessment*

*Field Evaluation & Excavation*

*Finds / Environmental Analysis*

*Geophysical Survey*

*Historic Building Recording*

*Site & Landscape Survey*

*Interpretation, Design & Display*

## **51 Abbeyhill, Edinburgh Standing Building Survey Report No 2086**

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This document has been prepared in accordance with CFA Archaeology Ltd standard operating procedures.

**51 Abbeyhill, Edinburgh  
Standing Building Survey  
Report No 2086**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 General**

This report presents the results of an archaeological standing building recording survey carried out by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) at 51 Abbeyhill, Edinburgh EH8 8EH (NGR NT 26823 74124) during July 2012. The survey was carried out prior to the conversion of the building into a domestic dwelling. The work was requested by John Lawson, the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeologist and a Written Scheme of Investigation for the survey was approved by him in advance. The work was commissioned by Craig Amy (architect) on behalf of Dr Geoffrey Platt.

### **1.2 Site Background**

The building stands on the west side of Abbeyhill, adjacent to the East Coast Main Line and adjacent to the main road into the Royal Mile and Old Town from the east of Edinburgh. The building is constructed of coursed sandstone with droved ashlar dressings. The building was built during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century as it shares the same footprint as a building shown on a historical map dated to 1817.

### **1.3 Objectives**

The objectives of the building survey were to carry out a drawn, photographic and written survey of the 51 Abbeyhill, linked to a programme of documentary research sufficient to support an account of the evolution of the building. The key elements were:

- Carry out a Level 2 standing building survey to include a drawn record of the principal external elevations and a comprehensive photographic record of the building's interior prior to its conversion.
- Produce an illustrated survey report presenting the results of the building survey.
- Establish any further mitigation work based on the results of the survey if considered appropriate.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 General

An effective standard for this type of project has been established by previous building recording conducted by CFA. Recording of all structural elements was carried out following established CFA methodology and included standard standing building record sheets, sketch drawing, photographic survey and measured survey. CFA follows the Codes and appropriate Standards set down by the Institute for Archaeologists. Recording conventions followed English Heritage (2006).

### 2.2 Desk Based Assessment

A desk-based assessment was conducted prior to fieldwork in order to collate relevant information on the historic development of the building. Sources consulted included:

- *National Monuments Record of Scotland*. The CANMORE database was checked for any records relating to 51 Abbeyhill.
- *Early map coverage for the area*. An examination of the early Ordnance Survey 6" map editions was made, together with any other readily available cartographic information on the development of the building.
- *Historical Documentary Search*. Readily available documentary sources to the area, including antiquarian accounts and parish descriptions, were checked for any relevant information.

### 2.3 Building recording parameters

The survey requirements are listed in Table 1.

LOCATION	METRIC SURVEY	PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY
Exterior Elevations (Principal Elevations)	Level 2 record of all significant detail	Level 2 with written descriptive record
Interior	N/A	Level 2 with written descriptive record
Annotated floor plans	Measured unit classification linked to tabulated descriptions	N/A

Table 1. Survey requirements for 51 Abbeyhill.

A Level 2 Building Survey was carried out (English Heritage 2006). This is a descriptive record supported by architectural drawings and plans to allow conclusions regarding the development and major alterations/additions over time. A detailed photographic record supported the survey. A written descriptive record of each elevation was made in line with the described level of survey. Standard CFA pro-forma recording sheets were completed.

CFA used a Nikon D300 camera to obtain high resolution images of specific architectural features. An appropriate photographic record was made of all external elevations. The interior of the building was also photographed. Important fixtures and fittings were photographed in detail and cross-referenced to the elevation drawings. A

list of the photographs taken is appended at the rear of this report. A selection of images that best portray the character of the school have also been included in this report.

#### *Metric Survey*

The client's scaled architectural drawings were sufficiently detailed and suitable for inclusion in the final report. All elevation drawings and interior floor plan were checked for accuracy and any additional features such as blocking work, scars and other historical features were added for completion.

#### *Floor plan*

Measurements of the floor dimensions and its formal layout were obtained using a hand-held Lieca distometer. Features were interpolated onto a measured sketch plan to produce Fig 3.

#### *Recording constraints*

The only recording constraint at the time of the survey was the lack of access to the exterior west facing elevation.

### 3. DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

#### 3.1 Introduction

The location of 51 Abbeyhill is shown on Fig 1. The building is detached but physically abuts a former Police Station and an Armenian Centre to its south.

#### 3.2 Desk-based survey results

##### *Cartographic sources (Figs 2a-2e)*

The earliest appearance of a structure with the same footprint as the surveyed building is shown on Kirkwood's map of 1817 (Fig 2a). This map depicts the building as being part of a larger complex of buildings under the ownership of a Mr Simpson. The 1852 edition Ordnance Survey town plan (Fig 2b) shows the building as an element of the larger Abbeyhill Foundry which occupied the site prior to the construction of the Police Station at No.55 Abbeyhill. The 1865 map by Hislop/Bartholomew (Fig 2c) shows increased development north towards the railway line. The 1877 First Edition map (Fig 2d) depicts only schematic block development at the site. The 1894 Second Edition map (Fig 2e) shows the building footprint with an angled gable fronting onto Abbeyhill.

##### *National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS)*

No data for this site is available for the NMRS.

##### *Buildings at Risk Register*

The building is listed in the Buildings at Risk Register. It is interpreted as being a possible remnant of Abbeyhill Foundry and dated to pre-1852.

Category	Condition	Reference No.	Category of risk
Restoration in progress	Fair	5224	Moderate

Table 2: Buildings at Risk Register entry

##### *Historic Scotland's Statutory List*

The building is not mentioned in the statutory list; however the adjoining former Police Station at No.55 Abbeyhill which abuts it to the south is listed Category B and was built in 1896 (Gifford *et al* 1984).

HB Number	Item No.	Category	Address
51170	1 H3	B	55 Abbeyhill

Table 3: Statutory List entry

##### *Bibliographic sources*

The 1836-1837 Post Office directory lists a James Simpson, Iron Founder at 53 Abbeyhill. Number 51 Abbeyhill is not mentioned in the street index as the building as it was then still part of the Abbeyhill Foundry. There is no mention of the foundry in the New Statistical Accounts of Scotland 1834-45.



## 4. BUILDING SURVEY RESULTS

### 4.1 Standing Building Survey Description: Exterior

#### *East-facing elevation (Fig 4b, Plate 1)*

The south-east facing elevation is a two storey pitched gable which presents the front of the building, facing onto the street. The main build is a mix of ashlar and random ashlar with rough facing and mortar bonding. The edges of the elevation are formed by long and short quoins with droving and smooth margins. The top two quoins of the right-hand side form an outshot decorative corbel. The lower 2m of the left hand side of the elevation is formed by eroded sandstone quoins are chamfered and capped with an overhung corbel (Plate 3). Often, when buildings were located at the intersection of two narrow streets, the corner was angled to protect the building from damage caused by vehicles scraping its façade. The lower storey has a centrally placed doorway, formed by quoins with a raised margin. The doorway entrance (Plate 5) is asymmetrical and reflects the angle of the main alignment of the building rather than that of the front elevation. The left hand doorjamb is acutely angled while the right hand jamb is curved. Several of the quoins surrounding the doorway are replacements, produced to match the original pattern. The second floor level has two vertical windows, formed by quoins. The gable is capped by large sandstone skews with decorative moulded outer edges.

#### *Exterior: South facing Elevation (Fig 4a, Plate 2)*

The south elevation (4.3m x 4m) forms the side of the building and faces obliquely towards the street. The main build is coursed sandstone with quoins forming the right-hand edge, which includes the lower chamfered 2m and corbelled overhang. The south facing elevation features a central double doorway which is framed by ashlar red sandstone quoins. Several of the quoins are recent replacements. The doorway is capped by a concrete lintel, moulded around an 'I' beam iron girder and coloured to match the red sandstone quoins. The left hand edge of the wall abuts the corner of the building at No.55, and although the construction sequence is unclear from the two building's relationship, partly due to a heavily pointed joint between the two buildings, cartographic evidence would show that No.51 predated No.55. The wall has a cast iron roan and downpipe. The side of the south-east facing gable can be seen to be elevated above the level of the wall head and roof line.

#### *North facing elevation (Fig 4c, Plate 4)*

Although no access was available to the north-facing elevation, a visual inspection was made from over the wall running along the street. Only the first floor level was visible, as the ground floor level is buried under soil and vegetation forming the edge of the railway bridge embankment. The main build is coursed rubble with irregular quoins at the corners. The quoins have decorative droving and margins. Two vertical windows framed by quoins are set in the wall.

### *West facing elevation (Fig 4d)*

No access was available to the west-facing elevation. A single central window is present at first floor level. The gable is capped with sandstone copings and moulded skews.

### *Roof structure*

The roof is covered in reused grey slates and the ridgeline is capped with a concrete or stone cover.

## **4.2 Standing Building Survey Description: Interior**

### *General*

The interior comprises an open plan layout. Prior to the standing buildings survey, a loft floor and partition were in place, however these were removed recently on the grounds of health and safety.

### *West facing elevation (Plates 5)*

The main build (4.6m x 4.1m) is random rubble and mortar bonded. Much of the ground floor level is obscured by timber panelling to secure the entrance. Most of the first floor/loft level wall is covered with a smooth cement render. The two vertical windows have slightly splayed surrounds and have timber window frames which have been boarded up.

### *North facing elevation (Plate 7)*

The elevation (6.1m x 3.9m) is random coursed rubble which is mortar bonded and thinly rendered. The double doorway is framed by red sandstone quoins and a replacement iron 'I' beam girder lintel. A modern concrete ramp has been laid across the entrance. Vertical joist sockets are set into the wall at west end showing the height of the loft floor.

### *East facing elevation (Plate 8)*

This elevation (3.9m x 3.9m) forms the inside of the rear gable. It is built of coursed rubble. The base of the wall is thicker than the wall head to form a retaining wall to the railway bank material on its exterior. The line of the former loft floor is marked by the remains of a plaster fillet. The lower wall has thin white render, while the loft level above has patches of render surviving. A vertical window is centrally placed and framed by red sandstone. The base of the window has been infilled by two courses of brick to bring it level with the loft floor. Two vertical features are visible either side of the window towards the top of the elevation, their purpose is not clear but they are likely to be blocked slit vents.

### *South facing elevation (Plates 9-10)*

The south-facing elevation (7.9m x 4.2m) is built of random coursed rubble and is whitewashed. It has a thick cement render at the base. The elevation has two vertical windows set within sandstone surrounds and each has been bricked up at the base to bring them level with the former loft floor. The loft floor level is indicated by a shallow concrete fillet running along the wall, and vertical joist sockets at the left hand side of the wall which match those on the north facing interior elevation. The stub of a brick partition wall (Plate 10) is visible towards the left hand side of the wall. A square dook socket and an *in situ* dook were situated between the windows at the loft level. An iron rod with a square section has been fitted into the wall, its purpose is unclear.

### *Floor plan (Plates 11-13)*

The floor plan is sub-rectangular with an angled east end. Thick sandstone flagstones survived around the east perimeter of the building but had been robbed from the rest of the floor, leaving a foundation solum of rubble, beaten earth and natural clay. The stub of the brick partition wall runs obliquely across the building defining what was likely to have been a trapezoidal shaped main unit accessible through either of the exterior doors. A 0.64m wide sub-floor gap in the flagstones showed that the flags continue underneath the inner skin of the wall to a depth of 0.25m. It is unclear whether the flagstones were an integral part of the construction and tied into the walls thus forming a very stable structure, or if this gap was a vent now blocked with rubble. Given that the north facing exterior wall of the building forms a retaining wall for part of the railway bridge embankment it would seem unlikely that a vent would be placed here. A stone built feature (Plate 12) occupied the corner between the interior south and north-east facing elevations and is most likely a plinth for a small stove.

### *Roof Truss (Plate 14)*

The A-frame roof trusses comprised machine cut timber (pine) that rest directly on the wall head. A partial fantail has been formed in the sarking at the east end to accommodate the angled gable.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

The building appears to have been built during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its original purpose is unclear although it is likely to be a remnant of the Abbeyhill Foundry which was established at the site by 1817 (Fig 2a).

The original floor layout of the building is unclear; however the partial bricking up of the first floor windows up to the level of the recently removed loft indicates that it was a later addition. The stub of the angled brick partition wall would also appear to be a later addition as it respects the level of the former loft, and the flagstone floor appears to have been cut to accommodate the brick partition wall.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Conclusion

The desk-based assessment and standing building survey have confirmed that the building is a former industrial building belonging to the Abbeyhill Foundry. The precise function of the building is not clear. The exterior of the building has undergone some repair, while the interior has indications of at least two possible layouts; the earlier possibly being a single unit and with the later addition of a loft.

### 6.2 Recommendations

In line with the Written Scheme of Investigation, the Level 2 standing building recording survey has adequately described, photographed and linked all the significant architectural elements to elevations and a floor plan of the building.

It is recommended that no further building recording work is required prior to the development of the building.

An entry in Discovery and Excavation in Scotland and OASIS is considered sufficient to disseminate the results of the building survey to a wider public audience.

## 7. REFERENCES

### *Bibliographic*

English Heritage 2006 *Recording Historic Buildings. A Descriptive Specification*, 3rd edition. London.

City of Edinburgh Post Office Annual Directory 1836-1837

Gifford, J., McWilliam, C and Walker, (eds) 1984 'Edinburgh: The Buildings of Scotland'.

### *Cartographic*

John Bartholomew 1865 Hislop's new plan of Edinburgh & Leith with suburbs..

Kirkwood, Robert, 1817 This plan of the City of Edinburgh and its environs.

Ordnance Survey 1852 Large Scale Scottish Town Plans, Edinburgh (south east part) Sheet 30

Ordnance Survey 1877 Large Scale Scottish Town Plans, Edinburgh (south east part) Sheet 30

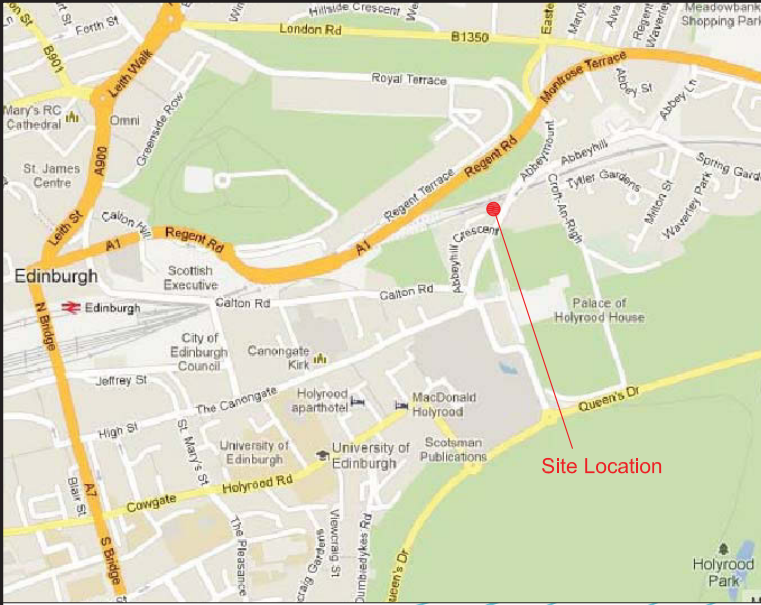
Ordnance Survey 1894 Large Scale Scottish Town Plans, Edinburgh (south east part) Sheet 30

## APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Photo No.	Unit No/Description	Taken From
1	Exterior, front elevation	SE
2	Exterior, front elevation	SE
3	Exterior, front elevation	SE
4	Exterior, front elevation	SE
5	Exterior, front elevation	SE
6	Exterior, front elevation, detail of window	SE
7	Exterior, front elevation, detail of window	SE
8	Exterior, front elevation, detail of window	SE
9	Exterior, detail of cutaway quoins at corner	S
10	Exterior, detail of cutaway quoins at corner	S
11	Exterior, side elevation	S
12	Exterior, side elevation	S
13	Exterior, side elevation	S
14	Exterior, side elevation	S
15	Exterior, front elevation, detail of doorway	E
16	Exterior, front elevation, detail of doorway	S
17	Exterior, front elevation, detail of doorway	SE
18	Exterior, front elevation, detail of doorway	SE
19	Exterior, detail of cutaway quoins at corner	S
20	Exterior, detail of cutaway quoins at corner	S
21	Exterior, side elevation	S
22	Exterior, side elevation	S
23	Exterior, side elevation	S
24	Exterior, oblique of north facing elevation	NE
25	Exterior, oblique of north facing elevation	NE
26	Exterior, detail of corbel	NE
27	Exterior, detail of roof	S
28	Interior, NW facing elevation	NW
29	Interior, NW facing elevation	NW
30	Interior, NW facing elevation, window detail	NW
31	Interior, NW facing elevation, window detail	NW
32	Interior, NW and S facing elevation, detail of stove stand	SW
33	Interior, NW and S facing elevation, detail of stove stand	SW
34	Interior, N facing elevation	N
35	Interior, N facing elevation	N
36	Interior, N facing elevation	NE
37	Interior, N facing elevation	NW
38	Interior, E facing elevation	E
39	Interior, E facing elevation	E
40	Interior, E facing elevation, detail of buttress	E
41	Interior, S facing elevation	SE
42	Interior, S facing elevation	SE
43	Interior, S facing elevation, detail of window	S
44	Interior, S facing elevation, detail of partition wall stub	S
45	Interior, S facing elevation, detail of partition wall stub	S
46	Interior, S facing elevation, detail of window	S
47	Interior, S facing elevation, detail of window	S
48	Interior, S facing elevation, detail of window	S
49	Interior, detail of floor and vent	S
50	Interior, detail of floor and vent	S
51	Interior, detail of floor and vent	S
52	Interior, floor	E
53	Interior, Floor	S
54	Interior, Floor	W
55	Interior, rood truss	W

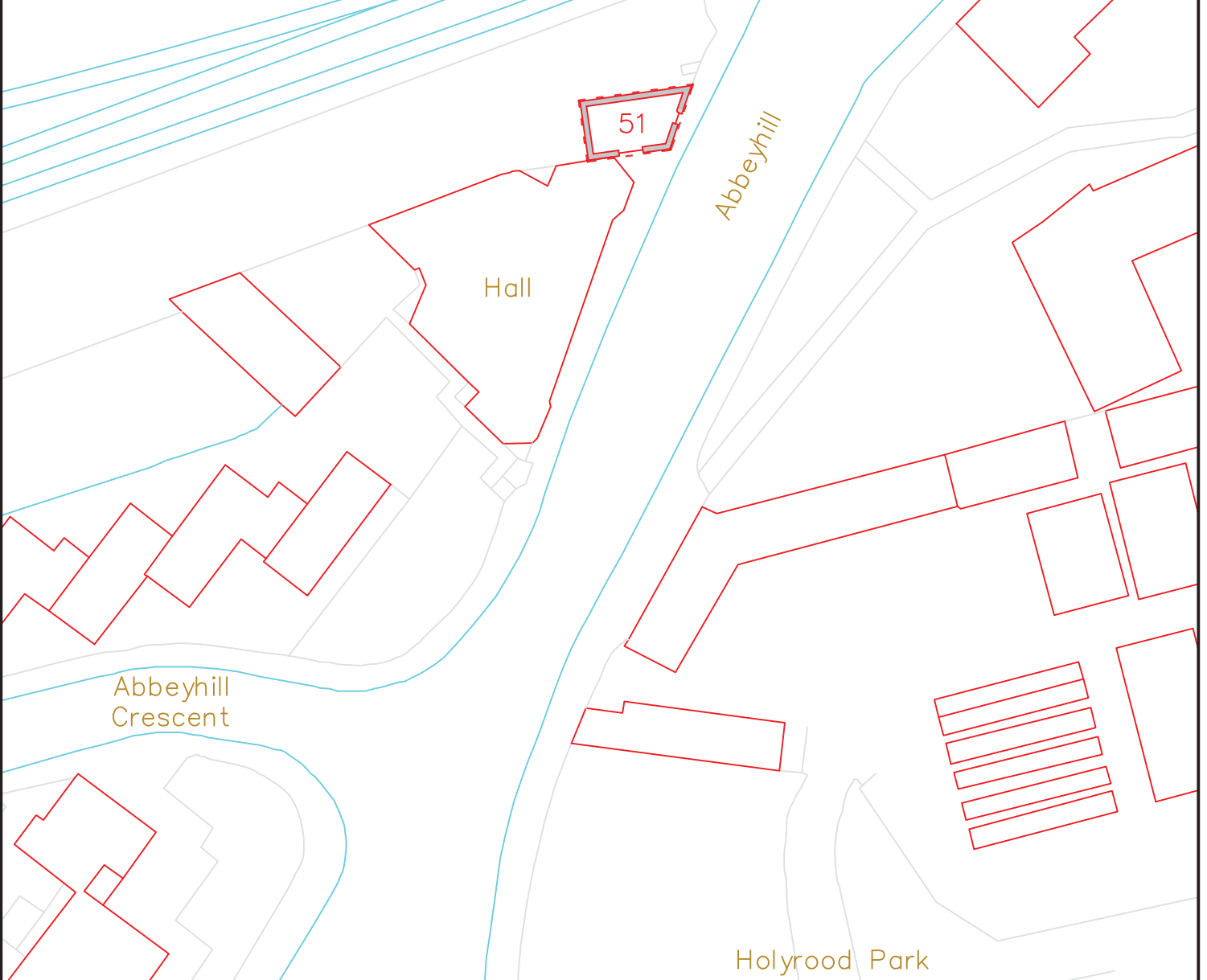
## APPENDIX 2: DISCOVERY & EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND ENTRY

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	City of Edinburgh
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	51 Abbeyhill, Edinburgh, EH8 8EH
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	51AB
<b>PARISH:</b>	Edinburgh (City of)
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	S. Mitchell
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	CFA Archaeology Ltd
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Standing Building Survey
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	N/A
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	N/A
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	N/A
<b>NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)</b>	NT 26823 74124
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	July 2012
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	July 2012
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	n/a
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	<p>A desk-based assessment and standing building survey (Level 2) was carried out by CFA Archaeology Ltd prior to alterations at 51 Abbeyhill, Edinburgh on behalf of Craig Amy Architects Ltd.</p> <p>The building is first depicted on Kirkwood's plan of 1817 and on ordnance Survey Town Plans from 1852 as part of the Abbeyhill Foundry complex.</p> <p>Currently the building comprises a two storey sandstone building with a pitched slated roof on a floor plan with a trapezoidal angled front which faces the street. The front has a central door and two vertical windows and features chamfered quoins on the corner with the the side elevation which faces south. The interior features have been largely stripped, although traces of a later loft floor are evident, and a plinth for a stove. The roof truss has been renewed and covered with re-used or original slates.</p>
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	None
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Dr Geoffrey Platt
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	CFA Archaeology Ltd, Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ.
<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>	cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)</b>	Archive to be deposited in NMRS, Reports lodged with SMR and NMRS



Regent Road Park

Railway Bridge




Key:  
  
 Scale at A4:  
**1:500**

Fig No: **1**  
 Revision: **A**  
 Client: **Dr. Geoffrey Platt**  
 Title:  
**Site Location**  
 Project:  
**51 Abbeyhill, Edinburgh: Standing Building Survey**

Drawn by: **LW**  
 Checked: **LW**  
 Report No: **2086**



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Key



Fig 2a - Kirkwood's 'New plan of the City of Edinburgh' 1817

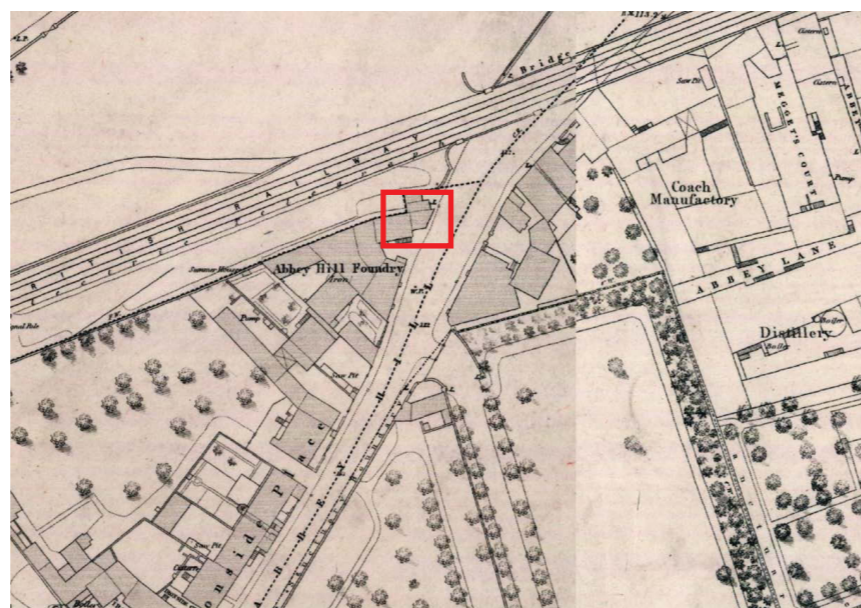


Fig. 2b - Extract from Town Plan by Ordnance Survey, 1852

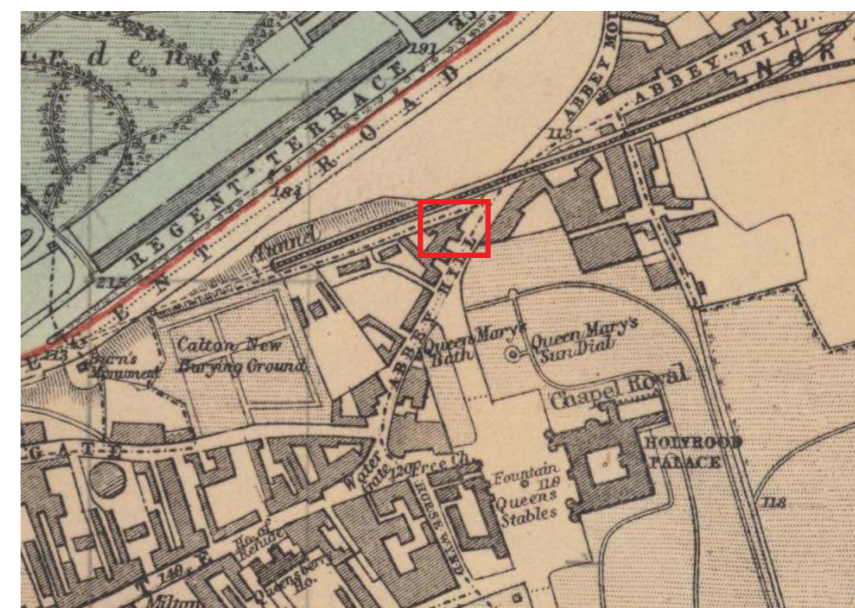


Fig. 2c - Extract from map by Hislop/Bartholomew, 1865

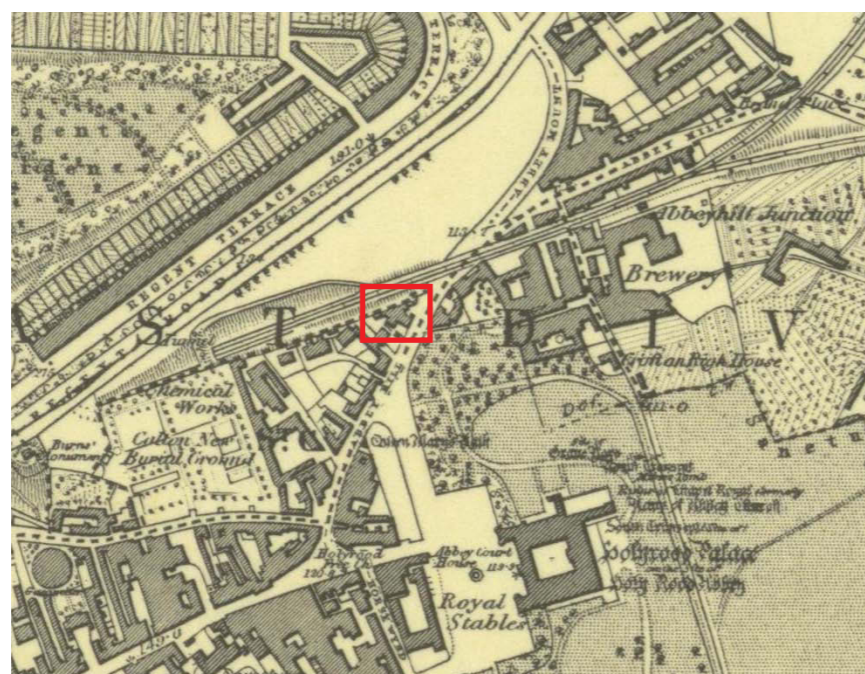
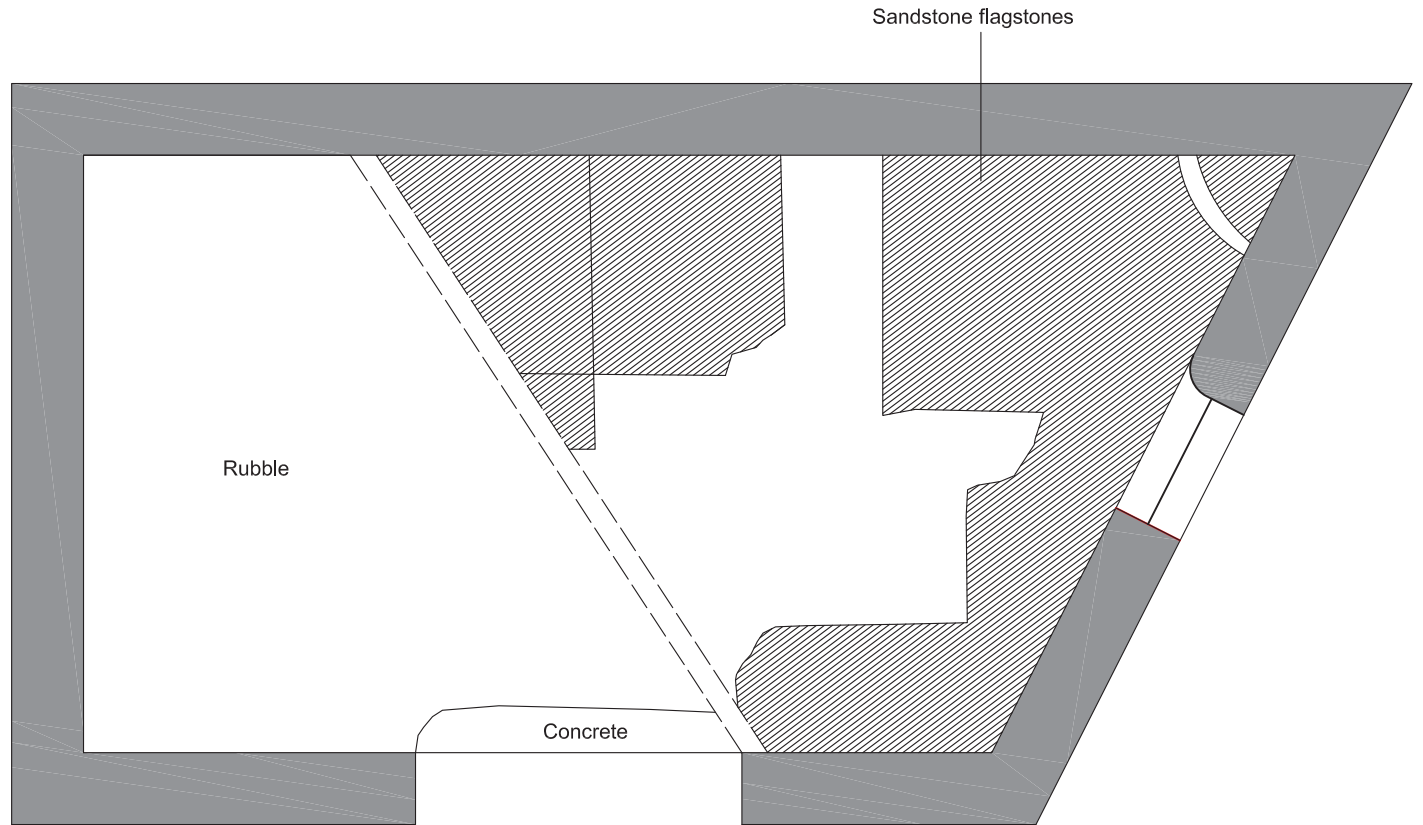




Fig. 2d - Extract from map by Ordnance Survey, 1st Edition, 1877



Fig. 2e - Extract from map by Ordnance Survey, 2nd Edition, 1894





Key:	Fig No: 3	Revision: A	Client: Dr. Geoffrey Platt
			
Scale at A4: 1:50	Title: Floor plan		
	Project: 51 Abbeyhill, Edinburgh: Standing Building Survey		
			CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD The Old Engine House Eskmills Park Musselburgh East Lothian, EH21 7PQ t: 0131 273 4380 f: 0131 273 4381 e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk
Drawn by: LW	Checked: LW	Report No: 2086	

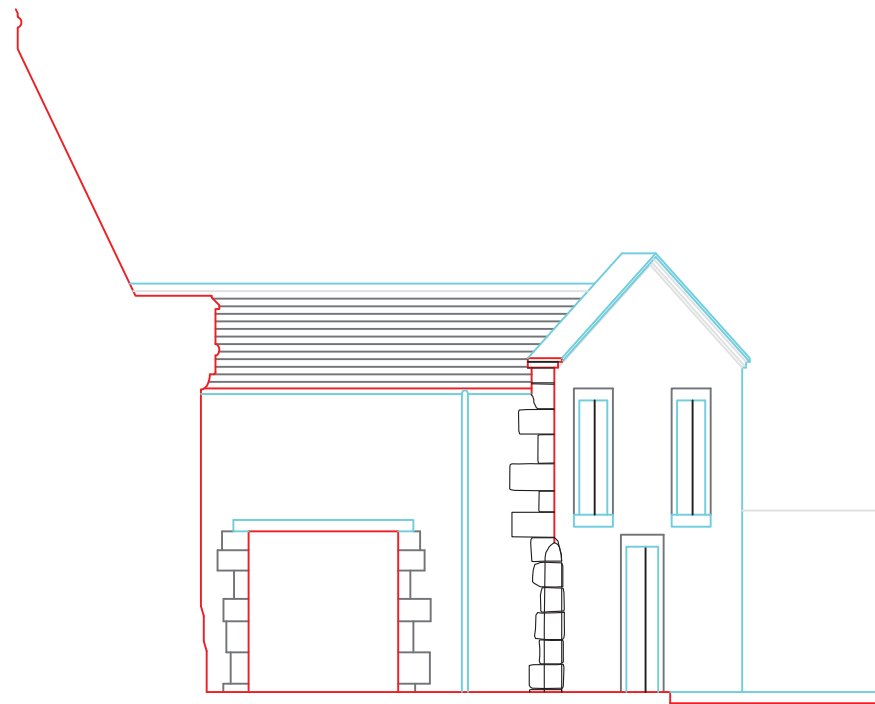


Fig. 4a - South-facing elevation

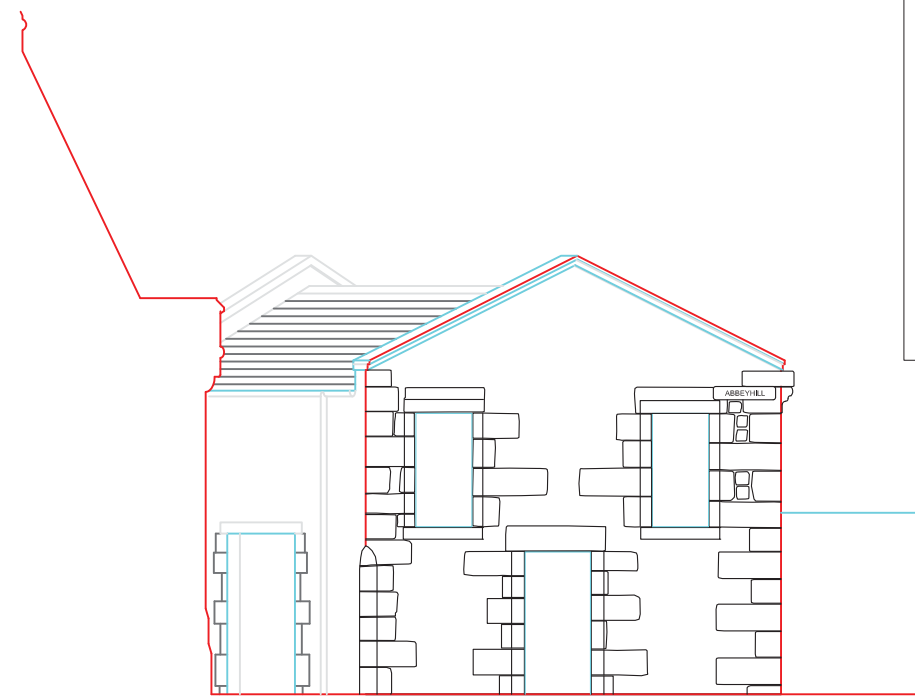


Fig. 4b - East-facing elevation

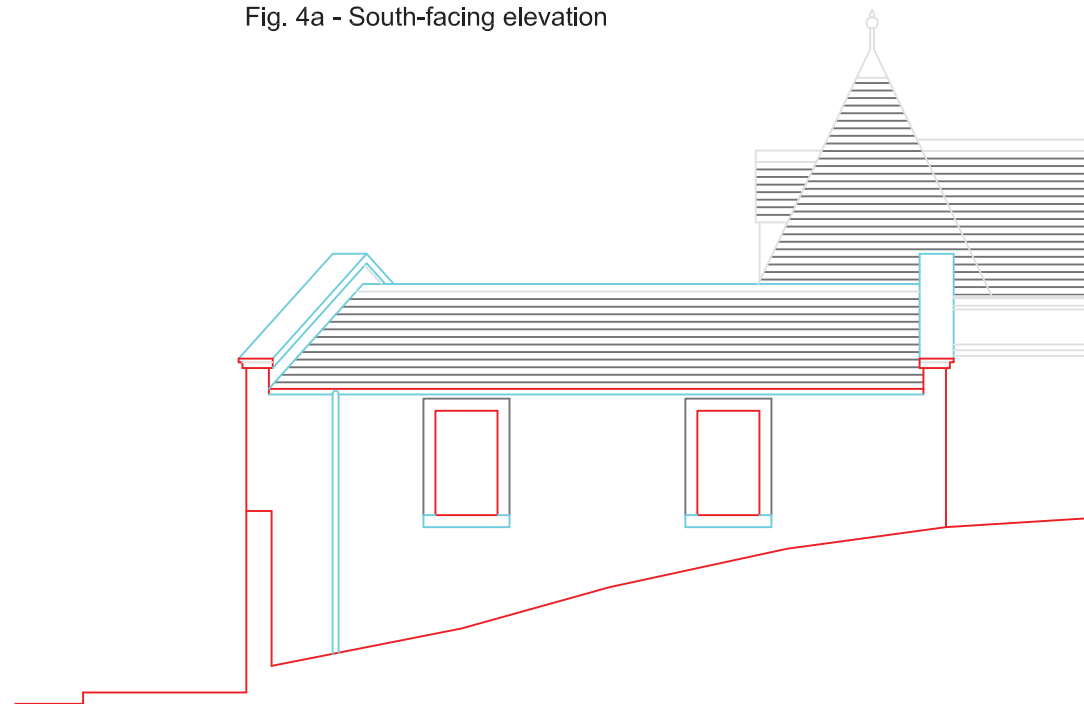
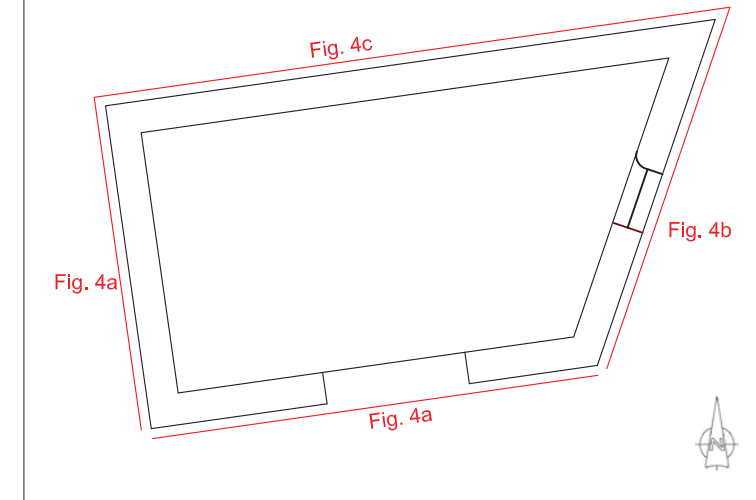


Fig. 4c - North-facing elevation

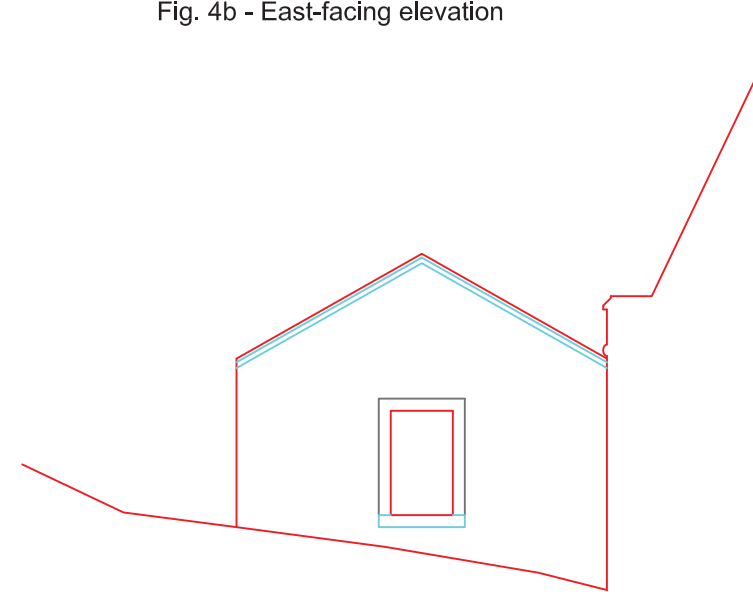


Fig. 4d - West-facing elevation



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Fig. No:	4a-d	Revision:	A	Drawn by:	LW	Checked:	LW	Report No:	2086	Client:	Dr. Geoffrey Platt
Title:	Building elevations					Project:	51 Abbeyhill, Edinburgh: Standing Building Survey		Scale at A3: 1:100		

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Plate 1 - Exterior, east-facing elevation



Plate 2 - Exterior, south-facing elevation

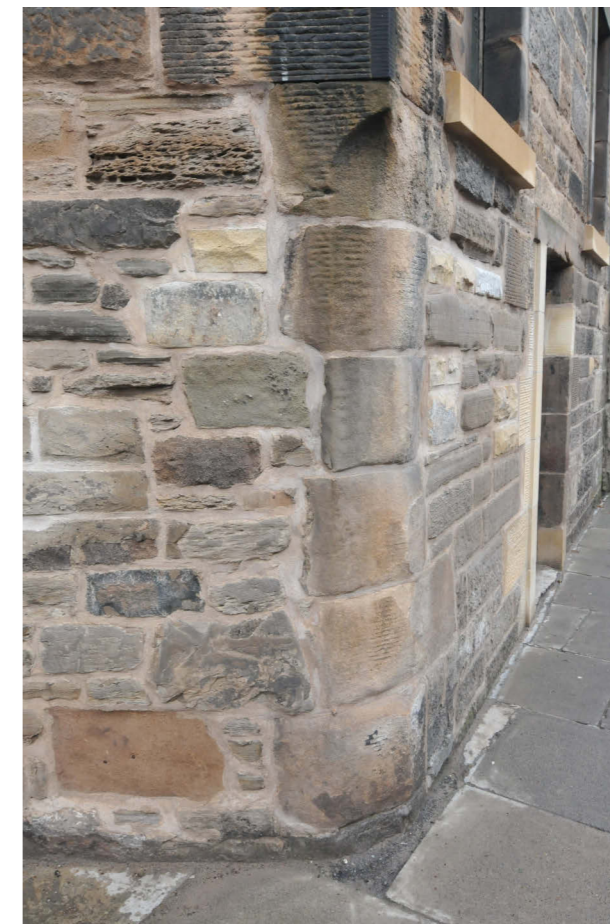


Plate 3 - Exterior, detail of chamfered quoins at south corner of the east-facing elevation



Plate 4 - Exterior, oblique view of the north-facing elevation



Plate 5 - Interior, west-facing elevation



Plate 6 - Exterior, east-facing elevation, doorway detail

Key



Plate 7 - Interior, north-facing elevation



Plate 8 - Interior, east-facing elevation showing floor joists



Plate 9 - Interior, south-facing elevation



Plate 10 - Interior, south-facing elevation, detail of partial wall stub



Plate 11 Interior, floor and vent



Plate 12 Interior, corner of west and south-facing elevation



Key



Plate 13 - Interior floor



Plate 14 - Interior roof trusses and sarking boards

Fig. No:		Revision:	Project:
		A	51 Abbeyhill Road, Standing Building Survey
Drawn by:	Checked:	Report No:	Client:
GC	LW	2086	Dr. Geoffrey Platt
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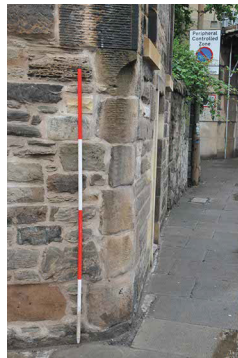
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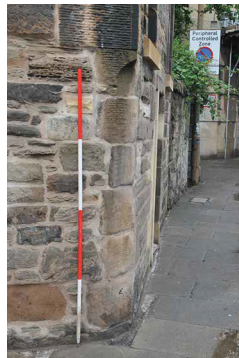
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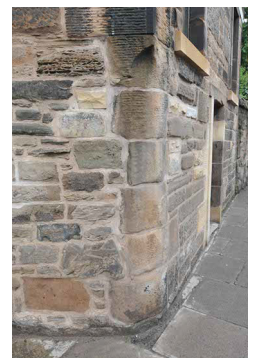
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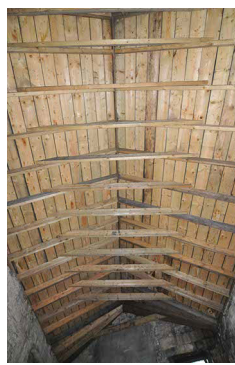
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