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Greenburn Surface Mine Wellhill Extension New Cumnock, East Ayrshire

Hall of Auchincross Farm Architectural Watching Brief

Report No 3007

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1. Introduction

This report describes the results of an architectural watching brief carried out by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) during the demolition of Building 4 a former byre at Hall of Auchencross Farm, near new Cumnock, Ayrshire (NGR: NS 58218 14075, Fig 1). The demolition was carried out as part of the Wellhill Extension of the Greenburn Surface Mine. During an earlier historic building survey (Cressey 2013) a series of carved stones including a heraldic plaque, a carved head and four moulded lintel stones were found built into the upper gable. It was recommended that an architectural watching brief be carried out during the demolition of Building 4 so that the carved head and other moulded stonework could be removed safely, recorded and stored until a decision over submitting them to the Treasure Trove Unit is made. It was also to identify if further re-used stonework was incorporated into the structure.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced for the watching brief by CFA and was designed to fulfil the requirements of East Ayrshire Council as advised by WoSAS.

2. Historical and architectural background

Hall of Auchincross Farm was a former dairy farm with an extensive range of buildings which included a modern cubicle house and dairy with 94 cubicles, a covered silage pit with two adjoining lean-to stock barns, a Dutch barn, storage barn and a former bothy. The farmhouse was a traditional early 19th century building with an attached rear stone-built byre and a detached storage barn to the west. The farm is depicted on the First Edition 1857 Ordnance Survey map (Sheet XLI.8) as an enclosed courtyard steading with a detached south-west range. The farmhouse was attached to a long building which was probably a byre (Building 4). A mill dam and associated lade is also shown attesting to the presence of a former water mill at the site. The same map depicts the site of an *Old Hall* to the north west of the farm (later subsumed by the farm complex). The old hall is likely to have had at least late-medieval origins as suggested by the depiction on Pont's map (1595) of a house, annotated as 'Achincrofs', set within enclosed grounds. Other records suggest that Auchincross Hall may have been a former medieval laird's house and was known to have been occupied in the early to mid 17th century. The site is mentioned in the NMRS (NS51SE 1) as the site of an old mansion house of which nothing now remains.

The gable of Building 4 (Fig 2) was heightened in the early 20th century using randomly laid rubble to accommodate a composite steel-framed roof. The building was last used as a calving shed. Wall heightening was evident on both sides of its north-west facing gable. Here, within the primary construction of the gable, was a re-used lintel with carved initials GC-BC that probably commemorated a wedding. This and a corbel with a carved face is mentioned in the NMRS record (NS51SE1). The record does not mention the presence of the four moulded lintel/sill stones that are present within the rebuilt section of the gable.

3. Aims and Objectives

- (i) The aim of the architectural watching brief was to monitor the safe recovery of the carved stonework during the demolition of Building 4, to record them and to set them aside for future submission to the Treasure Trove Unit if required. It was also to identify if further re-used stonework was incorporated into the structure.
- (ii) To produce a report on the type, character and significance of the carved stonework.

4. Methodology

The gable was taken down systematically by hand and the carved stonework safely lowered to the ground using slings and set aside on a pallet. The individual stones were measured and described using CFA standard recording forms. High resolution digital photographs were taken and a list of photographs taken is provided in Appendix 1.

5. Architectural watching brief results

The results are presented in Table 1 and each stone has been numbered individually and cross-referenced to Figs 2-17.

No.	Description	Dimensions (mm)
1	A corbel stone (Fig 3) with bearded head that comprised a single finely hewn sandstone block (Fig 4) which was incorporated into the byre wall as a through-stone. A human face had been heavily whitewashed and is partially eroded.	600 x 250 x 270
2	A marriage lintel (Fig 5). This stone comprised a sandstone block with carved outer face featuring a curved inset cornice along the top edge, returning downwards at both ends. The central plaque featured a shield shaped crest with three possible anthropomorphic figures. The letters "GC" and "BC" are carved either side of the plaque. The underside of the lintel had a carved slot with a smooth rounded profile. The sides and back are rough hewn and show some damage from its earlier removal and re-use.	1250 x 390 x 210
3	A re-used stone slab (Fig 6-8), carved sandstone with a smooth outer face with an iron door latch fitting which would have been fitted to accommodate the modern sliding door of the byre. Carved margin around the edge of the outer face, whitewashed and with large quantities of degraded mortar adhering to its rear and sides.	785 x 300 x 130
4	A re-used stone slab (Fig 9-11), carved sandstone with a smooth outer face. Carved margin around the edge of the outer face, whitewashed and with large quantities of degraded mortar adhering to the rear and sides.	810 x 305 x 140
5	A re-used stone slab (Fig 12-14), carved sandstone with a smooth outer face. Carved margin around the edge of the outer face, whitewashed and with large quantities of degraded mortar adhering to the rear and sides.	690 x 295 x 150
6	A re-used stone slab (Fig 15-17), carved sandstone with a smooth outer face. Carved margin around the edge of the outer face, whitewashed and with large quantities of degraded mortar adhering to the rear and sides.	1000x 300 x 135

Table 1 Summary description of the carved stonework

6. Discussion

Stone No. 1 Corbal with carved face

The size of the stone and the way the face is set within a right-angled soffit would strongly suggest that this was a load-bearing corbel with a carved head. Unfortunately the bearded face is covered with several layers of whitewash which masks the true definition of the individual's features.

Stone No. 2 Marriage stone with heraldic shield

Stone 2 is probably a Marriage Stone and has both anthropomorphic and part formal heraldic style crosses within its shield. The initials CC and BC are set within a rectangular panel and appear to be contemporary with the shield. The lower part of the stone lintel has an incised roll running horizontally along its full length. This lintel probably originally framed a moulded doorway. Traditional marriage stones were created when newly married couples carved (or arranged to have carved) their initials and the date into the lintel stone above their front door.

Stones Nos. 3-6 carved sill or lintel stones

Stones 3-6 are either carved sills or lintel stones that have had a single roll moulding carved on one face.

7. Conclusion

In accordance with the WSI the architectural watching brief has been successful in monitoring the safe recovery and the photographic recording of six carved stones that were built into the fabric of the heightened gable of Building 4 at Hall of Auchencross Farm:

Stone 1 was a probably a corbel with gargoyle head and was probably associated with supporting a roof of late medieval date.

Stone 2 is a traditional marriage stone incorporating the initials CC and BC on either side of a heraldic shield.

Stone's 3-6 are lintel or sill stones which were not identified in the NMRS report on the site.

All six stones could have a 16th century date (Professor Charles McKean Pers Comm). and judging by the quality of the stonework they came from a structure of high status. It is therefore probable that they originated from the Auchencross Hall.

The stonework is currently being stored undercover on the Kier Mining site and details will be submitted to the Treasure Trove Unit to agree on the final depository for the material.

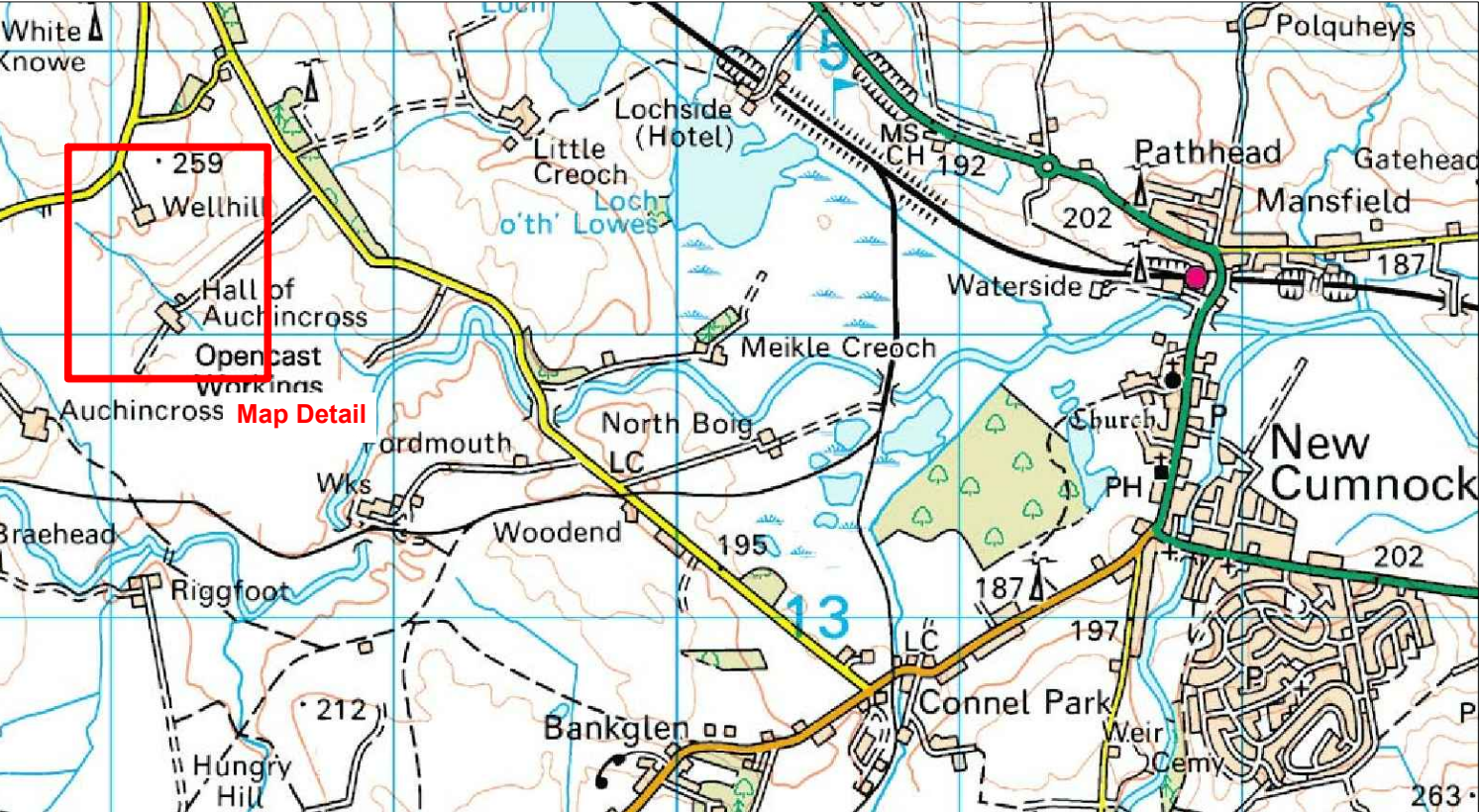
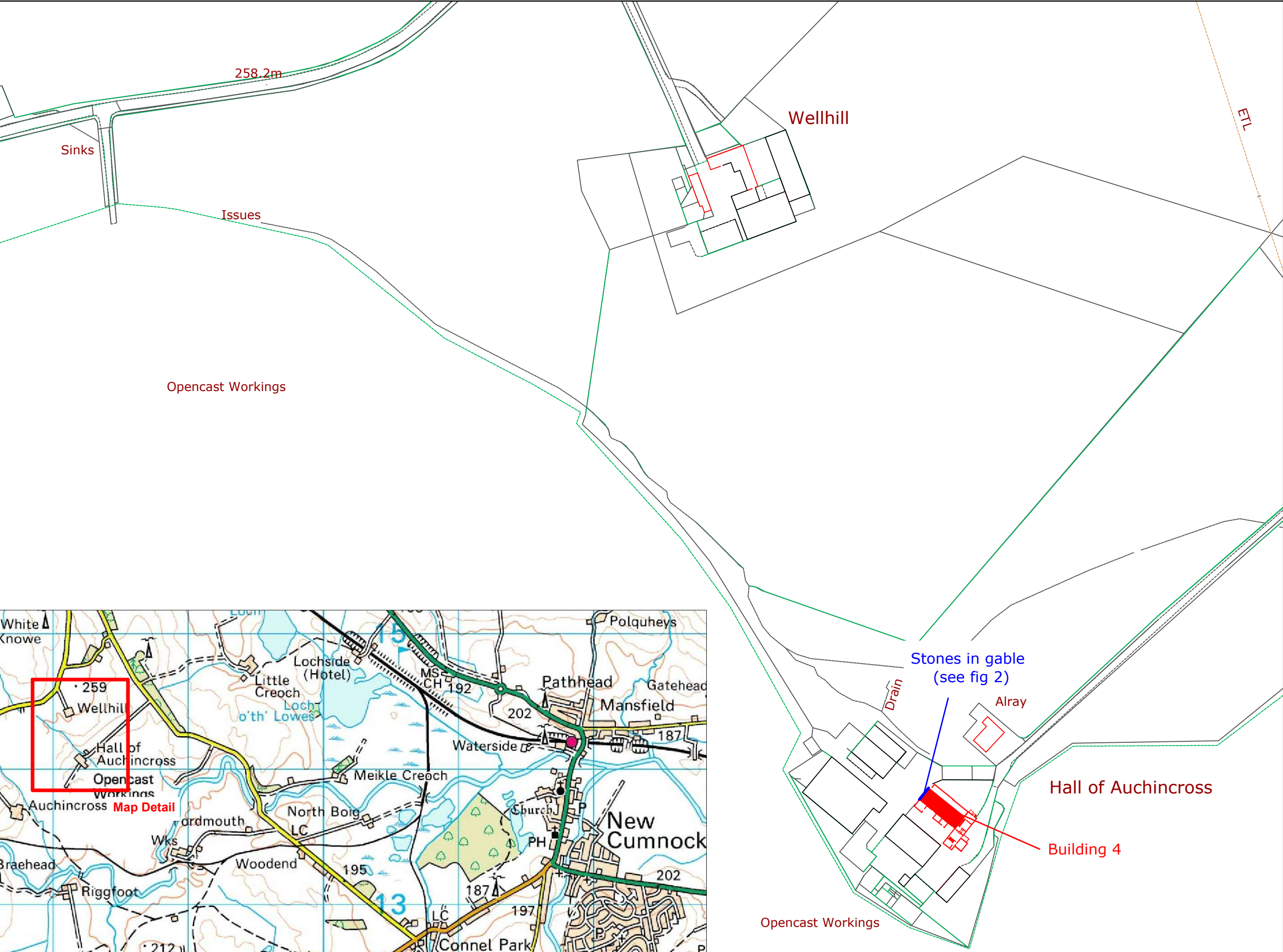
No further work is recommended in relation to the stonework but it is understood that the final decision on this rests with the Council as advised by WoSAS.

8. References

Cressey, M. 2013 'Greenburn Surface Mine Extension New Cumnock, East Ayrshire, Wellhill Farm & Hall of Auchincross Farm: Desk-Based Assessment and Standing Building Surveys'. CFA Report No 2124

APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Photo No.	Description	Taken from
1-11	Initial demolition of west gable	Various
12-26	Removal and recovery of gargoyle	Various
27-32	Working shots, removal and recovery of lintel and re-used stones	Various
33	Stone 4 detail after recovery	Various
34-35	Stone 3 detail after recovery	Various
36-42	Gargoyle detail after recovery	Various
43-45	Lintel detail after recovery	Various
46	Stone 5 detail after recovery	Various
47-48	Stone 6 detail after recovery	Various
49-52	Recovered architectural elements	Various
53-56	South outshot gable prior to demolition	Various
57-61	General views after collapsing of roof	Various
62	South outshot gable demolition	Various
63-73	Working shots of barn west end	Various
74-82	Working shots of barn north elevation and lean-to	Various
83-84	Working shots of barn south outshot	Various
85-88	General post-demolition views.	Various
89	Stone 3 profile	N/a
90	Stone 3 plan	N/a
91	Stone 3 end profile	N/a
92	Stone 4 plan	N/a
93	Stone 4 profile	N/a
94	Stone 5 plan	N/a
95	Stone 5 profile	N/a
96	Stone 5 end profile	N/a
97	Stone 6 plan	N/a
98	Stone 6 profile	N/a
99	Stone 6 end profile	N/a
100	Stone 4 end profile	N/a



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Fig. No:	1	Revision:	A
Title:	General Site Location		
Project:	Wellhill and Hall of Auchincross Farm Watching Brief		
Client:	Kier Infrastructure and Overseas Ltd		
Scale at A3:	1:2000		
Drawn by:	TB	Checked:	MC
Report No:	3007		

Key

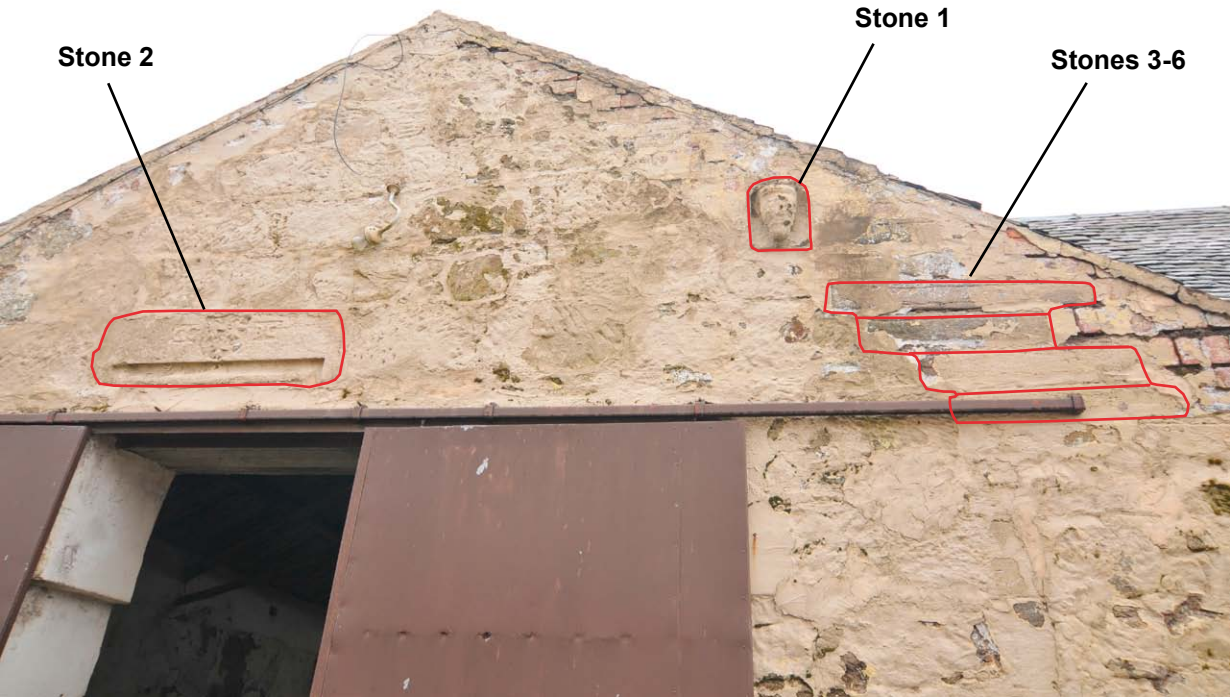


Fig. 2 - Building 4, NW-facing gable of the former byre with stones 1-6 in situ



Fig. 3 - Stone 1 Carved head



Fig. 4 - Stone 1 Carved head on the end of a single block of hewn stone



Fig. 5 - Stone 2 Marriage stone with carved initials and armorial plaque at centre



Fig. 6 - Stone 3 profile view



Fig. 7 - Stone 3 plan view



Fig. 8 - Stone 4 end profile



Fig. 9 - Stone 4 plan view



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Fig. No:	6-9	Revision	A
Title	Selected Photos		
Project	Wellhill and Hall of Auchincross Farm Watching Brief		
Client	Kier Infrastructure and Overseas Ltd		
Drawn by:	TB	Checked by:	MC
Report No:	3007		



Fig. 10 - Stone 4 end profile



Fig. 11 - Stone 4 profile view



Fig. 12 - Stone 5 plan view



Fig. 13 - Stone 5 profile view



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Fig. No:	10-13	Revision	A
Title			
Selected Photos			
Project			
Wellhill and Hall of Auchincross Farm Watching Brief			
Client			
Kier Infrastructure and Overseas Ltd			
Drawn by:	Checked by:	Report No:	
TB	MC	3007	



Fig. 14 - Stone 5 end profile



Fig. 15 - Stone 6 plan view



Fig. 16 - Stone 6 profile view



Fig. 17 - Stone 6 end profile



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Fig. No:	14-17	Revision	A
Title			
Selected Photos			
Project			
Wellhill and Hall of Auchincross Farm Watching Brief			
Client			
Kier Infrastructure and Overseas Ltd			
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TB	MC	3007	