

West Coast Archaeological Services

Plockton Harbour CIC Equipment Store

Plockton, Balmacara Estate

Photographic Building Survey



Plockton Harbour CIC Equipment Store

Plockton, Balmacara Estate National Trust for Scotland

Historic Building Survey Report

Client	National Trust For Scotland
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Site Code	PLOCK15
WCAS Report Number	42/Plock/15
Author	M. Sharpe
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Acknowledgements

Fieldwork and reporting was carried out by Michael Sharpe on behalf of West Coast Archaeological Services. Mapping containing Ordnance Survey data is subject to Crown Copyright 2015. All rights reserved. Excerpts from historical maps are taken from mapping copyright of the National Library of Scotland. This is an unpublished report.

Summary

A photographic survey was carried out of the Plockton Harbour Equipment Stores in October 2015 on behalf of the National Trust for Scotland in advance of their demolition and replacement. The work was undertaken to record detailed information about the character of the building and its landscape setting prior to demolition and re-building of the site.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

A Level 1 Historic Building Survey of the Plockton Harbour CIC Equipment Store on Balmacara Estate was conducted in October 2015. The work was requested by the National Trust for Scotland in order to provide a detailed record of the character of the structures prior to demolition and alteration. As part of the work, a desk-based assessment, detailed recording and photographic survey were conducted in order to provide a baseline record of the monument's present condition.

1.2 Aims and objectives

An historic building survey aims to establish the character, history, dating, form and archaeological or historical development of a specified building, structure, or complex and its setting¹. The results will form a lasting record of the site and inform a strategy for the safeguarding of any significant features². The *Scottish Planning Policy 2014* and PAN2/2011 describe how archaeology should be managed when considering planning decisions and determining conditions for developments that have an impact on the historic environment³.

The specific objectives⁴ were:

- To inform the formulation of a strategy for the conservation, alteration, demolition, repair or management of a building, or structure or complex and its setting
- To seek a better understanding, compile a lasting record, analyse the findings/record and then disseminate the results

2.0 Site Location

The site is located directly south of the Plockton Church, on Innes Street, in the village of Plockton on the west coast of Scotland (**Figure 1**). It falls within the old civil parish of Lochalsh.

¹ Highland Council 2012

² *Ibid*

³ The Scottish Government 2011; 2014

⁴ Highland Council 2012

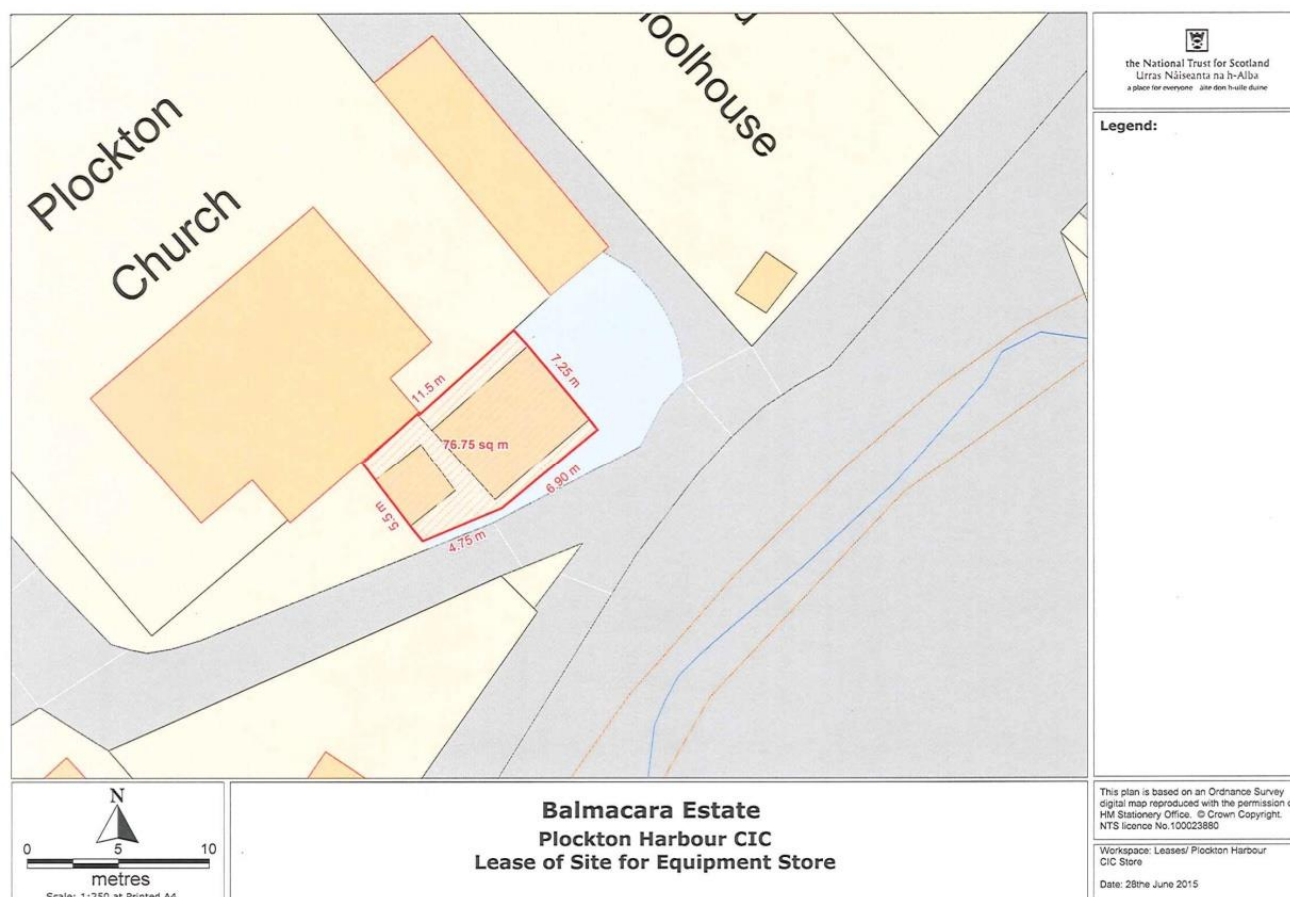


Figure 1: Bound in red: the two buildings surveyed, the cabin to the left and the garage to the right (map courtesy of the National Trust for Scotland)

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

The building appears to have been constructed between 1875 and 1904 (first depicted on the 2nd edition OS map) as an exterior addition to the Telford church in Plockton. It has been previously recorded on the Highland Historic Environment Record (HER) as monument no. MHG54903 (see below).

4.0 Methodology

All work was conducted in accordance with Highland Council's *Standards for Archaeological Work*⁵ and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct*⁶.

4.1 Desk-based Assessment

A desk-based assessment was conducted prior to commencement of the survey in order to assess the archaeological potential of the area based on previously recorded sites and any historical documentation.

A full check of all available historical and archaeological records, aerial photographs and historical maps was conducted using the Highland Historic Environment Record (HHER), the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS), Historic Scotland's databases, the National Library of Scotland, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland databases, statistical accounts and other available records, literary sources or online resources about the site.

4.2 Level 1 Building Survey

A detailed recording and photographic survey of the buildings were undertaken. A written record of the condition, construction, materials, fixtures, fittings and function of the building was made, while evidence for modification and phasing were also assessed and recorded.

Photographs (**Appendix 1**), of the building at all levels, were taken using a Nikon D3100 SLR of the external and internal elevations, historic features of interest and internal changes to the building layout. The location of photographs was recorded (**Figure 6**).

Survey and recording methods recommended by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS)⁷ were employed and all work was conducted in strict adherence to the *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct*⁸.

5.0 Results

5.1 Desk-based Assessment

A desk-based assessment was carried out in order to augment the building survey record.

5.1.1 Cartographic Sources

Historical maps were consulted at the National Library of Scotland online⁹.

⁵ Highland Council 2012

⁶ Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014

⁷ RCAHMS 2004

⁸ Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014

⁹ NLS 2014



Figure 2: Extract from William Roy Military Survey of Scotland

**William Roy Military Survey of Scotland, 1747-55
Highlands Map 1747-52**

Plockton first appears in the available cartographic records as *Plock* on Roy's Military map (**Figure 2**). The buildings cannot be discerned from the layout of the village, and the settlement itself seems to be situated further west than the modern day village.



Figure 3: Extract from Thomson's map

**John Thomson's *Atlas of Scotland, 1832*
*Skye Island, &c.***

While Plockton appears written as it is today by the time of Thomson's *Atlas*, the layout of the town is indiscernible (**Figure 3**).

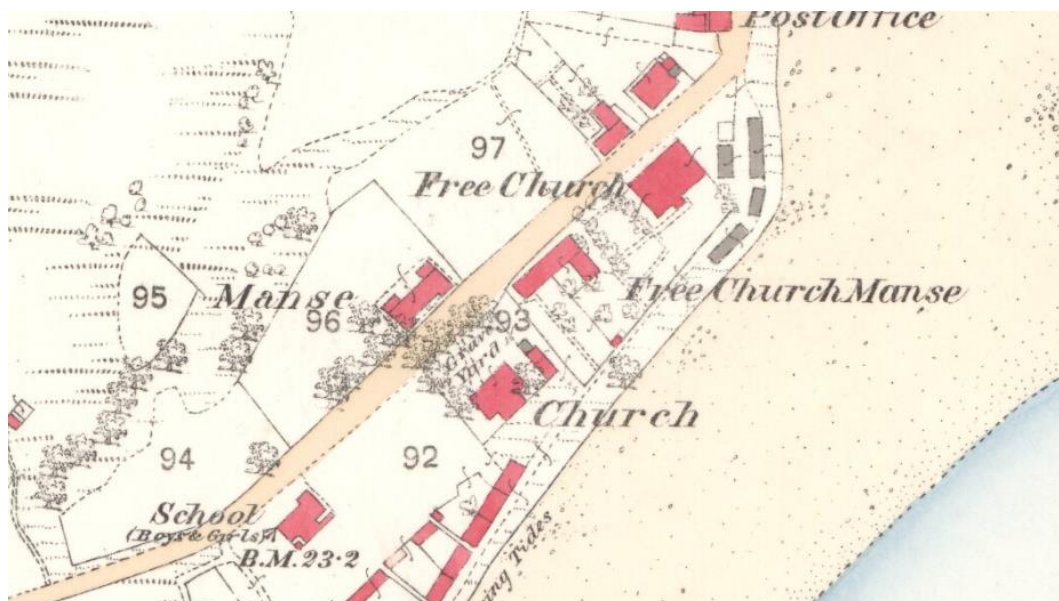


Figure 4: Extract from the First Edition OS map

First Edition 25-inch-to-the-mile Ordnance Survey map
Ross and Cromarty Ross-shire Sheet CXVII.9
 Survey date: 1875 Publication date: 1880

The First Edition map shows the Church, but no structures that could be interpreted as the cabin or garage (Figure 4).

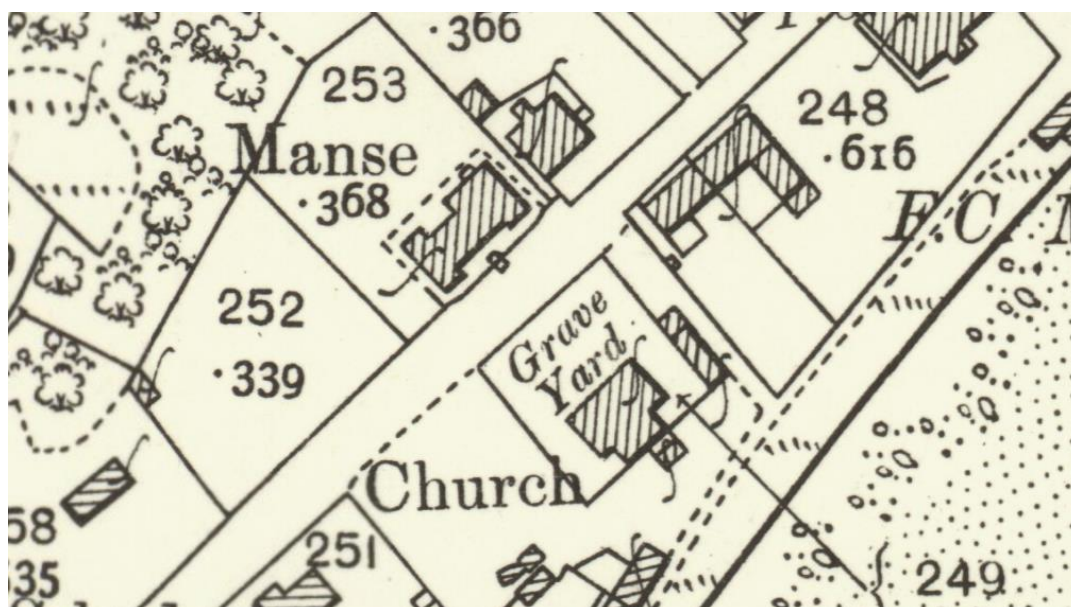


Figure 5: Extract from the Second Edition OS map

Second Edition 25-inch-to-the-mile Ordnance Survey map
Ross-shire 117.09 (includes Lochalsh)
 Publication date: 1904 Date revised: 1902

There is evidence for a roofed structure situated to the south-east of the Church (**Figure 5**). This is most likely the tin bothy, which would provide a potential construction date range between 1875 (the date of survey for the First Ordinance Survey Map) and 1902 . the date of this map's revision.

The later editions of maps do not provide a detailed enough layout to identify the presence of the cabin and the garage, therefore the only dating limitation we can place around the garage's construction is that it was built post-1903.

5.1.2 Historic Environment Sources

A full search of the Highland Council Historic Environment Record (HHER) was made, with the following becoming apparent.

MHG54903 NG 80291 33293 Tin bothy

The buildings have already been designated this monument number. The record was made as a result of an independent site visit in 2011 by Highland Council archaeologist Andy Puls: "Constructed between 1875 and 1904 (first depicted on the 2nd edition OS map) up against the outerwall of the Telford church and burial ground to the NW. It is a small wooden framed bothy or shed, clad primarily in corrugated iron although the SW gable is a double skin of vertically laid timber. A brick flue and chimney is attached to the outer wall of the NE gable. Internally the building is surprisingly comfortable with tongue and groove to the walls and ceiling and a simple yet attractive cast iron fire place with a red tile and timber surround. It has clearly not been used for some time and represents an unusual survival." (HER 2015)

5.2 Building Survey

The building survey was carried out on October 6th 2015 by Michael Sharpe. The weather was bright and dry, and visibility within and without the structure was excellent.

The two buildings comprise one single-storey timber-framed building of approximately 28 m². here referred to as the 'garage' and a second of approximately 15 m². here referred to as the 'cabin'. These abut one another at their south and north gable ends respectively. The first has an asymmetrical gable roof (15/40 degrees pitch), while the second has a gable roof of 35 degrees pitch.

5.2.1 The Garage

Originally, this building was probably half its current size. just wide enough to accommodate the double doors at the north end, along with the concrete slab, and with a symmetrical gable roof of 40 degrees pitch. The later addition of a shallower shed roof on the east side widened the building, and was accompanied by the addition of a new door. It also seems that the southern third or so of the building may have been added at this time, and includes a separate space here labeled as the 'office'. The quality of the construction is poor, and there appears to be no insulation. Only the walls of the office, and the west wall of the main

space, have timber linings. Otherwise walls and roof are unlined. The exterior, both walls and roof, are clad in corrugated, galvanized steel (**Plates 1; 2**).

Given the double doors and the concrete slab with tracks (timber rails on 1.45 m centers), the original building may have been built as a vehicle store, with little room for any other activity. Its most recent use (apart from storage), seems to have been as the workspace of a joiner or handyman. There are shelves labeled for screws; nails for hanging paint brushes, a few small tools; and notes on the wall of timber sizes and quantities, paint quantities, and literature from suppliers of stoves, boilers, and fireplaces. One note written on the wall is dated 05 May 1953.



Plate 1: The tin clad garage building



Plate 2: The interior of the garage building

5.2.1 The Cabin

This seems to have been built as a very modest dwelling with a single room (**Plate 3**), and includes a plumbed wash basin, fireplace, water heater, a few cupboards, porch, and at least one sash window in the east wall, though another may have existed in the degraded south wall. It is timber lined throughout on the inside. The quality of construction is much superior to that of the garage. On the outside, the long walls and roof are clad in corrugated steel, while the gable ends are clad in painted timber. The fireplace (**Plate 4**) is vented through a brick chimney. It is currently being used to store road salt and a salt spreader.



Plate 3: The cabin building, with the tin-clad garage situated behind



Plate 4: Fireplace and sink inside the cabin building

6.0 Discussion

- 6.1 The structures are in a poor condition and have limited historical value in its current state. The recommendation for demolition is a sensible choice.

7.0 References

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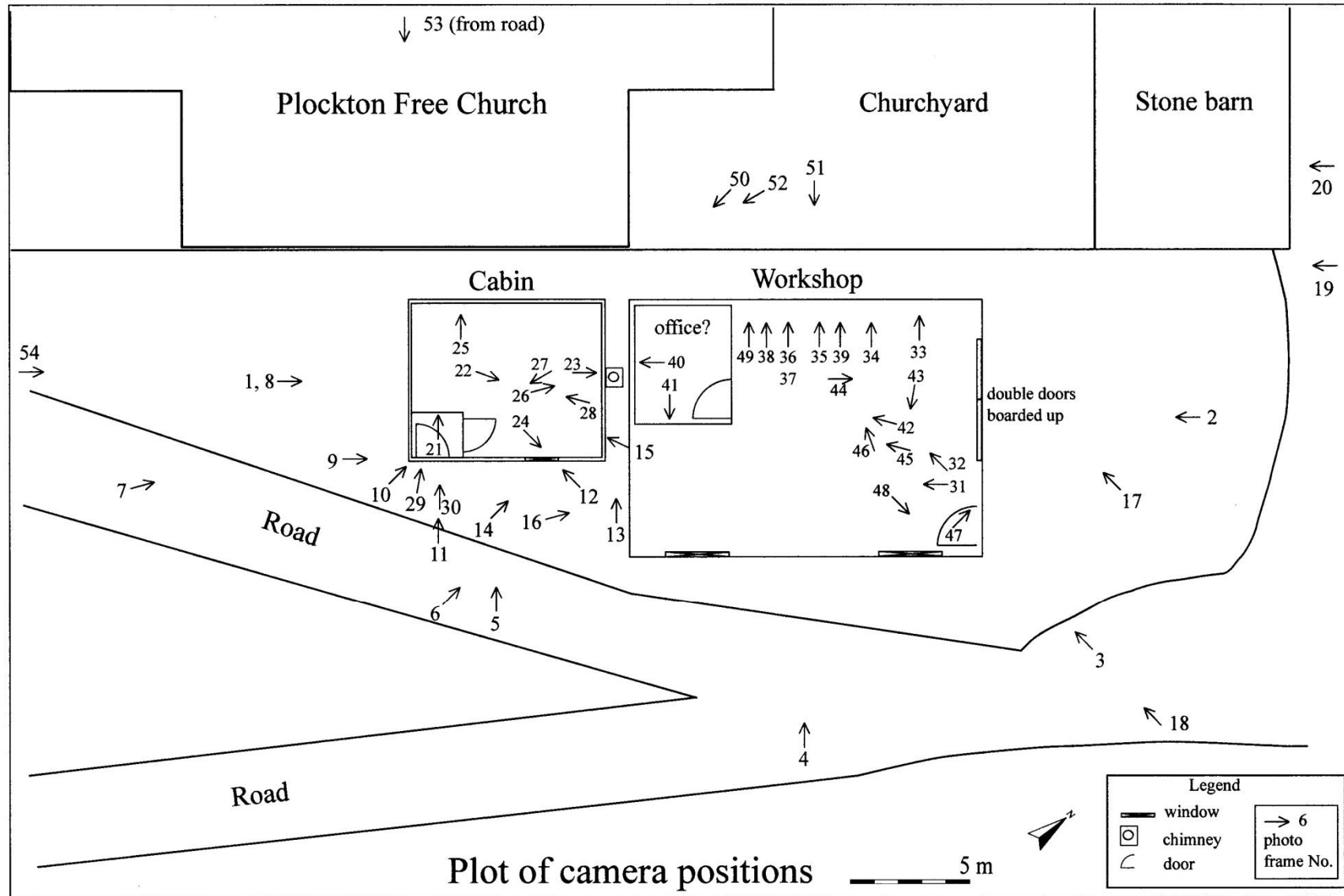


Figure 6: Plan of the photograph positions

APPENDIX 1 List of Photographs

Photo No.	Feature	Description	Facing	Date
1	Cabin	S gable end	ENE	06/10/2015
2	Garage	N wall	S	06/10/2015
3	Garage	N and E walls	SW	06/10/2015
4	Garage	E wall	W	06/10/2015
5	Cabin	E wall	W	06/10/2015
6	Garage	View across S wall of garage	NW	06/10/2015
7	Cabin/garage	S gable ends of cabin and garage	NE	06/10/2015
8	Cabin	S gable end, detail	ENE	06/10/2015
9	Cabin	Eaves, SW corner	N	06/10/2015
10	Cabin	Door in E wall of cabin	W	06/10/2015
11	Cabin	Sash window in E wall of cabin	SW	06/10/2015
12	Cabin	Chimney at N extent of cabin gable	W	06/10/2015
13	Cabin	Chimney at N extent of cabin gable	NW	06/10/2015
14	Garage	S gable barge board and roof edge	NW	06/10/2015
15	Garage	N gable	SW	06/10/2015
16	Garage	View across buildings with stone barn in background	SW	06/10/2015
17	Garage	View across to garage, stone barn in the foreground	SE	06/10/2015
18	Cabin	Circuit breaker, porch	W	06/10/2015
19	Cabin	Fireplace in N wall, sink	N	06/10/2015
20	Cabin	Fireplace surround, detail	N	06/10/2015
21	Cabin	Sash window in E wall	E	06/10/2015
22	Cabin	Old wall covering, detail	W	06/10/2015
23	Cabin	Fireplace in N wall	N	06/10/2015
24	Cabin	Inside porch door	SE	06/10/2015
25	Cabin	Living space, S gable	S	06/10/2015
26	Cabin	Porch door, exterior	W	06/10/2015
27	Garage	E side of interior	S	06/10/2015
28	Garage	W side of interior; joiner's stores	SW	06/10/2015
29	Garage	Adverts, etc. posted to wall	W	06/10/2015
30	Garage	Label with notes	W	06/10/2015
31	Garage	Label with notes	W	06/10/2015
32	Garage	Coat hooks	W	06/10/2015
33	Garage	Notes pinned to wall	W	06/10/2015
34	Garage	Notes pinned to wall	W	06/10/2015
35	Garage	Notes pinned to wall	W	06/10/2015
36	Garage	Wall-written notes	W	06/10/2015
37	Garage	Paint-brush hanging nails	E	06/10/2015
38	Garage	W side of interior	S	06/10/2015
39	Garage	E side of interior	E	06/10/2015
40	Garage	N gable wall (double doors), interior	N	06/10/2015

Photo No.	Feature	Description	Facing	Date
41	Garage	Roof framing detail, interior	S	06/10/2015
42	Garage	Timbers set into concrete floor, west side	SW	06/10/2015
43	Garage	Notes written on wall frame, N gable	W	06/10/2015
44	Garage	Window tilting arm	NE	06/10/2015
45	Garage	Screw store shelf, W side	W	06/10/2015
46	Garage	W elevation (partial) from church yard	E	06/10/2015
47	Cabin/garage	W elevation (partial) from church yard	SE	06/10/2015
48	Cabin/garage	S elev., long view, incl. church	N	06/10/2015