

**Design and Access Statement  
LBC Application for Investigative Work at Barmoor Castle  
Barmoor Country Park, Berwick-upon-Tweed,  
Northumberland, TD15 2TR**

Submitted by Spence & Dower , Historic Building Architects  
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## Background to the submission of this LBC Application

Comments were received on 20 September 2021 from the Planning Officer, James Bellis in relation to our planning pre-application submission for Conversion of Barmoor Castle into Holiday Apartments.

Welcome lengthy advice was received from a number of Consultees regarding the very detailed information which would need to be submitted for Full Planning Applications for this Grade II\* Listed Building which is on Historic England's 'At Risk Register'. Historic England have also provided guidance as to acceptability of those initial draft proposals.

Since then we have put together a specialist team of consultants who have been working closely together to gradually piece together the fine detail of how this conversion work can be carried out; and importantly how this might be done with minimum harm to the immediately visual evidence it provides but also the historic evidence that further investigations are slowly revealing.

***During this lengthy process various iterations of possible layouts have been carried out as further evidence surfaces. The drawings presented with this application must not be read as the final version of layout of the building. They are merely to inform of just one interim stage of work in relation to the need for a small amount of investigative work which is required to provide more clarification for further study.***

## Current Archaeology work on the project which requires an Interim Listed Building Consent

### **Archaeology: Trial Pits**

John Nolan, Northern Counties Archaeological Services, is our team's archaeologist guiding us through the significance of all the evidence being provided of the historic context of the Castle.

He recently obtained approval from the County Archaeologist and Conservation Officer to undertake various trial pits within and around the ground floor of the building, to endeavour to reveal and record more of the history of the building — which in turn will inform the final layout, details and justification when submitted for Full Planning Applications.

Attached to the application are:

- His Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation on which he was granted approval to proceed. That document includes a drawing showing where these trial pits are located.
- His draft Heritage Statement which will be completed as more evidence becomes available.

Those trial pits are now underway and will be completed early next year. These are being carried out with local charity TillVAS and are revealing interesting historic details (including mediaeval fabric), which are already indicating the need for some minor alterations to the proposed plan layouts in their current form. A full report will be forthcoming when the work is completed. Martin Lowe, Historic England, has been kept informed of general progress of the project and was happy that this work was proceeding.

## Archaeology: Discovery in trial pit work which possibly needs LBC

During the first stages of the trial pit work, John Nolan contacted the County Archaeologist and Conservation Officer requesting advice on whether an area he had uncovered really needed LBC to allow for further investigation. As yet he has not received a reply. Therefore we are including this detail in this request for LBC.

This is the information he sent regarding TP4 and TP5:

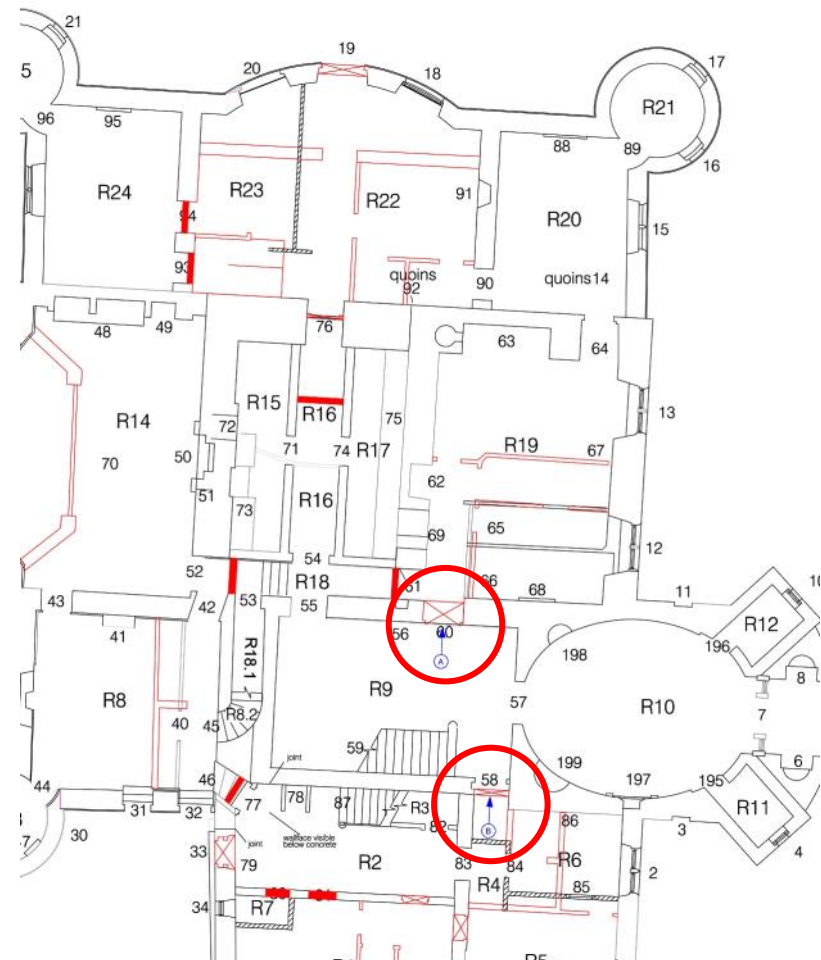
- TP4 R5 concrete floor laid on hardcore of (mostly) broken wine bottles! Directly below at just c.100mm from surface a rough flagged floor surface which seems to belong with the Paterson build. A hint that medieval corework might be poking through in the corner. As this is not a 'soft' deposit I've sent a photo to Ros Kain and Nick Best for their instruction if we can lift it and carry on, or if they'll make it an LBC issue.
- TP5 R6 partly as TP4 on the west side, there's a mortared foundation running N-S at the east side, with well-laid flagstones beyond. As with TP4 awaiting decision if we can carry on or if LBC is required.

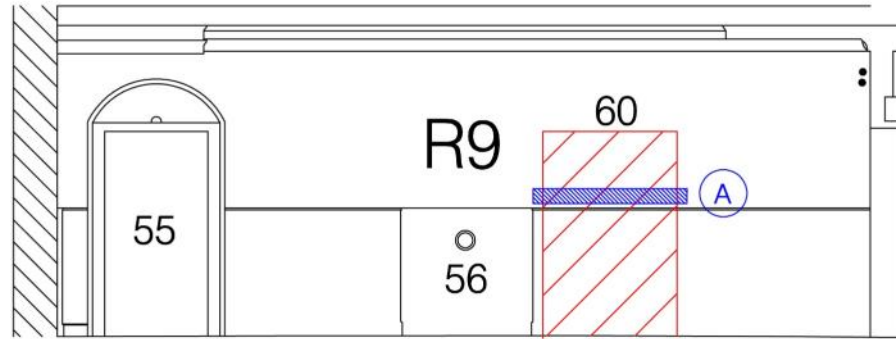
**John Nolan requests that he is able to lift these areas and carry on this investigative work. It would be useful to ascertain what lies beneath this area in terms of future use of the spaces. For the moment the flagged areas uncovered will be drawn and the pits mothballed.**

**Ideally this needs a rapid decision whilst TillVAS are still on site early in 2023. Otherwise we may need to leave this investigation until full building works start on site with a Conditioned Archaeological Watching Brief—surety obtained now would be highly beneficial for comprehensive Full Planning Applications.**

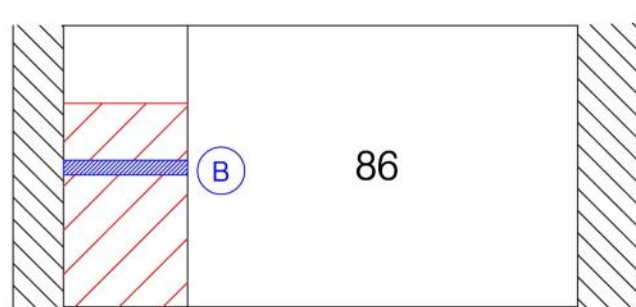
## Archaeology: LBC approval for internal investigation within the Great Stairwell

John Nolan also wishes to make some minor investigations into the built fabric above ground level, further ascertaining some historic evidence he is unsure about to better inform the layouts being proposed. The two areas of walling he wishes to make minimal intrusion into are within the ground floor of the Great Stairwell shown in R9 and R6 below (A and B). The next page shows the room elevations of the areas to be investigated by removing existing fabric along the strips indicated.





R9 north wall



R6 north wall

**Note:**

*These drawings indicate the locations for the 2 strips of plaster removal necessary to try and determine where and with what these former openings have been blocked.*

*For each of A and B: about a 6" tall strip of plaster chiselled off is intended to pick up the edges of brick blocking which is visible on the north side of the wall in R19 and also extent of blocking at B. This will be made as simple and neat as is possible in endeavouring to ascertain the information required.*

*This work will be carried out either by or under John Nolan's supervision and will be thoroughly recorded.*

1:50 @A3

### R9 Great Stair

This is almost wholly 1801-4 remodelling and much of the fabric is intact if in poor condition. The walls are plastered and lime-washed, peeling and flaking.

The north wall, where it is intended there should be minimal intrusive investigation, may be thinned mediaeval masonry as on the opposite side of the wall in R19 there is brick blocking which appears to represent a doorway. This is indicated in a 1778 drawing as passing through a thick wall from the 'now' stairwell area into the old 'kitchin'. It is difficult to precisely correlate this wall with these earlier plans.



**Above: The north wall of the Great Stair**

*This appears to have been altered since first conceived, as the 'fireplace' insertion would seem to be a later installation together with the timber panelling, which most certainly does not belong with the proportions that would have been intended.*

*The location of the intended slim strip of investigation is where the staff is placed and between the short upright black markers. Might there have been a door matching the one on the left in the image at this point?*

### **Below: The south wall of the 'kitchin' - behind the markers shown left.**

*Brick on end infill is clearly shown together with positive vertical junction lines, indicating a previous opening. This side of the wall will not be disturbed in the minimal opening up on the stairwell side.*

*The 'kitchin' is little changed in overall appearance since the 1778 plan. Note there is a fragment of wall plaster with narrow cornice surviving above the assumed old doorway.*



## R6 Game Larder(?)

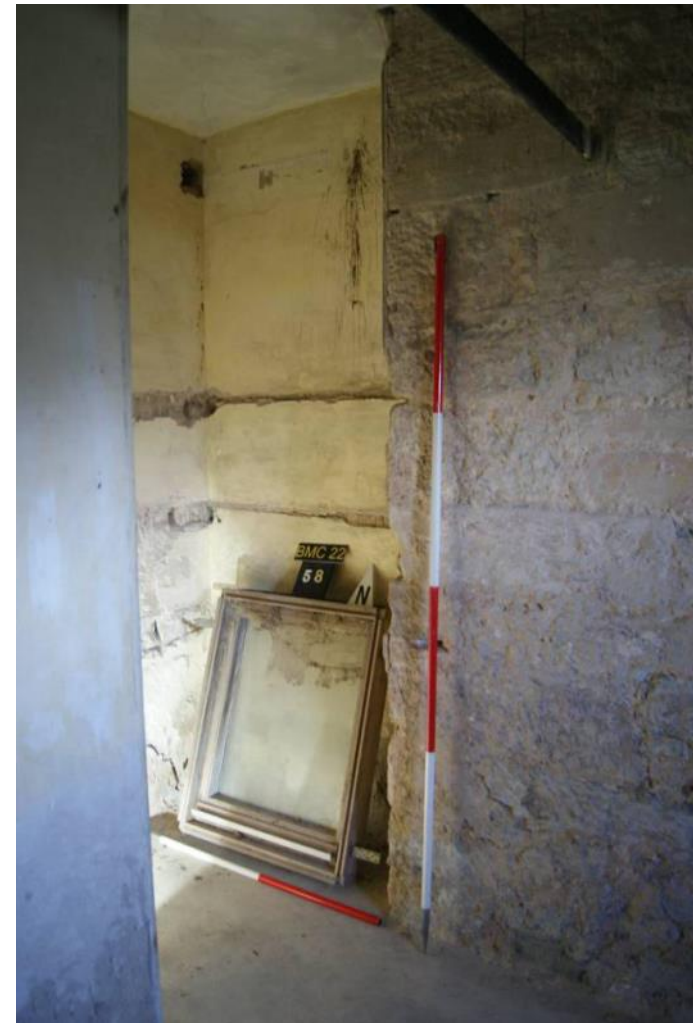
A door on the South side of the stairwell (seen in image below left) leads into a cupboard. On the 1801 floor plan this doorway is shown as linking the stairwell to a north-south passage into the servant's stair. Was this ever made?

Above the door the plaster has been removed exposing long grey-purple ashlar which might predate 1801-4. However, there is also evidence of a previous altered doorway below this ashlar.



Behind this cupboard is a recess in the north wall of the Game Larder. This forms a small alcove in the larger Game Larder space. The walls of this recess are plastered and formerly shelved (see image below right).

It is proposed to remove a small strip of this plaster to ascertain if there was indeed a doorway in this location. The remainder of the stone walls of the Game Larder are already stripped of plaster.



## **Current work in ascertaining sensitive future service routes on the project which requires an Interim Listed Building Consent**

### ***M and E Consultants: Opening up.***

We have been working for some months with our M and E Consultants, TGA, who are experienced working with, making alterations to and converting our precious heritage buildings throughout the country. They are based in the North East of England.

Meetings have been held with them during that time which have included our Archaeologist and our Accredited Structural Engineer in order that we are all aware of the limitations of sensitive alteration and intervention in converting the Castle to remove it from the 'At Risk Register'. Our client has also been involved in these meetings in order that he can fully understand the sensitivity of future building work to the building he owns.

TGA are also in consultation with our client as to how the Castle might be heated via a variety of remote engineering plant possibilities in order that the Castle is kept 'clean' of the space that will be required for equipment for such a large building. One access route into the building for all new services is currently being considered within the proposals for the derelict north wing.

It is how these services are sensitively distributed around the Castle from this single point of entry that is currently being further discussed. We have been using the most current alteration plan proposals to begin to ascertain how services might be incorporated. The plans in their current format are attached to this application.

***The A1 drawings presented with this application must not be read as the final version of layout of the building as these are constantly being amended and are likely to be amended again when our fire engineer is appointed. It is the principles of service distribution that we are considering at present and it may be helpful to read some of our thought processes on these drawings regarding service distribution and insulation of the fabric.***

It has become obvious during our on-site investigations that the two existing cupboards off the central oval space (Saloon) at the north end will be invaluable without any alteration for service equipment. These cupboards are shown on the 'as existing' plan of the first floor on the next page, and also in the image below.



*Cupboard doors on the north wall. The central door is false.*

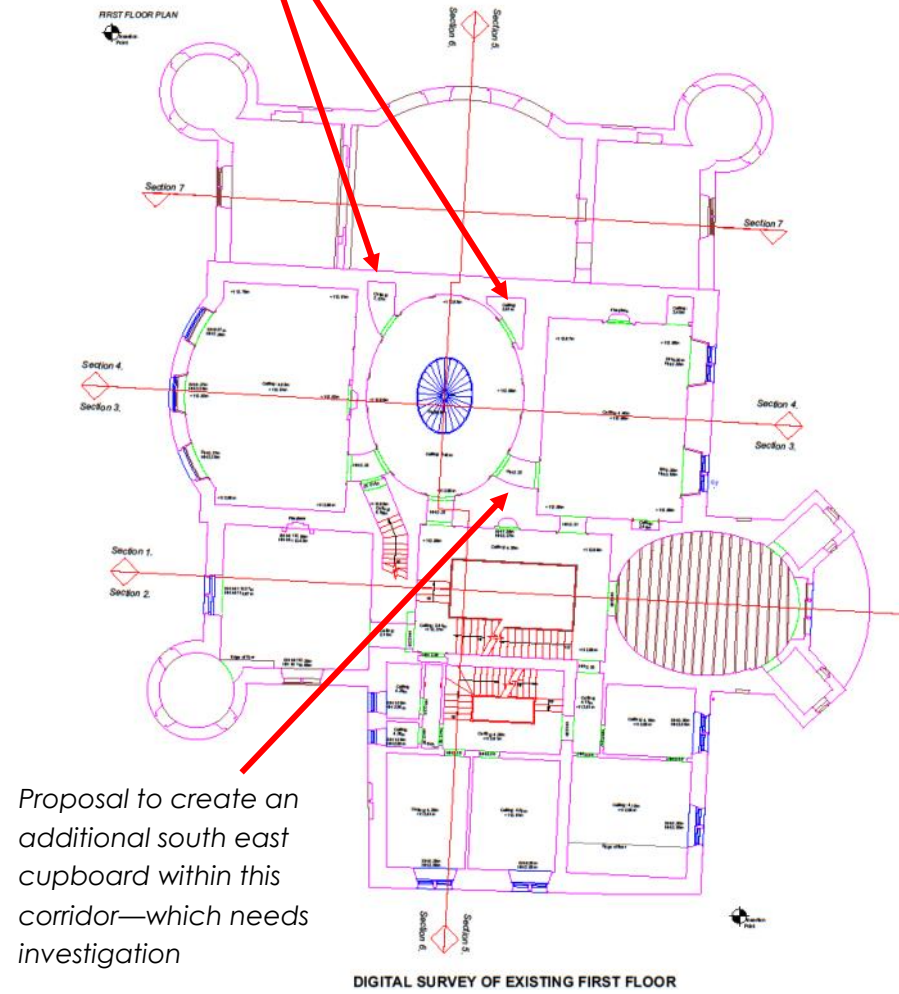
However, it is also clear that servicing of 'intact' rooms on the east side of the Castle (helping to retain existing plaster, corncicing and other details) will be assisted if a similar cupboard could be created at the south east corner of that oval space in what is presumably a masonry corner void (much as at the north end with the existing cupboards, and also in which the mural stair sits in the south west corner).

A small penetration is required in this south east corner from within the corridor that links the oval room with the room to its right. This is to establish if there is a hollow space here and how it might connect into the roof void for use as a service 'trunk' (see image over).





The two north cupboards in the masonry voids beyond the oval room



Proposal to create an additional south east cupboard within this corridor—which needs investigation

The corridor link between the two rooms. The investigative intrusion would be made in the curved wall on the right hand side and the coat hook curved batten would remain intact.

**Summary:** We hope that the investigative approach we are taking as a team now will limit the number of possible 'amendments' to approvals when work commences on site, as our client and contractor will then be encountering minimum additional 'surprises'! Approval of these LBC applications will assist with that process.