

Banff Castle



Proposed alterations to East Pavilion + former Rifle Range

Design & Access Statement

Description of Project

Proposals to provide additional office / informal meeting space at the East Pavilion and former Rifle Range at Banff Castle.

Client: .. Banff Castle Community Association.
Job No : .. 2958
Status : .. Planning / Listed Building Consent
Author : .. Alec Milne
Reviewer : .. Marc Taylor
Date of Issue : .. 24th February 2024
File Ref: .. 2958/Planning/D+A

This document has been prepared for Banff Castle Community Association. ("the clients").
G.D.Lodge Architects LLP accepts no liability or responsibility for any use that is made of this document other than by the Client for the purpose of the original commission for which it has been prepared. G.D. Lodge Architects LLP is a Limited Liability Partnership registered in Scotland No.SO300742



partners
alec milne bsc(hons), dip.arch., r.i.b.a., a.r.i.a.s.
colin d. anderson bsc(hons), b.arch., r i b a,
a.r.i.a.s.
associate
frank bell hnd





Contents

- background
- site location
- site history
- building history
- existing building
- significance
- design principals
- heritage impact
- design solution
- access strategy



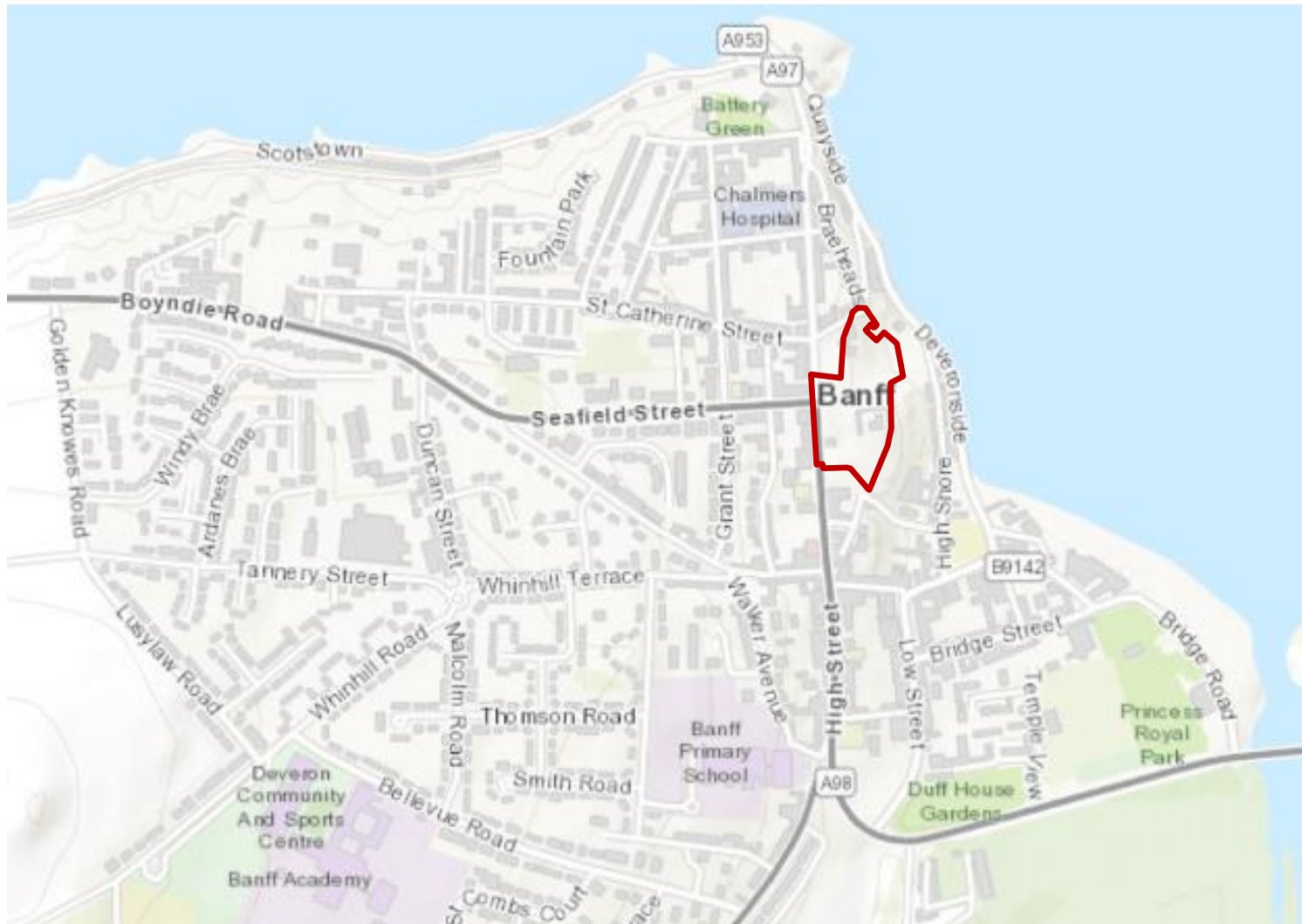
East Pavilion and Rifle range

Proposals are being put forward by Banff Castle Community Association to alter the ground floor of the east pavilion and the former rifle range at Banff Castle to provide ancillary office / informal meeting space following the demise of Banff and Macduff Rifle Club.

G.D Lodge Architects were approached in December 2023 to assist with preparing a measured survey of the existing buildings and proposing small scale alterations that would not detract from the heritage and character of the listed pavilion and outbuildings whilst providing additional amenity that the Community Association can use and let.

The following Design and Access Statement explores the site history, constraints and opportunities which have helped establish design principals towards a design solution.





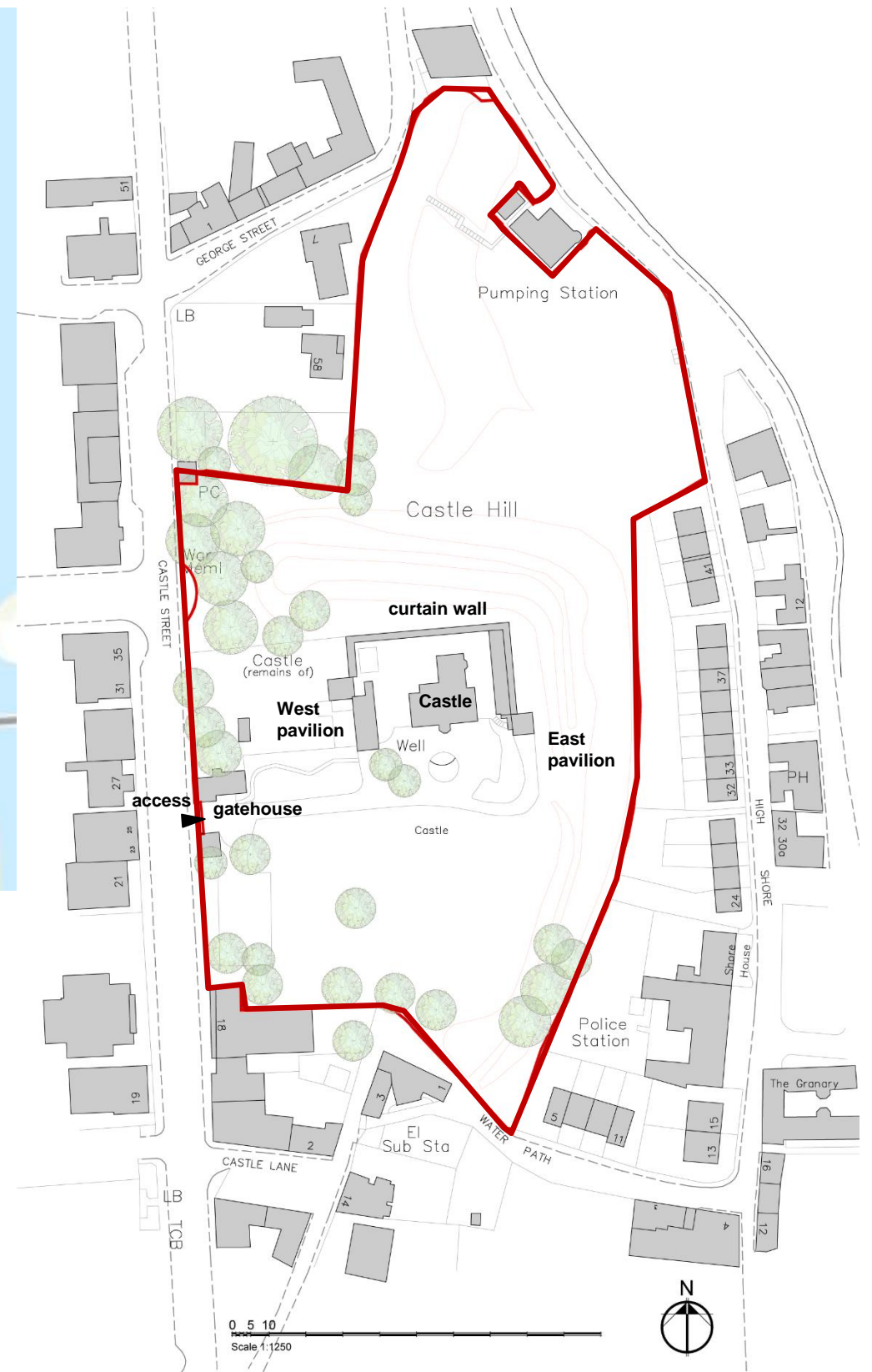
Location Plan

The town of Banff is located on the Moray coast in the northeast of Scotland at the mouth of the river Deveron. It is a former royal burgh, and is the county town of the historic county of Banffshire. The site of the existing castle lies on an area of higher ground at the end of Seafield Street and to the east of Castle Street with wide panoramic views over the bay and out towards the Moray Firth.

Castle Hill is a promontory overlooking the Deveron Bay to the eastern edge of the current town. A motte and bailey castle was first recorded here in the 12th century. This was later strengthened by the construction of a massive curtain wall, part of which survives forming the east, west and north walls of the courtyard behind the current Banff Castle House.

Any remnants of the old castle were removed in the 18th century to make way for the present mansion house which includes gatehouse and east and west pavilions. The range of buildings forming the rifle range was added in the 19th century.

The castle buildings and courtyard are accessed via a formal driveway off Castle Street but there are several pedestrian links around the perimeter of the site.



Context Plan





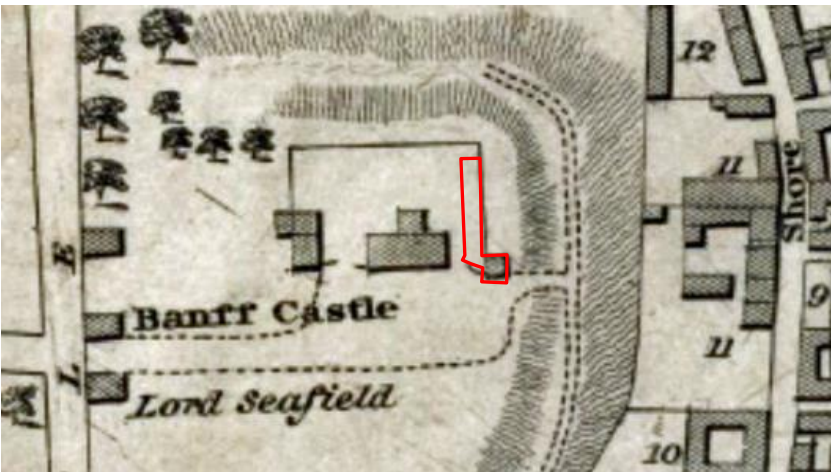
Points Map of Scotland 1590



Roy Military extract 1755



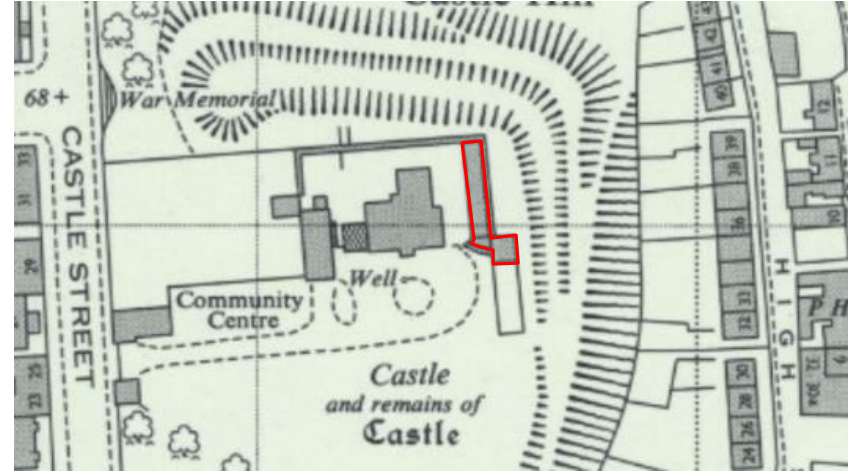
John Thomson extract 1826



Banff John Wood extract 1823



Banff OS extract 1866



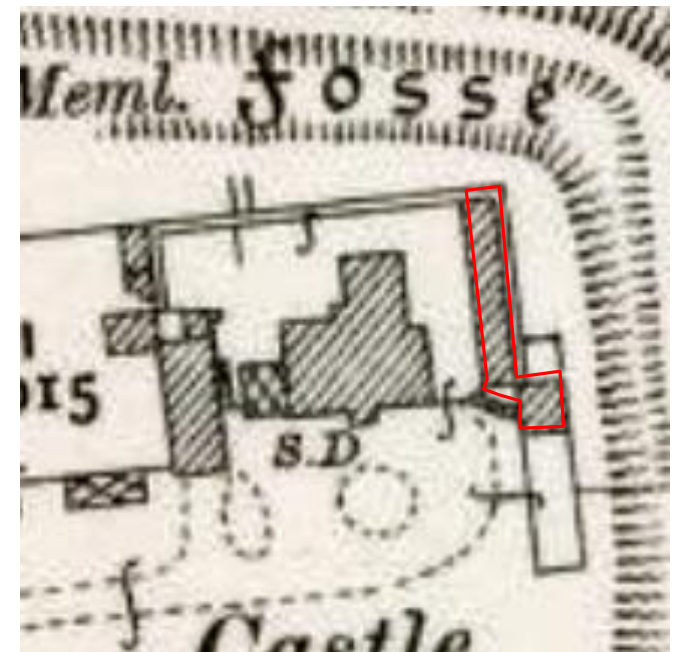
Banff OS extract 1962

Very little is known as to the origins of the town of Banff but it likely developed from a trading port on the mouth of the Deveron River. The first recorded castle was of motte and bailey design built to repel Viking invaders and a charter of 1163 shows that Malcolm IV lived there at that time. Over time the castle fortifications were improved and parts of the medieval curtain wall, earth fortifications and ditch are still in evidence and are a scheduled monument ref SM2927.

By the early 18th century the old castle was in a ruinous state and much of the remains were landscaped over with the formation of the present mansion house in 1750 to a design by John Adam. A restrained 3 storey Georgian mansion house flanked by east and west 2 storey pavilions with two lodges situated on the north and south sides of the western entrance gate. A porch was added to the main house in the 19th century. The historic curtain walls form the perimeter enclosure to the rear north facing courtyard to the house. The forecourt to the south side of the house as a domed peristyle well. The house, flanking pavilions and well are A listed ref LB21957. The entrance lodges, gates and gate piers are covered under LB21959 and the surrounding policy walls under LB21958.

John Wood's Plan of the Town of Banff 1823 shows the new mansion house and flanking pavilions enclosed by the historic curtain wall with the gate lodges to the west.

By 1866 the OS map shows that the west pavilion has been extended and that a new structure has been introduced north of the east pavilion to the inside of the eastern curtain wall, representative of the current rifle range. The 1929 OS map shows no link between the east pavilion and this new structure. The toilet link (below the curved access stair to the east pavilion) does not appear until the 1962 OS map.



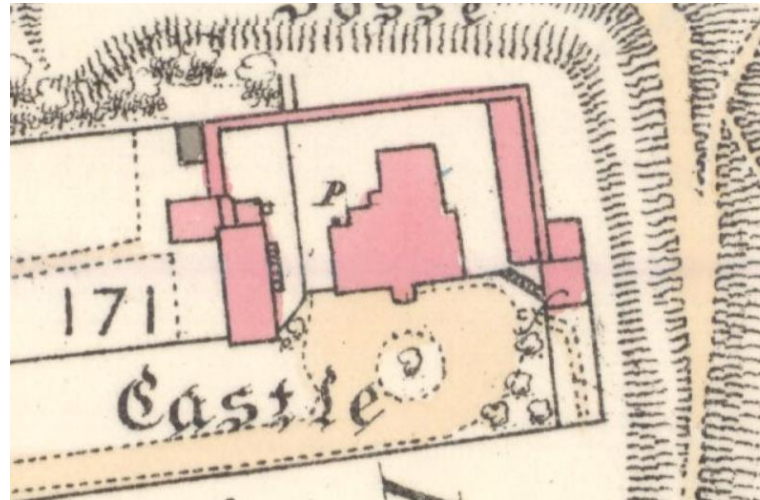
Banff OS extract 1929

Buildings along the western side of the east curtain wall first appear on the Banff OS map extract of 1866. This possibly relates to the formation of 1st Banffshire Artillery Volunteers in 1859 as part of a national response to an invasion threat from the French between 1858 to 59 and was one of a number of Artillery Volunteer Cores established in the area with their HQ in Banff.

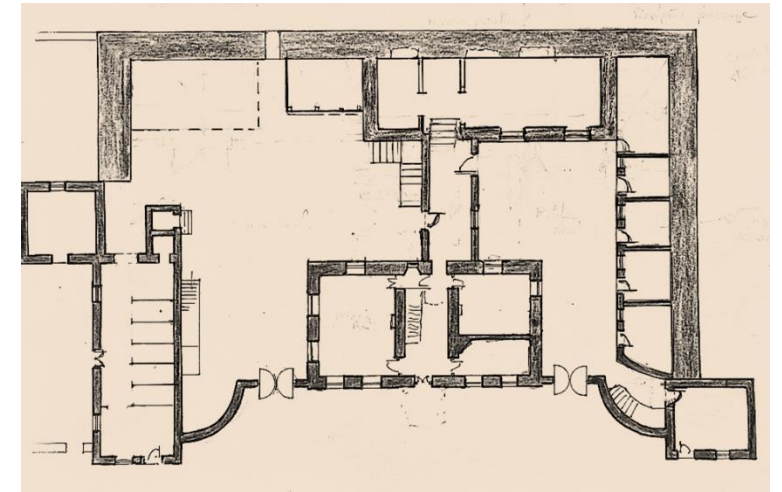
There is no defined plan arrangement shown on the OS map but the inferred format is a linear arrangement of 'casemates' or bombproof barracks or stores. These would have opened onto the north courtyard elevating as a series of alternating doors and windows with dividing walls between. As noted in the extract from the 1904 renovations, this appears similar to the north 'casemates' at Fort George.

As part of the external restoration carried out to the eastern curtain wall, east pavilion and rifle range carried out in 1997 defective harl was removed from the wet elevation of the rifle range exposing a number of infilled openings that broadly correspond with the historic casemates or stores.

From the available information the building is a simple linear lean to, masonry front (west) wall circa 2.0m high and 0.65m thick. The original roof was constructed from half log timber rafters with half log ceiling ties along the curtain wall. Lath and plaster to underside of roof tie and plaster on the hard internally to the walls. Roof was Scottish heavy slate in diminishing courses. The whole roof was renewed in 2003.



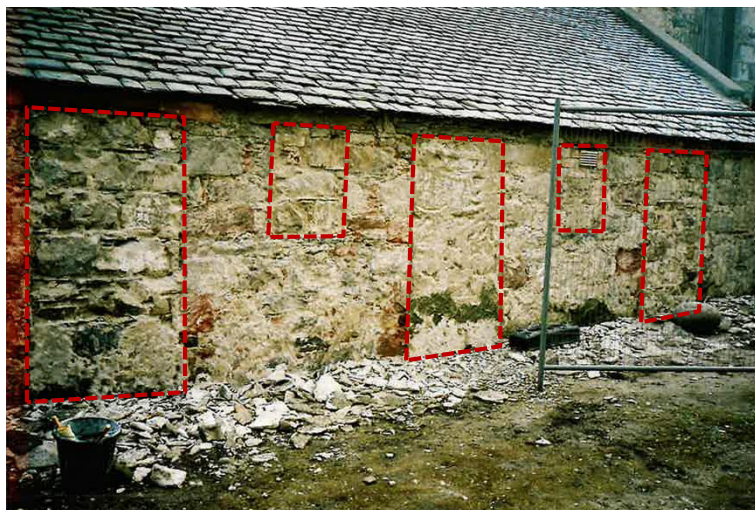
Banff OS extract 1866



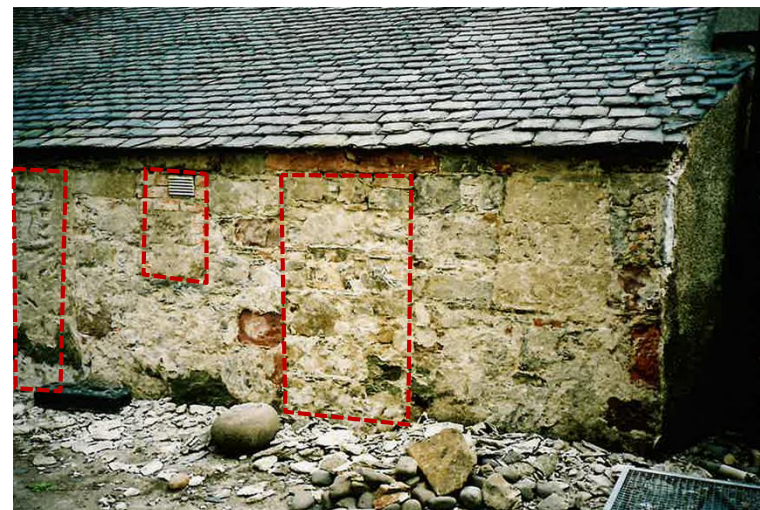
Sketch Plan 1904 renovations



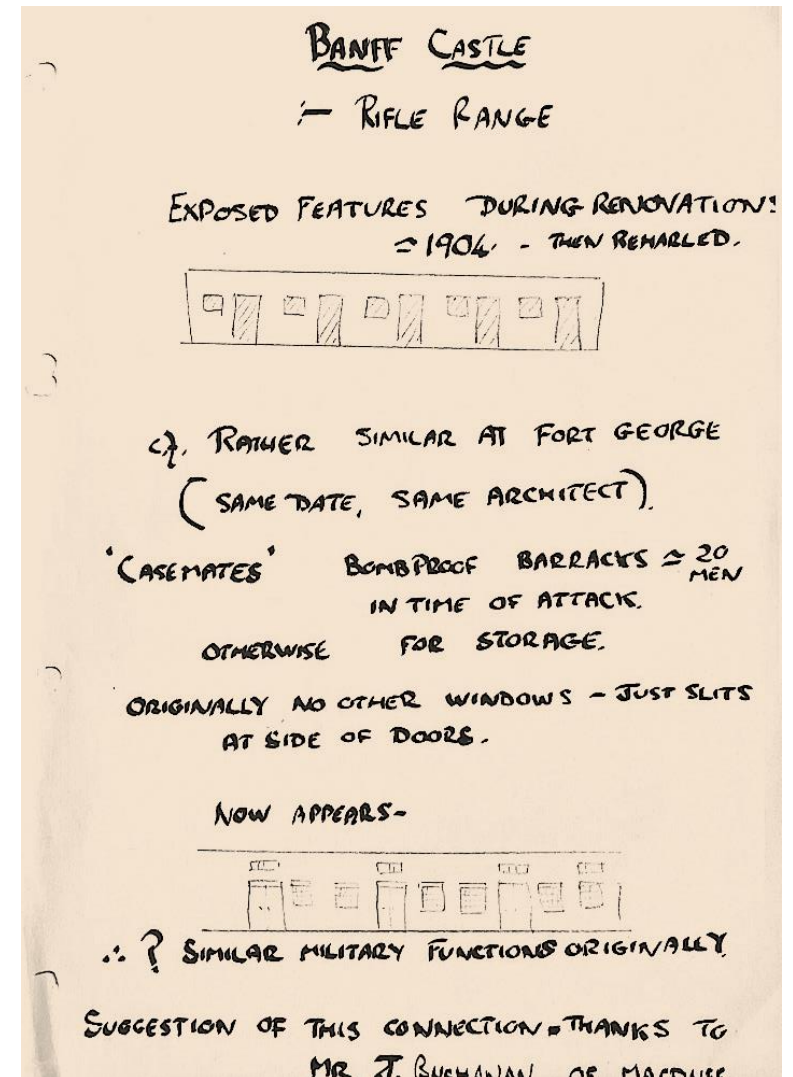
North Casemates, Fort George



Rifle Range 1997 alterations



Rifle Range 1997 alterations



Suggested connection to Fort George 1904

There are no formal records to indicate when the rifle range was converted from the casemates stores, but the current building was recorded as being a rifle range during the 1904 renovations. The requirement to provide an indoor training facility for firearms may have been part of the restructuring of the 1st Banffshire Artillery Volunteers into the Royal Garrison Artillery divisions in response to the Boer Wars of 1899 to 1902.

Much of the historic structure was exposed during the 2003 renovations as can be seen in the adjacent photographs. In this the ceiling ties are evident at every second rafter bearing onto a continuous wall plate. This in turn is propped by vertical posts at intermittent centres that may relate to the historic store divisions. Walls are plastered up to but not above ceiling level.

An insitu concrete floor slab is now evident 400mm to 700mm above adjacent ground level, sloping down to a steel backed bullet trap. There is also evident to the southern end of the range a redundant chimney flue which has been raised above ceiling tie line probably around the time the building was converted from casemates to a rifle range.

It is likely that the rifle range was entered through the south gable via an external door adjacent to the east pavilion external stairs. In the 20th century a direct link was created from the ground floor of the east pavilion via a lobby and toilet.



Rifle range interior looking south, 1997

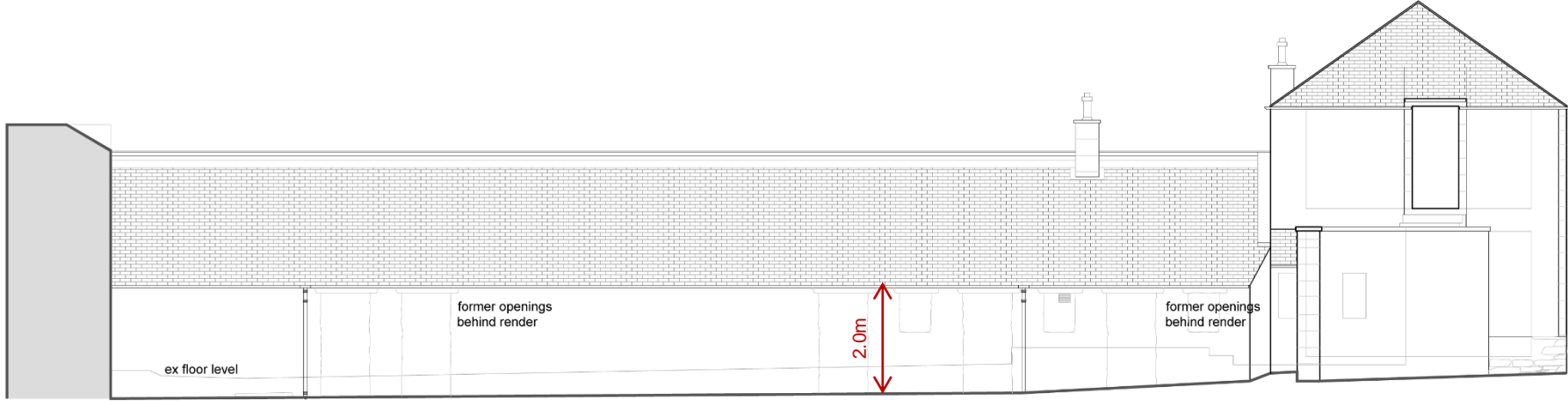


Rifle range interior looking south following roof strip, 2003

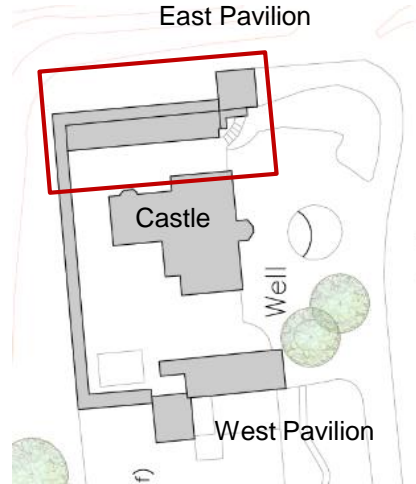


Rifle range interior looking north, 1997

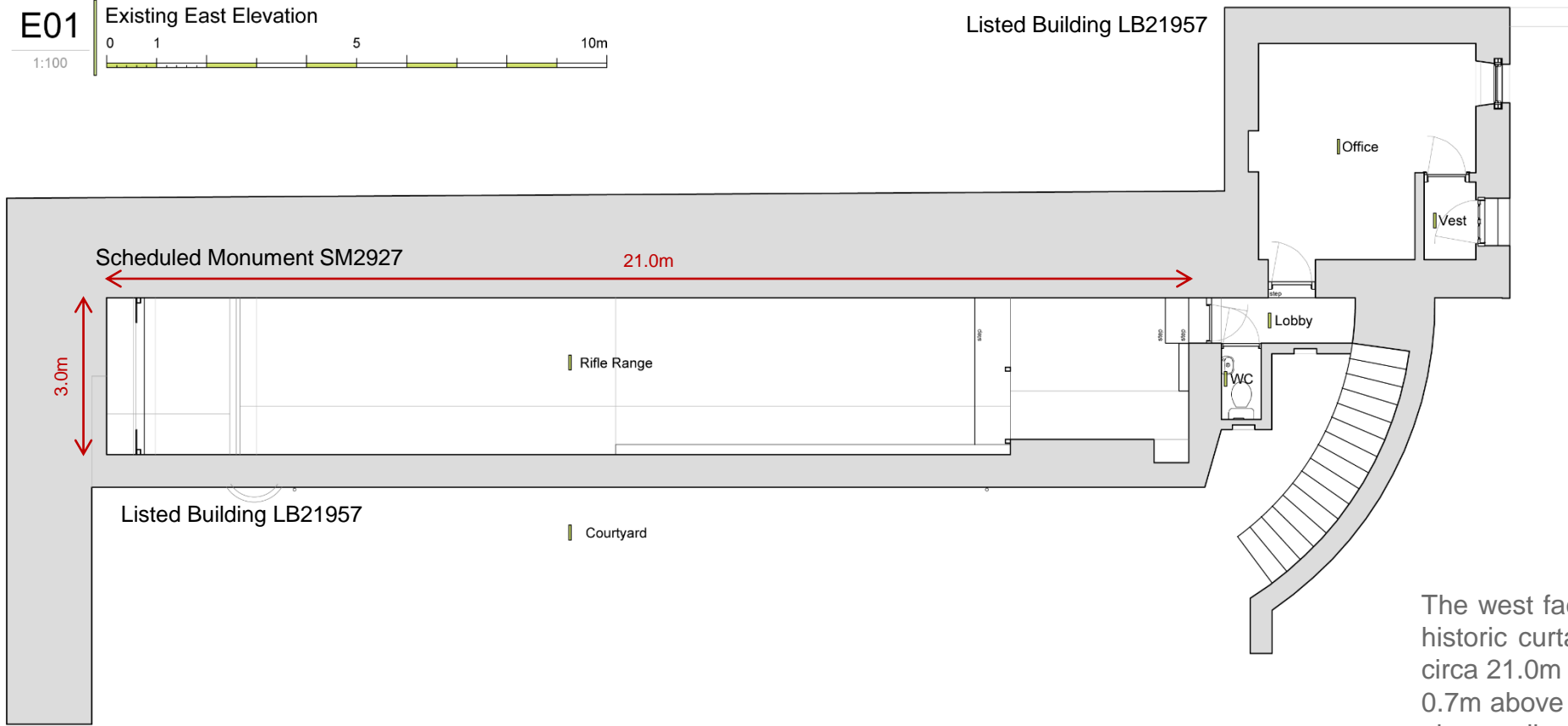




E01 Existing East Elevation
1:100



Key Plan



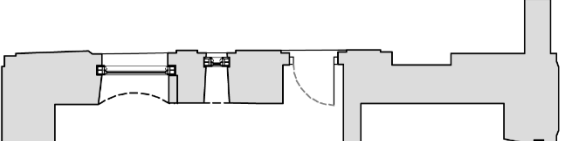
P01 Existing Ground Floor Plan
1:100



View from South West

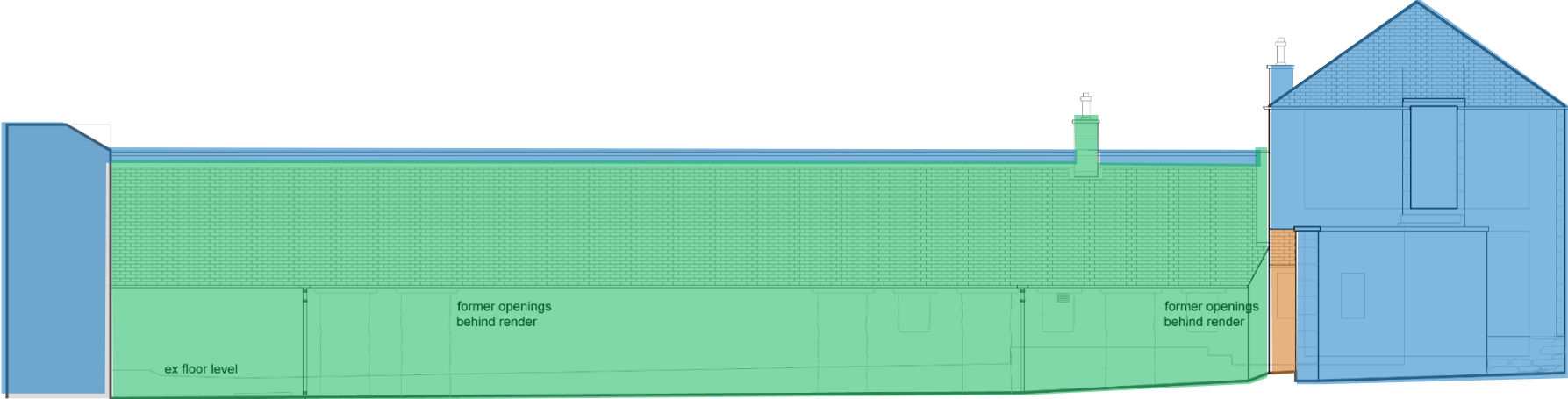
The west facing rifle range runs along the west face of the historic curtain wall. As a rifle range the current space is circa 21.0m x 3.0m with an internal floor level some 0.4m to 0.7m above adjacent ground level. The eaves is circa 2.0m above adjacent ground level.

Currently there is a single means of entry to the rifle range through the ground floor of the east pavilion via an internal toilet lobby.

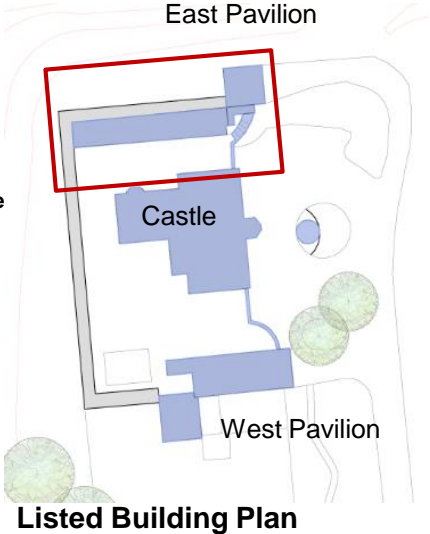


existing building

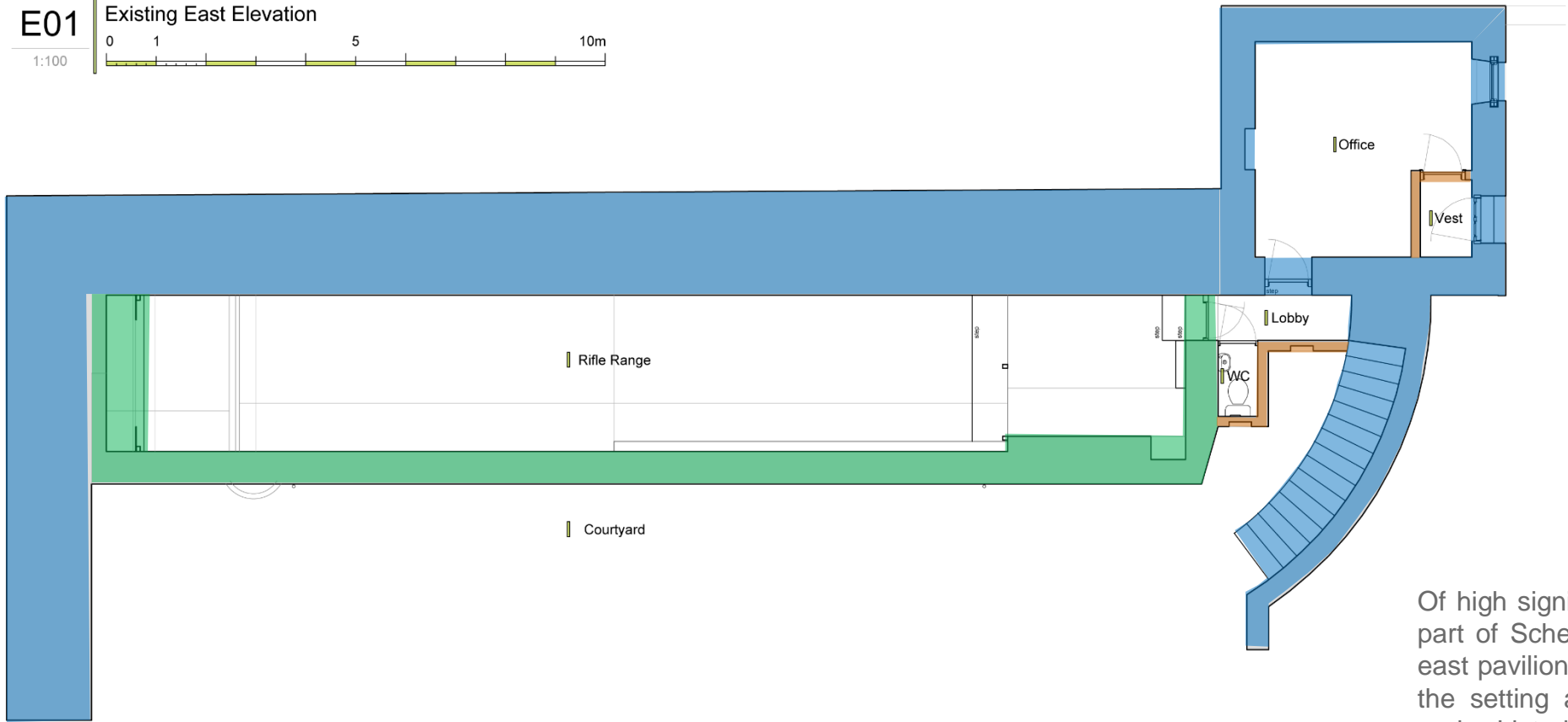
significance



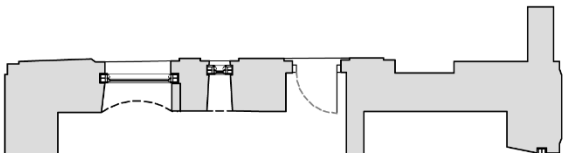
- High significance
- Medium significance
- Neutral significance
- Low significance



E01 Existing East Elevation



P01 Existing Ground Floor Plan

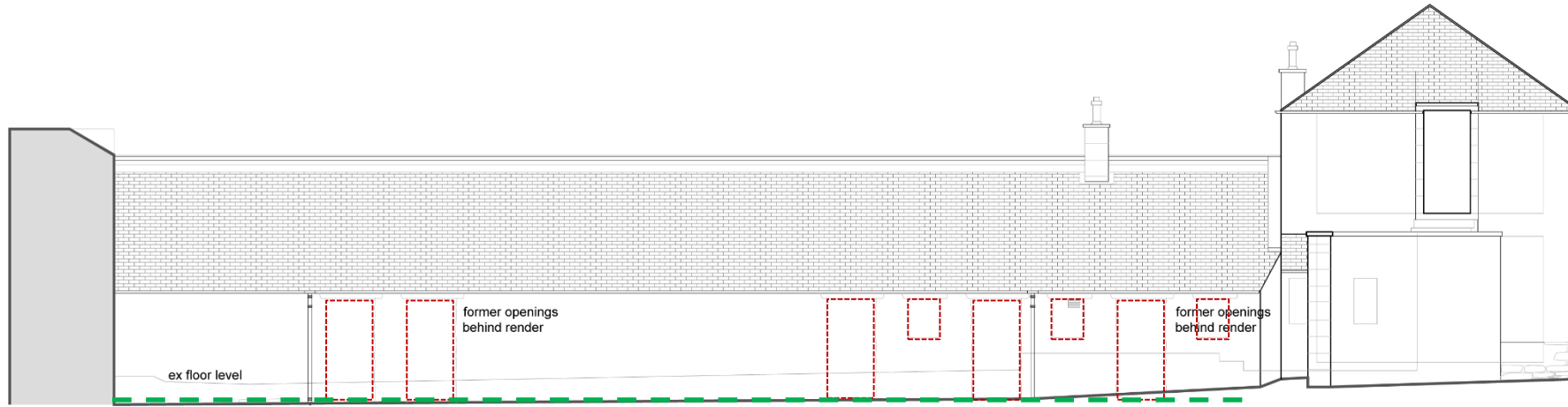


Of high significance are the medieval curtain walls forming part of Scheduled Monument SM2927 and the two storey east pavilion, and access stair as these are fundamental to the setting and symmetry with the main mansion house under Listed Building LB1957 and form part of the original 1750 Adam design.

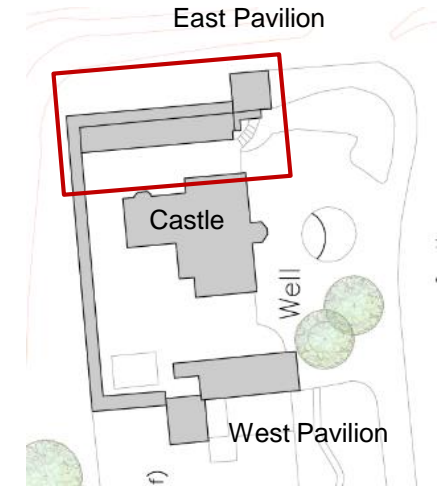
Of medium importance is the later addition of casemate stores / rifle range which have been altered over the centuries but retain much of the character and design of the original lean to extension.

Of neutral and lesser significant are the more recent additions of the vestibule at the east pavilion ground floor and the toilet and lobby linking with the rifle range.

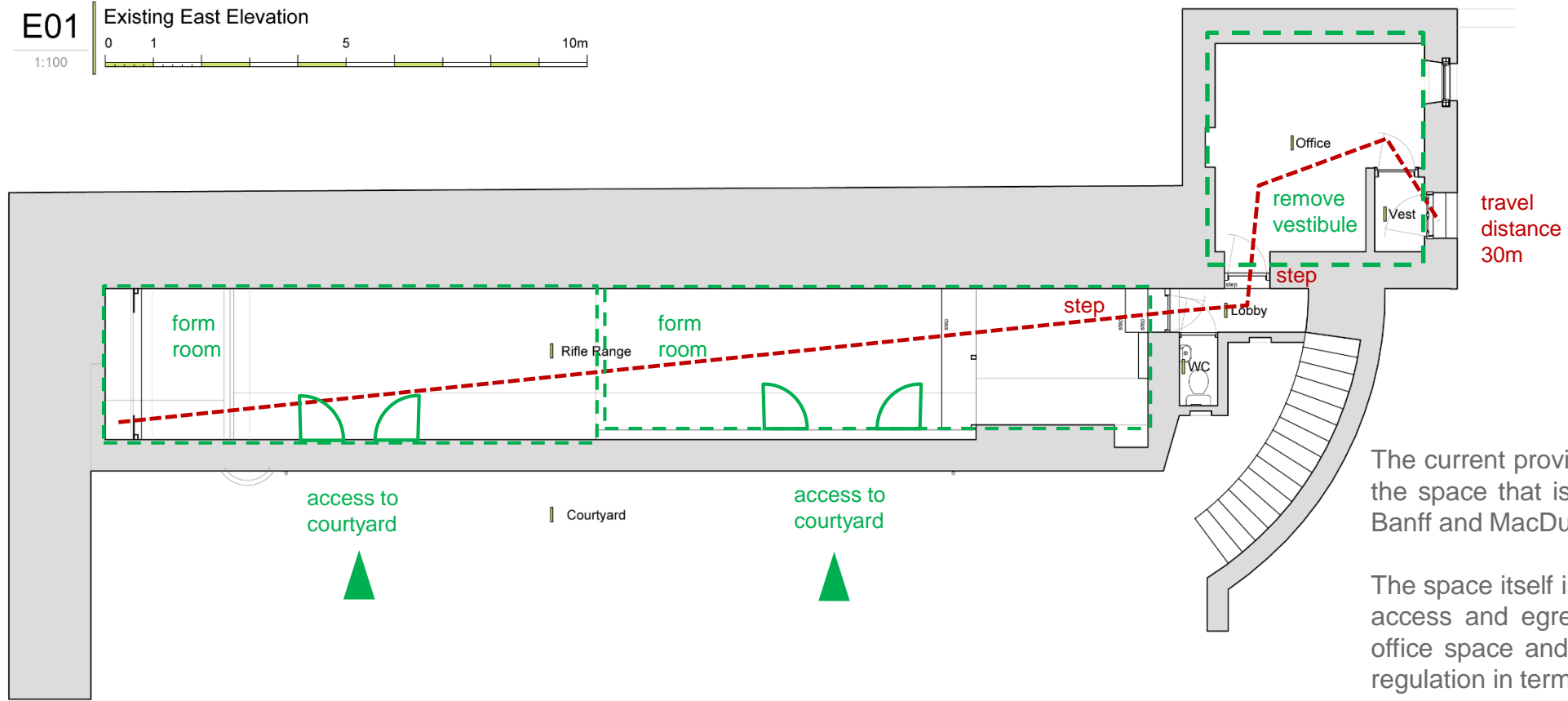




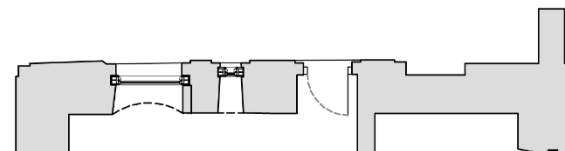
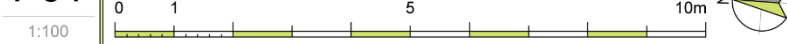
E01 Existing East Elevation



Key Plan



P01 Existing Ground Floor Plan



The current provision of a rifle range is a specialised use of the space that is no longer an option given the demise of Banff and MacDuff Rifle Club earlier this year.

The space itself is long and linear having only one means of access and egress at the southern end through a lobby, office space and vestibule. This is non compliant with fire regulation in terms of sequence and travel distance.

To improve the future viability of the space it is proposed to reintroduce access from the courtyard as both a way of bringing natural light into the room(s) and compliant access egress. This would also involve removal of the redundant concrete floor so that significant step access can be avoided.

Proposals will consider minimal impact on historic fabric by utilising former openings and also the use of rooflights to augment the provision of natural light and amenity.



PROPOSAL	AFFECT	IMPACT	MITIGATION
Introduce new doorways to west elevation of rifle range	External. Improved access is required to the former rifle range to improve escape access / egress and provide independent access to the new multi-purpose facility from the courtyard	Loss of historic fabric. Proposals involve forming new openings through the existing stone wall. This wall has a history of alteration and repair. Visual. Current elevation has no external openings	Locate new openings to the approximate location of the former 'casemate' doors to reduce impact on historic stonework. Limit apertures to doorways only.
Remove existing raised concrete floor and introduce replacement floor at a lower level	Internal. The current concrete floor is not original and was likely introduced when the 'casemates' barracks were converted to a rifle range in the early 20 th century. A replacement floor with a direct relationship to the courtyard is required as part of the change of use to the former rifle range	Loss of historic fabric. Proposals involve the removal of the current concrete floor and reducing levels closer to the courtyard level to facilitate access	Retention of the existing concrete floor is no longer required since the use as a rifle range is no longer relevant. The floor is unlikely to have been original, but has been in place since the formation of the rifle range. Range elements such as the steel bullet back and card targets are to be retained as evidence of the building's past
Raised door head detail	External. The current eaves level from the courtyard is insufficient to afford compliant external access. Proposals are to raise the structural height of the proposed door openings with a new structural lintel that breaks the existing eaves line	Loss of historic fabric. Alterations will impact the existing wall head and former structural lintels. Visual. Existing eaves is unbroken at the gutter line. The existing roof will require to be raised locally at both raised lintel heights	Raised lintel heights have been introduced at both the east and west pavilions at first floor levels as part of the 1996 external repairs and 2003 refurbishment. Interventions are to the courtyard elevation and will not have any impact on the principal elevation of the castle
Roof lights	External. To mitigate the requirement for further openings to the courtyard elevation rooflights are to be introduced to the mono pitch roof to provide additional daylight and ventilation	Loss of historic fabric. Introduction of rooflights will involve alteration to the roof structure and removal of sarking and slate	The section of roof was replaced during the 2003 refurbishment with new treated timber rafters, sarking and reclaimed Scottish slate. Introduction of rooflights will have minimal impact on historic fabric and affected slate can be set aside for re-use. Windows are to be conservation type to match elsewhere.
Thermal upgrade	The change of use from a rifle range (Sui Geneis) to class 4 business will require an improvement to the thermal performance. To mitigate any work to the scheduled monument SM2927 proposal are to insulate below the new floor slab, introduce insulation at ceiling level and to provide an internal insulated wall lining to the front wet wall	Minimal. Insulation can be introduced as part of the change of use to below the new floor and at ceiling tie level to the exiting roof. The proposed internal wall lining to the back of the east wall will give opportunity to run electrical and data cabling without impacting on the rear curtain wall covered under the scheduled monument	The new floor slab will be installed closer to the original floor level. An archaeological watching brief will be required in relation to any ground excavations. Ceiling insulation will be contained within the roof void and the proposed wall insulation will form part of an independent wall lining system that can be removed with minimal impact at a later date
Gutter alterations and additional downpipe	External. The introduction of the raised lintel to the proposed entrance doors will disrupt the existing gutter line and will necessitate the introduction of a new rain water pipe	Fabric integrity and visual. The unbroken gutter line will now be broken and the new rwp will require fixing to the front wall and the formation of a new soakaway	The placement of the new doorways are in relation to the 2no. exiting downpipes ensuring that these do not require relocation as part of the works. Proposals involve alteration to the exiting cast iron rain water goods with matching black units

Overall the impact of the proposals are considered low in terms of the setting and character of both the scheduled monument and main castle building. The courtyard area is screened from the principal view by the main house and flanking walls. There are no proposed work to the medieval curtain wall and the rifle range itself has underwent alteration and change throughout its life. Where there are interventions these are in keeping with the existing character and detailing of the subservient elements of the Georgian manor house and pavilions.



Replacement roof 1997

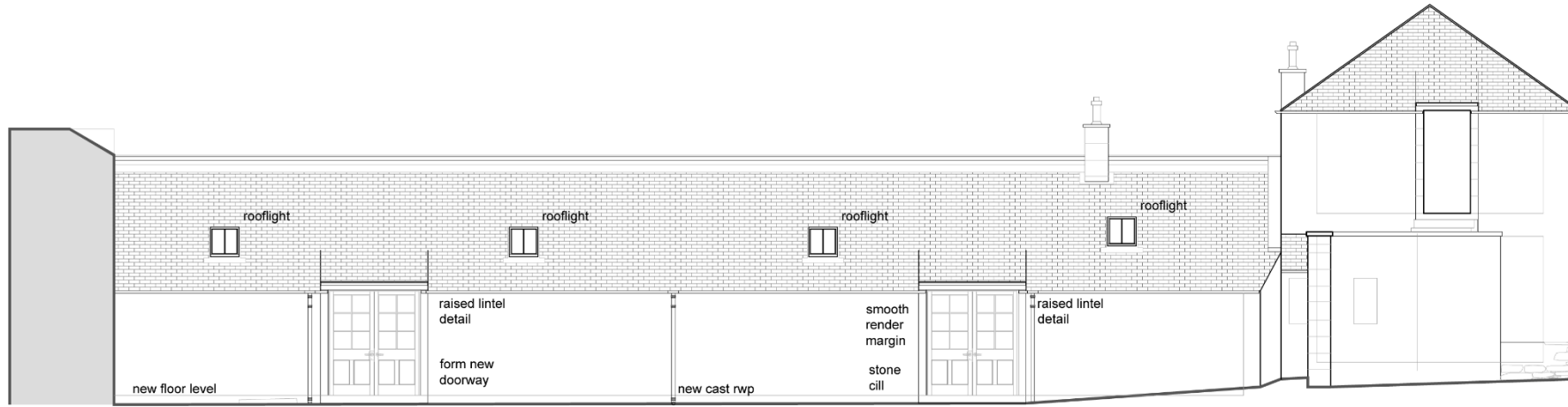


Cast iron rainwater goods

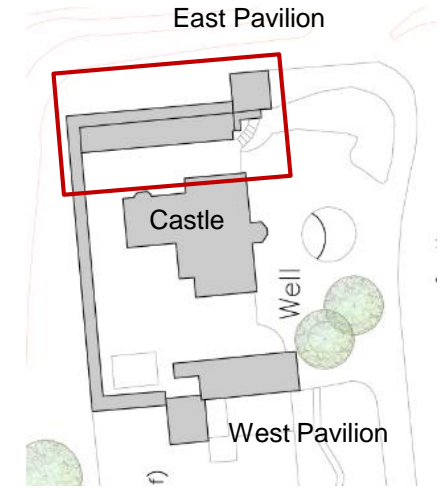


Existing double door

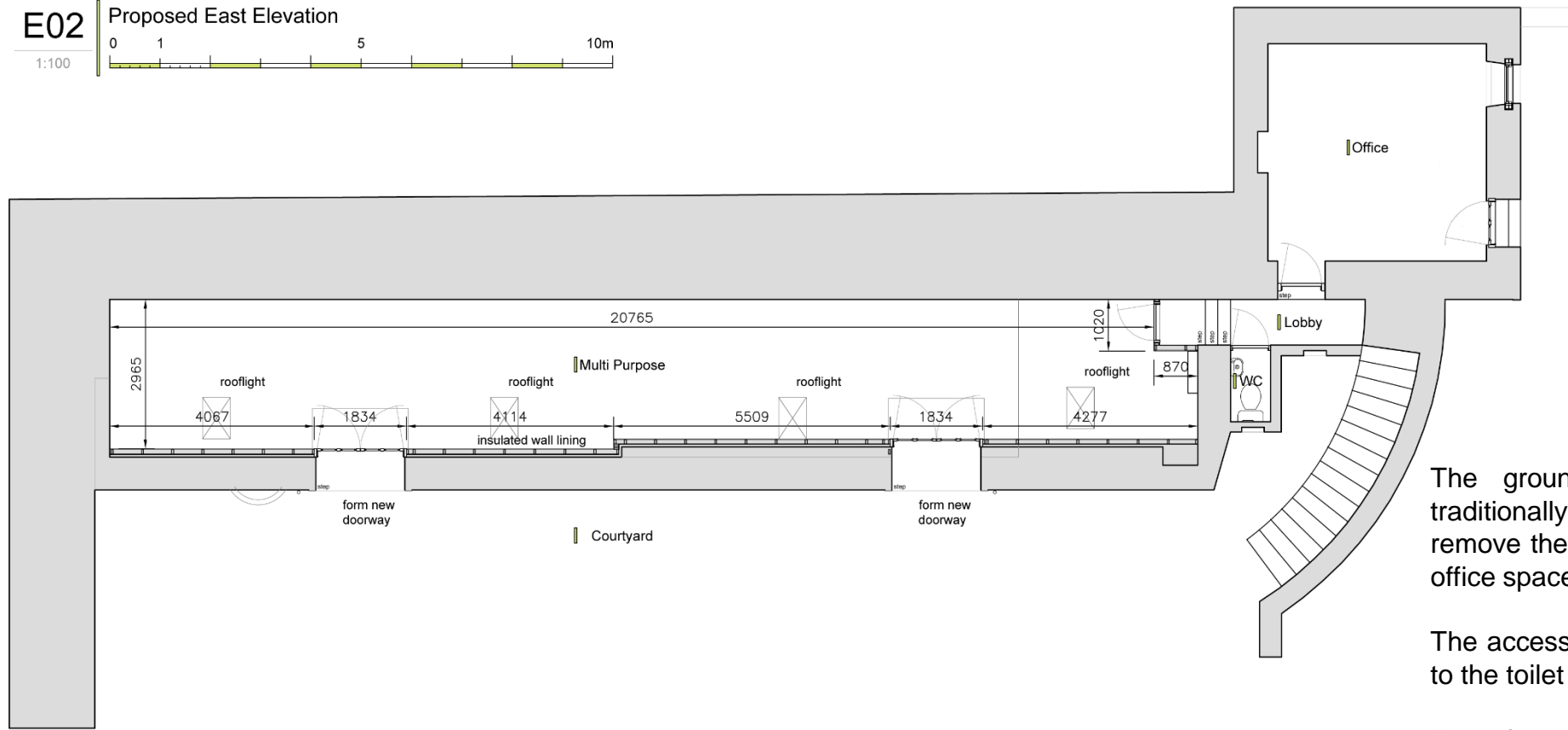




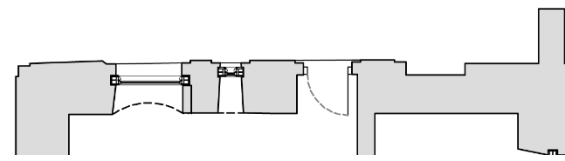
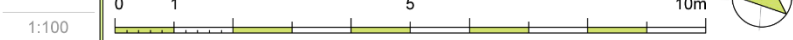
E02 Proposed East Elevation



Key Plan



P02 Proposed Ground Floor Plan



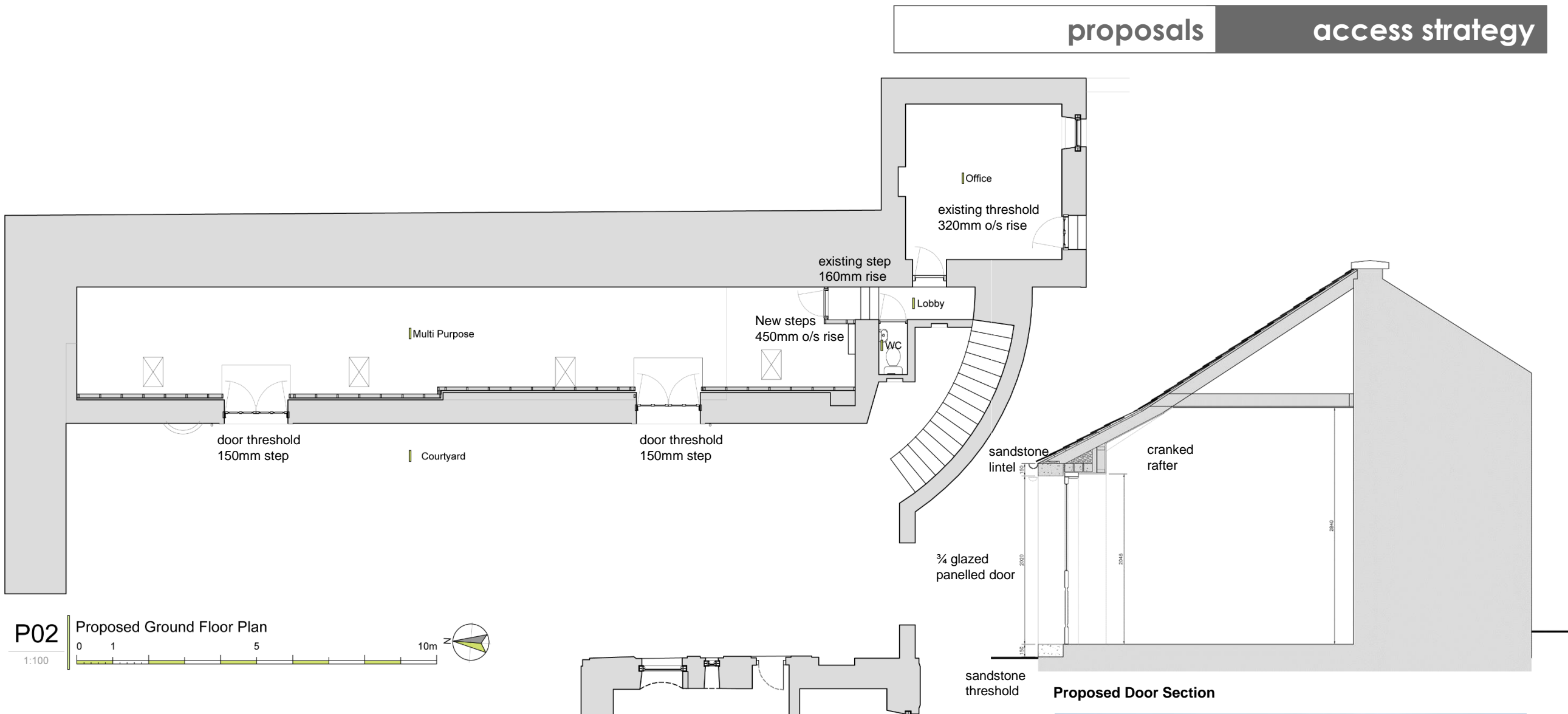
The ground floor of the east pavilion would have traditionally been a single room and the proposals are to remove the redundant vestibule and restore this to a single office space.

The access to the lobby is to be retained to ensure access to the toilet can be maintained between the various users.

The rifle range is to be stripped out of redundant fixtures and fittings and the historic raised concrete floor carefully broken out before laying a new insulated floor slab 150mm above adjacent ground level.

New openings are to be formed to the courtyard elevation with a raised lintel detail similar to that at first floor of the east and west pavilions fitted with $\frac{3}{4}$ height glazed panelled doors.

Conservation rooflights provide additional natural light and ventilation to the new multi purpose space.



P02

Proposed Ground Floor Plan

1:100



Level access is already provided to the main castle building and it would be impractical to provide it here at the rifle range due to the existing ground levels which slope towards the wet facing courtyard wall. There is concern that run off from the courtyard would breach the door thresholds if these were at ground level and so the proposed door detail lifts these 150mm off ground level via a stone threshold.

With a raised 2.0m lintel height matching the exiting first floor door to the East Pavilion compliant access is provided from the courtyard..

Internally it is difficult to navigate the connections between the ground floor of the East Pavilion and the former Rifle Range without changes in level but where they are needed these are compliant with current regulations for rise and going in public buildings.



Existing Raised Lintel Detail



Design Team

Client: **Banff Cattle Community Association**
Castle Street, Banff AB45 1DE

Architect: **GD Lodge Architects**
Crown House, 152 West Regent Street,
Glasgow, G2 2RQ

Reports & Technical Studies

A schedule of the technical reports which have been prepared and submitted in support of the application are noted below:

1. Archaeological Watching Brief and Recording 2003
2. Statement to support Change of Use by Client