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# Papdale Conservation Statement

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Orkney Islands Council  
Development & Marine  
Planning

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November 2013

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Development and Marine Planning would like to acknowledge the kind assistance of the following in creating this Conservation Statement, without whose help it would not have been possible: Orkney Library and Archive, Sarah Jane Gibbon, Willie Thomson, Jamie Macvie, Leslie Burgher, Graeme Christie, Gwyn Evans and Alastair Tait.

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# 1. Introduction

1.1 This document was prepared to inform the Papdale Development Brief (2013) created by Development and Marine Planning at Orkney Islands Council.

1.2 It builds on research done by Jamie Macvie, Planning Officer, in 2011. A desktop survey was made of material gathered from the Council's records, Orkney Library and Archives, papers from the collection of Willie Thomson, aerial photography from Orkney's Sites and Monuments Record, and historic maps from the National Library of Scotland. It aims to present an understanding of the history of the site, assess the historic significance and condition of the remaining buildings, and suggest guidelines for historically sensitive development.

1.3 Papdale House is a two-storey classical villa built around 1807 by Malcolm Laing (1763-1818)<sup>1</sup>, then MP for Orkney and Shetland. Surviving within the complex of associated buildings are a group of disused farm buildings adjacent to the house, Papdale Farmhouse, and a large walled garden running north-south along the Papdale Loan. All of these structures are listed at Category B (see appendices A & B). The site also includes a number of mature trees within its landscaping. The Papdale Development brief concerns housing allocations KW-M and KW-N of the Orkney Local Development Plan: this conservation statement deals with allocation KW-N, which includes Papdale House and the farm buildings, but not the walled garden. Papdale Farmhouse is now a private dwelling and is also not included within this study.

The site lies on the northern edge of a large complex of educational buildings, which includes Kirkwall Grammar School, Papdale Primary School and the Papdale Halls of Residence. The old and new sites of the Papdale Halls of Residence lie to the west and south of Papdale House respectively; Aurrida House, which provides accommodation for children with additional support needs, lies to the north-east of the farm. Beyond this is low-density suburban housing.

1.4 Papdale House and farm are currently in the ownership of Orkney Islands Council. The House was acquired in 1947 for use by the Education department as teachers' accommodation<sup>2</sup>, and the farm was bought in 1972 for housing development<sup>3</sup>. Papdale House is currently used for offices and specialist teaching spaces by Orkney Islands Council Education. One of the buildings is currently leased for use as a weight-training facility. The other buildings are generally disused: most appear to have been vacant for some time, having only been used for the storage of building materials and other miscellaneous objects, and are generally in a poor state of repair. Descriptions of each of the buildings are given in section 3.

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<sup>1</sup> (Fereday, Appendix IV: Necessary Identifications 2000)

<sup>2</sup> (Orkney County Council Education Committee 1970)

<sup>3</sup> Records held by Orkney Islands Council Estates

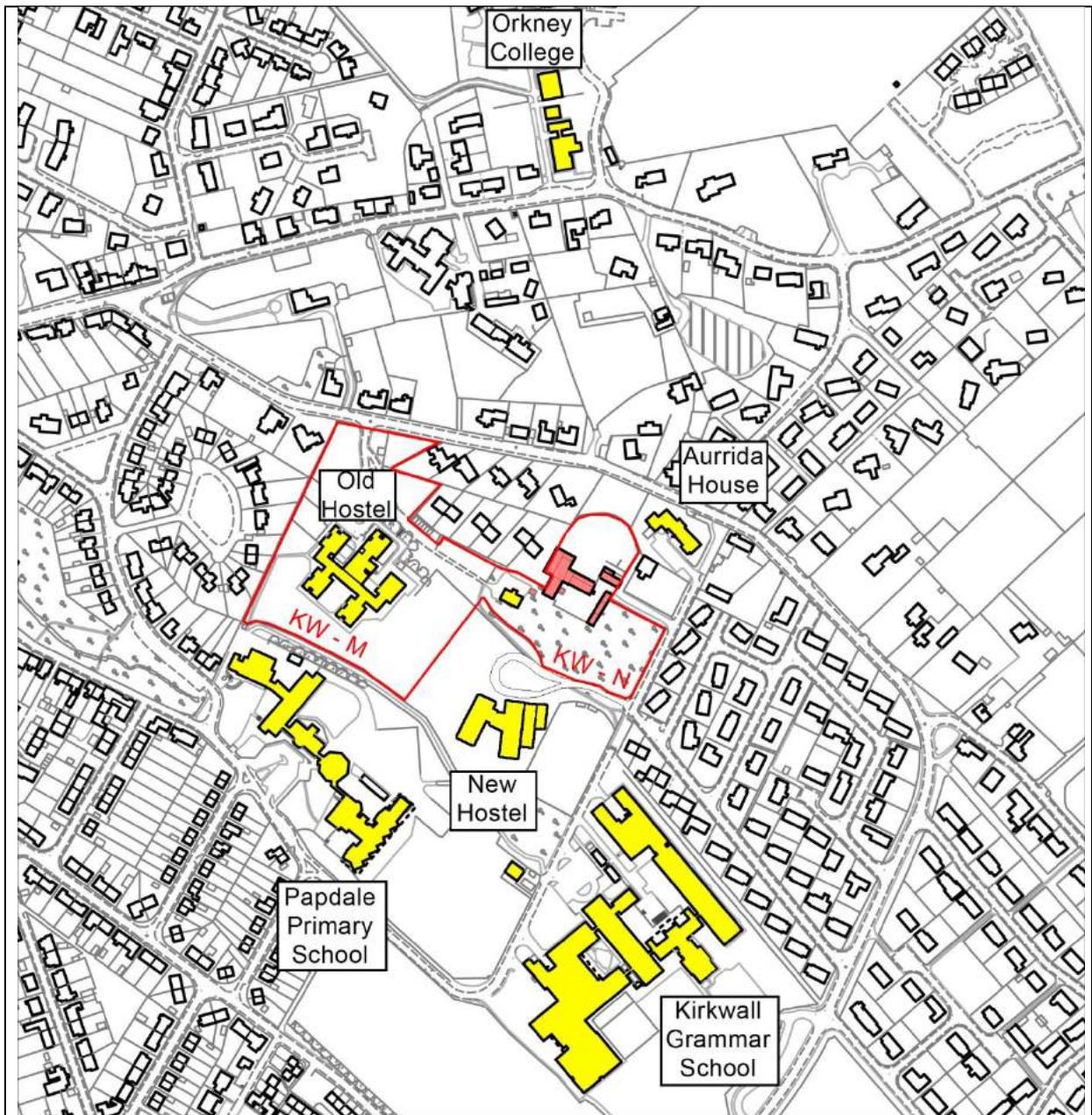


Figure 1:  
Map showing Papdale Farm (shaded red) and its surrounding context (educational buildings shaded yellow). Boundaries of housing allocations KW – M and KW – N shown in red.

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## 2. Site History

2.1 The Papdale estate was, until the mid-twentieth century, a private country house and working farm. The age of the estate is uncertain, but its name suggests it may have Pictish origins. The House and farm buildings which survive today date from the early nineteenth century or later.

2.2 The name “Papdale” probably comes from “papar”, believed to refer to Pictish monks, and “dalr”, the Old Norse for valley<sup>4</sup>. This name has been used historically to refer to all the land alongside the Papdale burn, which extends as far as modern-day Bridge Street (the original shoreline). This suggests that a religious foundation of some sort may have existed in the valley prior to the arrival of the Norse c. 800 AD, but no concrete evidence of where this might have been has been found.

Alternatively, the name might refer to the eleventh-century church of St. Olaf (now destroyed) which bordered the Papdale burn. This would place the early centre of activity in the valley in what is now the centre of Kirkwall, far from the site of the nineteenth-century house and farm.

During the early medieval period the Papdale estate appears to have been important to the Earls of Orkney, probably due to the quality of the farmland and its central location within the islands<sup>5</sup>. In 1486 Papdale formed one edge of the newly-incorporated Scottish royal burgh of Kirkwall, along with the neighbouring farm of Weyland<sup>6</sup>. In this period it already seems to be closely connected to Kirkwall, and was the location of the 1577 battle of Papdale, when an English raiding party were expelled by an assembled force of around three thousand islanders<sup>7</sup>. During the medieval period, and into the sixteenth century and possibly later, Papdale appears to have been linked to church estates, probably connected with St. Magnus Cathedral<sup>8</sup>. In 1614 Papdale and its mill were feued to Jon. Findlison of Dundie, and by 1624 it was occupied by the Craigie family<sup>9</sup>. In 1739 it appears to have been owned by the Baikie family<sup>10</sup>. Apart from being depicted on maps<sup>11</sup> and these sporadic records, little is recorded of life at Papdale at this time, although the early existence of the mill suggests a valuable estate.

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<sup>4</sup> (Papar Project 2005)

<sup>5</sup> (Papar Project 2005)

<sup>6</sup> (Royal Charter of King James III of Scotland 1952)

<sup>7</sup> (Thomson 2008, 246)

<sup>8</sup> (Papar Project 2005)

<sup>9</sup> (Hossack 1900, 394) & (Unknown n.d.)

<sup>10</sup> (Papar Project 2005)

<sup>11</sup> Blaeu 1654, Mackenzie 1750, Anderson 1769 (Papar Project 2005). Note that Murdoch Mackenzie’s map, the most accurate depiction of pre-Improvement Orkney, shows Papdale as (natural) pasture, which supports the assumption that the estate was fertile and profitable during the medieval period and earlier.

2.3 In 1783 Papdale was acquired by Robert Laing, a merchant and prominent figure in the civic life of the burgh<sup>12</sup>. Upon his death in 1803 the estate passed to his son Malcolm, a lawyer and historian, who constructed Papdale House in a Palladian style around 1807<sup>13</sup>. The House was originally built with at least one wing extending to the east, presumably for servants, with another added to the north façade of this either at the same time or shortly afterwards. Malcolm Laing developed a great reputation as an agricultural Improver, and the development of the modern farm buildings at Papdale was almost certainly started by him. On Malcolm's death in 1818 Papdale passed to his brother Samuel Laing. Samuel was, like his brother and father, an important civic figure in Orkney during his time in Kirkwall. He shared his brother Malcolm's passion for agricultural Improvement, and appears to have continued the development of the Papdale estate. The documentary research undertaken for this study has not provided any firm evidence of when the farm buildings were built, other than between 1808 (or 1814)<sup>14</sup> and 1832 (see map below), but given that Samuel Laing credits Malcolm with improving Papdale<sup>15</sup>, it seems reasonable to assume that most or all of the courtyard buildings were put up before Samuel inherited the estate in 1818. This would give a probable date for the completion of the farm between 1814 and 1818. Continuing Improvement to the estate certainly did take place under Samuel Laing<sup>16</sup>, but it seems unlikely that the vast increase in the farm's profitability under Samuel would have been possible if extensive improvements to infrastructure, such as constructing expensive new buildings, were not already completed. Timber lintels which are apparently original are exposed in Building 2; subjecting samples from these to dendrochronology or carbon dating tests may be able to provide more concrete evidence for their age.

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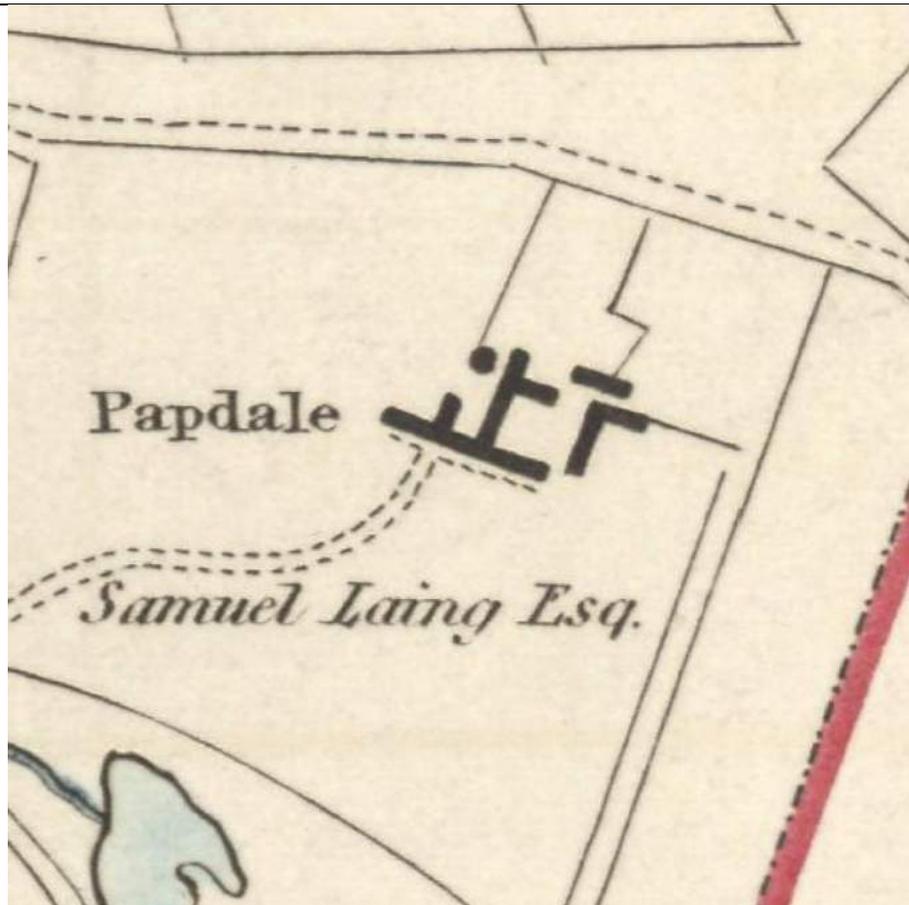
<sup>12</sup> (Hossack 1900, 394)

<sup>13</sup> (Laing 2000, 178) & (Fereday, Appendix IV: Necessary Identifications 2000)

<sup>14</sup> Shirreff (1814, 40) states that in 1808 there were no farms in Orkney arranged around a courtyard, which he describes as "a measure which would certainly be highly useful in that climate". As he elsewhere describes Malcolm Laing's experiments with Merino sheep in 1813, it is possible that the current farm at Papdale had not been completed by the publication date in 1814.

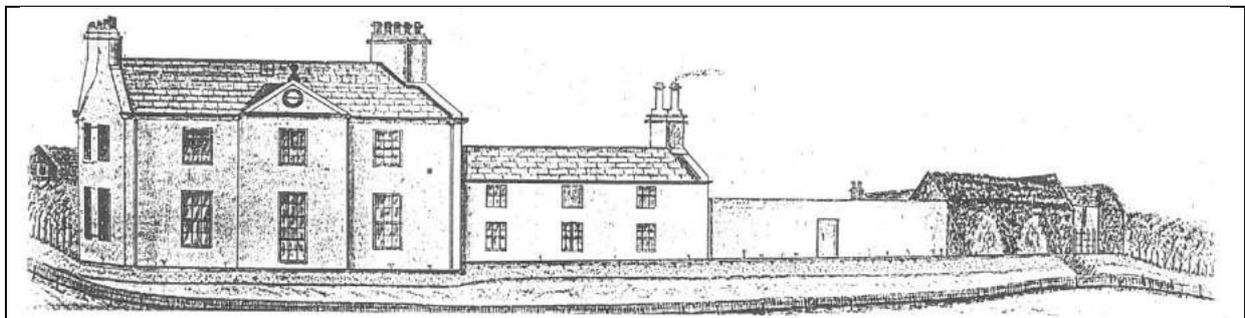
<sup>15</sup> See (Laing 2000, 38-40)

<sup>16</sup> The estate accounts show that the yearly value of Papdale Farm increased from £250 in 1829 to £350 in 1830, by far the largest increase of all Samuel Laing's income sources at this time (Unknown n.d.)



*Figure 2:  
Papdale shown on the Great Reform Act plan of Kirkwall Burgh 1832.  
Image courtesy of the National Library of Scotland.*

Following the collapse of the kelp industry, Samuel left Kirkwall in 1834 for a prolonged visit to Norway, before returning to Papdale to focus on academia, including the first English translation of the *Heimskringla* saga<sup>17</sup>. In 1852 Papdale was sold and Samuel moved to Edinburgh. For most of the rest of the twentieth century the estate was owned by the Dundas family, after whom the feus on Dundas Crescent were named<sup>18</sup>.



<sup>17</sup> (Marwick 1967)

<sup>18</sup> (Hossack 1900, 400)

Figure 3:  
 Papdale House and steadings as shown in perspective on the Dundas Plan (1852-72).  
 Image courtesy of W. Thomson.

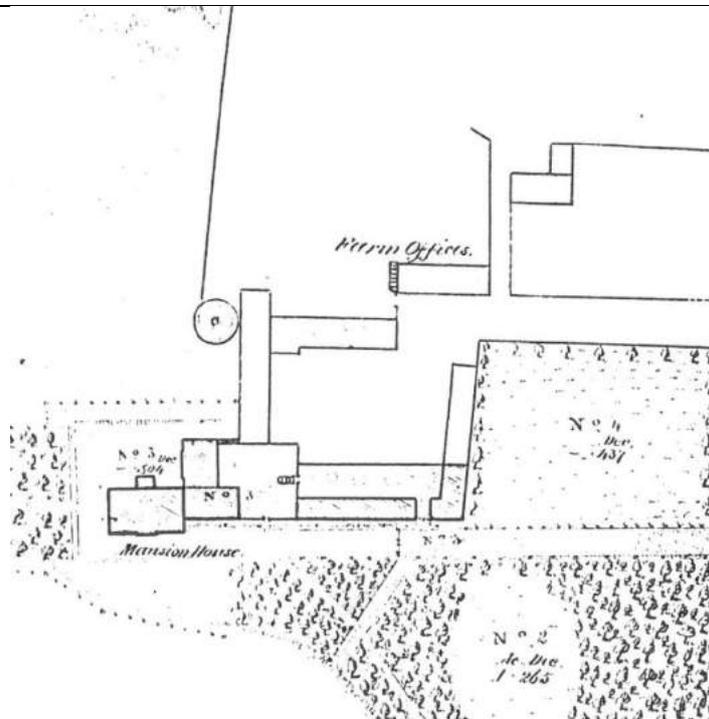


Figure 4:  
 Papdale House and steadings as shown in plan on the Dundas Plan (1852-72).  
 Image courtesy of W. Thomson.

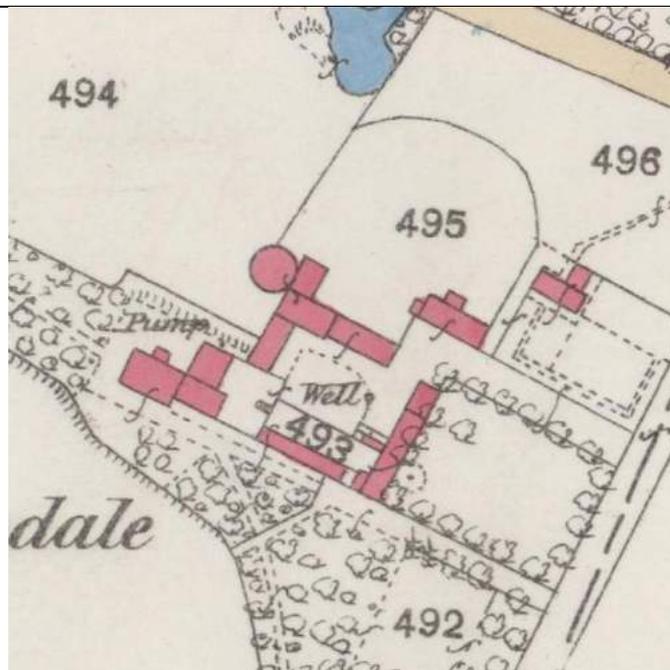


Figure 5:  
 Papdale as shown on the Ordnance Survey 1:25 inch 1<sup>st</sup> edition map (published 1882).

*Image courtesy of the National Library of Scotland.*



*Figure 6:  
Papdale as shown on the Ordnance Survey 1:25 inch 2nd edition map  
(published 1902).*

*Image courtesy of the National Library of Scotland.*

2.4 There appears to have been little change to the fabric of Papdale House and farm between its sale by Samuel Laing and the early twentieth century. In 1920 the house and outbuildings (but possibly not the farm) were sold by Alice Louisa Dundas, widow of John Dundas, to John Low the solicitor<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> *Register of Sasines for Orkney and Zetland 1920*, item 429



*Figure 7:  
Aerial photograph from 1950 showing Papdale.  
Image courtesy of the Orkney Sites and Monuments Record.*

2.5 Following Papdale House's acquisition by the Council in 1947, the house, including the servants' quarters, were converted into three flats<sup>20</sup>. This required a great deal of alteration and addition to the configuration of the house to achieve, including building a castellated porch on the south side of the house, converting the north porch into a bathroom and adding a garage and sheds to the north façade of the building.

2.6 During the 1960s, the Council, which was at that point keen to demolish Papdale House, was forced by a high-profile public campaign to instead restore it as a single dwelling from 1969-73. The restoration of the main body of the house was, however, accompanied by the removal of many of the other structures on site, including the servants' quarters (referred to as the "old wing" at the time<sup>21</sup>) and the south range of steadings. Once restored, the house was occupied as a family home by Willie Thomson, Rector of Kirkwall Grammar School, and his family, from 1973 until his retirement in 1991<sup>22</sup>. The following year the house was converted to offices and teaching facilities, in which use it remains<sup>23</sup>.

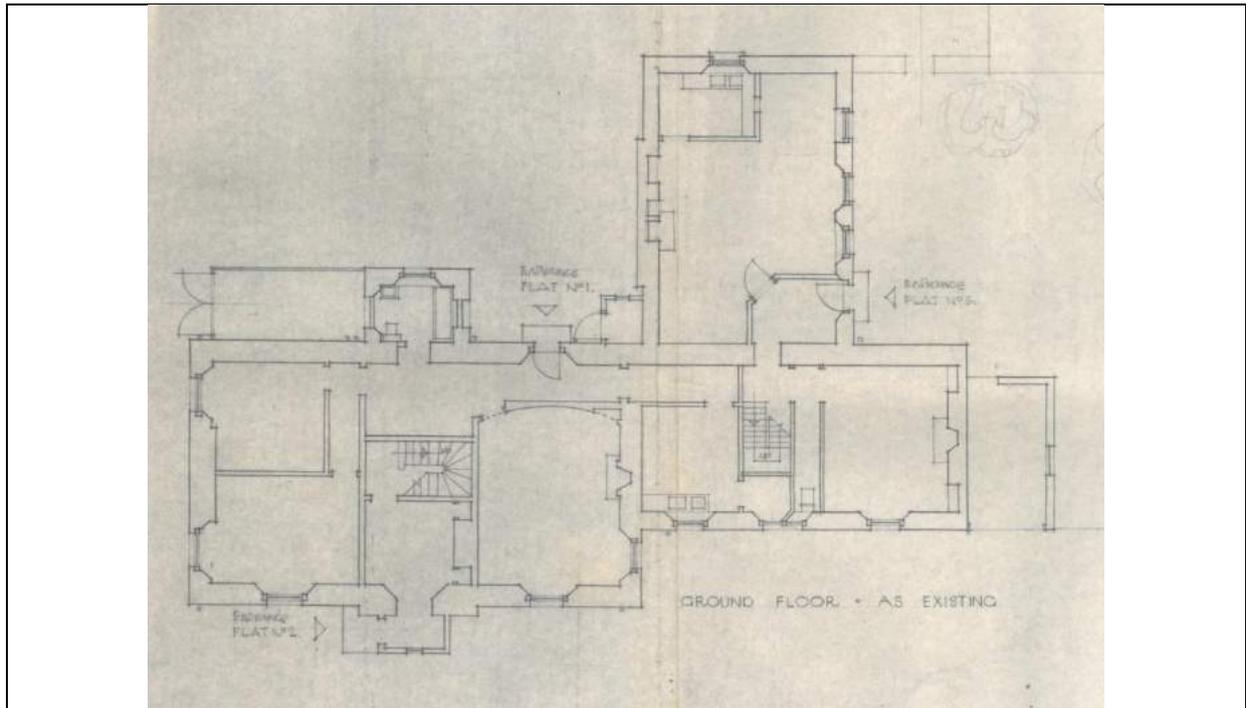
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<sup>20</sup> (Orkney County Council Education Committee 1970)

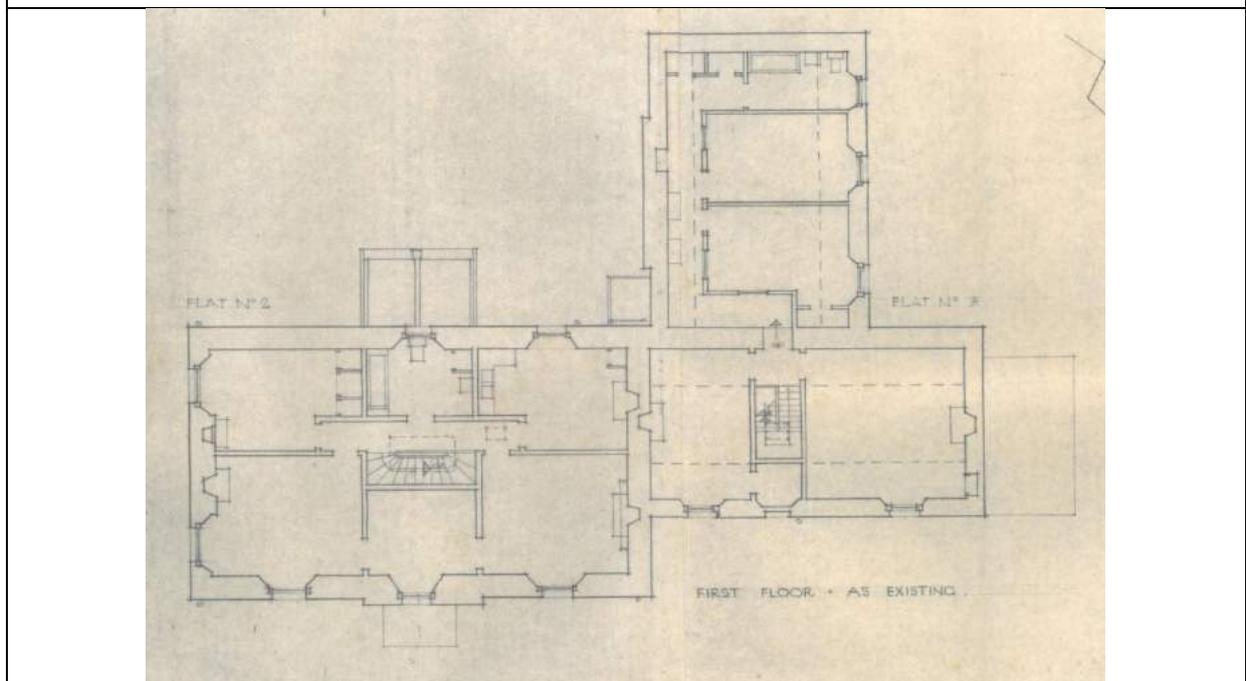
<sup>21</sup> (Orkney County Council Education Committee 1970)

<sup>22</sup> (W. Thomson, pers.comm.)

<sup>23</sup> Records held by Orkney Islands Council Estates



*Figure 8:*  
*Plan of the ground floor of Papdale House prior to its 1970s restoration, showing the servants' quarters adjoining the main house.*  
*Image courtesy of W. Thomson.*



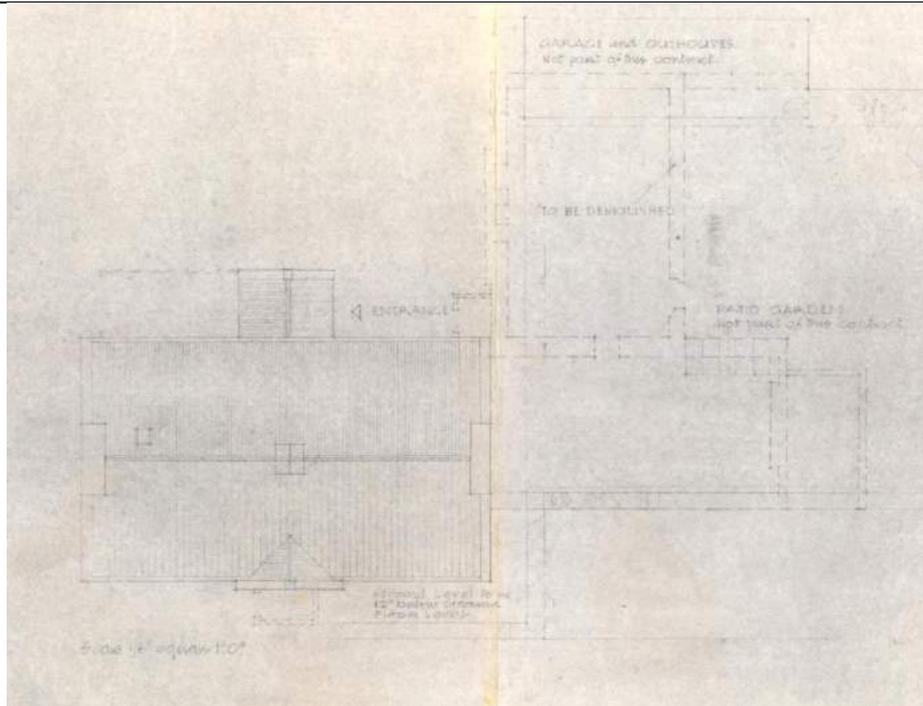
*Figure 9:*  
*Plan of the first floor of Papdale House prior to its 1970s restoration, showing the servants' quarters adjoining the main house.*  
*Image courtesy of W. Thomson.*



*Figure 10:  
Aerial photograph from 1963 showing Papdale.  
Image courtesy of the Orkney Sites and Monuments Record.*



*Figure 11:  
Papdale House in the late 1960s, prior to its restoration. Note the servants' wing and castellated south porch.  
Image courtesy of Orkney Library and Archive, ref. D31/29/3.*



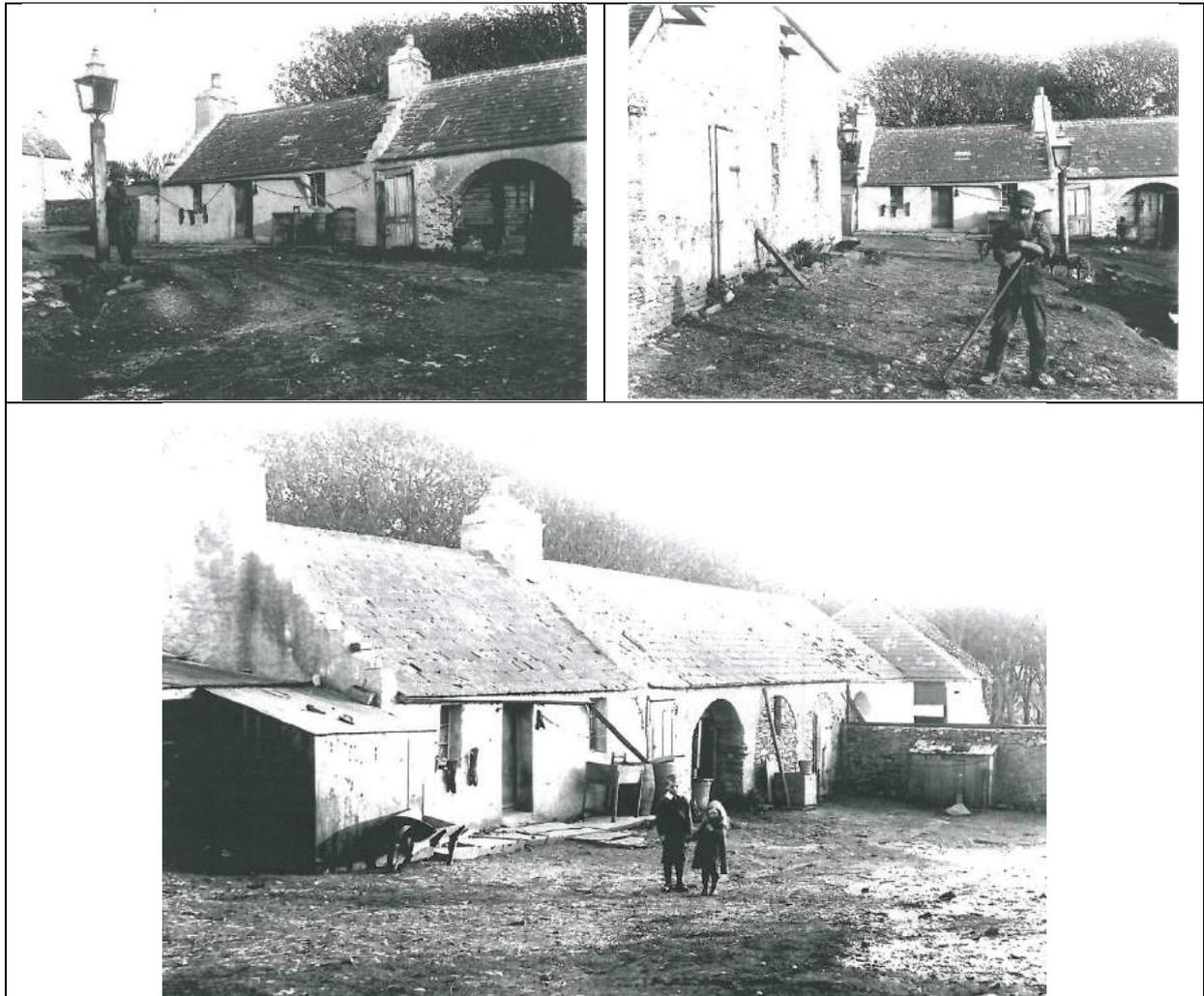
*Figure 12:  
Plan showing the extent of demolitions which accompanied the restoration of Papdale House in the early 1970s. Note the removal of the servants' quarters. Image courtesy of W. Thomson.*



*Figure 13:  
The opening of Papdale House in 1973 after its restoration. Image courtesy of W. Thomson.*

2.7 The farm was altered during the late nineteenth to early twentieth century through the addition of buildings 3 and 7, and the refurbishment of building 2. During

the mid-twentieth century Papdale Farm underwent extensive change. Prior to the farm coming into Council ownership in 1973, an extensive programme of modernisation led to the destruction of many of the historic buildings and their replacement with modern barns (buildings 1, 5 & 8-13). These are described in detail in Chapter 3 (Building Descriptions). Following the development of the farmland for housing and school facilities the farm buildings became redundant (apart from occasional use for storage or as a weight-lifting gym), and many fell into disrepair. They are currently gated and locked.



*Figure 14:  
Papdale Farm in operation during the late nineteenth century.  
Photographer: Tom Kent  
Images courtesy of Orkney Library and Archive, Tom Kent collection.*

### 3. Building Descriptions

Having been relatively recently restored, and being in full-time use by Orkney Islands Council, Papdale House is in a fair state of repair. The associated farm buildings, however, are in a poor condition, ranging from dilapidated to ruinous. External areas are overgrown with vegetation and littered with debris, which appears to have not been cleared for some considerable time.

The surveys of individual buildings below use the numbering system created by Jamie Macvie for his condition survey in 2011. Building ages are based primarily on evidence from historical maps and aerial photographs (see bibliography for references). Descriptions are based on visual surveys of the buildings in January and August 2013. Assessments are indicative, and should not be taken as definitive.

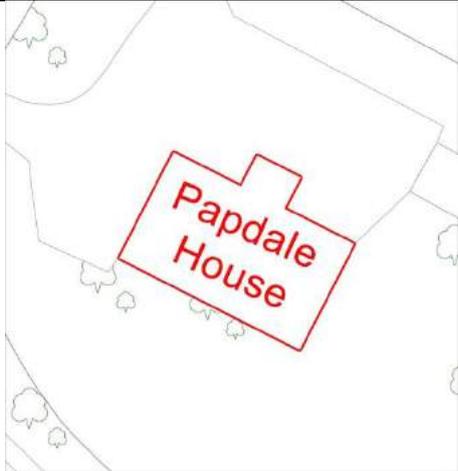


*Figure 15:*

*Map of Papdale House and Farm with buildings labelled.*

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### 3.1 Papdale House

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	Age:	Built c.1807
	Roof:	Scottish Slate
	Walls:	Local stone, rendered with a mix of cement and lime, dry dashed.
	Windows and Doors:	Sash-and-case window frames painted white, many of which have modern internal secondary glazing, installed in 2002 (OIC Estates records). Brick-built south porch converted to window during 1970-3 restoration, building now accessed via north porch.
	Rainwater goods:	Black cast iron
	Interior:	Many original features remain, sympathetically refurbished as modern offices.
	General condition:	Fair – some maintenance issues (damaged rainwater goods, dampness) need to be addressed. Reinforcement bars in concrete around openings in porch are rusting and visible. Evidence of historic settlement, which appears to have stopped.



*Figure 16:  
South façade of Papdale House (looking N)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 17:  
North façade of Papdale House, with entrance porch (looking S)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 18:  
Inside the drawing room in Papdale House, with its distinctive curved wall and doors  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

### 3.2 Building 1

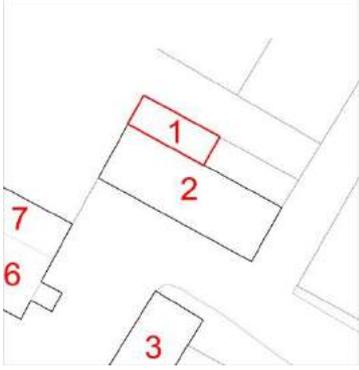
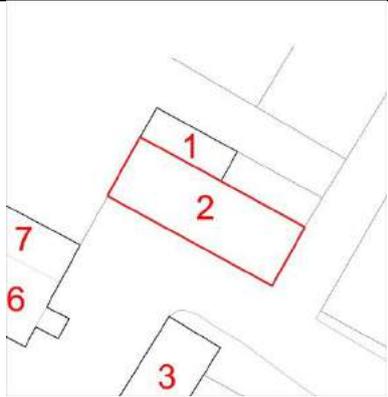
 <p>Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Orkney Islands Council 100021621. For reference purposes only. 2013</p>	General description:	Monopitch single-storey lean-to outbuilding on north wall of Building 2.
	Age:	Post 1980
	Roof:	Absent, rafters remain.
	Walls:	Concrete block
	Windows and Doors:	Absent
	Rainwater goods:	Absent
	Interior:	No noteworthy features
	General condition:	Ruinous



Figure 19:  
 Building 1 seen from boundary of Papdale Farmhouse (looking W)  
 Photo: Tom Hunter

### 3.3 Building 2

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	Age:	Earlier than 1832, believed part of Malcolm & Samuel Laing's Improved farm
	Roof:	Double pitched, with traditional sandstone tiles. Fireclay ridge & cast concrete skews.
	Walls:	Stone, render in poor condition.
	Windows and Doors:	Ground floor door blocked. Upper floor door modern. Windows mostly either blocked up or fitted with steel mesh grilles.
	Rainwater goods:	Cast iron.
	Interior:	Currently in use as a weight-training gym. Timber lintels exposed internally, apparently original. Some pieces of ironwork still survive attached to later timber work.
	General condition:	Wind- and water-tight, main building appears structurally sound. Concrete access stair collapsing.



*Figure 20:  
Building 2 viewed from entrance to farm (looking N)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

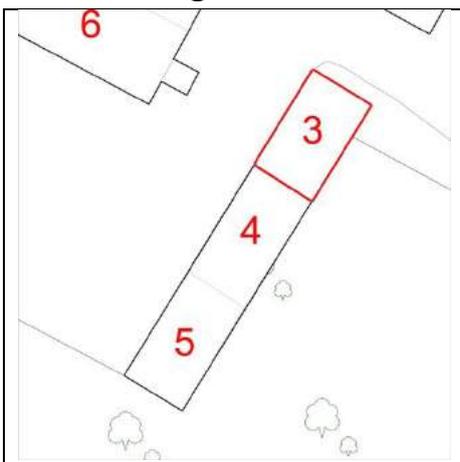


*Figure 21:  
Building 2 viewed from waste ground to N (looking S)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 22:  
Ground floor interior of Building 2  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

### 3.4 Building 3

	<b>General description:</b>	Single-storey farm building, part of a group of similar (with buildings 4 & 5) along east side of the courtyard.
	<b>Age:</b>	Built between mid-C19th and 1950.
	<b>Roof:</b>	Double pitched, with traditional sandstone tiles. Cast concrete skews.
	<b>Walls:</b>	Stone, thin smooth cement render.
<i>Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Orkney Islands Council 100021621. For reference purposes only. 2013</i>	<b>Windows and Doors:</b>	Sliding agricultural door, locked. Window in gable, covered with steel mesh grille.
	<b>Rainwater goods:</b>	Absent.
	<b>Interior:</b>	Not seen.
	<b>General condition:</b>	Derelict. Some holes in roof, cracks in walls. Structural integrity of west wall affected by tree growth in building 4.

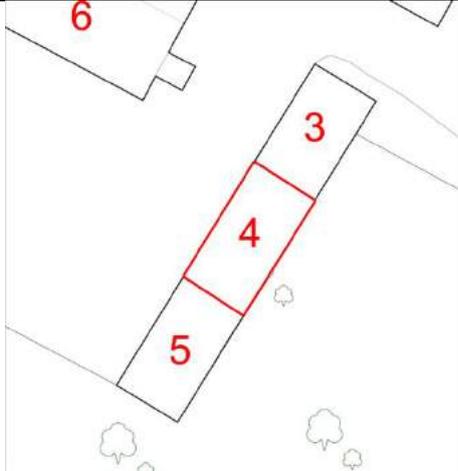


*Figure 23:  
Building 3 from the north side of Building 7 (looking S)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 24:  
Building 3 from the entrance track to the farm (looking W)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

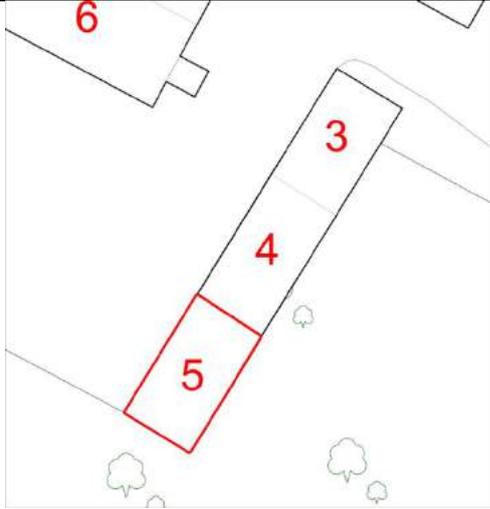
### 3.5 Building 4

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	Age:	Earlier than 1832, believed part of Malcolm & Samuel Laing's Improved farm.
	Roof:	Double pitched, corrugated metal sheeting. Crowstepped gable on south end.
	Walls:	Exposed stonework, originally harled.
	Windows and Doors:	Blocked/boarded up.
	Rainwater goods:	Absent
	Interior:	Not seen.
	General condition:	Ruinous, tree growing from west wall.



*Figure 25:*  
*Building 4 seen from E side of Building 6 (looking SE)*  
*Photo: Tom Hunter*

### 3.6 Building 5

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	Age:	Twentieth century, probably built at some point before 1963.
	Roof:	Monopitch, corrugated sheet metal. Some holes caused by collapsing masonry from Building 4.
	Walls:	Concrete block, incorporating some reclaimed stonework. Concrete block quoins indicate modern construction.
	Windows and Doors:	Modern sliding agricultural door in poor condition.
	Rainwater goods:	Absent
	Interior:	Some debris, no notable features.
	General condition:	Derelict, wall structure appears intact.

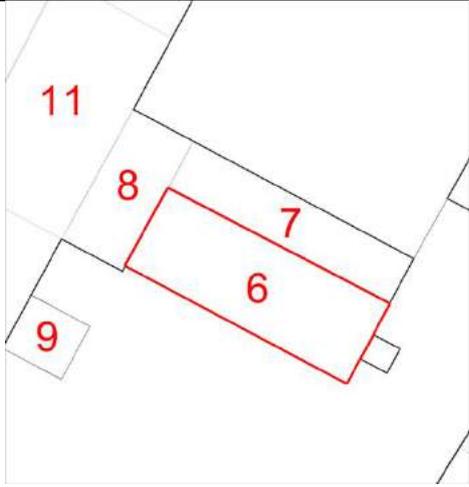


*Figure 26:  
Building 5 from courtyard (looking SE)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 27:  
Interior of Building 5  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

### 3.7 Building 6

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	Age:	Earlier than 1832, believed part of Malcolm & Samuel Laing's Improved farm.
	Roof:	Double pitched with traditional sandstone tiles. Stone ridges. Crowstepped west gable; east gable has cast concrete skewes.
	Walls:	Exposed stone.
	Windows and Doors:	Window openings boarded up, timber lintels remain. Timber doors, appear to be modern replacements. Currently accessed via Building 8.
	Rainwater goods:	Some cast-iron rhones remaining.
	Interior:	Ground floor: Floor appears to be sandstone cobbles covered with concrete, with an integral drainage channel. Timber stall partitions survive with some iron fittings. Timber staircase. Upper floor: Timber floorboards. Doocot formed from brickwork set into walls.
	General condition:	Appears wind- and water-tight, although structural integrity of walls/roof/floor uncertain.



*Figure 28:  
Building 6 (left-hand structure) with Building 7 (lean-to on right hand side) adjoining.  
Seen from entrance to farm (looking W).  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 29:  
Building 6 from courtyard (looking N)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

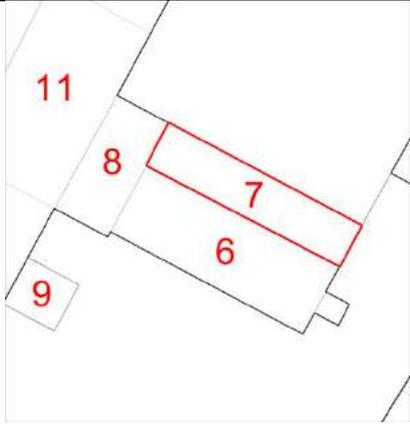


*Figure 30:  
Ground floor interior of Building 6, with cattle stalls on left hand side and ladder to  
upper floor at rear  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 31:  
Doo cot built into walls on upper floor of Building 6  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

### 3.8 Building 7

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	Age:	Built between 1880 and 1950.
	Roof:	Monopitch with traditional sandstone tiles. Cast skews in poor condition on both gables. Some leaks have caused rafters to rot and collapse locally.
	Walls:	Stone, larger blocks than Building 6.
	Windows and Doors:	Boarded up.
	Rainwater goods:	Absent.
	Interior:	Flagstone floor with drainage channel. Mid-twentieth century stall partitions.
	General condition:	Some damage to roof, walls appear structurally intact.



*Figure 32:  
Building 6 (left-hand structure) with Building 7 (lean-to on right hand side) adjoining. Seen from entrance to farm (looking W).  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

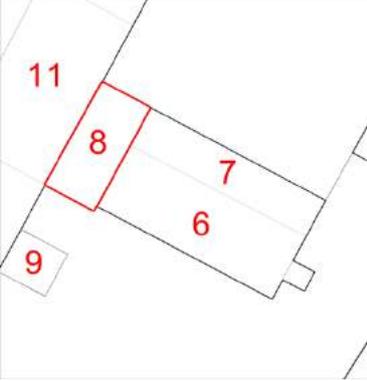


*Figure 33:  
Part of Building 7, seen from top of staircase to upper floor of Building 2 (looking W)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 34:  
Interior of Building 7. Note staining of timber by water penetration.  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

### 3.9 Building 8

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	Age:	Built between mid-C19th and 1950.
	Roof:	Monopitch, corrugated metal sheet.
	Walls:	Part reclaimed stone, part concrete block.
	Windows and Doors:	Vehicle access, boarded up.
	Rainwater goods:	Absent on gables, forms valley gutter with Building 11.
	Interior:	Debris, no noteworthy features.
	General condition:	Roof damaged, structure appears intact.

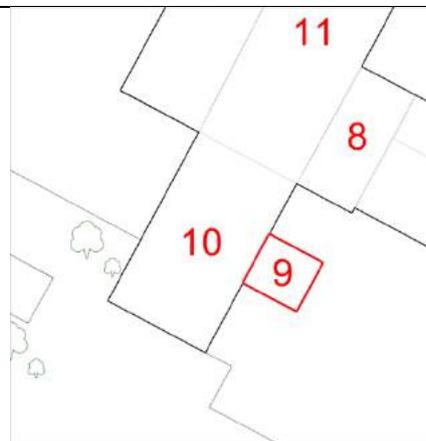


*Figure 35:  
Building 8 (garage door on left) seen from courtyard (looking N)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 36:  
Interior of Building 8  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

### 3.10 Building 9



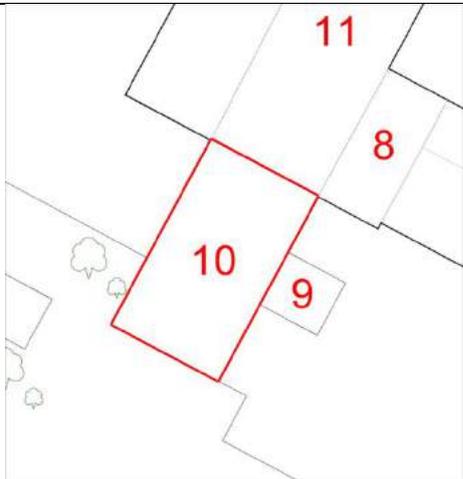
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General description:	Small single-storey modern structure, rectangular in plan.
Age:	Built between 1964 and 1980.
Roof:	Flat roof, covered with roofing felt.
Walls:	Rendered, presumed concrete block.
Windows and Doors:	Sealed.
Rainwater goods:	Absent
Interior:	Not seen.
General condition:	Derelict, appears structurally sound.



Figure 37:  
 Building 9 seen from courtyard (looking N)  
 Photo: Tom Hunter

### 3.11 Building 10

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	Age:	Built between mid-C19th and 1950.
	Roof:	Double pitched, with corrugated metal sheeting.
	Walls:	Reclaimed stone and internal cement render.
	Windows and Doors:	Boarded up, accessed via Building 11.
	Rainwater goods:	Absent.
	Interior:	Mid-twentieth century stall partitions.
	General condition:	Appears wind- and water-tight, structurally stable.



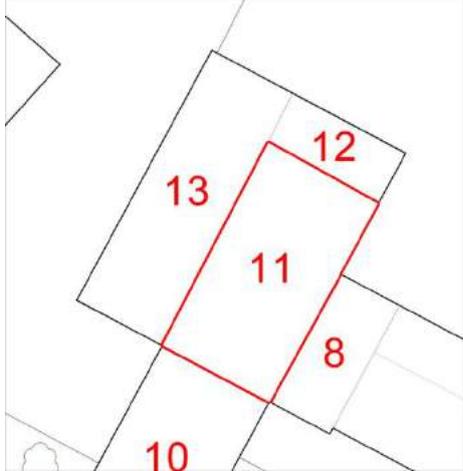


*Figure 38:  
Building 10 seen from courtyard (looking NW)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 39:  
Interior of Building 10, with concrete stalls.  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

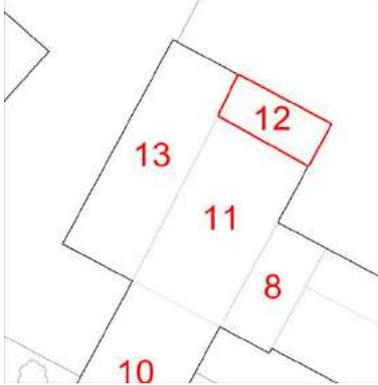
### 3.12 Building 11

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	Age:	Completed between 1950 and 1964. Possibly partly dating to before 1950, then extended soon afterwards.
	Roof:	Double pitched, with corrugated metal sheeting.
	Walls:	Uncertain, possibly reclaimed stone. Rendered with cement internally.
	Windows and Doors:	Doorways lead to adjacent buildings.
	Rainwater goods:	Absent
	Interior:	Mid-twentieth century stall partitions; debris.
	General condition:	Appears wind- and water-tight, and structurally stable.



*Figure 40:  
Interior of Building 11, with concrete stalls  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

### 3.13 Building 12

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	Age:	Built between 1950 and 1964.
	Roof:	Monopitch, with corrugated metal sheeting.
	Walls:	Cement render over concrete.
	Windows and Doors:	Two large vehicle access bays, one boarded up and the other with a large sliding door. Internal vertically-sliding door to Building 11.
	Rainwater goods:	Absent
	Interior:	Debris; used for tractor storage. No noteworthy features.
	General condition:	Appears wind- and water-tight, and structurally stable.

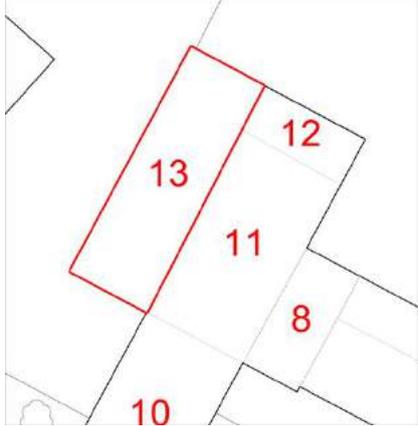


*Figure 41:  
Entrance to Building 12, seen from N side of Building 7 (looking W)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 42:  
Interior of Building 12  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

### 3.14 Building 13

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	Age:	Built between 1950 and 1964.
	Roof:	Double pitched, with corrugated metal sheeting.
	Walls:	Rendered, assumed concrete.
	Windows and Doors:	None. Accessed via Building 11.
	Rainwater goods:	Absent.
	Interior:	Debris, no noteworthy features.
	General condition:	Appears wind- and water-tight, and structurally stable.



### 3.15 External Areas Around Steadings

External areas around the steadings, including the main courtyard, are overgrown and covered by an accumulation of debris. Cobbles appear to be visible at certain points, but it has not been possible to assess the full extent and condition of any surviving historic surface materials. Surviving boundary walls are often damaged but generally appear structurally stable.



*Figure 44:  
View of courtyard from E corner (looking W)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 45:  
View over waste ground to N of farm to Buildings 1, 2, 6 & 7 (looking S)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 46:  
Boundary wall which currently forms S edge of courtyard (looking NW)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

### 3.16 Wider Landscaping

Much of the ornamental landscaping immediately around Papdale House survives, but has suffered from infrequent maintenance. The fencing and gateposts around the house have largely disappeared, and the addition of standard suburban streetlights does not contribute to the setting of the House.



*Figure 47:  
View down the avenue towards Papdale House (looking SE). Note streetlight on right hand side of path.  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 48:  
Papdale House as seen from Papdale Burn in the late nineteenth century.  
Photographer: Tom Kent  
Image courtesy of Orkney Library and Archive, Tom Kent collection.*



*Figure 49:  
Papdale House as seen from Papdale Burn today.  
Photo: Tom Hunter*



*Figure 50:  
View of Papdale House from SE (looking NW)  
Photo: Tom Hunter*

## 4. Assessment of Significance, Authenticity and Integrity

4.1 Papdale House, and its associated steadings, are significant both for their intrinsic and historical qualities and for their connection to the Laing family, and through them to the early period of agricultural Improvement in Orkney. This chapter assesses this significance, and also the authenticity and integrity of the various components of the site.

4.2 The intrinsic architectural and historical importance of Papdale House and its remaining traditionally-built steadings lies both in the individual buildings and in the design and layout of the site as a whole. The buildings dating from Malcolm and Samuel Laing's Improvements (Papdale House and Buildings 2, 4 & 6) stand as excellent examples of early nineteenth-century Orcadian architecture, both of high-status villas and of working agricultural buildings. This period was one of great change architecturally, as styles and concepts which had developed over the previous century in mainland Britain were adopted by a social elite who found themselves suddenly wealthy from the profits of the kelp industry<sup>24</sup>. This was expressed architecturally by a shift from vernacular design to Classicism, as shown at Papdale by the Palladian-inspired design and detailing of both Papdale House and some of the now-demolished buildings. The fact that the design and many of the original features of several of these buildings survive substantially unaltered from this period therefore gives them historical and architectural significance additional to their inherent qualities of proportion, material and form.

4.3 It is highly possible, given the prehistoric origins of some Orkney farms, that a farm had existed on this site for some considerable time prior to the construction of the surviving buildings in the early nineteenth century. The estate is recorded as far back as 1486, although whether the current site of the farm buildings has been used for this long is unknown. There is therefore a great possibility for archaeological finds on the site, with remains possibly dating back to the medieval period or even earlier.

4.4 Both Papdale House and the farm have significance through their close association with the Laing family. The prominent Orcadian family of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Laings were closely involved with all the major historical trends in Orkney during this period, including: the boom and bust of the kelp industry; agricultural Improvement; political representation both at home and at Westminster; working in the Empire; and developing cultural links with Norway<sup>25</sup>. The house and farm they built and occupied for several decades at Papdale bear witness to the three members of the family who resided there.

Papdale House, whose construction coincided with the election of Malcolm Laing as M.P., is an architectural expression of the status he enjoyed as one of the prominent

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<sup>24</sup> See (Thomson 2008, 349-362)

<sup>25</sup> (Marwick 1967) and (Laing 2000)

gentry in Orkney, as well as being where he received prominent guests such as Sir Walter Scott in 1814<sup>26</sup>.

The steadings at Papdale formed part of the Laings' programme of agricultural Improvements, which took place across their estate in Orkney<sup>27</sup>. These included a major upgrade of the farm at Stove on Sanday and the construction of Whitehall village on Stronsay as a herring port<sup>28</sup>. These achievements were studied by the economist JS Mill, due to their socially liberal attitude towards their tenants (which was in sharp contrast to the clearances elsewhere in Scotland). Perhaps due to its position as the Laings' home estate, there is evidence to suggest that Papdale was one of the first courtyard farms in Orkney<sup>29</sup>, which went on to become the most heavily Improved agricultural county in Britain<sup>30</sup>. Robert Scarth, who in his role as factor for a number of estates has been described as "more than any other individual ... the architect of agricultural Improvement [in Orkney]"<sup>31</sup>, resided for a time at Papdale House<sup>32</sup>. This gives the farm a wider importance in the social history of Orkney in addition to its association with the Laings' own Improvement projects.

4.5 Papdale House and farm also have a role in their urban context as evidence of previous land use. As an obviously rural country estate, they are the legacy of the area's history prior to suburbanisation in the post-war period. As such they have a certain commemorative value as a remnant of a stage in Kirkwall's urban development.

#### 4.6 Authenticity:

The restoration of Papdale House, whilst destroying the servants' wings and many outbuildings, did seek to preserve as much of the original fabric as possible. The sympathetic design of the new work has made it difficult to distinguish new work from old, but the tender documents from the restoration make clear that original features within the house were to be kept (and detail the extent and nature of the new work). Unfortunately no record survives of the earlier works undertaken to divide the house into flats, but it can be assumed, in the absence of intrusive testing, that the remaining House exhibits a high degree of authenticity through its surviving fabric.

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<sup>26</sup> (Hossack 1900, 395)

<sup>27</sup> (Laing 2000, 38)

<sup>28</sup> (Marwick 1967) & (Glendinning and Wade Martins 2008, 67)

<sup>29</sup> Shirreff (1814, 40) states that in 1808 there were no farms in Orkney arranged around a courtyard, which he describes as "a measure which would certainly be highly useful in that climate". As he elsewhere describes Malcolm Laing's experiments with Merino sheep in 1813, it is possible that the current farm at Papdale had not been completed by the publication date in 1814. This would give a probable completion date for the farm buildings between 1814 and 1818 (following the implication in Samuel Laing's *Autobiography* (2000) that Malcolm (d. 1818) was responsible for the main Improvements at Papdale).

<sup>30</sup> (Glendinning and Wade Martins 2008, 136)

<sup>31</sup> (Thomson 2008, 379)

<sup>32</sup> See 1841 census records.

The farm buildings of traditional construction (2, 4, 6 & 7) generally display a high level of authenticity. Many original features, such as the doocot in Building 6, survive intact. These buildings have been little altered since their construction, and where significant works have since taken place (such as re-roofing in Building 2) these are historic, and can be seen as sympathetic repairs rather than restoration or alteration.

#### 4.7 Integrity:

Although many of the works undertaken during the restoration of Papdale House have preserved the integrity of the building through use of sympathetic materials, designs and techniques, an understanding of its context has been lost by the removal of the adjoining farmhouse and steadings. Whilst the removal of modern accretions around the house in 1970-73 (such as the south porch and the various outbuildings) improved the integrity of the house, the removal of the servants' wings severely undermined an appreciation of how the House was designed and operated as a high-status residence in the nineteenth century.

The integrity of the farm has been severely compromised by the removal of many of the historic steadings during the twentieth century. The removal of the south range of steadings in particular had a major effect on the integrity of the farm as a whole, as the courtyard layout enclosed by them was integral to the design and function of the farm.

## 5. Guidelines for the Conservation and New Development of the Site

5.1 The aim of these guidelines is to preserve the authenticity and character of the remaining traditionally built buildings, whilst restoring the integrity of the site as a whole. Recommendations are made for the conservation or removal of existing buildings, and guidelines are provided for sympathetic new development.

N.B. These recommendations have been made from the point of view of the historic integrity of the site and the conservation of the historic buildings and their setting, and are subject to other policies and considerations as appropriate.

5.2 Given their very different states of preservation, separate recommendations are made for Papdale House and for the associated steadings, and for the open areas associated with each.

Please note that any proposed works to the House, Farm or associated objects within their curtilage (such as fence-posts) may require Listed Building Consent – anyone considering such works should contact the Development Management at Orkney Islands Council in the first instance.

5.3 Following a successful public campaign to preserve Papdale House in the 1960s it was restored to its current form, and has remained occupied since. Proposals should avoid significant alteration to the building, including subdivision, except in the following cases:

- undertaking internal alterations which do not affect any historic fabric; or
- extending the House with a development whose footprint, scale, form and fenestration pattern match those of the original servants' quarters, so far as these are recorded<sup>33</sup>. This should enable an understanding of the relationship between the servants' quarters and the main House, whilst making clear, through the sympathetic modern choice and detailing of traditional materials, that this is a new addition rather than a surviving historic building (see 5.6.4).

These alterations should have a neutral or positive impact on the historic integrity of the House and site in general.

5.4 Much of the scenic approach to, and setting of, Papdale House has been lost, as it has been encircled by development since its construction. Any ways of maintaining and enhancing the remaining designed landscape should be seriously considered, as this would greatly improve the appearance and historic character of the house. The trees around the house are the main component in its landscape setting, and

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<sup>33</sup> Plans and documents recording the extent of the servants' quarters are in the private collection of W. Thomson, South Manse, Burray. Photographs are held in the Orkney Archive.

should be preserved where they form part of the planned landscaping of the site. A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) should therefore be considered for the group of trees forming the historic (pre-1960s) landscaping. Younger trees should be excluded from this TPO, but protected under existing policies towards trees<sup>34</sup>.

There is an opportunity to improve the legibility of the site by restoring the historic pathways, the definition of the earth bank and the gateposts which mark the garden boundary. The gateposts in particular are in a state of very poor repair, and should be conserved and restored as a priority.

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<sup>34</sup> A Tree Conservation Plan for the grounds of Papdale House can be accessed by Development Management at Orkney Islands Council.

5.5 The historic and architectural character of the steadings would best be served by restoring and reusing the historic buildings and removing unsympathetic additions, making sure to salvage and reuse any local sandstone stonework. The steadings can be understood for these purposes as falling into three categories: traditionally constructed buildings, modern agricultural buildings, and modern agricultural buildings built using significant reclaimed stonework.

Traditionally constructed buildings (Papdale House and 2, 4, 6, 7):

These are either believed to be original or sympathetic later additions, and are built using traditional methods and materials. They should be retained and conserved, and any unsympathetic additions removed. Their conditions vary from being in use to ruinous; a range of conservation approaches would therefore be appropriate, from in-situ preservation to controlled dismantling and reconstruction where required.

Modern agricultural buildings (1, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13 & Garage at Papdale House):

These are generally in poor repair and are detrimental to the character of the historic steadings. Their removal should therefore be supported. This would enhance the integrity of the complex, and gives scope for high-quality new development.

Modern agricultural buildings built using significant reclaimed stonework (3, 5, 10):

These are generally either in poor repair or are unsympathetic in design to the historic steadings. They should be considered eligible for removal, and any traditional stonework recovered should be salvaged and reused within the development as appropriate.



### Papdale by Category

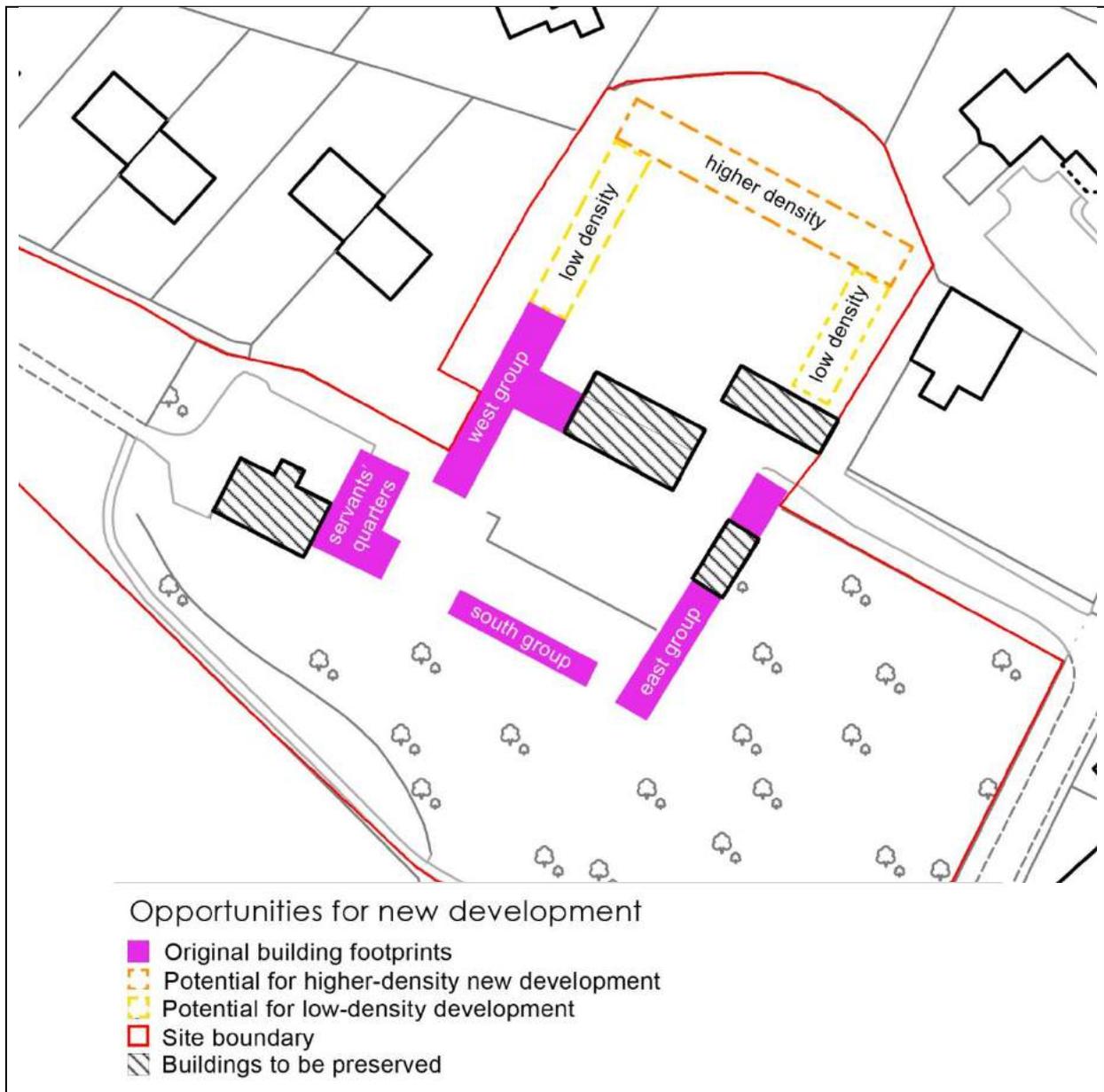
- Modern agricultural buildings
- Modern agricultural buildings built using significant reclaimed stonework
- Traditionally constructed buildings

**Figure 51:**

**Map showing the categories of existing buildings at Papdale House and Farm**

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5.6 New development on the site should aim to restore the spatial character of the farm, with the aim of restoring the historic integrity of the site. Any development should follow the principles laid out in the *Orkney Local Development Plan* and appropriate supplementary planning guidance (*Listed Buildings and the Orkney Local List*), and refer to the guidelines for redevelopment in the *Kirkwall Urban Design Framework* (points 4.50 & 4.51).



**Figure 52:**

*Map showing the opportunities for new development at Papdale*

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- 5.6.1 New development should be sited in the first instance on the original building footprints (see diagram above). The re-enclosure of the courtyard through development replacing the south range of steadings should be considered a central component of restoring the character of the whole complex. Whilst the preferred location for this development would be on the exact footprints of the south range of steadings, the siting of new development should be informed by an assessment of any potential impacts on the existing mature trees, and ensuring access to the courtyard from the south is provided.
- 5.6.2 New buildings should respect the scale of the surviving historic buildings (2, 4 & 6). The heights of new developments should be based on those of the adjacent historic buildings. Any proposals should prepare a Design Statement to respond to the following suggestions as to how this will be achieved:
- A. for development replacing the buildings on the west of the site (8 to 13), the roof ridge height should not exceed the wall head height of the building 6;
- B. for development replacing the buildings on the east of the site, the roof ridge and wall head heights should match those of building 4;
- C. for development built on the footprint of the (now demolished) south range of steadings, development should not exceed the roof ridge and wall head heights of the tallest of the previous buildings on that footprint, as shown in documentary evidence.
- 5.6.3 The form and design of new development should respect that of the surviving historic buildings: roofs should be symmetrical and pitched, with angles and wall head heights based on the surviving historic buildings; buildings should adjoin each other to form continuous building lines around the courtyard; and the pattern of openings should be sympathetic to that of the surviving historic buildings.
- 5.6.4 The choice of colours and materials should enhance the setting of the surviving historic buildings, and not overwhelm them. The modern use of traditional materials (such as stone, timber, slate, lead, and corrugated metal) should be supported. The main colours of walls and roofs should complement those of the surviving historic buildings.
- 5.6.5 From a historic point of view, the use of the buildings would ideally respect the historic land uses of the Papdale estate: either agricultural (pre-twentieth century) or educational (twentieth century to present). Other uses could easily be accommodated, such as offices, housing or studio workshops, provided

they are not detrimental to the fabric or the character of the complex.

5.6.6 There exists the possibility for a second courtyard to be built to the north of the existing buildings, with development following the guidelines laid out above. Whilst this new development in this area would have no direct historical precedent, done sensitively it would not be detrimental to the character of the existing historic buildings or to the integrity of the site as a whole. The scale of this new development should not dominate the historic buildings: development along the western and eastern edges should follow the guidelines above at 5.6.2 (A), as they will be perceived as a continuation of the buildings along the west edge of the site. Development along the northern edge of the site could be taller, not exceeding the maximum height of the tallest historic buildings. The courtyard space should adhere to the guidelines for the existing courtyard at 5.8. Efforts should be made, through a considered choice of materials, to make clear a distinction between development on the footprints of historic buildings and development on previously undeveloped areas of the site.

5.7 The current buildings on the Farm date from the early nineteenth century, although the site is believed to have been occupied long before then, possibly as early as the Pictish period (before c.800 AD)<sup>35</sup>. As a result, there is unknown potential for archaeological finds when excavating the site. In addition, a well is marked on the 1882 Ordnance Survey 1:25 inch map within the courtyard. The County Archaeologist should be consulted as part of pre-application discussions for proposed works to the site.

Prior to any significant works commencing on site, a historic building recording survey should be undertaken, both to inform the development and to provide a record for the Orkney Sites and Monuments Record. The specifications of this should be agreed prior to necessary consents being given.

5.8 The courtyard area was originally an open, functional space, which was subdivided to enclose small areas around certain buildings on the south range of steadings. Separating these enclosed areas from the main farmyard was a large stone wall which today forms the boundary of the courtyard. The preservation of this wall, at least in part, should be supported where possible. Other boundary walls should be preserved where possible, or dismantled and reused elsewhere on the site. In keeping with the historic nature of the site, and with the principles of the Council's developing place-making strategy, the creation of new divisions, including stepped level changes, within the courtyard (beyond those described above) should be discouraged in favour of a single shared space, which covers the entire area of the courtyard up to the edges of the buildings.

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<sup>35</sup> (Papar Project 2005)

The renovation of the courtyard should create a high-quality space which is in keeping with the historic character of the site. Where historic surface treatments, such as cobbles or setts, are found to remain, they should either be repaired appropriately and re-used, or should be preserved in situ and overlaid with sympathetically chosen modern materials, such as flagstones, setts, cobbles or an equivalent. Colours and forms should be well-chosen and sympathetic to the surrounding buildings, avoiding the use of colours which would not have been available historically. Continuous materials such as tarmac or concrete should not be used, because they would fundamentally alter the character of the space. Planting arrangements could contribute positively to the amenity of the space, but care should be taken to ensure that the scale is appropriate for the setting of the historic buildings.



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“Enlarged Plan of the Mansion House and Pleasure Grounds of Papdale, F. Dundas Esquire M.P.”, late nineteenth century (between 1852 and 1872) – *sourced from Mr W. Thomson*

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Ordnance Survey 1:25 inch 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1902, Sheet 108.03 – *sourced from National Library of Scotland*

Aerial Photograph from Orkney Sites and Monuments Record: 25<sup>th</sup> March 1950, Sortie 540.A.463, No. 4400

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Ordnance Survey 1:2500, 1980, Sheet HY4510 – *sourced from Orkney Library and Archive*

## **Appendices**

**A. Determination of Curtilage of Listing, by Jamie Macvie, Planning Officer (OIC)**

## **Papdale House Curtilage**

Firstly, it should be noted that in order to be listed, a building need not be functioning for the purpose it was originally intended. Equally, the state of repair is not a relevant consideration against the test of special interest.

Both the interior and exterior of any listed building is covered by the listing, regardless of category. Similarly, other structures at the location such as boundary walls or additional buildings may be considered to be covered by the listing. This is the curtilage of the listing.

The local planning authority is responsible for determining what is covered by the listing and whether or not other structures may also be considered to be covered.

The usual tests provided by Historic Scotland to be used by the planning authority to determine if curtilage applies are:

- Were the structures built before 1948?
- Were they in the same ownership as the main subject of listing at the time of listing?
- Do the structures clearly relate in terms of their (original) function to the main subject of the listing?
- Are the structures still related to the main subject on the ground?

With regard to Papdale House and Farm Steading, the answers to the above tests are:

- Yes;
- Yes;
- Yes, as the home farm to Papdale House and Estate; and
- Yes, being immediately adjacent to Papdale House, and not interrupted or altered by subsequent development

Former Papdale Farmhouse would be considered similarly; however, it has been sold off, and doesn't meet the second test. As such, Papdale Farmhouse is not considered to be covered by the listing.

## **B. List Descriptions (from Historic Scotland)**

## **BERSTANE ROAD, PAPDALE HOUSE (Ref:36807)**

This building is in the Orkney Islands Council and the Kirkwall Burgh. It is a category B building and was listed on 08/12/1971.

Group Items: N/A, Group Cat: N/A, Map Ref: HY.

### Description

Later 18th century with later alterations and additions. 2-storey, 3-bay rectangular-plan symmetrical classical house with advanced, ball-finialled, pedimented central bay and gabled entrance porch to rear (NW). Harled with sandstone ashlar dressings. Corniced eaves course. Plain margins to windows. SE (PRINCIPAL) ELEVATION: window at each floor in advanced bay to centre; oculus to pediment above. Window at each floor in each bay flanking. NW (REAR) ELEVATION: window to entrance porch at ground in bay to centre; boarded door with rectangular fanlight in left return; window in right return; window at 1st floor above. Window at each floor in bay to left. SW (SIDE) ELEVATION: small window at ground in bay to right; Window at ground in bay to left; gablehead stack above. NE (SIDE) ELEVATION: window at each floor in each bay; sandstone plaque between window at ground; gablehead stack above. Predominantly 18-pane timber sash and case windows. Grey slate roof; stone ridge; harled, coped gablehead stacks; polygonal cans; cast-iron rainwater goods.

### Notes

The home of Malcolm Laing (1762-1818), author of "A History of Scotland" whose brother, Samuel, translated the Heimskringla, the pair being prominent figures in local affairs. Samuel was Provost of Kirkwall, his son, also Samuel, became MP for the Northern Burghs. Malcolm was instrumental in saving the Standing Stones of Stenness from demolition. Papdale House was the seat of the Laing family from 1783 until circa 1850, and was acquired by the Reids in the mid 19th century. Sir Walter Scott visited Malcolm at Papdale on 12th August 1814.

### References

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## **BERSTANE ROAD, PAPDALE HOUSE, WALLED GARDEN INCLUDING DOOCOT (Ref:36808)**

This building is in the Orkney Islands Council and the Kirkwall Burgh. It is a category B building and was listed on 07/01/1992.

Group Items: N/A, Group Cat: N/A, Map Ref: HY.

### Description

Later 18th century; walled garden associated, and probably coeval, with Papdale House. Rectangular plan, north wall curved semi-polygonal; side gate central both on E and W long flanks; Rubble walls possibly heightened, several masonry courses on east and south walls, at least. DOOCOT: sited at SE corner; square-plan; roofless; rises above adjacent wall height; blocked doorway and round-arched opening to S elevation.

### Notes

Setting has been spoiled by modern buildings erected close by, but listed category B for relationship to Papdale House.

### References

1st edition Ordnance Survey map, (1881), evident; Leslie Burgher, ORKNEY, AN ILLUSTRATED ARCHITECTURAL GUIDE (1991), p25.

## **C. Extracts from Kirkwall Urban Design Framework**

pp. 16 & 20-24

pp. 43-51

pp. 128 & 140

### 3.0 planning and urban design principles

#### Principle 2: To reinforce Kirkwall's Distinctiveness through its New Development, and Protect and Enhance its Historic Environment.

The second principle seeks to see Kirkwall embrace and promote opportunities for new high quality architecture which responds to the distinctive character of Orkney and the town, but which is forward-looking and sustainable. Respect for the local context is an essential requirement for new developments and development within the historic core must respect and enhance the local environment.

- 3.10
- 3.11 Kirkwall offers a range of different potential development opportunities from small gap sites to large greenfield sites. These opportunities should all be used to positively reinforce the image and functionality of the town regardless of scale or budget. Development projects must be addressed holistically, with consideration of how the other objectives listed in this chapter might also apply. The development zone masterplans, the environmental improvement strategies and the outline design guidance in Chapter 4, indicate the recommended approach for key development areas, however there should be high aspirations for design quality in all cases. This should include consideration of how each development responds to context both in the immediate vicinity of the development and the town as a whole including views and vistas to and from the development site. Key landmarks, such as St Magnus Cathedral should be protected from development which would impact on the visual dominance of these on the main land and sea approaches to the town. New developments should seek to respond to distinctive elements of Kirkwall's physical setting and landmark features such as Kirkwall Bay, the harbour, the historic core including St Magnus, and surrounding Orkadian landscape etc. The use of non standard materials, colours and incorporation of landscape proposals (external layout and spatial arrangement as well as 'planting') can all contribute to the creation of distinctive places, and this may warrant the use of architectural design competitions for strategic sites.

- 3.12 Planning applications must demonstrate that they:
- Are of an appropriate design quality which respects local surroundings and enhances the local area (reference should be made to the 'Developing the Vision Part C' of this document and the accompanying 'Townscape Characterisation' information provided at Appendix B);
  - Contribute to the creation of a high quality public realm through good site layout, landscaping and use of materials;
  - Protect listed buildings and their setting, and preserve or enhance the conservation area.



'IDENTITY' Distinctiveness / Sense of Place N

### 3.0 planning and urban design principles

#### Principle 6: To Improve Pedestrian Connectivity in Kirkwall and Achieve a more Pedestrian Friendly Environment in Kirkwall

This principle seeks to achieve the development of a network of interconnected public access routes through and around Kirkwall. This would achieve a number of benefits including:

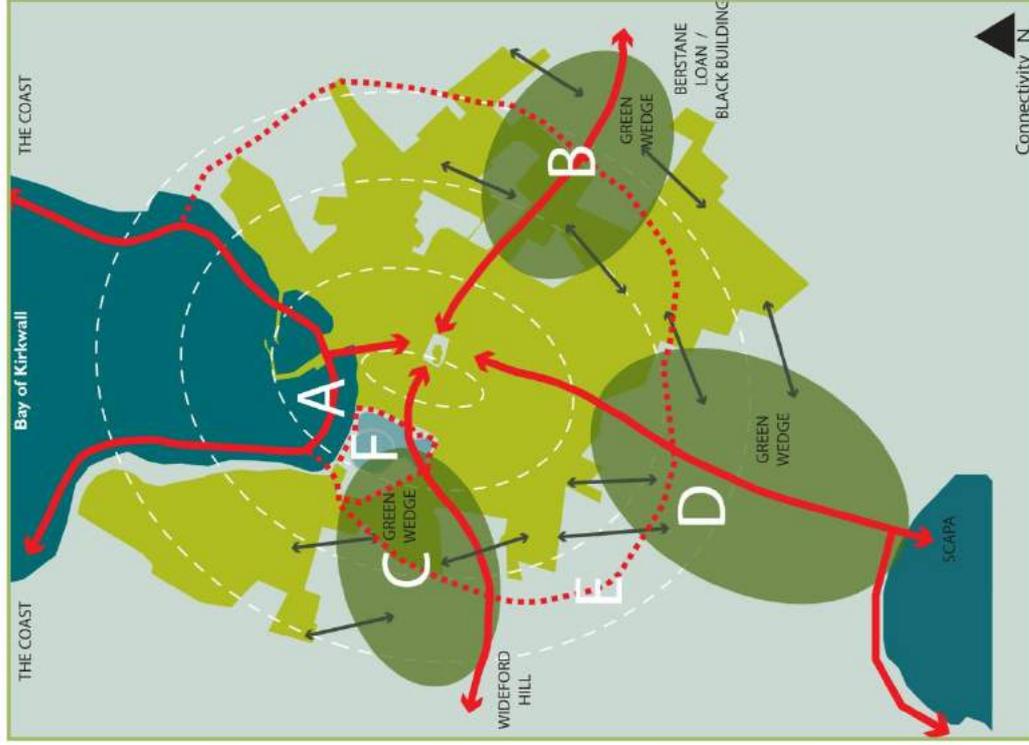
- reduced car use and dependency by Kirkwall residents, with associated reduction in car parking requirements;
- health benefits through exercise (walking and cycling);
- better linkages to and between Kirkwall's facilities and attractions;
- easier access between town and countryside;
- pedestrian safety benefits;
- create seating areas at regular intervals along the main routes;
- opportunities to increase biodiversity along strategic routes.

3.23 This objective relates strongly to Principle 7 and 8 (GreenSpace Network and Woodland Framework) as ideally access routes would utilise green corridors or pass through greenspaces.

3.24 Where greenspaces are not available footways and road crossings between key destinations should be of an appropriate standard, fulfilling DDA and traffic safety requirements.

3.25 The adjacent figure indicates an optimum strategic network of main public access routes for Kirkwall. Some of these routes exist but require enhancement; others require missing links to be filled. Key aspirational routes include:

- A. around Kirkwall Bay from Hatston Pier to Cragfield via the Harbour, Peedie Sea and entrance to Bridge St / historic spine;
- B. radial route: Papdale corridor;
- C. radial route: Muddisdale / Peedie Sea;
- D. radial route: Scapa;
- E. town edge orbital route;
- F. circular walkway around the Peedie Sea.



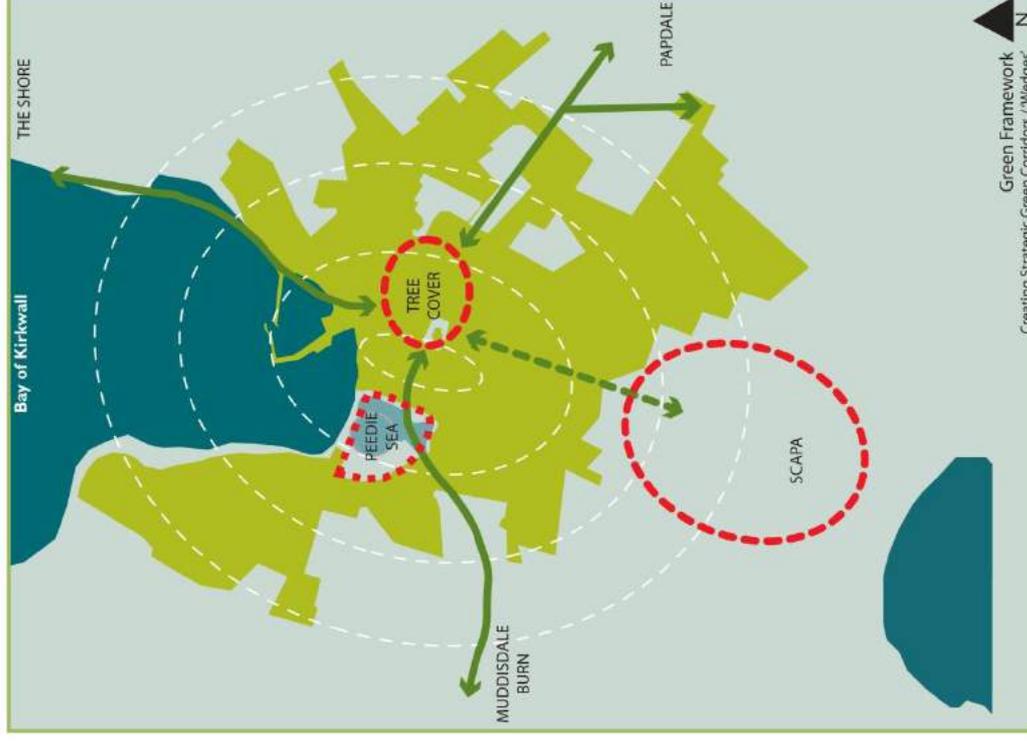
- 3.26 The above routes, in addition to road corridor footways, would allow a number of circuits to be followed and/or improve links between strategic sites and facilities. These would also connect with pedestrian routes outside Kirkwall, e.g. to Scapa Bay and Wideford Hill. Furniture components should be provided at key strategic locations such as viewpoints to provide rest points and interpretation. Improved signage, particularly at the beginning of routes such as at Hatston Pier, should be developed. Opportunities to develop innovative forms of passenger transport for example electronic buses for strategic routes should be explored through the development process.
- 3.27 Planning applications must demonstrate that they:
- Connect with the pedestrian walking and cycling network and (where relevant) strategic greenspace, anticipating future development potential of surrounding area. Dead ends and cul-de-sacs should be avoided.
  - Adopt best practice in the delivery of good quality public realm. This should include full investigation of the possibilities to develop shared spaces and pedestrian priority areas in new developments.

### 3.0 planning and urban design principles

#### Principle 7: Creation of a Greenspace Network for Kirkwall

- 3.28 Kirkwall currently has a strong visual relationship with the sea and the surrounding countryside, but its network of greenspaces and parkland is fragmented and somewhat limited. This determines that there are relatively few public greenspaces within the housing areas and there are no continuous green corridors through the town. This objective therefore seeks to redress this deficit in a way that improves amenity, local biodiversity and access between town and countryside. The existing density of development in Kirkwall makes this objective difficult to achieve but there are some opportunities in relation to future developments, and in the longer term further opportunities may arise when old housing stock areas become available for redevelopment.
- 3.29 In principle it is desirable to establish green corridors, or a sequence of green spaces which create physical and visual linkages between the town centre and Kirkwall's surrounding countryside. These would improve the environment of the housing areas and help to stop sub-urban coalescence. The greenspaces would have advantages for local recreation and access, and would importantly create the focus for new developments in adjacent areas, i.e. new housing could be designed to positively address the adjacent greenspaces, with potentially enhanced architectural quality (and property values). Developments adjacent to green spaces could also achieve higher densities and allow more bespoke urban design solutions as well as acting as a means to differentiate areas into smaller cohesive communities.
- 3.30 Where development encroaches upon watercourses the retention of greenspace on either side of the watercourses offers significant opportunities to address flood risk issues and also to incorporate habitat enhancement which can bring benefits in terms of both biodiversity and landscape value.

X



- 3.31 The adjacent figure indicates how Kirkwall's main greenspace opportunities relate to (1) Papdale and the Papdale Burn, (2) Muddisdale/Pickaquooy and (3) the coast.
- A. Papdale already contains significant areas of green space including Bignold park, Papdale Park, the Grammar School and Primary School grounds, The Willows and fields adjacent to the urban edge. This provides the basis for creating a network of interlinked green spaces leading from the town centre to Berstane Loan on the southern periphery of Kirkwall to perhaps incorporate a future public use of the Black Building, or public space/viewpoint as part of a housing development scheme. This opportunity might involve the reopening of culverted sections of the Papdale Burn and the safeguarding of green spaces adjacent to or within new housing development areas. Unfortunately the opportunity to create a green link to the south of Bignold Park may have been lost by the ongoing housing development. The development of this green network should incorporate access routes, woodland, recreation facilities and biodiversity enhancements.
- B. The Muddisdale/ Pickaquooy area is less developed at present but includes the Muddisdale Woodland recreational parklands associated with the Pickaquooy Centre, linking with the Peedie Sea and Kirkwall Bay. It contains areas designated in the Local Plan for housing development and so this is an appropriate time to establish how greenspace could be integrated and used positively as the focus of new developments. Once again this area has a watercourse (Muddisdale Burn) which could be used as a positive feature in the green spaces. Access routes could be integrated to allow movements into the countryside (e.g. towards Wideford Hill) and towards the town centre.
- C. The coastal areas around Kirkwall Bay have various areas of greenspace including the parkland areas at Weyland and the relatively new pedestrian and cyclist access path to the west of the harbour. Greenscape should be maintained along coastal areas as a primary source of recreation. This will include the enhancement and potential extension of parkland areas to the east of the harbour towards Cragfield, civic 'hard' spaces associated with the harbour and further extension and improvement to the path to the west of the harbour.
- 3.32 Allotments are an important community resource and green space in Kirkwall and should be protected from development which would compromise their operational use as allotments. Opportunities to create new allotments as part of the greenspace network is supported
- 3.33 Planning applications must demonstrate that they:
- Do not have a significant adverse impact on the Primary Greenspace Network areas identified on the Strategic Proposals Plan;
  - Where relevant, assist in the delivery of the greenspace opportunities and enhancements outlined through this principle;

### 3.0 planning and urban design principles

- Where relevant, link into the greenspace network by creating new pedestrian and cycle path links.

#### Principle 8: Creation of a Woodland Framework for Kirkwall

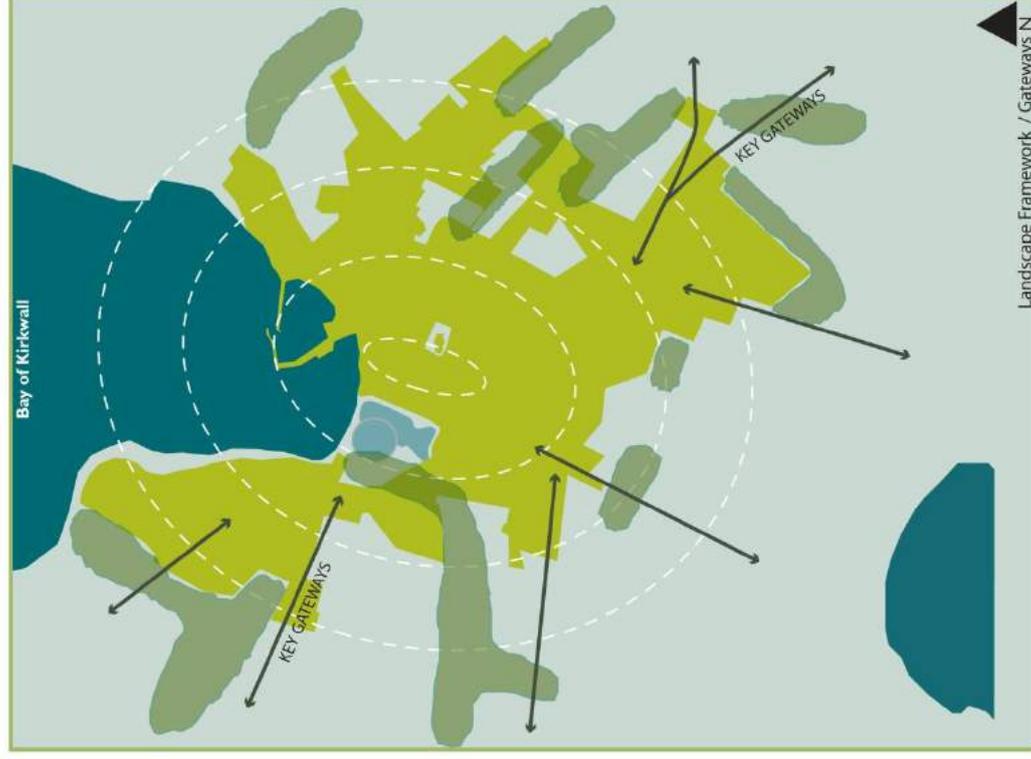
While woodland cover is not extensive in Orkney, there is considerably more than the outside misconception which portrays the County as having no trees. In reality there are many small woodland areas and belts associated with the settlements and with isolated farm steadings. Kirkwall has some of the County's largest trees and some prominent areas of woodland (e.g. around Papdale House) which provide a backcloth to developments from several directions.

3.35 However Kirkwall's expansion onto the surrounding higher ground, particularly on its east and south eastern sides has created an abrupt and unsympathetic edge to the town. Housing developments have filled the former field enclosures without addressing the relationship between the town and the countryside, specifically without considering the visual impact of the urban edge from outside the town or how the skyline appears from the lower central areas of Kirkwall. The relatively open and exposed nature of the surrounding agricultural areas compounds this problem and therefore it is an objective to develop a woodland framework for Kirkwall that can help to integrate peripheral developments, set spatial limits for urban expansion and enhance the associated greenspaces.

3.36 The adjacent figure indicates where the establishment of small woodlands could be achieved in outline. They are located in positions which could:

- Form part of the greenspace network as outlined in Principle 7;
- Provide an outer limit and enclosure for future development areas, working in conjunction with the local topography and landscape features (e.g. at Weyland Burn);
- Help to define the edge of the town as 'gateway' devices next to main roads;
- Reinforce the line of watercourses and improve their biodiversity;
- Reinforce the line of key public access routes.

3.37 In addition to the above there should also be complementary initiatives to manage and conserve existing trees/ woodland areas perhaps expanding the areas covered by Tree Preservation orders. Many of Kirkwall's most notable trees are



#### Development Zone 1 - Papdale and the Willows

4.28 Any significant development within this area will be related to educational facilities. This is largely based on the presence of existing primary and secondary educational buildings, as well as halls of residence. A replacement secondary school is proposed between Willow Road and 'The Meadows' on the site of existing playing fields. The proposals include the provision of new playing fields on the site of the existing secondary school.

4.29 Opportunities for small scale housing development and provision of new halls or residence are also identified. All of the development within this zone should respond to the strategic greenspace corridor as outlined in the Strategic Framework Plan. This strategic greenspace corridor should act as a focus for new development, and provide a new community resource and activity area.

4.30 The main opportunities for this area are:

- Enhance as a strategic green link;
- Maintain open greenspace in front of Papdale House;
- Reopen Papdale Burn culvert;
- Improve and enhance pedestrian and cyclist access through area;
- Refurbishment / redevelopment of Papdale Farm buildings;
- Provide conceptual framework for secondary school new build, and
- Redevelopment of existing Halls of Residence buildings.

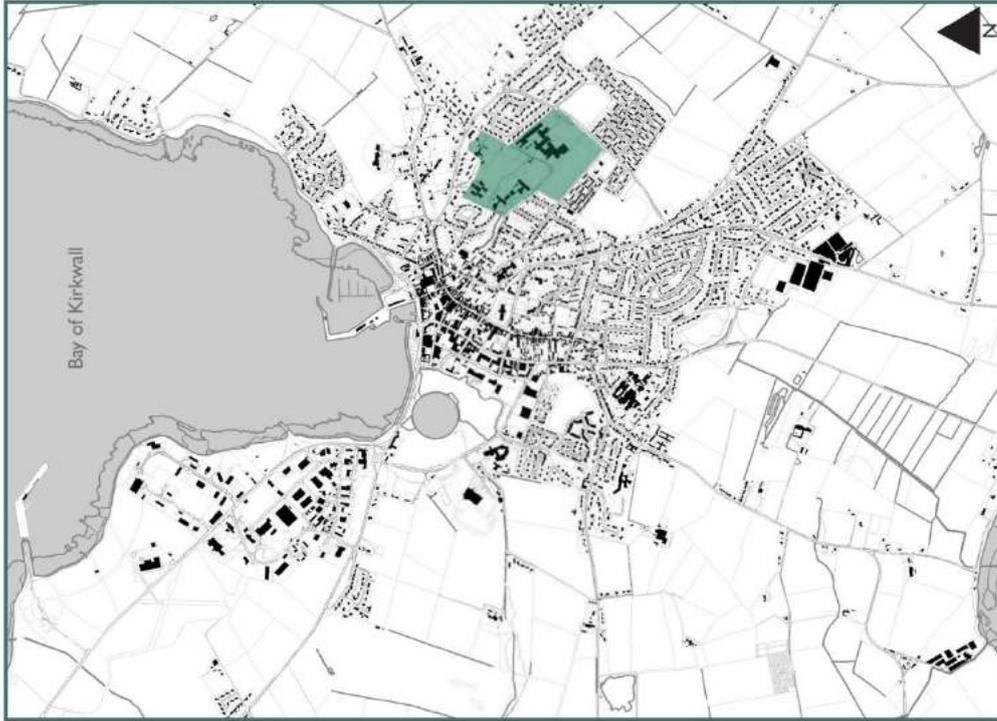


Figure 4.2 Development Zone 1, scale 1:25,000  
Advised Urban Design Development Framework

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## 4.0 developing the vision

### IA Greenspace

- 4.31 This document supports the concept of constructing the new secondary school on existing playing fields between Willow Road and 'The Meadows', and installing playing fields on the site of the existing school. This would allow a strategic green wedge to be established connecting 'The Willows', the greenspace in front of Papdale House, the new school playing fields, Papdale East Park and the countryside to the south east. Environmental enhancements should be considered at Otterswick Crescent to promote the transition of greenspace across the urban edge. There are opportunities to plant appropriate tree species in Papdale East Park, softening the outline of the densely built landscape of Papdale East and increasing the biodiversity and landscape value of the greenspace.
- 4.32 The greenspace and open aspect in front of Papdale house should be preserved. The trees surrounding Papdale House, the farm buildings, the walled garden and any mature trees that comprise this woodland grouping should be protected. Further trees and structured woodland areas could be established between the existing halls of residence buildings, the primary school and Papdale House to offer further amenity, spatial definition and shelter.
- 4.33 The reopening of the Papdale Burn culvert should be investigated at the planning and design process as part of a wider strategy to manage flood risk in the locality as part of this development project. This would have environmental benefits in terms of habitat creation and biodiversity as well as providing an amenity focus within the strategic 'green wedge'. The landscape amenity value of the burn at the surface is evident at 'The Willows'. It could be integrated with a SUDS scheme as part of a discharge system. This may have benefits in terms of providing opportunities for flood alleviation against storm water conditions such as those experienced in 2006.
- 4.34 Existing pedestrian and cyclist access links should be enhanced and extended where possible. The key strategic link between Kirkwall College and the new Grammar School should be enhanced. Other strategic links should also be enhanced to the town centre via 'The Willows' along existing footpaths and pavements on Willow Road and to the east of the Primary School. These links should be extended towards the countryside to the south via Papdale Park which would benefit from structure woodland and spatial definition.

- 4.35 The location of the new playing fields should not act as a barrier to pedestrian and cyclist movement across the area especially if the playing fields require perimeter fencing.
- 4.36 There is an opportunity to restore and utilise the existing historic walled garden as an educational resource to be used by the college and both schools. The garden could function at many levels; as an experimental organic food production site; ecological garden; sheltered outdoor teaching areas.

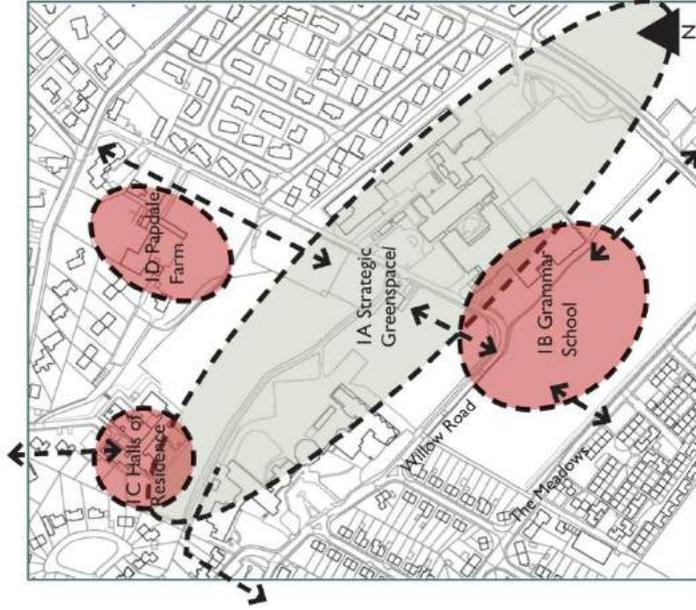


Figure 4.3 Development Zone 1, NTS  
Kirkwall Urban Design Development Framework

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4.37

Pedestrian and cyclist access to the schools from the western and southern parts of the town through Bignold Park and the existing path that runs parallel to Garrioch Street should be improved.

4.38

Proposals to develop a new halls of residence building in the middle of the existing site must demonstrate that they respond sympathetically to the overall objectives of this UDF document in terms of the creation of a strategic greenspace link in this locality. Detailed design layout of new buildings should ensure appropriate provision for pedestrian and cycle permeability and that greenspace is incorporated within the new build development. The design objectives outlined in this document for sites IB and IC will also be relevant to consideration of a new build halls of residence building in the local area, and where this impacts on IA Strategic Greenspace.

### IB Grammar School

Careful consideration needs to be given to the way that school buildings are located on site to ensure that they are well integrated into the urban structure of the town and its green networks. The new school is a major civic development for Kirkwall and it must therefore be of a worthy stature and quality of design which will enhance the area. It is not appropriate to establish rigid criteria for new development in this document. However, future reserved matters or full planning applications must demonstrate that they have addressed the following matters:

- The illustrative layout presented at figure 4.3 places buildings on the western part of the site which would achieve a strong urban edge to Thoms Street. There is also the opportunity for a strong entrance point to the school from the Meadows.
- The new Grammar School will act as a community focus for the Papdale area. With this in mind the buildings for the new school should present 'positive' designed elevations to 'The Meadows' and other surrounding streets incorporating amenity landscape areas and external circulation that benefits the students, staff and community alike. One of the most negative aspects of the existing school complex is the amount of blank and featureless walls which, in combination present an uninviting complex of buildings.



*Cheerful, contemporary architecture for children*



## 4.0 developing the vision



**R reinterpretation of traditional form and massing**  
Street in Kikewell and Larro Community School, Allford



**Understated entrance sequence to building**  
Nursery School, Ivey

**Elegant blank walls**  
School in Spain

**Robust choice of materials**  
Kikewell Urban Design Development Framework

- The Grammar School should integrate with the existing green spaces and woodland areas. Classrooms and teaching areas would benefit from views over the greenspaces. New woodland areas should be considered to soften the impact of this large development and integrate it with the surrounding greenspace, as well as contributing to the wider strategic green corridor. Opportunities to re-open the culverted Willow Burn should be explored and only discounted where there is a clear operational or safety reasons for it remaining as it is.
  - The school could form a series of modest sized and interconnected built forms, or building clusters, instead of large monolith blocks. The arrangement of the built forms should provide varied, welcoming and sheltered spaces and courtyards between them incorporating hard and soft landscape areas for play and socialising as well as acting as external teaching rooms.
  - Circulation around and through the school should be promoted with main entrance points relating to key contextual pedestrian / cycle links. Consideration should be given to large internal social areas for periods of poor light and weather.
  - The preferred location for parking should be to the southwest or south east minimising vehicle movements and access between the school and the existing greenspaces to the north.
- 4.40 An excellent example of a large new school in a small-town context is the recently-completed Loreto School in Milford, Donegal by Grafton Architects. In a similar context, the complex is designed as a series of varying-scaled buildings creating the image of a 'settlement' (as opposed to an institution) and generating a series of sheltered external spaces which relate to the internal spaces they adjoin.
- 4.41 The building is architecturally successful externally because its inherent bulk is divided up into a rigorous grouping of forms. This and the consistent application various materials give the complex variety and human scale. It also has a strong relationship to the particular characteristics of the landscape setting. Despite its large size, it is site-specific and subsequently appears to 'belong' to its place. This project offers lessons for the design of the new Kirkwall Grammar School project.

## 4.0 developing the vision

### IC Redevelopment of Existing Halls of Residence Site

The existing halls of residence buildings do not relate to their surrounding context. The building massing and scale is not in proportion to other nearby residential buildings and therefore they sit uncomfortably in their setting. They are prominent on the skyline from certain viewpoints given their slightly elevated location. If there is an opportunity to provide alternative student accommodation elsewhere in the town consideration should be given to the removal of the existing halls of residence buildings and to replace them with medium to high density housing. Approximately 20-30 units could be developed within the existing 0.5ha footprint based on a medium - high density layout.

4.43 A number of semi-detached housing units largely comprise the context of this site. It is therefore considered that semi-detached housing possibly combined with mini 'terraces' of 3-4 housing units; most likely to be 2 - 3 storeys in height would comprise a suitable scale of development for this site.

4.44 The site of the existing halls of residence is slightly elevated above the town centre and therefore views over the town towards St Magnus Cathedral, the harbour and the Orkney Landscape beyond should be considered desirable from majority of units and will influence the orientation and layout of any new build. Alternatively the buildings could be arranged in 'cloister' groupings establishing a clear and sheltered circulation whilst generating a sequence of social spaces.

4.45 With no through vehicle access the overall layout should promote the sense of small community through a dense cluster of built forms. Pedestrian links should be extended through the development to the surrounding path network.

4.46 Equally this site could accommodate a new halls of residence development based on a similar form and scale as above if no alternative location for halls was available.



Indicative layout for Halls of Residence Site



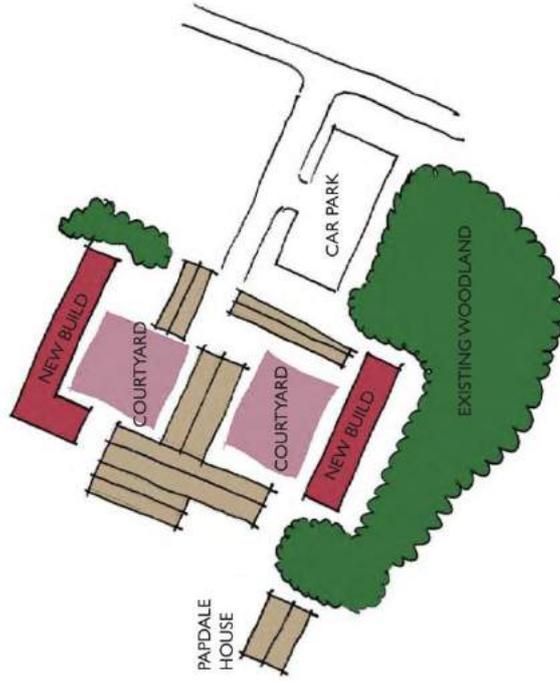
### 1D Papdale House Farm Buildings

- 4.47 The Papdale House farm buildings offer a significant opportunity for redevelopment and refurbishment. Given their central location between both schools and Kirkwall College, and access to key strategic pedestrian and cyclist links these buildings could be converted to provide new **halls of residence**. This should involve the redevelopment of the existing farm buildings with the probable addition of 2 or 3 new-builds.
- 4.48 The buildings should form a relatively high density residential campus set within an existing woodland framework. The incorporation of 2 or 3 new buildings would present an opportunity to create internal courtyard spaces for play and socialising in a safe and sheltered external environment.
- 4.49 It is envisaged that new buildings would be 2 or 3 storeys with a relatively simple footprint. The buildings should incorporate small single or twin rooms with en-suite facilities. Communal areas should be provided for socialising during inclement weather and these should be located primarily on the ground floor. This would allow a visual interaction between the internal and external communal areas to promote vitality and interest. Nearly all of the main access points to the buildings would be from the courtyard areas which would be free of vehicle access although allowing access for emergency and service vehicles.



New building encloses courtyard  
House in Oudenburg, Belgium

- 4.50 The form of the new buildings should complement the scale and form of the existing farm buildings. Consideration should be given to the impact on the setting of the nearby Papdale House and associated buildings which are category B listed. It is envisaged that the existing farm buildings would comprise restoration of the traditional stonework although it may be possible to incorporate contemporary architectural interventions in the treatment of entrances and access points, and other details.
- 4.51 There is an opportunity to implement a contemporary style with the new buildings that would sit side by side with that of traditional stone construction of the existing farm buildings. This could be achieved through the use of varied shapes, materials, textures and colour to assist in the creation of a spatially interesting and stimulating campus especially on facades and elevations of the internal courtyards.



Indicative layout for Papdale Farm Buildings  
Kirkwall Urban Design Development Framework p49

## 4.0 developing the vision

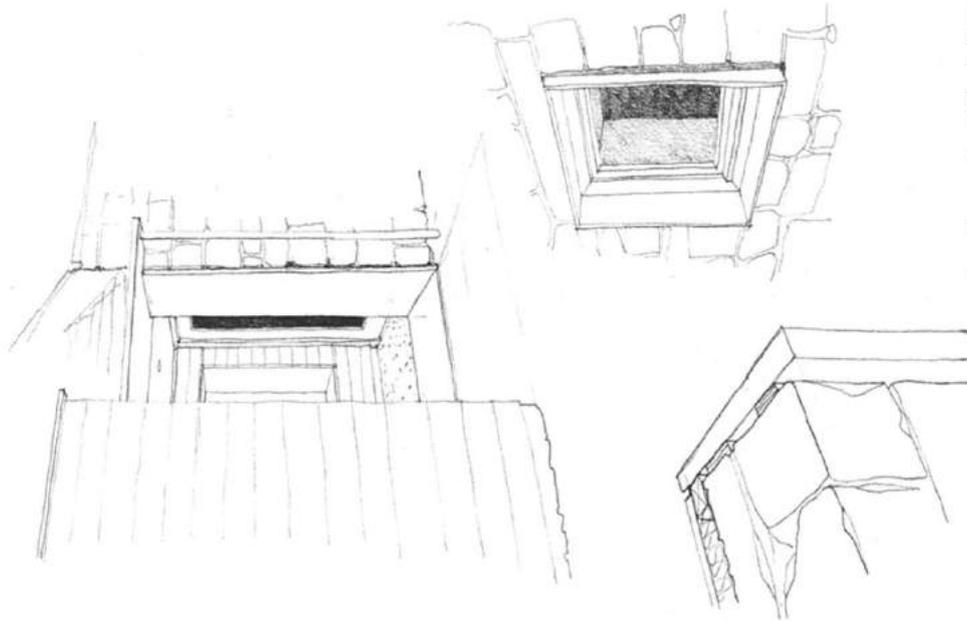
- 4.52 Consideration should be given to coloured harling, metal, glazing or timber materials as the main visible construction material. A simpler treatment could be considered for external elevations although there should also be key visual relationships with the surrounding mature trees and woodland setting.
- 4.53 Links between the halls of residence and strategic pedestrian and cyclist links should be encouraged especially on Papdale Loan.
- 4.54 The new halls of residence campus could incorporate a youth community centre and the facilities should be flexible enough to offer cheap **hostel accommodation** in summer / holiday periods.
- 4.55 Should the above use not prove possible the farm buildings could also offer an opportunity for refurbishment as flats and housing units, or potentially annex educational buildings including workshops, artist studios etc. The buildings would also lend themselves to development of sheltered housing scheme. The design guidance above would be applicable to the above uses with additional consideration being given to the breakdown of private and public space in the courtyards areas.



Contemporary public building responds to vernacular heritage without pastiche  
Museum of Rural Life, Kitchinshole



Contemporary details against traditional stonework  
Kirkwall Urban Design Development Framework p50



**Contemporary interventions in historic fabric**  
 Entrance and window details

**Transportation Implications**

- 4.56 The level of vehicular activity associated with the new grammar school is likely to be unchanged compared to the present situation. The existing school is accessed from The Meadows to the east of the site and Willow Road from the west. The relocated grammar school is likely to be accessed from The Meadows to the south and / or the east of the new facility. It is recommended that Willow Road is used primarily as pedestrian and emergency / service access.
- 4.57 As a result the patterns of vehicular access may change slightly compared to the current situation, as traffic re-routes from outlying main connectors such as Bignold Park Road and Berstane Road, but overall the levels should remain similar to present.
- 4.58 No timetabled bus services currently serve the east of the town, which includes Kirkwall College and the grammar school. There is the potential for a new service which could take in East Road, Berstane Road and The Meadows. This could potentially link the College, proposed Halls of Residence and Grammar School.
- 4.59 The conversion of Papdale House Farm Buildings to Halls of Residence is likely to result in a small increase in vehicular movements along Berstane Road. This is unlikely to have a significant impact upon traffic flow in the area especially as most residents are likely not to own a car.
- 4.60 Safe crossing facilities should be provided on Berstane Road, to enhance the cycle/pedestrian 'spine' linking Kirkwall College, the Halls of Residence and the Grammar School.
- 4.61 Car Parking facilities for the Grammar School, new Halls of Residence and Housing Development should be provided in line with Orkney Islands Council Local Car Parking Standards.
- 4.62 Safe, plentiful and secure cycle parking should be provided at new developments to complement the high quality of walking and cycling links to these destinations.

## A. assessment of current urban form

### Views and Visual Characteristics

Kirkwall's relationship to the Bay of Kirkwall and its development on the north facing hill slopes around the bay, determines that the predominant aspect of the city is to the north and north-west. The historic core is relatively low-lying and consequently a number of the outer housing areas and approach roads overlook the city centre in which the Cathedral is the dominant landmark with a backcloth of the sea and northern isles. This is distinctly Kirkwall and many of the more recent developments that are located some distance from the town centre do not possess this unique quality.

- Orkney College due to its open setting, scale and contemporary style/colouring;
- Ayre Mill building complex (Ayre House and West House), a fine architectural composition dominating the approach to Kirkwall from the west;
- Papdale House and associated outbuildings and walled garden, another fine architectural composition with mature woodland setting above Kirkwall Grammar School;
- The Power Station – while the large main building is of architectural merit, the associated tanks/silos and external plant are more prominent from the west and detract from the foreground image of Kirkwall's historic centre and from the amenity of the Peedie Sea.

- The Harbour Ice Factory building;
- The Harbour Beacons.

A.60 There are woodland areas and groups of mature trees within the urban environment. These also represent important landmarks and are horizon features where they exceed the height of the buildings. The woodland of Papdale House is particularly prominent in this regard.

A.61 Views outwards from the city centre reach horizons now largely defined by the suburban housing developments where they have spread towards the tops of ridgelines. To the south-east and east of the Papdale area, however, there remains undeveloped farmland which is partially designated as 'Countryside around Town' and which forms a green agricultural backcloth and horizon when viewed from lower areas to the west.

A.62 The absence of trees and woodlands in the surrounding landscape determines that the edges of Kirkwall are harshly defined; mostly along field boundary lines by fences or walls. There has been no opportunity for more subtle integration with the surrounding landscape or for screening/framing the new housing developments with trees or woodland.

A.63 Examination of future housing expansion around Kirkwall's current limits will have to carefully address the above relationship. This subject will be examined in further detail at later stages of the project.

A.57

A.58

The relatively consistent scale of buildings in the centre of Kirkwall (2 – 2½ storeys) determines that the Cathedral, other churches and tall buildings stand out as landmarks above the surrounding housing. In addition, the rooftops of some grand houses are also notable. Of particular prominence in the central area are the following buildings:

- St. Magnus Cathedral;
- Patterson Church (OIC offices);
- OIC offices (former School on School Place);
- Bishop and Earls Palace;
- Sheriff's Court;
- Kirkwall Hotel;
- The Strynd
- Former Tourist Information Centre (on the axis of Castle Street).

A.59

In the wider setting of Kirkwall, a number of large buildings are prominent features, although not all of architectural interest. These include:

- Highland Park Distillery on high ground at the southern edge of Kirkwall; the scale of buildings and the distinctive tower is a particular landmark;
- the tall halls of residence buildings near Kirkwall Grammar School, given additional prominence by their ridgeline location and open landscape setting;
- Pickaquoey Centre due to its scale, isolation and green colouring;

## A. assessment of current urban form

### Greenspace, Trees and Woodland

- A.88 The previous figure indicates the distribution of Kirkwall's main public greenspaces and the main groupings of trees/woodland in the city. This demonstrates that the largest greenspaces are in the Papdale area and at the Peedie Sea/Pickaquooy. At Papdale there are large parkland areas including Bignold Park and the playing fields adjoining the Grammar School. These are largely grassland with recreational facilities.
- A.89 The former grounds of Papdale House now part of the Grammar School complex contains the most significant and prominent areas of mature woodland in Kirkwall. This is predominantly Sycamore and occupies the ridge line making it visible and an important background/horizon feature from views from the west.
- A.90 'The Willows' of the Papdale Burn, below Papdale Primary School is an attractive corridor of parkland extending closer to the city centre. It represents the only open section of the Burn remaining; above and below this valley the burn is culverted. This area of parkland and the adjacent primary school landscape also contain several mature Sycamores which are locally distinctive and attractive townscape features.
- A.91 The Peedie Sea and its associated parkland is strategically located and represents an essential feature of the city. It provides the open foreground across which the city centre and Cathedral can be appreciated. It also represents the remnant of Kirkwall's original tidal inlet, giving understanding to the city's historic pattern of development.

