

Cardrona Tower, Cardrona, near Peebles, Scottish Borders

Historic Building Recording

Report

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ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

Cardrona Tower, near Peebles, Scottish Borders

Historic Building Report

On Behalf of:	Forest Commission Scotland 1 Highlander Way Inverness IV2 7GB
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Appendix 1: Black & White and Colour Digital Photographic register

Appendix 2: Feature Register

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The Forestry Commission commissioned AOC Archaeology Group to undertake an historic buildings survey of Cardrona Tower near Peebles in the Scottish Borders in advance of a wider programme of consolidation and repair work on the building, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Cardrona Tower dates back to the mid-late 16th century, probably built by the Govan family. The land was later purchased by the Williamson family in the 18th century who built a new house to the east of the tower and it is thought that this is the time at which the tower house was abandoned. Today it survives as a roofless shell with a stair tower to the south-west side. The ground floor vaulted basement and the main first floor hall have remained intact and there are a number of original features – mostly doors, windows and pugholes – which also survive. A large gable survives on the south-east side, indicating that the tower originally had a steeply pitched roof, and a large projecting stone on the south-west exterior elevation indicates that there was probably either a parapet walk around the top of the tower or an additional corbelled turret on this side.

This report synthesises the results of a Level 4 historic building survey which has included a detailed photographic, written and drawn record of the building, including floor plans, interior and exterior elevations and sections.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site background

- 1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by the Forestry Commission to undertake a Level 4 historic building survey of Cardrona Tower near Peebles in the Scottish Borders which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Ref: 2784). These works have been undertaken in advance of further stabilisation and consolidation work. The tower was built in the mid-late 16th century and currently stands three/four storeys high. It is a roofless shell and was likely abandoned in the late 17th century when a new family brought the lands and erected a new house to the east of the present ruin.
- 1.1.2 The tower was briefly studied by David McGibbon and Thomas Ross in their late 19th century tome, *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland* and was further inspected by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments in Scotland (RCAHMS) in the 1960s. Both investigations culminated in a basic ground and first floor plan.

1.2 Site Location

- 1.2.1 Cardrona Tower is located in an overgrown clearing in the Cardrona Forest which is accessible via a forest track accessed from the visitor car park at Kirkburn approximately 4 miles to the south-east of the town of Peebles in the Scottish Borders (Figure 1). It is located at National Grid Reference: NT 30092 37863.

2 OBJECTIVE

- 2.1 The objective of this historic building survey was to create a baseline record of the surviving structural features of the tower to inform the future conservation management and consolidation of the structure.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 A Level 4 historic building record was undertaken on the structure, which includes archive research, preceding an on-site written, photographic and drawn record. A more detailed analysis of the methodology is provided below.

3.2 Archive research

- 3.2.1 A simple map regression was undertaken on the site using publicly accessible maps from the National Map Library of Scotland including all pre-Ordnance Survey maps and Ordnance Survey maps. These are represented chronologically, where referenced in the text, in Figures 2 - 5. Additional sources were examined to identify in more detail the history and development of the tower and to place the site into context. Secondary sources and previous studies were consulted in the library of the RCAHMS and the National Library of Scotland. A list of all sources consulted can be found in Section 8 at the end of this report.

3.3 Photography

- 3.3.1 General and detailed photographs were taken of the buildings in black and white print film using a 35mm single lens reflex camera with a 1m or 2m ranging pole for scale where access and health and safety allowed. A colour digital photographic record was also taken using a 35mm digital camera (Nikon D80) to a 10 mgpxl resolution. A register of all those photographs taken can be found in Appendix 1, and some of the digital photographs have been used to illustrate this report (Plates 1 – 46).

3.4 Written record

- 3.4.1 A written record of the buildings was made on site using AOC *pro forma* building recording sheets with comment on condition, construction, architectural and historic features, structural features and any evidence for phasing or function. In addition, each specific feature within the building was given a feature number (F1, F2, F3, etc) which can be cross-referenced between the text and the illustrations. The general written record is represented in the main body of this report and a more detailed feature record can be found in Appendix 2.

3.5 Archiving

- 3.5.1 The project has been recorded in the Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS (OASIS) site (Ref: 90330). An entry has also been submitted to Discovery and Excavation in Scotland (DES) publication for inclusion in the forthcoming 2011 volume. The original black and white photographs, together with a hard copy and a pdf digital version on CD of the report, has also been submitted to the National Archives of Scotland held at the RCAHMS building at Salisbury Place, Edinburgh. For all archiving queries, please contact admin@aocarchaeology.com.

4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The origins of Cardrona Tower

- 4.1.1 At one time the lands of Cardrona were known as Easter Hopkailzie and are first mentioned as Cardrona – so named after a British fort ‘Caerdronnach’ that existed over the brow of the hill – in 1465 (Chambers 1865, 393; Buchan 1927b, 547). 70 years later in 1534, Malcolm, Lord Fleming, granted the lands of Cardrona to William Govan. However, the Govans had been associated with Cardrona since the 14th century, as in 1358, the eastern portion of ‘Hopkailzie’ is mentioned in association with Laurence of Govan, Sherriff of Peebles (Buchan 1927b, 547). It seems probable that they built their new tower house at about the time that they came into official ownership of the lands and copied the border peel towers that already existed along the Tweed Valley. The tower would have reflected their wealth and standing, and formed part of the defensive system at a time when Border raids were both common and bloody.
- 4.1.2 Into the early 17th century, the Govans of Cardrona are mentioned in several documents which reflect the turbulent times and the strict reinforcements designed to bring peace by James VI. For example, in 1607, there is a complaint by the Privy Council that James Govan, proprietor of Cardrona, had been slain in a feud by John Scott, brother of Walter Scott of Tushielaw and that Scott had still not been brought to justice (Chambers 1864, 126). Another, dated to a similar period,

reports a complaint from John Govan of Cardrona denouncing some of his neighbours as rebels for the non-payment of 1200 merks, the outcome of which was that the King's Guards were ordered to apprehend them (*ibid*, 136).

4.2.2 In the 17th century (ca. 1685) the lands passed into the hands of the Williamson family, namely John Williamson of Hutcheonfield (RCAHMS 1967, 221; Chambers 1864, 393). Financial problems appear to be the reason that the Govans sold the land: '*...William Govan and his son, John, labouring under the embarrassment of sundry heritable bonds for borrowed money, were under the necessity of relinquishing Cardrona to John Williamson, a principal creditor, who, on assuming possession, discharged a variety of encumbrances on the estate.*' (*ibid*). The Govans were to die out by the early 19th century (*ibid*).

4.2.3 At some point after their acquisition of the lands, the Williamson family built a new house on the lower ground nearby; hence it is probable that Cardrona Tower was abandoned at this point. An inscribed stone with the date 1686 is built into the later house, which in its present form dates from a further rebuilding in 1840 (Historic Scotland 2010). The house stayed within the family (they later became the Kers) into the 20th century.

4.3 The ruin in the 18th and 19th centuries

4.3.1 The first depiction of a settlement at Cardrona in the historical map record is in William Edgar's 1741 map (Figure 2), followed shortly after by the more detailed map by General Roy in ca. 1747-55 (Figure 3). Both these maps appear to omit the tower (as it would have been a ruin) although the main 'new' house and surrounding land and gardens are identified. The 1794 Statistical Account of Scotland very briefly mentions Cardrona Tower as one of several tower houses in the parish at the time. It describes the tower houses as '*...a continued chain...so situated on both sides of the Tweed, as by the lights placed in them, intimation might be given from one to another of the approach of any foe.*' (Walker, 1794, 378).

4.3.2 On Thomson and Johnson's map of 1820 the tower is depicted to the west of the house (Figure 4). Then in 1834, the New Statistical Account of Scotland records that the estate of Cardrona is owned by a 'Miss Williamson', also mentioning that it has long been in possession of these families (Campbell 1834, 42). The 1855 Ordnance Survey map marks the ruin within the forest, which has been identified as an L-shaped building (albeit on the wrong alignment) with a rectangular enclosure of land to the north-west and south-east (Figure 5).

4.3.3 In the 1860s, in his study of Peeblesshire, William Chambers inserted an engraving of Cardrona Tower, which is assumed to be contemporary with the publishing of his volume in 1864 (see below). The ruin looks much as it does now, with the tall gable to the south-east elevation and the exposed remains of the windows on the north-east. The boundary wall to the south, however, survives more intact than it does today, it being now completely overgrown.

- 4.3.4 In the final years of the 19th century, scholars McGibbon and Ross visited the tower as part of the research for the *Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland Series* (1889, Volume 3, pp. 554 – 555). They identified the ruin as a three-storey L-shaped building constructed of whinstone with a circular stair tower and a vaulted basement. They also identified the remains and traces of the walls of a courtyard on the side next to the hill and produced a basic ground plan and first floor plan of the tower showing the layout of the obvious openings and detail of the stair (Figure 6). It is clear that at this time, the tower was not so overgrown as it is today, as was seen in Chambers' engraving, and the outline of the boundary wall of a much larger enclosure was seen more clearly to the south-east.



Etching of Cardrona Tower from the east, after Chambers 1864, 71

4.4 The 20th century

- 4.4.1 Buchan, in his study of Peeblesshire in the 1920s, describes the main door of the tower as having a 'well moulded' main entrance and also mentions that the 'upper floor' (ie, the main first floor hall) as being of wood (Buchan 1927a, 233). These mouldings no longer exist and any wood has long since been removed, although the joist sockets are still visible in the wall (see below). No plan was made, although it is assumed that these accounts were either first or second hand.
- 4.4.2 In the late 1950s/early 1960s, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments in Scotland (RCAHMS) undertook a more detailed study of the tower, including it in their book on Peeblesshire (RCAHMS 1967, 220-221). In that volume, they published a small ground and first floor

plan of the building identifying a small area of build around the main stairwell door as a later intervention (Figure 7), although no specific notes on the building accompany this record.

5 ARCHITECTURAL DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Cardrona Tower is now a roofless shell and survives up to three-four storeys in height, constructed of whinstone rubble throughout with larger rubble stones used for the quoins. The tower appears to be of a single phase of build, although there is a possible levelling course on the north-west elevation, which may represent an area of rebuilding or simply a more deliberate method of construction. The tower is rectangular in plan, with a small stair tower projection to the west on the south-west side (Plates 1 & 2). There are a number of original openings within the walls, although there are also signs of later phases with areas of blocking in these openings. The basic floor plans and sections (Figures 8 – 12) identify what is essentially a plain rectangular tower with a vaulted ground floor accessed via the south-west from the main stair tower (Figure 8) and first floor main hall over it, also accessed from the stair tower on the south-west side (Figure 9). No more floors above this survive, although the wallheads rise up to almost the second floor level on the north-west, north-east and south-west sides (Figure 10), whilst the south-east gable survives almost up to roof height revealing a steeply pitched roof (Figures 11 & 13).

5.1.2 The following descriptions should be seen in conjunction with the accompanying plans, elevations and sections (Figures 8 - 20) and photographic plates (1 – 46). As mentioned above in the methodology, each feature within the building has been given a unique feature number (F1 – F24) which can be cross-referenced between the text and illustrations. A separate feature register is provided in Appendix 2, which gives basic dimensions and further descriptions where not elaborated specifically in the descriptions below.

5.2 The North-west elevation

5.2.1 The north-west elevation of the tower is the first view one has when approached from the current trackway (Figure 13; Plate 3). The ground floor window, F1, looks to be either an inserted window, or one that has been reduced in width because of the distinct area of blocking to either side (Plate 4). Above this on the first floor is a larger window, F2, the relieving arch of which has partially collapsed (Plate 5). There also appears to be a large area of blocking between the windows with a larger stone on the east side. The only other feature of note on this elevation is the levelling course F3 seen on the east side of the wall near the upper levels of the remains (Plate 6).

5.3 The South-west elevation

5.3.1 There are two aspects to the south-west elevation of the tower. To the north side is the single bay of the stair tower which has no obvious features, although there is an area of re-mortaring on the ground floor (Figure 14; Plates 7 & 8). To the south, the main tower has a number of features including a first floor window, F4. Although the surround has deteriorated, the relieving arch is still

partially visible (Plate 9). In the top level of the wallhead at the southern corner is a projecting area of stonework, F5 (Plate 10). This probably depicts the position of a parapet walk around the top of the tower, or the base of a corbelled tower; more will be discussed with regard to this feature in Section 6. The other features on this wall include a small slot in the wall about mid-way between the floor levels (F6) although very regular so could be simply caused by a gap from a fallen stone (Plate 11). At ground level, there are also some possible pug-holes (F7), which would have aided in the original construction of the tower. Given the whinstone used in the construction, the difficulty of creating defined square holes would have been difficult, and therefore more wedge-shaped holes have been created within the sharp-edged rubble during the main construction (Plate 12).

5.4 The South-east elevation

5.4.1 There are two elements to the south-east elevation. To the west side is the projecting main entrance to the stair tower (Figure 15; Plates 13 & 14). To the east is the elevation of the main tower (Plate 14). The stair tower entrance is a single bay with a number of openings at each floor level. The main entrance (F8) to the stair tower, Room 0/2, is off-set from its relieving arch on the north side, and this is recorded as being a later repair of the mid-20th century (RCAHMS 1967, 221). The mortar around the edge of the doorway and in the relieving arch certainly looks different to that seen elsewhere in the building. The entranceway curves in to the south side giving entry to the circular stair within (Plate 15). Above this is a crude window F9 with no discernible surround, probably robbed out (Plate 16). Above this feature is a moulded surround for a plaque (F10) for an armorial shield (now removed) (Plate 17). At the very top of the surviving wallhead is another window F11, a flat rectangular window with a large moulded surround surviving the north-east side; although those to the opposite side, this has been removed on the other side (Plate 18). This forms the only real remains of any dressed stonework on the openings that survives (apart from F10) and it has remained so probably due to its inaccessibility!

5.4.2 On the south-east elevation of the main tower, only one feature exists, a small slit window on the ground floor, F12 (Plate 19). Splaying widely to the interior, this has relatively large flat surround stones.

5.5 The North-east elevation

5.5.1 The north-east elevation and has no features at ground floor level, although there are two windows at first floor level, F13 & F14 and another pughole F26 (Figure 16; Plate 20). The relieving arch over window F13 survives although the surround stones have been robbed (Plate 21). The base of the window has been blocked with a smoother-faced stone. Window F14 has less survival to the surround (Plate 22).

5.6 The interior: Room 0/1 (vaulted chamber)

5.6.1 The vaulted ground floor room (0/1) is a rectangular room 7.74m x 4.46m in size (measured in the centre) with a stone vaulted roof (Figure 8; Plates 23 & 24). Interestingly the room is approximately 0.15m shorter on the south-west side than the north-east creating a rhomboid shape as opposed to a pure rectangle. The room now has an earthen floor which has probably been built up considerably from its original floor level. More intrusive investigation/excavation would be needed

to identify whether a stone-flagged floor still survives. The windows in the north-west (F1) and south-east (F12) elevations can be clearly identified (see Figures 17 & 19). Window F1 (Plate 25) is set high in the wall, identifying just how much the ground level to the exterior of this wall has built up (see Figure 13). The top of the lintel lies behind the stones of the vaulted roof and the stone blocking seen to the exterior elevation is also visible. Window F12 in the south-east wall is very widely splayed to the interior to offer the maximum amount of light for the smallest of openings (Figure 19; Plate 26). It is possible that window F1 was once identical or similar to F12, with a later area of blocking put in after the removal of the surround stones.

- 5.6.2 The main entrance into this room is to the north of the south-west wall through a wide doorway F20 (Figure 18; Plate 27). The interior of doorway F20 is built into the main vault of the roof, although to the exterior (south-west facing) side it has a small relieving arch. On the north-east and south-east walls are a number of pugholes within the stone rubble build (F21) (see Figures 18 & 20; Plates 28 & 29). It is curious, given their location quite low in the wall, what their function could be.

5.7 The interior: Room 0/2 (ground floor stair)

- 5.7.1 This room is the base of the stairwell, the entry to which is in the south-east elevation through the main doorway F8 (Figure 8). From here, access is provided to the Room 0/1 to the north-east through door F20 and to the north-west is the main turnpike stair (Plate 30). The stairs are all in a poor condition at the corners to the joint of the exterior wall, although clearly defined.

5.8 The interior: Room 1/1 (main hall)

- 5.8.1 The main hall, situated over Room 0/1 encompasses the entire floor space of the building and is 7.75m x 4.50m in size (Figure 9; Plates 31 & 32). The north-west elevation has one feature, the large window F2, all the surrounds of which have been robbed (Plate 33). The top of the stone blocking on the exterior elevation is partially exposed here at the base of the window.
- 5.8.2 Entered on the south-west side at the top of the surviving turnpike stair is a wide doorway (F15) (Figure 18; Plate 34). It has no specific dressed surround, although a large gap in the south side indicates that it once had a large lintel stone which has now been robbed. The stone relieving arch has survived, supporting the doorway above it, F23, to the second floor. Further along this wall to the south side is another window F4 which is much more clearly defined to the interior rather than the exterior (Plate 35). It is set in a splayed bay with a stone rubble recessed area below it with a stone relieving arch over. As with F15, this arch supports another opening F24 above it and offset to the north side. Between these two features, and above window F4, is a row of slots (F19) which would have taken joists (Plate 36). However, there are no corresponding beam slots on the opposite north-east wall.
- 5.8.3 The south-east gable is dominated by the large rectangular fireplace and remains of the flue, F16, together with a small section of projecting walling (F17) to the west side forming the original west side of the fireplace F16 (Figure 19; Plates 37 & 38).

In the north-east wall are the two windows seen from the exterior (Figure 20; Plate 39). To the south is window F14 which looks to be similar to window F4 on the opposite wall with an area of thin stone walling below the main window bay forming a recessed window embrasure (Plate 40). To the north is window F13 which is in a very poor condition, and may be a later insertion with a cement repaired sill and rather crude whinstone lintel (Plate 41). In the corner of the room are two small niches or aumbrys (F18), one above the other (Plate 42). There are two more interesting features along this wall on the north side – two small pugholes (F25) - located near the present floor level, one of which is located beneath window F14 (Plate 43). These were likely to be a part of the original construction of the tower, small pugholes needed for the scaffolding to erect the upper storeys.

5.9 The interior: Room 1/2, the stairwell

- 5.9.1 Rising up from the ground floor, the stairs only reach as far as the doorway F15 into the main hall (1/1) (Figure 9). There is a single feature, window F9, in the south-east wall of this curved tower which has a very basic surround with two large stone lintels (Plate 44).
- 5.9.2 The remains of the steps on the south-west side of the stair tower have gone and now only survive as a scar in the wall (Plate 45).

5.10 The interior: the second floor

- 5.10.1 All levels above the main hall have not survived, although the walls which reach to this height retain a number of key features which originally belonged to a second floor level. In the south-west wall, above doorway F15, is another opening F23, an entrance from the (now demolished stair) to the upper bed chambers (Figure 10 & 18; see Plate 34). As with window F14 on the north-east elevation, the base of this doorway looks to have been crudely consolidated with cement render, with a large slot in one side to take the large stone of a step or base stone. Above this, the doorway is generally straight. Equally, above the window F4 and slightly off-set from it is another opening, F24 (see Figure 18; Plates 35 & 36). Also fairly straight, the wallhead above it is stepped back identifying the possible position of a lintel.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Peel Towers of the Borders

6.1.1 During the 12th – 16th centuries, the Borders region suffered from raids and attacks by both English and Scots. Hence there was a long tradition of building defensive structures known as ‘peel towers’ or ‘bastle’ towers (Chambers 1864). These towers were buildings of refuge in times of raids and also acted as beacons along the valley to alert of an oncoming attack. The word ‘peel’ or ‘pele’ stems from the word for a timber palisade, a purely defensive structure relating to the castles of the Norman period (Simpson 1961, 241). It has never been clear from contemporary references to peel towers whether they were anything more than a place of refuge. However, Hornyold-Strickland (1954, 44 – 54) argued that a peel tower was a defensive *house* which was permanently lived in. Other scholars have come to the conclusion that, although the tower would have been reasonably habitable with a large fireplace in the main hall, the family, or at least their armed retainers, would have largely lived *outside* the tower in huts, resorting to the tower in times of refuge (Chambers 1864, 70). Whatever the exact living arrangements may have been, Cardrona certainly fits into the definition of this type of tower house, few examples of which survive that have not been later converted into larger fortified houses in more peaceful times from the 17th century onwards.

6.1.2 These tower houses were steeped in a long tradition stretching back to the 12th century of tall, almost monolithic structures in stone rubble, rectangular, three-four storeys in height with a vaulted basement and turnpike stair. Recent studies have identified that there were at least 80 of these towers in the Borders region, 5 of which remain intact with 20 more now in a ruinous condition (Reid 2006, 13). Chambers identified the close relationship between the adjacent towers in the region: ‘...*On the line of the Tweed with its lateral valleys, the towers are placed at intervals of a mile or two miles, from the lower to the higher parts of the county...Thence the communication through Peeblesshire was kept up, generally zig-zagging across the river, to Scrogbank, Caberstone, Bold, Plora, Purvis Hill, Pirn, Traquair, Grierston, Ormiston, Cardrona, Nether Horsburgh, Peebles, and Neidpath.*’ (Chambers 1864, 70). The Statistical Account for the parish in 1795 goes further, saying that these towers formed ‘...*a continued chain...so situated on both sides of the Tweed, as by the lights placed in them, intimation might be given from one to another of the approach of any foe...*’ (Walker 1794, 378). This was referred to as a ‘beacon stance’ and located in an open turret of the tower. Examples of this feature have been found in Elshieshiels Tower and Johnnie Armstrong’s Tower in Dumfriesshire (Simspon 1961, 241). Whether the landowners built peel towers because they were community-minded is debated by some, Dunbar (1966, 44) suggesting that ‘...each was erected where it might serve the individual interests of the owner...’ rather than serve an interconnecting system of communication. Whatever the motivation, it seems clear from the historical evidence that Cardrona formed part of a network of towers with a beacon stance, ready to alert its neighbours to an attack by the English.

6.2 Cardrona Tower in the 16th century

- 6.1.2 We have suggested above that the tower was first constructed when the Govans became formal owners of the land in 1534. They may well have built the tower under the prompting of Parliament. In 1535, an Act was passed which required that men of the Borders with a 'hundred pound' of land should build a sufficient barmkin of stone and lime for defence of his lands together with a tower '*...if he think it sufficient... [and that] all other landed men of smaller rent and revenue build peels and great strengths as they please...completed within two years...*' (quoted in Simpson 1961, 241). Again, the use of the word 'peel' could mean anything from a protective palisade and barmkin to a fully-fledged tower house.

6.3 Cardrona Tower - a peel tower?

- 6.1.3 Is Cardrona a typical example of a peel tower? This can be characterised as a building three-four storeys in height with a vaulted ground floor (used mainly as a storeroom) and with walls between 1.22m – 3m in thickness. At Cardrona the walls are about 1.25m thick at the ground floor level so they were relatively thin compared to contemporary examples. The windows on the ground floor would have been designed with the defence of the building in mind, hence small slit windows such as window F12 in the south-east gable. We have suggested above that window F1 probably originated as small splayed slit window, the large surround stones of which were later removed and the hole filled in. The window may have been deliberately widened to allow more light into the store room as the tower adopted a less defensive function after its abandonment in favour of the new house in the late 17th century.

On the first floor was always the main hall (Room 1/1), taking up the entire floor space of the tower with a large fireplace (F16) at one end. It would have been a place for family, guests and retainers to occupy as living and dining space, sometimes with small cupboards or niches (such as feature F18 on the north-east interior elevation) set within the walls.

The second floor (Room 2/1) would have been used for the family as sleeping quarters. The turnpike stair would have ascended right to roof level – the scars in the stonework in the walls of the stair tower and the remains of protruding stones indicate that this was the case – and this would have afforded access to the roof. Until the invention and development of guns in the 17th century, much of the defensive capabilities of a tower house was from the roof level (Simpson 1964, 216). The protruding stone F5 on the southern corner may be the remains of some form of platform or parapet walk, possibly where the beacon stance was positioned. However, Cruft *et al* (2006, 150) call this feature a '*...corbled angled turret...*' and consider that the walls were '*...too thin...to have carried a parapet walk.*' (*ibid*). As described above the walls of Cardrona are at the thin end of the spectrum for peel tower walls but this does not necessarily mean that they could not have supported a beacon stance on a parapet walk.

6.2 The phasing, development and architectural features at Cardrona Tower

- 6.2.1 On brief inspection, the main build of the tower looks to be all of one phase and it is assumed, based on current evidence, that it was occupied for at least 100 years. After the Restoration, better relations with England and political stability in general aided the transition from defensive stronghold to comfortable fortified house. This more than often led to the adaptation and expansion of the earlier towers, but at Cardrona, the Williamsons abandoned the building in favour of a new house to the east. Thereafter it was left to ruin, and little obvious changes or alterations were made. The whinstone rubble build looks to be contemporary throughout with the exception of a possible levelling course to the north-west elevation which may be a section of rebuilt wall, or simply part of the general construction. There are also a number of blocked and altered openings in the building, namely the blocking surrounding windows F1 and F2. F2 may also have been a window expanded to provide more light into this floor. Both these adaptations suggest that the tower may have been put to a non-defensive use after the new house was built. In some cases, peel towers had their main access door on the first floor, with a timber ladder providing access, which could have been the nature of the first floor opening F2, later converted to a window. However, the existence of the stair down to the ground floor and through doorway F8 suggests this was not the case, and there is no evidence of a hatch in the ground floor vault Room 0/1 from the main hall.
- 6.2.2 The higher the window, the larger they became as there was less likelihood of attack at this level and more freedom could be given to window size. Unfortunately, the main surrounds to the openings have not survived well enough to identify whether there was any decoration or architectural embellishment of the windows and doorways, such as ogee-shaped or pointed arches, or even corbelled turrets to the top of the tower. Many contemporary towers do have such embellishments and it is a possibility that the Govans, being such a prominent family in the area, would have been able to afford them as well. However, if these features did exist, they have been robbed, leaving in many cases a rubble core surround to the openings.
- 6.2.3 The internal features offer some insights into the construction of the tower, namely the pugholes identified in various places in the building into which timber scaffolding poles would have been inserted. The present ground level is almost certainly much higher than the original ground level, so more pugholes may exist, although those identified (features F21) were the only ones seen at the time of survey. In some tower houses, large corbel stones were located at a height just below the spring of the arch of the vault on each long elevation so that planks could be laid across to provide adequate access to build the vault, such as that seen recently as investigations at another Borders peel tower, albeit on the other side of the Border, at East Kyloe in Northumberland (Sproat 2010). On the first floor, two larger pugholes, F25, were identified on the north-east interior elevation in the main hall, Room 1/1. Externally, two more pugholes (F7) were located to the south-west elevation. Given the unevenness of the type of stonework used in the rubble build, these amount to little more than fashioned slots within the main construction.
- 6.2.4 In terms of finishing, the tower was probably originally harled with a combination of lime mortar and aggregate to make the stonework waterproof (Reid 2006, 23). No evidence of any of this harling was found; it is unlikely that it weathered away or was removed centuries ago. The

moulded dressings of the openings would probably have been exposed, especially the moulded stone shield (F10) which would have held an armorial panel.

- 6.2.5 To the exterior of the tower, there is clear evidence of some other structure adjoining the south-east side. This may form part of more enclosed courtyard, for accommodation of servants, retainers, etc, as well as a safeguard for cattle in case of raids in the form of a barmkin, a stone built protective wall. McGibbon & Ross's plan of the tower ca. 1897 (see Figure 6) shows that this was approximately 16m x 11m in size, with an opening on the north-west side. The whole enclosure would have been fairly well-defended, with a steep slope beyond the remains of the wall on this south-west side, but more exposed on the relatively flatter ground to the north-east.

7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 This report has recorded in detail all the structural and architectural elements of this fine example of a peel tower house in the Borders of Scotland. Few of these towers have survived and therefore examples of monuments such as Cardrona Tower need to be maintained and preserved before they, as with many of their contemporaries, are resigned to the realms of archaeology. A wider comparison of peel towers of the Borders region would place Cardrona Tower in appropriate context, as would a more thorough investigation of the history of the Govan family.
- 7.3 Although little of the decorative stonework survives, the monument still stands out as a tower of strength in a barren landscape, a perfect example of one of the few remaining heritage assets of its type in southern Scotland.

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1745	Herman Moll	<i>Tweeddale, alias the Shire of Peebles</i>
ca. 1747 – 55	General Roy	<i>Military Survey of Scotland</i>
1775	M Armstrong	<i>County of Peebles or Tweeddale</i>
1820	John Thomson	<i>Peeble-Shire</i>
1821	John Ainslie	<i>Ainslie's Map of the Southern Part of Scotland</i>
1855	Ordnance Survey	

Cardrona Tower, near Peebles

Appendix 1

**Black & White Print and Colour Digital
Photographic record**

Appendix 1

Black and White Film & Digital Photographic register

<i>Film/Frame</i>	<i>Elevation/Room</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>Date</i>
1/1	SW Elevation	General view of main tower	SW	11/11/2010
1/2 - 3	SW Elevation	General view	SW	11/11/2010
1/4 - 5	Room 0/1	Detail of doorway F20 in the south-west elevation	NE	11/11/2010
1/6 - 7	Room 0/2	Detail of relieving arch over door F20 in the north-east wall leading into Room 0/1	SW	11/11/2010
1/8 - 9	Room 0/2	General view of water tower wall	SE	11/11/2010
1/10	Room 0/1	General view of floor	W	11/11/2010
1/11 - 12	Room 0/1	Detail of window F12 in the south-east elevation	NW	11/11/2010
1/13	Room 0/1	Detail of window F1 in the north-west elevation	SE	11/11/2010
1/14 - 15	Room 0/1	Detail of window F12 in the south-east elevation (closer view than shots 11 - 12)	NW	11/11/2010
1/16	-	Mishot	-	11/11/2010
1/17 - 18	Room 0/1	Detail of stonework forming vaulted roof	NNW	11/11/2010
1/19 - 20	Room 0/1	Detail of stonework forming vaulted roof	NW	11/11/2010
1/21 - 22	Room 0/1	General view	S	11/11/2010
1/23 - 25	Room 0/1	General view	N	11/11/2010
1/26 - 28	Room 0/1	General view	W	11/11/2010
1/29	Room 0/1	General view	E	11/11/2010
1/30 - 31	Room 0/1	General view	SE	11/11/2010
1/32 - 33	Room 0/1	General view	NW	11/11/2010
1/34 - 35	SW Elevation	General view	SW	11/11/2010
1/36	-	Film 1 Registration shot	-	11/11/2010
2/1	NW Elevation	General view of tower in its setting	NW	11/11/2010
2/2	-	General view of tower in its setting	E	11/11/2010
2/3	-	Mis-shot	-	11/11/2010
2/4 - 9	-	General view of tower in its setting, including some closer views largely looking at the NW Elevation	NNE	11/11/2010
2/10 - 11	NW Elevation	General view	NW	11/11/2010
2/12 - 13	NE Elevation	Detail of window F14	NE	11/11/2010
2/14 - 15	NE Elevation	Detail of window F13	NE	11/11/2010
2/16 - 17	NE Elevation	General view	NE	11/11/2010
2/18 - 19	NE Elevation	General view	E	11/11/2010
2/20 - 21	SE Elevation	General view	E	11/11/2010
2/22 - 25	SE Elevation	Detail of window F12	SE	11/11/2010
2/26 - 27	SE Elevation	General view	SE	11/11/2010
2/28 - 29	SE Elevation (Stair Tower)	Detail of plaque surround F10	SE	11/11/2010
2/30 - 31	SE Elevation (Stair Tower)	Detail of doorway F8	SE	11/11/2010
2/32 - 33	SE Elevation (Stair Tower)	General view	SE	11/11/2010
2/34 - 35	-	General view	S	11/11/2010
2/36	-	Film 2 Registration	-	11/11/2010
3/1	-	General view looking through from Room 1/1 (through window F2) looking at the scanning machine	S	16/11/2011
3/2 - 3	Room 1/2	General view looking down the stairwell from Doorway F15	NE	16/11/2011
3/4 - 5	Room 1/2	General view of wall of stairwell, showing the scar of the previous stair	NE	16/11/2011

		up to the second floor (now collapsed)		
3/6 – 7	Room 1/1	Detail of Window F2 in the NW elevation	SE	16/11/2011
3/8 – 9	Room 1/1	General view of flue F16 in the SE gable	NW	16/11/2011
3/10 -11	Room 1/1	General view of the SW elevation	N	16/11/2011
3/12 – 13	Room 1/1	Detail of two small pugholes – F25 – to the base of the NE elevation on the W side	SW	16/11/2011
3/14 – 15	Room 1/1	General view of the SW elevation showing windows F13 & F14	SE	16/11/2011
3/16 – 17	Room 1/1	Detail of window F14 in the NE elevation – also shows small pughole F25 below it	SW	16/11/2011
3/18 – 19	Room 1/1	General view of NE elevation showing windows F13 & F14	W	16/11/2011
3/20 – 21	Room 1/1	Detail of window F13 in the NE elevation	SW	16/11/2011
3/22 – 23	Room 1/1	Detail of niches F18 in the far E side of the NE elevation	SW	16/11/2011
3/24 – 25	Room 1/1	Remains of former stone partition wall F17 surviving on the SE gable to the S side	NW	16/11/2011
3/26 – 27	Room 1/1	General view of the SW elevation	E	16/11/2011
3/28 – 29	Room 1/1	Detail of doorway F15 and doorway above it, F23, on the SW elevation to the far W side	NE	16/11/2011
3/30 – 31	Room 1/1	Detail of window F4 in the SE elevation to the far E side	NE	16/11/2011
3/32 – 33	Room 1/1	General view of the SE gable showing flue F16 and the broken-off stone partition wall F17	NW	16/11/2011
3/34 – 35	Room 1/1	General view of NW wall showing window F2	SE	16/11/2011
3/36	-	Film 3 Registration Shot	-	16/11/2011
4/1 – 10	-	Unassigned	-	-
4/11	Room 0/1	Detail of small pughole F21 near the base of the SW elevation	NE	16/11/2011
4/12	Room 0/1	Detail of small pughole F21 near the base of the NE wall	SW	16/11/2011
4/13 – 14	NW Elevation	Detail of window F2	NW	16/11/2011
4/15 – 16	NW Elevation	Detail of window F1	NW	16/11/2011
4/17 – 18	SW Elevation	Detail of small pugholes F7	SW	16/11/2011
4/19 – 20	SW Elevation	Detail of small slot F6 in wall	SW	16/11/2011
4/21 – 22	NW Elevation	Detail of top of wall to the SW side showing the levelling course F3	NW	16/11/2011
4/23 – 24	SE Elevation Stair Tower	Detail of window F11 to the uppermost area of the stair tower wall	SE	16/11/2011
4/25 – 26	SW Elevation	Detail of the projecting course of stonework F5 on the far SE side	W	16/11/2011
4/27 – 28	Room 2/1	General view looking up at the stair tower remains	NNW	16/11/2011
4/29 – 30	-	Mis-shot	-	-
4/31 – 33	Room 1/2	General view looking through doorway F15 into Room 1/1	SW	16/11/2011
4/34 – 35	Room 2/1	General view looking up at the stairwell showing the remains of the protruding steps	NW	16/11/2011
4/36	-	Film 4 Registration Shot	-	16/11/2011

Cardrona Tower, near Peebles

Appendix 2

Feature Register

Appendix 2

Feature Register

Feature No	Elevation	Room	Description	Measurements (width x height in mm)
F1	NW	Room 0/1	Ground floor window, probably an original slit window (as with F12 in the opposite wall) although the surround has been robbed out and the area round the opening has been stone-blocked.	Exterior: 519 x 554; Interior: 445 x 401
F2	NW	Room 1/1	First floor window, now open to the top, and has a substantial area of blocking between the base of it and window F1 seen on the exterior elevation.	Exterior: 762 x 2121; Interior: 1285 x 2120
F3	NW	-	Levelling course seen in the top of the elevation on the south-west side.	N/A, although width of area with levelling course: 4671
F4	SW	Room 1/1	First floor window located in the south-east side of the south-west elevation, the surround has been robbed and is more defined to the interior where the relieving arch survives.	Exterior: 1197 x 1310; Interior: 1150 x 2200
F5	SW	-	Projecting stonework located at the top of the wallhead on the south side indicating the existence of a possible original projecting walkway at the top of the tower.	967 x 163
F6	SW	-	Small slot in wall.	401 x 136 x 100 depth
F7	SW	-	Crude pug-holes in the wall at ground floor level.	Average: 134 x 60
F8	SE	Room 0/2	Main doorway leading to the stair tower, looks to have been altered and/or repaired on the south-west side. Relieving arch over.	947 x 1862
F9	SE	Room 1/2	Small window above door (F8) leading into the main stair tower, the surround has been robbed.	532 x 720
F10	SE	-	Remains of small plaque above window F9 with remains of a moulded surround, would have originally probably held an armorial shield of the Govan family.	604 x 596
F11	SE	Room 2/2	Window in the stair tower	675 x 463
F12	SE	Room 0/1	Small window to the base of the south-east gable, a small slit window, splayed to the interior, to provide ventilation to the storeroom whilst providing an impenetrable opening.	73 x 595
F13	NE	Room 1/1	First floor window on the north-east elevation. The exterior is ill-defined, although as with F4 on the opposite wall, is better defined to the interior with a relieving arch and area of stone blocking below.	Exterior: 1239 x 1024; Interior: 1080 to inside of splay, 1202 to outside of splay x 2080 (including blocking, which is 830 in height)

F14	NE	Room 1/1	First floor window on the north-east elevation, although looks to have been altered and repaired, or even inserted. No obvious surround, the sill has been repaired in a cement render.	Exterior: 1268 x 971 Interior: 917 x 654
F15	SW	Room 1/1	Doorway into room from the main stair tower in the NW wall on the N side with relieving arch over.	940 x 1580
F16	SE	Room 1/1	Remains of fireplace and flue in the SE elevation, which only partially survives, the side walls of the fireplace (F17 on the south-west side) now gone. Flue goes up to the top of the gable.	1994 (at first floor level) x 7248
F17	SE	Room 1/1	Remains of a former stone wall now represented as a broken-away section of wall against the south-east gable elevation, forming the south-west side of the fireplace of the main hall.	580 x 4401
F18	SE	Room 1/1	Two small niches, one above the other, in the far south end of the north-east elevation.	Bottom niche: 600 x 560; Top niche: 300 x 140
F19	SW	Room 1/1	Array of beam slots on the south-west elevation, although there is no equivalent on the opposite north-east elevation. Located at the height of the top of the window in this room.	Average width 200, heights range from 170 – 200 and depths range from 180 - 340
F20	SW	Room 0/1	Doorway between bottom floor of stairwell (Room 0/1) and the vaulted ground floor room (0/1).	955 x 1832
F21	SW & NE	Room 0/1	Two small stone-blocked pugholes to the south end of the north-east and south-west elevations respectively.	North-west wall: 260 x 180 x 180 depth; South-east wall: 150 x 280 x 200 depth
F22	NE	-	Small pughole located to the top right of window F14 with defined surround.	110 x 220
F23	SW	Room 2/1	Doorway on the north-end of the south-east elevation located above the main doorway into the main hall (Room 1/1) F15.	916 x 1554
F24	SW	Room 2/1	Opening, probably a window, partially surviving on the south-west elevation set above window F4 of the main hall (Room 1/1) F4.	840 x 985
F25	NE	Room 1/1	Two small pugholes in the north end of the north-east elevation.	Northernmost pughole: 220 x 104 x 110 depth - also located 140 above the present ground level; Southern pughole, beneath window F14: 220 x 104 x 110 depth – is also 360 above the present ground level

Cardrona Tower, near Peebles

Appendix 3

DES Entry

Appendix 3: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland (DES) Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Scottish Borders Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Cardrona Tower
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 21714
PARISH:	Traquair
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Diana Sproat
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Historic Building Survey
NMRS NO(S):	NT33NW 2
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Medieval Tower House
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None.
NGR	NT 30092 37863
START DATE	11 th November 2010
END DATE	16 th November 2010
PREVIOUS WORK	RCAHMS Survey, 1958, reported in the RCAHMS book on <i>Peeblesshire</i> (1967, Volume 2, pp. 220-221).
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:	<p>A detailed historic building survey was undertaken on the remains of the 16th century tower house at Cardrona in the parish of Traquair near Peebles in advance of consolidation works on the building by the Forestry Commission. An element of archive research and map-regression was undertaken on the tower, which preceded a detailed photographic, written and drawn record of the building, the latter of which consisted of a 3D scanner survey to create floor plans and internal and external elevation drawings and sections.</p> <p>The tower is accessed to two storeys in height with a ground floor vaulted basement with the floor of the first floor 'main hall' still surviving. It is L-shaped in plan, with a tall stair tower attached to the north side of the south-west elevation. Constructed of whinstone, the south-east still retains much of its steeply pitched gable, with wallheads surviving to the second and third floor level in places. A projecting piece of stonework on the south side of the south-west elevation indicates a possible parapet walk or the foundation of a corbelled tower.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None.
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None.
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	The Forestry Commission
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	admin@aocscot.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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