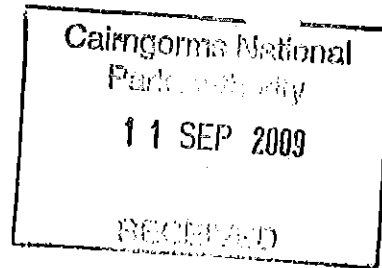


Grigor-Taylor Associates Ltd,
West Steading,
Upper Fowls,
By Alford,
Aberdeenshire,
AB33 8NU.



Tel: 01224 865900
31st August 2009

Dear Sirs

09021 OLD BALLOCH SCHOOLHOUSE, GLENBUCHAT.

At the request of your client, Mr Duncan, our Messer's McKenzie & Willis visited the above property on the 25th August 2009. The purpose of the inspection was to assess the condition of the existing building structure and determine its suitability for refurbishment/conversion. The weather at the time of the inspection was warm and dry.

The old Balloch School House consists of two adjoining rectangular blocks with a corrugated steel sheet outhouse on the northern gable, refer figure 1, the outhouse is proposed to be removed so is not discussed further under this report.

The building is of old solid stone rubble masonry with the south east & west outer faces roughcast. The northern gable has historically been re-pointed. The inner faces of the building are of exposed rubble masonry. All roof, wall, window and door timbers have been historically removed & in terms of timber members only the lintels remain.

The walls are generally fairly straight & plumb. The lintels in the west elevation above the windows have started dislodging, probably caused by historical movement in the now removed roof structure. Where the internal walls are exposed the mortar in the walls has generally decayed to no more than a grey sand that can be freely raked out. In the east wall in parts, around half the internal thickness of the wall has collapsed, refer fig 2. While the other internal walls are still currently intact, from random samples, generally the mortar can be freely removed and in effect has structurally failed. All the lintels in the building should be considered unsuitable and be replaced as part of any future renovation works.

There were no obvious signs of the foundations stone pinning's but these are likely to be shallow and consideration of this should be given by the engineer/architect in any future alteration works as any significant undermining of same could require the underpinning of the foundation stones.

The proposed development involves an element of digging into the ground to the east of the property and consideration should be given to incorporating a cut off drain local to any new build to direct water around the proposed building.

Figure 3 shows the external north gable with a crack to the North West corner.

Figure 4 shows the south west external face with signs of cracking @ the head of the wall & local to the window lintels.

Figure 5 shows the east elevation with local areas of bossed cracked render. Where the stone wall is exposed the mortar was generally found to have degenerated and be loose.

Figure 6 shows the internal north gable.

Figure 7 shows the south east of the building.

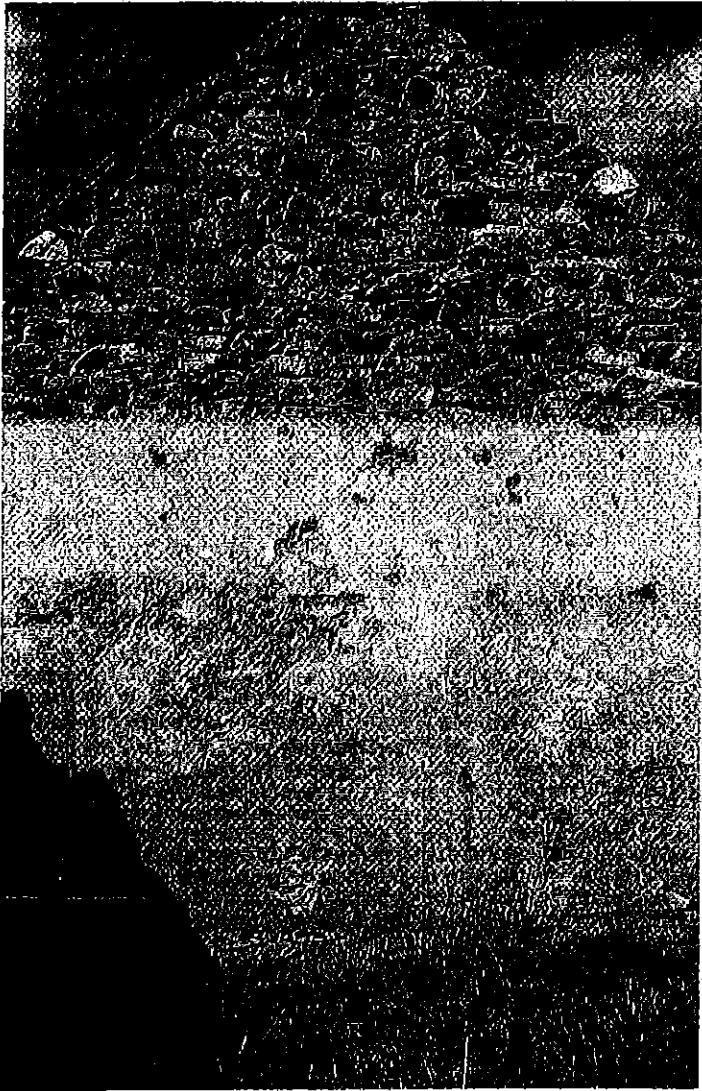


Figure 7



FIGURE 5

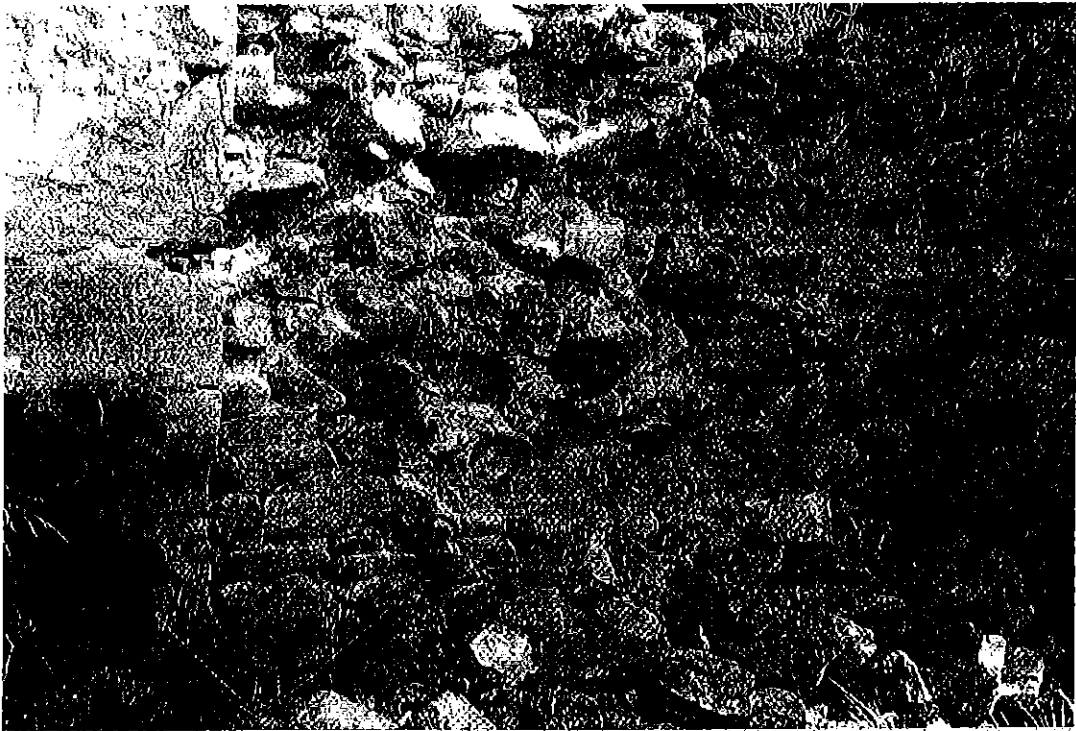


FIGURE 6



FIGURE 3

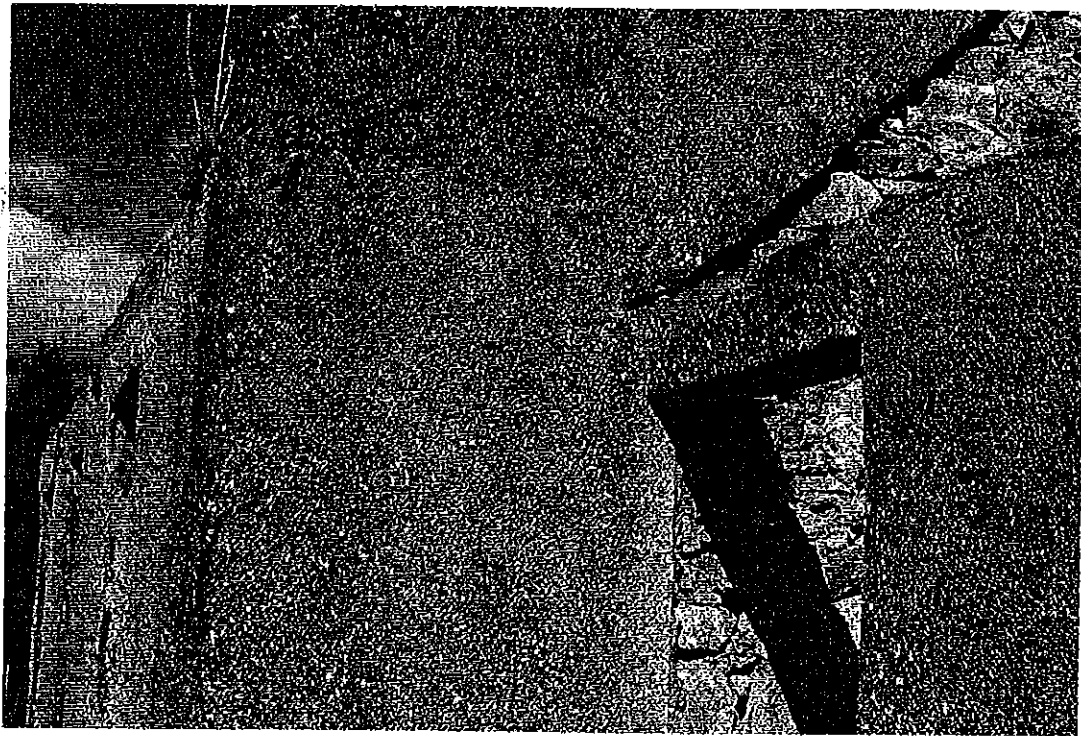


FIGURE 4



Figure 1



Figure 2

Recommendations

While the walls are generally plumb it is thought that due to the degenerated condition of the mortar, as a minimum considerable time and care would be required to restore the walls. We would recommend inspection by a experienced stonemason to comment on the practicalities of making good the walls in their current condition, as on opening up of the walls and starting to re point/mortar the walls it may be large areas if not all of the walls may require to be taken down and rebuilt to safely and permanently make good the structural integrity of the walls. From discussion with the mason any areas of the existing walls that can be safely retained should be thoroughly picked and re pointed to remove all loose mortar. All joints to be raked to a minimum of 20mm. The selection of materials for new or replacement stone masonry should be in accordance with BS 5390 : Code of practise for Stone Masonry .

If it is considered impractical for areas of the walls to be repaired any new walls should be built of suitable new foundations and suitably tied/jointed, to the engineer's details.

The architect should be consulted on the selection of a suitable mortar in keeping with a building of this nature.

All lintels in the building should be replaced.

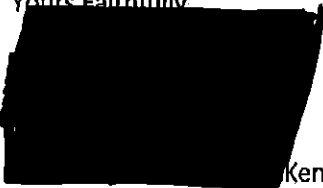
Original foundation stone pinning's likely to be shallow. Should areas of the existing walls be proposed to remain trial pits at various locations should be undertaken prior to the start of the works to allow for due consideration of the proposed finished levels and the extent of any underpinning relative to same.

Note

This report is based on a visual walk round inspection of exposed surfaces of the walls that are reasonably accessible. We have not inspected woodwork or any other parts of the structure which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible and we are therefore unable to report that any such part of the property is free from defect.

We trust the above is suitable for your current purposes. Should you have any queries please contact the undersigned

Yours Faithfully



Mckenzie Willis Ltd