

Historic Building Recording Guidance

for Curators, Consultants and Contractors



ALGAO:Scotland

2013



ALGAO:Scotland Historic Building Recording Guidance

Introduction

A survey of ALGAO: Scotland members indicated that while all respondents used one or more of the published guidelines there was no correlation between different Local Authority areas as to which set of guidelines were used. For this reason ALGAO: Scotland have pulled together the current guidance documents to try to give a measure of consistency across Scotland as to what is required in respect of Historic Building Recording levels. The aim of this guidance is to refine the current guidelines into a more user friendly set of recording levels and to attempt give a greater consistency to the recording of historic structures across Scotland.

This guidance acknowledges and builds upon the Historic Building Recording (HBR) guidelines set out by the RCHME in 1996 and RCAHMS in 1997 with reference to the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO) 1997 document *Analysis and Recording for the Conservation and Control of Works to Historic Buildings*; the *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological recording of standing building and structures* published by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) in 2001; English Heritage's 2003 publication *Measured and Drawn: Techniques and practice for the metric survey of historic buildings*; Historic Scotland's *Guide for Practitioners-Measured Survey and Building Recording* (2003), *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* by English Heritage (2006).

What this guidance does not attempt to do is to define the types of structures which should be subject to Historic Building Recording nor does it attempt to determine how this guidance is applied by each Local Authority. The document assumes a level of experience and understanding from both the curator and contractor and should not be used as a definitive guide of how to record a structure. It simply seeks to offer a common language that should allow clearer understanding of individual requirements.



How to use this guidance

This guidance simply lays out the recommended levels of recording with clear details of what each level requires.

Each level builds upon the preceding one, and should include all the elements required of the preceding level with the additional elements of each level bullet pointed.

A summary table of the levels is included for ease of reference.

The recommended levels should be used as a starting point but as each individual building or project will have its own specific requirements these can be further refined using the checklist (Appendix 1). The checklist is a simple way of informing the contractor and developer of the exact requirements of the Historic Building Recording as clearly and concisely as is possible.

It allows for individual requirements to be included that are appropriate to an individual structure.

For example: overall a building may require a Basic level of recording but certain elements may need to be recorded in more detail (such as fireplaces) and dendrochronology or paint analysis may also be warranted on specific elements (such as reused timbers or painted ceilings).

The guidance is also designed to be flexible enough that each Local Authority can reflect its own policies and requirements while giving contractors and developers a greater consistency of approach across Scotland.



Historic Building Appraisal

An appraisal report should generally include;

- An archive assessment
- A general description of the structure(s)
- Photographs
- An annotated ground plan

Field records should include the following:-

Drawings

- Location map of the structure/s within the landscape (1:10,000 or larger scale)
- A ground plan (the architectural plan/s are acceptable, if relatively accurate).
- A map regression depicting 1st / 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map locations (additional historic OS maps may also be relevant) and earlier historic maps of the development area with the location of the site clearly marked.

Written

- A descriptive summary of the structure, such as: type of building; its place in the wider topographical landscape; materials used in construction; any visible changes in build/additions; etc.
- A structure description (a general appraisal of the external elevations/features and any other relevant constructional details).
- A short narrative section describing the significance of the findings of the historic building appraisal.

Photographs

- Photographs of the building in its setting
- Photographs that relate to and complement the descriptions within the text

A Historic Buildings Appraisal report should provide adequate detail to inform the level of any further works.

Note: An appraisal is often carried out as pre-application work by architects and submitted with planning applications.

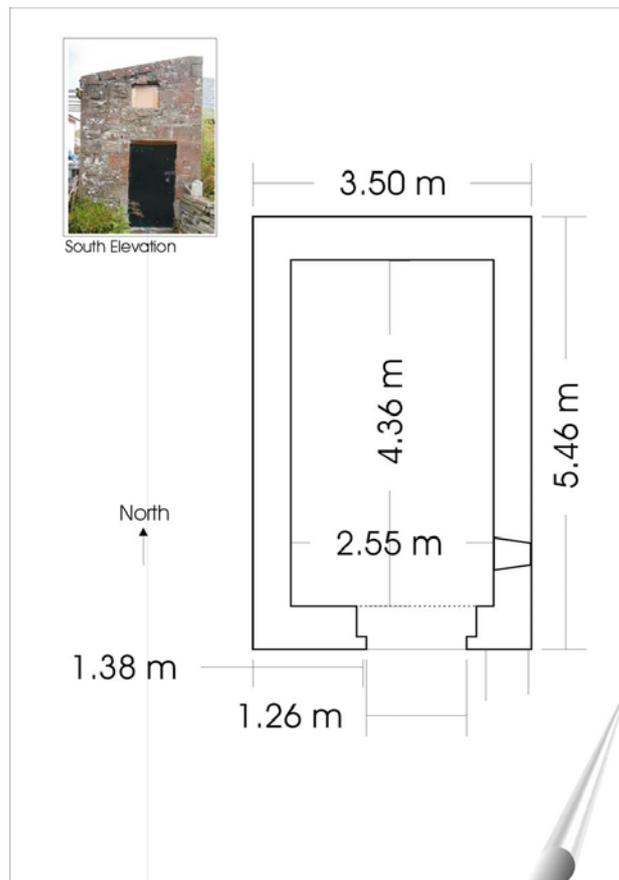
Historic Building Recording (Basic)

This builds upon an Appraisal survey (whether carried out or not) and should also be:

- an adequate record of a structure in its own right and the report should reflect that rather than be seen as evaluation of a structure.

It should also include:

- A narrative placing the structure in its geographical, architectural and historical context



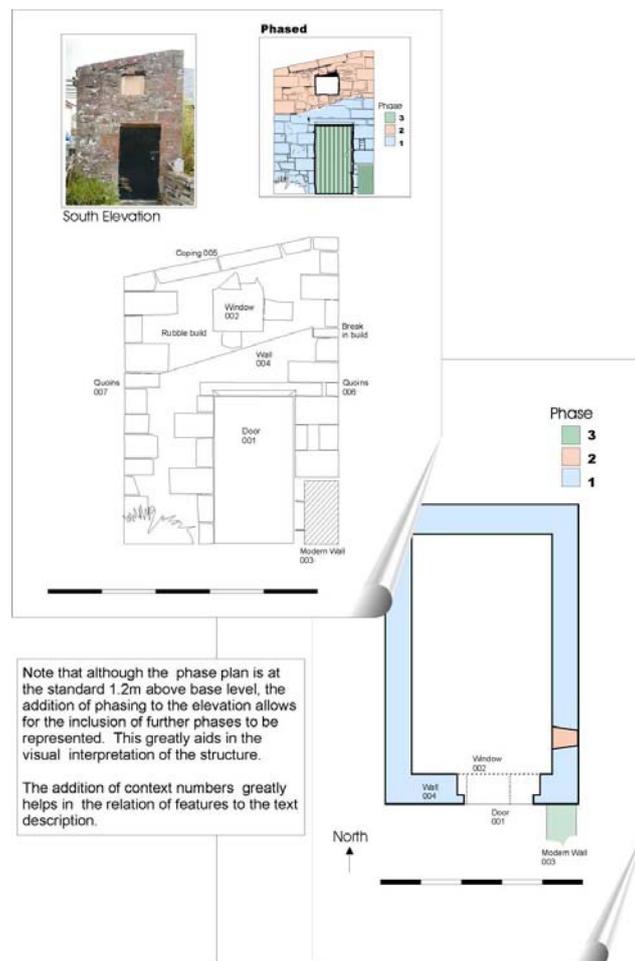
Example of Historic Buildings Appraisal and Historic Building Recording (Basic)

Note: In practice often an Appraisal and Basic Survey are the same with an Appraisal being the first stage of a more detailed recording programme and the Basic survey being a record of a structure in its own right. Often what starts as an appraisal turns into a basic survey when it becomes clear that further recording is not warranted.

Historic Building Recording (Enhanced)

This should build upon the basic survey (whether carried out or not) and should also include:

- all significant elevations (both internal and external as appropriate) should be illustrated either by means of annotated photographs or annotated illustrations
- all ground/floor plans and elevations should show any evidence of phasing
- The main elevations and ground/floor plans should now contain feature numbers, so that the text and drawings can be easily cross-referenced
- A more enhanced description of the building/s is now required, which also includes information about any architectural phasing
- The photography should include general views of all external and main internal elevations, with details as appropriate
- Detailed Archive Research including RCAHMS, NLS, Local Studies Record, NRS, Estate/ Town plan and Statistical Accounts

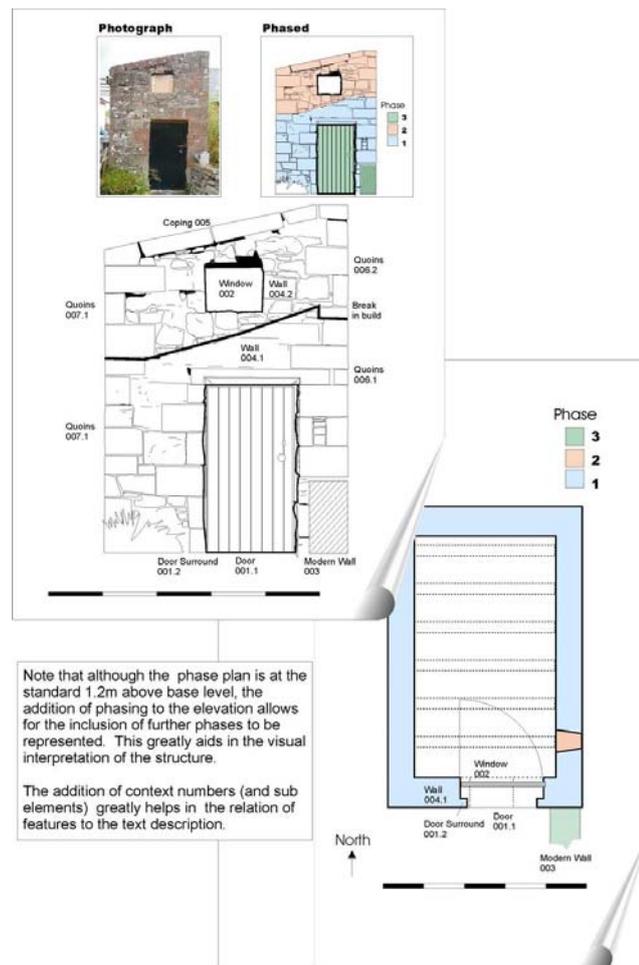


Example of Historic Building Recording (Enhanced)

Historic Building Recording (Detailed)

This should build upon the Enhanced survey (whether carried out or not) and should also include:

- Detailed illustrations of all significant external and internal elevations should be drawn either manually or digitally (e.g. laser scanning etc)
- Detailed phased ground/floor plans should be drawn
- feature numbers and additional subdivisions to aid discussion of the different components of a feature should be used
- photography should include general and detailed views of all external and main internal elevations
- a full photographic record of any unusual and/or important details and elements of the structure.
- presentation and publication of the survey work and its findings to both a popular and academic audience



Example of Historic Building Recording (Detailed) and Historic Building Recording (Comprehensive)

Historic Building Recording (Comprehensive)

This should build upon the detailed survey (whether carried out or not) and should also include:

- detailed illustrations of all external elevations
- detailed illustrations of significant internal elevations
- Comprehensive Archive Research including deeds, wills, manuscripts, charters, MOD collections, mining records, newspaper archives, local historical society collections, journals and magazines, paintings and prints, Burgh and Local Authority records, Dean of Guild records etc

If appropriate to the structure it may be specified that the following elements are included:

- Input from an architectural historian
- other specialist sampling strategies
- Conservation measures

Summary of Levels

Survey Type	Record	Written	Drawings	Photographic
Appraisal	Visual	Basic description Archive Assessment	Sketch and/or annotated ground/floor plan	General to complement and aid written descriptions
Basic	Visual	Basic description Archive Assessment	Sketch and annotated ground/floor plan Main elevations	General to complement and aid written descriptions
Enhanced	Descriptive	Enhanced description Detailed Archive Research	Annotated/measured phased ground/floor plan Annotated significant elevations (internal and external)	General to complement and aid written descriptions All major elevations and details of appropriate features
Detailed	Analytical	Fully enhanced description Detailed Archive Research Historical and landscape context of site examined	Measured phased ground/floor plans. measured significant elevations Details of all features and fabric described	General to complement and aid written descriptions All major elevations and details of appropriate features
Comprehensive	Comprehensive with synthetic analysis	Comprehensive description Comprehensive Archive Research Historical and landscape context of site examined Synthesis of recording results with comparison to other sites	All measured phased ground/floor plans. All measured elevations Details of all features and fabric described	Comprehensive coverage

Appendix 1 – Historic Buildings Specification Checklist

Section A: Drawings

NB All drawings to be included in the final report should be produced at an appropriate scale

Location

- a. Location map of structure within landscape (1:10,000 or larger scale)
- b. Location map of structure in landscape (topographic plan)

Additional Notes

Plans

- c. A rough plan of the property, drawn by eye, and a front elevation. Measure main dimensions should be put on the plan.
- d. Annotated architects plans (checked for dimensions if inaccurate then c. and/or d. required)
- e. Measured ground plan
- f. Measured floor plans
- g. Phased ground and floor plans
- h. Roof and truss plans
- i. Location of unusual and important features (labelled)
- j. Reconstructions of each phase (as a ground plan)
- k. Reconstructions of each phase (as a 3-dimensional view)

Additional Notes

Elevations

- l. Annotated architects elevations (checked for dimensions if inaccurate then c., d. and/or e. as appropriate)
- m. Annotated digital photographs of elevations (acceptable, but only if elevations not too complex and/or show little detail that would preferably require a line drawing)
- n. Measured principal elevations (phased where complex vertical relationships are apparent)
- o. Measured additional external elevations (to complement descriptive text and where they show historical development of the structure/s and phased where complex vertical relationships are apparent)
- p. Measured internal elevations (to complement descriptive text and where they show historical development of the structure/s and phased where complex vertical relationships are apparent)
- q. Cross Sections (to 1) complement descriptive text; 2) where they reveal vertical relationships not easily identifiable through elevations/photographs alone; 3) where they show historical development of the structure/s; and, 4) phased where complex vertical relationships are apparent)
- r. Location and detail of unusual or important features (labelled)

Additional Notes

Other

- s. Details (*specify type of detail*) of other unusual or important features not included on ground/floor plans or elevations i.e. an external water pump trough etc.
- t. Details of additional features such as mouldings, fittings, graffiti, mason marks, complex constructional details etc.

Additional Notes

Section B. Written

- a. The location, name, site code, parish, grid reference, OASIS ref No, status of the structure/s, HER / LB number etc.
- b. An introduction, outlining the reasons for the survey, including a summary of the basic findings and conclusions
- c. The aims and objectives of the project, in addition to the archaeological and planning background and the types of recording activities undertaken.
A list of activities is available at:
http://thesaurus.english-heritage.org.uk/thesaurus.asp?thes_no=566
- d. A descriptive summary of the structure, such as the type of building (see <http://orapweb.rcahms.gov.uk/apex/f?p=210> for thesaurus); its place in the wider topographical landscape; its relationship with other nearby structures; the materials used in its construction; any visible changes in build/additions, history of the structure/s and the evolution of the structure/s based on physical evidence etc.
- e. A more detailed report of the structure, where the summary (see point d) is expanded to provide **additional** information which should include an outline of the buildings form, function, development, architectural and/or historical context, dates and any relevant additional material such as architect, owners or associated local traditions. The report should also make reference to similar buildings and how the building/s fit into a wider architectural, historical and socio-economic context, together with an assessment of its significance.
- f. A general discussion, including flow diagrams, of the social, industrial or historic movement relating to the building/s, including any changes over time.
- g. Structure by structure description (where the record is involving a multi-structure building).
- h. Room by room description (this includes courtyards, hallways or any discrete space).
- i. A description of relevant and significant elements/features with individual numbering (features such as windows, doors, fireplaces, blocking etc.) Similar features can be described as a group.
- j. Minor feature description with numbering or sub-numbering (such as skirting, dado, wallpapers, fittings, gratings, gutters and down pipes)
- k. A description of any details such as butt jointing, repairs, mortar, constructional details, signs of wear or damage etc.
- l. Any other pertinent details or information that is of relevance to the project objectives.

Additional Notes

Section C. Photographs

All photography should be should fall within the current guidelines for archival standards set by the Archaeology Data Service and RCAHMS

The RCAHMS archival guidelines are available at:

<http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/freedom-of-information.html>

- a. Photographs of the building in its setting
- b. Principal elevations
- c. Additional external elevation
- d. Internal elevations, where possible
- e. Details such as chimneys, decorative features and windows (Representative selection if they are all the same)
- f. Details of minor features and items of interest, such as wallpaper/s, wood joints, graffiti, finishes, constructional and demolition. If features such as these are discovered during the course of the building recording work then it will be expected that these minor features will be recorded.
- g. Video footage within and around building.
- h. Specialist photography such as B/W, Medium Format, Rectification etc.

Additional Notes

Section D. Samples, Details and Oral Evidence

- a. Samples such as mortar, wallpaper, stone types, wood etc.
- b. Samples of timber for dating purposes and dendrological analysis
- c. Physical recovery (salvage) and destination of details such as mouldings, beams, old machinery, columns and fittings for use elsewhere.
- d. Recording and recovery of local knowledge (Oral History) associated with the structure, including oral stories.

Additional Notes

Section E. Additional Work

- a. Provision will need to be made to further record features after the demolition/removal of later fabric (material, architectural etc.).
- b. A watching brief of the building/s foundations being grubbed out.
- c. An intrusive archaeological evaluation of the site, after the building/s has been demolished.

Additional Notes

Section F. The Report

- a. A thumb-nailed sequence of digital photographs as an appendix to the final report.
- b. A historic map regression with the location of site clearly marked.
- c. Copies of any relevant estate maps (where possible)
- d. Copies of any historic maps (where possible)
- e. Copies of any historic photographs (where possible)
- f. Inclusion of all digital photographs for the Historic Environment Record to an agreed format and on an appropriate recording medium
- g. An appendix containing relevant feature lists, photographs lists, drawings register, samples list etc.
- h. A summary report that will be sent for inclusion to Discovery & Excavation in Scotland.
- i. A complete archive of the project to be deposited with RCAHMS within 6 months of completion of the fieldwork. The inclusion of photographs, plans and illustrations should fall within the current guidelines for archival standards set by the Archaeology Data Service and RCAHMS.
- j. A digital copy of the full report with plans and DES entry in an agreed format.
- k. Depending on the importance and significance of the findings from the Historic Building Survey the site may warrant publication in either an academic and/or popular publication.
- l. Prior to full distribution of a report, a draft copy should be sent for approval by the Local Authority Archaeology Service to allow any amendments, corrections or additions to be discussed. It should be remembered that this is a public document and should be of sufficient accessibility for public dissemination.

Additional Notes