



A BEAUTIFUL SITE, WITH A LONG, ILLUSTRIOUS HISTORY

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KNOCKHALL CASTLE, NEWBURGH, ABERDEENSHIRE, AB41 6AD





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### **Distances**

Ellon 5 miles

Aberdeen 14 miles

Aberdeen International Airport 15 miles

### **Directions**

Leaving Aberdeen, take the Ellon Road towards the A90. Shortly after passing Trump International Golf Club take the right turn onto the A975 and continue to follow the road through Newburgh. After passing through the main street of Newburgh take the left turn into Knockhall Road. Turn left at the first junction, continue to follow this road around where you will see a cottage on the right hand side and turn into the track leading to Knockhall Castle.

### **Location**

Newburgh is a popular and picturesque, sheltered coastal village, ideally situated for easy commuting to Bridge of Don, Aberdeen and Dyce as well as Aberdeen International Airport which is a mere 15 miles away and offers daily services to London, Europe and various other destinations. The area is well served by local recreational facilities including an 18 hole golf course, salmon and sea trout fishing on the River Ythan, coastal walks and the famous Forvie Sands, a designated nature conservation area (NNR – National Nature Reserve) with long sandy beaches and large colonies of seals, Eider duck, Arctic terns and many other species. Primary and nursery schooling is provided at the highly regarded Newburgh Mathers School which is located in the village, while a modern Academy is available for secondary school education in Ellon. Newburgh also contains a church, a hotel, convenience stores and offers a regular fast track bus service to Aberdeen, Peterhead, Dyce and Ellon, the latter of which is only 5 miles away and offers additional amenities.

### **History**

The lands of Newburgh were held by the Sinclair family from the 13th century, with a settlement established there in 1261. The castle was probably built for Henry, Master of Sinclair, the future 6th Lord Sinclair, and it is recorded that James VI stayed with him at Knockhall on 9 July 1589. The castle was sold in 1633 to a son of Udny of that ilk and was



damaged in 1639 when taken by the Earl Marischal for the Covenanters. It was later returned to Udny hands and it may have been at this time that the building was altered.

The family occupied the castle until 1734, when an accidental fire gutted the building. This episode is associated with James Fleming better known as Jamie Fleeman, the servant fool of the laird of Udny. Jamie is said to have not only saved the family from the fire, but also the laird's iron character chest, which usually took three men to lift, by picking it up and throwing it out of a window. It is said that the laird rewarded Jamie with a peck o' meal and sixpence per week for life.

Knockhall Castle has been in the current owner's family for hundreds of years, and was gifted to him on his 21st birthday. The owner quickly developed a passion for the restoration of old buildings, working on prestigious projects such as Illieston Castle near Edinburgh and Slains Castle. He has been stabilising the site at Knockhall which is a blank canvas for someone to develop the building's full potential as a spectacular family home or business.

#### **The Scottish Castle Initiative**

The Scottish Castle Initiative was launched in 2009 by the culture minister to encourage investment in Scotland's rich castle and tower house heritage. As well as the development of a castles register, which people can peruse to look at buildings identified as having the characteristics determined as suitable for reuse, the initiative is also intended to provide advice, expertise and guidance on the process and the potential support available. Scotland has a rich and diverse built heritage that can in

the right circumstances make fantastic businesses or family homes. People have been inspired by recent trends to identify and renovate traditional properties and the Historic Scotland initiative is designed to provide advice and support in order to make the process as transparent and flexible as possible, to help release the potential of these beautiful properties to a new generation of owners.

#### **Description**

The following details have been documented by Historic Scotland:

Knockhall Castle, in the parish of Foveran, is situated near the mouth of the river Ythan and was probably built in 1565 as an L plan towerhouse of three stories and an attic with a projecting staircase tower on its northside. The tower does not have a parapet and the gables have skewers rather than crowsteps. To the south of the castle there was an enclosed courtyard, but all that now remains of this is a fragmentary round tower at the south east angle of the enclosure which incorporated a dovecot on its upper level. The tower has undergone significant alteration, probably in the second quarter of the 17th century.

The tower is lit by large rectangular windows in the south and east walls. These are arranged more or less symmetrically and their raised margins suggest they are insertions dating to the mid 17th century. The earlier windows which have survived have a typical roll moulding of mid 16th century type, and some appear to have had gunloops in their sills. The basement is pierced by a number of wide-mouthed gunloops but also has some fairly large windows which have the raised margins of the 17th century windows.





The entrance is in the re-entrant angle and the lintel of the door is inscribed with the date 1565. Above this are two empty heraldic panels and at eaves level there is a projecting stone shelf which appears to have been intended to shed water away from the entrance doorway. The doorway gives access to a corridor running the length of the building and leads to the main stair. Entered off the corridor, on the left, is the kitchen, complete with fireplace, sink and drain. The main block contains a large cellar also with a sink and drain. Both spaces are vaulted although that over the kitchen has collapsed.

The circular stair is comfortably wide and provides access both to the principal upper floors in the main block and to those in the wing. It may be an addition, but if so the original access arrangements are unclear. The main block of the tower contained the hall and again there is evidence that this space was significantly re-ordered when the large windows were inserted. The second floor of the main block was divided into two, each chamber supplied with a latrine and fireplace. The attic floor was reached by a small internal staircase, with the space above the main stair being a small room with a fireplace.

The tower is externally complete and in an example such as this there is often sufficient evidence for a tower to be restored for modern occupation without detracting from its historic significance. The planning of this tower, with a large stair serving the two wings, and with ample light through the large rectangular windows, would also make its adaptive re-use possible. It should be noted that there is significant potential for associated archaeology surrounding the tower. In schemes of adaptive re-use, archaeology is an important issue to be addressed.

#### Services

Any prospective purchaser should make investigations to source services to the property however the current owner has made the following comments:

Mains electricity would be available from existing services to nearby houses.

Mains water. Contact Scottish Water.

A private spring or private water supply could be discovered although investigations have not been made.

## Listing

The castle is B Listed and is a Scheduled Monument.

## Servitude rights, burdens and wayleaves

The property is sold subject to and with the benefit of all servitude rights, burdens, reservations and wayleaves, including rights of access and rights of way, whether public or private, light, support, drainage, water and wayleaves for masts, pylons, stays, cable, drains and water, gas and other pipes, whether contained in the Title Deeds or informally constituted and whether referred to in the General Remarks and Stipulations or not. The Purchaser(s) will be held to have satisfied himself as to the nature of all such servitude rights and others.

## Possession

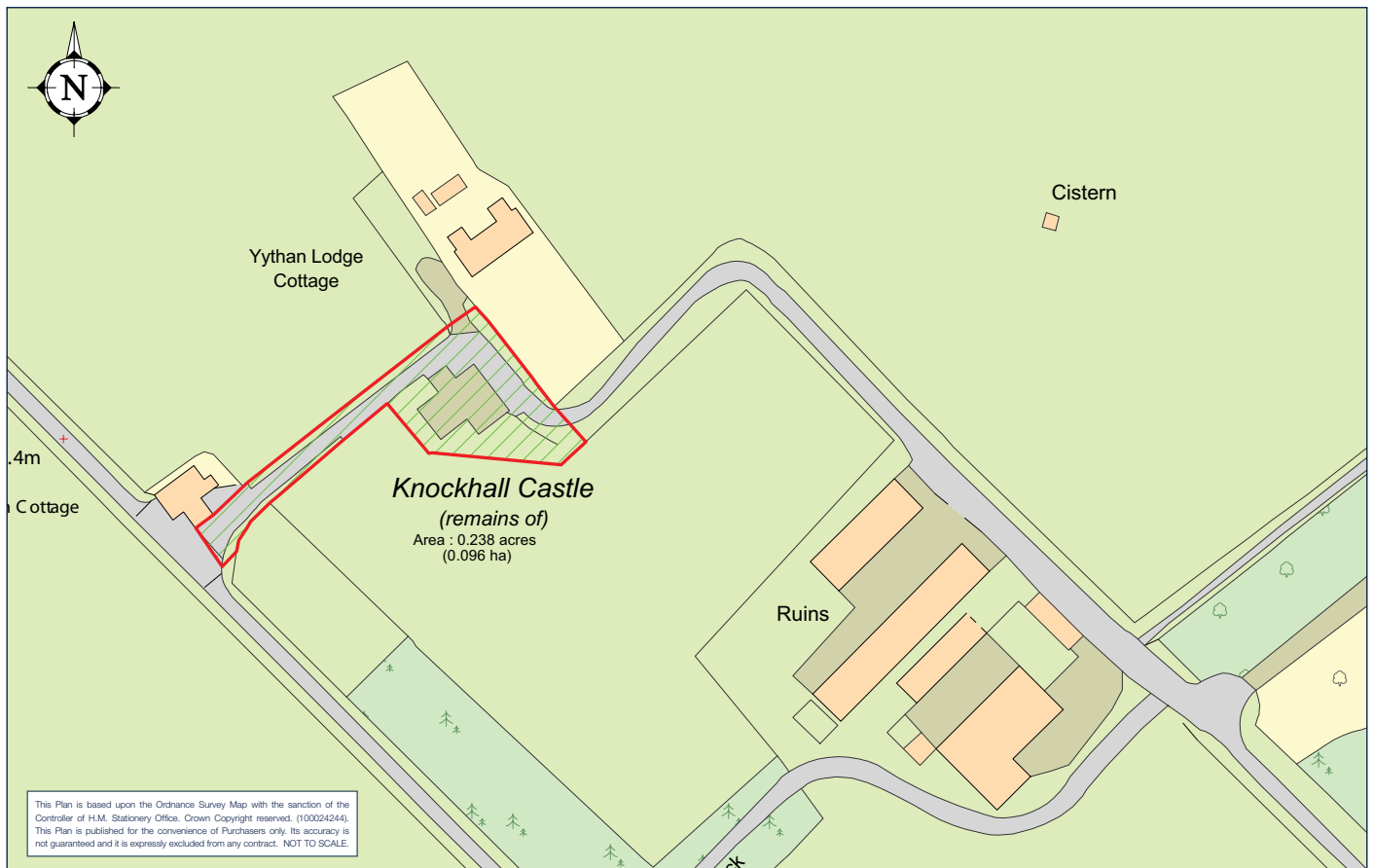
To be by mutual agreement.

## Offers

Offers must be submitted in Scottish legal terms to the Selling Agents. A closing date for offers may be fixed and prospective purchasers are advised to register their interest with the Selling Agents following inspection.

## Viewing

Strictly by appointment with Savills – 01224 971110



**Savills Aberdeen**  
5 Queen's Terrace,  
Aberdeen, AB10 1XL  
aberdeen@savills.com  
**01224 971110**

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