

## Midmar Castle, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire



### Magnificent 16th Century Castle set in parkland estate

- 6 reception rooms
- 10 bedrooms & 3 bathrooms
- Farmhouse & buildings
- Walled gardens and parkland
- Grazing. 185 acres in all

Excess of £3,500,000  
Freehold

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### Mileage

Banchory 11 miles, Aberdeen 16 miles, Braemar 43 miles

### Situation

Midmar Castle is set within parkland beside a miniature wooded glen and hidden away behind mature trees. There are wide ranging views over the surrounding countryside from the top of the tower.

The castle is particularly well placed, being only 11 miles from Banchory and 16 miles from Aberdeen with its international airport. The area encompasses much of what Scotland is famous for. The thriving cultural city of Aberdeen, founded on fishing and expanded from oil, has excellent shopping services, education and recreational opportunities. Aberdeenshire boasts a dramatic, rocky coastline and miles of sandy beaches, exceptional links golf courses, deer stalking, grouse and pheasant shooting and some of the best salmon fishing in Scotland, on the rivers Dee and Don. The ski slopes of the Lecht and Glenshee are easily accessible.

### Description

The Marr is a historic region lying between the famous salmon rivers of the Dee and the Don. The district comprised Brae-Marr, so called on account of it being the highest part of the country: Cro-Marr, a lower and more cultivated tract; and Mid-Marr, indicating its central position between the two rivers. The word is derived from the Saxon "Mid" and the Gaelic "Marr", signifying a black forest.

Its territorial chieftains were the Earls of Mar, whose stronghold was Braemar Castle. Oliver Hill's book "Scottish Castles of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries" states: "The Castle of Midmar is situated on the northern slopes of the Hill of Fare, the dominating feature of the region, which reaches to a height of one thousand eight hundred feet. The countryside is famous for its druidical stone circles and cairns and the extensive stone walled enclosures of its hill-forts. These were built by the ancestors of a very remarkable school of local granite-masons, the Midmar school, which sprang up here in the late sixteenth century. Within an area no more than fifteen miles across, they built that group of masterpieces, Crathes, Frazer, Drum, Craigievar and Midmar, castles unrivalled for their splendour and character in all Scotland."

Tradition has it that Midmar was built by Sir William Wallace, when Governor of Scotland, as a hunting seat for his friend Sir Thomas Longavale. The square tower dates from about 1411 with the main towers added around 1565. The first recorded mention of the estates of Midmar is in the late 13th century when Adam Broun of Fordell, the Bishop of Aberdeen, held it. The castle passed to Alexander Gordon, first Earl of Huntly, in 1468 and was owned by the Gordons until 1620 when it was sold to Alexander Forbes. It later passed to the Grant family and others before being bought back by Colonel Gordon of Cluny in 1842.

Crathes Castle, Castle Fraser, Drum Castle and Craigievar Castle are now all owned by the National Trust and open to the public. Midmar Castle remains the only one of the principal Castles of Mar still in private hands. It has been featured in Country Life three times - in 1912, 1945 and 1986.

Midmar Castle is built in the traditional defensive manner of a Z plan tower house. It is based around three towers: one square and two circular, but with new and dramatic decorative features

attributed to the Bell family of master masons. The art of decorative stone masonry is shown at its very best in the detailed chequered corbelling of the square tower, the bold roll-mounted window surrounds and the circular turrets with candle snuffer roofs.

There have been changes over the years, with various additions including the two plain roofed wings forming the north courtyard with its raised terrace entrance added during the Grant family ownership in the late 18th century.

Midmar Castle survived the Victorian era with no tasteless modifications and retained its original form and character. It underwent an extensive programme of restoration with the guiding hand of Historic Scotland in the late 1970s. This has helped bring the castle into the modern era without destroying any of its historic charm and character.

The castle combines traditional features such as spiral stairways, ground floor vaulted rooms and a great hall with well proportioned 18th century rooms such as the kitchen and the billiard room. The bedrooms are arranged off two sets of spiral stairs with the tower above. There is much original plasterwork, panelling and stonework.

### Accommodation

The layout of the rooms is shown on the floor plans but essentially the accommodation includes:

Ground Floor: Hall, dining room, gun room, kitchen, conservatory, utility room and WC.

First Floor: Great hall, billiard room, study, playroom, sitting room, office, WC.

Upper floors: 10 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms

Integral workshops, garages and dog kennels. Stone barn.

Two walled gardens. Parkland and amenity woodland.

Traditional two bedroom farmhouse and buildings.

About 140 acres grazing with deer fencing, buildings and handling pens.

About 185 acres in all.

Barony of Midmar and Shooting Lease of 1,300 acres of Forestry Commission Woodland included in the sale. Significant antique collection available by negotiation.

### Gardens And Grounds

The castle is surrounded by parkland with both fine mature trees and newer plantings.

Adjoining the castle is the principal walled garden which dates from the 16th century. It is entered by a gate in the wall beneath an old yew tree or directly from the large conservatory adjoining the kitchen. The garden slopes from south to north with two large productive greenhouses and a landscaped shrubbery looking down over a sweeping lawn to the fruit garden at the bottom.

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There is a two storey garden house and apple store and recessed bee skeps along the wall.

To the south of the house are lawns with a mature grove of beech and lime trees and a second, more private walled garden of similar size and date to the main garden.

### Craigshannoch Farm

The remainder of the estate is made up of the lands of Craigshannoch Farm, trading as Midmar Castle Farms, which extends to about 140 acres of productive arable/grassland encircling the castle and its policies.

The farmhouse and steading are located at the top of the glen and are of traditional Aberdeenshire design, built of granite under pitched and slated roofs. The house has two bedrooms, bathroom, sitting room and kitchen. There is a useful modern barn/store.

Midmar Castle was until recently home to a herd of pure Warnham Park red deer, which were successfully exported all over Europe. The purpose built deer handling sheds and pens are located in a sheltered spot below the castle. The handling system is very well developed for safe and efficient operations. The farm is mainly deer fenced with an extensive roadway system to move the animals around the farm. The herd was sold in 2008.

All farm machinery and equipment is included in the sale.

### GENERAL REMARKS

#### Services

Mains electricity backed up by the estate's own mini hydro plant producing up to 9 KVA of power. Water is from a private supply and drainage to septic tanks.

Central heating from oil-fired boiler with generator as back up.

#### Access

The owners of the properties at the Manor House (half way up the private road) and the houses at Craigshannoch (at the top of the private road) have servitude rights of access. There is also an access reserved to the forestry (but timber cannot be extracted on this road).

#### Listing

The castle, walled garden and sundial are all listed category A. The outbuilding is Listed Category B.

#### Sporting Rights

A lease in favour of the owners of Midmar Castle exists to shoot over the adjoining Forestry Commission land extending to over 1300 acres. The lease was granted in 1929 for 99 years. The roe deer stalking is currently sub-let on an annual basis to a local syndicate.

#### The Contents

The castle contains an extensive and varied collection of antiques, arms and armour including antique furniture, artefacts and paintings. The vendors are retaining some family related items but the majority of the contents are available for a price to be agreed in addition to the sale price. A full inventory will be made available to interested parties.

### The Barony of Midmar

Midmar Castle is the seat of an ancient Scottish Feudal Barony. The owner of the Castle becomes the "Baron of Midmar" and is entitled to use the suffix "of Midmar" after his name.

**Tenure:** Freehold

### Directions

From Aberdeen take the A944 west. At the end of the dual carriageway (about 6 miles) fork left onto the B9119 signposted to Tarland. Follow this road for about 10 miles. The private road to Midmar Castle is set in trees on the left hand side about 3 miles west of the small village of Echt. Follow this road up the hill. The gates to Midmar Castle are on the left hand side.

**Viewing:** Strictly by appointment with Savills

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# Midmar Castle, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire

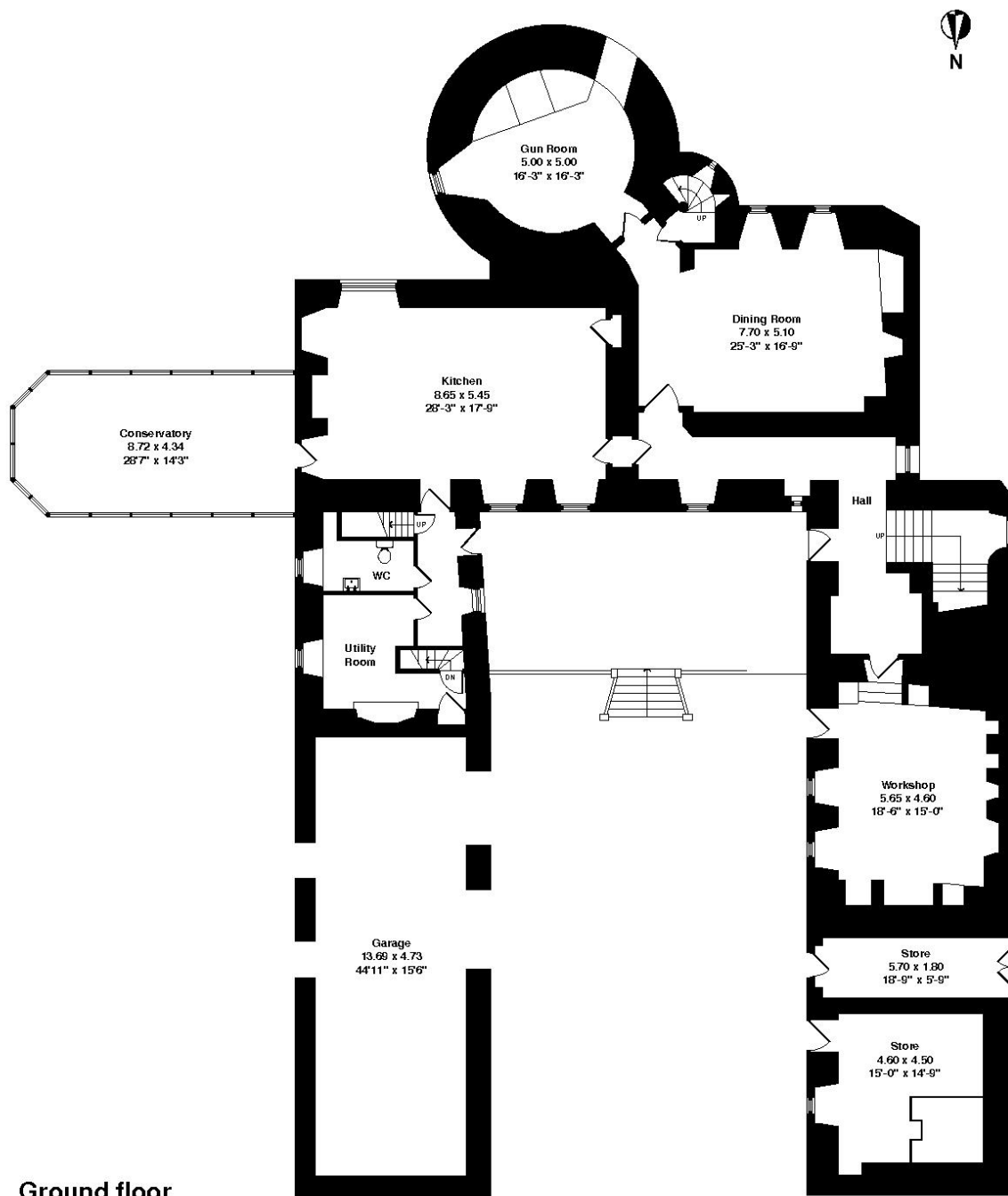
## Midmar Castle, Midmar, Inverurie, AB51 7LX

Gross internal area (incl garage) (approx):

1139m<sup>2</sup> (12,260sqft)

For identification only. Not to scale.

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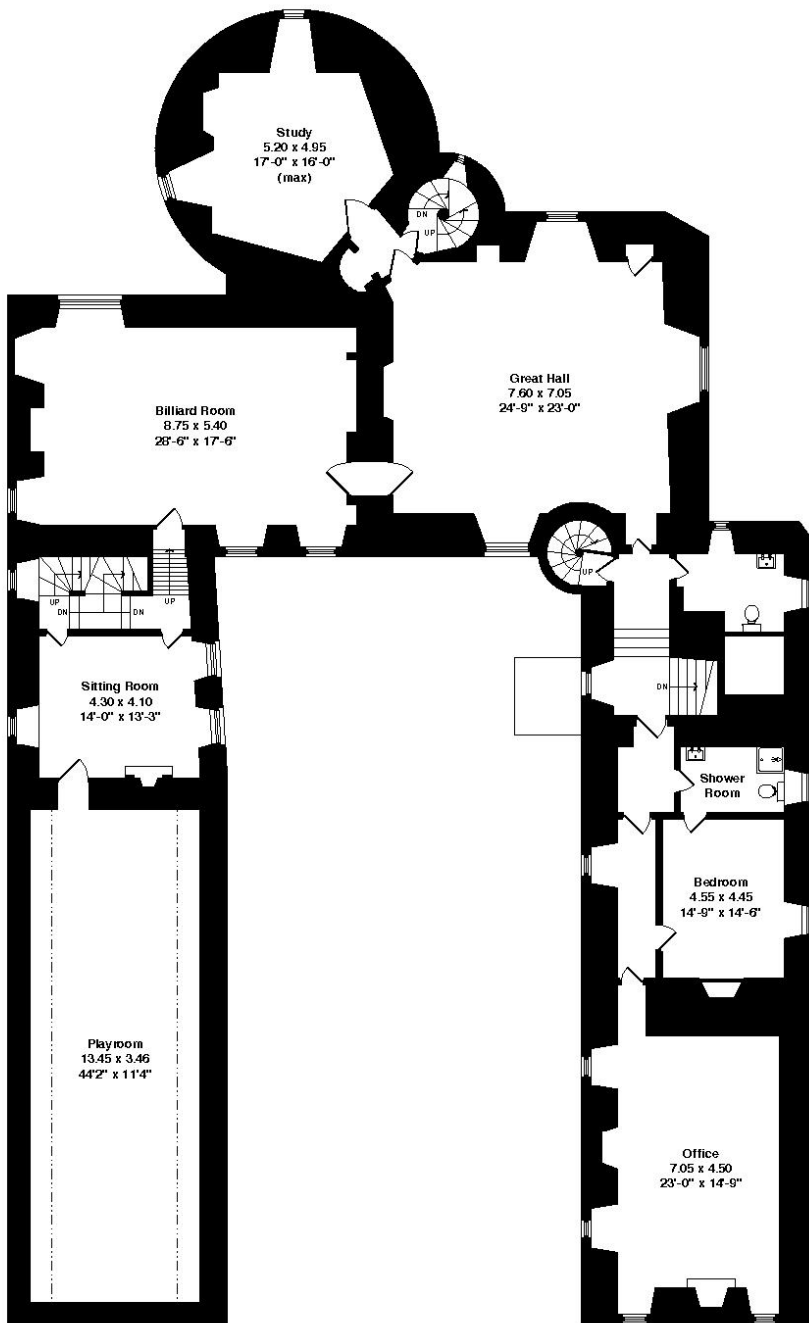
Ground floor

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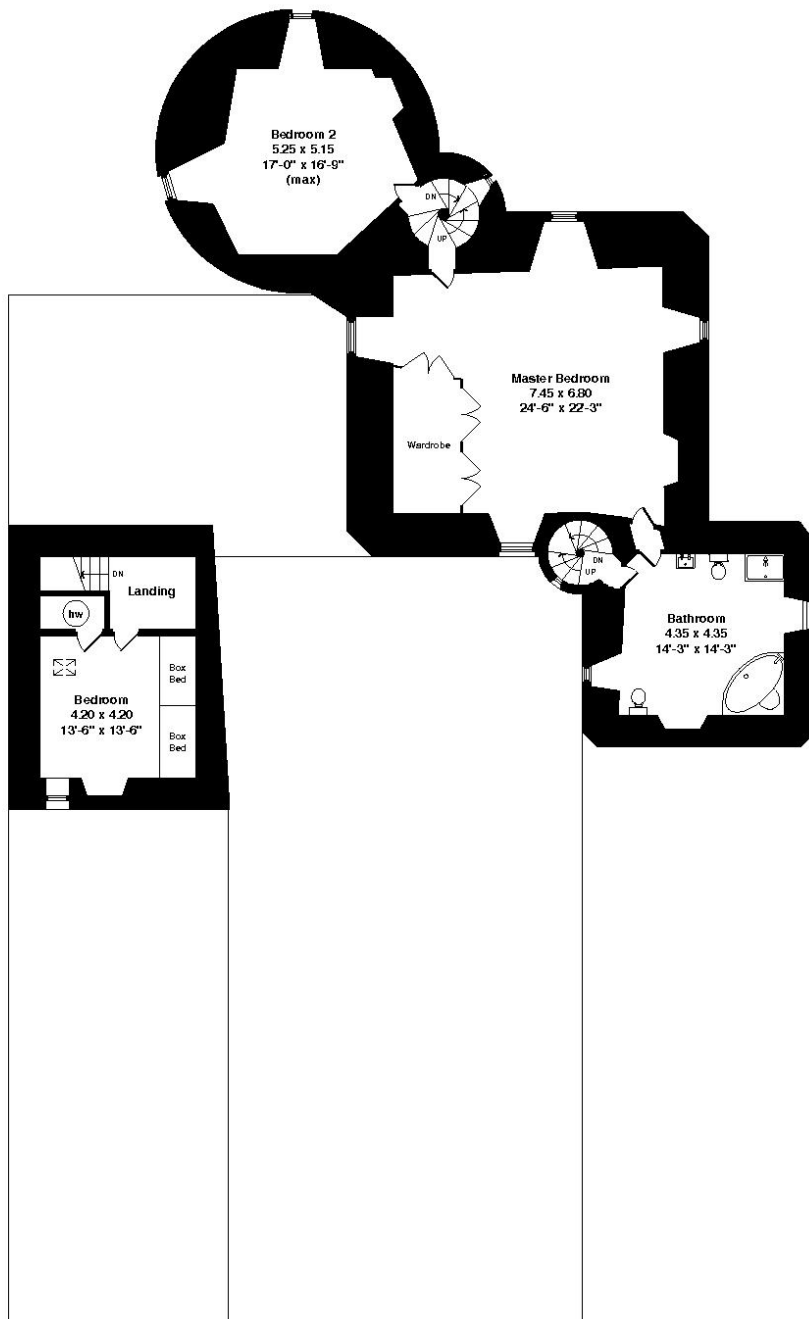
First floor

# Midmar Castle, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire

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**Second floor**

# Midmar Castle, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire

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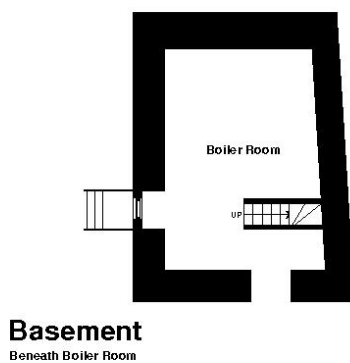
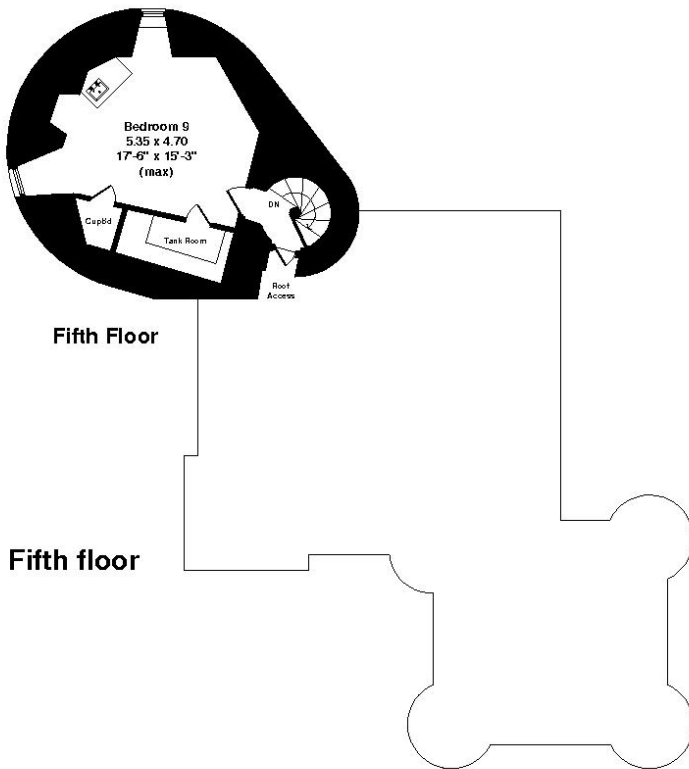


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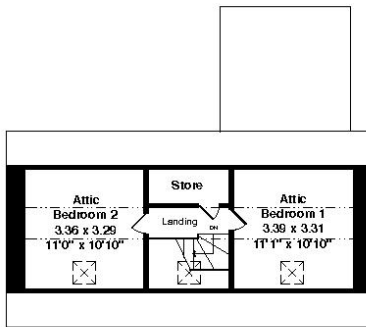
## Craigshannoch Farm, Midmar, Inverurie, AB51 7LX

Gross internal area (approx):

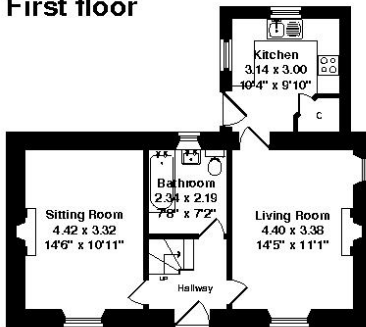
81m<sup>2</sup> (871sqft)

For identification only. Not to scale.

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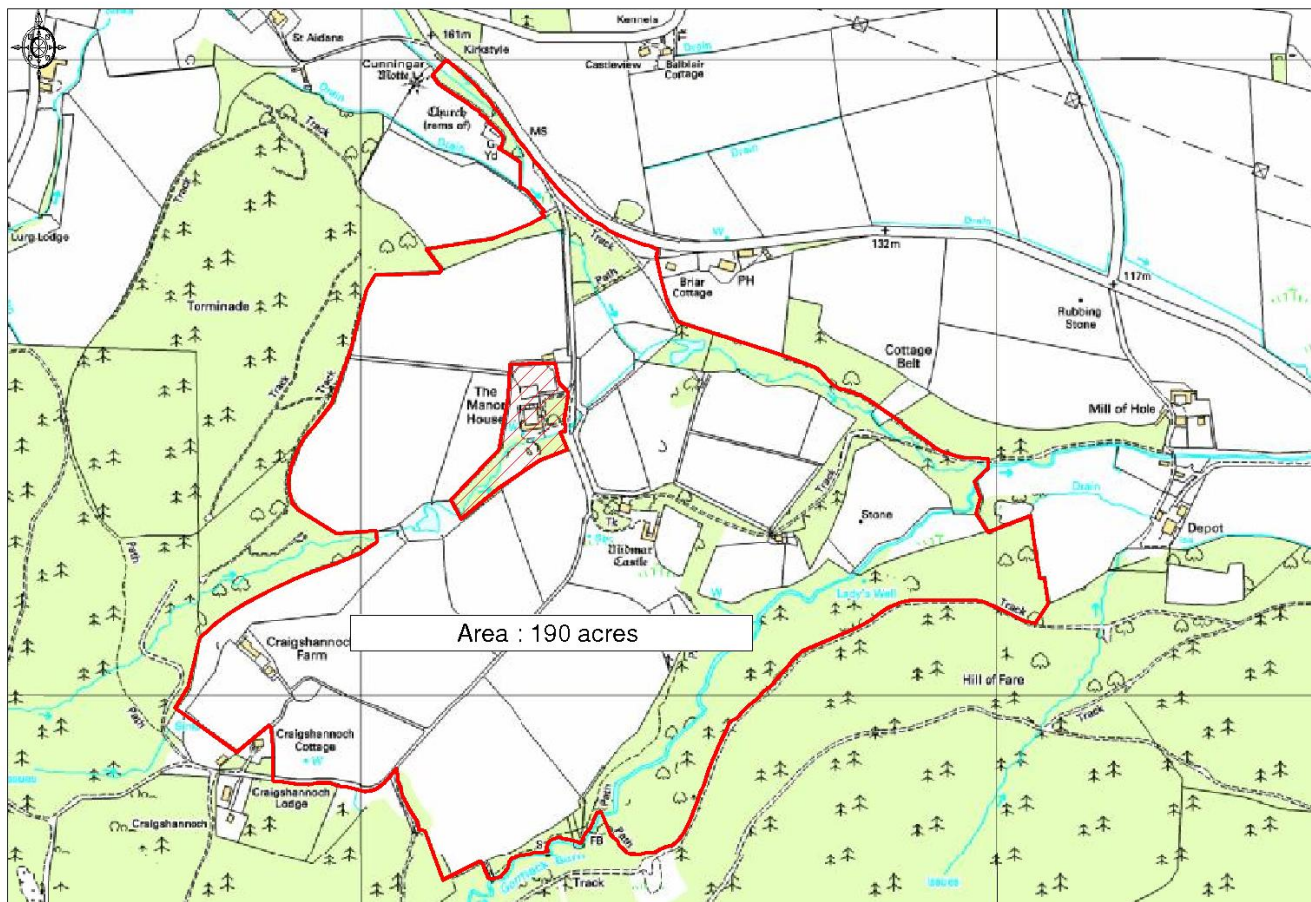


First floor



Ground floor

# Midmar Castle, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire



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