

# DUNBEATH ESTATE

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SCOTLAND







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## CAITHNESS • SCOTLAND

Helmsdale 16 miles • Wick Airport 23 miles • Inverness Airport 89 miles

Attractive 'A' Listed castle (3 reception rooms, 13 bedrooms and 9 bathrooms)

Magnificent walled gardens & policies

Stable courtyard & Gate Lodge

500 acre in-hand stock farm

Extensive peatland restoration opportunities

Deer forest averaging 40 stags and 59 hinds

Walked-up grouse moor (64 brace) and driven pheasant shoot

12.5 miles of double bank fishing averaging 118 salmon & 16 sea trout

Diversified letting income

Renewables and development potential

**In all about 28,500 acres (11,534 hectares)**

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## Situation

Caithness is a coastal county lying in the north eastern corner of Great Britain, fringed to the north and east by dramatic sea cliffs and long sandy beaches. To the south and west it bounds the more rugged and mountainous county of Sutherland. It is a land of great moorland expanses, gentle rolling farmland and blanket peatland known as the 'Flow Country', the largest expanse of blanket bog in Europe. This is divided by the straths (river valleys) and by more fertile farm and croft land. Caithness is known for big skies and long summer nights. Such is its unique appeal, the late Queen Mother owned the Castle of Mey in Caithness as a holiday home for half a century.

Dunbeath lies 21 miles to the south of Wick on the A9 to the south of the small fishing village bearing the same name. A statue in the harbour commemorates the birthplace of Neil M.Gunn (1891–1973), author of *The Silver Darlings* and *Highland River*, many of whose novels are set in Dunbeath and its Strath. Gunn wrote of the intimate beauty of the Strath of Dunbeath: "In boyhood we get to know every square yard of it. We encompass it physically and our memories hold it. Birches, hazel trees for nutting, pools with trout and an occasionally visible salmon, river-flats with the wind on the bracken and disappearing rabbit scuts, a wealth of wild flower and small bird life, the soaring hawk, the unexpected roe, the ancient graveyard, thoughts of the folk who once lived far inland in straths and hollows, the past and the present held in a moment of day-dream." ('My Bit of Britain', 1941).

Dunbeath has a very rich archaeological landscape, being the site of numerous Iron Age brochs and an early medieval monastic site, and it was used by the Vikings as a harbour for their longboats and trading vessels. Although granted the title of Royal Burgh in 1589, it was in the 1800s that Wick enjoyed its greatest prosperity as a thriving herring port, in time becoming the busiest in Europe, boasting a fleet of 1,120 vessels at its peak around 1900.





While Caithness is relatively isolated geographically (its remoteness is central to its extraordinary unspoilt beauty), it can be reached with relative ease. Wick has an airport (23 miles) suitable for private jets, plus there are flights to and from Aberdeen (Eastern Airways), with onward connections to a variety of UK destinations. Helicopters can land on the lawn at Dunbeath Castle, and there is a good train service from Inverness (83 miles) which also has an airport (89 miles). The A9 provides excellent access by road from the south and the railway stations in Wick and Thurso (27 miles) offer a daily service to Inverness, from where Aberdeen, Edinburgh and the south are directly accessible.

Wick also provides a wide range of facilities and professional services, supermarkets, a hospital, and primary and secondary education. Inverness sits 82 miles to the south and provides all the services expected of a major regional city.

In addition to Dunbeath's own fine sport, the wider area is recognised for its exciting country pursuits, which include salmon fishing on numerous rivers such as the Thurso, Helmsdale, Halladale, Forss, Borgie and Naver. Stalking and grouse shooting can also be taken on the varied terrain of other local estates. There are several golf courses locally at Thurso, Wick and Lybster, and further down the coast at Helmsdale, Brora, Golspie and Royal Dornoch.







## Historical Note

A castle is first recorded on the rocky peninsula at Dunbeath in 1428, when the lands belonged to the Earl of Caithness. The first recorded laird was Alexander Sutherland. It later became the property of the Clan Sinclair through the marriage of the daughter of Alexander Sutherland to William Sinclair (1410–1484), the first Sinclair Earl of Caithness. The Sinclairs replaced the earlier structure with a four-storey tower house in 1620 which remained in family occupation for 325 years.

In March 1650, Dunbeath was attacked by the Royalist forces of James Graham, 1st Marquess of Montrose, during the Wars of the Three Kingdoms. Sir John Sinclair rode to Edinburgh to warn of Montrose's arrival, leaving his wife to defend Dunbeath against Sir John Hurry. She soon surrendered, and a Royalist garrison was installed. Montrose was later defeated in April at the Battle of Carbisdale, and the opposition forces, under David Leslie, recaptured the castle.

The castle was extensively remodelled in the 17th century by Sir William Sinclair, and again in 1853 and 1881 when David Bryce was the architect. From 1894 to 1945, the castle was owned by Vice-Admiral Sir Edwyn Alexander-Sinclair. Some of the buildings at Dunbeath still bear the Sinclair crest. Since the war the estate has had four owners, two of whom were American citizens, before being bought in 1997 by Tertius and Claire Murray Threipland whose family has long established connections with Caithness.



## Description

Dunbeath Estate is a diverse all round estate of uncompromising quality, in a spectacular coastal location. The principal house is Dunbeath Castle, a magnificent castle on a cliff top setting above the north sea. The earliest parts of this Category A Listed castle date from the 15th century but it was extensively remodelled in the 1860s in the grand Baronial style when the grounds were also transformed.

Comprising 28,500 acres of truly spectacular topography, 12.5 miles of river flowing from source to mouth, 4 hill lochs and lochans and about four miles of rugged coastline, the estate represents an unparalleled combination of historic architecture, a unique landscape recognised globally and one of Scotland's great coastal wildernesses.

Dunbeath offers an excellent variety of sport. The hill provides exhilarating walked up grouse shooting over pointers and challenging stalking for red deer. The steep sided Dunbeath Strath presents first class driven pheasant and partridge. Most unusually the estate also encompasses a full river system from catchment to ocean. The Dunbeath Water is a wild and beautiful river offering salmon and sea trout fishing. With this variety of wild sport, the months of August and September offer the rare privilege and challenge of obtaining a 'Macnab' (bagging a salmon, stag and brace of grouse within one day between dawn and dusk from a single estate).

In all weathers Dunbeath is a paradise of moorland, riverside and coastline; a place to relish the absolute personal remoteness and to create unforgettable childhood memories of water sports and swimming in the crystal clear waters, catching fish or enjoying a picnic with family and friends in one of the three lunch huts or bothies across the estate.

As well as the superb sport it has to offer, the estate is a rich environmental and ecological habitat supporting a fascinating array of birdlife, wildlife and flora. It is therefore of significant conservation value with considerable potential for a variety of conservation or peatland restoration projects. These rich natural assets may provide exciting opportunities for income generation and capital growth.

In total there are 20 houses and cottages throughout the low ground of the estate, providing accommodation for employees, holiday cottages or long term lets. The style, construction and condition of the properties is relatively consistent, with the majority being of traditional stone construction. They also provide an additional income stream to the estate.

With fertile pasture along the coastline and extensive upland grazing, the in-hand farm supports a commercial herd of 70 suckler cattle and a flock of 800 breeding ewes, producing quality beef and lamb in a natural environment.









## Dunbeath Castle

Dunbeath Castle dates from 1620 and occupies an ancient defensive site on a cliff-top promontory. In the mid 19th century David Bryce was commissioned to remodel the ancient castle and bring it up to date in the grand Baronial style of the time. His visionary landscaping idea of making the northern front of the castle symmetrical and approaching it down a  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile long arrow straight drive in a classic "cut and fill" approach is a true masterpiece.

As one enters the gates past the lodge house one sees a glimpse of the front door of the castle some  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile away, approaching via a steeply sloping 'keyhole' drive. The view gradually unfolds as two progressively higher banks topped with over hanging sycamores extend either side of the drive towards the castle, with the sea as a constant backdrop. The sea's horizon slowly changes the perspective along the way, making this the most dramatic of approaches. The Castle's cliff top location commands views far along the Caithness coast and across the North Sea and it stands as a striking architectural beacon, enhanced by the clarity of the pure northern coastal light.

The castle has a symmetrical northeast front defined by two matching bow stair turrets with corbelled bases. At the corners, on the upper floor, two angle bartizans with conical roofs add further character to this magnificent 'fairytale' castle. The walls, reaching five feet in thickness, are harled and whitewashed beneath a series of pitched slate roofs and crowstepped gables. Ornate dormers project above the wallheads. There are numerous gunloops and a square tower with a crenallated parapet in keeping with the castle's defensive origins. Bryce's work also includes an extensive crenellated retaining terrace wall, with occasional bartizans and round terminal piers, forming a large gravelled forecourt and U-shaped enclosure to the castle.





## Dunbeath Castle

Behind its grand exterior, Dunbeath Castle is a much cherished family home offering ample space for entertaining and accommodating guests in great comfort. The internal layout is extremely well appointed, with all the usual rooms one would expect of a house of this scale and period. All of the reception rooms sit on the eastern side the castle to take full advantage of the magnificent sea views and feature large windows flooding the rooms with natural light. In all there are 13 bedrooms, eight of which could be regarded as principal bedrooms and all bear the names of great naval battles above the doors.

An ornately carved turnpike staircase rises from the ground floor up to the second floor where there are two reception galleries (Lower and Upper Gallery) which are at the heart of their respective levels. A second service staircase leads from the basement all the way up to the attic floor. In keeping with Bryce's work, there are a number of spiral staircases hidden within the many turrets and enormously thick walls. The accommodation is over four floors and can be briefly described as follows:

### Ground Floor

The ground floor includes an entrance hall off which there is a boot room with a barrel vaulted ceiling and an arched inglenook fireplace. On the opposite side of the hall is a flower room and WC, also under a barrel vaulted ceiling.

### Ground Floor (Upper Level)

A short staircase leads to the Lower Gallery which has elaborate ceiling plasterwork and a dark marble fire surround and wood burning stove. Off the Lower Gallery is the well proportioned dining room which comfortably seats 16 and is serviced by a butler's pantry with a dumb waiter lift to the kitchen below. In the southern corner is a study with an open fire and curved window within a tower. Adjacent to the study is a library with four large bookcases and a dark marble fire surround containing a wood burning stove.





# Dunbeath Castle

## First Floor (Lower Level)

The first floor includes three bedrooms (Nile, Montrose and Waterloo) together with two bathrooms.

## First Floor (Upper Level)

The main staircase continues to the Upper Gallery which features an impressive fireplace with marble slips and an intricately carved overmantel. Off the Upper Gallery and situated above the dining room is the magnificent drawing room. Vast windows flood the room with natural light, and while the fireplace forms a centrepiece for the room, it is undoubtedly trumped by the exquisite ceiling plasterwork and the mesmerising outlook. To the front (west) of the castle is the principal bedroom suite with views up the long drive. This comprises two bedrooms (December 26 and Queen) one of which has an en suite bathroom and a further separate bathroom.

## Second Floor

The second floor includes three double bedrooms (First of June, St Vincent and Camperdown) together with two bathrooms.

## Third Floor

The third floor is reached via the service staircase and has comfortable secondary accommodation comprising five bedrooms and four bathrooms.

## Lower Ground Floor

This lower level includes a large kitchen with a four door electric AGA with an electric oven and gas hob extension. A substantial central island is the focal point of the room and the original dark Caithness flagstone floor is still in situ. The lower ground floor also encompasses extensive and practical service rooms which all have a role to play in keeping guests comfortable and well catered. A side door leads to a small courtyard off which are a series of cellars and stores including the former dairy, game larder, the boiler room and a staircase leading to a large outside wooden floored terrace with astonishing coastal views.





## Gardens & Grounds

Dunbeath Castle sits within a Designed Landscape which itself is regarded as a work of art with its skilfully contrived and dramatic approach and setting. The beautifully designed gardens and grounds are truly outstanding and form a wonderful contrast to the exposed and rugged natural surroundings. The centrepiece of the policies are a matching pair of walled gardens, one on either side of the sunken drive each extending to around an acre.

### Southern Garden

Known affectionately as 'Mrs Threipland's Garden', this is a spectacular award winning ornamental and formal walled garden with two viewing turrets at its corners and a bowed niche in the top corner. The classic layout in the shape of a cross is subdivided into eight equal compartments intersected by grass paths and edged with hedges. It includes a rose garden and intriguing plant combinations, resulting in a stunning flower and colour-filled garden oasis complete with glasshouses. Adjoining the rear outer wall is a potting shed and former gardener's room which has been recently refurbished and now offers a comfortable space for shooting guests and those on private garden tours to congregate.

### Northern Garden

In contrast, the northern 'Mr Threipland's Garden', originally the kitchen and cutting garden, is more minimalist in style, dominated by a smooth expanse of lawn, sculptural grasses and a series of contemporary water features. The pretty Laundry House situated in the garden is now used as a charming lunch room ideal for informal entertaining amongst the peaceful surroundings of the garden. The building also contains a continuous flow plunge pool and a shower room.











### **Stable Courtyard**

The stable courtyard lies to the west of the castle beyond the walled garden and can either be accessed from the main drive or via a private estate road from Dunbeath Mains. This well maintained and most attractive Category B Listed building is arranged around a central courtyard and features two fine drum towers under conical bell cast roofs. It is accessed through a pillared and gated entrance and contains a two bedroom flat above a triple garage in the southwestern range. There are also three traditional tiled stalls and a harness room with a former groom's flat above. There is further store / mower shed and three WCs.

### **Gate Lodge**

The Gate Lodge is situated at the entrance to the main drive and is characterised by a round tower under a conical roof. This Category B Listed lodge comprises a reception room and three bedrooms and is occupied by an employee. Stone gate piers flank the carriage and pedestrian entrances each of which has cast iron gates.

### **Dovecot**

Located towards the western extremities of the policies in the woodlands opposite the Gate Lodge there is a mid-18th century “lectern” dovecot (or 'doo-cot') under a Caithness flag roof. It is Category B Listed.



# Estate Enterprises

## Farming

Dunbeath Estate has a productive in-hand livestock farming enterprise including over 378 acres of silage ground and permanent pasture and 119 acres of rough grazing. The farm carries a flock of 800 breeding Cheviot ewes and a herd of 70 suckler cows (Aberdeen Angus cross). Lambing takes place inside at Dunbeath Mains from mid-April, with the store lambs sold at Lairg or Dingwall. Calving is also inside and all progeny are sold as stores at about 12 months.

The in-hand land is largely situated towards the south eastern corner of the estate and runs from the shoreline to a height of about 30 metres above sea level. It has mainly easterly aspects and is largely classified as Grades 4 and 5. The in-bye fields are well fenced and are serviced by either water troughs or natural supplies. Approximately 200 acres are cut for silage each year and additional feed is also bought in as required. Further grazing land may be available to rent on an annual grazing agreement.

The farm is equipped with an extensive range of modern and traditional stone farm buildings at Dunbeath Mains which are easily accessed off the A9 public road. This well maintained farm steading provides useful general storage and ample housing for stock on slatted or bedded courts. The majority of the sheds are serviced by three phase electricity, mains water and are mostly surrounded by concrete aprons and yards. The approximate dimensions for the larger modern steel framed sheds are as follows:

- General purpose / implement shed (erected 2022) – 33m x 15m
- Stock courts (erected 2004 and extended 2007) – 72m x 20m
- General purpose / straw shed (erected 2008) – 27m x 9m

The in-hand farm qualifies for Less Favoured Area Support Scheme (LFASS) payments in addition to receiving Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and Scottish Beef Calf Scheme (SBCS) support. The estate entered into an Agri-Environment Climate Scheme in 2020 for a five year period.





# Sporting

## **Walked-up Grouse Shooting: *12<sup>th</sup> August – 10<sup>th</sup> December***

Dunbeath offers the sportsman varied and exciting walked-up grouse shooting amidst a breathtaking and vast landscape. In common with many Caithness and Sutherland moors, the grouse are walked-up over pointers providing smaller teams of guns with exhilarating sport combined with the fascinating spectacle of watching the dogs in action. Bags are generally in the order of three to five brace per day and tend to be shot between August and September. Typically 20 - 25 days are shot each season and the average bag for the last 10 years has been 64 brace.

The Caithness moors are also famed for their perfect conditions for falconry. The absence of trees, relatively flat landscape and smaller covey sizes make this the ideal hunting environment for falcons.

## **Driven Low Ground Shoot: *1<sup>st</sup> September (Partridge) / 1<sup>st</sup> October (Pheasant) – 1<sup>st</sup> February***

The low ground shooting is largely focused on the land around Balcraggie Lodge and the dramatic steep sided gullies and slopes rising up from the Dunbeath Water. The wooded and sheltered banks of the river provide an ideal habitat for holding pheasants and are in stark contrast to the open moorland further west.

There are 10 drives offering challenging and exciting sport where the focus is on the quality of birds presented rather than bags. Typically 4,000 pheasants are released and 500 partridges providing six or seven driven days per season. Bags generally vary between 150 and 200 birds.

Migrating woodcock arrive from Scandinavia from the October full moon and through the winter months offering testing sport amongst the sheltered cover on the lower ground and protected glens. There is also the opportunity for walked up snipe and wildfowling as wild duck fly into the many lochans scattered across the estate from September onwards.

## **Red Deer Stalking - Stags: *1<sup>st</sup> July – 20<sup>th</sup> October; Hinds: 21<sup>st</sup> October – 15<sup>th</sup> February***

The Dunbeath Deer Forest forms the western portion of the estate and comprises an interesting and varied hill which extends to approximately 20,000 acres. The terrain offers exciting and challenging stalking, and has a ten year average cull of 40 stags and 59 hinds. The forest sits in a spectacular landscape between the hills of Ben Alisky (348m) to the north and Morven (706m) and the Maiden Pap (484m) to the south.

The forest is naturally divided into two beats by the Dunbeath River enabling two parties to stalk independently when conditions allow. It is predominantly a hind forest but does hold a resident population of stags year-round though on the whole, stags are drawn onto the land for the rut. The majority of the sport is let by the day or as part of a mixed week incorporating grouse and fishing.

The estate enjoys excellent access to the hill on hard tracks. Thereafter, reasonable access to allow for extraction is obtained over most of the ground with an Argocat. A new deer larder, equipped with a chiller, gantry system and preparation area, was built within the last 15 years. Dunbeath works closely with the adjoining estates over deer management and is a member of the Northern Deer Management Group. A deer management plan was prepared in 2012 and is available to interested parties. In addition to red deer, the estate also supports a small population of sika and roe deer on the lower slopes and wooded glens.



| Sporting Returns |                |       |       |        |           |
|------------------|----------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Season           | Grouse (Brace) | Stags | Hinds | Salmon | Sea Trout |
| 2012 / 13        | 40.5           | 40    | 59    | 249    | 15        |
| 2013 / 14        | 43             | 46    | 49    | 58     | 9         |
| 2014 / 15        | 63             | 40    | 65    | 99     | 28        |
| 2015 / 16        | 62.5           | 44    | 42    | 105    | 7         |
| 2016 / 17        | 78             | 39    | 62    | 260    | 44        |
| 2017 / 18        | 88             | 37    | 73    | 64     | 30        |
| 2018 / 19        | 55             | 37    | 73    | 130    | 6         |
| 2019 / 20        | 88.5           | 38    | 58    | 115    | 13        |
| 2020 / 21        | 53.5           | 35    | 53    | 11     | 0         |
| 2021 / 22        | 72             | 48    | 59    | 91     | 12        |
| 10 Year Average  | 64.5           | 40    | 59    | 118    | 16        |





### **Fishing: 11<sup>th</sup> February – 15<sup>th</sup> October**

The Dunbeath Water offers excellent salmon and sea trout fishing and is one of the few rivers in Scotland to be under single ownership from source to sea. It also includes the netting rights in order to help preserve salmon stocks.

This modest but prolific spate river stretches from Loch Braigh na h-Aibhne in the most westerly corner of the estate to the harbour of Dunbeath, some 16 miles in length and includes about 50 fishable pools. Numerous smaller tributaries flow into the main body of the river, the two most significant being the Achorn and Houstry burns. Flow is also maintained by feeds from two lochs, Loch Dubh and Loch Braec. It is understood that in the 1920s, both these lochs were equipped with hatches as a buffer against very low flow conditions during times of drought; these have been maintained to this day. The fishing season opens on 11<sup>th</sup> February and closes on 15<sup>th</sup> October with the main run of fish coming through in the late summer and early autumn spates.



Due to the dwindling stock of salmon in the river in the early 2000s, a small scale hatchery was established to help replenish the population. This project has been a success and the 10 year average now stands at about 118 salmon and 16 sea trout. Fishing is by fly only and the general policy in recent years has been no more than one fish per person per day to be killed; all fish heavier than 9 lbs and anything coloured to be returned to the river.

The fishing rights are exercised by the Dunbeath Angling Club on an annual agreement but with two rods reserved for Balcraggie Lodge guests and the “Castle”. In addition to salmon fishing, brown trout fishing can be enjoyed both on the river and the four hill lochs. Loch Dubh is best fished by boat and also offers a small lunch hut.





## Natural Capital

Rural land is unique within the context of the current environmental crisis as it can have the ability to provide nature-based solutions. Habitat creation and restoration can increase carbon sequestration and raise biodiversity levels, as well as provide other valuable ecosystem improvements such as better water quality, slower water transit and decreased air pollution.

Approximately 15,000 acres of Dunbeath are situated within the Caithness and Sutherland Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), RAMSAR Site and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The vast majority of the estate falls within Caithness Flow Country. The Flow Country is Europe's largest expanse of blanket bog and is reported to store 400 million tonnes of carbon.

This sale offers an owner the opportunity to deliver significant nature-based solutions through the restoration and management of peatlands and to conserve and enhance this important upland habitat. The Peatland Code currently provides a voluntary mechanism for carbon finance to peatland restoration work throughout the UK. In addition to peatland restoration there is also potential for further biodiversity enhancement which may include the expansion of existing riparian woodlands within some of the steep sided gullies.





The vast majority of the moorland at Dunbeath is blanket bog, made up of nationally important Class 1 carbon-rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat of high conservation value. A carbon assessment will be undertaken by Caledonian Climate over initially the Deer Forest 10,000 acres in April 2023 but it is anticipated that approximately 25% of this area will include eroding or drained peatland of varying degrees, as seen from aerial imagery, which will require sensitive management or restoration. In addition there may be up to a further 8,500 acres of degraded peatland across the estate which may be suitable for a restoration scheme. This additional area is subject to common grazing rights and any project would require the agreement of the crofters. Areas of exposed and damaged peatlands are a considerable source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions whilst healthy and restored peatlands emit significantly less CO<sub>2</sub> and can also provide additional benefits such as improved biodiversity, water quality and flood mitigation.



*This photograph shows a peatland restoration scheme on the neighbouring estate owned and retained by the seller.*



# Residential Properties

## Balcraggie Lodge

Constructed in 1882, this fine six bedroom Victorian shooting lodge lies in a spectacular position above the Dunbeath Water, about 1.8 miles inland of Dunbeath Castle. Built of traditional stone over two floors and beneath a pitched slate roof, the lodge faces eastwards with views down the Strath and to the North Sea beyond.

This comfortable yet well appointed house combines wonderful reception rooms ideal for entertaining with the practical service rooms needed for a functioning sporting lodge accommodating house parties and staff. It comfortably sleeps 12 in five principal bedrooms with en suite bathrooms and four secondary bedrooms to the rear of the house and in the attic. There are a further two bathrooms. Balcraggie is let on a self-catering basis throughout the year with many returning guests. It is popular with parties taking shooting and stalking on the estate.

To the front and side of the lodge are large lawns with deciduous woodlands beyond and a former walled kitchen garden. There is a generous gravelled parking area to the rear. A mature stand of pine provides shelter from the south westerly prevailing wind.

A short distance from the rear of the house is a former traditional stone byre which has been converted to provide a well equipped shoot lunch room which can seat 30 beaters. Adjoining the shoot room is modest range of stores. There is also a double garage and a traditional timber built game larder with gauzed windows.

## Dunbeath Mains Farmhouse & Bothy

This well proportioned period farmhouse is of stone construction with rendered elevations beneath a pitched slate roof. It sits a short distance to the south of the farm steading in generous grounds flanked by mature trees. Akin to most dwellings on the estate, it has a dramatic easterly outlook over the sea and also northwards along the Caithness coastline. It is currently used as an estate office and archive but the accommodation could be easily turned back into a five bedroom farmhouse with three reception rooms. Adjoining the rear of the house is a self-contained bothy.

## Other Residential Properties

There are a further 17 dwellings across the estate which are largely of traditional stone construction. The properties range from modest one bedroom single storey cottages to two storey three / four bedroom houses many of which are in exceptionally picturesque rural locations. 12 of the residential properties are let on Private Residential Tenancies (PRTs) generating a valuable income, with the two occupied by employees and three on short term self-catering basis. A full schedule of the residential properties is listed under the General Remarks section of these particulars.





# Commercial & Development

Across the estate there are ten commercial and miscellaneous lets ranging from a former mill converted into let offices to a secure compound let to a highways agency. This diverse portfolio currently generates an annual income of circa. £42,000. Further details are available in the online data room.

There are a number of potential development opportunities across the estate including traditional farm buildings and derelict dwellings, many of which benefit from good access, services nearby and fine coastal outlooks. Any such development will be subject to obtaining the relevant planning consents.

# Renewable Energy

## Wind Turbine

A 15kW turbine located a short distance to the north of Dunbeath Mains was commissioned in 2012 and provides electricity to the castle. The turbine has a height of 15m and 5.4 metre blade length. In addition to supplying the castle with sustainable energy the turbine qualifies for Clean Energy Cashback (FIT ID: FIT00356485). The annual payment typically amounts to about £12,000.

## Air Source

Dunbeath Castle is serviced by four air source heat pumps providing an efficient source of heating. The hot water is either by oil boiler or immersion heating. It also benefits from a back up oil fired boiler. In low occupancy the Castle is self sufficient in terms of heating and hot water as the wind turbine provides power to the air source heat pump systems, electric AGA and immersion heater.



## Photovoltaic (PV) Panels

The cattle court at Dunbeath Mains is fitted with a 18.80kW roof mounted solar PV system. The panels supply power to the two air source heat pumps heating Dunbeath Mains Farmhouse with any surplus electricity generated fed into the grid. The system qualifies for Clean Energy Cashback (FIT ID: FIT00356485). The annual payment typically amounts to about £3,500.

## Wind Farm

An option agreement with a wind farm developer is currently under negotiation. It covers land known as Leanarich extending to about 3,000 acres. The wind farm is expected to comprise of up to 27 turbines with a power output in excess of 150mW. The turbine base site itself is approximately 300 acres. In the event of any renewable development by the purchaser or agreed to by the purchaser, the seller retains a right to seek an uplift payment in terms to be agreed in a Clawback Agreement. The terms of this agreement will be 25% of any uplift in value resulting from any renewable development or any payment due to the purchaser as the result of any renewable development. The Clawback Agreement will subsist for a period of 35 years from the date of entry.





## Common Grazings & Crofts

There are seven areas of common grazings across the estate ranging from 25 acres to 5,000 acres and totalling about 14,591 acres. They are either grazed by crofters or sheep stock clubs.

Sheep stock clubs are sheep flocks held in common ownership and farmed for collective benefit of the members / shareholders with any profits split equally. The owners of Dunbeath Estate are a participating member of the club.

In addition, approximately 1,141 acres are occupied crofting tenants (crofters). A croft is a relatively small agricultural land holding, which is normally held in tenancy by the crofter, and is unique to Scotland. The sporting rights over common grazings and crofted land can be exercised by the estate.



# Viewing & Travel Arrangements

## Viewing

Strictly by appointment with Savills.

## By Road

From Inverness, follow the A9 north towards Thurso. After passing through the town of Helmsdale, continue following the A9 for approximately 14 miles before turning right signposted towards Dunbeath. Follow this road for 100m before turning right onto Campbell Avenue. Continue on this road for half a mile before turning left onto the drive leading down to Dunbeath Castle.

The postcode for sat nav purposes is KW6 6EY. what3words: ///column.award.nodded

## By Air

Inverness is the closest international airport from where helicopters and cars can be hired. Aberdeen airport has daily scheduled flights (Sunday-Friday) to and from Wick (23 miles from Dunbeath Castle). Other Scottish international airports include Edinburgh and Glasgow. There are daily flights from London to Inverness airport (90 miles from Dunbeath Castle) from where a private driver can be arranged.

Aberdeen - 03444 816666 <https://www.aberdeenairport.com/>

Wick - 01955 602215 <https://www.hial.co.uk/wick-john-ogroats-airport>

Inverness - 01667 464000 <https://www.hial.co.uk/inverness-airport>

## Helicopter Hire

For helicopter charter from most Scottish airports contact PDG Helicopters on 01667 462 740.

## By Rail

From Edinburgh and Glasgow it is possible to get a train to Inverness. Change here for a train to Helmsdale, the closest station to Dunbeath Castle (14 miles).





| Ref. No. | Property                     | Occupation             | Construction                            | Bedrooms / Reception | Council Tax Band / Rateable Value | EPC Rating | Water Supply | Heating  |
|----------|------------------------------|------------------------|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|--------------|--|
| 1        | Dunbeath Castle              | Owner occupied         | Traditional                             |                      | H                                 | E          | Mains        | Air source heating / oil fired boiler (back up). Hot water via electric immersion. |
| 2        | Stable Flat, Dunbeath Castle | Short-term holiday let | Traditional / Adjoins stables & garages | 2 / 1                | £1,800                            | F          | Mains        | Electric   |
| 3        | Dunbeath Castle Gate Lodge   | Service occupancy      | Traditional / Detached                  | 2 / 1                | C                                 | E          | Mains        | Solid fuel back boiler   |
| 4        | Dunbeath Mains Farmhouse     | Owner occupied         | Traditional                             | 6 / 3                | £4,250                            | F          | Mains        | Oil fired central hearing & hot water via air source                               |
| 5        | The Bothy, Dunbeath Mains    | PRT                    | Traditional (adjoins farmhouse)         | 1 / 1                | A                                 | G          | Mains        |  |
| 6        | Mains Cottage                | PRT                    | Traditional / Detached                  | 3 / 1                | C                                 | F          | Mains        | Electric   |
| 7        | Ordgarth House               | PRT                    | Traditional / Detached                  | 3 / 2                | E                                 | G          | Mains        | Oil fired central heating  |
| 8        | Old Police Station           | PRT                    | Traditional / Semi Detached             | 2 / 1                | A                                 | F          | Mains        | Oil fired central heating  |
| 9        | Old Police House             | PRT                    | Traditional / Semi Detached             | 2 / 1                | C                                 | F          | Mains        | Oil fired central heating  |
| 10       | Rose Cottage                 | PRT                    | Traditional / Detached                  | 2 / 1                | A                                 | F          | Mains        | Solid fuel & electric  |
| 11       | Balnabruich                  | PRT                    | Modern / Detached                       | 2 / 3                | B                                 | F          | Mains        | Oil fired central heating  |
| 12       | Balaccladdich 1              | PRT                    | Traditional / Terrace                   | 2 / 1                | A                                 | F          | Mains        | Electric   |
| 13       | Balaccladdich 2              | PRT                    | Traditional / Terrace                   | 1 / 1                | A                                 | F          | Mains        | Electric   |
| 14       | Balaccladdich 3              | PRT                    | Traditional / Terrace                   | 2 / 1                | A                                 | F          | Mains        | Electric   |
| 15       | Bayview                      | PRT                    | Traditional / Detached                  | 2 / 2                | C                                 | F          | Mains        | Oil fired central heating  |
| 16       | The Old Weavers              | PRT                    | Traditional / Detached                  | 2 / 2                | C                                 | D          | Mains        | Air source heat pump & solar   |
| 17       | Keeper's House               | Service occupancy      | Traditional / Detached                  | 3 / 2                | D                                 | F          | Mains        | Biomass heating & hot water  |
| 18       | Balintra                     | Short-term holiday let | Traditional / Detached                  | 3 / 2                | B                                 | G          | Mains        | Oil fired central heating  |
| 19       | Balcraggie Lodge             | Short-term holiday let | Traditional / Detached                  | 8 / 2                | £4,500                            | G          | Mains        | Oil fired central heating  |
| 20       | Castlehill Cottage           | PRT                    | Traditional / Detached                  | 3 / 1                | B                                 | G          | Mains        | Oil fired central heating  |
| 21       | Bual                         | PRT                    | Modern / Detached                       | 2 / 2                | C                                 | D          | Mains        | Oil fired central heating & electric   |
| A        | Markethill Road Depot        | Lease                  | Yard & modern sheds                     | -                    | £8,250                            | -          | -            | -  |
| B        | Dunbeath Mill Offices        | Lease                  | Converted traditional mill              | -                    | £6,000                            | -          | Mains        | Electric heating   |
| C        | Salmon Hatchery              | In-hand                |   | -                    | -                                 | -          | -            | -  |
| D        | Garage                       | Licence                | -                                       | -                    | -                                 | -          | -            | -  |
| E        | Store 1 at Bayview           | Licence                | Traditional / Terrace                   | -                    | £500                              | -          | -            | -  |
| F        | Store 2 at Bayview           | Licence                |   | -                    | -                                 | -          | -            | -  |
| G        | Store 3 at Bayview           | Licence                |   | -                    | -                                 | -          | -            | -  |
| H        | Store at Rose Cottage        | Licence                | Container                               | -                    | -                                 | -          | -            | -  |
| I        | Old Police House Shed        | Licence                | Traditional shed                        | -                    | -                                 | -          | -            | -  |
| J        | Old Police Station Shed      | Licence                |   | -                    | -                                 | -          | -            | -  |







# General Remarks

## Offers

Offers in Scottish Legal Form are to be submitted to the selling agents - Savills, Wemyss House, 8 Wemyss Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6DH. A closing date for offers may be fixed, and prospective purchasers are advised to register their interest with the selling agents following inspection.

## Entry & Possession

Entry by arrangement, subject to existing leases.

## Ingoing Valuation

The purchaser(s) shall, in addition to the purchase price, be obliged to take over and pay for at a valuation to be agreed between two valuers, one acting for each party, or an arbiter appointed by the valuers, or failing agreement as to the appointment by the President, for the time being, of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (Scottish Branch), the following:

- All oils, fuel, fertilisers, sprays, chemicals, hay, feedstuffs and sundries at cost.
- The cattle and sheep flock at hefted and acclimatised value on the farm.

If the amount of the valuations has not been agreed on the date fixed for completion, then the purchaser shall pay to the seller such a sum as the selling agents shall certify on account at the valuation pending agreement. Should the payment not be made within seven days then interest will become payable on the outstanding monies at 5% over Bank of Scotland borrowing rate.

## Fixtures, Fittings, Contents and Estate Equipment

The fitted carpets, curtains and light fittings in Dunbeath Castle, Dunbeath Mains and Balcraggie are included in the sale. The garden and estate and farm equipment are available by separate negotiation.

## Servitude Rights, Burdens, Wayleaves And Statutory Public And Other Access Rights

The property is sold subject to and with the benefit of all existing servitude and wayleave rights, including rights of access and rights of way, whether public or private. The property is also sold subject to the rights of public access under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. The purchaser(s) will be held to have satisfied themselves as to the nature of all such servitude rights and others following their solicitors' examination of the title deeds.

- A number of Core Paths run through the estate but do not pass through the Castle gardens and policies. Further details are available within the Data Room.
- There are wayleave agreements with Scottish and Southern Energy in connection with overhead and underground power lines. There are also other third party wayleaves.
- The estate benefits from a right of access over third party property (Langwell Estate) for access to the south western portion of the deer forest. This track also serves the neighbouring estate to the west which benefits from a right of access through Dunbeath.

## Non Domestic Rates

The current sporting and fishing rateable values are as follows:

- Sporting Rights (Deer Forest) - £4,700
- Salmon Fishings (Dunbeath Water) - £4,000
- Salmon Netting Rights - £0



## **Employees**

The staff employed on Dunbeath will fall to be transferred to a purchaser under the TUPE Regulations 2006. Further details are available from the selling agents.

## **Basic Payment Scheme (BPSE)**

Any BPSE will be made available to the purchaser(s) and can be purchased in addition at valuation. Payments in respect of the current farming year and in relation to any previous years will be retained by the sellers.

## **Less Favoured Area Support Scheme (LFASS)**

The estate lies wholly within a Less Favoured (Severely Disadvantaged) Area and therefore qualifies for LFASS payments. Payments in respect of the current farming year and in relation to any previous years will be retained by the sellers.

## **Sporting Rights**

The sporting rights are in-hand, included in the sale and available to the purchaser(s).

## **Mineral Rights**

The minerals are included within the sale insofar as the sellers' right thereto.

## **Timber**

All standing and fallen timber will be included in the sale.

## **Environmental Designations**

The estate falls within the following designations:

- Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area and Ramsar.
- Dunbeath Peatlands SSSI on account of the blanket bog and birds (breeding bird assemblage).
- Coire na Beinne Mires SSSI on account of the blanket bog.
- Dunbeath Water SSSI on account of its geology and upland birch woodland.

## **Archaeological and Historical Designations**

- Dunbeath Castle, Walled Gardens and Garden Pavilion – Category A Listed
- Dunbeath Stable Yard, Gate Lodge, Gate Piers and Dovecote - Category B Listed
- Gardens and policies - Gardens and Designed Landscapes
- 49 separate Scheduled Ancient Monuments

## **Local Authority**

Highland Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX Tel:01463 228 340

## **Solicitors**

Gillespie Macandrew LLP, 5 Atholl Crescent Edinburgh EH3 8EJ. Tel: 0131 260 7544 Email: Robert.Scott-Dempster@gillespiemacandrew.co.uk







# Stipulations

## Purchase Price

On conclusion of missives a non-returnable deposit of 10% of the purchase price shall be paid. The balance of the purchase price will fall due for payment at the date of entry (whether entry is taken or not) with interest accruing thereon at the rate of 5% above Bank of Scotland base rate. No consignation shall be effectual in avoiding such interest.

## Disputes

Should any discrepancy arise as to the boundaries or any points arise on the Remarks, Stipulations or Plan or the interpretation of any of them, the question shall be referred to the arbitration of the selling agents whose decision acting as experts, shall be final.

## Plans, Areas and Schedules

These are based on the Ordnance Survey and are for reference only. They have been carefully checked and computed by the selling agents and the purchaser shall be deemed to have satisfied himself as to the description of the property and any error or mis-statement shall not annul the sale nor entitle either party to compensation in respect thereof.

## Funding

Any offer by a purchaser(s) must be accompanied by a guarantee from a bank which is acceptable to the sellers.

## Lotting

It is intended to offer the property for sale as described, but the seller reserves the right to divide the property into lots, or to withdraw the property, or to exclude any property shown in these particulars.

## Generally

Should there be any discrepancy between these particulars, the General Remarks and Information, Stipulations and the Missives of Sale, the latter shall prevail.

## Apportionments

The Council Tax and all other outgoings shall be apportioned between the seller and the purchaser(s) as at the date of entry.

## Important Notice

Savills and their clients give notice that:

They are not authorised to make or give any representations or warranties in relation to the property either here or elsewhere, either on their own behalf or on behalf of their client or otherwise. They assume no responsibility for any statement that may be made in these particulars. These particulars do not form part of any offer or contract and must not be relied upon as statements or representations of fact.

Any areas, measurements or distances are approximate. The text, photographs and plans are for guidance only and are not necessarily comprehensive. It should not be assumed that the property has all necessary planning, building regulation or other consents and Savills have not tested any services, equipment or facilities. Purchasers must satisfy themselves by inspection or otherwise. Neither these particulars nor any subsequent communication relative to the property shall be binding upon Savills or the Sellers (whether acted on or otherwise) unless the same is incorporated within a written document signed by the Sellers or on their behalf satisfying the requirements of Section 3 of the Requirements of Writing (Scotland) Act 1995 or is granted in pursuance of any such document.

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