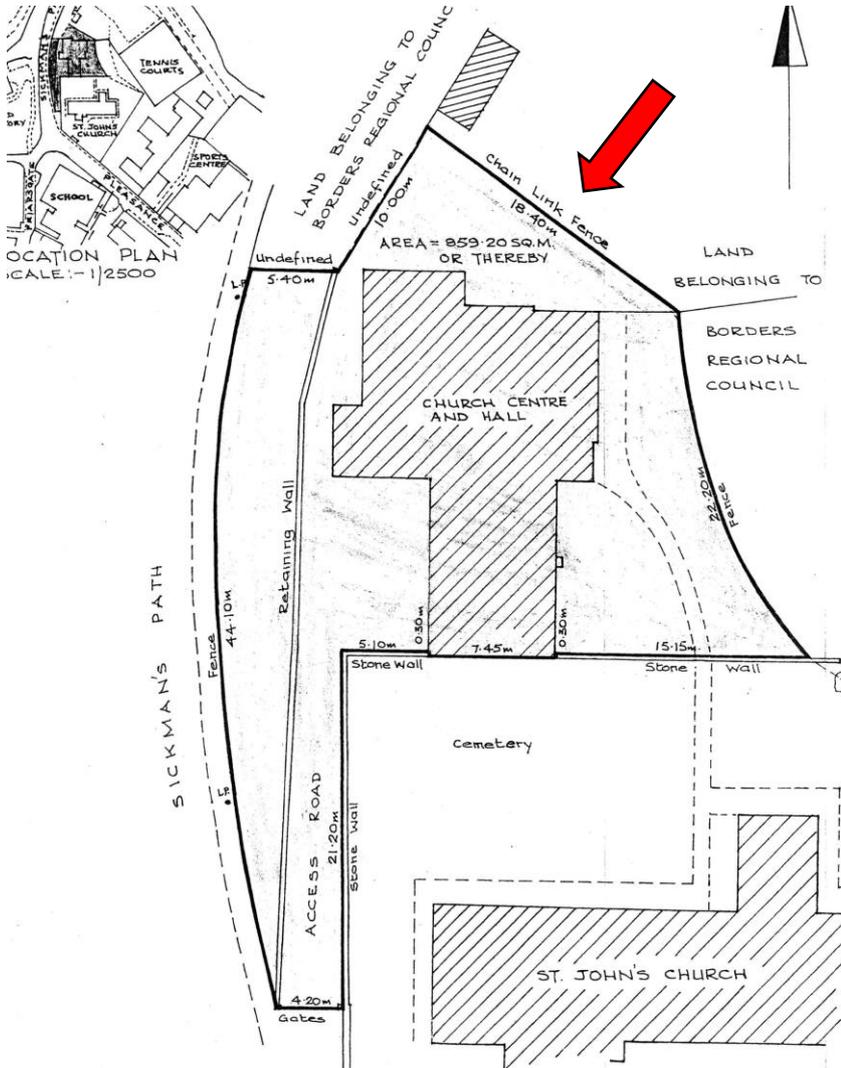


Old School playground

I now have access to a paper file called 'JCAC Garden'. It is a record of work by Margaret Robinson and others to create a garden and play area on the north and east sides of St. John's Old School, as part of their revitalisation of the building in the early 2000's.

It helps understand the query raised recently by SBC about land bought from us in 1974, part of which we occupy, as a lot of plans were drawn and letters written in the process of Jedburgh Community and Arts Centre applying for grants and getting estimates. The file also has a copy of a 2002 planning permission application and associated letters that give the background to the present-day layout of the site.

This plan from 2002 shows what things were like before any work was done.



A chain link fence (my red arrow) ran along what later became the front edge of the soft play area, and a surface change of texture shows where the fence used to be.

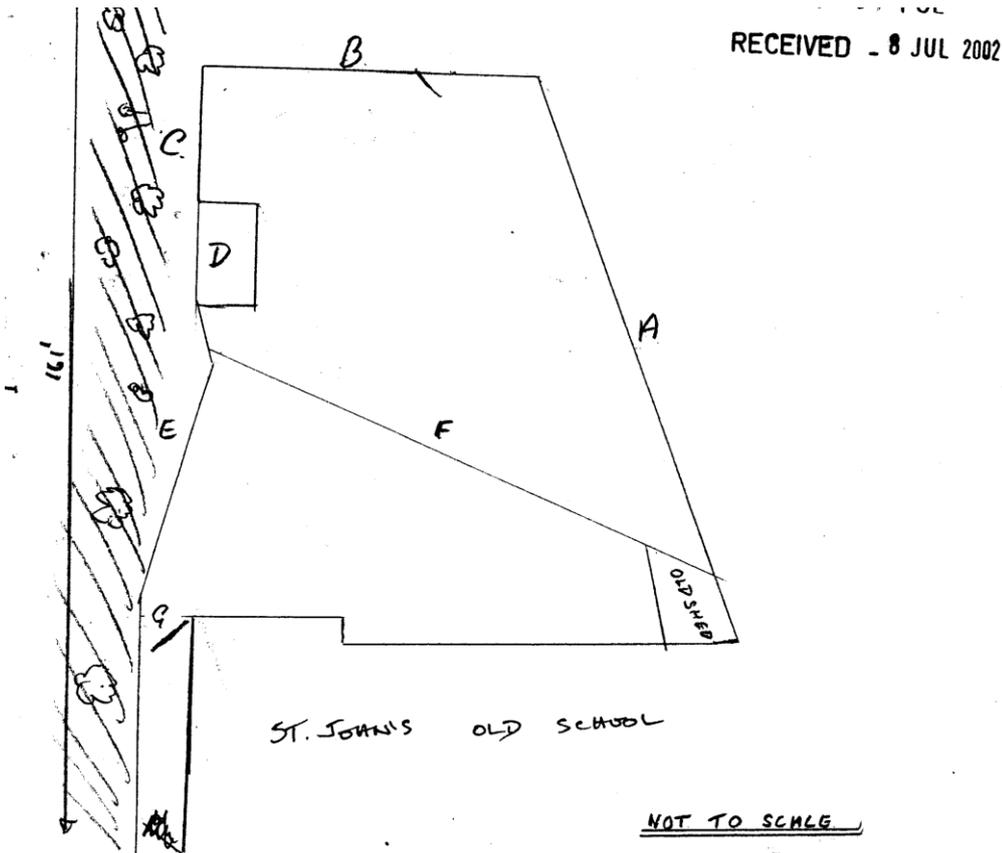


Beyond it lay the land Roxburgh County Council had bought from St. John's in 1974 to develop the Grammar School site.

But the Council had not used all of that land, and the area between the chain link fence and the Grammar School's dry ski slope was unused and overgrown. JCAC approached SBC in December 2001 with a view to extending the playground to include that unused area for the after-school club then being set up.ⁱⁱ

SBC replied early in 2002 welcoming the proposal and suggesting it would offer JCAC a renewable 3-year lease of the additional land as a play area at £100 a year, the tenants to fence it in at their own expense, pointing out that a planning application would be needed if the new fencing was to be more than 1m high and within 20m of a public road. It was, and the application was made on 3 July 2002.

Approval was given in September 2002. The chain link fence (F on the plan) was removed and the new fences (A and B) erected, enlarging the asphalt playground to its present-day extent.



- A 54' x 6' high weldmesh fence.
- B 29' x 6' high 6" vertical spar fence
- C 18' x 6' high weldmesh fence
- D 18' x 10' shed - existing
- E 35' x 5' high 6" vertical spar fence.
- F Old fence to be removed.
- G 5' x 5' gate.
- H 5' x 6' gate.
- I Steep bank to be cleared.

Scottish Borders Council
 Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Acts
APPROVED
 (Subject to conditions)
20 SEP 2002
 Planning & Development Department
 Newtown St Boswells

However, it seems nothing was ever done about a lease, as confirmed in an email from SBC on 12 July 2004.

JCAC was applying for funding under a Government environmental scheme (CERS). In order to qualify, it needed to confirm that the garden work it envisaged on the eastern side of the building (what is now the garden and patio to the ground floor flat) would not be covered under any local authority scheme or obligation. Margaret Robinson asked the Council to confirm this, and this is the reply forwarded to her by SBC's Environmental Strategy Coordinator:

> -----Original Message-----
> From: Hastie, Neil
> Sent: Monday, July 12, 2004 10:39 AM
> To: Cox, Louise
> Subject: RE: Jedburgh Community and Arts Centre - Garden Project.

> Louise,
> I can confirm that the Council has no ownership or other responsibility over the old school grounds at St John's in Jedburgh. I would however advise you that at the end of last year we were in negotiations with Jedburgh Community and Arts Centre to lease an area of ground extending to approx 200 square meters adjoining St Johns Old School for a childrens play area. I am not sure if this area will be part of the scheme and on checking our file it would appear that the lease has never been concluded.

> If you need any further information please let me know.

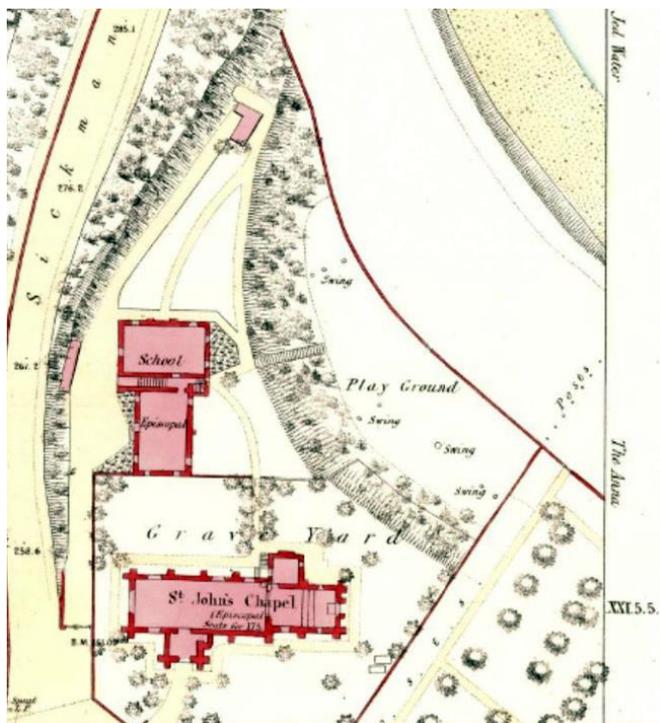
> Neil

I can find nothing more in the file about the proposed lease.

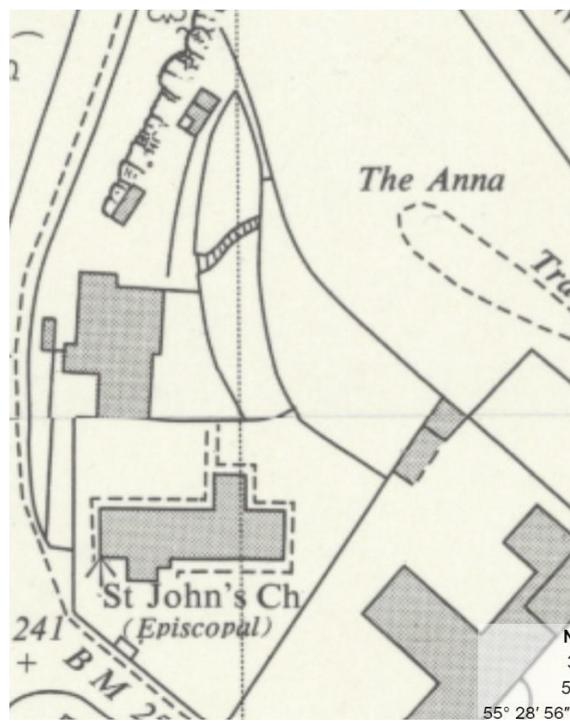
Observations

1. The short-term renewable lease initially suggested by SBC in response to JCAC's proposal would have enabled it to control the use of the land, to impose conditions, and ultimately to repossess it if it needed to. The lie of the land, essentially unchanged since St. John's School opened in 1855 (except for the dry ski slope work), probably explains why it did not take that idea further, appearing simply to acquiesce in the land's continued occupation by JCAC. The land was not worth it: never of practical use to SBC and for the same reason probably never of practical use to any future purchaser of the Grammar School site.
2. The correspondence confirms that the fences put up by JCAC were new, not replacements; they marked the edges of the usable flat space then remaining around the Old School.
3. The diagonal plotted boundary north of the 'School House' on SBC's title plan ROX16205 doesn't follow the former position of the chain link fence, though the plan sent to us in July 2021 by SBC querying our occupation does.
4. Further questions might arise when SBC disposes of the Grammar School land.

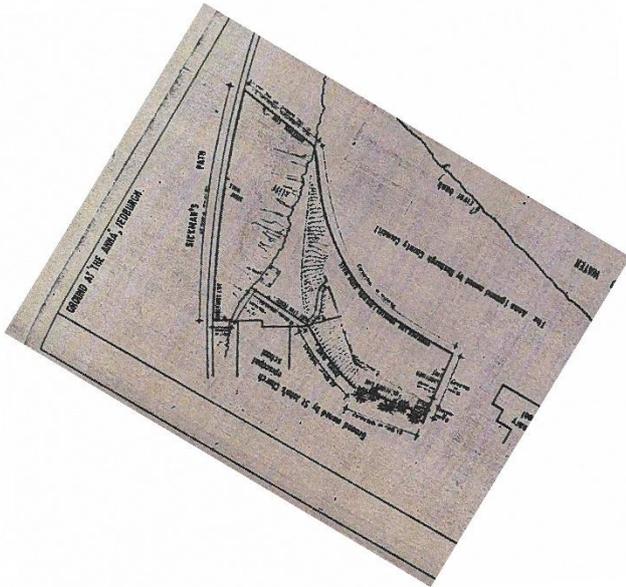
Maps



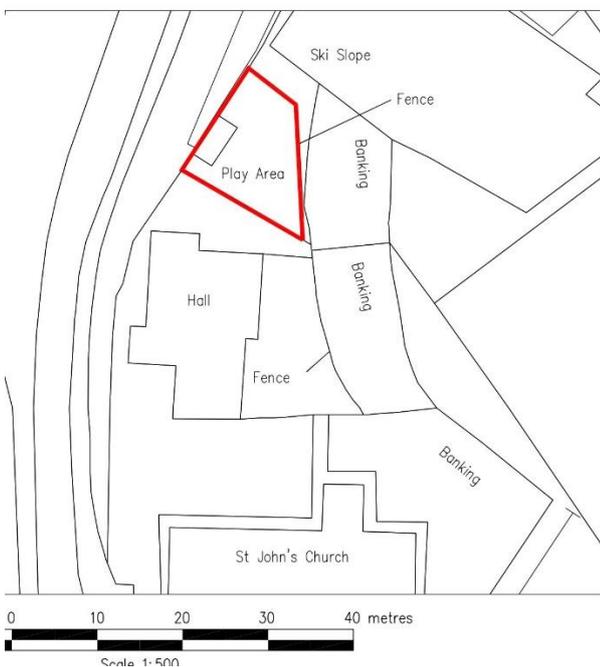
Ordnance Survey Town Plan, 1858



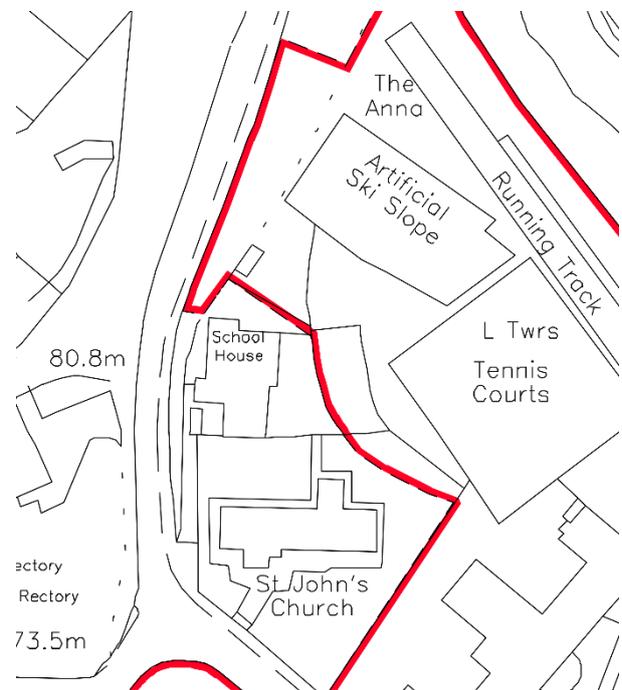
Ordnance Survey, 1970



Detail (rotated) of the plan to the 1974 sale to Roxburgh County Council.



Extract from the plan from SBC (July 2021) querying the land occupied by St. John's



Extract from SBC's title plan (ROX16205), registered in 2019

I have scanned the items of correspondence referred to and will store them digitally in case this summary doesn't answer all the questions.

I suggest we retain the 'JCAC Garden' paper file.

I will request a better-quality scanned copy of the 1974 Deed from the Edinburgh Diocesan office.

PB

4 October 2021

ⁱ Jedburgh Community and Arts Centre (SC231584) was incorporated 16 May 2002, changed to a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) in 2012, and was based in the Old School as the tenant of St. John's Church until its dissolution in June 2019, when its surplus assets transferred to the Church.

ⁱⁱ Jedburgh Out of School Club (SC032893) was established as an unincorporated association 5 March 2002 and changed to a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) in 2013. It operated from the Old School – initially as a tenant of JCAC, then (briefly) as a tenant of St. John's Church – until April 2020 (Covid lockdown) and restarted at Jedburgh Grammar Campus in August 2020.