

Land to North of Ardlair  
Strachan, Banchory, Aberdeenshire  
AB31 6NN  
Report on the archaeological watching brief  
NO 67054 93378



Alison Cameron  
Cameron Archaeology  
3 February 2012

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Aberdeenshire, AB31 6NN  
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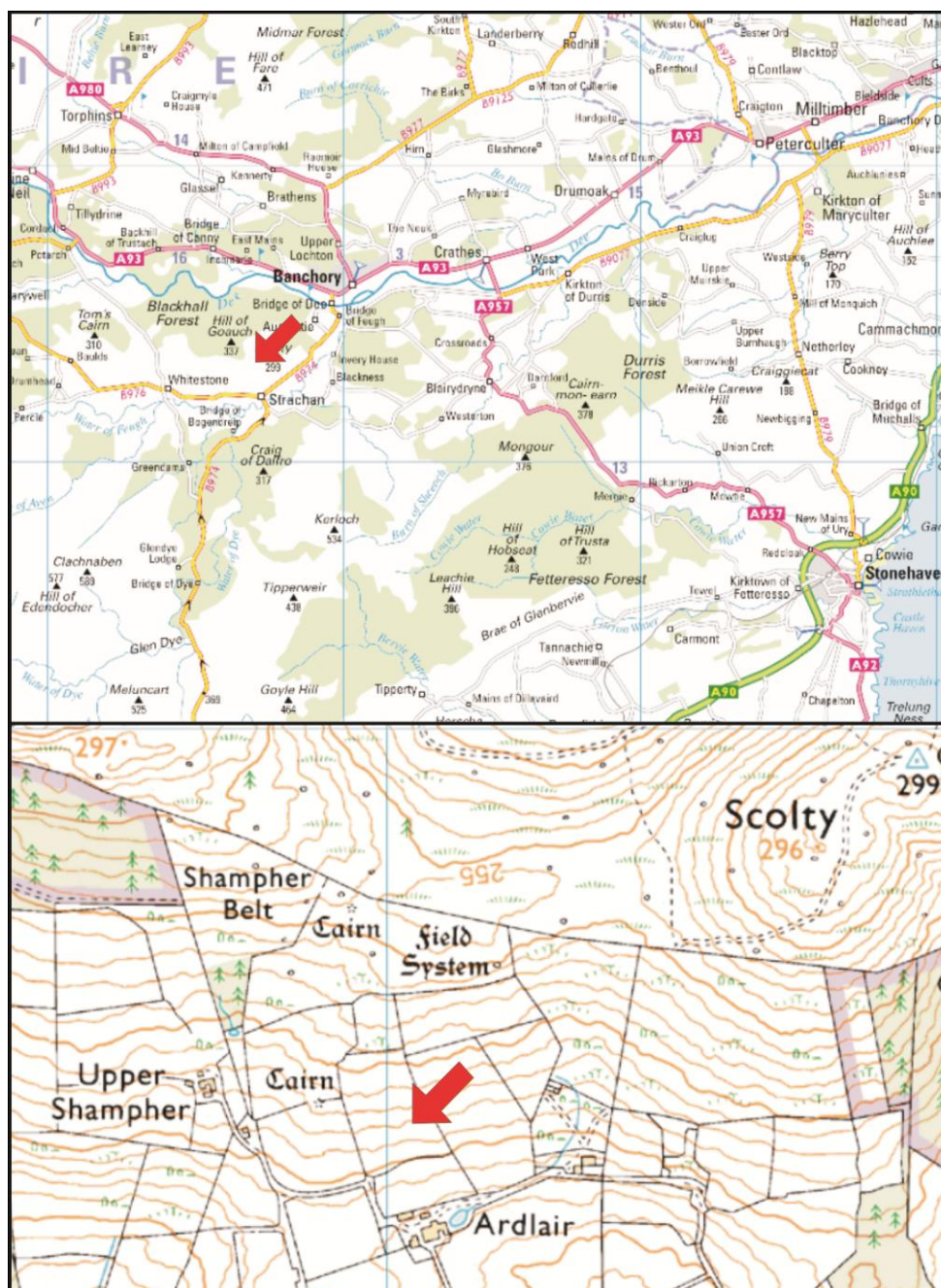
## **SUMMARY**

A watching brief was maintained at land north of Ardlair, Strachan, Banchory, Aberdeenshire on 2 February 2012 for installation of two wind turbines (Aberdeenshire Planning Application 2011/1472). No archaeological remains were uncovered and it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required at this site during the current development although the final decision remains with Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

A watching brief was carried out at land north of Ardlair, Strachan, Banchory, Aberdeenshire on 2 February 2012. The site is in Strachan parish, the NGR for the site is NO 67054 93378 and it lies at 205-215m OD. The work was commissioned by Enviko Ltd (contact Louisa Coursey) on behalf of Mr Brian Middleton, Ardlair and refers to Aberdeenshire Planning Application 2011/1472 for the erection of two wind turbines; condition 9 states that the applicant must secure an archaeological watching brief during the soil removal for the turbine base.

The watching brief was carried out in the context of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) Planning Advice Note (PAN 2/2011) and Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), which state that archaeological remains should be regarded as part of the environment to be protected and managed.

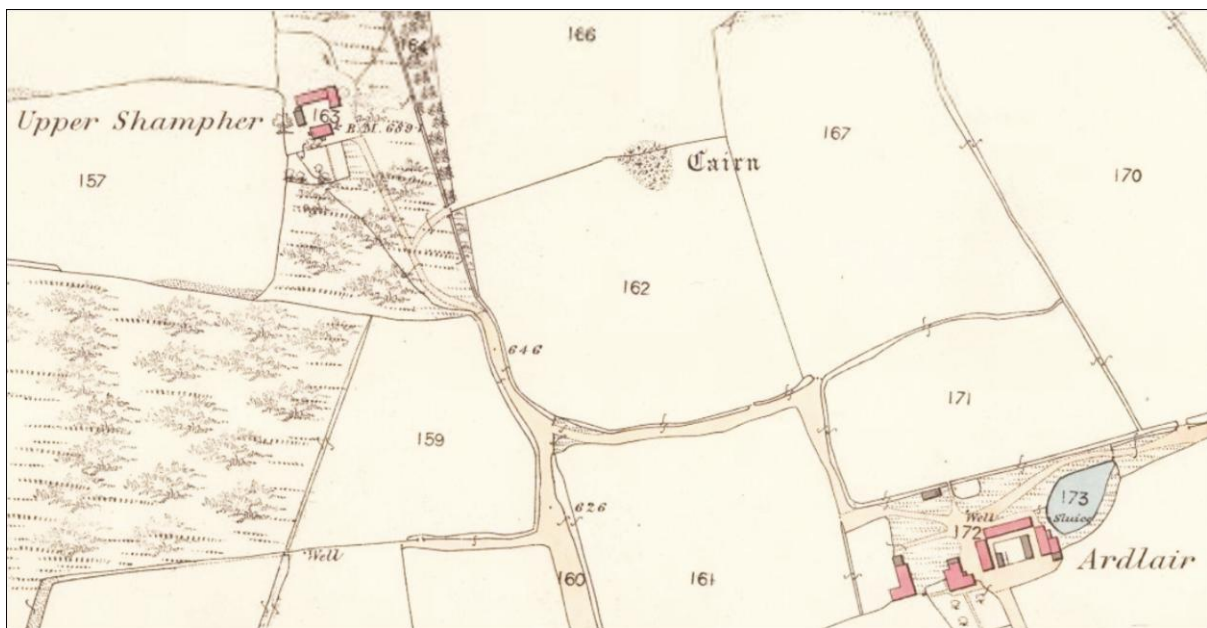


Illus 1 Location plan (© Crown copyright and database right 2012).



## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 200m west of the current site is a cairn (NO69SE2) of bare stones partly robbed at the north and south. It appears to stand on a platform 29m in diameter and 0.6m high.
- 2.2 200-300m north of the current site is a robbed cairn lying within a field system (NO69SE7) consisting of stone clearance heaps and lynchets.
- 2.3 400m east of the current site is a large E-W rectilinear enclosure (NO69SE14) seen on aerial photographs; there are also stone clearance heaps, a hollow way and earlier field boundaries.
- 2.4 The farm name Ardlair appears on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (surveyed 1867; Illus 2).
- 2.5 The fields have been regularly ploughed by the current farmer and his father who bought the farm in 1924 (Brian Middleton pers comm).



Illus 2 First Edition Ordnance Survey date 1867 (*copyright National Library of Scotland*)

### 3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

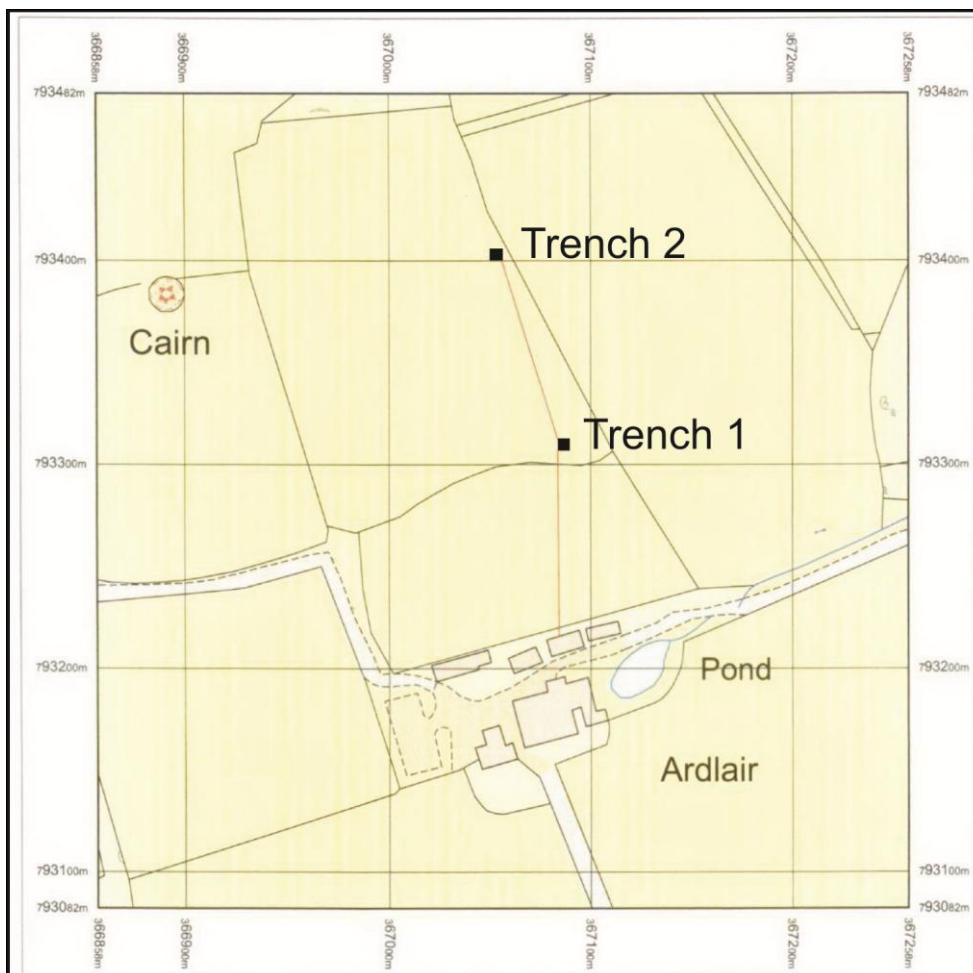
A watching brief was maintained at land north of Ardlair, Strachan, Banchory, Aberdeenshire on 2 February 2012 for two trenches for the installation of two wind turbines. Two trenches 6 x 6m in size were excavated using a tracked machine and 1.8m ditching bucket.

#### Trench 1

Trench 1 was located at the SE corner of the field (Illus 3). The heavy clay ploughsoil was 10cm deep at the east of the trench next to the field dyke and 25cm at the west of the trench. The subsoil was rusty brown sand with many large and medium stones. Several stoneholes were investigated but no archaeological features or finds were identified in this trench.

#### Trench 2

Trench 2 was located at the east side of the field near the brow of the hill (Illus 3). The heavy clay ploughsoil was 10cm deep at the east of the trench next to the field dyke and 20cm at the west of the trench. The subsoil was rusty brown sand with many large and medium stones. No archaeological features or finds were identified in this trench.



Illus 3 Plan showing area of soil strip (copyright Enviko Ltd)





Illus 4 Trench 1 facing north



Illus 5 Trench 2 with cairn NO69SE2 in background facing W

## **4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required at this site; this is subject to advice from Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service.

## **5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thanks to Louisa Coursey, Enviko Ltd, Brian Middleton, Ardlair and Bruce Mann, Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service.

Cameron Archaeology  
45 View Terrace  
Aberdeen  
AB25 2RS  
01224 643020  
07581 181057  
[cameronarch@btinternet.com](mailto:cameronarch@btinternet.com)  
[www.cameronarchaeology.com](http://www.cameronarchaeology.com)  
Company registration no 372223 (Scotland)  
VAT registration no 990 4373 00



## APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS



DSC\_0649



DSC\_0658



DSC\_0659



DSC\_0668



DSC\_0669



DSC\_0676



DSC\_0677



DSC\_0678



DSC\_0685



DSC\_0695



DSC\_0696



DSC\_0700



DSC\_0701



DSC\_0710



DSC\_0711



DSC\_0720

Photo number	Description	Facing
DSC_0649	Trench 1	N
DSC_0658	Trench 1	E
DSC_0659	Trench 1	S
DSC_0668	Trench 1	W
DSC_0669	Trench 1	SW
DSC_0676	Trench 1	SW
DSC_0677	Trench 1	N
DSC_0678	Trench 1	S
DSC_0685	Trench 2	N
DSC_0695	Trench 2	W
DSC_0696	Trench 2	S
DSC_0700	Trench 2	S
DSC_0701	Trench 2	SW
DSC_0710	Trench 2	E
DSC_0711	Trench 2	N
DSC_0720	Trench 2 with cairn in background	W



## APPENDIX 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SITES

SITE NUMBER	NMRS NAME	CLASS
NO69SE.1.0	CASTLEHILL OF STRACHAN. Alternative: MOTTE	MOTTE
NO69SE.1.1	CASTLEHILL OF STRACHAN. Alternative: OCCUPATION SITE	OCCUPATION SITE
NO69SE.10.-	STRACHAN. Alternative: AXEHEAD (STONE)	AXEHEAD (STONE)
NO69SE.2.-	UPPER SHAMPHER. Alternative: CAIRN	CAIRN
NO69SE.4.-	STRACHAN. Alternative: STONE BALL(S) (STONE)	STONE BALL(S) (STONE)
NO69SE.5.-	STRACHAN, STRACHAN PARISH CHURCH AND CHURCHYARD. Alternative: BURIAL GROUND, CHURCH, CHURCHYARD	BURIAL GROUND, CHURCH, CHURCHYARD
NO69SE.6.-	LETTERBEG. Alternative: CAIRN	CAIRN
NO69SE.7.-	UPPER SHAMPHER. Alternative: CAIRN, FIELD SYSTEM	CAIRN, FIELD SYSTEM
NO69SE.8.-	HEUGH-HEAD FARM. Alternative: UNIDENTIFIED FLINT(S) (FLINT)	UNIDENTIFIED FLINT(S) (FLINT)
NO69SE.9.-	HEUGH-HEAD FARM. Alternative: ENCLOSURE	ENCLOSURE
NO69SE.16.-	BURN OF RHODA. Alternative: ENCLOSURE (POSSIBLE)	ENCLOSURE (POSSIBLE)
NO69SE.13.-	BOWBUTTS. Alternative: MOUND(S)	MOUND(S)
NO69SE.14.-	SCOLTY. Alternative: ENCLOSURE	ENCLOSURE
NO69SE.20.-	BUCHARN. Alternative: ENCLOSURE(S), FARMSTEAD	ENCLOSURE(S), FARMSTEAD
NO69SE.21.-	STRACHAN. Alternative: VILLAGE	VILLAGE
NO69SE.3.-	BUCHARN. Alternative: CAIRN	CAIRN
NO69SE.24.-	STRACHAN, WOODEN BRIDGE. Alternative: ROAD BRIDGE	ROAD BRIDGE
NO69SE.25.-	SCOLTY WOOD. Alternative: FIELD BOUNDARY(S)	FIELD BOUNDARY(S)
NO69SE.26.-	SCOLTY WOOD, GENERAL BURNETT'S MONUMENT. Alternative: COMMEMORATIVE MONUMENT	COMMEMORATIVE MONUMENT

NO69SE.38.-	CASTLEHILL. Alternative: FARMSTEAD	FARMSTEAD
NO69SE.39.-	LETTERBEG. Alternative: FARMSTEAD, MILL (POSSIBLE)	FARMSTEAD, MILL (POSSIBLE)
NO69SE.40.-	ARDLAIR. Alternative: FARMSTEAD	FARMSTEAD
NO69SE.41.-	BURN OF RHODA. Alternative: FARMSTEAD	FARMSTEAD
NO69SE.51.-	HEUGH-HEAD. Alternative: CROPMARK (POSSIBLE)	CROPMARK (POSSIBLE)
NO69SE.52.-	BELTS OF COLLONACH. Alternative: QUARRY	QUARRY
NO69SE.53.-	MILL OF HAUGHS, QUARRY. Alternative: QUARRY	QUARRY
NO69SE.55.-	STRACHAN, HOUSE OF STRACHAN. Alternative: MANSE	MANSE