

COCKMUIR, STRICHEN ABERDEENSHIRE



- Archaeological Watching Brief -

Carried out 5TH October 2009 & 9th March 2010

by

Murray Archaeological Services Ltd



Report No: MAS 2010-5

by

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1. Background

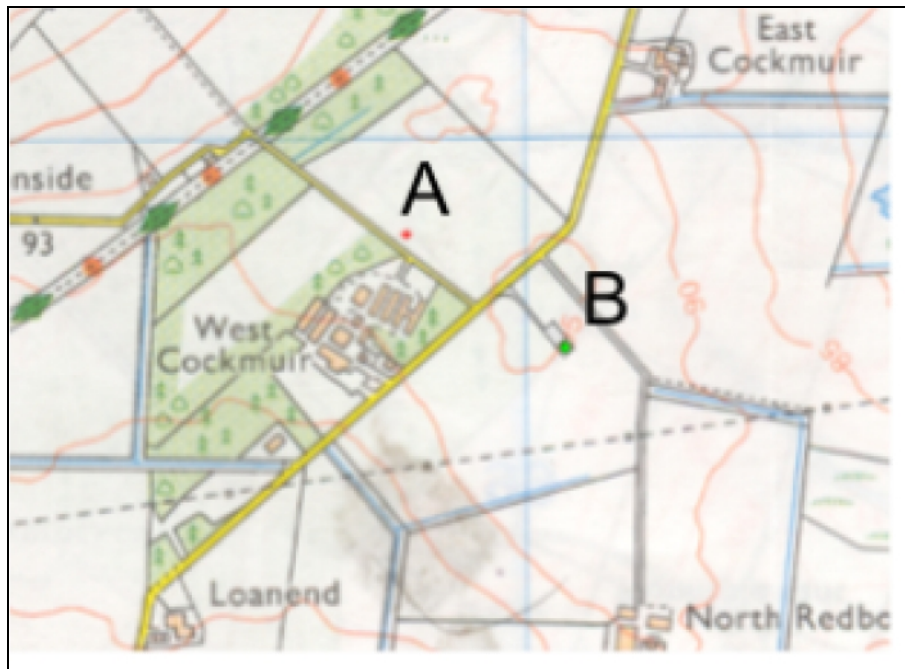
- 1.1 Proposals for the installation of a wind turbine at West Cockmuir, Strichen, Aberdeenshire, required that an archaeological watching brief should be carried out.
- 1.3 The archaeological condition was applied in the context of PAN 42 para 35 which states that it is necessary for developers to arrange for archaeological fieldwork to take place prior to development, in appropriate circumstances.
- 1.4 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Green Cat Renewables to undertake the work; the field element of which was carried out on 5th October 2009 and 9th March 2010.

2. Desk-top survey

- 2.1 A search was carried out in the Sites and Monuments Record, Archaeology Service, Aberdeenshire Council and in the Sites and Monuments Records of the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments in Scotland (RCAHMS) through Canmore, Canmap and Pastmap.
- 2.2 Cockmuir is shown on the 1st edition OS map (1870, pub. 1872). The farm lies on a gentle slope on the S side of Mormand Hill. The Dyce-Fraserburgh branch of the (former) 1870 Great North of Scotland Railway and the Mormand Station House lie some 350m to the N. No other sites of possible archaeological interest are shown on the 1st edition map.

3. The Site

- 3.1 The site is located c.4km E of Strichen on the S side of Mormand Hill and to the N of New Leeds. NGR: NJ 9907 5571 (centre of site). Parish: Strichen.
- 3.2 The wind turbine is located c.300m SE of the farm and of the cropmark of a possible palisaded circular enclosure, discovered during aerial photography in 1982, [NGR: NJ98806 55931; NMRS No: NJ95NE 15] and now a Scheduled Ancient Monument. [Illus.1, below]



Illus. 1: Location of Site, showing the Scheduled Ancient Monument, A, and the wind turbine, B.
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4. The Work

- 4.1 The watching brief was carried out over two days on the area of hard standing for the crane c.40m x 23m and the location of the turbine itself, c.25m diameter.
- 4.2 The wind turbine is located within a stubble field. The topsoil was removed by a full-slew mechanical digger using a 2m wide toothless bucket. The topsoil was c.300mm deep overall and overlay hard yellow/beige clayey natural with some small stone.

- 4.3 Apart from modern plough marks, mostly running NW-SE across the area, nothing else was visible in the natural.
- 4.4 No archaeological features or finds were evident.



Illus. 2: View, looking NW, at area of hard standing



Illus. 3: Soil strip over area of wind turbine, looking NW

Photographic Catalogue (supplied on CD to archive)

Series 1

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 1-5 | View, looking NW, at area of crane hard standing. |
| 6-7 | As 1-5, looking N. |
| 8-10 | View, looking NW, towards Mormond Hill |
| 11-15 | As 1-5 |
| 16-21 | View, looking E, across the site to turbines in adjacent field. |

Series 2

- | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|
| 1-6 | Views, looking NW at area of turbine. |
| 7-8 | As above, looking N. |