

**PETERHEAD - ST FERGUS 132 kV  
LINE  
MIDDLETON OF RORA  
ABERDEENSHIRE**



**- Archaeological Watching Brief -**

Carried out 21<sup>ST</sup> March 2011

by

**Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2011 - 11**

by

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**- Archaeological Watching Brief -**

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**1. Background**

- 1.1 As part of an overhead line replacement project between Peterhead and St Fergus, Aberdeenshire, an archaeological watching brief was required at the location of a new electricity double pole and stays at Middleton of Rora, Aberdeenshire.
- 1.2 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 SSE Power Distribution to undertake the work; the field element of which was carried out on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2011.

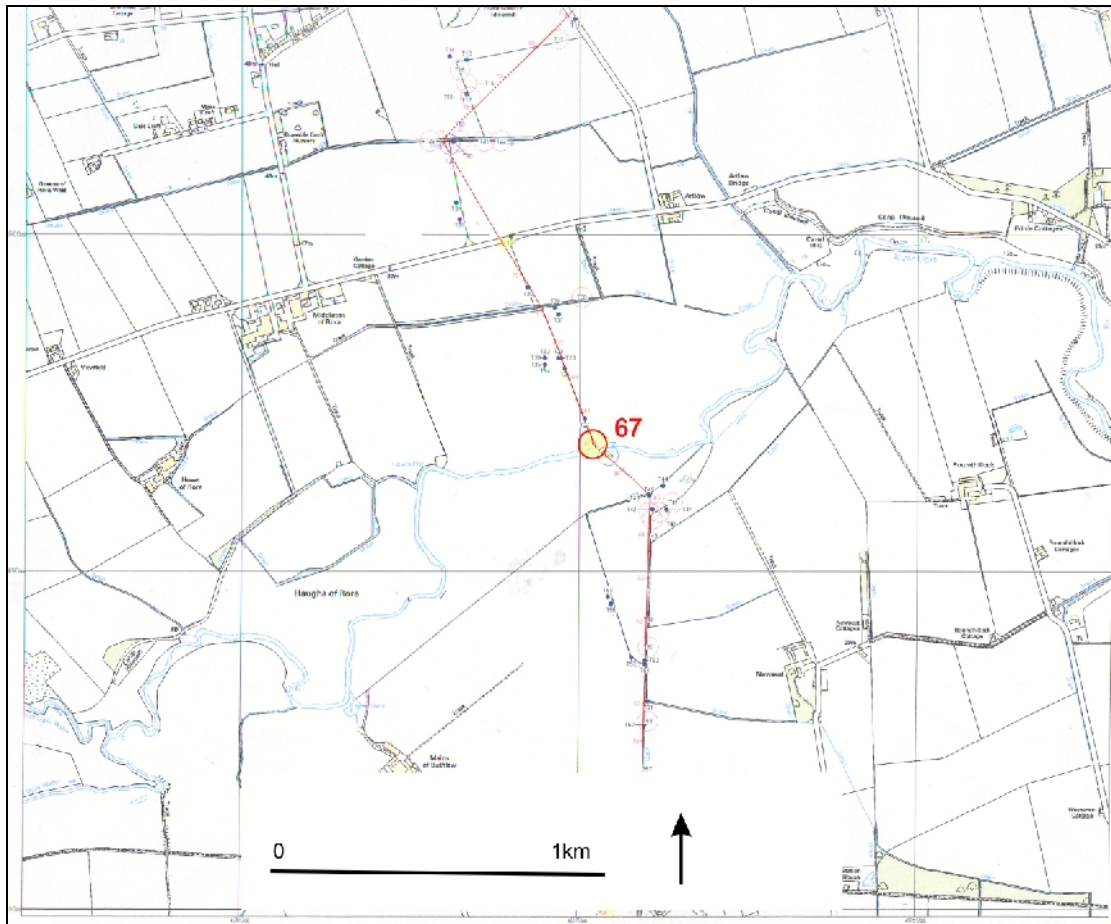
**2. The Site**

- 2.1 A Cultural Heritage impact assessment was carried on the proposed route of the transmission line by CFA Archaeology Ltd. A baseline survey of a 500m corridor centred on the proposed line identified forty-six sites, seventeen of which lay within a 200m corridor.

Following discussions between Murray Archaeological Services Ltd and the Archaeology Service, Aberdeenshire Council, it was decided that the installation of only one pole required archaeological observation.

- 2.2 The pole (no.67) at Middleton of Rora is located within metres of the Ugie river, with the possibility that it may reveal details on the extent of the Ugie Canal in this locality; a section of which is known to exist less than a km to the NE near Artlaw Bridge and the Crooko Burn.
- 2.3 Work on the Ugie Canal began around 1790. The plan was for the waterway to allow barges to transport shell-sand from Scotstoun of St Fergus to the estate of Admiral Fergusson at Pitfour. The work was abandoned in 1800.

### 3. The Work



Illus. 1: Location Plan, showing the position of Pole 67

- 3.1 Pole 67 is located c.17m to the N of the Ugie river [NK 07036 49367]. The trench excavated measured 5m x 2.3m x 2.5m deep. A depth of c.400mm of



topsoil overlay a sequence of natural gravels to a depth of c.2.4m where a layer of brown clay was encountered.

- 3.2 No archaeological features or finds or evidence of canal workings were visible.



**Illus. 2: Position of Pole 67, looking W**



**Illus. 3: S facing section of pole trench**

- 3.3 The excavation of the trenches for the pole stays to S of the pole 67 was also observed. Located c.8m from the N bank of the river, the trenches measured

2.5m x 1.25m x 1.7m deep. As with the pole trench, c.400mm of topsoil overlay successive layers of natural gravel.

No features or finds were evident.



**Illus. 4: Position of stay holes to S of pole 67**



**Illus. 5: Trench for stay, looking W**

#### **4. Results**

4.1 A watching brief was maintained during the excavation of the trenches for Pole 67 and the stays to the S of the pole, on the N bank of the Ugie river.

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4.2 No archaeological features or finds of evidence of canal construction were evident.

**Photographs supplied to archive on CD**

- 1            Location of Pole 67, looking W
- 2 – 12      Pole trench during excavation
- 13 – 17     Pole being erected, looking E
- 18 – 21     Position of pole stays, looking W
- 22 – 23     Stay trench, looking W