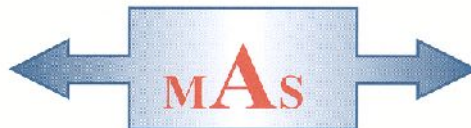


**STONEYHILL, KEITHALL
INVERURIE
ABERDEENSHIRE**



**- Archaeological Watching Brief -
Carried out 16th April 2012
by
Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2012-13
by
J C Murray**

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STONEYHILL, KEITHALL INVERURIE ABERDEENSHIRE

-Archaeological Watching Brief-

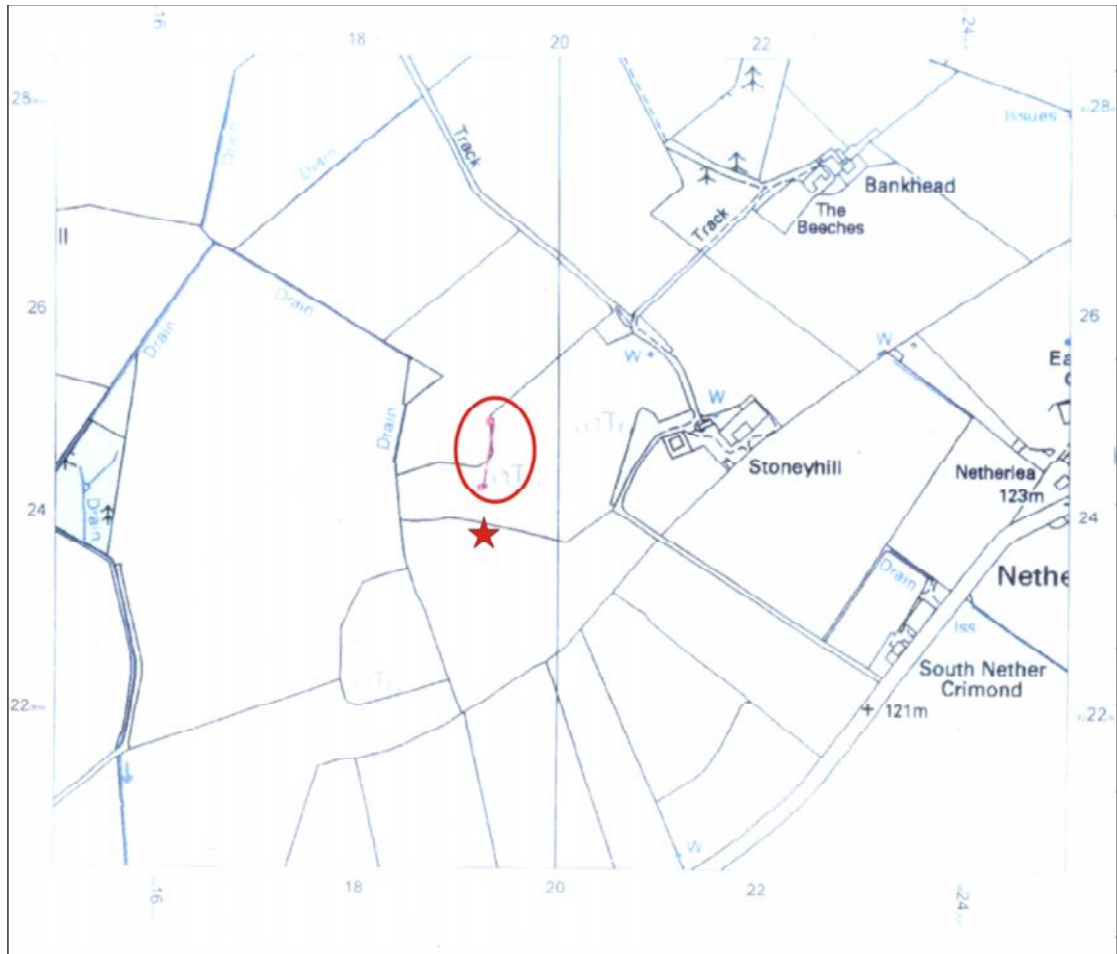
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1. Background

- 1.1 A Planning Application (APP/2011/3403) was granted for the erection of two wind turbines at Stoneyhill, Keithhall, Aberdeenshire. The turbines are 20kW type, with hub height of 20m and total height of 27.1m. An archaeological condition requiring a watching brief to be maintained during the ground works for the turbine bases was applied in the context of Scottish Planning policy (PAN 2/2011, SPP, SHEP).
- 1.2 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Mr Grant Watt to undertake the work; the field element of which was carried out on 16th April 2012.

2. The Site

- 2.1 The site is located several kilometres E of Inverurie on the N side of the B993, Inverurie to Whiterashes road.
- 2.2 The wind turbines lie in the immediate vicinity of Stoneyhill cairn, which is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (SAM 12343 Stoneyhill). The cairn lies c.50m down slope to the SSE of the nearest of the two proposed turbines. It survives as a low, grass-covered earth and stone mound with a slight central depression measuring c.6m in diameter and less than 0.5m high [NGR: NJ 8194 2237].



Illus 1: Stoneyhill Farm with location of turbines within red circle. Red star is position of Stoneyhill cairn.

3 Methodology

3.1 Excavations were carried out using a full slew mechanical digger. Owing to the stoney nature of the ground, a toothed bucket was used. Following this, areas of potential interest were cleaned by hand.

3.2 The summit of the hill where the turbines are located was rough grazing with abundant hard rock outcrop visible through the grass.

4. The Work

4.1 Turbine 1: Turbine 1 is the most southerly of the two and only c.50 NNE of the Stoneyhill cairn. A 5.5m square trench x 1m deep was excavated to provide the turbine base. A very thin layer of rough grass overlay a 200mm

layer of rough stone and black earth. This, in turn, overlay areas of hard bedrock in a beige coarse sandy matrix which fractured easily with machine pressure.

No archaeological features or finds were evident.



Illus 2: View of base of Turbine 1, looking N



Illus 3: Base of Turbine 1, showing underlying rock formation, looking N.

- 4.2 Turbine 2: Turbine 2 is located c.62.5m N of Turbine 1. As with Turbine 1, the area excavated was 5.5m square x 1m deep. The strata observed were identical to Turbine 1, although the underlying rock formation was less hard and fractured more easily.

No archaeological features or finds were evident.



Illus 4: Base of Turbine 2, looking N.



Illus 5: View across Turbine 2 to Bennachie, looking W.

5 Results

- 5.1 Although in relatively close proximity to the Stoneyhill cairn, the excavations for the turbine bases exposed only thin grass and soil cover over bedrock.
- 5.3 No archaeological features were evident during the ground works for the development.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Catalogue of digital photographic record (on CD)

Photographic catalogue – Stoneyhill, Keithhall, Inverurie	
Digital frame no	Content
1	General view, W, of site of Turbine 1
2-4	Site of Turbine 1, looking N
5	Stones from Turbine 1 excavations
6-9	Site of Turbine 2, looking N
10	View across Turbine 2 to Bennachie, looking W
11	View across Turbine 2, looking S