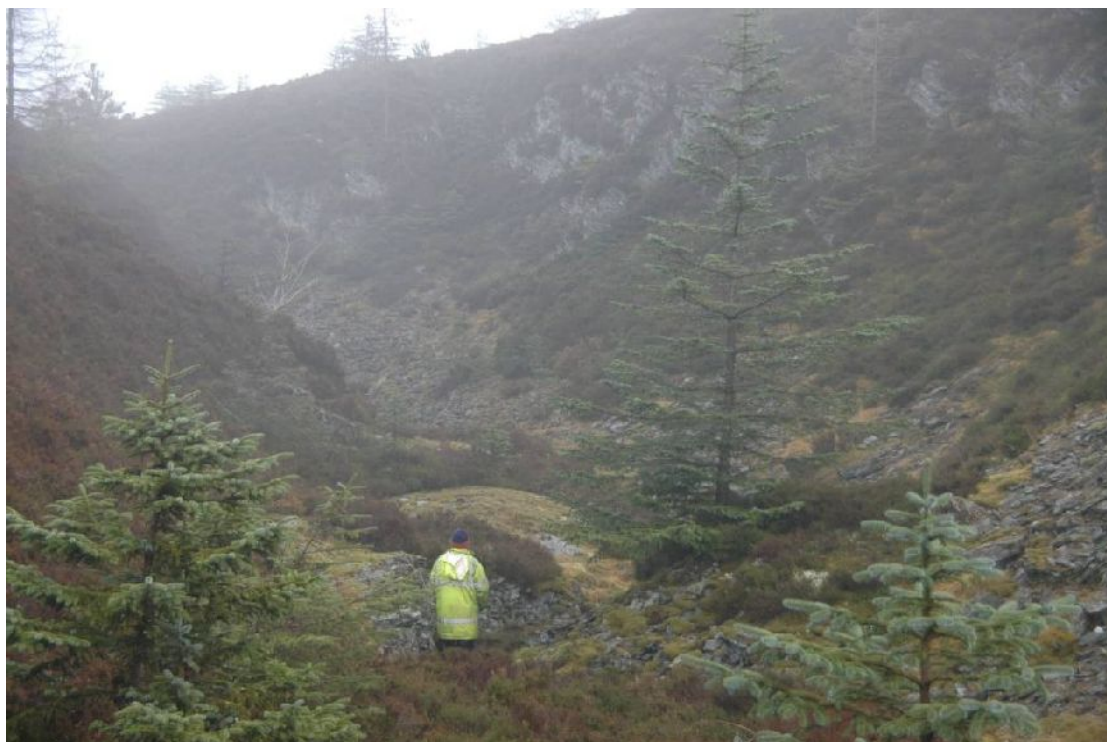
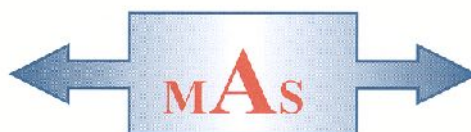


HILL OF CORSKIE GARTLY ABERDEENSHIRE



- Archaeological Walkover Survey -
Carried out 11th January 2013
by
Murray Archaeological Services Ltd



Report No: MAS 2013-04
by
H K Murray & J C Murray

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-Archaeological Walkover Survey-

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1. Background

1.1 As part of the pre-application preparation for an application to erect 8 turbines on Corskie Hill, Gartly, Aberdeenshire a walkover survey of two specific areas was required by Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Services in the context of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), Planning Advice Note: PAN 2/2011.

1.2 The brief from Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Services specified that:

- *A walkover survey of the quarries should try and identify if any of the particular features associated with the works (such as workmen's huts etc) are going to be impacted on.*
- *The cairn (SMR 2 feature) may be prehistoric in nature, but again a walkover survey will be able to throw more light on this.*

1.2 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Green Cat Renewables Ltd on behalf of the applicant, Mr Oosterhof, to undertake the work.

1.3 The field element of the work was carried out on the 11th January 2013.

2. The Site

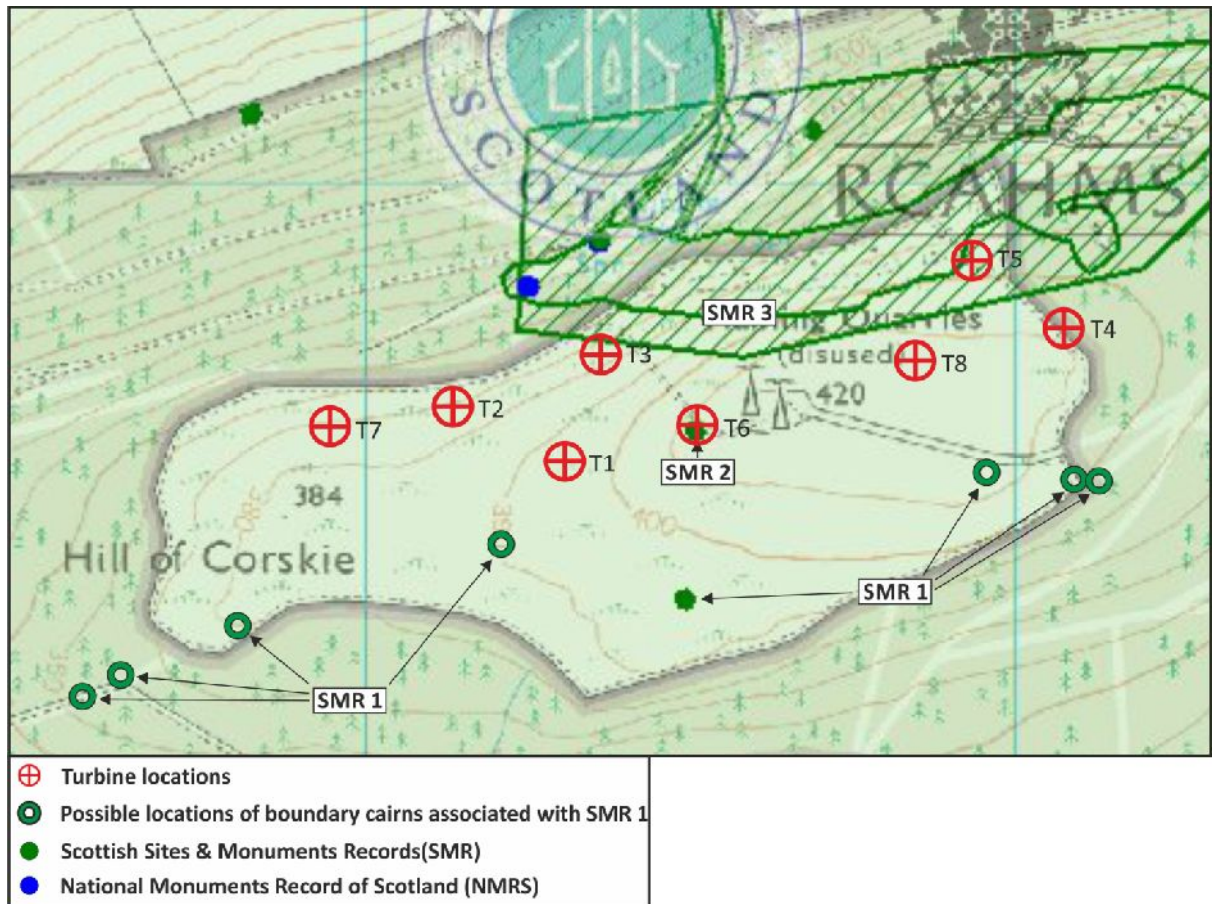
2.1 The proposed turbine site lies on the Hill of Corskie, which lies E of Gartly and to the S side of the A96 Aberdeen to Huntly Road.

NGR: (centre of site). NJ 5465, 3279

Parish: Gartly

3. The Background

3.1 A desk top survey had been undertaken by Green Cat Renewables. This highlighted three sites documented in the SMR and NMRS records within the area of the proposed turbines (Illus 1 and table below).



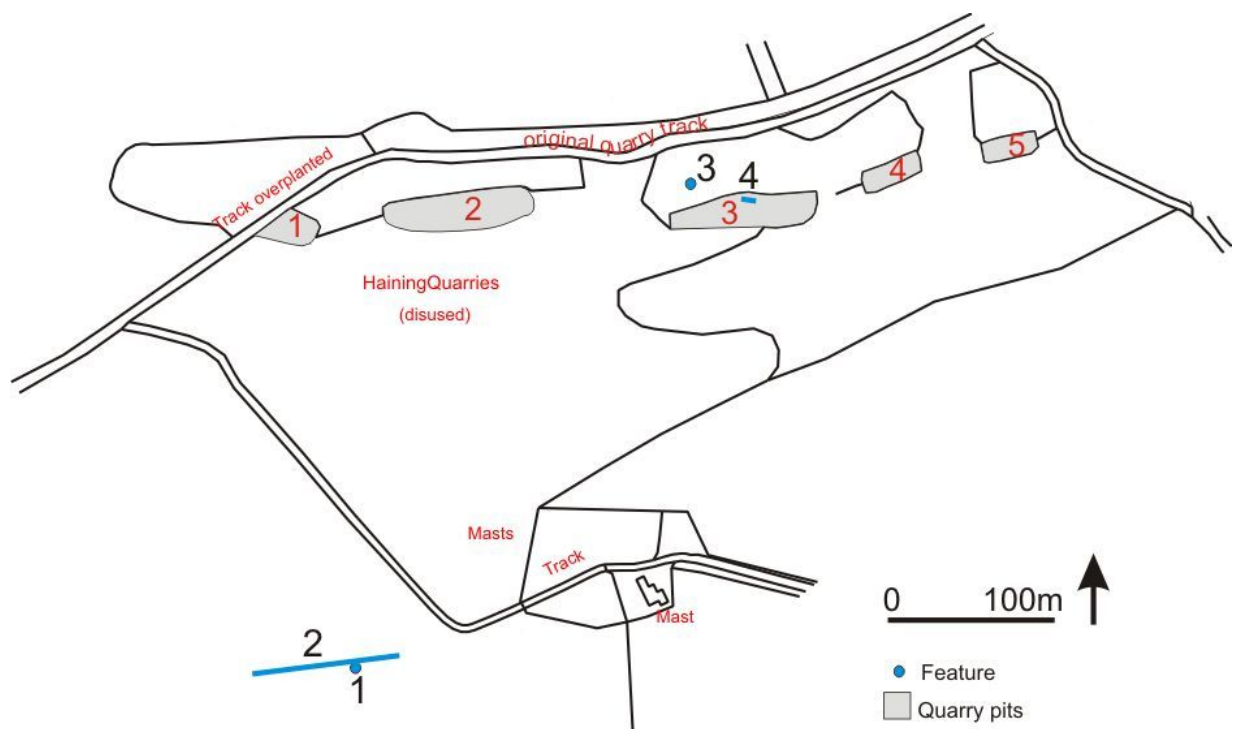
Illus 1 Location of proposed turbines with recorded SMR sites marked. Plan courtesy of Green Cat Renewables Ltd. SMR nos refer to the table below prepared by Green Cat Renewables Ltd.

SMR:	Ref No:	Description:
SMR 1	NJ53SW0054	A number of boundary cairns. Only a few are still depicted on the later 1888 edition. They mark the boundary between the parishes of Gartly and Kennethmont. It is unknown if any survive as much of the area is now afforested.
SMR 2	NJ53SW0065	Remains of a cairn and dyke. The cairn is a spread of stones approximately 6m across. It is attached to a denuded dyke which runs south-west for 20-30m.
SMR 3	NJ53SW0033	Remains of disused slate quarries, depicted on the OS map of 1867 as the Haining and Roughouster Quarries, with access tracks leading to the quarry workings. Most of the tracks are now covered with forestry but the quarries are still visible.

- 3.2 No action was required in relation to the boundary stones SMR 1.
- 3.3 The location of SMR 2 beside proposed turbine T6 was checked and the accurate location established.
- 3.4 The quarry area SMR 3 was walked as far as possible and the impact of the proposed turbines on the quarry features assessed.

4. Methodology

- 4.1 The recorded position of SMR 2 was identified and a walkover survey undertaken around this point to a radius of c100m.
- 4.2 Initial access to the quarries was attempted on the marked track along their N side. However this proved to be blocked by tree growth and access was only possible with difficulty to quarry Q1. Access to the other quarries was then attempted from above, and much of the S slope above the quarries was walked. Only Quarry Q3 was mapped in any detail.
- 4.3 All mapping was done with a Magellan Mobile Mapper CX.



Illus 2 Location of sites (blue). Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data, © Crown Copyright, All rights reserved. 2013. License No 100041040

5. Results

- 5.1 *Cairn (NJ 53SW0065) and related dyke. (Illus 2: 1 and 2)*

The recorded position of this cairn was 354507, 832615. At this position, there is no evidence of a cairn or of overgrown dykes (Illus 3).



Illus 3 Inaccurate position of cairn (Illus 1: SMR 2) (red star) in relation to track (person)

However some 35m to the S the line of an overgrown dyke with occasional visible stone was identified. The dyke ran ENE/WSW and was traced for over 90m, extending downhill to the W (Illus 4). At the ENE end it was grown over by long heather but was clearer at the WSW end where it was only covered by grass. It appeared to be c1m in width but only c 300mm in height.



Illus 4 Dyke, looking WSW

Walking along the dyke line, a stone spread c 5-6m in diameter was identified on the S side of the dyke, extending between 354482, 832574 and 354480, 832570. It was totally overgrown with heather and grass but appeared to be a very low stone scatter, less than 300mm high (Illus 5, 6).



Illus 5 Looking ENE along dyke to cairn (ranging rod)



Illus 6 Detail of cairn

The dyke does not appear to have the width or spread ever to have been a standing stock dyke for controlling livestock and may be stone clearance along and denoting a boundary. In this context it is perhaps as likely that the possible cairn not a prehistoric cairn but is either part of the linear spread of the boundary or the remnant of a small boundary cairn associated with it.

5.2 *Slate quarries.*

As noted above (4.2) access to the quarries was extremely difficult and only two of the marked quarry areas were examined in any detail.

All the quarries lie down the steep slope of the hill to the N of the proposed turbine sites. The original access to the quarries appears to have been along a track along the downhill, N edge of the quarries, as shown on Illus 2. The proposed turbine sites lie above the quarries, on the higher ground to the S.

Quarry 1

35440, 83283 (centre)

Access along the very overgrown track. Quarry c 20 x 25m. No associated structures.

Quarry 3

From 35467, 83283 to 35475, 83284

Quarry runs E-W along the base of the slope with a steep working face at the E end. The original access would have been along the now tree-covered track on the N side, but access was possible by climbing down into the quarry at the shallower W end. Clearly the steep W face was the working face where large blocks of slate were quarried off.

Part of the way along the quarry there was a E/W line of revetting extending for 9m along the side of a flat possible path. (From 354713, 832852 to 354722, 832849).

(*Illus 2: 4, Illus 7, 8*)



Illus 7 Looking E along Quarry 3. Person standing beside revetting



Illus 8 Detail of revetting. Quarry 3.

At the E end of the quarry there were a number of stone heaps where slates had clearly been split and shaped (Illus 10). Near these there was a small ovoid structure built of drystone walling using slate blocks (354684, 832860). (Illus 2: No 3; Illus 9). This was c 3m N/S x 1.8m E/W with an entry gap 900mm wide at the N end (towards

the flat area where the slates appear to have been split, near to the original access track). The walls survived up to 900mm high and c 800mm wide, with the W side built into/against one of the heaps of waste slate. This appeared to have been a small shelter for quarry workers. There was no evidence regarding the roofing and it is possible it was simply an unroofed windbreak, or that a tarpaulin was thrown over the top as needed.



Illus 9 Drystone foundations of shelter in Quarry 3, looking S in through the entrance (by ranging rod).



Illus 10 Heap of waste slate in Quarry 3.

6 Impacts and Mitigations

6.1 The cairn and dyke

Impacts The actual position of the dyke and cairn appear to be at least 35m from the position shown in the SMR. They do not therefore appear to be at risk from the proposed position of turbine T6 as shown in Green Cat Renewables plan here included as Illus 1.

Mitigations None

6.2 The quarries and related structures

Impacts The proposed turbine positions are all uphill (S) from the quarries. As the original access to the quarries appears to have been along their lower N margins, features such as shelters for quarry workers are unlikely to have been on the steep slopes above/uphill from the quarries and a walkover of this area showed no evidence of such features on the upper slopes.

The evidence of Quarry 3 suggests that such features may as survive in the other quarries are likely to be within the quarry base, and most likely near to the original quarry entrances and the track.

There appears therefore to be no threat to the quarries and related features as the proposed turbines are sited on the slopes above them.

Mitigations None.

6.3 The lack of visible, threatened archaeological assets does not preclude the possibility of chance finds or archaeological discoveries outwith the specific areas of the walkover survey. Should such chance finds occur, then the Archaeology Service, Aberdeenshire Council, or Murray Archaeological Services Ltd, must be informed immediately so that an appropriate archaeological response can be formulated and agreed by all parties concerned.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Catalogue of digital photographic record in archive Aberdeenshire SMR and NMRS

Digital frame number	Content
001	Site of cairn as shown on SMR (ranging road) in relation to track (person standing)
002-007	Site of cairn as shown on SMR (ranging road)
008	Dyke looking WSW from cairn (pole on line)
010	Looking ENE along dyke to cairn (ranging rod)
012	Looking E at cairn (ranging rod)
013	Blocked quarry track towards Quarry 1
015-016	Quarry 3 looking E from W end
018, 020, 022	Quarry 3, hut looking S
023	Quarry 3. Detail of hut wall to E of entry
024	Quarry 3. Hut in relation to waste slate heap behind, looking NE
025-027	Quarry 3. Detail of revetting, looking E
028-029	Quarry 3. Detail of waste slate heap.