

**KEMPSTONE HILL WINDFARM  
STONEHAVEN  
ABERDEENSHIRE**



**Archaeological Watching Brief**

Carried out 2<sup>nd</sup>- 26<sup>th</sup> May 2016

by

**Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2016-17**

by

**H K Murray & J C Murray**

H K Murray BA, PhD, MCIfA, FSA Scot

J C Murray BA, MCIfA, FSA Scot, FMA

Hill of Belnagoak, Methlick, Ellon, Aberdeenshire AB41 7JN

Telephone: (01651) 806394 e-mail: [cmurray@btinternet.com](mailto:cmurray@btinternet.com)

# **KEMPSTONE HILL WINDFARM STONEHAVEN ABERDEENSHIRE**

## **Archaeological Watching Brief**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 In June 2011, Murray Archaeology Services Ltd was commissioned by Green Cat Renewables Ltd on behalf of Kempstone Hill Wind Energy Ltd to undertake an archaeological and cultural heritage desk-based and walk over assessment of the areas directly affected by the proposed development of a windfarm on Kempstone Hill, Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire (Murray 2011).

This work was undertaken in the context of Scottish Planning Policy (PAN 2/2011, SPP, SHEP).

**In a development context desk-based assessment will establish the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment (or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so), and will enable reasoned proposals and decisions to be made whether to mitigate, offset or accept without further intervention that impact. (IFA Standard 2011).**

- 1.2 The mitigations in the 2011 survey (Murray 2011, para 6.1) recommended a watching brief of any soil disturbance and of the removal of any of the dense gorse which it had not been possible to walkover in 2011.

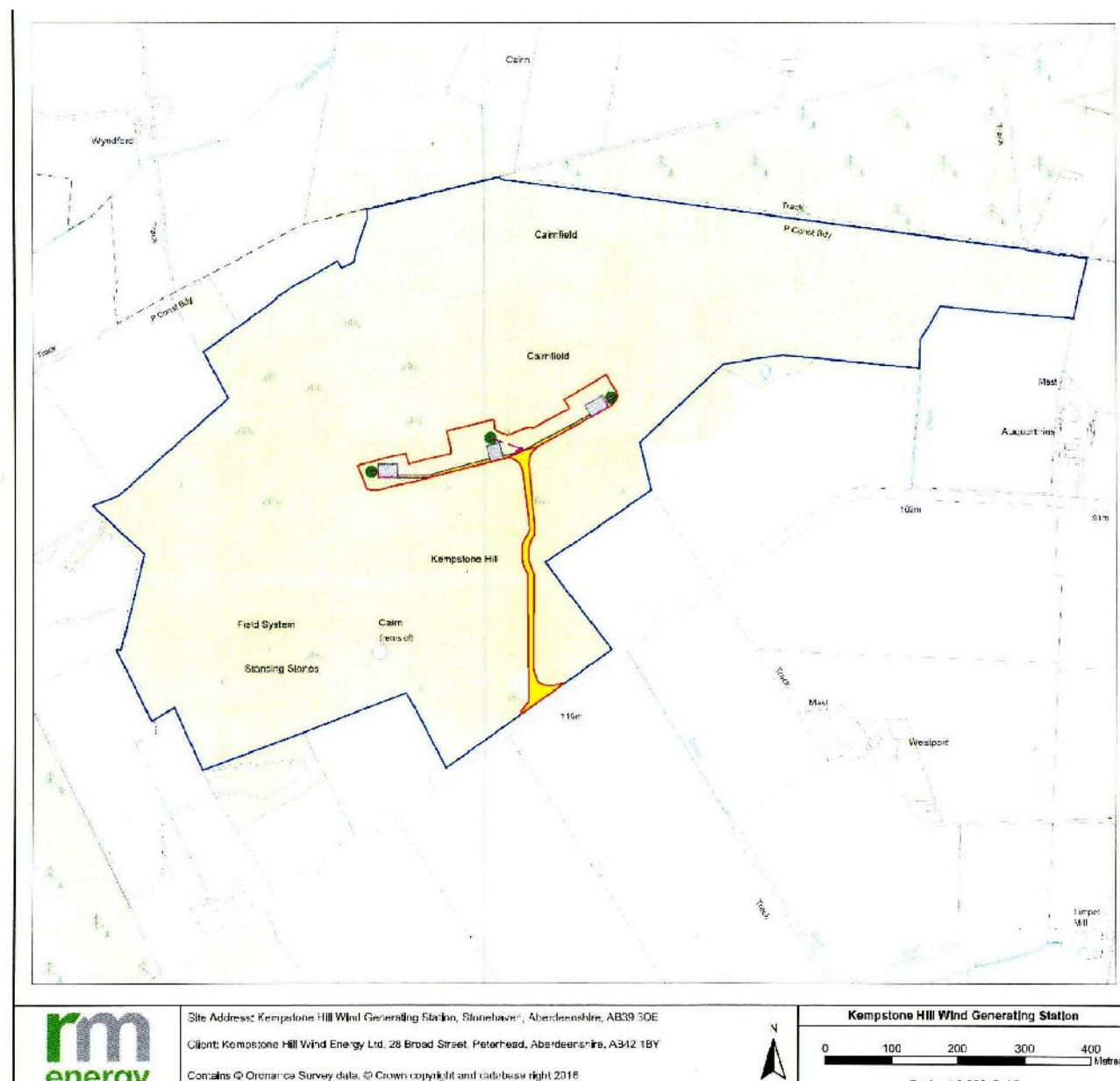
- 1.3 In 2016 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by RM Energy to undertake the work and the watching brief was carried out 2<sup>nd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

## 2. The Site

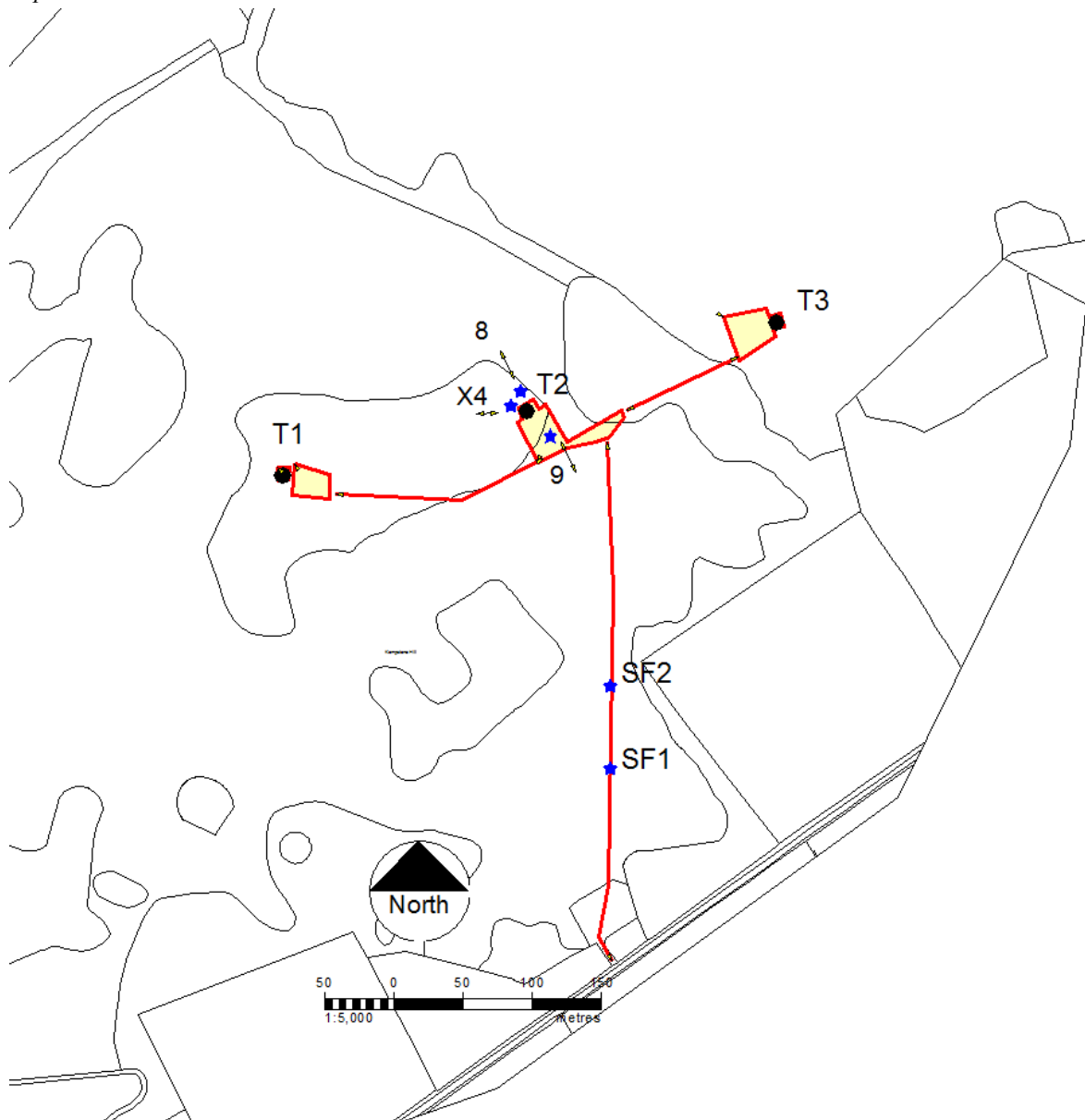
2.1 The windfarm site is located between the A90 Stonehaven to Aberdeen road and the B979 Stonehaven to Netherley road on Kempstone Hill, Aberdeenshire. The marked sites of the proposed three wind turbines lie along the N slope below the ridge of Kempstone Hill. All lie in thick heather with large areas of high dense gorse. A new access track runs from the road to the site of turbine T2.

The site is located at approximate centre grid reference NO 88010, 89790 (approx site of T2).

Parish:Fetteresso



Illus 1 Site location. Courtesy of RM Energy.



**Illus 2 Detail of tracks as excavated, with blue stars indicating flints (SF 1 & 2) and affected features (8, 9, X4) OS map reproduced Crown Copyright. License 100041040**

### 3 Methodology

- 3.1 The topsoil was removed by a full slew excavator with a 2.1m wide toothless ditching bucket. Any possible features were cleaned and excavated by hand.
- 3.2 All mapping was done with a Magellan Mobile Mapper 120 GPS and Glonass.

### 4. Watching Brief Results

#### 4.1 The Track

The new access track, which is 4m wide, extended c380m from an existing gate at the roadway (388072, 789385), through a small existing parking area and up

the hill towards the substation site (388063, 789768) beside the central T2 turbine site. Spurs of the track extended from T2 towards turbines T1 (150m) and T3 (112m) (illus 2).

Over the whole length of track the topsoil was 250-300mm of peat with heather and gorse vegetation. The natural was pebbly gritty clay with frequent natural boulders up to 1.5m in size.

#### *Archaeological results*

No features were observed along the track line. However two prehistoric flint artefacts were found at the S end of the main track.

SF1 388069,789528. In topsoil. Flint nodule (320 x 180mm) with flakes struck from one end.



**Illus 3 SF1**

SF2 388070,789587. In topsoil. Flint flake (490 x 320mm) with secondary working along one edge.





**Illus 4 SF 2**

#### 4.2 Turbine T1 and crane pad

T1: 387830, 789740

There was c250mm of peaty topsoil over gritty stoney clay natural. The track from T2 to T1 sloped steeply downhill with increasingly large natural boulders down the slope.

No archaeological finds or features were evident.

#### Turbine T2 and crane pad

T2: 388010, 789790

There was 200-300mm of peaty topsoil over yellow gritty stoney clay natural. T2 was near to two possible sites identified in 2011. Clearance of gorse prior to the site works and watching brief had destroyed one of these possible sites and exposed another possible site that would have been covered by gorse in 2011.

The area of the T2 crane pad sloped significantly to the N with both site 8 and the new possible site being at the break of slope; it is highly likely that these may be largely the result of natural stone slippage down slope, with smaller stones accumulating around natural boulders sticking up out of the natural clay. Further gatherings of stone by people can not be precluded but could not be proved.

*Clearance cairn 8:* 388005, 789800. Gorse clearance prior to the watching brief had destroyed feature 8 (Murray, 2011, 10). Only a few scattered stones were evident.



**Illus 5 Remnant of possible clearance cairn 8 (Murray 2011).**

*Possible clearance cairn 9:* 388030, 789767. The crane pad for turbine T2 covered the area of possible clearance cairn 9 (Murray, 2011, 10); this was sectioned and photographed. It comprised 250mm of topsoil over a couple of larger boulders with smaller stones ( $9 < 300\text{mm}$ ) around them. Many of the stones were in part set into the natural. Overall this appeared more likely to have been a natural feature than a man-made clearance cairn.





**Illus 6 Feature 9 (Murray, 2011) with E half excavated; looking W across T2 crane pad**



**Illus 7 Feature 9 (Murray, 2011) with E half excavated; looking W**

*Possible new clearance cairn (X4). 387998, 787789. Gorse clearance had exposed a linear accumulation of stones (<500mm), extending c 5m along a break of slope and c2.5m wide. This could be a natural feature.*





**Illus 8 Feature X4 looking S.**

#### **4.3 Turbine T3 and crane pad**

T3: 388190, 789850

W end of crane pad there was c300mm of peat over yellow gritty hard natural clay with frequent boulders (<2m). At the E end this was partly covered by a layer of 200-250mm sticky grey clay below the peat.

No archaeological finds or features were evident.



**Illus 9 T3 crane pad looking NE.**

## 5 Reference

Murray, H K 2011 *Proposed windfarm site, Kempstone Hill, Aberdeenshire: Archaeological Assessment*. Archive report MAS 2011-18. Available in Aberdeenshire SMR.

### Appendix 1: Catalogue of digital photographic records

(Supplied to Aberdeenshire SMR)

Digital frame number	Content
1-5	Main track from road to T2
6-9	Track from T2 to T3
10-18	T3 crane pad
19-21	T3 section at E showing clay
22-23	T2 feature 8
24-25	T2 crane pad
26-29	T2 Feature X4
30-33	T2 Feature 9