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DESK BASED ASSESSMENTS  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
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GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY  
TOPOGRAPHICAL AND LANDSCAPE SURVEY  
HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING  
EIA AND HERITAGE CONSULTANCY



**LIGHTSOURCE RENEWABLE ENERGY LIMITED**

**LAND AT MIDDLE BALBEGGIE, KIRKCALDY, FIFE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION DATA STRUCTURE REPORT**




**March 2016**

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**JOB NUMBER:** CP11633/16  
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**GRID REFERENCE:** Centred on NT 28934 95688  
**REPORT NUMBER:** RPT-001

Lightsource Renewable Energy Limited

Land at Middle Balbeggie, Kirkcaldy, Fife

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Location of evaluation trenches

## SUMMARY

In 2016 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology was commissioned by Neil Sutherland at Wardell Armstrong LLP on behalf of their client Lightsource Renewable Energy Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at Middle Balbeggie, Kirkcaldy, Fife (NGR NT 28934 95688). This was a result of formal planning consent being granted (Planning reference: 15/02687/FULL) with a condition attached to the consent (Condition 8), stipulating the need for archaeological investigation of the site prior to the development of a 5MW solar farm.

The archaeological potential of the site was deemed uncertain, and therefore a 5% sample of the development area was requested by Douglas Speirs, Archaeologist (Development Plan), at Fife Council. It was further agreed that if no archaeological remains were encountered after the excavation of the first 2.5% of the trenches, no further archaeological work would be necessary (WAA, 2016; 4).

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken over five days from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2016. The evaluation involved the excavation of 23 50m-long, 2m-wide evaluation trenches, totalling approximately 2300m<sup>2</sup> of excavation across the proposed development area.

The evaluation revealed likely post-medieval and modern tile-pipe and cobble in-filled land-drains. No archaeological remains were identified within the study area.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology (WAA) thanks Neil Sutherland at Wardell Armstrong LLP, for commissioning the project, and Lightsource Renewable Energy Limited, the client, for all their assistance throughout the work. Thanks also to Douglas Speirs, Archaeologist (Development Plan) at Fife Council, for his assistance throughout the project. Further thanks are extended to Derek and David Laird for their assistance throughout the fieldwork phase of the project.

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology are also grateful to the staff at the RCAHMS, Edinburgh for their help during this project.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Damion Churchill, Edward Johnson, Sean Johnson and Charles Rickaby. The report was written by Damion Churchill and the figures were produced by Helen Phillips.

The report was edited by Richard Newman, Post Excavation Manager for WAA. The project was managed by Frank Giecco, Regional Manager for WAA.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Circumstances of the Project**

- 1.1.1 In March 2016, Wardell Armstrong Archaeology were invited by Wardell Armstrong LLP, on behalf of their client Lightsource Renewable Energy Limited, to undertake an archaeological field evaluation on land at Middle Balbeggie, Kirkcaldy, Fife (centred on NGR NT 28934 95688, Figure 1). This was in advance of the proposed development of a 5MW solar farm at the site (Planning Application number 15/02687/FULL). The area occupies a previously undeveloped area of agricultural land within a wider rural landscape, south of Thornton. (Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The site lies within a landscape containing archaeological features and heritage assets, including Scheduled Monuments, both Category A and B Listed Buildings and Gardens and Designed Landscapes. A prehistoric stone circle is also recorded to the south east of the site (Wardell Armstrong, 2015). This area is therefore considered to have potential for below ground remains associated with prehistoric settlement and land use.
- 1.1.3 As a result of this potential, and in accordance with advice given in Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), the Kirkcaldy Council, under condition 8, recommended a programme of archaeological work prior to the commencement of any other works on site (Fife Council, 2015a) This proposed programme of archaeological work consisted of an archaeological trial trench evaluation, in order to establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains and their nature, extent and state of preservation (Wardell Armstrong Archaeology, 2016).
- 1.1.4 This report outlines the archaeological investigation undertaken on-site, the subsequent programme of post-fieldwork analysis, and the results of this scheme of archaeological works carried out in order to meet this condition.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Written Scheme of Investigation

2.1.1 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WAA, 2016) was submitted by WAA in response to a request by Wardell Armstrong LLP, for an archaeological evaluation of the proposed development area. This request was made because condition 8 of the planning application decision notice (Fife Council, 2015a) required a scheme of archaeological work to be undertaken prior to the commencement of works associated with the construction of a solar farm at the site in accordance with Structure Plan Policy 16, Fife Local Development Plan Policy 14 (Fife Council, 2015b) and national policy SPP23.

2.1.2 Following acceptance of the Written Scheme of Investigation by Douglas Speirs, Archaeologist (Development Plan) at Fife Council, WAA was subsequently commissioned by the client to undertake the work.

2.1.3 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (2014a), and in accordance with the WAA Excavation Manual (2012).

2.1.4 The fieldwork programme was followed by an assessment of the data as set out in the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (ClfA 2014a) and the *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

### 2.2 The Archaeological Evaluation

2.2.1 The archaeological evaluation consisted of a 23 trenches, which covered approximately 2300m<sup>2</sup> of land in total. The purpose of the archaeological evaluation was to identify whether archaeological remains were present and, if remains were identified, to quantify their nature and extent. The purpose of the archaeological evaluation was to investigate and record the archaeology identified as part of the evaluation, prior to their destruction by the potential development of the site.

2.2.2 In summary, the main objectives of the field investigations were:

- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where they were observed;
- to establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces, in order to fully understand the nature of the archaeological remains



within these areas; the period(s) of occupation present across the site and the relationship(s) between the various periods of occupation and activity;

- to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes and to help inform understanding of the layout, date, function, phasing, development and economic function of the remains;
- to recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes.

2.2.3 The topsoil was removed by mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision. All potential features were cleaned by hand, investigated and recorded according to the Wardell Armstrong Archaeology standard procedure as set out in the Excavation Manual (WAA, 2012).

2.2.4 The treatment of the finds followed the *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b). All finds encountered on site were retained and returned to the office where they were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* was then produced for each stratified context under the supervision of the Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Finds Officer, and the dates were used to help determine the date phases for the site. On completion of this project, the finds were cleaned and packaged.

## 2.3 The Archive

2.3.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the specification, and in line with the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2011) and EAC guidelines (2014). The archive will be deposited within the RCAHMS, and made available upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier WAA16, BAL-A CP 11633.

2.3.2 A brief summary of the results of the archaeological work will be prepared and submitted for publication in the Archaeology Scotland's annual journal 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' (see Appendix 2).

2.3.3 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology and Scottish Borders Council Archaeology Service, support the **Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS)** project. This project aims to provide an on-line index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature, created as a result of developer-funded archaeological work. As a result, details of the results of this project will be made

available by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology, as a part of this national project under unique identifier: **wardella2-246434**.

### 3 BACKGROUND

#### 3.1 Location and Geological Context

3.1.1 Kirkcaldy is a small coastal town situated in the south of Fife, on the east coast of Scotland and, positioned 19km north of Edinburgh, and 44km south west of Dundee-upon-Tweed. The town sits south of the A92 road, which connects Dunfermline to Dundee (Figure 1).

3.1.2 The proposed development area comprises a single arable field, north of Kirkcaldy, to the east of Soldiers Plantation, and immediately to the west of the B9130 road (Figure 1). A minor road, Balbeggie Avenue, is situated to the north of the site, with further agricultural fields immediately to the north and west.

3.1.3 The solid geology of the area comprises Passage Formation sedimentary rock of the Clackmannon Group; sandstones, siltstones, mudstones, limestones, ironstones, coals and seatrocks. This bedrock formed approximately 312 to 322 million years ago in the Carboniferous Period, and is overlain by Divensian to Diamiction till deposits, laid approximately two million years ago (BGS 2015).

#### 3.2 Historic and Archaeological Background

3.2.1 This historical background is compiled mostly from secondary sources and from records consulted during an Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Assessment (Wardell Armstrong, 2015). It is intended only as a summary of historical developments around the study area. References to the Historic Environment Record (HER) are included where known.

3.2.2 **Prehistoric:** there is no known evidence for human prehistoric activity in the proposed development area, although within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development area, there is a prehistoric standing stone (MFF2948) recorded within the Historic Environment Record (HER). This lies approximately 570m to the south east of the site, and is considered to be of significance.

3.2.3 **Roman:** there is no known evidence for Roman activity in the proposed development area. The site of a potential temporary camp has been recorded 840m to the south west of the site (MFF12970).

3.2.4 **Medieval:** there is no direct evidence of activity in the vicinity of the proposed development during the early medieval or medieval periods. No early medieval or medieval activity has been recorded in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development.

### 3.2.5 ***Post-medieval and Modern:***

3.2.6 The 1828 map of Fife and Kinross shows the site as adjacent to an area of plantation to the east, and divided by an east – west orientated field boundary, dividing the field into two. A number of farmsteads are also evident on the map, the closest of which, Easter Balbeggie, was depicted approximately 350m to the north of the site.

3.2.7 Subsequent Ordnance survey maps of 1856 and 1895 show little change within the boundary of the site. A change within the site boundary occurred in 1959, with the erection of an overhead powerline crossing the site, following the construction of an electricity sub-station to the south. The field boundary separating the north and the south of the site was also removed at this time.

3.2.8 An extraction pit was established to the east of the site within the plantation between 1959 and 1961. This was associated with Thornton Mine (MFF3368), established north east of the site in 1945. After the closure of the mine in 1953, opencast coal mining was undertaken immediately east of the proposed development area, and removed a former cold war bunker (MFF9802). Currently, the opencast mine has been disused and the land restored.

### 3.3 **Previous Archaeological Work**

3.3.1 The aforementioned Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Assessment was conducted by Wardell Armstrong in 2015. As part of this assessment, a walkover survey of the site was conducted, which concluded that no designated heritage assets would be physically impacted upon by the development. In addition to this, it was also concluded that little evidence exists that may indicate the presence of archaeological remains within the site boundary (Wardell Armstrong, 2015; 15).

3.3.2 Previous to this, no archaeological work had been undertaken either in the immediate vicinity or within the proposed development area.

## 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2016. A total of 23 trenches were excavated across the proposed development area (Figure 2). Agricultural topsoil was removed down to reveal the underlying deposits by a mechanical excavator with toothless grading bucket. Potential features observed were cleaned and investigated.

### 4.2 Evaluation Results

4.2.1 No archaeological remains were observed in any of the trenches. In each trench, the topsoil comprised a mid brown friable silty clay, which was observed to overlie a firm yellow sandy clay natural substrate.

4.2.2 The trenches were up to 0.60m deep, with **Trench 3** located towards the northern limit of the field, the deepest and machined to a height of 69.65m aOD. By contrast, the natural substrate (**2101**) in **Trench 21**, located in the south of the proposed development area, was observed at a height of 84.60m aOD.

4.2.3 Although no archaeological remains were identified during the course of this work, numerous land drains were identified in each trench. They largely fell into two categories; cobble drains, likely to be post-medieval in date, comprised of narrow cuts filled with moderately sized fragments of sandstone, or modern land drains, the cut of which were filled by a clinker material (Plate 1).

4.2.4 As no archaeological features were identified during the course of the onsite investigation of the proposed development area, no artefacts were recovered, nor were environmental samples taken.

## **5 CONCLUSIONS**

### **5.1 Conclusions**

- 5.1.1 During the archaeological field evaluation of land at Middle Balbeggie, 23 pre-agreed trenches were excavated providing a 2.5% sample of the proposed development area. Initially 45 trenches had been initially planned to have been excavated. With prior agreement with Douglas Speirs, half of those trenches were excavated as no archaeology was located. The purpose of the evaluation was to establish the nature and extent of below ground archaeological remains. All trenches were excavated down to the top of the natural substrate.
- 5.1.2 The evaluation revealed post-medieval and modern cobble and clinker in-filled land-drains.
- 5.1.3 The absence of any significant archaeological remains within the evaluation trenches in the confines of the study area, suggest that the possible crop marks, identified within the desk based assessment are probably a result of variances in the natural substrate.

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## APPENDIX 1: TRENCH DATA

### Trench 1

Length: 50.57m                      Width: 2.09m                      Orientation: WNW-ESE  
 Maximum Depth: 0.40m                      Minimum Depth: 0.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
100	Deposit	Topsoil
101	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 2

Length: 50.22m                      Width: 1.97m                      Orientation: NNW-SSE  
 Maximum Depth: 0.34m                      Minimum Depth: 0.32m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
200	Deposit	Topsoil
201	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 3

Length: 51.63m                      Width: 2.10m                      Orientation: NNW-SSE  
 Maximum Depth: 0.60m                      Minimum Depth: 0.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
300	Deposit	Topsoil
301	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 4

Length: 51.26m                      Width: 2.03m                      Orientation: WNW-ESE  
 Maximum Depth: 0.40m                      Minimum Depth: 0.28

Context Number	Context Type	Description
400	Deposit	Topsoil
401	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 5

Length: 51.92m                      Width: 2.01m                      Orientation: NNW-SSE  
 Maximum Depth: 0.40m                      Minimum Depth: 0.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
500	Deposit	Topsoil
501	Deposit	Natural Geology



### Trench 6

Length: 50.10m                      Width: 1.93m                      Orientation: WNW-ENE  
Maximum Depth: 0.40m                      Minimum Depth: 0.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
600	Deposit	Topsoil
601	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 7

Length: 49.08m                      Width: 2.15m                      Orientation: WNW-ESE  
Maximum Depth: 0.50m                      Minimum Depth: 0.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
700	Deposit	Topsoil
701	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 8

Length: 50.33m                      Width: 2.11m                      Orientation: NNW-SSE  
Maximum Depth: 0.50m                      Minimum Depth: 0.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
800	Deposit	Topsoil
801	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 9

Length: 50.90m                      Width: 2.03m                      Orientation: WNW-ESE  
Maximum Depth: 0.46m                      Minimum Depth: 0.27m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
900	Deposit	Topsoil
901	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 10

Length: 50.76m                      Width: 2.13m                      Orientation: NNW-SSE  
Maximum Depth: 0.40m                      Minimum Depth: 0.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
1000	Deposit	Topsoil
1001	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 11

Length: 49.91m                      Width: 2.06m                      Orientation: WNW-ESE  
Maximum Depth: 0.42m                      Minimum Depth: 0.35m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
1100	Deposit	Topsoil
1101	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 12

Length: 49.69m                      Width: 2.28m                      Orientation: NW-SE  
Maximum Depth: 0.40m                      Minimum Depth: 0.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
1200	Deposit	Topsoil
1201	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 13

Length: 50.31m                      Width: 2.23m                      Orientation: NE-SW  
Maximum Depth: 0.40m                      Minimum Depth: 0.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
1300	Deposit	Topsoil
1301	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 14

Length: 50.37m                      Width: 2.05m                      Orientation: WNW-ESE  
Maximum Depth: 0.43m                      Minimum Depth: 0.29m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
1400	Deposit	Topsoil
1401	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 15

Length: 49.81m                      Width: 2.21m                      Orientation: WNW-ESE  
Maximum Depth: 0.50m                      Minimum Depth: 0.40m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
1500	Deposit	Topsoil
1501	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 16

Length: 51.00m                      Width: 2.20m                      Orientation: NNE-SSW  
Maximum Depth: 0.50m                      Minimum Depth: 0.40m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
1600	Deposit	Topsoil
1601	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 17

Length: 51.22m                      Width: 2.05m                      Orientation: NE-SW  
Maximum Depth: 0.42m                      Minimum Depth: 0.35m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
1700	Deposit	Topsoil
1701	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 18

Length: 50.39m                      Width: 3.14m                      Orientation: WNW-ESE  
Maximum Depth: 0.40m                      Minimum Depth: 0.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
1800	Deposit	Topsoil
1801	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 19

Length: 52.40m                      Width: 2.14m                      Orientation: NNW-SSE  
Maximum Depth: 0.35m                      Minimum Depth: 0.22m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
1900	Deposit	Topsoil
1901	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 20

Length: 50.88m                      Width: 1.91m                      Orientation: NNW-SSE  
Maximum Depth: 0.40m                      Minimum Depth: 0.28m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
2000	Deposit	Topsoil
2001	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 21

Length: 49.87m                      Width: 1.87m                      Orientation: NNW-SSE  
Maximum Depth: 0.42m                      Minimum Depth: 0.32m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
2100	Deposit	Topsoil
2101	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 22

Length: 50.07m                      Width: 1.95m                      Orientation: NE-SW  
Maximum Depth: 0.50m                      Minimum Depth: 0.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
2200	Deposit	Topsoil
2201	Deposit	Natural Geology

### Trench 23

Length: 52.36m                      Width: 2.09m                      Orientation: NNW-SSE  
Maximum Depth: 0.35m                      Minimum Depth: 0.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description
2300	Deposit	Topsoil
2301	Deposit	Natural Geology

## APPENDIX 2: DES ENTRY

In 2016 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology was commissioned by Neil Sutherland at Wardell Armstrong LLP on behalf of their client Lightsource Renewable Energy Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at Middle Balbeggie, Kirkcaldy, Fife (NGR NT 28934 95688). This was a result of formal planning consent being granted (Planning reference: 15/02687/FULL) with a condition attached to the consent (Condition 8), stipulating the need for archaeological investigation of the site prior to the development of a 5MW solar farm.

The archaeological potential of the site was deemed uncertain, and therefore a 5% sample of the development area was requested by Douglas Speirs, Archaeologist (Development Plan), at Fife Council. It was further agreed that if no archaeological remains were encountered after the excavation of the first 2.5% of the trenches, no further archaeological work would be necessary (WAA, 2016; 4).

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken over five days from the 14th to the 18th of March 2016. The evaluation involved the excavation of 23 50m-long, 2m-wide evaluation trenches, totalling approximately 2300m<sup>2</sup> of excavation across the proposed development area.

The evaluation revealed likely post-medieval and modern tile-pipe and cobble in-filled land-drains. No archaeological remains were identified within the study area.


### APPENDIX 3: PLATES



*Plate 1 – Examples of land drain types, Trench 7, looking south, 1 x 1m scale*

## APPENDIX 4: FIGURES





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2016

PROJECT: Land at Middle Balbeggie, Kirkcaldy, Fife  
 SCALE: 1:25,000 at A4  
 REPORT No: CP11633  
 CLIENT: Lightsource Renewable Energy Limited  
 DRAWN BY: HP  
 DATE: March 2016  
 FIGURE: 1

KEY:



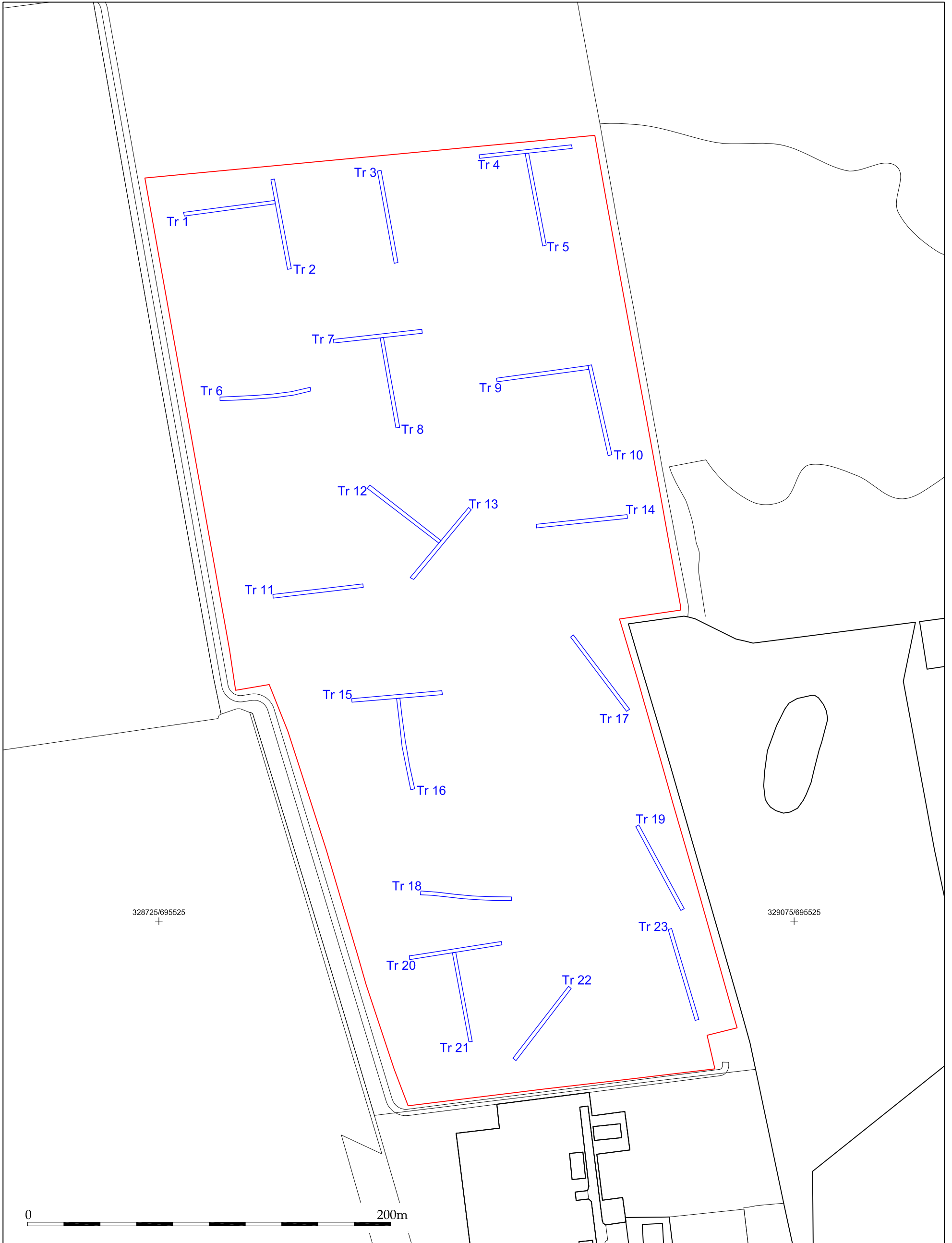
Site boundary



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Figure 1: Site location.





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2016

PROJECT: Land at Middle Balbeggie, Kirkcaldy, Fife  
SCALE: 1:2,000 at A3  
REPORT No: CP11633  
CLIENT: Lightsource Renewable Energy Limited  
DRAWN BY: HP  
DATE: March 2016  
FIGURE: 2

KEY:



Site boundary

Evaluation trenches



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Figure 2: Detailed site location.

STOKE-ON-TRENT  
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