

Cairnmore Windfarm, Rhynie: Watching Brief Report

AOC 21500
20th November 2009



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

Cairnmore Windfarm, Rhynie: Watching Brief Report

For:	Greenspan Energy
National Grid Reference (NGR):	NJ 5037 2481
AOC Project No:	21500
Prepared by:	Victoria Clements & John Gooder
Illustration by:	Douglas Park
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Date of Report:	20th November 2009

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

Author: Victoria Clements & John Gooder **Date:** 20th November 2009

Approved by: John Gooder **Date:** 20th November 2009

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Enquiries to: AOC Archaeology Group
Edgefield Industrial Estate
Edgefield Road
Loanhead
EH20 9SY

Tel. 0131 440 3593
Fax. 0131 440 3422
e-mail. admin@aocarchaeology.com



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Abstract

This report represents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group at the Cairnmore Windfarm site, Rhynie, Aberdeenshire (centred NGR: NJ 5037 2481). The work was commissioned by Greenspan Energy to address the possibility of any adverse archaeological impact deriving from specific groundworks associated with the windfarm's construction. The archaeological works were designed in accordance with the principles inherent within SPP23 (2008) and PAN42 (1994).

The monitoring, carried out on 3rd November 2009, did not identify any significant archaeological material.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 A programme of archaeological works comprising an archaeological Watching Brief was required by Greenspan Energy during groundworks associated with the construction of the Cairnmore Windfarm site, near Rhynie, Aberdeenshire (approx NGR: NJ 504 247). The scope of the works was determined by Aberdeenshire Council as advised on archaeological matters by the Aberdeen Council Archaeology Service (ACAS). The work undertaken was in keeping with the policies outlined in PAN42 and SPP23 order to gauge and safeguard any significant archaeological remains within ground impacted by the SI works.

1.2 Archaeological background

1.2.1 The windfarm development lies to the south of the archaeological site of *Cairn More* (NMRS NJ52SW9; NGR: NJ 5035 2494), a small fort lying at the end of a broad spur (Hare Hill) extending northwards from the foot of the northern flank of the Correen Hills. Oval in plan, it measures about 52 m (NE - SW) by 45 m internally. An earlier survey of the fort by RCAHMS recorded two concentric lines of defence. These are now largely invisible in dense gorse, but the northern sector of the defences comprises a single broad spread of stones tumbled down the slope.

1.2.2 It is the juxtaposition of this fort with the windfarm development that necessitated the requirement for a watching brief.

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the watching brief were:

- i) to safeguard the archaeological resource that may be disturbed by the proposed development works;
- ii) to liaise with ACAS and the client in the event of significant archaeological features and /or small finds being unearthed as to the most appropriate response in safeguarding these features either by preservation *in situ*, if at all feasible, or by archaeological recording.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1. The details of the archaeological works were designed to meet the requirements of the planning authority as advised by ACAS. The scope and scale of the watching brief was agreed with ACAS in advance of construction works by means of a Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC 2009).

3.2 The areas to be archaeologically monitored comprised:

- i. groundworks associated with the construction of an access track from the existing track (at c.NGR: NJ 5020 2490) to Turbine 1 (at c.NGR: NJ 5037 2481);
- ii. groundworks associated with the construction of the foundations of the base to Turbine 1 (at c.NGR: NJ 5037 2481);
- iii. groundworks associated with the construction of the foundations of the base to Turbine 2 (at c.NGR: NJ 5038 2454);

- iv. groundworks associated with the construction of the foundations of the base to Turbine 3 (at c.NGR: NJ 5038 2396).

3.2 Monitoring ceased when the natural subsoil was met and found to be archaeologically sterile.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1 The groundworks involved topsoil stripping undertaken by a 360° tracked excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. The soil profile on-site consisted of a mid grey/brown soft sandy silt with occasional small sub-rounded stones (average depth 0.30 m) overlying a natural subsoil of mid orange sand and gravel.

4.2 Observations

4.2.1 Some of access track from the existing track to Turbine 1 had already been topsoil stripped to natural subsoil prior to arrival. The surface of the subsoil was inspected for archaeological features with none being apparent.

4.2.2 No archaeological features were observed within the foundation areas of Turbine bases 1, 2 and 3. During the course of the watching brief officer's time on-site the stripped natural subsoil within the hardstanding area of Turbine base 1 and the access track between Turbines 1 and 2 was also observed. No archaeological features were apparent. Summary inspection of spoil heaps across the site did not identify any significant artefactual material.



Plate 1: Topsoil stripped hardstanding area



Plate 2: Topsoil stripped access track

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Neither significant archaeological features nor artefactual material were encountered during the watching brief.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 No further archaeological works are considered necessary. This recommendation will require confirmation by ACAS, acting on behalf of Aberdeenshire Council.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

AOC 2009 *Cairnmore Windfarm: Archaeological Watching Brief: Written Scheme of Investigation*, 23rd October 2009. Unpubl AOC Archaeology technical report.

PAN42 1994 *Planning Advice Note 42; Archaeology – the Planning Process and Scheduled Ancient Monument Procedures*. The Scottish Office, 1994.

SPP23 2008 *Scottish Planning Policy SPP23. Archaeology and Planning*. The Scottish Government, Nov.2008.

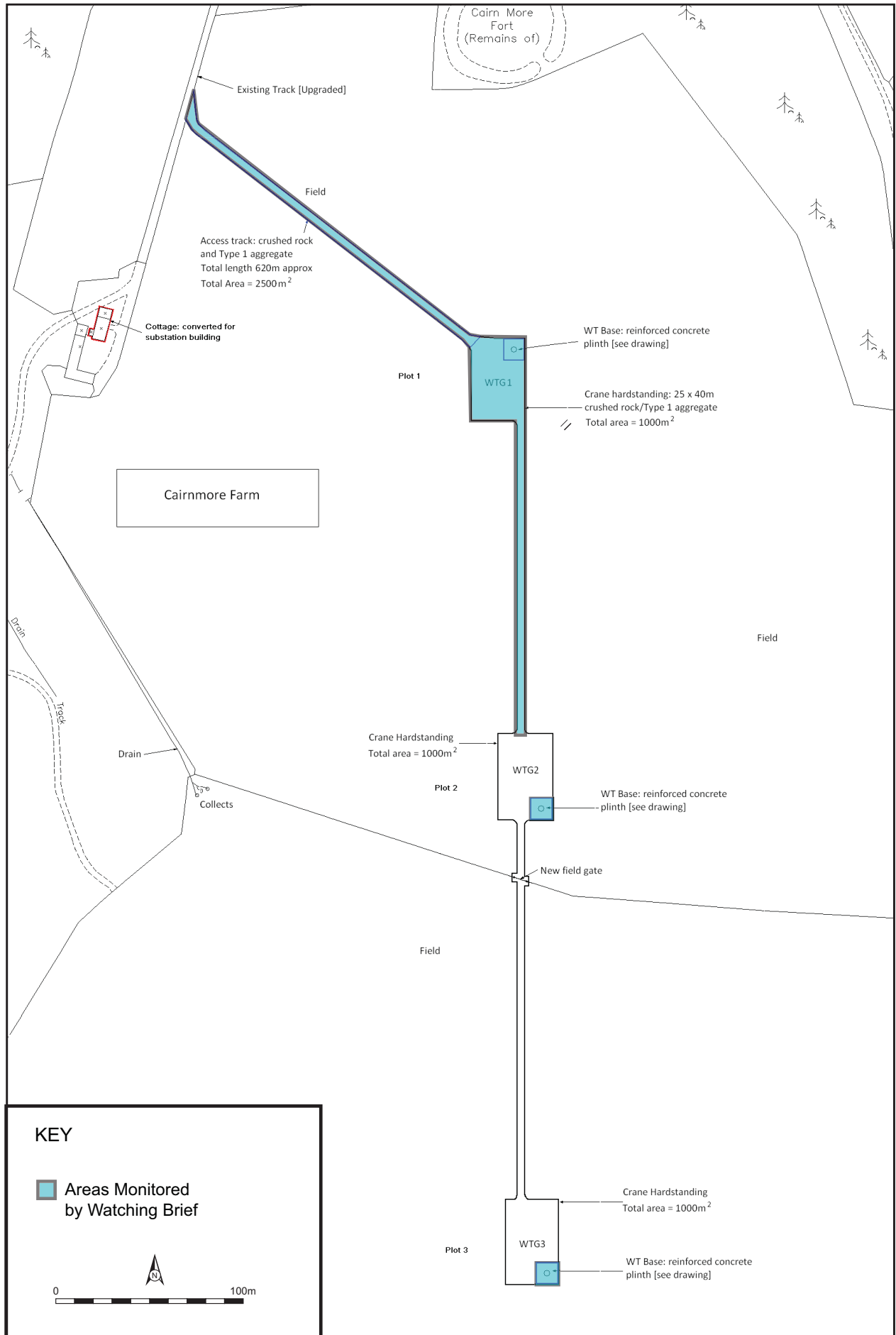


Figure 1: Areas Monitored by Watching Brief

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Section 2: Appendices

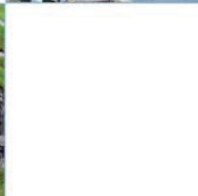
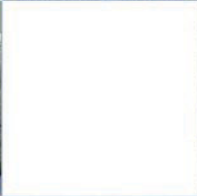
APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

Black & White Print Film 1

Frame	Description	From
1 -2	Access road stripped	south
3-4	Turbine 1 area	north-east
5	Cairn More fort	west
6-7	Registration	
8-9	Access track between Turbines 1 & 2	north-east
10-11	Foundation area of Turbine 1	west
12-13	Foundation area of Turbine 2	west
14-15	Foundation area of Turbine 3	west

APPENDIX 2: 'DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND' REPORT

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Aberdeenshire Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Cairnmore Windfarm Watching Brief
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 21500
PARISH:	Auchindoir & Kearn
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Victoria Clements & John Gooder
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	NJ52SW9
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Watching Brief
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NJ 5037 2481
START DATE (this season)	3 rd November 2009
END DATE (this season)	3 rd November 2009
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A watching brief was undertaken to address the potential negative archaeological impact of construction works associated with a windfarm development located to the south of Cairn More fort (NMRS NJ52SW 9). Neither significant archaeological features nor artefacts were encountered.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	n/a
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Greenspan Energy
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	c/o AOC Archaeology Group
EMAIL ADDRESS:	admin@aocarchaeology.com



AOC Archaeology Group, Edgefield Industrial Estate, Edgefield Road, Loanhead EH20 9SY
tel: 0131 440 3593 | fax: 0131 440 3422 | e-mail: edinburgh@aocarchaeology.com

www.aocarchaeology.com