

BCWF14,003



BLACKCRAIG WIND FARM, NEAR ST. JOHN'S TOWN OF DALRY, DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

Recording and marking-out survey:

Heritage Asset 14: Fell Hill sheep ree

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Commissioned by SSE Renewables

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HEADLAND
ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd

1. INTRODUCTION

Planning permission for the development of a wind farm at Blackcraig, near St. John's Town of Dalry in Dumfries & Galloway has been granted, subject to a series of planning conditions. Condition 26 relates to cultural heritage issues:

"No construction work shall take place until any archaeological features as identified in the Environmental Statement falling within 50 metres of areas of construction and associated activity resulting from the proposal have been physically marked out on the ground by the Company. Thereafter, no ground disturbance shall take place within these marked areas. The Planning Authority shall be notified in writing, at least 10 days in advance, of the commencement of development on site in order to ensure that arrangements for this are in place. If any ground disturbance is required within these demarcated areas, the Company must instigate a scheme of prior archaeological recording. These schemes must be agreed in advance with the Planning Authority, who shall be allowed access to the site to undertake checks on compliance with this condition".

The condition reflects the conclusion of the Environmental Statement (ES) that although there is some potential for accidental damage to known sites, nonetheless this can be readily mitigated. To ensure compliance with the cultural heritage planning condition, it was agreed that a marked-out area would be created around Heritage Asset 14, corresponding to an Archaeological Exclusion Zone (AEZ). A programme of works was set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated 11 March 2015 and this was agreed with the Dumfries & Galloway Council Archaeologist in his email dated 13 March.

2. WORK UNDERTAKEN

The full extent of Site 14 was surveyed and recorded with a GPS device. In accordance with the WSI, a temporary fence, formed of posts and rope (the latter tagged at intervals with hazard tape), was erected around it at a minimum distance of 5m from the feature. The work was undertaken in favourable conditions by a two-person archaeological survey team on 20 April 2015.

As noted in the WSI the chosen type of fence is not permanent and an archaeologist will visit the site following any substantial gaps in the construction programme, for example between construction of the access road and construction works on the main wind farm, to ensure that the fencing is still in place and fit-for-purpose.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

Site 14, a stone-built enclosure, is located at NGR NX 72097 83964, approximately 1.6km to the north-northeast of Halfmark Farm. It lies within a discrete area of grassland on the southern side of Fell Hill at a height of approximately 340m AOD.

The feature comprises a large irregular shaped drystone enclosure, described as a sheep ree on 1st Edition Ordnance Survey mapping (Ordnance Survey 1854). It likely dates to the post-medieval period.

The enclosure is roughly 25 x 22m overall and has been constructed of medium to large sub-angular stones. A gap at the northwest corner possibly indicates the location of an entrance. Where best-preserved along its south and west sides, the wall is approximately 1.2m high and 0.3m wide. To the north and east, the wall is visible as a low turf-covered bank. The south end of the east side of the enclosure, however, is absent and may have been entirely robbed. A low bank across the interior of the enclosure possibly marks the line of an internal partition.

It was noted during the survey that there was a considerable amount of loose stone within the vicinity which may represent quarrying activity during the construction of the feature.

The feature is shown in Annex 1, Figures 1 to 6, and mapped on Figure 7.

4. OTHER REPORTING

In accordance with the WSI, a summary report will be submitted for inclusion in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*; a record of the survey has also been submitted to OASIS, the online digital archive of archaeological work undertaken in the UK.

5. CARTOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Ordnance Survey 1854, *Kirkcudbrightshire, Sheet 16 (includes: Balmaclellan; Dalry)*, available online at < <http://maps.nls.uk/view/74427629>> (accessed April 7th, 2015)

APPENDIX 1: FIGURES

Figure 1: View towards enclosure, facing south.



Figure 2: View towards enclosure, facing south-west.



Figure 3: Southern upstanding element of wall, facing north.



Figure 4: Southern and western upstanding element of wall, facing west.



Figure 5: Western side of enclosure, facing west-southwest.



Figure 6: Enclosure and met mast, facing north.



