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GRIFFIN WIND FARM, PERTH AND KINROSS

Report on the Evaluation of Sites D, E and P

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HEADLAND ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd

PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

Client	GRIFFIN WIND FARM LTD
National Grid Reference	NN 9344
Parish	LITTLE DUNKELD
Council	PERTH AND KINROSS
Planning Ref No.	04/00004/WIND
Oasis No.	HEADLAND1-90834
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Schedule	
Fieldwork	OCTOBER 2010
Report	10 JANUARY 2011

Signed off by: C. E. Lowe

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Date: *10th January 2011*

CONTENTS

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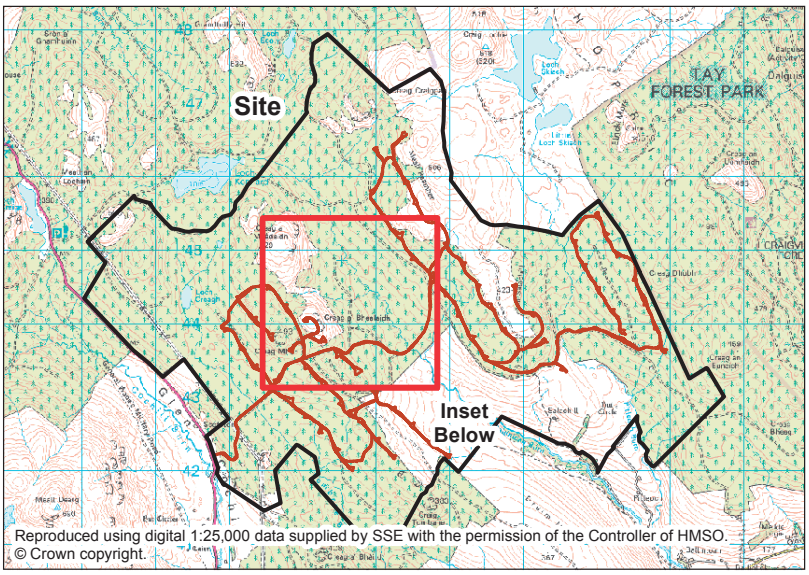

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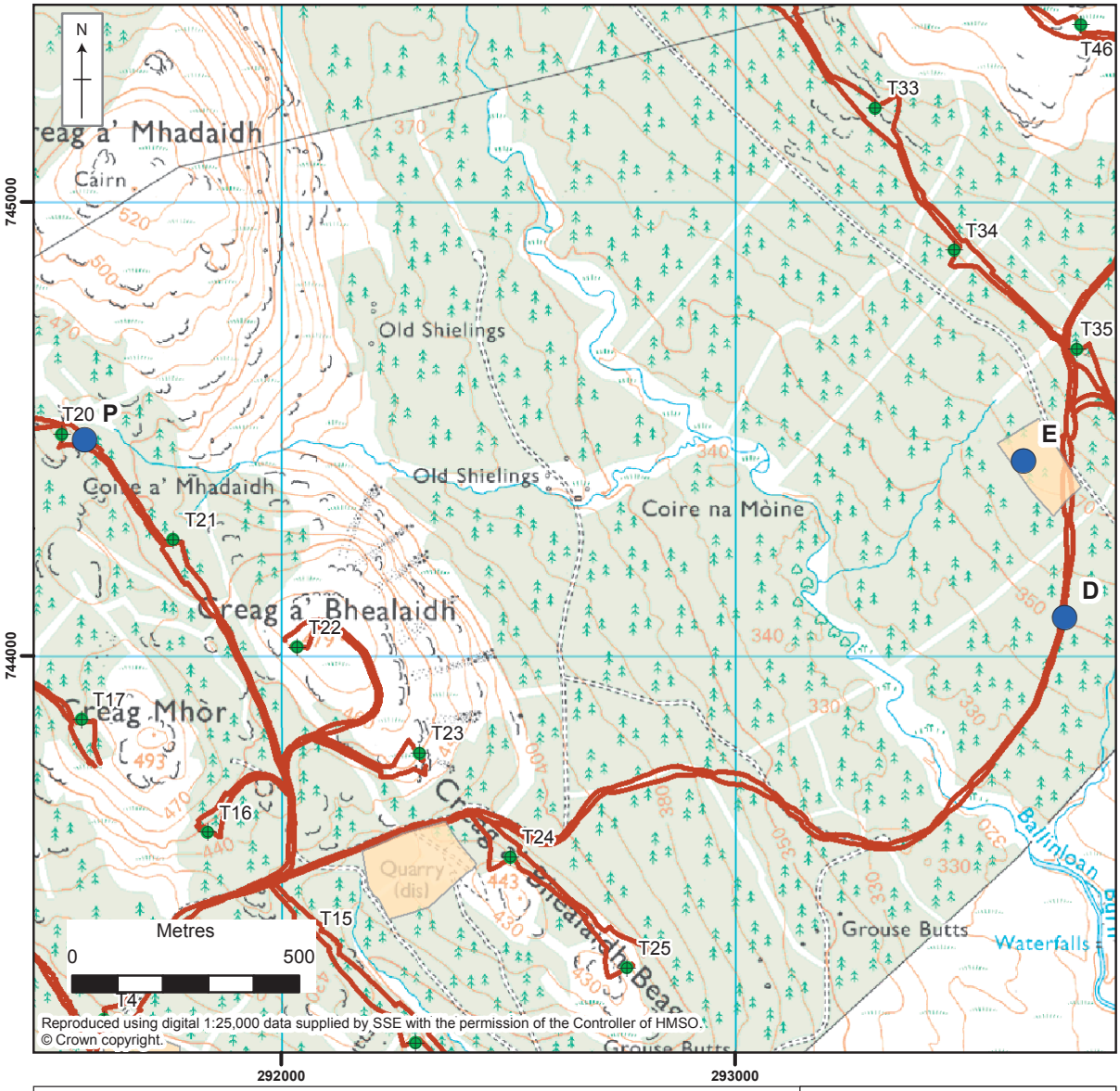


Key

- Cultural heritage sites discussed in text
- Turbine
- Access track
- Borrow pit

Illus. 1

Location of cultural heritage sites D, E and P within Griffin Wind Farm

GRIFFIN WIND FARM, PERTH AND KINROSS

Report on the Evaluation of Sites D, E and P

by Magnar Dalland

A preliminary phase of archaeological evaluation of two large turf-covered mounds and a possible structure was undertaken in October 2010. The sites had been identified during the course of a walk-over survey of the access tracks and turbine bases. The evaluation established that the two mounds were natural features. The structure was identified as a square or rectangular cairn, possibly a Pictish burial cairn.

1. INTRODUCTION

A preliminary phase of archaeological evaluation of three sites was undertaken in October 2010. The sites, comprising two large turf-covered mounds (Sites D and P) and a possible structure (Site E), had been identified during the course of a walk-over survey of the access tracks and turbine bases (Illus 1).

The programme of works followed an earlier phase of work of desk-based assessment and walk-over survey that was undertaken as part of the cultural heritage study for the Environmental Impact Assessment. In accordance with the Archaeological Mitigation Plan, subsequent discussions with Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust (PKHT), Perth & Kinross Council's archaeological advisors, indicated that archaeological evaluation was required in order to more accurately assess the archaeological potential of these features. Their evaluation was brought forward in order to minimize disruption to the construction programme.

Illus 2
Site E. Mossy area outlining the extent of the site. From north-west

Illus 3 (left)
Site P. Bedrock exposed beneath a thin cover of soil. From north

Illus 4 (right)
Site D. West quadrant of natural peat mound. From west-south-west

Illus 5 (left)
Site E. Line of boulders resting on top of cairn. From north-west

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Sites D, E and P were identified during a walkover survey in September 2010 (Scott report in prep).

Site P was located at NGR NN 91567 44476, in the centre of the proposed site for Turbine 20. It was an oval mound, aligned north to south and measured 15m by 8m by 0.8m high. At the time of the survey the area of the turbine base had been felled but the brushwood was still covering the ground.

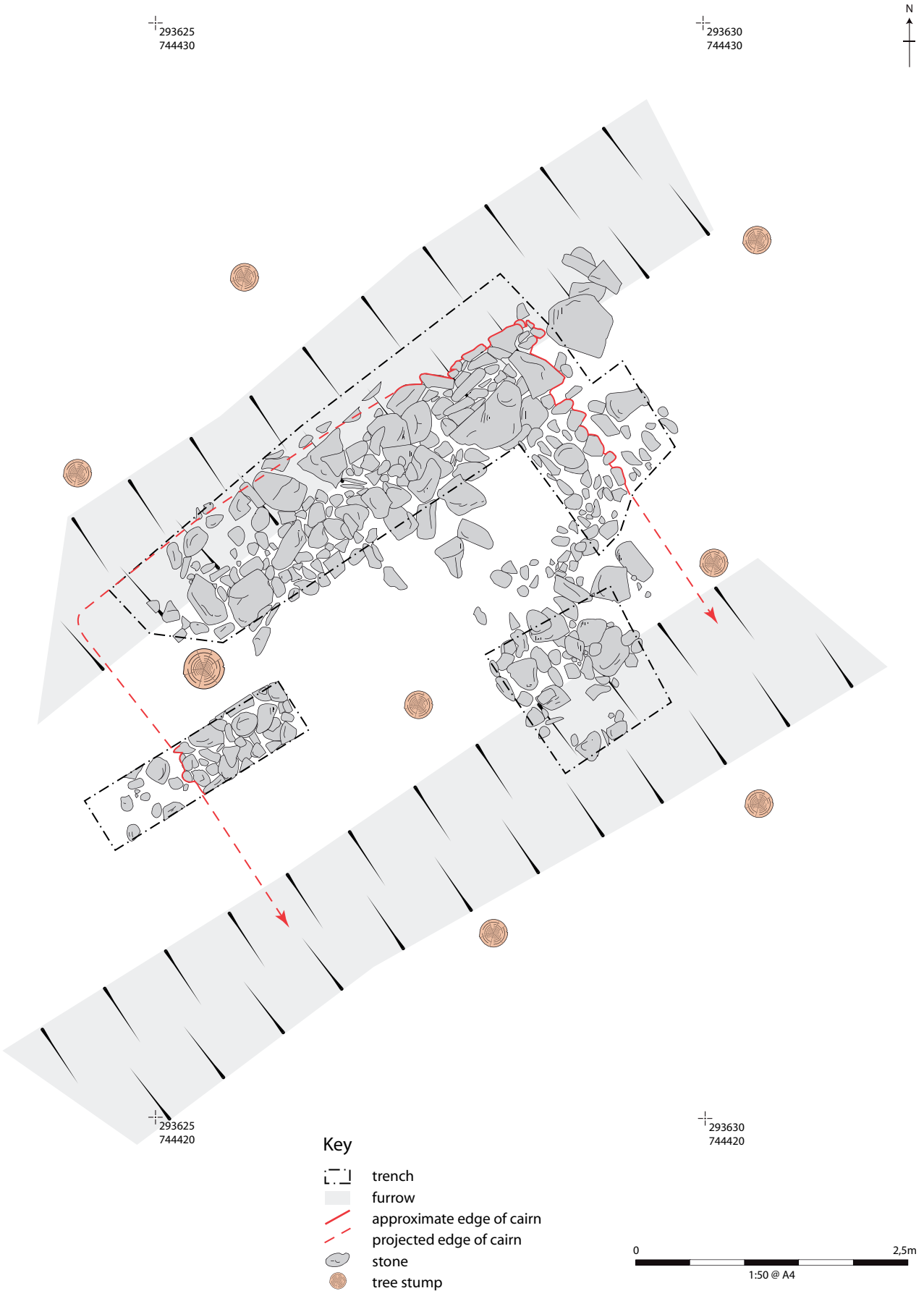
Site D was located at NGR NN 93727 44085 in the forest on the eastern side of Ballinloan Burn. It measured 11m in diameter and was 0.8m high. The mound had been planted over with trees some 20 years ago but lay now in a cleared corridor through the forest along the line of a proposed road connecting the Scotston and Ballinloan sections of the wind farm.

Both mounds were distinctive land-forms and appeared to be rare features in the landscape. The mounds lacked any obvious stone element to their form and their location on relatively well-drained slopes with shallow ground cover meant that it was difficult to explain their forms in terms of peat or other formation processes.

Site E was located at NGR NN 93636 44430, in the north corner of Borrow Pit 4, southwest of Turbine 35. It was first noted as a conspicuous mossy area some 5m across that stood out against the surrounding forest floor (Illus 2). The mossy zone covered an area of stony ground, possibly a low cairn. What looked like a segment of a stone wall comprising an intermittent line of rectangular boulders overlay the western side of the area.

3. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the evaluation was to clarify the nature and extent of the features that were identified during the course of the walk-over survey to date. For the two mounds, the objectives were to clarify, firstly, whether the mounds were man-made structures or naturally-



Illus 6
Site E. Plan of sondage trenches

Illus 7
Site E. Cairn seen from the north-east

occurring features. If man-made, the evaluation would seek to establish and clarify:

- the nature and extent of the mounds;
- the quality and condition of archaeological deposits within them;
- their date.

For Site E in Borrow Pit 4, it was not clear if the feature represented:

- a line of stones created by forestry ploughing;
- an unrecorded field dyke;
- an unrecorded building.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Evaluation of the two mounds, Sites P and D

The mounds were machine-excavated under archaeological supervision. A mechanical tracked excavator with a flat-bladed ditching bucket was used to remove the tree stumps and topsoil under direct archaeological control.

4.2 Evaluation of Site E in Borrow Pit 4

Brash was removed by hand from the line of exposed stones, to clarify the nature and extent of the feature. The site was evaluated by hand excavation of sondage trenches.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Site P, oval mound at NGR NN 91567 44476

The mound was oval and aligned north to south. It was 15m long, 8m wide and 0.8m high. The mound appeared to be truncated by a ditch on the south-west side. Prior to excavation the mound was divided into four quadrants and the machine excavation started in the east quadrant. However bedrock was immediately exposed close to the surface and it became clear that the mound was a natural feature comprising bedrock in the form of a small

rounded knoll, covered by a thin layer of soil 0.1m to 0.2m deep (Illus 3). Once this fact was established further excavation was abandoned.

5.2 Site D, mound located at NGR NN 93727 44085

The mound measured 11m in diameter and was 0.8m high. It lay in an area that had been forested some 20 years ago. Three forestry furrows ploughed as part of the planting procedure cut across the mound. At the time of excavation the trees had been felled leaving behind rows of tree stumps along the ridges of the forestry furrows.

The mound was divided into four quadrants. Initially the west quadrant was excavated by machine, revealing that the entire mound was formed from peat (Illus 4). At the base of the mound was a natural deposit of light grey clay. During the excavation it was noted that the area around and below the mound was wetter than the surrounding hillside. It is therefore likely that the mound has been formed near a spring that created wet conditions in this area. This would then create favourable conditions for peat growth that resulted in the formation of the mound. Once it had been established that the mound was natural, no further excavation took place and the quadrant was backfilled.

5.3 Site E, structure located at NGR NN 93636 44430

This feature was initially identified as a stone wall, possibly part of a building or a field dyke. At first two trenches were opened up by hand, one along the south side of a forestry furrow cutting into the north-west side of the stony area. The other trench was located across the north-east side of the feature cutting across from the furrow on the south-east side of the site. The area between these two furrows was stony and had therefore been avoided by the forestry plough when the planting took place some 20 years ago.

It soon became clear that the feature was a stone cairn. The row of boulders that were running over the top of the cairn seemed to be a fairly recent feature as they were sitting on top of the thin turf layer that covered the cairn below (Illus 5). The way the stones were aligned along a forestry furrow indicated that they had been thrown up by the plough.

The trench along the north-west side revealed that the bottom of the furrow had cut through the edge of the cairn. However, what seemed to be the undisturbed edge of the cairn appeared to survive at the north-east end of the trench. The edge seemed to form a corner at this end and to investigate this further the two trenches were joined up to investigate the possible north-east side of the cairn. This exposed a possible straight edge of the cairn running north-west to south-east (Illus 6, 7).

In order to locate the opposite edge of the cairn, a slot trench was excavated some 4m to the south-west in the middle between and parallel with the two furrows on either side of the cairn. The trench was 2m long and 0.5m wide and exposed a densely packed cairn with a well-defined straight edge about half way along the trench. Although it was a fairly narrow trench, the edge appeared to be straight and parallel with the edge seen in the trench to the north-east. Based on the edges seen in the two trenches it was possible to establish that the cairn measured 4.8m north-east to south-west (Illus 6). However, the extent of the cairn north-west to south-east was more difficult to estimate due to the damage caused by the furrows on either side of the cairn.

The excavation of the sondage trenches only involved the removal of turf to expose the stones and outline of the cairn. No artifacts were recovered and no deposits suitable for sampling were identified during the excavation.

6. DISCUSSION

The evaluation established that the two mounds, Sites P and D were both natural features. It also showed that the presumed stone wall at Site E was a fairly recent feature, possibly formed during forestry ploughing some 20 years ago. However, the stony ground in the area turned out to be a man-made cairn. The north-west and south-east sides of the cairn had been damaged by forestry ploughing, but what appeared to be straight edges of the cairn were exposed in evaluation trenches to the north-east and south-west, indicating that the cairn measures 4.8m across.

Although only a small part of the cairn was exposed in the evaluation trenches and the cairn was damaged by ploughing, the evidence so far seems to suggest that the cairn was not round but square or rectangular (Illus 6). If this is the case, the feature could possibly be identified as a Pictish burial cairn. However, in order to clearly establish the shape of the cairn, the entire cairn including a wide buffer zone would have to be exposed as the sides to the north-west and south-east have been disturbed by forestry ploughing.

7. REFERENCES

Scott, L., (forthcoming), *Griffin Wind Farm: post-felling walk-over survey (September 2010 – January 2011)*. Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, unpublished client report.

8. APPENDIX 1

8.1 Photographic register

Picture no.	B/W print	Digital file name	Facing	Description
1	1	GWPK09-Job07-01	SW	Site P. Mound before evaluation.
2	1	GWPK09-Job07-02	NW	Site P. Mound before evaluation.
3	1	GWPK09-Job07-03	NE	Site P. Mound before evaluation.
4	1	GWPK09-Job07-04	SE	Site P. Mound before evaluation.
5	1	GWPK09-Job07-05	SW	Site P. Bedrock exposed immediately beneath the surface in evaluation trench.
6	1	GWPK09-Job07-06	S	Site P. Bedrock exposed immediately beneath the surface in evaluation trench.
7	1	GWPK09-Job07-07	NW	Site D. Mound before evaluation.
8	1	GWPK09-Job07-08	N	Site D. Mound before evaluation.
9	1	GWPK09-Job07-09	S	Site D. Mound before evaluation.
10	1	GWPK09-Job07-10	NE	Site D. Corner of excavated quadrant
11	1	GWPK09-Job07-11	NE	Site D. SW-facing section of excavated quadrant
12	1	GWPK09-Job07-12	ENE	Site D. Clay exposed beneath peat
13	1	GWPK09-Job07-13	NE	Site D. SW-facing section of excavated quadrant
14	1	GWPK09-Job07-14	W	Site D. Clay exposed beneath peat
15	1	GWPK09-Job07-15	SE	Site D. NW-facing section of excavated quadrant
16	1	GWPK09-Job07-16	N	Site E. Cairn before evaluation.
17	1	GWPK09-Job07-17	NE	Site E. Cairn before evaluation.
18	1	GWPK09-Job07-18	SE	Site E. Cairn before evaluation.
19	1	GWPK09-Job07-19	S	Site E. Cairn before evaluation.
20	1	GWPK09-Job07-20	SE	Site E. Slot-trench into SW side of cairn
21	1	GWPK09-Job07-21	SW	Site E. Undisturbed part of cairn between two furrows
22	1	GWPK09-Job07-22	S	Site E. N corner of cairn. Plough disturbance of NW side of cairn
23	1	GWPK09-Job07-23	SE	Site E. Boulders overlying N corner of cairn
24	1	GWPK09-Job07-24	NW	Site E. Furrow cutting into SE side of cairn
25	1	GWPK09-Job07-25	N	Site E. Cairn seen from the S
26	1	GWPK09-Job07-26	E	Site E. Cairn seen from the W
27	1	GWPK09-Job07-27	S	Site E. Furrow cutting into NW side of cairn
28	1	GWPK09-Job07-28	SW	Site E. Line of boulders along S side of furrow N of cairn
29	1	GWPK09-Job07-29	NW	Site E. Evaluation trench over NE part of cairn
30	1	GWPK09-Job07-30	E	Site E. Boulders along S side of furrow at SW end of cairn
31	1	Failed	NE	Site E. Slot-trench into SW side of cairn
32	1	GWPK09-Job07-32	N	Site E. Row of boulders overlying N corner of cairn
33	1	GWPK09-Job07-33	N	Site E. Boulders along S side of furrow at SW end of cairn
34	1	GWPK09-Job07-34	NE	Site E. Boulders along S side of furrow along NW side of cairn
35	1	GWPK09-Job07-35	SW	Site E. Evaluation trench over NE part of cairn