

Mains of Balhall Menmuir, Brechin, Angus: Archaeological Survey

Data Structure Report



by Peter Klemen

issued 10th December 2015

on behalf of Harmony Energy

RATHMELL 
ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Quality Assurance

This report covers works which have been undertaken in keeping with the issued brief as modified by the agreed programme of works. The report has been prepared in keeping with the guidance of Rathmell Archaeology Limited on the preparation of reports. All works reported on within this document have been undertaken in keeping with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct.

Signed  Date10th December 2015.....

In keeping with the procedure of Rathmell Archaeology Limited this document and its findings have been reviewed and agreed by an appropriate colleague:

Checked  Date10th December 2015.....

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Quality Assurance Data

Author(s)	Peter Klemen		
Date of Issue	10 th December 2015	Version	1.0
Commissioning Body	Harmony Energy		
Event Name	Mains of Balhall, Menmuir, Brechin, Angus		
Event Type	Walkover		
Event Date(s)	November 2015		
Rathmell Archaeology Code	RA15106	OASIS Ref	Rathmell 1-232727
Location	United Kingdom: Scotland: Angus		
NGR	NO 50777 64428	Parish	Menmuir
Designation(s)	None		
Canmore IDs	None		

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Introduction

1. A programme of archaeological works is required by A Craig Architectural Consultant, on behalf of Harmony Energy, in support of the erection of a single wind turbine at land 600m Northwest Of Balhall Lodge, Menmuir, Brechin DD9 7RW (Planning Application: 14/00781/FULL) (NGR: NO 50777 64428). The archaeological works were designed to meet the conditions for archaeology work, the requirements of the client, Angus Council and their advisors Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service.
2. The objective of these archaeological works was to identify significant archaeological features and, wherever possible, to then avoid impact by promoting preservation *in situ*. The specific focus has been identified by Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service to establish a sound baseline on the archaeological resource within the given survey area which covers the sweep of the rotor at 453 sq m, the crane pad projection area measuring 60 sq m and the proposed access track at 210 sq m, a total 0.08ha.
3. The archaeological works undertaken were the survey of the development area for significant archaeological features, with the intention of developing protection measures to safeguard these features. The programme of works was detailed within the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation (Klemen 2015) and this Data Structure Report presents the findings of the field survey.

Site Topography

4. The total application site is some 863 sq m of ground located on a moderately flat open topography (Figures 2a & 2b) within an 'improved' and enclosed field to the west of Balhall Lodge at an altitude of 250m OD. The ground rises to the north on a relatively steep gradient with extensive views to the south over to Montrose and the sea. The site of 'White Caterthun' (Canmore ID: 35007 SM: 90069, ACAS HER: NO56NW0017) is clearly visible 4km to the northeast.

Project Works

5. An archaeological walkover was carried out on the 24th November 2015, and was carried out in keeping with the methods outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Klemen 2015).
6. The objective of the archaeological works was to identify any significant archaeological features and, wherever possible, to then avoid impact by promoting preservation *in situ*. The walkover survey was also used to identify any previously unknown archaeological features, within the development area.
7. The record of any archaeological features would comprise:
 - ❖ classification of the archaeological sites and monuments;
 - ❖ written site description (objective measured description; subjective site interpretation; site condition; and management recommendations if appropriate);
 - ❖ a measured sketch plan;
 - ❖ photographic record (digital) of all sites; and
 - ❖ locate all archaeological site limits and elements by DGPS equipment (Leica GS50) allowing real-time correction to Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum.

All works were conducted in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct and Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statements.

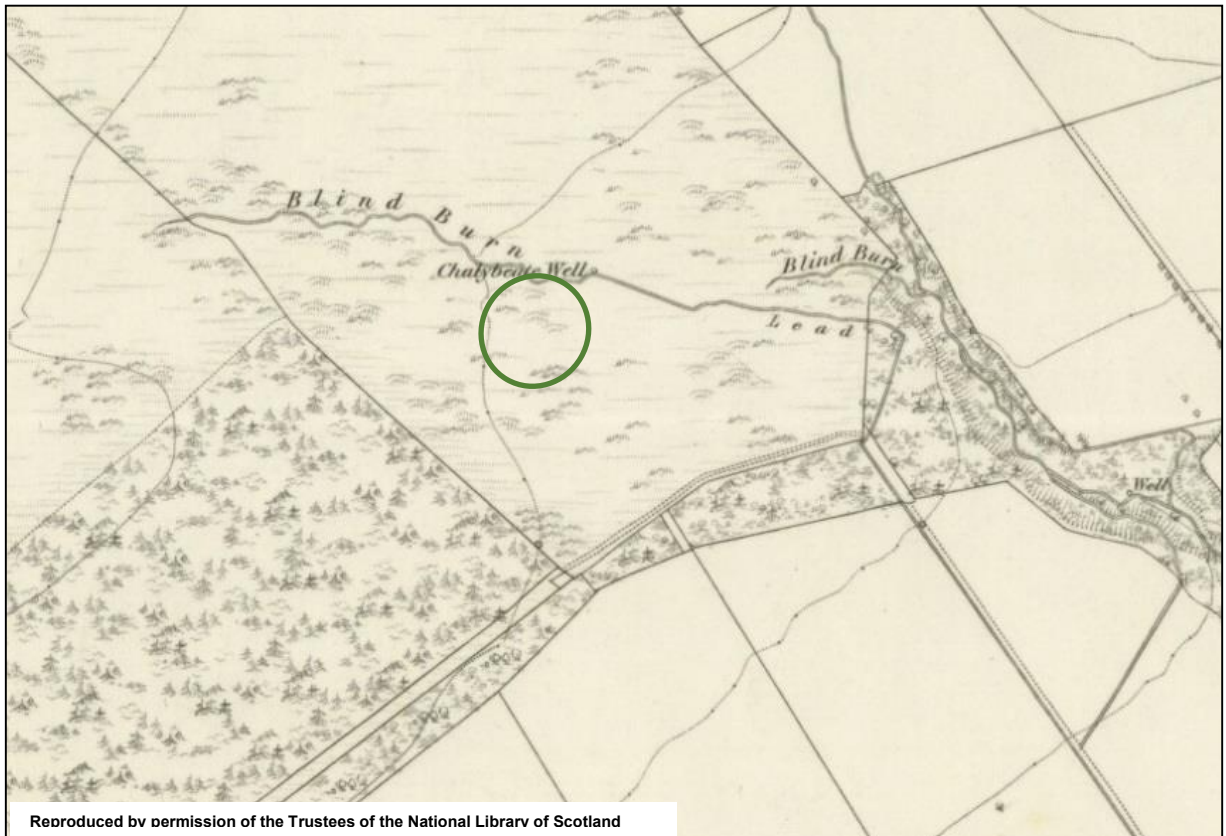


Figure 1a: Extract from the 6-inch 1st edition Ordnance Survey (1865)

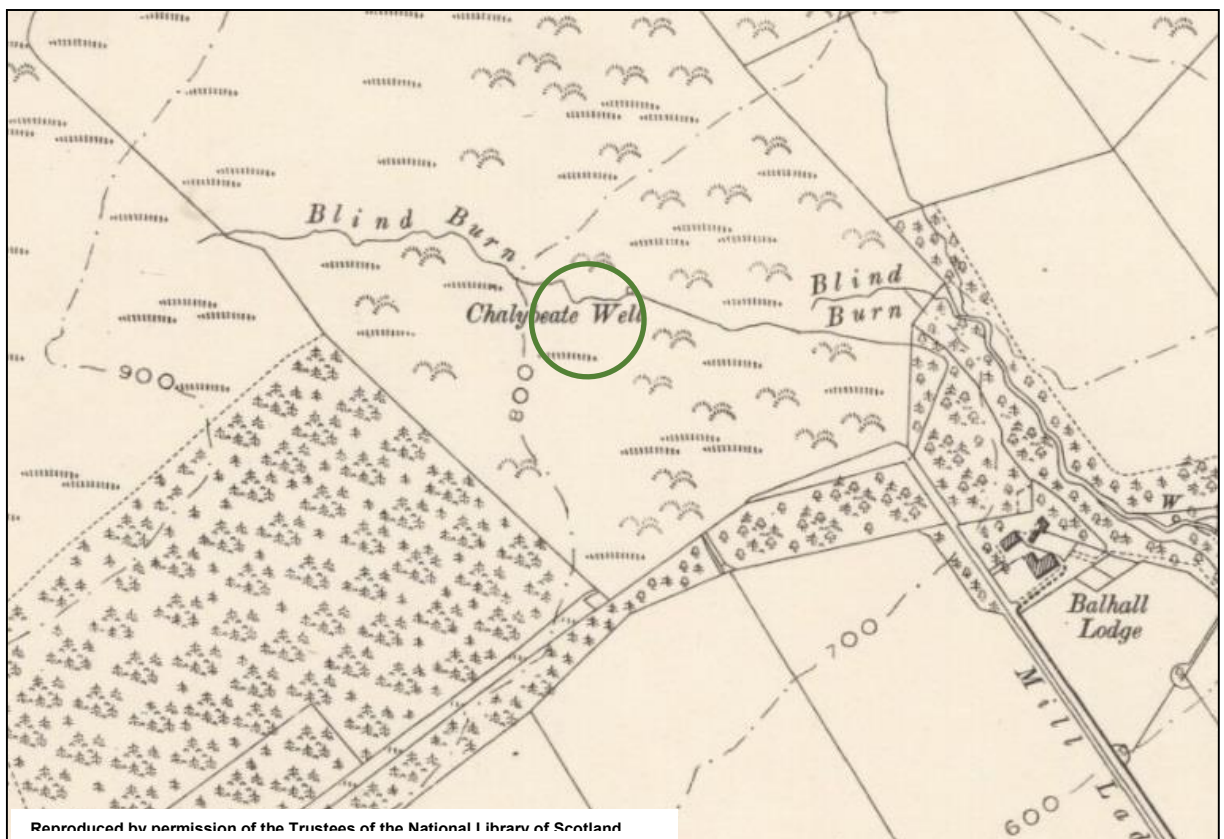


Figure 1b: Extract from the 6-inch 2nd edition Ordnance Survey (1903)



Figure 2a: Demonstrating site topography and location of the development area (to the left of the cable trench in the middle of the image)



Figure 2b: Demonstrating site topography and location of the development area (to the left of the cable trench in the middle of the image)

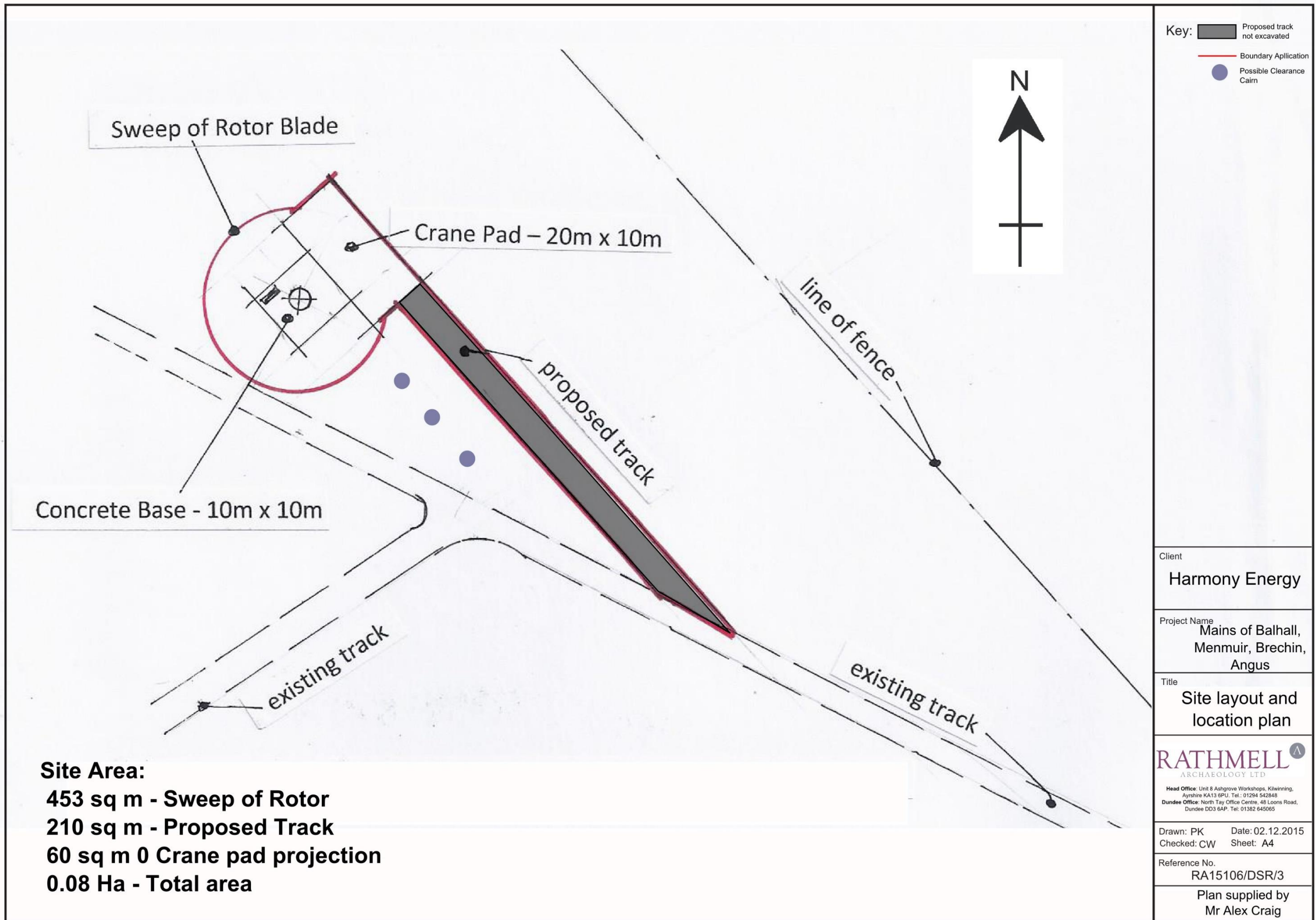


Figure 3: Site Layout Plan

Findings

8. A study of the Historic Environment Records available, revealed no known archaeological sites recorded within the development area. However, located within the same field and approximately 300m to the west is the Scheduled Monument of Balhall Fields and Cupmarked Stone (SM: 44559, Canmore ID: 3511 Cupmarked stone & 35119 field system, ACAS HER: NO56SW0017).
9. Located approximately 170m to the south is recorded another field system with a group of small cairns measuring up to 7m in diameter (Canmore ID: 35120). There is also a large barrow, measuring over 15m in diameter (Sherriff & MacKnight 1984, Sherriff 1985).

Historic Landuse

10. The *6-inch 1st edition Ordnance Survey* map (1865) (Figure 1a) depicts the development area and immediate landscape as rough unimproved land and the only woodland is a small distance to the west. The trackway that presently leads to Balhall Lodge is depicted, although the lodge itself is not.
11. There has been little change in the form of the landscape by the time of the *6-inch 2nd edition Ordnance Survey* (1903) (Figure 1b). One exception is a Balhall Lodge is now depicted and labelled as such. The present improved and enclosed landscape may well be a relatively recent formation with the wooded area to the west has now gone.

Site Walkover

12. The walkover survey took place over the morning of 10th November 2015. It confirmed the core of the study area to have a moderately steep and open topography (Figures 2a & 2b). The open nature of the topography provided good conditions for the identification of any known or unknown archaeological sites or features.
13. The walkover survey did not identify any previously unknown archaeological sites or features with the development area defined within the planning application as the sweep of the rotor at 453 square metres, the crane pad area measuring 200 square metres and the proposed access track at 210 square metres (see Figure 3).
14. Three possible clearance cairns were recorded and are possibly associated with those labelled 'Balhall' that had previously been identified by Sherriff & MacKnight (1984) and Sherriff (1985) (Canmore ID: 35210). Located to the south of the development area and to the east of the cable trench (Figures 4a & 4b) with the closest of the cairns/clearance cairns sited 46m away to the south.
15. All the cairns/clearance were formed of turf with some stone observable and measured 4m by 4.5m and sited on a west-east slope (Figures 4b, 5a & 5b). The three possible clearance cairns were all located well to the south of the turbine area and so would not suffer inadvertent damage from the construction of the turbine.
16. The location of the three cairns/clearance cairns had the potential to have been disturbed by the excavation of the proposed new track for the turbine area. However, on discussion with work crew it was confirmed that the proposed track was not to be excavated and the existing track was to be upgraded and used.

Discussion

17. The walkover survey did not identify any previously unknown archaeological sites or features within the survey area. The open nature of the topography provided good conditions for the identification of any known or unknown archaeological sites or features.
18. Three cairns/clearance cairns were recorded to the south of the turbine area and are possibly associated with those labelled 'Balhall' that had previously been identified by Sherriff & MacKnight (1984) and Sherriff (1985) (Canmore ID: 35210).
19. It not possible to confidentially conclude as to whether the cairns are associated with ritual. In two of the cairns (1 & 3) there appears to be evidence that the central areas have been dug into and therefore possibly suggests that previously people had considered them to be

ritual features.

20. It is most likely that they are linked to the field systems within the immediate landscape and so reflect clearance cairns constructed of moved stone and have since been covered by turf.
21. As demonstrated in the immediate surrounding landscape, there is evidence for late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age activity in the form of the cup marked stone and barrow and potentially later Bronze Age activity on the form of the field systems and possible clearance cairns.
22. Given that there are no identifiable archaeological features or structures within the development area that merit protection or safeguarding from development works. We recommend no further archaeological works are undertaken.

Conclusion

23. A programme of archaeological works was required by A Craig Architectural Consultant, on behalf of Harmony Energy, in support of the erection of a single wind turbine at land 600m Northwest Of Balhall Lodge, Menmuir, Brechin DD9 7RW (NGR NO 50777 64428).
24. The works did not identify any previously unknown archaeological sites or features within the survey area. The open nature of the topography provided good conditions for the identification of any known or unknown archaeological sites or features.
25. Three cairns/clearance cairns were recorded to the south of the turbine area and are possibly associated with those labelled 'Balhall' that had previously been identified by Sherriff & Macknight (1984) and Sherriff (1985) (Canmore ID: 35210). It is most likely that they are linked to the field systems within the immediate landscape and so reflect clearance cairns constructed of moved stone and have since been covered by turf.
26. We have recommended that as there are no identifiable archaeological features or structures within the development area that merit protection or safeguarding from development works, that no further archaeological works are required.

References

Cartographic

- | | | |
|-----------------|------|--|
| Ordnance Survey | 1865 | <i>6-inch 1st edition Ordnance Survey, Forfarshire, Sheet XXVI</i> |
| Ordnance Survey | 1903 | <i>6-inch 1st edition Ordnance Survey, Forfarshire, Sheet XXVI.NW</i> |

Documentary

- Sherriff and Macknight, J R and O. 1985i Balhall (Menmuir p): settlement, field-system and small cairns'. *Discovery Excav Scot*, 1985. Page(s): 58
- Sherriff, J. R. 1984e Balhall (Menmuir p): small cairns and field systems', *Discovery Excav Scot*, 1984. Page(s): 35



Figure 4a: Demonstrating the three possible clearance cairns to the south of the development area and east of the cable trench



Figure 4b: Demonstrating possible clearance cairn 1



Figure 5a: Demonstrating possible clearance cairn 2



Figure 5b: Demonstrating possible clearance cairn 3

Appendix 1: Photographic Register

Photographic Register

Image No.	Print		Slide		Digital	Description	From	Date
	Film No.	Neg. No.	Film No.	Neg. No.				
001	-	-	-	-	3886	View onto turbine/development area	W	24/11/14
002	-	-	-	-	3887	View onto turbine/development area	N	24/11/14
003	-	-	-	-	3888	View onto turbine/development area	E	24/11/14
004	-	-	-	-	3889	View onto turbine/development area	S	24/11/14
005	-	-	-	-	3890	View out from the turbine/development area	N	24/11/14
006	-	-	-	-	3891	View out from the turbine/development area	E	24/11/14
007	-	-	-	-	3892	View out from the turbine/development area	S	24/11/14
008	-	-	-	-	3893	View out from the turbine/development area	W	24/11/14
009	-	-	-	-	3894	View along 3 possible clearance cairns	NW	24/11/14
010	-	-	-	-	3895	Possible clearance cairn 1	NW	24/11/14
011	-	-	-	-	3896	Possible clearance cairn 2	E	24/11/14
012	-	-	-	-	3897	Possible clearance cairn 3	NE	24/11/14
013	-	-	-	-	3898	cairn/clearance cairn on Canmore	W	24/11/14
014	-	-	-	-	3899	Possible clearance cairn 4	E	24/11/14
015	-	-	-	-	3900	Possible circular feature (denuded sheepfold)	SE	24/11/14
016	-	-	-	-	3901	Showing cable trench and trackway	SE	24/11/14
017	-	-	-	-	3902	Showing cable trench and trackway	NW	24/11/14

Appendix 2: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Angus Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Mains of Balhall, Menmuir, Brechin, Angus
PROJECT CODE:	RA15106
PARISH:	Menmuir
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Peter Klemen
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Rathmell Archaeology Limited
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Walkover Survey
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NO 50777 64428
START DATE (this season)	24 th November, 2015
END DATE (this season)	24 th November, 2015
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>A programme of archaeological works was required by A Craig Architectural Consultant, on behalf of Harmony Energy, in support of the erection of a single wind turbine at land Northwest Of Balhall Lodge, Menmuir, Brechin DD9 7RW. The works did not identify any previously unknown archaeological sites or features within the survey area.</p> <p>Three possible clearance cairn were recorded to the south of the turbine area and are possibly associated with those labelled 'Balhall' that had previously been identified by Sherriff & Macknight (1984) and Sherriff (1985) (Canmore ID: 35210). It is most likely that they are linked to the field systems within the immediate landscape and so reflect clearance cairns constructed of moved stone and have since been covered by turf.</p> <p>We have recommended that as there are no identifiable archaeological features or structures within the development area that merit protection or safeguarding from development works, that no further archaeological works are required.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Harmony Energy
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	North Tay Office Centre, 48 Loons Road, Dundee DD3 6AP
EMAIL ADDRESS:	contact@rathmell-arch.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Report to Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service and archive to HES Collections.

Contact Details

27. Rathmell Archaeology can be contacted at our Registered Office or at:
- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Rathmell Archaeology Ltd | www.rathmell-arch.co.uk |
| North Tay Office Centre | |
| 48 Loons Road | t.: 01382 645065 |
| Dundee | m.: 07827 913796 |
| DD3 6AP | e.: peter.klemen@rathmell-arch.co.uk |
28. The Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service can be contacted at their office or through the web:
- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Archaeology Service | www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk |
| Aberdeenshire Council IS | |
| Woodhill House | t.: 01224 664221 |
| Westburn Road | e.: archaeology@aberdeenshire.gov.uk |
| Aberdeen | |
| AB16 5GB | |

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