

# CFA Archaeology Ltd

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**Windyfield Rhynie WTW Transfer Main,  
Aberdeenshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**Report No. 2048**

 0131 273 4380

 0131 273 4381

 [info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk](mailto:info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk)

 [www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk](http://www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk)

## **CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**

The Old Engine House  
Eskmills Business Park  
Musselburgh  
East Lothian  
EH21 7PQ

Tel: 0131 273 4380  
Fax: 0131 273 4381  
email: [info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk](mailto:info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk)  
web: [www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk](http://www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk)

Author	Ian Suddaby MA FSA Scot MifA
Illustrator	Graeme Carruthers MA MifA & Shelly Werner BA MPhil PhD
Editor	Melanie Johnson MA PhD FSA Scot MifA
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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 General**

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) between April and 2012. The work took place during the excavation of a trench for a new water main on land to the west of Auchleven, Aberdeenshire (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Scottish Water Solutions.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated 14 December 2010 was produced by CFA on behalf of Scottish Water. The WSI was designed to fulfil the requirements of the Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service (ACAS).

### **1.2 Background**

Scottish Water Solutions intended to construct a new water main between a point to the west of Mill of Leslie and Auchleven, Aberdeenshire.

ACAS identified three areas where the pipeline route passed close to known archaeological sites and thus required a watching brief in those areas during pipeline construction. These were at Mill of Leslie (NJ 591 249 and NJ 592 248), Leslie Castle (NJ 598 247 and NJ 600 248) and a former stone circle at Husband Hillock (NJ 617 245 and NJ 622 245).

The areas at Leslie Castle and Mill of Leslie were not monitored, following agreement with ACAS, due to re-routing of the pipe away from the archaeologically sensitive areas. An additional area of watching brief to the west of Mill of Leslie was, however, included in the watching brief instead.

### **1.3 Objectives**

The objectives of the watching brief were:

- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological deposits within the watching brief area and propose mitigation measures where necessary.

## **2. WORKING METHODS**

### **2.1 General**

CFA Archaeology Ltd follows the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Fieldwork.

Two areas were monitored. The first (Fig. 1) was at Husband Hillock on the western edge of Auchleven. The second was to the west of the Mill of Leslie (Fig. 2).

At both locations, the indicative route of the water main was altered to follow the line of the public road. At Husband Hillock, this avoided the former location of a stone circle. To the west of Mill of Leslie, this was done to minimise the damage to crops. The actual routes are shown on Figs. 1-2.

### **2.2 Watching Brief**

The terms of the WSI required a watching brief to be maintained in those areas identified above during all topsoil stripping works for the pipeline wayleave and any off-easement areas.

At Husband Hillock, excavation was undertaken with a tracked mechanical excavator with a smooth-bladed ditching bucket (Fig. 3).

To the west of Mill of Leslie, excavation was undertaken with a tracked mechanical excavator with a smooth-bladed narrow bucket (Figs. 4-5).

All monitored topsoil stripping operations were conducted under constant archaeological supervision.

All excavation and on-site recording was carried out according to standard CFA procedures, principally by drawing, by photography and by completing standard CFA record forms.

### **3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

#### **3.1 General**

Numbers in bold in the following text refer to contexts, a full list of which is contained in Appendix 1. Other site records are listed in Appendix 2. An entry for inclusion in Discovery and Excavation in Scotland is included as Appendix 3.

#### **3.2 Husband Hillock**

The pipeline route was monitored between Counterford at NJ 6170 2454 and the road to Harestone at NJ 6227 2454. Topsoil and subsoil were removed from a trench 1.5m wide before natural was excavated. A view of the trench is shown in Fig. 3.

The depth of the soil deposits varied (Fig. 4) but over much of the route 0.3m of dark orange-brown topsoil (**001**) overlay a similar depth of light orange-brown subsoil (**002**). The natural subsoil consisted of a light orange sandy silt with occasional small stones (**003**).

No features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance were identified.

#### **3.2 West of Mill of Leslie**

The pipeline route was monitored between the track leading to Cottown at NJ 5860 2478 and Smithy Croft at NJ 5901 2490. The trench was 0.6m wide and varied between 0.3m and 0.9m deep. Views of the route from the east and west are shown in Figs. 5-6.

The depth of the soil deposits varied but over much of the route 0.3m of dark orange-brown topsoil (**001**) overlay up to 0.6m of light orange-brown subsoil (**002**). The natural subsoil was varied, consisting either of a mustard yellow stony silt or of a similar coloured clayey silt (**003**).

In the westernmost field, to the north of Littlemill (Fig. 2), traces of rig and furrow cultivation (**004**) were visible in the trench edges. Aligned NW-SE, these had a wavelength (centre to centre) of 6-7m. Individual furrows had a width of 1-2m and depth of 0.1m. The fills (collectively **005**) consisted of deposits similar to the subsoil. No finds were recovered. There was no rig-and-furrow in the field to the west of Smithy Croft.

No features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance were identified.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of a water main trench at two locations to the west of Auchleven, Aberdeenshire.

There were no features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance identified during the watching brief.

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps, photographs, data and reports, will be deposited with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and with the Aberdeenshire Council Sites and Monuments Record.

A summary statement of the results of this watching brief will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 3) and an online OASIS form will be completed.

## APPENDIX 1: Context Register

Context No.	Description
001	Topsoil
002	Subsoil – stony orange brown sandy silt
003	Subsoil – orange silt with shattered stone
004	Collective context for rig and furrow to the west of Mill of Leslie
005	Collective context for the fills of 004. Sterile yellow brown sandy or clayey silt

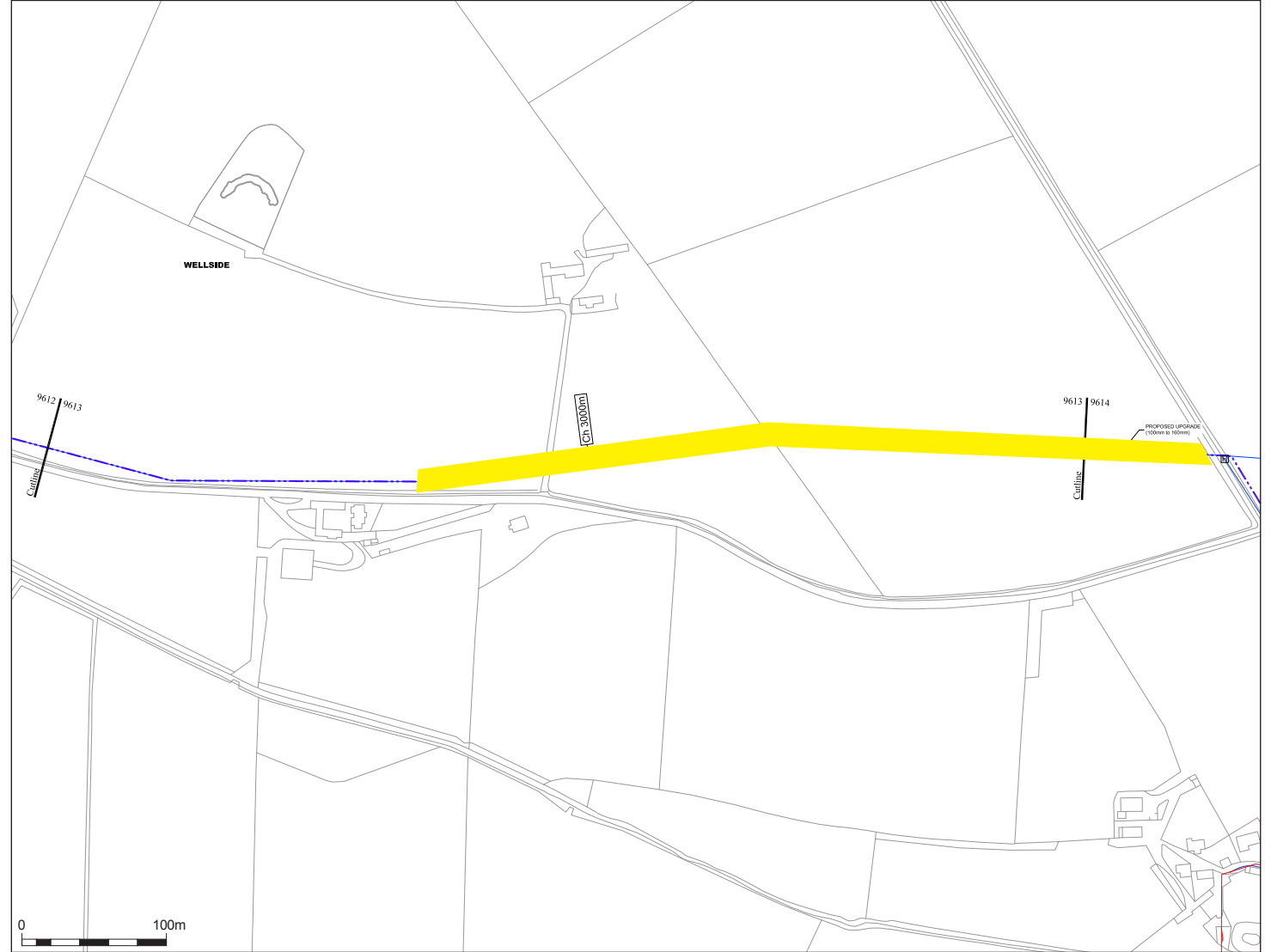
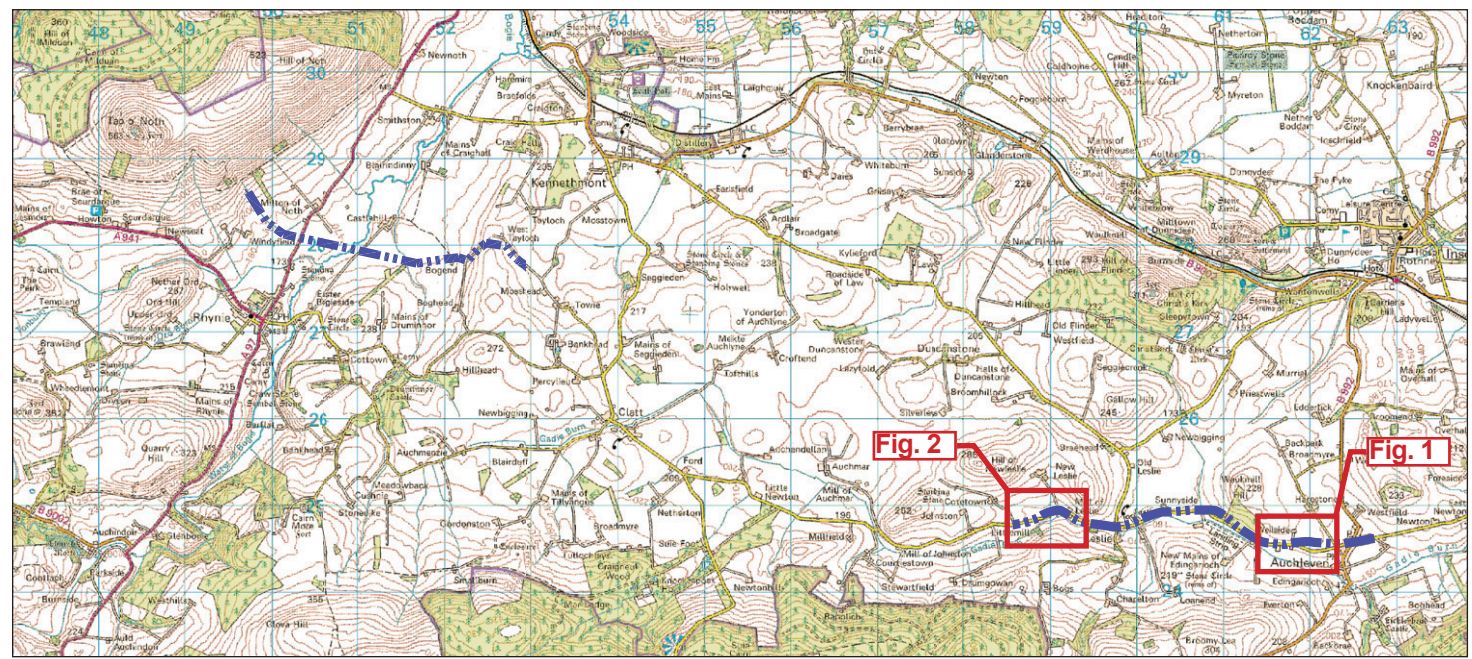
## APPENDIX 2: Digital Photographic Register

Number	Description	From	Conditions
	<b>Husband Hillock</b>		
1	Field A from the East prior to work	E	Bright
2	Field A from the East prior to work showing 12m way-leave	E	Bright
3	South facing section of trench in Field A showing depth of topsoil, subsoil and brown/yellow coarse sand natural	S	Sunny
4	South facing section of trench in Field A showing depth of topsoil, subsoil and brown/yellow coarse sand natural	S	Sunny
5	Field B from Eastern corner showing the tree which made the trench move away from the fence-line	E	Overcast
6	Halfway along Field B looking back towards Field A	W	Overcast
7	Western edge of Field A looking Eastwards along the trench	W	Overcast
	<b>Mill of Leslie</b>		
8-9	Pre-excavation views looking west from Smithy Croft	E	Sunny
10-12	Views of the excavated trench moving from east to west	E	Sunny
13-14	Views of the excavated trench moving from east to west	W	Sunny



### APPENDIX 3: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	Aberdeenshire
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Windyfield Rhynie WTW Transfer Main, Aberdeenshire
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	RHYN
<b>PARISHES:</b>	Premnay and Leslie
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Ian Suddaby
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	CFA Archaeology Ltd
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Watching Brief
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	-
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	-
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	-
<b>NGR (2 letters, 10 figures)</b>	NJ 6170 2454 to NJ 6227 2454 and NJ 5860 2478 to NJ 5901 2490
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	April 2012
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	July 2012
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	N/A
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	A watching brief was carried out during ground works for the Windyfield Rhynie WTW Transfer Main in Aberdeenshire. Two areas were monitored, one to the west of Auchleven and one to the west of Mill of Leslie. Rig-and-furrow was recorded near the Mill of Leslie but no features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance were identified.
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	N/A
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Scottish Water Solutions
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	The Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ
<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>	cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION</b> (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in RCAHMS, reports lodged with Aberdeenshire Council SMR and RCAHMS



Key:

Route of water main

Watching brief area



Scale at A4: 1:4500

Fig. No: 1

Revision: A

Client: Scottish Water Solutions

Title: Location map showing the route of the water main and the watching brief area to the west of Auchleaven

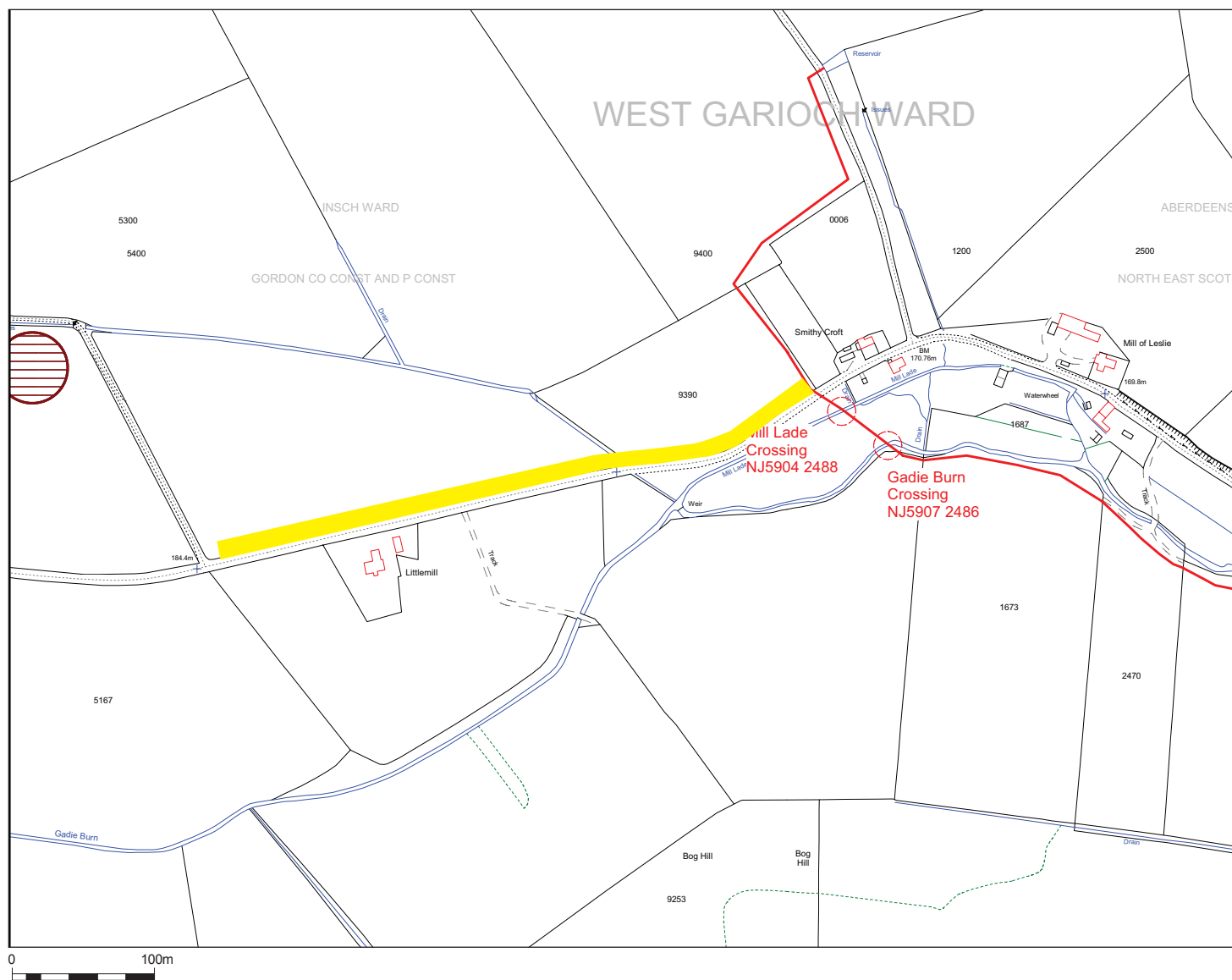
Project: Windyfield Rhynie WTW Transfer Main

**CFA** ARCHAEOLOGY LTD  
The Old Engine House  
Eskmills Park, Musselburgh  
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ  
T: 0131 273 4380  
F: 0131 273 4381  
e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk  
w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Drawn by: SW

Checked: MJ

Report No: 2048



Key:

- - - - - Route of water main
- Watching brief area
- Scheduled Monument



Scale at A4: 1:4500

Fig. No: 2 Revision: A Client: Scottish Water Solutions

Title: Location map showing the route of the water main and the watching brief area at Mill of Leslie

Project: Windyfield Rhynie WTW Transfer Main



Drawn by: SW Checked: MJ Report No: 2048





Fig. 3 - General View of the pipeline route to the west of Auchleven





Fig. 4 - Soil profile to the west of Auchleven



Fig. 5 - Looking west along the water main route from Mill of Leslie



Fig. 6 - Looking east along the water main route towards Mill of Leslie

Fig. No: <b>3-6</b>		Revision: <b>A</b>	Project: <b>Windyfield Rhynie WTW Transfer Main</b>			<b>CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD</b> The Old Engine House Eskmills Park, Musselburgh East Lothian, EH21 7PQ  T: 0131 273 4380 F: 0131 273 4381 e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk
Drawn by: <b>SW</b>	Checked: <b>MJ</b>	Report No: <b>2048</b>	Client: <b>Scottish Water Solutions</b>			

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