

# CFA Archaeology Ltd

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## **Camster Wind Farm, nr Wick, Caithness: Archaeological Watching Brief and Demarcation**

**Report No. 2073**

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Commissioned by	Natural Power (on behalf of E.ON)
Date issued	June 2012
Version	0
OASIS Reference	cfaarcha1-127866
Grid Ref	ND 2589 4711 (centred)

This document has been prepared in accordance with CFA Archaeology Ltd standard operating procedures.

### **Camster Wind Farm, nr Wick, Caithness: Archaeological Watching Brief and Demarcation**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief and demarcation works undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) between December 2010 and April 2012 at Camster Wind Farm, nr Wick, Caithness (NGR: ND 25893 47116) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Natural Power on behalf of E.ON.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated 10 June 2010 was produced by CFA on behalf of Natural Power. The WSI was designed to meet the requirements of the Highland Council Historic Environment Team (HCHET), in consultation with Andrew Puls.

### 1.2 Background

In response to the planning application for the wind farm, a programme of archaeological works was agreed with the HET consisting of:

1. **Walkover Survey.** Survey in advance of felling in areas of forestry, with mitigation measures proposed as necessary depending on the findings.
2. **Monitoring of Tree Clearance.** Archaeological monitoring to be undertaken during all tree felling within 20m of Sites 5, 6, 56 and 57 and any newly discovered sites.
3. **Fencing-off Sites.** Sites 5, 6, 56 and 57 and any newly discovered sites will be clearly identified and marked off with high visibility fencing.
4. **Archaeological Watching Brief.** An archaeological watching brief is required during all ground breaking works outwith the existing forestry plantation.
5. **Photographic Record.** A Photographic Record will be undertaken of Badlipster farmstead prior to any conversion works taking place.
6. Development of a **Heritage Interpretation and Access Plan** for archaeological monuments within the development site.

The results of items 1 and 5-6 of the programme of archaeological works are presented in a separate report (see Mitchell & MacRae 2010).

### 1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the watching brief were:

- To conduct an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation (watching brief) to monitor all groundbreaking works for the construction of access roads, turbine bases and hard standings, and to ensure works are cleared of topsoil and other modern overburden to identify either undisturbed natural subsoil or archaeological features (whichever comes first).

- To mitigate the effects of construction on any archaeological deposits or features identified through excavation and recording and produce a report on them.

## **2. WORKING METHODS**

### **2.1 General**

CFA Archaeology Ltd follows the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Fieldwork. Recording of all elements followed established CFA methods, as detailed in the approved WSI.

### **2.2 Archaeological Watching Brief**

The terms of the WSI required an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation (watching brief) to monitor ground breaking works associated with the construction of access roads, borrow pits, temporary lay down areas, and turbine bases and crane stances.

A programme of test-pitting in the location of the borrow pits, to test ground conditions, was monitored prior to the main construction works. Floating roads were not monitored: these comprised Track No 2 between WTG7 and WTG17 and the T9 Spur; Track No 1 between Badlipster and WTG25; part of Track No 1 between WTG20 and WTG25; and part of Track No 2 between WTG21 and WTG22. Two turbines (WTG24, WTG25) were pile construction due to the depth of peat and so were not monitored. Trenches for cabling were not monitored.

Excavation was undertaken using a tracked excavator fitted with a smooth-bladed ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. All discoveries, including soil profiles and subsoil characteristics, were recorded using standard CFA recording forms and digital photography.

### 3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

#### 3.1 Demarcation

Site 5 was demarcated initially with red-and-white barrier tape and then with road pins and blue rope, with a buffer zone of 20m from all visible parts of the site (Fig. 2). Site 63 was demarcated with a buffer zone of 5m. The sites were unaffected by construction works.

#### 3.2 Monitoring of Tree Felling

Tree felling inside the demarcated area of Site 5 was monitored, as was felling around the margins, to prevent any accidental damage to the site (Fig. 3). The site was unaffected by the works.

#### 3.3 Watching Brief

Numbers in bold in the following text refer to contexts, a full list of which is contained in Appendix 1. The contexts (**001-002**) were found throughout the site.

The topsoil throughout the site predominantly consisted of a dark brown silty peat (**001**) with varying depth, ranging between 0.1m and 2m deep; peat in areas of floating roads and piled turbine bases was known to be over 4m deep from probing. Underlying this was natural substrate consisting of mottled grey-blue sandy clay, yellow clay or orange-brown stony clayey silt (**002**) (Fig. 4-8).

A shallow, linear feature (**003**), orientated north-west by south-east, was identified in the north-eastern area of the development whilst conducting ground works associated with the access road leading towards Achairn Cottage (NGR: ND 29892 50082 to ND 29883 50084) (Fig. 9). The feature traversed the entire 10m strip for the access road and continued to the north-east and south-west. A 0.75m slot through the feature revealed it measured 1.1m wide and 0.12m deep, with a flat base. The fill (**004**) consisted of a grey-brown sandy-silt containing rounded-angular stones. The feature ran parallel to an existing farm track and it likely represents the remains of an earlier track.

A large, curving, linear feature (**005**) which continued under the south-west stripped edge of the access track (ND 29959 49972 to ND 29947 49984) measured 15.8m long, 1.6m wide and 0.3m deep (Fig. 10). The fill (**006**) consisted of a brown-grey clay-silt with a high percentage of rounded to sub-angular stones. The feature was located within an improved pasture field and may represent some form of drain.

A small circular feature (**007**) measured 0.43m in diameter and 0.21m deep and was located at the southern edge of borrow pit B (Fig. 11). The fill (**008**) consisted of a dark brown silty-peat, the same as the overlying topsoil. There were no artefacts and this feature is unlikely to be archaeologically significant and may in fact be a stone hole.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during ground works associated with the construction of Camster Wind Farm, Caithness.

Three features were identified consisting of two linear features (a trackway and a drainage feature) and one small, circular pit/stone hole. No artefacts were identified in the various features and these features are not likely to be of any antiquity.

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) and copies of reports will be lodged with the Highland Council Sites and Monument Record.

A summary statement of the results of this watching brief will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 4) and an online OASIS form will be completed.

#### **5. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Mitchell, S. & MacRae, F. 2010 *Camster Wind Farm, nr Wick, Caithness: Archaeological Photographic Survey, Walkover Survey and Desk Based Assessment*. CFA Archaeology Ltd, Unpublished Report No 1797.

## APPENDIX 1: Context Register

Context no.	Trench/Area	Fill of	Description
001		-	Brown-black peat topsoil
002		-	Mixed colour clay silt natural subsoil
003		-	Shallow linear cut
004		003	Fill of (003) – grey-brown sandy silt
005		-	Shallow stone filled cut
006		005	Fill of (005) – Brown-grey clay silt
007		-	Circular pit
008		007	Fill of (007) – Brown-black peat

## APPENDIX 2: Digital Photographic Register

Shot No.	Summary description of subject	Taken from	Conditions
1-4	Site 5 demarcation	Various	Bright
5	General post-excavation shots of main access road	NW	Overcast
6	Post-excavation shot of main access road	NW	Overcast
7	NW-facing section through (003)	NW	Overcast
8	General shot of (003)	W	Overcast
9-10	General shots of (005)	E	Bright
11	NW-facing section through (005)	NW	Bright
12	General shot of soil stripping opposite Lower Achairn showing field drains	N	Overcast
13	General shot of soil stripping opposite Lower Achairn	N	Sunny
14	General shot of soil stripping opposite Lower Achairn	S	Sunny
15	TP1 Oblique view of test pit	NW	Overcast
16	TP2 Oblique view of test pit	NW	Overcast
17	TP3 Stripped of topsoil onto natural substrate	SW	Overcast
18	TP3 Oblique view of test pit	S	Overcast
19	TP4 Oblique view of test pit	NW	Overcast
20	TP7 Oblique view of test pit	N	Overcast
21	TP8 Stripped of topsoil onto natural substrate	S	Overcast
22	TP10 Oblique view of test pit	SW	Overcast
23	TP12 Oblique view of test pit	N	Overcast
24	TP13 Oblique view of test pit	SE	Overcast
25	TP15 Oblique view of test pit	N	Overcast
26	TP20 Oblique view of test pit	NW	Overcast
27	TP21 Oblique view of test pit	S	Overcast
28	TP22 Oblique view of test pit	S	Overcast
29-34	General views of temporary storage area post-excavation	S	Overcast
35	Temporary storage completed	S	Overcast
36-39	General views of borrow pit A, peat removed	Various	Sun/shade
40	T2 hard standing area peat removed	W	Sunny
41	General view T4	W	Low sun/shade
42-46	Site 5 tree machinery working shots and post-clearance with access road	S	Overcast
47	T4 and access road peat removed	S	Sunny
48	T4 peat removed	SW	Sunny
49	T5 base, peat removed	SW	Sunny
50-51	T5 base	SW	Sunny
52	T2 base peat removed	NE	Overcast
53	T1 base and hard standing, general view after turf removal	NW	Rain



54	T1 hard standing, working shots of peat stripping	SW	Overcast
55-56	T1 base working shots of peat removal	NW, W	Rain
57-59	T1 base peat removed	NE, S	Rain
60	T1 track	NW	Sunny
61	T1 track, with examples of large stones within the natural subsoil	S	Overcast
62	Post-excavation shot of test pit 2 at Badlipster	E, N	Overcast
63	Post-excavation of test pit 3	S	Low light
64	Location and working shots of test pit 4	NE	Low light
65	Post-excavation of test pit 4	E	Low light
66-67	Working shot of peat removal at Borrow Pit B	WSW	Low light
68	Location shot of circular pit (007)	W, NW	Rain
69	Pre-excavation shot of pit (007)	Above & W	Rain
70-71	Section photo of pit (007)	W	Rain
72	Working shot of peat removal at Borrow Pit B	E	Overcast
73	View of natural and drain to south of barn at Badlipster	NNE	Overcast
74	Ceramic drain to north of barn at Badlipster	NNE	Overcast
75	Working shot at Badlipster		Overcast
76	View of barn with natural, foundations are visible	NNE	Overcast
77	View of duct and ceramic drain north of barn at Badlipster	NE	Overcast
78	Working shot of Turbine 20	SW	Sunny
79	Working shot of Turbine 21	S	Sunny
80	Working shot of Turbine 20 storage area	SW	Sunny

### APPENDIX 3: Field Drawing Register

Dwg No.	Sheet No.	Scale	Plan / Section	Description/contexts
1	1	1:50	Plan	Plan of linear cut (003)
2	1	1:10	Section	North-west facing section through (003)
3	1	1:100	Plan	Plan of linear cut (005)
4	1	1:10	Section	North-west facing section through (005)
5	2	1:20	Plan	Plan of pit (007) in borrow pit B
6	2	1:10	Section	North-west-facing section through (007)
7	3	1:100	Plan	Area excavated for hardstanding at Badlipster Farm

## APPENDIX 4: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	Highland
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Camster Wind Farm, near Wick, Caithness: Archaeological Watching Brief
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	CAMS
<b>PARISH:</b>	Wick
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Gary Savory
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	CFA Archaeology Ltd
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Archaeological Watching Brief
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	-
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	-
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	-
<b>NGR (2 letters, 10 figures)</b>	ND 25893 47116 (centred)
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	December 2010
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	April 2012
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	N/A
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	<p>A programme of archaeological works was conducted by CFA Archaeology Ltd both prior to and during construction of Camster Wind Farm, Caithness, comprising photographic survey, walkover survey, demarcation of sites, watching brief, and a Heritage Interpretation and Access Plan.</p> <p>A pre-felling walkover survey of the wind farm areas within the forestry plantation and the access route was conducted prior to on site works to inform mitigation measures. The field survey recorded the condition of all known sites of archaeological significance within the area and identified three previously unknown sites. Two sites were subsequently demarcated during construction works.</p> <p>The reputed site of an illicit whisky still was demarcated and forestry felling operations within 20m of the site were monitored to ensure no damage was caused to the site.</p> <p>A photographic survey of all structures comprising Badlipster Farmstead was conducted. A 1950s barn was subsequently demolished to make way for a new control building and ground works were monitored under a watching brief. No archaeological features were recorded.</p> <p>A watching brief was carried out during all ground works outside of the existing forestry plantation. No significant archaeological features were uncovered.</p>
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	N/A
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Natural Power (on behalf of E.ON)
<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 (intended/deposited)</b>	National Monuments Record of Scotland (archive) Highland Council Historic Environment Record (report)



Key

 Old Site Boundary

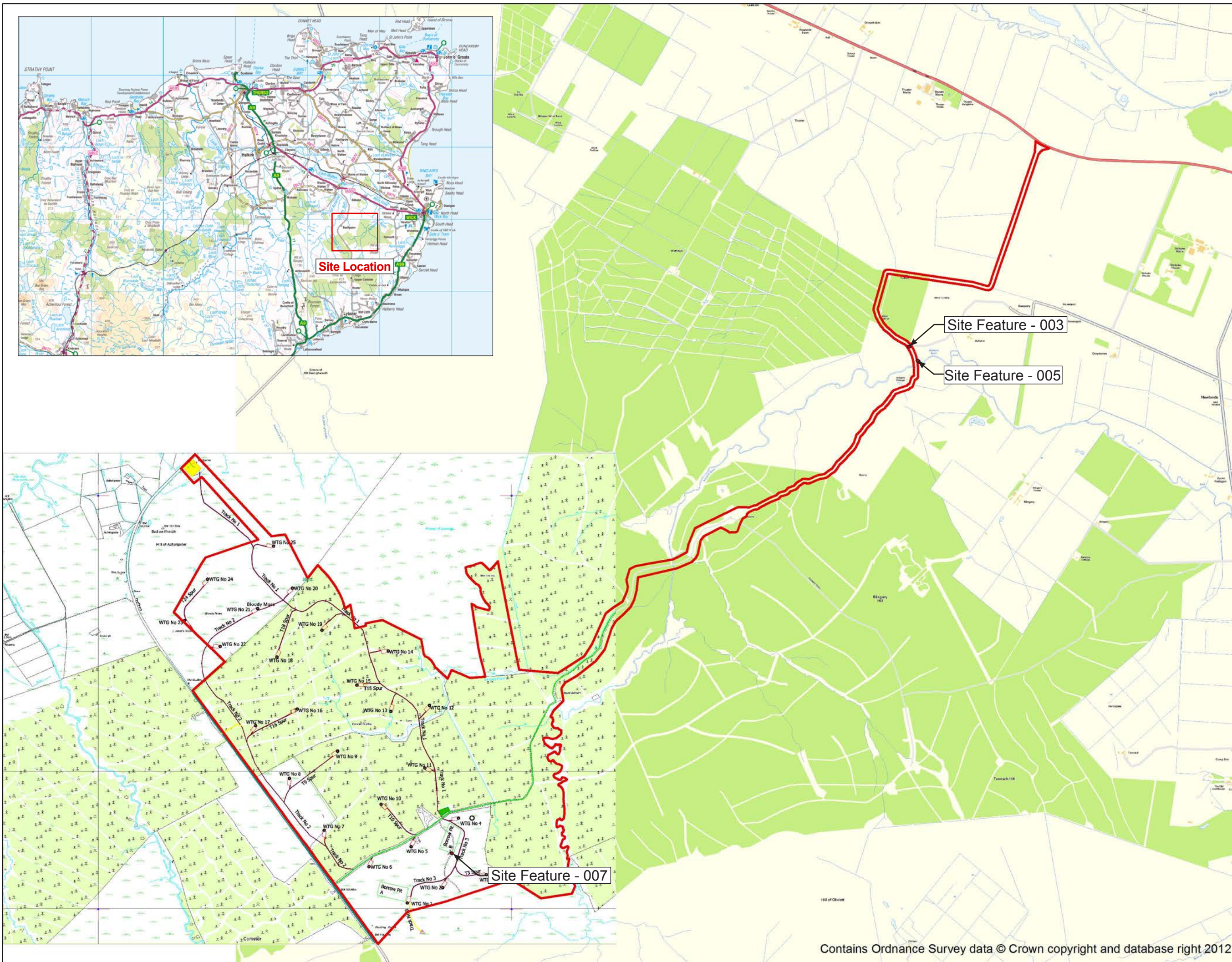








Fig. 2 - Site 5 demarcated



Fig. 3 - Tree felling in the vicinity of Site 5

Fig. No: <b>2-3</b>	Revision: <b>A</b>	Project: <b>Camster Wind Farm, nr Wick, Caithness</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>LW</b>	Report No: <b>2073</b>			

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Fig. 4 - General vie of topsoil stripping along principal access track from Achairn



Fig. 5 - Borrow pit B



Fig. No: <b>4-5</b>	Revision: <b>A</b>	Project: <b>Camster Wind Farm, nr Wick, Caithness</b>		
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Fig. 6 - Turbine 4 base



Fig. 7 - Access track No. 2

Fig. No: <b>6-7</b>	Revision: <b>A</b>	Project: <b>Camster Wind Farm, nr Wick, Caithness</b>		
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Fig. 8 - Topsoil stripping at Badlipster Farm



Fig. 9 - Linear feature (003) showing SE-facing section

Fig. No: <b>8-9</b>	Revision: <b>A</b>	Project: <b>Camster Wind Farm, nr Wick, Caithness</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
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Fig. 10 - Linear feature (005) showing NW-facing section



Fig. 11 - Circular pit/stone hole (007) showing W-facing section

Fig. No: <b>10-11</b>	Revision: <b>A</b>	Project: <b>Camster Wind Farm, nr Wick, Caithness</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
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