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Wathegar Wind Farm, near Wick, Caithness: Archaeological Mitigation

Report No. 2120

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

**Wathegar Wind Farm, near Wick,
Caithness:
Archaeological Mitigation**

Report No. 2120

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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 June and August 2012 at Wathegar Wind Farm, near Wick, Caithness (ND 28040 50875 (centred)) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Wathegar Wind Farm LLP.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated 21 December 2011 was produced by CFA on behalf of Whirlwind Renewables. The WSI was designed to meet the requirements of the Highland Council Historic Environment Team (HCHET).

This report contains site reference numbers, which refer to the gazetteer entries in the 'Cultural Heritage' chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) (see Whirlwind Renewables, 2010, Appendix 11.1).

1.2 Background

Planning permission (Ref; 10/00042/FULCA) has been granted for the erection of five wind turbines and associated infrastructure at Wathegar Wind Farm, approximately 8km west of Wick, Caithness.

The development area consisted of commercial forestry land and rough pasture, some of which has been intensively drained beginning probably in the nineteenth century. There were eight sites within the vicinity of the development area but none of these were directly impacted upon by the development.

In response to the planning application for the wind farm, a programme of archaeological works was agreed with the HCHET.

1.3 Objectives

The archaeological work consisted of two components:

- Fencing-off. Site 6 was to be identified and clearly marked off with high visibility fencing.
- Archaeological Watching Brief. An archaeological watching brief was required during all ground breaking works outwith the existing forestry plantation.

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 outwith the existing forestry plantation including but not limited to access tracks, borrow pits, turbine bases, compounds, and cabling.

All of the access tracks outside of the forestry were floated and so were not monitored. Turbine bases 1, 3 and 4 were monitored along with the locations of the construction compound and electrical control building. The final location for the construction compound was at the alternative construction compound (see Fig. 1). Approximately half of the area had been stripped prior to an archaeologist being present. The remainder of the compound stripping was monitored as per outlined in the WSI

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 6 was a clearance heap recorded at grid reference ND 7638 1370, and was the only site to lay within close proximity to construction elements of the wind farm.

Site 6 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). The site was unaffected by construction works.

3.2 Watching Brief

Numbers in bold in the following text refer to contexts, a full list of which is contained in Appendix 1.

The topsoil throughout the site predominantly consisted of a dark brown sandy clay (**101**) with an average depth of approximately 0.3m. Underlying this was natural subsoil (**100**) consisting of light grey and brown, mottled, compact clay.

A number of linear features were identified at Turbine 1 and 3 and at the electrical control building. These proved to be field drains after further investigation (**102-104, 200-204, 300-303**), the majority of which contained clay pipes. A larger ditch (**300**), aligned SW-NE, was 1m wide and 0.4m deep and did not contain a pipe but is considered to be a drainage ditch of recent date as it contained fragments of broken clay pipe (Fig. 6).

There were no other features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance identified.

4. CONCLUSION

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

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

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 3) and an online OASIS form will be completed.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Whirlwind Renewables, 2010 *Wathegar Wind Farm, Volume 1: Environmental Statement*.

APPENDIX 1: Context Register

Context	Fill of	Trench	Description
100		site	Natural - dense, hard-packed clay, light-grey and brown, mottled
101		site	Topsoil - dark brown sandy clay, 0.3m deep
102		T1	Cut for field drain NNW-SSE
103	102	T1	Fill of (102) dark brown humic clay
104		T1	Fill of (104) dark brown humic clay, waterlogged
200		Elec control	Cut - field drain NNW-SSE
201	200	Elec control	Fill of (200), deep brown sandy clay, mod compaction
202	200	Elec control	Clay field drain with collar - flat edge/rounded edge
203		Elec control	Cut of field drain N-S
204	203	Elec control	Fill of (203), no pipe, pipe sherds in fill
300		T3	Cut - field drain SW-NE, 1m wide
301	300	T3	Fill of (300) - mottled clay fill, stone and drain pipe sherd inclusions
302		T3	Cut - field drain SW/NE, 0.3m wide
303	302	T3	Fill of (302)
304		T3	Plough scores

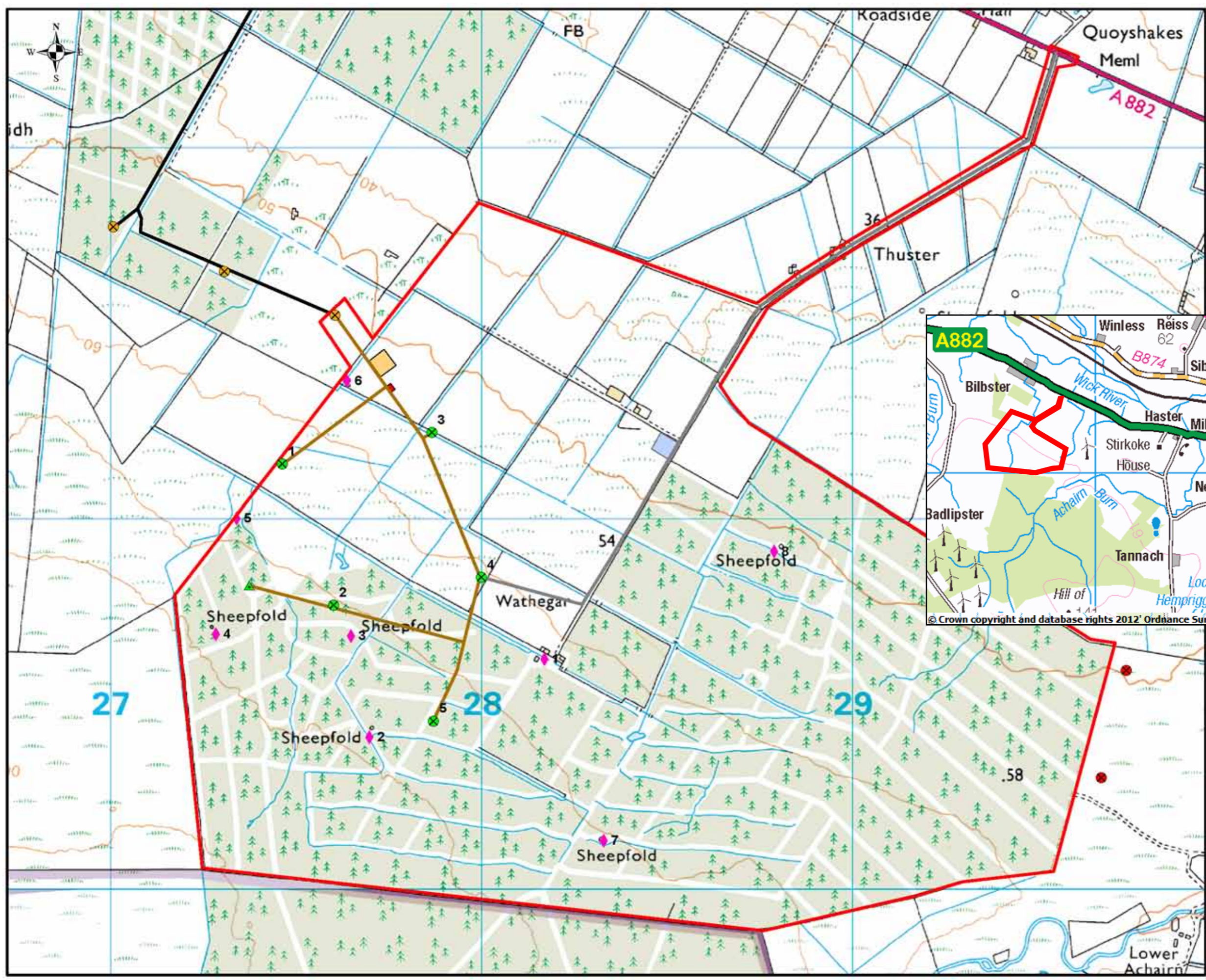
APPENDIX 2: Digital Photographic Register

Shot No.	Summary description of subject	Taken from	Conditions
1	Site 6 with bunting demarcating it	E	Overcast
2	Compound stripped of topsoil	S	Misty
3	Compound stripped of topsoil	S	Misty
4	SE facing section of compound strip	SE	Misty
5	SE facing section of compound strip	SE	Misty
6	Site 6 with marker bunting	E	Overcast
7-9	Overall of turbine 3, pre-stripped	SSW/SW/W	Sunny
10-13	Turbine 3, overall shot, post-strip	NW/N/NE/ENE	Overcast
14-16	Turbine 3, overall shot, post-strip	N/NE/NW	Overcast
17	Field drain (300)	NE	Overcast
18	Field drain (300), looking NE	SW	Overcast
19	Field drain (300). SW facing section	SW	Overcast
20	Field drain (300) NE facing section	NE	Overcast
21	Field drain (300) - section and NE extent	SW	Overcast
22	Field drain (302) looking NE	SW	Overcast
23	Filed drain (302) looking SW	NE	Overcast
24-25	Field drain (302) SW facing section	SW	Overcast
26	Plough scores (304), overall	S	Sunny
27	Plough scores (304), section	S	Sunny
28	Electrical control building showing (200)	SE	Sunny
29	Electrical control building showing (200)	NW	Sunny
30	Detail of (200)	NW	Sunny
31	Overall (200)	SE	Sunny
32	Post-ex (200) showing (202)	NW	Sunny
33	Post-ex (200) showing (202)	NE	Sunny
34	Post-ex (200) showing (202)	SE	Sunny
35	Post-ex (200) showing (202)	SE	Sunny
36	(200) NW facing section	NW	Sunny
37	Electrical control building - showing (203)	SSE	Sunny
38-39	(203) SE facing section	SE	Sunny
40-41	Overall - Electrical control building	S	Sunny
42-43	T1 overall	N/NW	Overcast

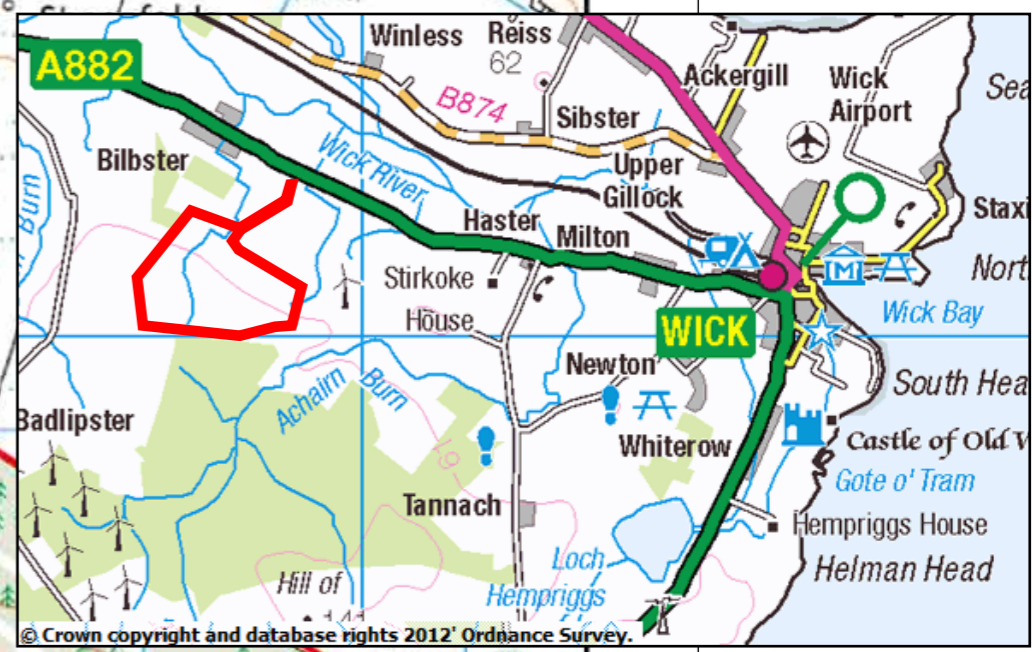
44-45	T1 showing field drain (102)	NNW	Overcast
46	(102) N facing section	NNW	Overcast
47	(102) overall	NNW	Overcast
48	(104) N facing section	NNW	Overcast
49	(104) overall	NNW	Overcast
50-51	T4 overall	SW/SSW	Overcast
52-53	T4 overall	NW/WNW/W	Overcast

APPENDIX 3: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Highland
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Wathegar Windfarm
PROJECT CODE:	WAWF
PARISH:	Wick
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Gary Savory
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	CFA Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	N/A
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 10 figures)	ND 27804 51105
START DATE (this season)	29/06/12
END DATE (this season)	22/08/12
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	N/A
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A programme of archaeological works was carried out at Wathegar Windfarm. Site 6, a clearance heap, was demarcated to prevent accidental damage during construction works. In all areas stripped and monitored, ceramic field drains were noted. There were no features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance identified.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	N/A
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	The Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ
EMAIL ADDRESS:	cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	National Monuments Record of Scotland (archive) Highland Council Historic Environment Record (report)




- Key
- Achairn Turbine
 - Flex Hill Turbine
 - Wathegar Turbine
 - ▲ Permanent Anemometer Mast
 - Site Boundary2
 - Existing Access Tracks
 - New Access Tracks
 - Alternative Access
 - Construction Compound
 - Construction Compound2
 - Electrical Control Building
 - ◆ Archaeological site



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Fig. No: 1 Revision: A

Title: Site Location



Project: Wathegar Wind Farm, near Wick, Caithness. Archaeological Mitigation

Scale at A3: 1:10,000



Client: Wathegar Wind Farm LLP



Fig. 2 - Site 6 demarcated with bunting flags



Fig. 3 - Compound area stripped of topsoil, from south



Fig. 4 - Turbine 1 stripped of topsoil, from north-west

Fig. No: 2-4		Revision: A	Project: Wathegar Wind Farm, near Wick, Caithness. Archaeological Mitigation			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: LW	Checked: LW	Report No: 2120	Client: Wathegar Wind Farm LLP			

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Fig. 5 - Turbine 3 stripped of topsoil, from north



Fig. 6 - Ditch (300), Turbine 3, from south-west

Fig. No: 5-6		Revision: A	Project: Wathegar Wind Farm, near Wick, Caithness. Archaeological Mitigation
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Fig. 7 - Turbine 4 stripped of topsoil, from north-west



Fig. 8 - Electrical control building stripped of topsoil, from south

Fig. No: 7-8		Revision: A	Project: Wathegar Wind Farm, near Wick, Caithness. Archaeological Mitigation			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
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