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Mid Hill Wind Farm Substation, Aberdeenshire: Archaeological Mitigation

Report No. 2144

CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

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Commissioned by	ASH Design + Assessment
Date issued	November 2012
Version	0
OASIS Reference	cfaarcha1-136987
Grid Ref	NO 7658 8605

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

**Mid Hill Wind Farm Substation,
Aberdeenshire:
Archaeological Mitigation**

Report No. 2144

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief, demarcation and post-felling walkover survey undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) between January and May 2012 at Mid Hill Wind Farm Substation, near Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire (NO 7658 8605) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by ASH Design + Assessment on behalf of Scottish and Southern Energy Plc.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated 14 June 2011 was produced by CFA. The WSI was designed to meet the requirements of the Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service (ACAS).

The WSI contains reference numbers, which refer to gazetteer entries in the Cultural Heritage report (CFA report no. 1810 dated September 2010). This WSI should be read in conjunction with that report.

1.2 Background

The Mid Hill Windfarm Grid Connection lies on the south side of Fetteresso Forest, to the west of Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire. The development area consisted of commercial forestry plantation.

The works reported on here comprise the upgrading of the existing access track and the construction of a new electricity substation: the grid connection will be reported on separately.

1.3 Objectives

The archaeological work consisted of three requirements:

1. Fencing-off Sites. Site 4 was clearly identified and marked off with high visibility fencing.
2. Walkover Survey. Survey following felling of forestry at the proposed substation site, with mitigation measures proposed as necessary depending on the findings.
3. Archaeological Watching Brief. A targeted watching brief was required.

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, comprising demarcation, walkover survey and watching brief.

The walkover survey was required following felling and prior to construction. This was designed to identify any previously unrecorded archaeological features that might survive within the previously afforested area and thus be affected by the development. Appropriate mitigation proposals would be brought forward in relation to significant discoveries.

A watching brief was required during road upgrading work in the vicinity of Lady Leys (Site 4).

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 1 is a Scheduled Monument known as Cowie Line, Pill box and earthwork (SM no. 6437, at NO 7646 8735), comprising a well preserved Type-22 pill box situated on a bluff overlooking a bridge over the Cowie Water, and associated earthworks on the southern bank of the Cowie water make the southern bank of the river a substantial obstacle.

Site 4 is a farmstead known as Lady Leys and recorded as a crofter's residence in 1868 (at NO 7644 8718). It survives as two stone built rectangular buildings, an L-shaped steading and a field boundary bank.

Sites 1 and 4 were demarcated with orange netlon fencing along the road edges (Fig. 2-3). The sites were 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 upgrading of the existing access track required very little ground breaking works, limited to a new passing place (Fig. 4). The topsoil was a dark brown clayey loam with an average depth of approximately 0.5m. Underlying this was natural subsoil consisting of orange sandy clay.

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

3.3 Walkover Survey

The substation location (at NO 7981 8597) measured approximately 4ha in extent and lay adjacent to the existing overhead power line.

The felled area had a surface covering in places of brash, mulch and younger felled trees, along with stacked cut timber in places, and the ground had been heavily disturbed by tree furrows (Fig. 5). Tree stumps remained in place and were numerous.

No archaeological sites were identified in the survey area.

4. CONCLUSION

A programme of archaeological works was carried out during works associated with the construction of the Mid Hill Wind Farm Substation, Aberdeenshire. This consisted of demarcation, watching brief and walkover survey.

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

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monument of Scotland (RCAHMS) and copies of reports will be lodged with the Aberdeenshire 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.

APPENDIX 1: Digital Photographic Register

Shot No.	Summary description of subject	Taken from	Conditions
1-2	Site 4 pre-fencing	N, S	Overcast
3	Cowie Line area pre-fencing	S	Overcast
4	Site 4 with fence	N	Sunny
5-8	Cowie Line, general views	Various	Sunny
9-18	Cowie Line, scheduled area fenced	Various	Overcast
19	Compound area at junction by Site 4		Overcast
20	Passing bay pre-exc	N	Overcast
21-22	Passing bay 1	S	Overcast
23	E-facing section of passing bay 1	E	Overcast
24	Deforested area	SW	Overcast
25	Deforested area	NW	Overcast
26	Deforested area	NE	Overcast
26	Deforested area	SE	Bright
28	Deforested area	SW	Bright
29-30	Deforested area	NW	Bright
31	Deforested area	N	Overcast
32	Deforested area	NE	Overcast
33	Deforested area	E	Overcast

APPENDIX 2: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Aberdeenshire
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Mid Hill Wind Farm Substation and Access Track
PROJECT CODE:	STOS
PARISH:	Glenbervie
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)	NO 7658 8605
START DATE (this season)	09-01-12
END DATE (this season)	08-05-12
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	N/A
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A programme of archaeological works was carried out during works associated with the construction of the Mid Hill Wind Farm Substation, Aberdeenshire. This consisted of demarcation, watching brief and walkover survey. There were no features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance identified during the fieldwork.
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)	RCAHMS (archive) Aberdeenshire Council Historic Environment Record (report)

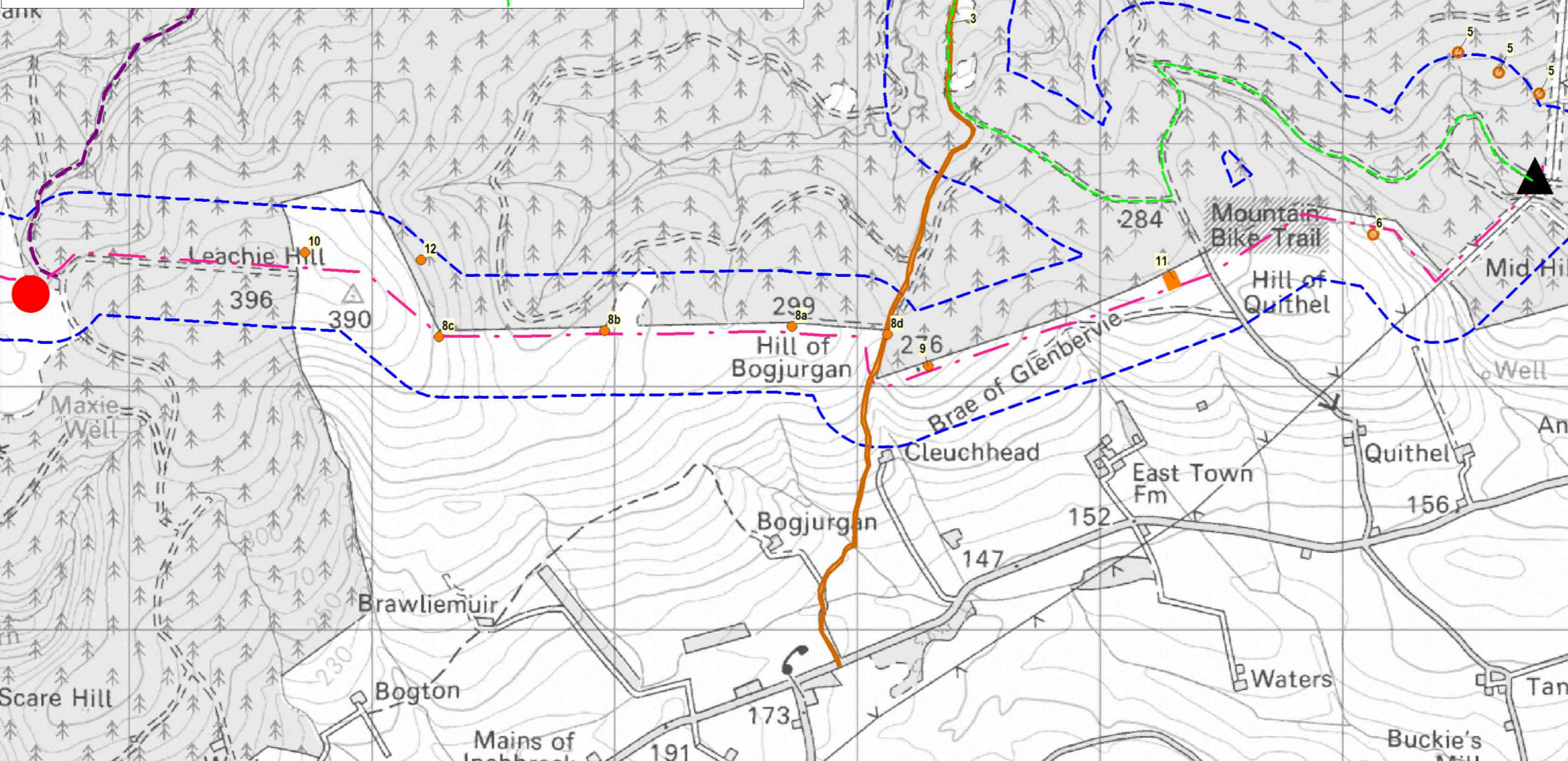


Key:

- Scheduled Monument
- Surveyed Site
- Cultural Heritage Site
- Cultural Heritage Site (Linear)
- Cultural Heritage Site (Area)
- Mid Hill Wind Farm Substation
- Proposed Substation
- Underground Cable
- Mid Hill Wind Farm Access Route
- Proposed Access Route to Substation
- Core Study Area



1:2,000



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Fig. No:	1	Revision:	A
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Title:
Cultural Heritage Sites and Monuments within the 'Core Study Area'

Project:
Mid Hill Wind Farm Grid Connection and Proposed Substation

Scale:
1:19,000 @ A3

Client:
Scottish and Southern Energy

Drawn by:	SW	Report No:	
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Fig 2: Fencing erected at Site 4



Fig 3: Scheduled area fenced, Site 1

Fig. No: 2-3		Revision: A	Project: Mid Hill Wind Farm Substation, Aberdeenshire		
Drawn by: GC	Checked: LW	Report No: 2144	Client: ASH Design + Assessment		
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Fig 4: Road widening works for passing place



Fig 5: General view of substation area post-felling

Fig. No: 4-5		Revision: A	Project: Mid Hill Wind Farm Substation, Aberdeenshire		
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