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**Turbine Bases & Cable Trenches
Parkhouse Farm,
Quothquan, near Biggar,
South Lanarkshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief
Report No. 2139**

 0131 273 4380

 0131 273 4381

 info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

 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

web: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Author	Ian Suddaby MA FSA Scot MifA
Illustrator	Shelly Werner BSc MPhil PhD
Editor	Melanie Johnson MA PhD FSA Scot MifA
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CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Working Methods	3
3.	Archaeological Results	4
4.	Conclusions	6

Appendices

1.	Context Register	7
2.	Digital Photographic Register	7
3.	Drawing Register	9
4.	Samples Register	9
5.	Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry	9

Illustrations (bound at rear)

Fig. 1 Site plan showing the location of the turbines and cable trenches

Fig. 2 Aerial photograph of the Parkhouse Fort ditches

Fig. 3 Plan of ditches 001, 002, 003 in the cable trench

Fig. 4 Inner ditch 001, oblique view from North

Fig. 5 Middle ditch 002 from West

Fig. 6 Outer ditch 003 from North-West

Fig. 7 Sections of ditches 001, 002, 003

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

This report represents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd in October 2012 during the excavation of turbine bases and associated cable trenches at Parkhouse Farm, Quothquan, Biggar, South Lanarkshire (Planning Ref. CL/12/2069, Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Parkhouse Farmers.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated 17 September 2012 was produced by CFA Archaeology Ltd and approved by the West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS) on behalf of the planners.

A prehistoric fort is located on Quothquan Law, some 700m to the south of the turbines; this site is a Scheduled Monument. Parkhouse Farm is situated on top of a prehistoric settlement (RCAHMS Site No. NS93NE 33; Fig. 2). The cable trenches were expected to run across the buried defences of this settlement although the ditches in this area are not visible on the aerial photograph. Collections of prehistoric stone tools (eg. NS93NE 20) are also well known from the vicinity of the farm.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the programme of archaeological works were

- To conduct an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation (watching brief) to monitor all groundbreaking works for the turbines, which includes, but is not limited to, access tracks, cabling, turbine bases, crane pads and other infrastructure.
- 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

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

The removal of soil deposits was carried out using tracked excavators with flat-bladed buckets.

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. The remainder of the site records form Appendices 2-4. Appendix 5 provides the draft of an entry for submission to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland 2013*.

3.2 Turbine Bases

The bases measured 4m by 4m. Topsoil with a depth of 0.2m-0.4m was removed by machine. No archaeological remains were present.

3.3 Cable Trenches

The cable trenches ran from the turbine bases to a shed at Parkhouse Farm. The trenches were around 0.7m wide and were excavated to a general depth of around 0.8m. The trenches were deepened to assess the ditches. Access to the trench was difficult at all times and the narrow width made photography awkward.

Three ditches (Figs. 1, 3-7) were recorded on the northern edge of the farm.

The inner ditch (**001**, Fig. 4) was recorded in a yard adjacent to one of the farm buildings. Full excavation was not possible due to a surface ceramic drain running alongside the shed (top left Fig. 4) and a buried plastic drain pipe (Fig. 4, 7). Cut into boulder clay, the ditch measured over 3.6m in width and was 1.3m deep. Three fills were recorded and the deposits were contaminated with diesel fuel. A basal fill (**008**) was 0.6m deep and consisted of a compact orange-brown clay-silt with frequent stones. Overlying this and with a depth of 0.5m was a light brown firm silty sand with occasional small stones (**009**). The upper fill (**010**) was 0.2m deep and was a mid brown firm silty sand with occasional small stones. The ditch was sealed by the gravel (**004**) forming the yard. There was no visible environmental content and no finds were recovered.

The middle ditch (**002**, Fig. 5, 7) was recorded under a wooden fence separating the yard from the pasture field to the north. Full excavation was not possible due to this fence (top left Fig. 5). Cut into boulder clay, the ditch measured 4.2m in width and was 1.1m deep. Three fills were recorded. A basal fill (**011**) was 0.5m deep and consisted of a compact grey-brown clay-silt with frequent stones. Overlying this and with a depth of 0.2m was a light brown firm silty sand with occasional small stones (**012**). The upper fill (**013**) was 0.4m deep and was a mid brown firm silty sand with occasional small stones. The ditch was sealed by gravel (**004**) within the yard and by topsoil (**016**) within the field. There was no visible environmental content and no finds were recovered.

The outer ditch (**003**, Fig. 6, 7) was recorded 8m to the north of the wooden fence in the pasture field. Cut into shattered basalt bedrock, the ditch measured 3.2m in width and was 1m deep. Three fills were recorded. A basal fill (**005**) was 0.4m deep and consisted of a firm, chemically-stained grey coarse sandy silt with angular pieces of

basalt. Overlying this and with a depth of 0.4m was a light brown firm silty sand with occasional small stones (006). The upper fill (007) was 0.2m deep and was a mid brown firm silty sand with occasional small stones. The ditch was sealed by topsoil (016) with a depth of 0.2m. There was no visible environmental content and no finds were recovered.

There was a gap of 8m between the inner and middle ditch and a gap of 7m between the middle and outer ditch.

No other features, finds or deposits of archaeological interest were recorded during the watching brief.

3.4 Assessment of Carbonised Plant Remains, by Mhairi Hastie

Three bulk soil samples (each 12 litres in volume) were retained from the basal fills of the three ditches uncovered during the watching brief.

Each sample was wet-sieved through a 1mm mesh and any floating material collected in a 250µm. Once dry the 250µm (flot) and 1mm (retent) fractions were sorted for any archaeologically significant material.

A summary of the carbonised material recovered from the samples is provided below in Table 1. No artefacts were recovered from the samples.

3.4.1 Results

The carbonised remains recovered from the samples was very limited with only a small amount of wood charcoal recovered from each sample. The charcoal fragments are small, generally no bigger than 5mm in diameter, are not identifiable to species, and are not suitable for AMS dating.

Table 1. Composition of carbonised plant remains

Sample no	Context no	Sample description	FLOTS			RETENTS	
			Flot vol (ml)	Charcoal	Comments	Sample vol (litres)	Charcoal
1	005	Basal fill of outer ditch (003)	<10		Archaeologically sterile	12	+
2	008	Basal fill of inner ditch (001) – diesel contamination	<10		Archaeologically sterile	12	+
3	011	Basal fill of middle ditch (002)	<10	+		12	+

Key: + = rare, ++ = occasional, +++ = common and ++++ = abundant

3.4.2 Recommendations

No further work is recommended.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The watching brief at Parkhouse Farm was successful in locating the multi-vallate ditches of the fort that appear on the aerial photograph (RCAHMS Site No. NS93NE 33; Fig. 2). That photograph does not show the ditches in the area of the watching brief and so the project has therefore added to the available evidence for this site.

The samples retained from the basal fills were wet-sieved. None of the ditches contained environmental or artefactual information, apart from a very small quantity of small fragments of wood charcoal which were not identifiable to species, and there was little evidence for the source of their fills. All, nevertheless, contained a similar sequence of fills.

Any further work required will be decided by WoSAS on behalf of South Lanarkshire Council planning department.

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

A summary statement of the results of this programme of work will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 5) and submitted online via the OASIS protocol.

APPENDIX 1: Context Register

Context no	Type	Fill of	Description
001	Cut		Cut for inner ditch
002	Cut		Cut for middle ditch
003	Cut		Cut for outer ditch
004	Layer		Gravel yard surface
005	Fill	003	Stained coarse grey sand and silt. Angular basalt cobbles
006	Fill	003	Light brown silty sand & occasional gravel-sized stones
007	Fill	003	Mid brown silty sand & occasional gravel-sized stones
008	Fill	001	Compact gritty yellow brown clay-silt and cobbles. Diesel contamination
009	Fill	001	Light brown silty sand & occasional gravel-sized stones. Diesel contamination
010	Fill	001	Mid brown silty sand & occasional gravel-sized stones
011	Fill	002	Light grey-brown clay-silt and stones
012	Fill	002	Light brown silty sand & occasional gravel-sized stones
013	Fill	002	Mid brown silty sand & occasional gravel-sized stones
014	Cut		Cut for modern plastic drain
015	Fill	014	Mixed modern fill
016	Layer		Topsoil
017			Natural subsoil

APPENDIX 2: Digital Photographic Register

Number	Description	From	Conditions
1	Turbine 1 base topsoil removed	S	Overcast
2	Turbine 1 base topsoil removed	N	Overcast
3	Turbine 2 base topsoil removed with Turbine 1 in the distance	E	Low Sun
4	Turbine 2 base topsoil removed with Turbine 1 in the distance	E	Low sun
5	Turbine 2 base topsoil removed	E	Overcast
6-7	Quothquan Law from Turbine 2	NE	Sunny
8-10	The southern end of the cable trench. Ranging rods mark ditches 001, 002	SW	Overcast
11-12	Ditch 001 section	NW	Overcast
13	Ditch 001 section	N	Overcast
14	Ditch 001 section close-up	NW	Overcast
15	Ditch 002 section	SW	Overcast
16	Ditch 002 section	W	Overcast
17	Ditch 002 section	NW	Overcast
18	Ditch 002 section close-up	NW	Overcast
19	General view of ditch 003 and the cable trench leading into the farm	N	Overcast
20	Ditch 003 section	W	Overcast
21	Ditch 003 section	NW	Overcast
22-23	Ditch 003 section	SW	Overcast
24	General view of ditch 003 and the cable trench leading into the farm	N	Overcast
25-27	General view of the cable trench leading into the farm	W	Overcast

APPENDIX 3: Drawings Register

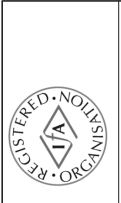
Dwg no.	Sheet no.	Scale	Plan / Section	Description / contexts
1	1	1:40	Plan	The southern end of the cable trench showing ditches 001, 002, 003
2	1	1:20	Section	Ditch 001 and fills 008, 009, 010 with drain 015 and fill 015
3	1	1:20	Section	Ditch 002 and fills 011, 012, 013
4	2	1:20	Section	Ditch 003 and fills 005, 006, 007

APPENDIX 4: Samples Register

Sample No.	Context	Description	Sample Type
1	005	Stained coarse grey sand and silt. Angular basalt cobbles	Bulk 12L
2	008	Compact gritty yellow brown clay-silt and cobbles. Diesel contamination	Bulk 12L
3	011	Light grey-brown clay-silt and stones	Bulk 12L

APPENDIX 5: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	South Lanarkshire
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Parkhouse Farm, Quothquan, near Biggar
PROJECT CODE:	PAHO
PARISH:	Libberton
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Ian Suddaby
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	CFA Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	NS93NE 33
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Fort ditches
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NS 9881 3910
START DATE (this season)	October 2012
END DATE (this season)	October 2012
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	-
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of turbine bases and cable trenches at Parkhouse Farm, Quothquan, near Biggar. Parkhouse Farm lies within a ditch-defined enclosure and three ditches were located and recorded during the watching brief. They measured around 3-4m in width and 1m in depths. No other features were located. The samples retained from the basal fills were wet-sieved. None of the ditches contained environmental or artefactual information, apart from a very small quantity of small fragments of wood charcoal which were not identifiable to species,
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	-
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	-
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Parkhouse Farmers
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	CFA Archaeology Ltd, Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ.
EMAIL ADDRESS:	cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in RCAHMS, Reports lodged with SMR and RCAHMS.



- Key:
- Turbine Base
 - Cable Trench

CFA
ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
The Old Engine House
Eskmills Park, Musselburgh
East Lothian, EH21 7PD
t 0131 273 4380
f 0131 273 4381
e info@cfaarchaeology.co.uk
www.cfaarchaeology.co.uk

Fig. No: 1
Revision: A

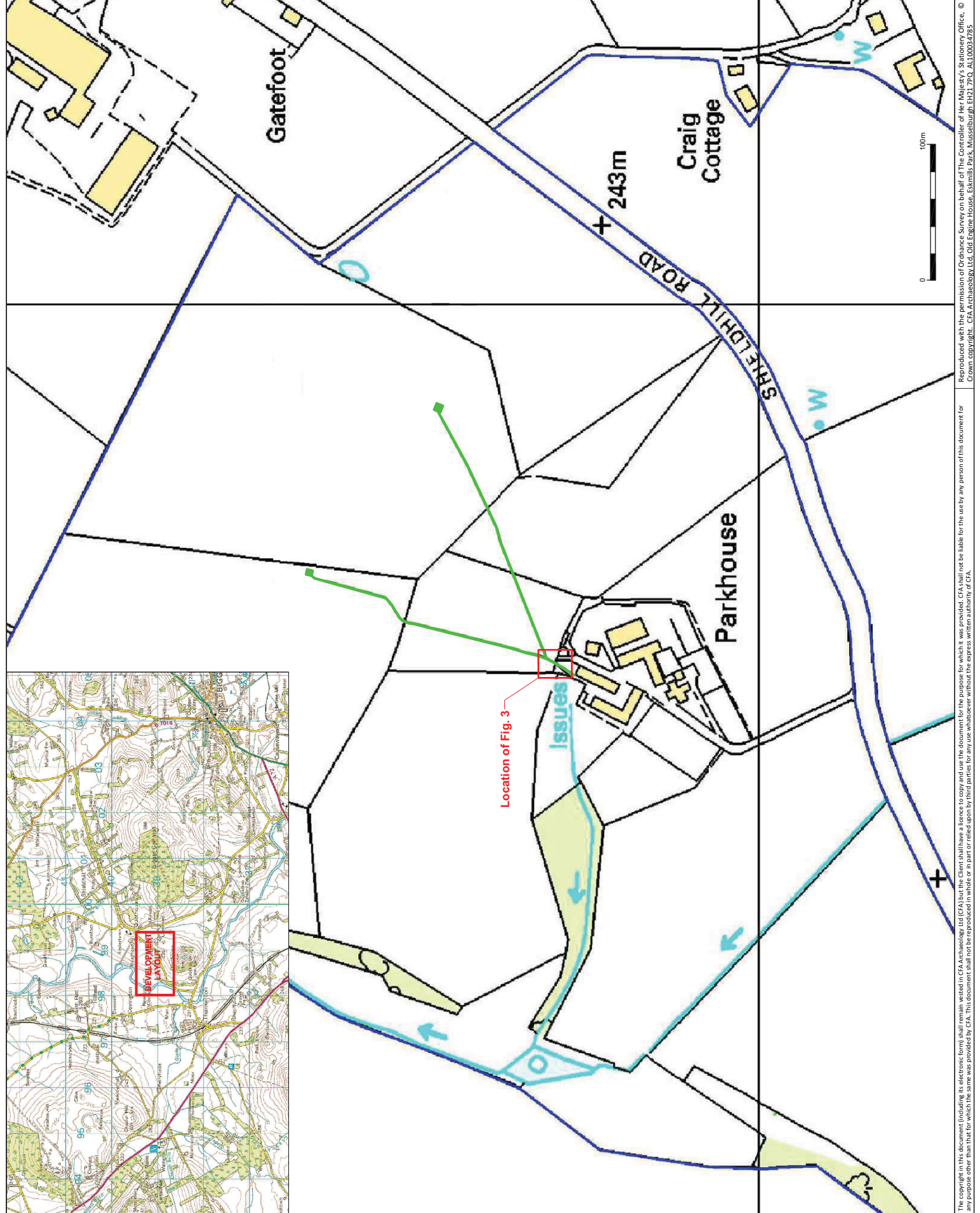
Title:
Site plan showing the location
of the turbines and cable
trenches

Project:
Parkhouse Farm, Quothquan,
Biggar, South Lanarkshire

Client:
Parkhouse Farmers

Scale at A3:
1:2,500

Drawn by:
SW
Checked:
LW
Report No:
2139




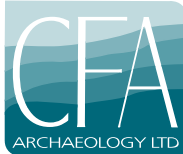
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Fig. 2 - Aerial photograph of the Parkhouse Fort ditches

 Location of ditches found in watching brief

Fig. No: 2		Revision: A	Project: Parkhouse Farm, Quothquan, Biggar, South Lanarkshire		
Drawn by: SW	Checked: LW	Report No: 2139	Client: Parkhouse Farmers		

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Fig. 4 - Inner ditch 001, oblique view from North



Fig. 5 - Middle ditch 002 from West



Fig. 6 - Outer ditch 003 from North-West

Fig. No: 4-6		Revision: A	Project: Parkhouse Farm, Quothquan, Biggar, South Lanarkshire
Drawn by: SW	Checked: LW	Report No: 2139	Client: Parkhouse Farmers

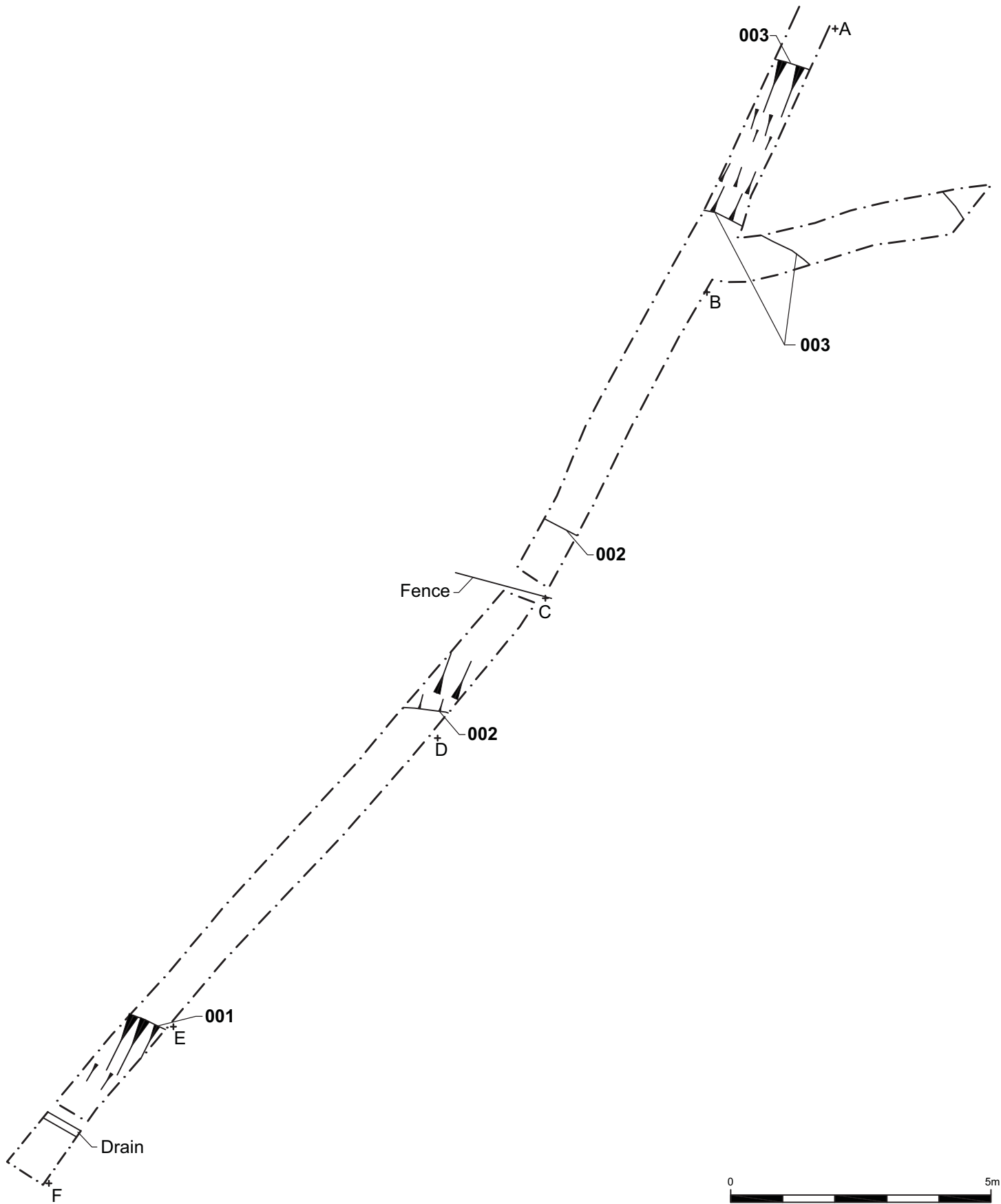


CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
The Old Engine House
Eskmills Park, Musselburgh
East Lothian, Eh21 7PQ


T: 0131 273 4380
F: 0131 273 4381

e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

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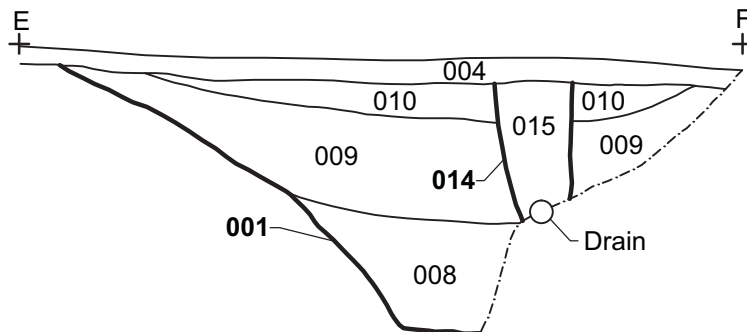
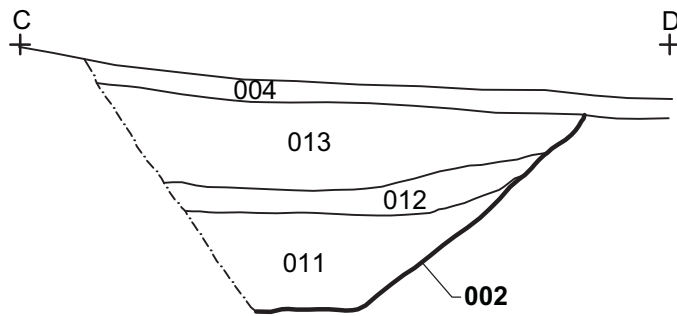
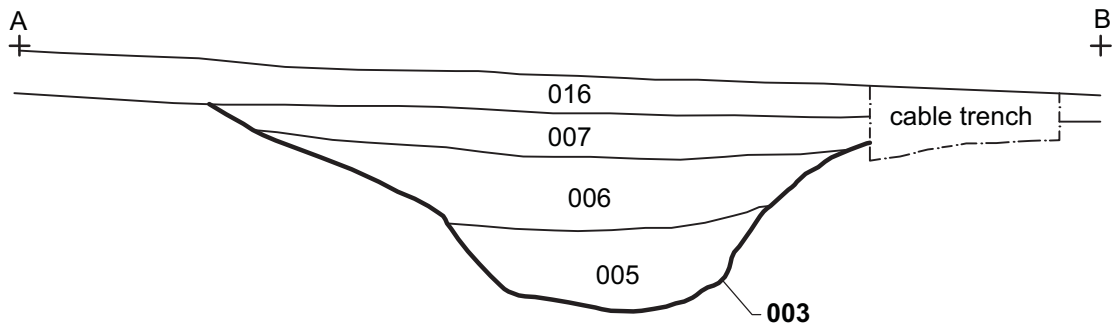
Key:



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1:100

Fig No: 3	Revision: 0	Client: Parkhouse Farmers
Title: Plan of ditches 001, 002, 003 in the cable trench		
Project: Parkhouse Farm, Quothquan, Biggar, South Lanarkshire		

	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: LW	Report No: 2139



Key:	Fig No: 7	Revision: 0	Client: Parkhouse Farmers
	Title: Sections of ditches 001, 002, 003		
Scale at A4: 1:40	Project: Parkhouse Farm, Quothquan, Biggar, South Lanarkshire		
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Drawn by: GC	Checked: LW	Report No: 2139	