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Geophysical Survey

**Meikle Carewe Windfarm,
Near Stonehaven,
Aberdeenshire**


Archaeological Watching Brief

Report No. 2163

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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) from June to November 2012 on the ground breaking works at Meikle Carewe Windfarm, near Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire (NGR: NO 8390 9176 (centred)). The work was commissioned by Renewable Energy Systems UK and Ireland Ltd (RES).

RES has consent to erect a windfarm in a hilly area of upland grazing and extensive areas of heather moorland with its lower flanks surrounded by remnant field systems and settlement of the recent past. Archaeological monitoring work was required due to the site's location within an archaeologically sensitive area.

The watching brief was requested by Mr Bruce Mann, of Aberdeenshire Council Archaeological Service (ACAS) to monitor the major infrastructure elements such as roads, turbine bases, construction compounds, borrow pits, substations and crane pads. Service connections will not need to be monitored if they follow road lines previously found to be sterile of archaeological remains.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated 24th of August 2011 was produced by CFA and agreed by Mr Bruce Mann of ACAS.

1.2 Background

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of trial pits prior to the erection of a number of wind turbines at Meikle Carewe Wind Farm. There were no features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance identified during the watching brief. No upstanding remains were affected. This work was reported under separate cover (Savory 2011).

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the watching brief were:

- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological features or deposits during groundbreaking and to mitigate any impact on those features or deposits as identified.

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.

2.2 Watching Brief

Topsoil and modern overburden was removed by a mechanical excavator equipped with a smooth-bladed bucket. All groundbreaking work was carried out under constant archaeological supervision. All further excavation required to fulfil the objectives of the WSI was carried out by hand.

The stratification of all excavated areas was recorded, whether or not significant archaeological deposits were identified.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

The numbers in bold and parentheses refer to contexts, a list of which is contained in Appendix 1. Three ditches, a trackway and a stone cairn were found during the watching brief, the details of which are discussed below.

The overburden was generally 0.2-1.5m of silty topsoil or peat (**001**), overlying orange-brown clayey-sand natural with stones, light brown sandy clay, or blue-grey boulder clay (**002/113**).

Ditches 003, 106 and 110

Ditch **003** was located within the construction compound between NGR NO 86170 90614 and NO 86192 90586. It was aligned north-west/south-east and measured 40m long, 1.1m wide and 0.2m deep; a section comprising 5% of the length of the feature was excavated. The ditch contained two fills; the lower fill was grey-brown gravel (**004**) which was overlaid by dark brown silty peat (**005**). No finds were found within this feature. The construction compound had been partially stripped previously to form a laydown area for the gas pipeline in the vicinity.

Ditch **106** was aligned north-west to south-east (on the access track between NGR: NO 85117 91466 and NO 85109 91472) and measured approximately 10m long, 1.2m wide and 0.28m deep (Fig. 2). It contained two fills; the lower fill was a thin layer of dark grey silt (**107**) which was overlaid by dark brown sandy gravel (**108**). No finds were found within this feature.

Ditch **110** was aligned north-south (on the access road between the substation and T6, between NGR NO 83 and NO 83) and measured 15.5m long, 1.2m wide and 0.42m deep. It contained two fills: the lower was brown sandy gravel with rounded pebbles and degraded stone inclusions (**111**); above this was dark brown silty peat (**112**). No finds were found within this feature.

Trackway 109

A possible trackway was found within the stripped area for the substation, and this consisted of a deposit of compacted dark grey sandy clay (**109**) with small rounded pebble inclusions lying within a shallow depression measuring 23m long by 4m wide and 0.2m deep. It was aligned north-south and continued beyond the monitored area towards Site 53 to the north, a small farmstead. No finds were associated with this feature.

Cairn

A cairn was located within the wind farm access track at NGR NO 85592 81056 . It was turf-covered, sub-circular in plan and measured 5.6m long (NW-SE), 3.6m wide (NE-SW) and 0.4m high.

The stratigraphy consisted of a 0.08m thick layer of turf (**101**) and below this was the main cairn structure which consisted of angular and sub-angular stones (**102**). The stones were set within brown-grey silty gravel (**103**). Below this was 0.2m of peat (**104**) and natural orange/yellow clay-sand was recorded below the peat. A lens of brown-orange sandy gravel (**105**), measuring 0.6m across and 0.02m deep, was recorded between **103** and **104**; this may be re-deposited natural or degraded stone. No artefacts were found during the investigation of the cairn.

4. CONCLUSION

A watching brief was carried out during the groundworks prior to the erection of a number of wind turbines at Meikle Carewe Wind Farm. Three ditches of unknown date, a trackway and a single cairn were found; no associated dating material was recovered with these features.

Although the cairn lay within Cultural Heritage Site 6, the Hill of Allochie Cairnfield (NMRS no. NO89SE 27), due to the cairn's being located upon peat it is thought to be a clearance cairn of modern date. This was likely to have been deposited during the construction of a haul road for a previous pipeline installation. The possible trackway (**109**) was also probably of post-medieval or recent date and likely relates to a trackway leading to a small farmstead.

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 Aberdeenshire Council Sites and Monuments Record.

A summary statement of the results of this programme of work will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 4) and submitted online via the OASIS protocol.

5. REFERENCES

Savory, G 2011 *Meikle Carewe Windfarm, Near Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire. Archaeological Watching Brief*. CFA Archaeology Ltd, Report No. 1933.

APPENDIX 1: Context Register

Context No.	Description
001	Topsoil
002	Subsoil
003	Cut of possible ditch
004	Lower fill of ditch 003
005	Upper fill of ditch 003
101	Upper turf covering of cairn
102	Cairn material (angular and sub angular granite stones)
103	Brown/grey silty gravel
104	Peat surface underlying cairn
105	Brown/orange sandy gravel
106	Cut of possible ditch
107	Lower fill of ditch 006
108	Upper fill of ditch 006
109	Possible track
110	Cut of ditch
111	Base fill of 110
112	Upper fill of 110
113	Natural geology

APPENDIX 2: Photographic Register

Shot	Description	From	Conditions
134	Pre-stripped location for proposed car park	South	Overcast
135-36	Pre-stripped location for proposed compound	NW	Overcast
137-138	Compound area stripped of vegetation (pre topsoil strip)	S-N	Overcast
139-40	Ditch 003 in compound area W-E	SE	Sunny
141	Compound area partially stripped	SE	Sunny
142-43	Compound area partially stripped W-E	SW	Sunny
144-45	SE facing section through 003, 004 and 005	SE	Sunny
146-48	003 with 1m slot	NW	Sunny
149	Field drain, S edge of existing track in stripped road area	WNW	Overcast
150	7m stripped area for spoil management, natural subsoil not reached	NW	Overcast
151-58	Possible cairn cleared of vegetation	Various	Overcast
159-61	E quadrant of Cairn 1 with upper level of stone exposed	ENE	Overcast
162-63	W quadrant of Cairn 1 with upper level of stones exposed	SW	Overcast
164-65	NW section of W quadrant of Cairn 1	NW	Overcast
166-67	SW facing section of W quadrant of Cairn 1	SW	Overcast
168	SW & SE facing section of E quadrant of Cairn 1	E	Overcast
169-70	SE facing E quadrant of Cairn 1	SE	Overcast
171-72	NW facing section of E quadrant of Cairn 1	NW	Overcast
173-74	NE & SE facing sections of E quadrant of Cairn 1	E	Overcast
175-76	Northern quadrant of Cairn 1	NE	Sunny
177-78	Southern quadrant of Cairn 1	SW	Sunny
179	Plan view of ditch 106 with 1m slot	SE	Overcast
180	SE facing section 106, detail	SE	Overcast
181	NW facing section 106	NW	Overcast
182	Oblique shot of ditch 106 with 1m slot	N	Overcast
183-84	Hard standing and base for T9	S	Overcast
185-89	Possible trackway 109 partially excavated by machine	Various	Overcast
190	Peat depth 1m, T10 turning head	W	Overcast
191	T10 platform partially stripped	E	Overcast
192	T10 access track stripped to natural.	N	Overcast

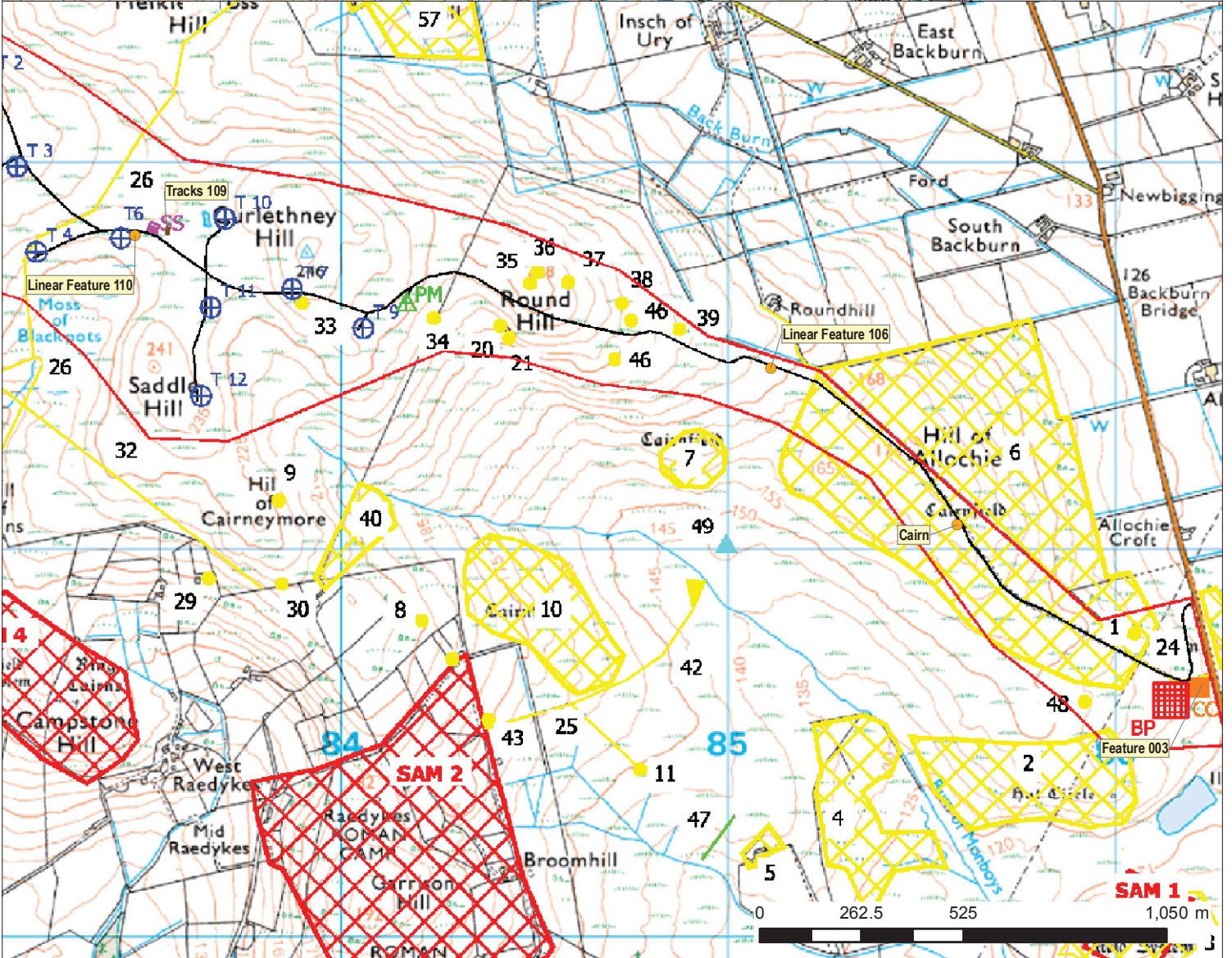
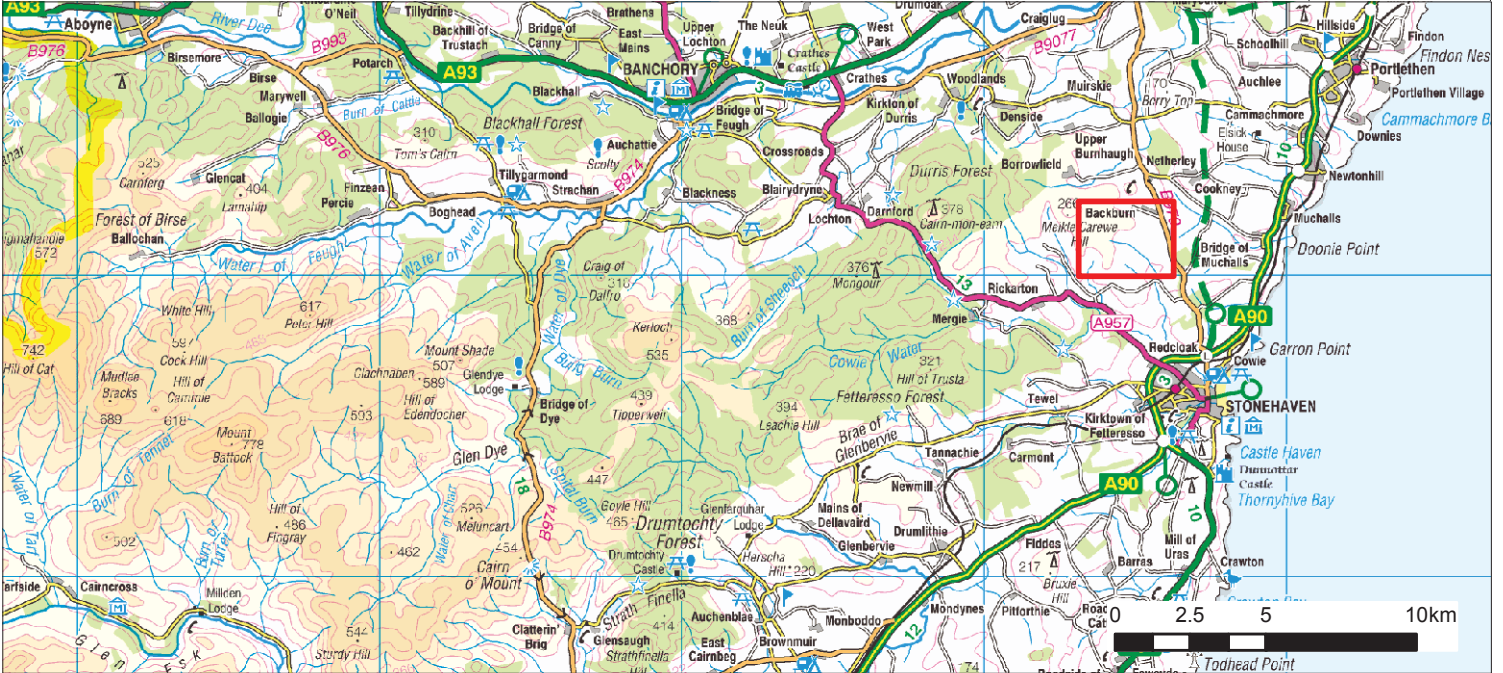
193	T11 base stripped to natural	SE	Sunny
194	Linear feature 110	S	Sunny
195-96	North facing section of 110	N	Sunny
197	South facing section through 110	S	Sunny
198	Access road to T4 with 110	E	Sunny
199	T3 stripped to natural	S	Overcast
200	T4 base and hardstand stripped to natural	N	Overcast
201	Access road to T5 partially finished	W	Sunny
202	Access road to T2 partially finished	SE	Low light
203	Access road to T2	E	Overcast
204	T1 base partially stripped	W	Overcast
205	T8 looking back towards T5, base partially stripped	NW	Overcast
206	Access road looking from T1	W	Overcast
207	T2 partially stripped	NE	Overcast
208	T1 Base partially stripped	NW	Overcast

APPENDIX 3: Field Drawings

Number	Sheet	Description	Plan/Sec	Scale
1	1	Plan of compound and ditch 003	Plan	1:200
2	1	SE facing section through ditch 003	Sec	1:20
3	2	SW facing section of western quadrant of cairn (102)	Sec	1:20
4	2	NW facing section of western quadrant of cairn (102)	Sec	1:20
5	2	SE facing section of eastern quadrant of cairn (102)	Sec	1:20
6	2	NE facing section of eastern quadrant of cairn (102)	Sec	1:20
7	3	Plan of cairn (102)	Plan	1:20
8	4	SE facing section of linear feature (106)	Sec	1:10
9	4	Sketch plan of linear feature (106)	Plan	
10	5	S facing section of linear feature (109)	Sec	1:20
11	5	Plan with location of linear feature (109)	Plan	1:100
12	5	N facing section of liner feature (110)	Sec	1:20

APPENDIX 4: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Aberdeenshire
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Meikle Carewe Windfarm, Near Stonehaven
PROJECT CODE:	REME
PARISH:	Fetteresso, Stonehaven
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):	Cairn, ditch
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	N/A
NGR (2 letters, 10 figures)	NO 8390 9176
START DATE (this season)	July 2011
END DATE (this season)	November 2012
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	N/A
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A programme of watching briefs was carried out at Meikle Carewe Wind Farm by CFA Archaeology Ltd. This consisted of a watching brief during the excavation of trial pits prior to construction; there were no features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance identified and no upstanding remains were affected. Further watching briefs were undertaken to monitor ground works during the construction of the wind farm. Three undated linear ditches, a possible trackway, and a single stone clearance cairn within the Hill of Allochie cairnfield were recorded during this investigation.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	N/A
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	N/A
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Renewable Energy Systems UK and Ireland Ltd (RES)
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	The Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ
EMAIL ADDRESS:	cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland Aberdeenshire Council Sites and Monuments Record



Key:	Site Boundary
	Archaeological Feature

Fig. No:	1	Revision:		Client:	Renewable Energy Systems UK and Ireland Ltd
Title:	Site Location				

Scale at A3:
1:16,000

Project:
Meikle Carewe Wind Farm

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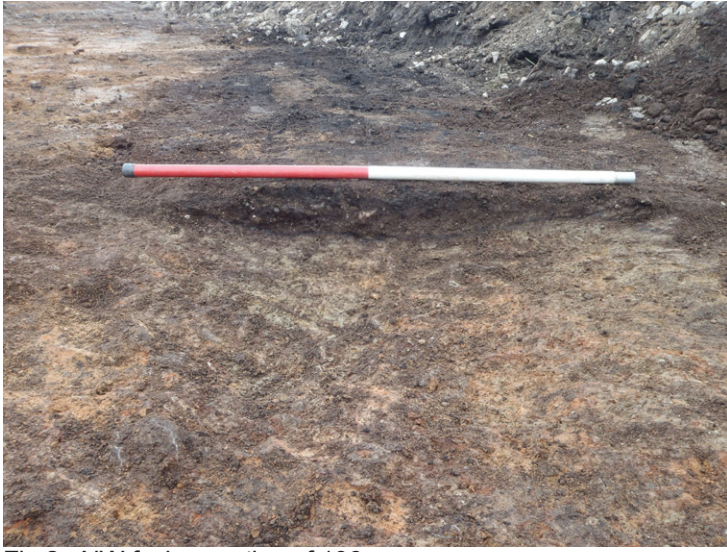


Fig 2 - NW-facing section of 106





Fig 3 - N-facing section of 110



Fig 4 - South quadrant of cairn



Fig 5 - NE-SE facing section of cairn

Fig. No: 2-5		Revision: A	Project: Meikle Carewe Wind Farm
Drawn by: SW	Checked: LW	Report No.: 2163	Client: Renewable Energy Systems UK and Ireland Ltd
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