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**Halkshill Hydro Scheme
Largs, North Ayrshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

Report No. 3403

 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

Authors	Gary Savory MA
Illustrator	Shelly Werner BA MPhil PhD MCifA
Editor	Melanie Johnson MA PhD MCifA
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Halkshill Hydro Scheme Largs, North Ayrshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

Report No. 3403

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief and evaluation undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) between November 2015 and February 2016 for a hydro scheme at Halkshill, Largs, North Ayrshire (NGR: NS 23451 59633, centred) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by MNV Consulting Ltd (MNV).

A Written Scheme of Investigations (WSI) dated 08 October 2015 was produced by CFA on behalf of MNV. This WSI was designed to meet the requirements of the West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS) on behalf of North Ayrshire Council. Addendum 1, dated 11 January 2016, was produced to cover the evaluation of an enclosure (Site 30) which would be impacted upon by the development, which was also approved by WoSAS.

The report contains reference numbers which refer to gazetteer entries in the archaeological appraisal reports (Johnson 2015a and 2015b).

1.2 Background

Planning permission (Refs. N/15/00295/PP and N/15/00167/PP) has been granted for the Greeto and Gogo Hydro Schemes (collectively known as Halkshill Hydro Scheme). The hydro scheme site lies to the east of Halkshill, Largs, on the Gogo Burn and Greeto Burn, with associated access roads from Blairpark. The scheme includes an intake structure, pipeline, a powerhouse, and associated access tracks. The planning permission was subject to an archaeological condition.

The development area is currently moorland which has been subject to very little development. The upland environment consists of a rolling topography with deeply incised, steep sided gullies. The lower catchment area consists of broader gullies with remnants of native woodland in the more sheltered areas. The majority of the development area is used as rough pasture.

1.3 Objectives

The project's aims and objectives were:

- **Fencing-off Sites.** Protection of Sites 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 29-31 by means of demarcation using high visibility fencing.
- **Archaeological Watching Brief.** A watching brief was maintained during topsoil stripping works in specified locations.

In addition, relocation of the turbine house for the Gogo outfall resulted in a direct impact an enclosure (Site 30) (covered by Addendum 1). Subsequently, an evaluation of Site 30 was undertaken prior to its controlled removal under a watching brief. In addition, a photographic survey was carried out prior to the commencement of works at Greeto Bridge in order to provide a baseline record.

2. WORKING METHODS

2.1 General

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

Topsoil was removed using a tracked excavator equipped with a smooth-bladed ditching bucket. All ground-breaking works were carried out under constant archaeological supervision.

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.

2.2 Site Demarcation

The following sites were demarcated by the client prior to the commencement of works:

Site no.	Description	Grid reference
2	Field wall	NS 22372 59185
3	Bridge	NS 22893 59764
4	Lime mortar bonded wall	NS22893 59764
5	Circular pond	NS 24002 59642
13	Quarry	NS 24582 59178
29	Small dwelling/enclosure	NS 22898 59675
30	Sub-rectangular enclosure	NS 22971 59404
31	Possible field boundary	NS 21662 59402

The sites were demarcated using high visibility netlon fencing and wooden posts. Each site was visited and checked by an archaeologist after the completion of the demarcation.

2.3 Photographic Survey

A photographic survey of Greeto Bridge (Site 3), was conducted prior to groundbreaking works associated with the construction of two concrete plinths over which a new bridge would be constructed. The original structure of the bridge, including the wooden and metal deck, remains in situ below the new bridge.

2.4 Watching Brief

A targeted watching brief was conducted during groundbreaking activities for the powerhouses, intakes/outfalls, pipeline trenches, construction of new permanent roads (blue on Fig. 1) and construction of any temporary roads (green on Fig. 1) which required topsoil removal down to natural, but which was to exclude:

- Upgrading of existing tracks (red on Fig. 1)
- Where access tracks (temporary or permanent) were built as floating roads

- Where access tracks or pipeline routes traversed very steep ground (access track to the outfall on the Greeto Water; pipeline and track routes upslope on the north side of the Gogo Glen)
- Where the ground was previously afforested (the west end of the Gogo Glen)

Otherwise, all other ground breaking works associated with the development were monitored (see Fig. 1 for watching brief areas).

2.5 Evaluation

A programme of archaeological evaluation was carried out on Site 30, identified as lying within the access road and hardstanding area for the Greeto Water turbine house and outfall. This was followed by a watching brief during the controlled removal of the remaining parts of Site 30.

Two trenches forming a cross shape were hand excavated, running from the outside edge to the outside edge of the walls of the enclosure (Site 30). The sections through the walls were hand excavated and, initially, the sections of trench through the interior were to be machine excavated. However, access by machine was severely limited and the entirety of the trenches were hand excavated.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

3.1 General

Numbers in bold and parentheses refer to contexts, which are listed in Appendix 2.

3.2 Photographic Survey

The existing Greeto Bridge (Site 3) required to be replaced by a new bridge, which would 'fly over' the existing bridge on new concrete plinths. A length of wall (Site 4) was recorded adjacent to the bridge on the west side.

Greeto Bridge consists of abutments of drystone construction with mortar reinforcing in places (Fig. 3-4). Some later brick repairs are apparent within the western abutment. The abutments are 4.1m wide with the deck roughly 3.6m above the river below. The bridge deck is made of iron beams surfaced with wooden slats and is 2.7m wide; the remains of a hand rail are present as upright iron posts with the remains of wooden rails in places. There is no evidence of any arched stonework indicating an earlier stone span.

Site 4 was a section of rough lime mortar bonded masonry incorporated into a drystone wall located on the south-west side of the bridge (Fig. 5). The date and function of the bonded masonry is unclear. It measured 2m in length by 1.5m in height. The wall was demolished under watching brief conditions as part of the new bridge works.

The original structure of the bridge, including the stone abutments and the wood and metal deck and railings, will remain in situ below the new bridge.

3.3 Watching Brief

The watching brief areas are shown on Fig. 1. Areas monitored included access roads from Blairpark to Rye Plantation, a borrow pit at Paton's Hill, a borrow pit near Greeto Bridge, ground breaking works to either side of Greeto Bridge (Fig. 15), access roads along the Greeto Water to Packman's Knowe and to the outfall on the Greeto Water (Fig. 13), and access roads between Greeto Bridge and Paton's Hill (Fig. 14).

Topsoil was generally thin (up to 0.4m) in the steeper areas around the Greeto/Gogo Waters, with some areas of peat (up to 1m) on the moorland, over yellow-brown clay natural which contained frequent stones and bedrock outcrops.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were uncovered during the watching brief. Occasional modern drainage ditches were noted across the moorland section.

3.4 Evaluation

Site 30 was a small sub-rectangular drystone enclosure close to the confluence of the Greeto Water and Gogo Water at NS 22963 59411 (centred) (Fig. 2), which would be impacted upon by the construction works for the turbine house and outfall. It was

visible as low, grass-covered banks with stones and boulders visible, with possible entrances in the NE and SE corners (Fig. 6-7). It measured 10m by 9.5m (NW-SE) at its widest, enclosing an area measuring 7.5m by 5.8m. It appeared to utilise large boulders, likely from rock-falls, within its circuit.

Two 1m wide trenches were hand excavated across the enclosure forming a cross (Fig. 7, 11). The two trenches were aligned north-west by south-east and transversely. Each trench was initially excavated as two slots across the opposing walls, which were then joined to form a continuous trench. Therefore, Slots 1 and 3 formed the north-east by south-west trench and Slots 2 and 4 formed the north-west by south-east trench. A fifth slot (Slot 5) investigated a possible north-eastern entrance.

The walls (**013-016**) were constructed from medium to large rounded and sub-angular boulders which were overlying a reddish-brown/grey sandy silt (**011**) with no discernible foundation trenches (Figs. 8-9, 12). The walls ranged in width from 1.0m to 1.6m and survived to heights ranging from 0.4m to 0.5m.

A possible north-west entrance was identified in Slot 5 (Fig. 10) which measured approximately 0.8m wide. A trench was also placed to investigate a possible entrance on the north-east but it turned out to just be a lower spread of stones beneath the turf. No internal features were identified within the trenches.

The individual wall sections are described below:

Feature	Slot	Description
Wall (013)	1	Slot 1 identified the NW-SE aligned wall (013). Wall was 1.4m wide (max) and survived to a maximum height of 0.45m.
Wall (014)	2	Slot 2 identified the NE-SW aligned wall (014). The wall measured 1.0 m wide (max) and survived to a height of approximately 0.5m
Wall (015)	3	Slot 3 identified the NW-SE aligned wall. It measured 1.3m wide and survived to a height of 0.4m
Wall (016)	4	Slot 4 identified the NE-SW aligned wall. It measured c.1.6m wide and survived to a height of 0.45m
Entrance	5	A possible north-eastern entrance was investigated in Slot 5. The entrance measured 0.8m wide

The walls of the structure were built on top of **011**, a deposit of shattered angular stone/scree likely deposited through movement of loose material from the steep slopes above, and **010**, a dark brown silty clay subsoil. The structure was covered with topsoil and turf (**017**).

A subsequent watching brief at Site 30 during the removal of the remaining walls did not identify any other archaeological remains associated with the enclosure and merely verified the findings of the initial evaluation.

4. CONCLUSIONS

A targeted archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Halkshill Hydro Scheme, Largs, North Ayrshire during groundworks associated with construction. A number of sites were demarcated by the contractor prior to the commencement of work. The sites were subsequently checked by an archaeologist after completion of the demarcation. A photographic survey of the existing Greeto Bridge was conducted prior to the commencement of works in the vicinity of the bridge. An evaluation was carried out at Site 30, in advance of the construction of the turbine house, to record the feature prior to its removal. The evaluation verified the structure was a drystone stock enclosure, probably a sheepfold.

CFA does not recommend any further work in relation to this development. However, it is understood that the decision regarding the requirement for further work lies with the council as advised by WoSAS.

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with Historic Environment Scotland and copies of reports will be lodged with the North Ayrshire Historic Environment Record.

On completion of the programme of archaeological works a summary statement will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 4) and will also be reported through *OASIS Scotland*.

5. REFERENCES

Johnson, R 2015a *Gogo Hydropower Scheme. Archaeology Report*. MNV Consulting Ltd.

Johnson, R 2015b *Greeto Hydropower Scheme. Archaeology Report*. MNV Consulting Ltd.

APPENDIX 1: Photographic Register

Shot No.	Summary description of subject	Taken from
1	View of terrain on Greeto Burn spur	S
2	View of terrain on Greeto Burn spur	S
3	Working shot above Gogo Burn, penstock track	E
4	Working shot above Gogo Burn, penstock track	NE
5	Working shot of rock quarry topsoil strip, Gogo Burn	S
6	Working shot of rock quarry topsoil strip, Gogo Burn	S
7	General working shot	E
8	Working shot above Gogo Burn, Penstock track	E
9	Pre-excavation view of Dry-stone enclosure	NE
10	Pre-excavation view of Dry-stone enclosure	NE
11	Working shot above Gogo Burn, Penstock track	E
12	Dry-stone enclosure in landscape	NE
13	Dry-stone enclosure in landscape	NE
14	Dry-stone enclosure in landscape	NE
15	Dry-stone enclosure in landscape	NE
16	Dry-stone enclosure in landscape	NE
17	Working shot, combined penstock track and road	E
18	Working shot, combined penstock track and road	E
19	Working shot, combined penstock track and road	E
20	Detail of drainage ditch	S
21	Working shot, combined penstock track and road	W
22	Working shot, combined penstock track and road	W
23	Working shot, road above Gogo Burn	W
24	Working shot, road above Gogo Burn	W
25	View towards steep approach to Greeto Bridge	SW
26	Greeto Bridge and environs	SW
27	Greeto Bridge and environs	SW
28	Greeto Bridge and environs	N
29	Greeto Bridge and environs	N
30	Greeto Bridge and environs	N
31	Greeto Bridge and environs	NE
32	Hillside east of Greeto Bridge	W
33	Hillside east of Greeto Bridge	E
34	Hillside east of Greeto Bridge	E
35	Working shot above Greeto bridge	W
36	Bridge and bank east of Greet Bridge	S
37	Pre-excavation view of Dry-stone enclosure	NE
38	Pre-excavation view of Dry-stone enclosure	N
39	General shots of Greeto Bridge (Site 2)	Various
40	General shots of Greeto Bridge (Site 2)	Various
41	General shots of Greeto Bridge (Site 2)	Various
42	General shots of Greeto Bridge (Site 2)	Various
43	General shots of Greeto Bridge (Site 2)	Various
44	General shots of Greeto Bridge (Site 2)	Various
45	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
46	Quarry (Site 13)	Various
47	Quarry (Site 13)	Various
48	Quarry (Site 13)	Various
49	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
50	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
51	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
52	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
53	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
54	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various

Shot No.	Summary description of subject	Taken from
55	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
56	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
57	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
58	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
59	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
60	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
61	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
62	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
63	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
64	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
65	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
66	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
67	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
68	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
69	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
70	Greeto bridge prior to construction work	Various
71	Greeto Bridge, pre-construction	WNW
72	Greeto Bridge, pre-construction	WNW
73	Greeto Bridge, pre-construction	WNW
74	Greeto Bridge, pre-construction	WNW
75	Eastern half of Greeto Bridge	SE and NE
76	Eastern half of Greeto Bridge	SE and NE
77	Western half of Greeto Bridge	SW
78	Partial dismantling of Greeto Bridge	Various
79	Partial dismantling of Greeto Bridge	Various
80	Partial dismantling of Greeto Bridge	Various
81	Partial dismantling of Greeto Bridge	Various
82	Partial dismantling of Greeto Bridge	Various
83	Partial dismantling of Greeto Bridge	Various
84	Partial dismantling of Greeto Bridge	Various
85	Partial dismantling of Greeto Bridge	Various
86	Partial dismantling of Greeto Bridge	Various
87	Partial dismantling of Greeto Bridge	Various
88	Partial dismantling of Greeto Bridge	Various
89	Site 30 with work in close proximity	Various
90	Site 30 with work in close proximity	Various
91	Site 30 with work in close proximity	Various
92	Site 30 with work in close proximity	Various
93	Site 30 with work in close proximity	Various
94	Site 30 with work in close proximity	Various
95	General views of site 30 pre-excavation	Various
96	General views of site 30 pre-excavation	Various
97	General views of site 30 pre-excavation	Various
98	General views of site 30 pre-excavation	Various
99	General views of site 30 pre-excavation	Various
100	Slot 2 post-excavation	SSE
101	Slot 2 post-excavation	WSW
102	Slot 2 post-excavation	WNW
103	Slot 2 post-excavation	ENE
104	Slot 2 post-excavation	ESE
105	Slot 3 post-excavation	ENE
106	Slot 3 post-excavation	NNW
107	Slot 3 post-excavation	WSW
108	Slot 3 post-excavation	SSE
109	Slot 3 post-excavation	NW
110	Slot 1 post-excavation	WSW
111	Slot 1 post-excavation	ENE

Shot No.	Summary description of subject	Taken from
112	Slot 1 post-excavation	SE
113	Slot 1 post-excavation	N
114	Slot 1 post-excavation	SSE
115	Working shot from above	NW
116	Slot 4 post-excavation	SSE
117	Slot 4 post-excavation	SSE
118	Slot 4 post-excavation	NNW
119	Slot 4 post-excavation	NNW
120	Excavated trenches from NW	NW
121	Excavated trenches from NE	NE
122	Excavated trenches from NE	NE
123	Excavated trenches from SW	SW
124	Excavated trenches from SW	SW
125	Rubble spread west of Slot 1	Above, N
126	Excavated trenches from SE	SE
127	Excavated trenches from NW	NW
128	Excavated trenches from NW	NW
129	Slot 5/possible entrance post-excavation	WNW
130	Slot 3 section (west end) post-excavation	SE
131	Slot 3 section (west end) post-excavation	SE
132	Slot 3 section (east end) post-excavation	SE
133	Slot 3 section (east end) post-excavation	SE
134	Slot 2 SW-facing section	Various
135	Slot 2 SW-facing section	Various
136	Slot 2 SW-facing section	Various
137	Slot 2 SW-facing section	Various
138	Slot 2 SW-facing section	Various
139	Slot 2 SW-facing section	Various
140	Slot 2 SW-facing section	Various
141	Slot 2 NE-facing section	Various
142	Slot 2 NE-facing section	Various
143	Slot 2 NE-facing section	Various
144	Slot 2 NE-facing section	Various
145	Slot 4 SW-facing section	Various
146	Slot 4 SW-facing section	Various
147	Slot 4 SW-facing section	Various
148	Slot 1 SE-facing section	Various
149	Slot 1 SE-facing section	Various
150	Slot 1 SE-facing section	Various
151	Slot 1 SE-facing section	Various
152	Slot 1 SE-facing section	Various
153	Removal of Site 30 under watching brief	Various
154	Removal of Site 30 under watching brief	Various
155	Removal of Site 30 under watching brief	Various
156	Removal of Site 30 under watching brief	Various
157	Removal of Site 30 under watching brief	Various
158	Removal of Site 30 under watching brief	Various
159	Removal of Site 30 under watching brief	Various
160-189	General views of terrain along Gogo Glen to Greeto	Various

APPENDIX 2: Context Register

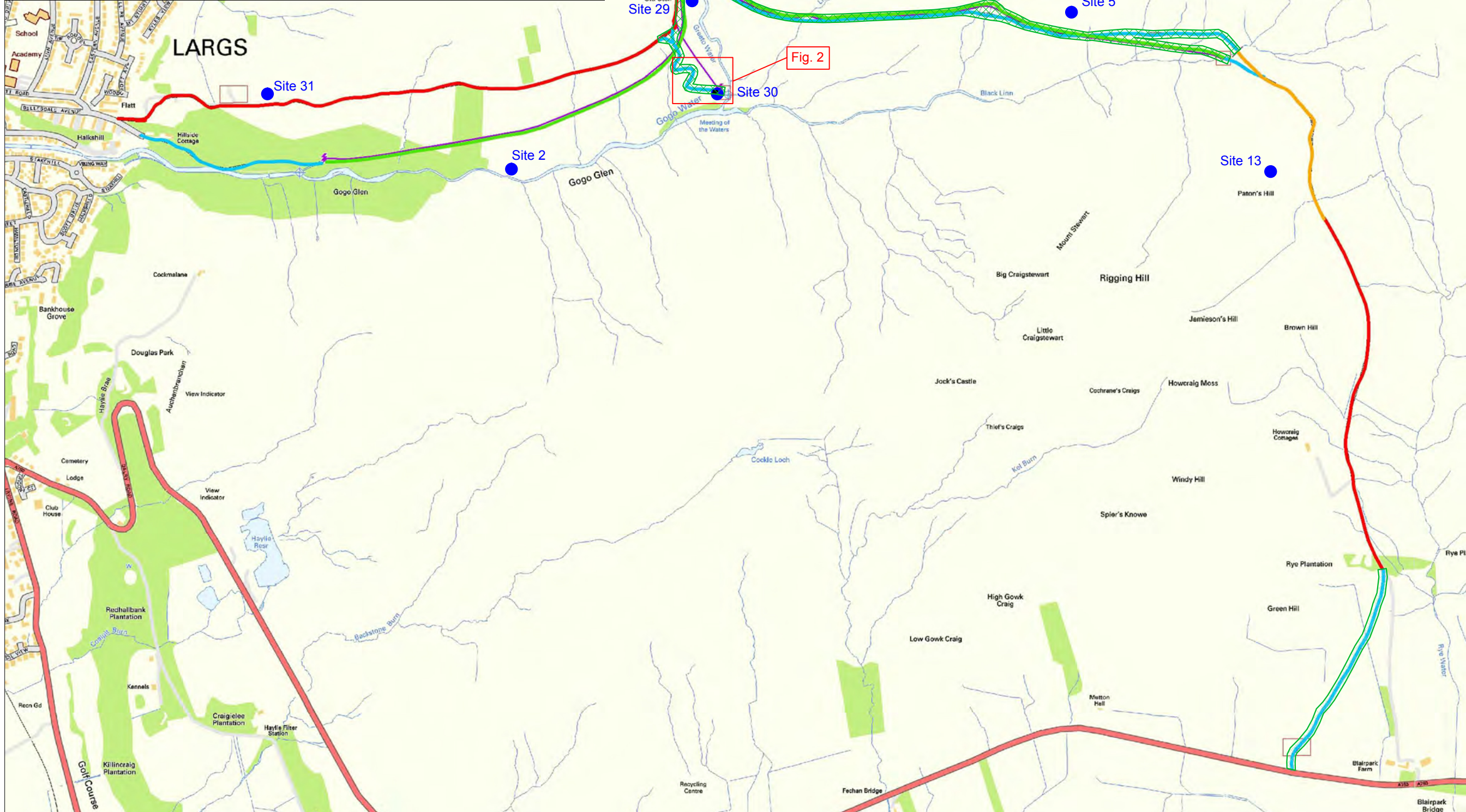
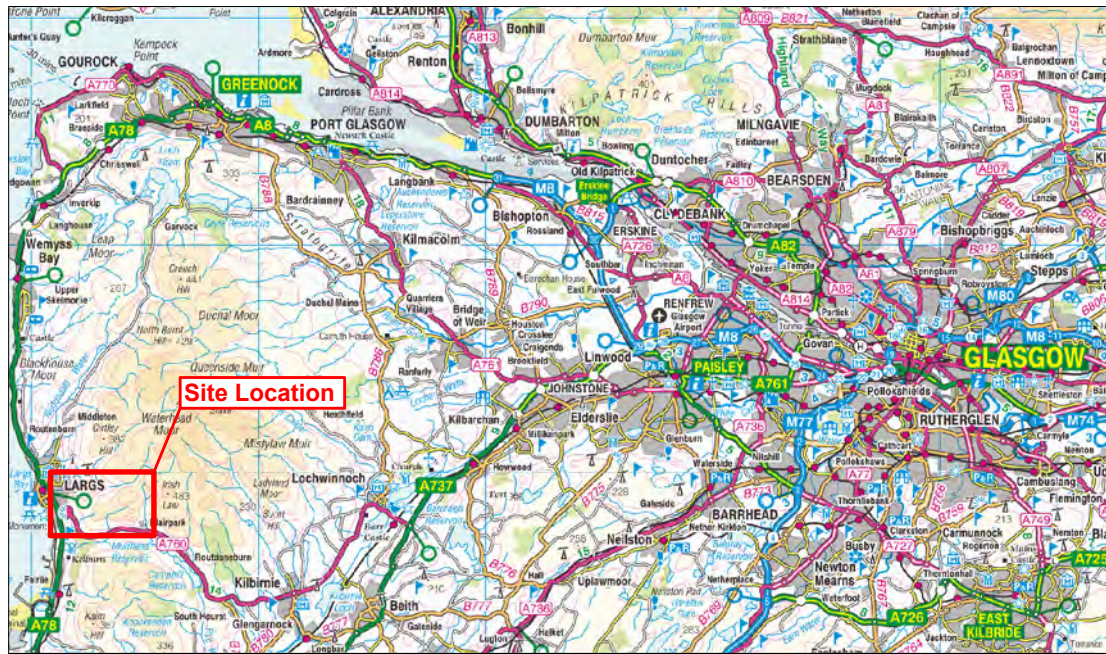
Context No	Slot No	Description
010	2	Subsoil, dark brown silty clay
011	All	Natural colluvial and scree material, deposited from slopes above, dark purple/grey sandy silt with angular stones, loose
012		<i>Not used</i>
013	1	NW-SE aligned enclosure wall, Slot 1
014	2	NE-SW aligned enclosure wall, Slot 2
015	3	NW-SE aligned enclosure wall, Slot 3
016	4	NE-SW aligned enclosure wall, Slot 4
017	All	Turf and topsoil overlying entire site, dark brown silt

APPENDIX 3: Drawing Register

Dwg No.	Sheet No.	Scale	Plan / Section	Description/contexts
1	1	1:50	Plan	Plan of Site 30
2	2	1:20	Plan	Slot 1 plan
3	2	1:20	Plan	Slot 2 plan
4	2	1:20	Plan	Slot 3 plan
5	2	1:20	Plan	Slot 4 plan
6	2	1:20	Plan	Slot 6/Possible entrance plan
7	2	1:20	Section	NW-facing Section of Slot 5/possible entrance
8	3	1:10	Section	SE-facing section of Slot 3
9	3	1:10	Section	SW-facing section of Slot 2
10	4	1:10	Section	SW-facing section of Slot 4
11	4	1:10	Section	SE-facing section of Slot 1

APPENDIX 4: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	North Ayrshire Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Halkshill Hydro Scheme, Largs, North Ayrshire
PROJECT CODE:	HBEH
PARISH:	Largs
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Gary Savory
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	CFA Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Evaluation and Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Bridge, enclosure
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	N/A
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NS 23451 59633, centred
START DATE (this season)	November 2015
END DATE (this season)	February 2016
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A targeted archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Halkshill Hydro Scheme, Largs, North Ayrshire during groundworks associated with construction. A number of sites were demarcated by the contractor prior to the commencement of work. The sites were subsequently checked by an archaeologist after completion of the demarcation. A photographic survey of the existing Greeto Bridge was conducted prior to the commencement of works in the vicinity of the bridge. An evaluation was carried out at Site 30, in advance of its removal to record the feature. The evaluation verified the structure was a drystone stock enclosure, probably a sheepfold.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	MNV Consulting Ltd
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 NMRS, Reports lodged with SMR and NMRS.



Key:

- Watching Brief Area
- Archaeological Site
- Permanent Road
- Upgrade to Road
- Temporary Road
- Floating Road
- Pipeline

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CFA
ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
The Old Engine House
Eskmills Park
Musselburgh
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ
T: 0131 273 4380
F: 0131 273 4381
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Title:
Site location and site plan

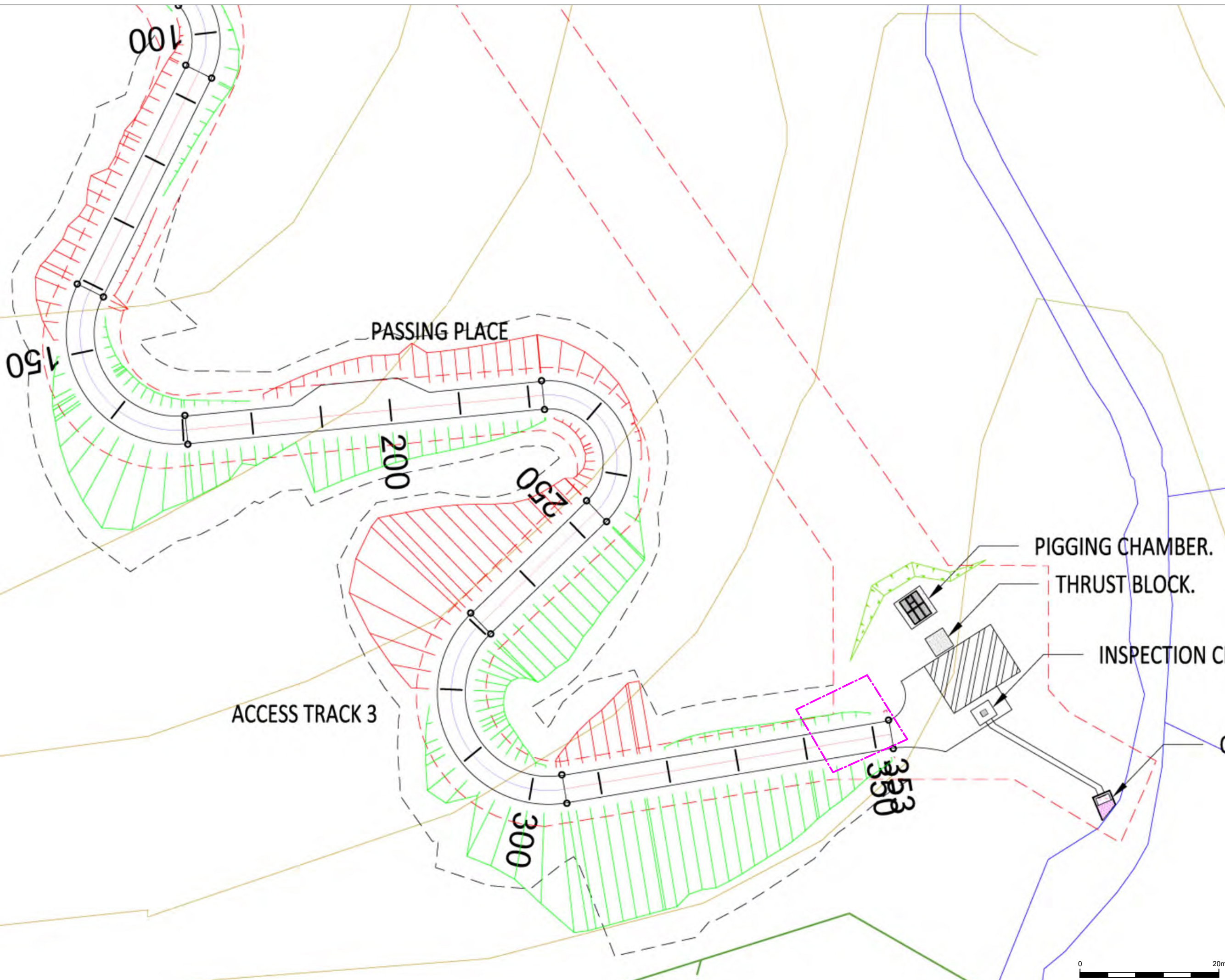
Project:
**Halkshill Hydro Scheme, Largs,
North Ayrshire:
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Client:

Scale at A3:
1:12,000

Drawn by: SW	Checked: GC	Date: 16/05/2016
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Report No: 3403	Fig. No: 1
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Key:

Site 30

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CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
 The Old Engine House
 Eskmills Park
 Musselburgh
 East Lothian, EH21 7PQ
 T: 0131 273 4380
 F: 0131 273 4381
 info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
 www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Title:
 Location of Site 30

Project:
 Halkshill Hydro Scheme, Largs,
 North Ayrshire:
 Archaeological Watching Brief

Client:
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Scale at A3:
 1:500

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0 20m



Fig. 3 - Greeto Bridge (Site 3) looking south-west



Fig. 4 - Greeto Bridge looking south-east



Fig. 5 - Site 4

Project:
Halkshill Hydro Scheme, Largs, North Ayrshire: Archaeological Watching Brief



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
The Old Engine House
Eskmills Park
Musselburgh
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ
T: 0131 273 4380
F: 0131 273 4381
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

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Fig. 6 - Pre-excavation photo of enclosure (Site 30)

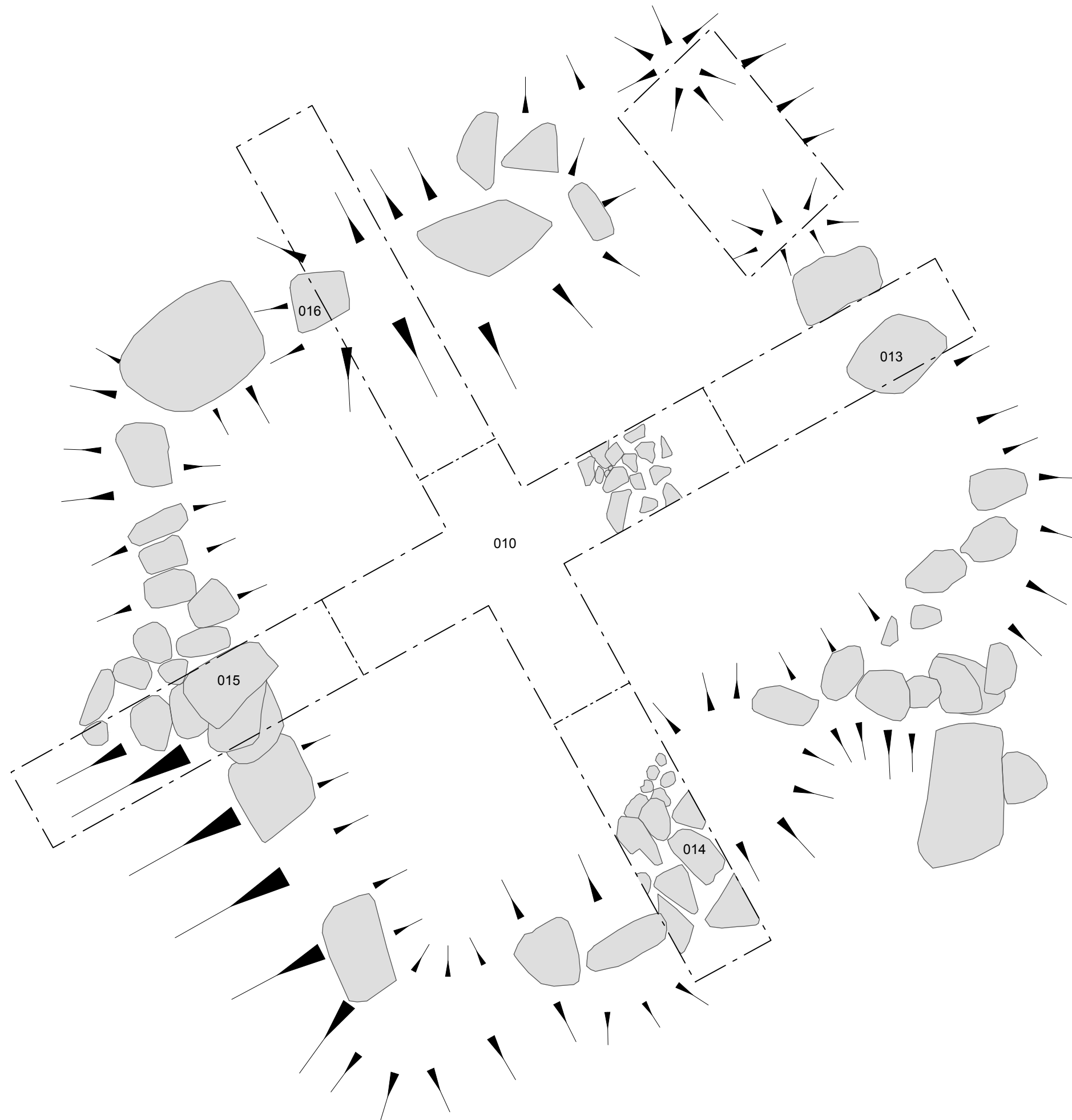
Project:
Halkshill Hydro Scheme, Largs, North Ayrshire: Archaeological Watching Brief



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
The Old Engine House
Eskmills Park
Musselburgh
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ
T: 0131 273 4380
F: 0131 273 4381
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

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Key:

Limit of Excavation

Stone



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
 The Old Engine House
 Eskmills Park
 Musselburgh
 East Lothian, EH21 7PQ
 T: 0131 273 4380
 F: 0131 273 4381
 info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
 www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Title:
**Plan of sub-rectangular enclosure
 (Site 30)**

Project:
**Halkshill Hydro Scheme, Largs,
 North Ayrshire:
 Archaeological Watching Brief**

Client:
MNV Consulting Ltd

Scale at A3:
1:50

Drawn by: SW	Checked: GC	Date: 16/05/2016
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Report.No: 3403	Fig. No: 7
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Key:

Limit of Excavation

Stone

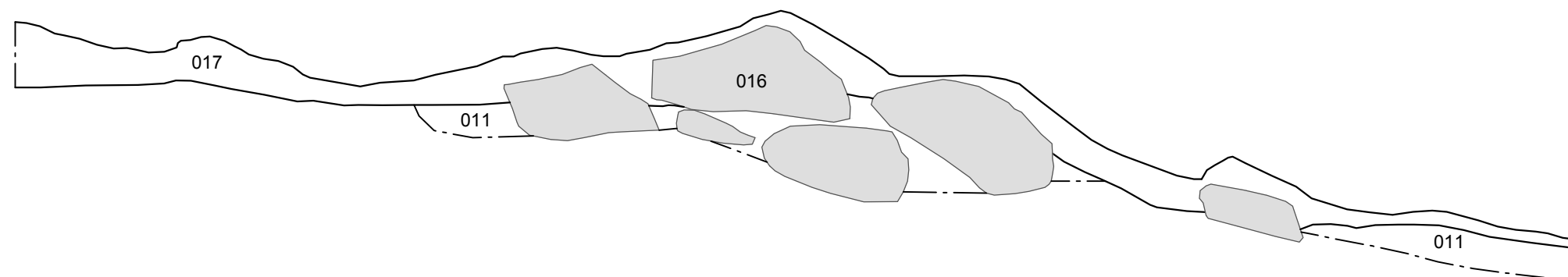


Fig. 8 - South-west-facing section through Wall (016)

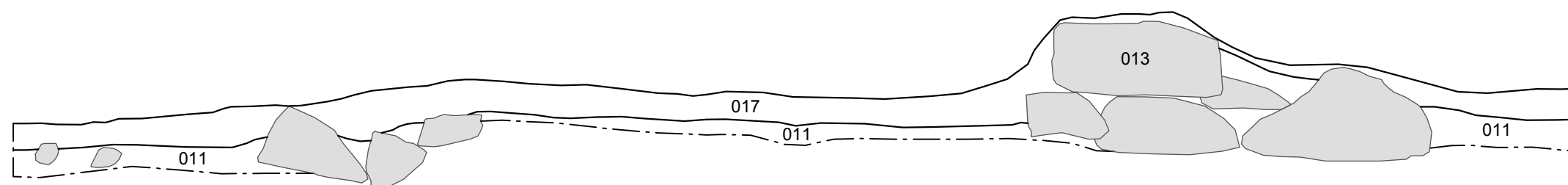


Fig. 9 - South-east-facing section through Wall (013)

CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
 The Old Engine House
 Eskmills Park
 Musselburgh
 East Lothian, EH21 7PQ
 T: 0131 273 4380
 F: 0131 273 4381
 info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
 www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Title:
Sections

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Scale at A3:
1:20

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Report.No: 3403	Fig. No: 8 - 9
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Fig. 10 - Possible north-west entrance of enclosure (Site 30)



Fig. 11 - Site 30, view of excavated trenches from NW



Fig. 12 - Site 30, wall 014 SW-facing section

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CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
The Old Engine House
Eskmills Park
Musselburgh
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ
T: 0131 273 4380
F: 0131 273 4381
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

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Fig. 13 - View of soil stripping for penstock along Greeto Water



Fig. 14 - View of soil stripping for penstock east of Greeto Water



Fig. 15 - Excavation work adjacent to Greeto Bridge

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CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
The Old Engine House
Eskmills Park
Musselburgh
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ
T: 0131 273 4380
F: 0131 273 4381
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

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