

Rothienorman 500MW BESS, Rothienorman, Aberdeenshire Heritage Impact Assessment

AOC Project Number: 28087

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ARCHAEOLOGY

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Rothienorman 500MW BESS, Aberdeenshire: Heritage Impact Assessment

On behalf of:	Blackford Renewables Ltd
National Grid Reference (NGR):	NJ 69507 35788
AOC Project No:	28087
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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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CONTENTS

List of Figures.....	3
List of Plates	4
List of Appendices.....	4
1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY	5
2 INTRODUCTION	6
2.1 The Site.....	6
2.2 Government and Local Planning Policies and Guidance	6
2.3 Planning Considerations	9
2.4 Limitations of Scope	10
3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	10
4 METHODOLOGY	11
4.1 Standards.....	11
4.2 Data Sources	11
4.3 Report Structure.....	11
4.4 Assessment Criteria	12
5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL EVIDENCE.....	12
5.1 Prehistoric (500,000 BC-AD 43).....	12
5.2 Roman (AD 43-410); Early Medieval and Medieval (AD 410-1540).....	13
5.3 Post-Medieval (AD 1540-1900).....	13
5.4 Modern (AD 1900-present day).....	14
5.5 Previous Archaeological Investigations (Events).....	14
5.6 Aerial Imagery and LiDAR.....	15
5.7 Site Walkover	15
5.8 Setting Assessment	16
5.9 Assets Considered for Setting Assessment	16
6 CONCLUSIONS.....	16
6.1 Direct Impacts	16
6.2 Setting Impacts	17
6.3 Mitigation.....	18
7 REFERENCES.....	19
7.1 Bibliographic References	19
7.2 Cartographic References	21
7.3 Aerial Photography.....	22
Plates	23
Figures.....	24
Appendix 1: Asset Gazetteer	25
Appendix 2: Assessment Scope and Criteria	26

List of Figures

Figure 1: Site Location Plan

Figure 2: Heritage Assets within the Site Study Area

Figure 3: Extract from a map by Roy, 1752-5

Figure 4: Extract from the OS 1871 25-inch map

Figure 5: Extract from the OS 1901 25-inch map

Figure 6: Extract from the OS A Series 1959 map

Figure 7: Extract from Satellite Imagery, May 2016

List of Plates

Plate 1: View north-northeast along the proposed access

Plate 2: View south-southwest along the proposed access towards the road, Middleton Wood on right

Plate 3: View north-northeast over the end of the proposed access; the bulk of the Proposed Development lies behind the fence line

Plate 4: Panoramic view from west to north over the northwest field, showing the substation behind trees on the upper left

Plate 5: Panoramic view from east to south over the Site from the northwest corner

Plate 6: Degraded fence-line between the two north fields, facing southwest

Plate 7: Panoramic view from west to north over the Site from main development area's southeast side

Plate 8: View southwest over the Site from the road to the northeast

Plate 9: View towards the Listed dovecot (Asset 1) from the northwest portion of Site, which lies to the right of the pylon and is screened by intervening topography and woodland

Plate 10: Views towards the Listed dovecot (Asset 1) from along the main development area's southeast Site boundary, which is situated in the central view but is screened by intervening topography and woodland

Plate 11: View northeast from central area of west field, facing croft (Asset 6)

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Assessment Scope and Criteria

Appendix 2: Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and Events

1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 1.1. AOC Archaeology Group were commissioned by Blackford Renewables Ltd to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) with regard to a Proposed Development of a 500MW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) on land at Rothienorman, Aberdeenshire (NJ (centred- NJ 69507 35788 Figure 1)). The Site lies within the local authority administrative area of Aberdeenshire Council.
- 1.2. This report follows on from a previous Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) undertaken in 2023 for a now consented 50 MW BESS located immediately to the west of the Site (Aberdeenshire Planning Application No: APP/2023/0718). AOC undertook an archaeological evaluation of the adjacent site in March 2023 although no archaeological remains or pre-19th century artefacts were identified (AOC 2023).
- 1.3. The assessment sets out the known historic environment baseline for both the Site and the surrounding area. In consideration of potential heritage constraints within the Site in general, there is considered to be a Low potential for Romano-British, Early Historic, medieval, non-agricultural post-medieval and modern archaeology; a Medium, potential for prehistoric archaeology, and a High potential for post-medieval and modern agricultural remains to survive.
- 1.4. One pit dated to the Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age period (2410BC and 2202BC) was identified during archaeological trial trenching (Event 32) prior to the start of construction of Rothienorman Substation, immediately west of the Site. A further two pits, one of which contained a sherd of early prehistoric pottery were recorded during an archaeological evaluation conducted in advance of the construction of a grid stability facility to the west of the Site (Event 27). As such there is the potential for prehistoric remains to survive beneath the plough soil, although it should be noted that AOC's recent investigations on the adjacent 50MW site did not find any evidence of archaeological activity (AOC 2023).
- 1.5. There is a paucity of Romano-British, Early Historic and medieval remains within the study area, although it is possible that post-medieval agricultural and settlement remains in the study area may have earlier antecedents. Historic map evidence suggest that the Site has been in agricultural use since at least the mid-19th century, it was under arable cultivation at the time of the November 2024 Site Visit.
- 1.6. National planning policies and planning guidance including National Planning Policy Framework 4 (NPF4) (Scottish Government 2023), Planning Advice Note 2/2011: Planning and Archaeology (PAN2/2011) (Scottish Government 2011) and Historic Environment Policy Scotland (HEPS) (HES 2019) as well as the local planning policies outlined in this report, require a mitigation response that is designed to take cognisance of the potential for impacts upon heritage assets and to assess the potential for archaeological remains to survive on the Site and hence allow for any impacts to be mitigated by avoidance or minimisation or where this is not warranted by preservation by record.
- 1.7. If significant archaeological remains are encountered then additional mitigation works, such as further archaeological fieldwork, post-excavation analysis and reporting, including publication may be required to ensure preservation by record of any identified archaeological remains.
- 1.8. The setting of the surrounding designated assets within the 2km Study Area are unlikely to be materially impacted by the Proposed Development and as such no mitigation for setting impacts is deemed necessary.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Site

- 2.1.1. The Site extends across four agricultural fields to the west of Blackford, Aberdeenshire. It is bounded to the north by Westfield Croft (Asset 6) and agricultural land; to the east and south by further agricultural land; to the south-west by a plot of woodland, Wood of Middleton; and to the west by the operational Rothienorman Substation. The Site is irregular in shape extends to 24 hectares in size and is centred on National Grid Reference NGR NJ 69507 35788.

2.2 Topographical & Geological Conditions

- 2.2.1. According to the British Geological Survey GeoIndex (BGS 2023), the Site is underlain by Macduff Formation a metamorphic bedrock formed between approximately 1000 and 541 million years ago between the Tonian and Ediacaran periods.
- 2.2.2. Mapping of the extent of superficial geological deposits by the BGS is not always accurate due to the discontinuity in distribution of these deposits and difficulties in accessing below ground data.
- 2.2.3. The superficial deposit recorded by the BGS (2024) as underlying the Site is Till, Devensian-Diamicton, which formed approximately 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago in the Quaternary period in ice age conditions.
- 2.2.4. There are no boreholes recorded within the Site (BGS, 2023b). The closest borehole record (NJ73NW2) is located c. 285m south-east within the residential extent of Blackford in 1995. However, the BGS (2023b) doesn't hold the borehole records online.
- 2.2.5. The Site occupies land which generally slopes from the west, where the land is recorded at 160m Above ordnance Datum (AOD) to east, where it is recorded at 140m AOD.

2.3 Proposed Development

- 2.3.1. The proposal is to construct a 500MW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated access track adjacent to the existing Rothienorman substation and the consented Middleton of Blackford 50 MW BSF (APP/2023/0718).

2.2 Government and Local Planning Policies and Guidance

National Planning Policy Guidelines

- 2.4.1 The statutory framework for heritage in Scotland is outlined in the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 both of which are modified by the Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2011.
- 2.4.2 The implications of these Acts with regard to local government planning policy are described within National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (Scottish Government 2023), Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) (Historic Environment Scotland 2019) and Planning Advice Notes (PAN) for Scotland. The stated intent of NPF4 Policy 7: Historic Assets and Places is:

'To protect and enhance historic environment assets and places, and to enable positive change as a catalyst for the regeneration of places.' (Scottish Government 2022, 45)

2.4.3 The following sections of NPF4 Policy 7 are relevant to this assessment:

'a) Development proposals with a potentially significant impact on historic assets or places will be accompanied by an assessment which is based on an understanding of the cultural significance of the historic asset and/or place.

The assessment should identify the likely visual or physical impact of any proposals for change, including cumulative effects and provide a sound basis for managing the impacts of change.

Proposals should also be informed by national policy and guidance on managing change in the historic environment, and information held within Historic Environment Records.

... c... Development proposals affecting the setting of a listed building should preserve its character, and its special architectural or historic interest.

...

o) Non-designated historic environment assets, places and their setting should be protected and preserved in situ wherever feasible.

Where there is potential for non-designated buried archaeological remains to exist below a site, developers will provide an evaluation of the archaeological resource at an early stage so that planning authorities can assess impacts. Historic buildings may also have archaeological significance which is not understood and may require assessment.

Where impacts cannot be avoided they should be minimised. Where it has been demonstrated that avoidance or retention is not possible, excavation, recording, analysis, archiving, publication and activities to provide public benefit may be required through the use of conditions or legal/planning obligations.

When new archaeological discoveries are made during the course of development works, they must be reported to the planning authority to enable agreement on appropriate inspection, recording and mitigation measures.'

2.4.4 HEPs (Historic Environment Scotland, 2019) sets out the Scottish Government's policy for decision making that affects the historic environment. It contains six policies for managing the historic environment, all of which favour protection, understanding and promotion of the historic environment as well as the preservation of the benefits of the historic environment for future generations. Of particular relevance to this assessment, HEP3 and HEP4 both state *'if detrimental impact on the historic environment is unavoidable, it should be minimised. Steps should be taken to demonstrate that alternatives have been explored, and mitigation measures should be in place'* (HES, 2019: 9). The following HEP policies are relevant to this assessment:

HEP2

Decisions affecting the historic environment should ensure that its understanding and enjoyment as well as its benefits are secured for present and future generations.

HEP3

Plans, programmes, policies and strategies and the allocation of resources should be approached in a way that protects and promotes the historic environment.

If detrimental impact on the historic environment is unavoidable, it should be minimised. Steps should be taken to demonstrate that alternatives have been explored and mitigation measures should be put in place.

HEP4

Changes to specific assets and their context should be managed in a way that protects the historic environment. Opportunities for enhancement should be identified where appropriate.

If detrimental impact on the historic environment is unavoidable, it should be minimised. Steps should be taken to demonstrate that alternatives have been explored, and mitigation measures should be put in place.

National Guidance

- 2.4.5. Historic Environment Scotland's (HES) setting guidance defines setting as *"the way the surroundings of a historic asset or place contribute to how it is understood, appreciated, and experienced"* (2020). The guidance further notes that *"planning authorities must take into account the setting of historic assets or places when drawing up development plans and guidance, when considering various types of environmental and design assessments/statements, and in determining planning applications"* (ibid). It advocates a three-stage approach to assessing potential impacts upon setting which is followed by the setting assessment included in this assessment.

The three-stage approach includes:

- Stage 1: Identify the historic asset;
- Stage 2: define and analyse the setting; and
- Stage 3: evaluate the potential impact of the proposed changes.

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan

- 2.4.6. The Site is located within the Local Authority Area of Aberdeenshire Council.
- 2.4.7. The Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on the 13th of January 2023 and sets out the policies that will be used for assessing planning applications. The following policies are relevant to the historic environment:

'Policy HE1 Protecting Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Sites (including other historic buildings)

HE1.1 We will resist development that would have an adverse impact on the character, integrity or setting of listed buildings, or scheduled monuments, or other archaeological sites. If adverse impact is unavoidable, it should be minimised and justified.

HE1.2 We will protect all listed buildings contained on the statutory list of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest for Aberdeenshire, all scheduled monuments contained on the statutory schedule of Monuments for Aberdeenshire and undesignated archaeological sites in Aberdeenshire. We will encourage their protection, maintenance, enhancement, and appropriate active use and conservation'

Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Sites

HE1.5 Development on nationally or locally important monuments or archaeological sites, or having an adverse impact on the integrity of their setting, will only be allowed if there are exceptional circumstances, including those of a social or economic nature, and there is no alternative site. It is

the developer's responsibility to provide information on the nature and location of the archaeological features, including details of any mitigation measures proposed, prior to determination of the planning application.

HE1.6 Where preservation of the site in its original location is not possible, the developer must arrange for the full excavation and recording of the site in advance of development to satisfy Aberdeenshire Council that the impacts from development have been fully mitigated.

Policy HE2 Protecting Historic, Cultural and Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas

HE2.1 We will resist development, including change of use or demolition, which would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area. This applies both to developments within the conservation area and proposals outwith that would affect its character or appearance...

HE2.3 Development affecting an inventory battlefield or inventory garden and designed landscape will only be permitted if:

- the proposal would not have an adverse impact that compromises the objectives of the designation of an inventory garden or designed landscape, or the key landscape characteristics and special qualities of an inventory battlefield; or,*
- any significant adverse effects are outweighed by long-term social or economic benefits of overriding public importance and there is no alternative site for the development.*

These conditions may also apply to developments outwith the designated sites. In either case, measures and mitigation must be taken to conserve and enhance the essential characteristics of the site as appropriate.

HE2.4 All development affecting the character and/or the appearance of an inventory battlefield or inventory garden and designed landscape must be justified through a Design Statement and/or Landscape Management Plan.'

(Aberdeenshire Council, 2023)

2.3 Planning Considerations

- 2.3.1 The Local Planning Authority, Aberdeenshire Council is advised on all archaeological matters by ACAS (Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service). Any requirement for archaeological work either preceding or during development will be determined by the ACAS as advisors on archaeological matters to Aberdeenshire Council.
- 2.3.2 The Category B Listed Home Farm of Blackford, Dovecot (Asset 1), is located c. 594m south-east of the Site. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) do not identify any further designated heritage assets (World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape, Inventory Battlefields and Conservation Areas) between 1km and 2km of the Site.

2.4 Limitations of Scope

- 2.4.1 This assessment is based upon data obtained from online and publicly accessible archives as described in the Data Sources in Section 4.3. All heritage assets within 1km and all designated heritage assets within 2km of the Site were identified. Data from the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) was obtained in November 2024. Data from the Aberdeenshire HER was obtained on the 7th November 2024. The information presented in the gazetteer in Appendix 2 regarding known heritage assets is current to this date.
- 2.4.2 Archival material held by the National Collection of Aerial Photography (NCAP) (hosted by HES); the National Library of Scotland (NLS); the National Record of Scotland (NRS) has been consulted online. AOC has a license to access online material held by NCAP and can assess available online historic maps and records held by the NLS and NRS. Where primary sources have not been available for consultation, secondary sources, published online have, where available, been consulted and referenced (see Section 7).
- 2.4.3 Changes in It should be noted that the report has been prepared under the express instructions and solely for the use of Blackford Renewables Ltd and their partners. All the work carried out in this report is based upon AOC Archaeology Group's professional knowledge and understanding of current (May 2025) and relevant United Kingdom standards and codes, technology and legislation.
- 2.4.4 Changes in these areas may occur in the future and cause changes to the conclusions, advice or recommendations given. AOC Archaeology Group does not accept responsibility for advising of Blackford Renewables Ltd or associated parties of the facts or implications of any such changes in the future.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The main objective of this assessment is to map the nature, character, extent, quality and value of the historic environment resource within the Site and surrounding area and to assess the potential for direct impacts upon the archaeological resource from the Proposed Development as well as to assess the potential for impacts upon the setting of designated heritage assets within 2km of the Site. This will be done by examining a variety of evidence for upstanding and buried remains of heritage interest including designated and non-designated heritage assets within 2km of the Site. The evidence presented and the conclusions offered will provide a comprehensive basis for further archaeological investigation required at the Site. The results of this heritage impact assessment will also help to inform the mitigation proposals.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Standards

- 4.1.1 This assessment contains sufficient information to meet the requirements for assessing potential impacts upon heritage receptors required by current planning regulations set out in the NPF4 (Scottish Government 2023), HEPS (HES 2019), and PAN 2/2011 (Scottish Government 2011), and local planning policy.
- 4.1.2 AOC Archaeology Group conforms to the standards of professional conduct outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2022), the *CIfA Standard and Guidance for Commissioning Work or Providing Consultancy Advice on Archaeology and the Historic Environment* (CIfA 2020a), the *CIfA Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessments* (CIfA 2020b), the *CIfA Regulations for Professional Conduct* (CIfA 2021b), and other relevant guidance.
- 4.1.3 AOC Archaeology Group is a Registered Organisation of the CIfA. This status ensures that there is regular monitoring and approval by external peers of our internal systems, standards, and skills development.
- 4.1.4 AOC is ISO 9001:2015 accredited, in recognition of the Company's Quality Management System.

4.2 Data Sources

- 4.2.1 The following sources were consulted during the preparation of this assessment:
- Historic Environment Scotland (HES):
 - For designated asset data.
 - Canmore and Pastmap, hosted by HES:
 - For National Record of the Historic Environment data (NRHE) and HER data.
 - National Map Library (National Library of Scotland, Causewayside, Edinburgh):
 - For online old Ordnance Survey maps (1st & 2nd Edition, small- and large-scale) and pre-Ordnance Survey historical maps.
 - Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record (HER);
 - For Historic Environment Record (HER) data received January 2023.
 - National Collection of Aerial Photography (NCAP):
 - For online accessible historic aerial photographs.
- 4.2.2 Open access LiDAR coverage of Scotland (available at <https://remotesensingdata.gov.scot/data>) does not cover the Site.

4.3 Report Structure

- 4.3.1 Each heritage asset (referred to as "Asset") and previous archaeological investigation (referred to as "Event") referred to in the text is listed in the Gazetteer in Appendix 2. Each has been assigned a 'Asset/Event No.' unique to this assessment, and the Gazetteer includes information regarding the type, period, grid reference, designation; NRHE number, HER number, protective designation, and other descriptive information, as derived from the consulted sources.
- 4.3.2 Each asset and event referred to in the text is plotted on the location map (Figure 2) at the end of the report, using the assigned Asset/Event Nos. The Site is shown outlined in red.

- 4.3.3 All heritage assets located within 1km of the Site have been included in the assessment (Figure 2). The aim of this is to identify the potential for any direct impacts on known heritage assets; to help predict whether any similar hitherto unknown archaeological remains may survive within the Site and to allow for an assessment of the potential for impacts upon the settings of designated heritage assets. There are no designated heritage assets between 1km and 2km from the Site.
- 4.3.4 All sources consulted during the assessment, including publications, archived records, photographic and cartographic evidence, are listed amongst the References in Section 7.

4.4 Assessment Criteria

- 4.4.1 The assessment aims to identify the known and likely archaeological potential of the Site and the relative value or importance of such a resource / asset. The criteria for assessing these factors are laid out in detail in Appendix 1.
- 4.4.2 The criteria for assessing archaeological potential are expressed in this report as ranging between the scales of High, Medium, Low and Uncertain, criteria for which are also noted in Appendix 1.
- 4.4.3 Levels of importance in the report are expressed as ranging between the scales of High, Medium, Low, Negligible and Unknown. The importance of heritage assets is determined firstly by reference to existing designations – for example Scheduled Monuments are already classified as Nationally Important and therefore of High importance. For assets where no designation has previously been assigned, the likely importance of that resource has been based upon the available evidence and professional knowledge and judgement.
- 4.4.4 The likely magnitude of the impact of the Proposed Development works is determined by identifying the degree of change from the Proposed Development upon the ‘baseline’ conditions of the Site and the heritage resource identified in the assessment. This impact can be either adverse (negative) or beneficial (positive) and is ranked according to the scale of major, moderate, minor, and negligible.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Prehistoric (500,000 BC-AD 43)

- 5.1.1 No remains of a prehistoric nature have been identified within the Site.
- 5.1.2 Archaeological works (Event 32) undertaken in advance of Rothienorman Substation, 311m to the west of the Site, identified charcoal within a pit which has been dated to the Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age period, between 2410BC and 2202BC. The pit was the only archaeological feature identified in 152 trenches, which represented a 9% evaluation of the land within Event 32.
- 5.1.3 A further evaluation undertaken in 2022 in advance of the construction of a grid stability facility (Event 27) located 270m west of the Site also recorded two pits, one of which contained a sherd of early prehistoric pottery/ This evaluation represented 10% of the land within Event 27.
- 5.1.4 There are therefore two prehistoric features recorded within the 1km study area and due to their proximity to the Site there is judged to be a Medium potential for prehistoric remains to survive within the Site itself. The Site appears to have been in agricultural use through the post-medieval period at least and it is possible that historic and modern ploughing has had an adverse impact on any below ground archaeological remains which may have survived. It should further be noted that the evaluation conducted in March 2023 in advance of the construction of the Rothienorman 50Mw Battery Storage Facility recorded no archaeological features within the 21 trenches that were excavated.

5.2 Roman (AD 43-410); Early Medieval and Medieval (AD 410-1540)

- 5.2.1 There are no Romano-British, Early Historic or medieval remains recorded within the 1 km study area. As such there is judged to be a Low potential for remains of these dates to survive on the Site.

5.3 Post-Medieval (AD 1540-1900)

- 5.3.1 Pre-Ordnance Survey maps tend to be schematic and lack detail, although they give some idea of the nature of settlement. Maps by Speed (1627- not illustrated) and Blaeu (1646- not illustrated), suggest that the area around the Site was not densely populated in the early post-medieval period. This settlement pattern likely reflects the earlier medieval settlement pattern.
- 5.3.2 Blackford (Asset 3) was documented as a manor in 1654 and likely owned the surrounding land, including the Site. Indeed, by the later 19th century Westfield (Asset 6) to the north of the Site was in the property of the owner of Blackford (reference OS1/1/7/104- Scotland Places, 2023). A mansion house at Blackford is thought to have existed in the vicinity of Asset 3 from at least 1723 when a house was recorded as “pretty new”. The 18th century house was replaced by a new mansion in the 19th century. Roy’s Military Map of the Highlands (1747-52- Figure 3) records Blackford (Asset 3) within a T-shaped plot of land depicted as being occupied by geometric shaped plots of individual gardens to the south and two parallel east-west aligned tree plantations to the north. The Site is located north-west of Blackford and based on the location of “Black Burn” on the later Ordnance Survey maps. Roy’s map depicts the Site in the vicinity of cultivated land to the north of a burn annotated as the “Burn of Earig”.
- 5.3.3 The Site was located within the Parish of Fyvie in the post-medieval period. The Old Statistical Account of Scotland (OSA) (Moir, 1793) makes no direct reference to the Site although it does note that the soils within the parish were variable, and much improvement was deemed necessary in the later 18th century. Blackford (Asset 3) is recorded as belonging to John Forbes in 1793, who is noted as one of the “Heirtors” of the parish.
- 5.3.4 The Ordnance Survey map published in 1871 (Figure 4) depicts the Site within two fields, divided by a roughly north-south aligned field boundary, which may be a footpath or trackway, to the south of Westfield Croft (Asset 6). The Site is recorded in plot number 1366 which is documented as being arable land (OS, 1869). Westfield Croft is recorded in the OS Name Book, 1865-71 (reference OS1/1/7/104- Scotland Places, 2023) as a small farmstead in the ownership of J.P. Watson Esquire. J.P. Watson Esquire is also documented as the owner of Blackford (Asset 3) to the south-east of the Site. The northern portion of a tree plantation, which currently extends to the southern boundary of the Site, is depicted, on the 1871 OS map, as extending into the south-western corner of the Site.
- 5.3.5 There is one Category B Listed Building within the study area; Home Farm of Blackford, Dovecot (Asset 1) c.594m south-east of the Site. The Dovecot dates to the 18th century and was originally constructed within the grounds of Blackford (Asset 3), likely first depicted as a formalised landscape in the mid-18th century (centred Asset 3- see Figure 2). The grounds of Blackford are depicted differently on the OS map published in 1871 than on Roy’s map 100 years earlier. However, the changes most likely represent the changes to country house garden landscape design in the intervening period and more specifically to changes in the 19th century required to accommodate large ponds, associated with milling to the south (Asset 13). The New Statistical Accounts (NSA) published in 1845 records the landowner of Blackford in that year was John Forbes (Manson,1845).
- 5.3.6 Within 1km of the Site the NRHE and HER record a further four farmhouses (Assets 4, 5, 8, 15), two mills (Assets 12 & 13); and a smithy (Asset 7) from historic Ordnance Survey maps dating to the later 19th century. A further four assets recorded in the original assessment now lie just beyond the current (May 2025) Study Area.

Assets 11 and 20 are recorded as farmhouses, Asset 22 as a quarry and Asset 25 as the location of boundary stones marking the division between the Warthill and Blackford estates. These non-designated heritage assets are indicative of a rural, agrarian landscape in the post-medieval period.

- 5.3.7 Degraded remains of rig and furrow cultivation were recorded in a number of trenches to the west of the Site with the extent of Event 27 and historic mapping from the mid-18th century indicating that the area was likely in agricultural land throughout the post-medieval period if not before. This is further supported by Asset 23 which records an area of rig and furrow ploughing to the southeast of the Site. The Site was likely in the ownership of the estate of Blackford (Asset 3) to the south-west, which also owned Westfield (Asset 6) farmhouse to its north. It is possible that modern agricultural activities within the Site have had an adverse impact on post-medieval remains which may survive within the Site including cultivation remains. As such there is considered to be a High potential for post-medieval agricultural remains to survive and a Low potential for any other post-medieval remains. Post-medieval archaeological remains on an agricultural nature are often considered to be of Negligible importance.

5.4 Modern (AD 1900-present day)

- 5.4.1 The OS map published in 1901 (Figure 5) illustrates that there were no changes to the Site or its immediate surroundings in the later 19th century.
- 5.4.2 Between 1901 (not illustrated) and the OS map published in 1959 (Figure 6), the northern portion of the Wood of Middleton appears to have been removed, with the pictography on the OS map published in 1959 (Figure 6) indicating that the south-western area of the Site was occupied by wetlands or grasslands. The area of former woodland is illustrated as being defined, suggesting that it retained a different land use to the rest of the Site in the later 1950s.
- 5.4.3 The only potentially modern asset is Asset 18, a large mound of overgrown stones recorded to the north of the Site during walkover survey in 2021 and potentially related to the construction of a nearby modern track.
- 5.4.4 The majority of the Site appears to have been located within arable land throughout the modern period. As such there is judged to be a High potential form modern archaeological remains to survive within the Site, however any remains would relate to modern agricultural practices and thus be considered to be of Negligible importance. There is Low potential for modern remains of any other type.

5.5 Previous Archaeological Investigations (Events)

- 5.5.1 An archaeological evaluation (centred Event 32) was undertaken at Rothienorman Substation to the west of the Site. A total of 152 trenches were excavated and one feature of potential archaeological significance was identified: a cut feature containing mottled soil and charcoal. A radiocarbon date for the charcoal produced a calibrated date between 2410BC and 2202BC, during the Neolithic – Bronze Age Transition. Traces of degraded rig and furrow cultivation were also identified in a number of trenches.
- 5.5.2 A trial trenching evaluation (centred Event 27) was undertaken to the west of the Site in advance of the construction of a grid stability facility. The evaluation covered 10% of the site area and identified two possible pits, one of which contained a sherd of early prehistoric pottery.
- 5.5.3 A trial trenching evaluation was carried out by AOC Archaeology in March 2023 (centred Event 28) ahead of a proposed battery energy storage system located immediately to the west of the Site. A total of 21 trenches were excavated across the development site but no archaeological features or artefacts were identified.

- 5.5.4 Ahead of a proposed development, a trial trenching evaluation consisting of 18 trenches was carried out c.54m to the west of the Site in 2023 (centred Event 29) however no archaeological features or artefacts were identified.
- 5.5.5 A programme of desk-based assessment and walkover survey (centred Events 30 and 31) conducted in 2021 and 2022 recorded a number of previously unrecorded features within the Study Area, mostly related to post-medieval agriculture.

5.6 Aerial Imagery and LiDAR

- 5.6.1 No LiDAR data or imagery is available for the Site.
- 5.6.2 A photograph taken in 1946 (106G/Scot/UK/0130 Frame 5068) depicts the majority of the Site within three fields, bisected by a north-south aligned field boundary. Woodland is depicted as extending into the southwestern area of the Site. The photograph indicates that the Site was located in agricultural land, in a rural and agrarian landscape occupied by dispersed settlement, including Westfield (Asset 6).
- 5.6.3 Whilst cloud cover obscures the wider landscape on a photograph taken in 1948 (CPE/Scot/UK/0313 Frame 2184) the Site is visible as occupying four arable fields with an area of woodland extending into the southwestern corner of the Study Area as in 1946.
- 5.6.4 The woodland in the south-western corner of the Study Area is not visible on a photograph taken in 1954 (542/RAF/0051 Frame 27 Sep 1954) indicating that it had been felled sometime between 1948 and 1954. This area appears to be grassland in 1954. The Site appears to occupy part of at least four fields, with the northern most fields showing visible signs of having been cultivated at some time in the past.
- 5.6.5 Photography taken in 1973 (MER/041/73 Frames 113, 114, 119, 120, 125, 126 & 185) shows the Site occupied by four fields, the north-western field appears to have been cultivated. A change in colour of the crop within this field likely locates a former field boundary or may be evidence of two different crops being grown in this field. The eastern and southern parts of the Study Area appear to be in use as a cattle pasture by 1973. A north-south linear feature, likely the field boundary visible in 1946 (106G/Scot/UK/0130 Frame 5068), is visible in the centre of the Site, whilst its south-western portion appears to be occupied by uneven grassland.
- 5.6.6 The entire Study Area appears to be located in cultivated land by 1988 (ASS/61088 Frame 23). An overhead line is visible to the south of the Site. The wider landscape does not appear to have undergone any material changes between 1946 and 1988, with Blackford (Asset 3) country house visible within planned woodland to the east of the Site.
- 5.6.7 No archaeological remains were identified on the aerial photographs.

5.7 Site Walkover

- 5.7.1 A walkover survey of the Site was conducted by AOC Archaeology Group on 19 November 2024. The weather was fine and sunny with slight snow on the ground, but excellent visibility overall. Plates accompanying this section can be viewed in Appendix 3.
- 5.7.2 The Site comprises three fields, one southern field and two northern fields. The southern portion of the Site comprises the proposed access, extending north-northwest through a single cut crop field from the road along a gently inclining slope (Plates 1 and 2), past the stand of deciduous woodland known as Middleton Wood, to meet a west-southwest/east-northeast aligned field boundary defined only by a post and wire fence (Plate 3). The bulk of the Proposed Development is situated in the two fields on the north side of this fence line.

- 5.7.3 Both the north fields decline from the fence line, which is the high point of the Site, to the north (Plates 4-6). These fields were also under crop stubble and were separated by a degraded post and wire fence, aligned north-northwest/south-southeast (Plate 7). Outward views from these are fairly limited by rising local topography, but glimpses to the substation to the west were afforded through the treeline (Plate 4). This is visible when the Site is viewed from the northwest (Plate 8).

5.8 Setting Assessment

Setting Assessment Criteria

- 5.8.1 This section considers the potential for the Proposed Development to result in impacts upon the settings of designated heritage assets within 2km of the Site. This includes consideration of whether any such change would constitute an adverse impact (diminishment) to those attributes of the designated assets which directly contribute to their significance rather than simply being an alteration to, or addition of a new element to the existing settings of these assets. Where a new development may be located within the setting of an asset but does not diminish the significance of the asset or the ability to appreciate that significance, it may have a neutral impact. The setting assessment was undertaken in line with the requirements of NPF4 and HES setting guidance.
- 5.8.2 All the assets considered by this assessment are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Assets considered for Setting Assessment

Asset No.	Plate No(s).	Asset Name	Status	Elements Affecting Intervisibility	Magnitude of Impact
1	9, 10	Home Farm of Blackford, Dovecot	Listed Building- Category B	Topography and vegetation	None
6	11	Westfield Croft	Non- Designated Heritage Asset	Vegetation	None

- 5.8.3 For all of the assets in the above table with an assessed magnitude of impact of none, no impacts upon their settings or character are predicted.

5.9 Assets Considered for Setting Assessment

Home Farm of Blackford, Dovecot

- 5.9.1 Views towards the Listed dovecot (Asset 1) are screened by intervening topography and woodland (Plates 9 and 10). In winter conditions, these show the woodland foliage at its barest and suggest there will no intervisibility between the Proposed Development and the Asset.

Westfield Croft

- 5.9.2 There are limited views of Westfield Croft from the Proposed Development (Plate 11) however due to the screening impact of vegetation and the presence of nearby large electrical infrastructure within the original setting of the croft it is not thought that the Proposed Development will have a significant impact on the setting of the Asset.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Direct Impacts

- 6.1.1 Potential impacts on known or unknown buried archaeological remains which may survive relate to the possibility of disturbing, removing, or destroying in situ remains and artefacts during ground-breaking works (including excavation, construction, and other works associated with the Proposed Development) on this Site. In the context of this development, direct impacts have the capacity to result in impacts of high magnitude as

they could potentially result in the destruction or removal of any archaeological deposits which may be present.

- 6.1.2 A singular pit dated to the Chalcolithic period (Event 32) has been identified to the west of the Site, however in general there was a paucity of archaeological remains identified during the archaeological works centred on Event 32. Two further pits, one containing a sherd of prehistoric pottery were recorded during archaeological works centred on Event 27. As such there is judged to be a Medium potential for prehistoric remains to survive. It is likely that historic and modern arable activity within the Site may have had a detrimental impact on any below ground remains.
- 6.1.3 There is judged to be a Low potential for Romano-British, Early Historic, medieval, non-agricultural post-medieval and modern archaeology to survive within the Site.
- 6.1.4 Historic maps of the post-medieval and modern periods locate the Site within largely arable land with the south-western corner being occupied by the northern extent of the Wood of Middleton until the first half of the 20th century. As such there is considered to be a High potential for archaeological remains of these dates to survive. Any archaeological remains would likely relate to agricultural activities and practices and be considered to be of Negligible importance.
- 6.1.5 The Site has largely been in arable land since at least the later 19th century (OS, 1869) if not prior to that date. Ploughing is one of the biggest threats to the survival of archaeological remains in Scotland (Noble et al. 2019). However, a Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age pit was identified to the west which suggests that archaeological remains may survive in this area notwithstanding long term agricultural activities.

6.2 Setting Impacts

- 6.2.1 All designated heritage assets within the 2km Study Area were considered for potential impacts to their setting as a result of the Proposed Development. This includes consideration of whether any such change would constitute an adverse impact (diminishment) to those attributes of the designated assets which directly contribute to their significance rather than simply being an alteration to, or addition of a new element to the existing settings of these assets. The setting assessment was undertaken in line with the requirements of NPF4 and HES setting guidance.
- 6.2.2 NPF4 (2022) and HES guidance on setting (2016; Updated 2020) are clear that the setting of an asset can contribute to its significance. Section 2.4 of this report outlines the planning policy in regard to the setting of designated assets.
- 6.2.3 There is one Category B Listed Building; Home Farm of Blackford, Dovecot (Asset 1) c. 725m south-east of the Site. The dovecot was originally constructed within the formal and designed grounds around Blackford House (Asset 3) in the 18th century. Whilst the grounds of Blackford have been much reduced in the modern era and the house documented has been reduced to a single storey, the dovecot is located in land visually and physically associated with Blackford (Asset 3) and thus retains its historic association and setting. The Proposed Development is not anticipated to be intervisible with the Listed Building and in the case there was a visual link, the Proposed Development would be seen backdropped by an electricity substation, and would be another modern development which does not impact upon the historic extent of grounds around Blackford (Asset 3). As such no impact on the setting of the dovecot is anticipated.
- 6.2.4 The non-designated Westfield Croft (Asset 6) is located to the north of the Site. Westfield is annotated on maps dating to the mid-late 19th century and is a 19th century estate cottage or farmhouse associated the Blackford estate (centred Asset 3- see para 5.3.5). A north-south aligned avenue to the south of Westfield is part of its landscaping (Figures 4 & 5) and once formed part of a trackway or lane which bisected the Site. The setting of

Westfield relates to its immediate surrounding landscaping, which appears to have been contemporary to the construction of the non-designated building, the surrounding agricultural land and the proximity to the surviving elements of the Blackford estate (centred Asset 3) to the south-east. The Proposed Development would not materially alter the view from Westfield, which in this direction already includes Rothienorman Substation; on this basis the Proposed Development would not result in an adverse change to setting of the asset.

6.3 Mitigation

- 6.3.1 National planning policies and planning guidance contained within the NPF4 and HES guidance, as well as local plan policies, require a mitigation strategy that is designed to take cognisance of the possible impacts upon heritage assets by a Proposed Development on the Site and avoid, minimise, or offset any such impacts as appropriate.
- 6.3.2 If significant archaeological remains are encountered then additional mitigation works, such as further archaeological fieldwork, post-excavation analysis and reporting, including publication may be required to ensure preservation by record of any identified archaeological remains.
- 6.3.3 In accordance with national and local planning policies on heritage, it is recommended that mitigation in the form of an archaeological watching brief be carried out in advance of development works. If significant features are encountered, further archaeological works, including full excavation and a programme of post-excavation works may be required.
- 6.3.4 The scope of mitigation should be set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) and agreed upon with the Client and ACAS (Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service) in liaison with HES and the Aberdeenshire Council, prior to mitigation works commencing.
- 6.3.5 The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 and its implications through NPF4, as well as recent guidance from ClfA (2021a) and ALGAO (Mann 2023) have noted the need for public benefit or public engagement in archaeology. HES's Our Past, Our Future (2023) states that 'the historic environment creates real benefits for people', and two of the three priorities of the publication relate to public engagement and public benefit. In this case if a programme of public engagement and/or enhancement were to be considered, engagement could include the dissemination of results through in person, physical and digital medias which allow for further engagement and community talks or local outreach. The scope and requirement of any programme of public benefit should be agreed by the Client and be undertaken in consultation with ACAS. The scope and requirement of any public benefit should be agreed by the Client and be undertaken in consultation with the Client and ACAS.
- 6.3.6 The setting of the surrounding designated assets within the 2km study area are unlikely to be materially impacted by the Proposed Development. Furthermore, the Proposed Development is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on the setting of the 19th century non-designated Westfield (Asset 6).

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7.2 Cartographic References

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Ordnance Survey. 1901. Aberdeenshire Sheet XXXVI.NW Date revised: 1899, Date Published: 1901

Ordnance Survey. 1959. NJ63NE – A Surveyed / Revised: 1955 to 1958, Published: 1959

7.3 Aerial Photography

The following aerial photographs were obtained from the National Collection of Aerial Photography (NCAP website).

Sortie	Finding Aid	Frame	Date
106G/Scot/UK/0130	SCOT B_0060	5068	25 Jun 1946
CPE/Scot/UK/0313	SCOT B_0216	2184 & 3184	8 Mar 1948
542/RAF/0051	SCOT B_0386	F21 0065	27 Sep 1954

Sortie	Frame	Date	Link
MER/041/73	0113	10 August 1973	https://ncap.org.uk/frame/8-110-1-49-113
MER/041/73	0114	10 August 1973	https://ncap.org.uk/frame/8-110-1-49-114
MER/041/73	0119	10 August 1973	https://ncap.org.uk/frame/8-110-1-49-119
MER/041/73	0120	10 August 1973	https://ncap.org.uk/frame/8-110-1-49-120
MER/041/73	0125	10 August 1973	https://ncap.org.uk/frame/8-110-1-49-125
MER/041/73	0126	10 August 1973	https://ncap.org.uk/frame/8-110-1-49-126
MER/041/73	0185	10 August 1973	https://ncap.org.uk/frame/8-110-1-49-185
ASS/61088	0023	14 May 1988	https://ncap.org.uk/frame/8-13-1-30-23

Plates



Plate 1: View north-northeast along the proposed access



Plate 2: View south-southwest along the proposed access towards the road, Middleton Wood on right



Plate 3: View north-northeast over the end of the proposed access; the bulk of the Proposed Development lies behind the fence line



Plate 4: Panoramic view from west to north over the northwest field, showing the substation behind trees on the upper left



Plate 5: Panoramic view from east to south over the Site from the northwest corner



Plate 6: Degraded fence-line between the two north fields, facing southwest



Plate 7: Panoramic view from west to north over the Site from main development area's southeast side



Plate 8: View southwest over the Site from the road to the northeast



Plate 9: View towards the Listed dovecot (Asset 1) from the northwest portion of Site, which lies to the right of the pylon and is screened by intervening topography and woodland



Plate 10: Views towards the Listed dovecot (Asset 1) from along the main development area's southeast Site boundary, which is situated in the central view but is screened by intervening topography and woodland



Plate 11: View northeast from central area of west field, facing croft (Asset 6)

Figures

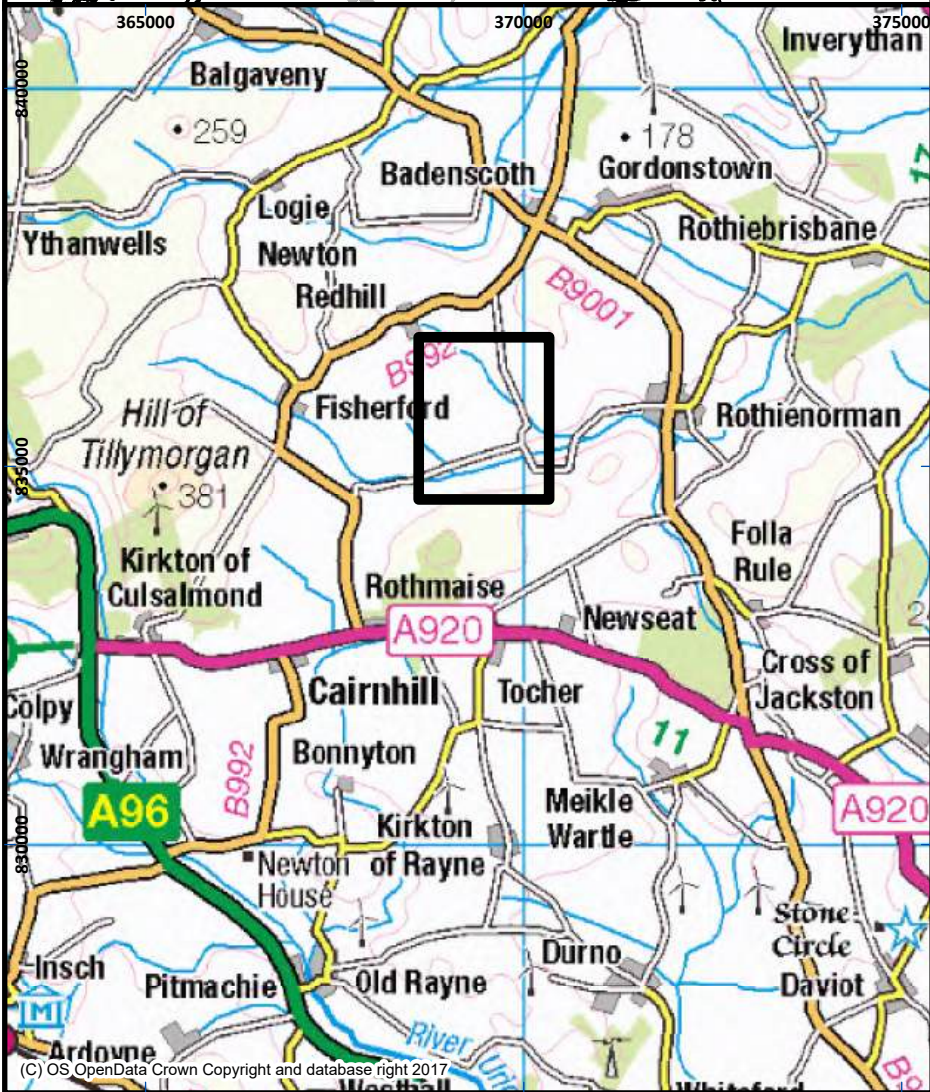
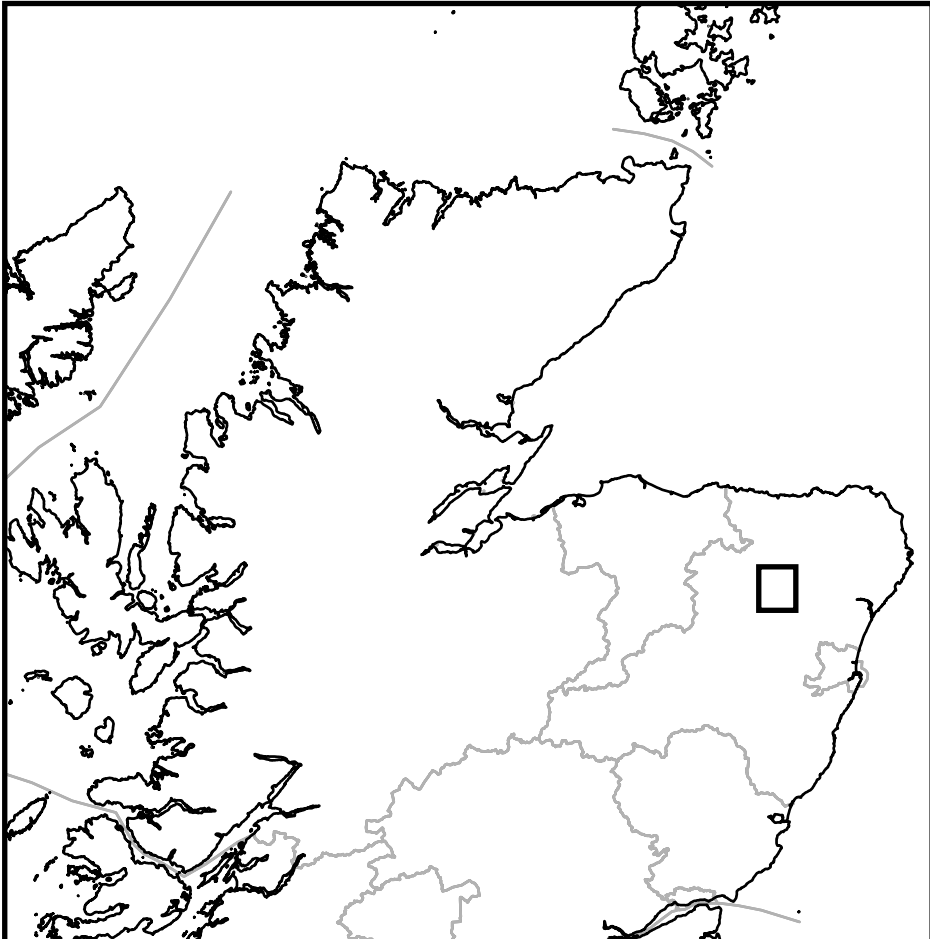



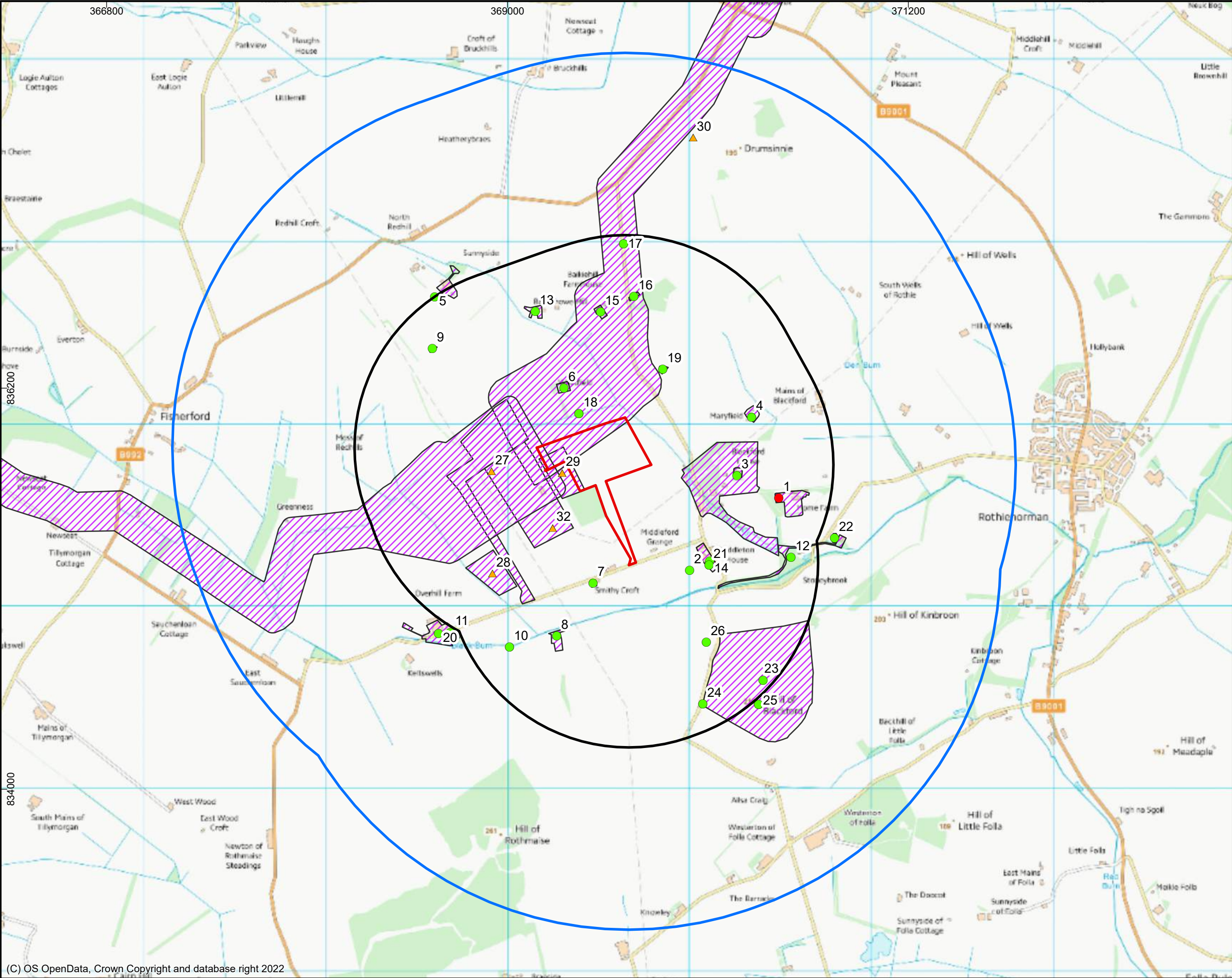


Figure		1
Site Location Plan		
Legend [Red Outline] Site Boundary		
FOR Blackford Renewables Ltd		
Drawn/checked:	CH/TL	
DWG no:	01/28087/HIA/01/02	
AOC Project No.:	28087	
 (C) AOC Archaeology Group 2025		
		
SYSTEM Coordinate System: British National Grid Projection: Transverse Mercator Datum: OSGB 1936		
SCALE 1:8,000 @ A3		
		
Service Layer Credits: OpenStreetMap: © OpenStreetMap (and) contributors,		

C:\Users\calum.hall\OneDrive - AOC Archaeology Group\28087 - Rothienorman_500MW_BESS_GIS - Data Portal\Geodatabases\Current\AOC28087_Working_CH_20250506\AOC28087_Working_CH_20250506.aprx



Heritage Assets within the Site Study Area

- Legend**
- Site Boundary
 - 1km Study Area
 - 2 km Study Area
 - HER Extents
 - Listed Building- Category B
 - Non-designated Heritage Asset
 - Event

FOR
Blackford Renewables Ltd

Drawn/checked:	CH/TL
DWG no:	01/28087/HIA/02/02
AOC Project No.:	28087





SYSTEM
Coordinate System: British National Grid
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: OSGB 1936

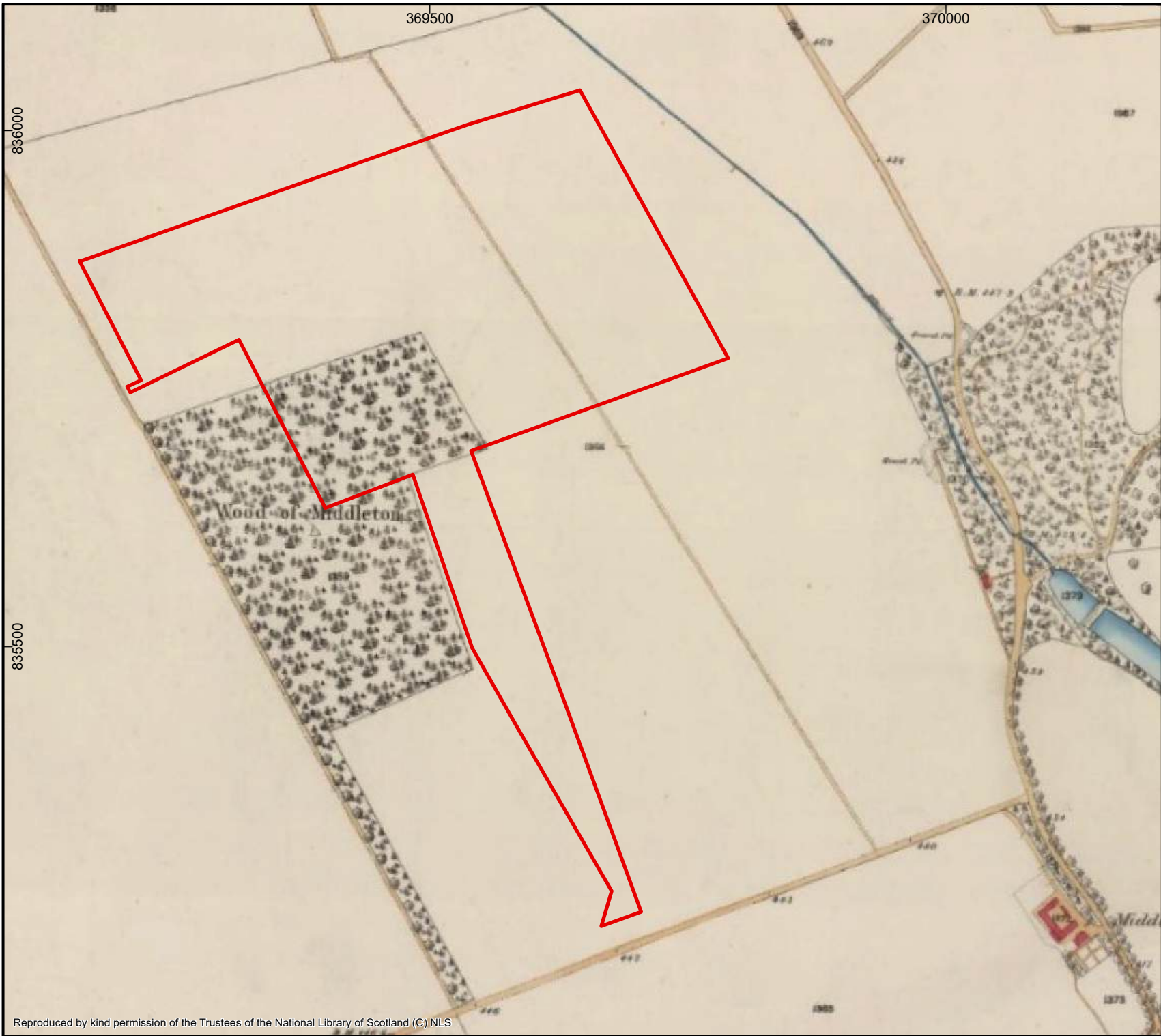
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Figure		3	
Extract from a map by Roy, 1752-1755			
Legend [Red square icon] Approximate Site Location			
FOR Blackford Renewables Ltd			
Drawn/checked:		CH/TL	
DWG no:		01/28087/HIA/03/02	
AOC Project No.:		28087	
 (C) AOC Archaeology Group 2025			
			
SYSTEM			
SCALE		NOT TO SCALE	
SCALE			

Reproduced from the British Library Online- Shelfmark:
Cartographic Items Maps 236.b.72.
Cartographic Items Maps 235.b.91.
Cartographic Items Maps Ref.B.8.(British Isles)(13.)



Figure

4

Extract from the OS 1871
25-inch map

Legend

 Site Boundary

FOR
Blackford Renewables Ltd

Drawn/checked:	CH/TL
DWG no:	01/28087/HIA/04/02
AOC Project No.:	28087



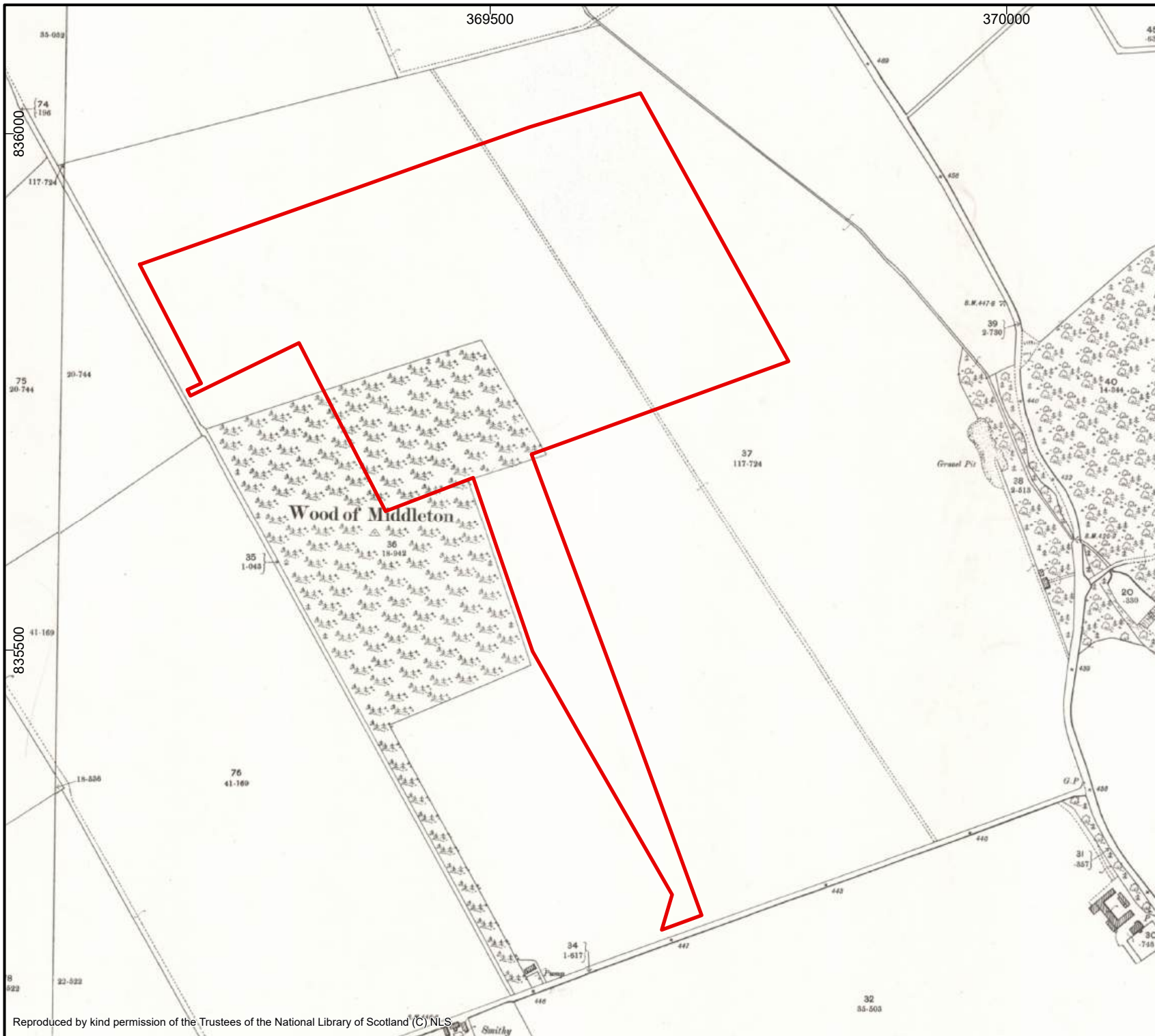
(C) AOC Archaeology Group 2025



SYSTEM
Coordinate System: British National Grid
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: OSGB 1936

SCALE
1:5,000 @ A4





Figure

5

Extract from the OS 1901
25-inch map

Legend

 Site Boundary

FOR
Blackford Renewables Ltd

Drawn/checked:	CH/TL
DWG no:	01/28087/HIA/05/02
AOC Project No.:	28087

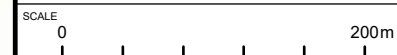


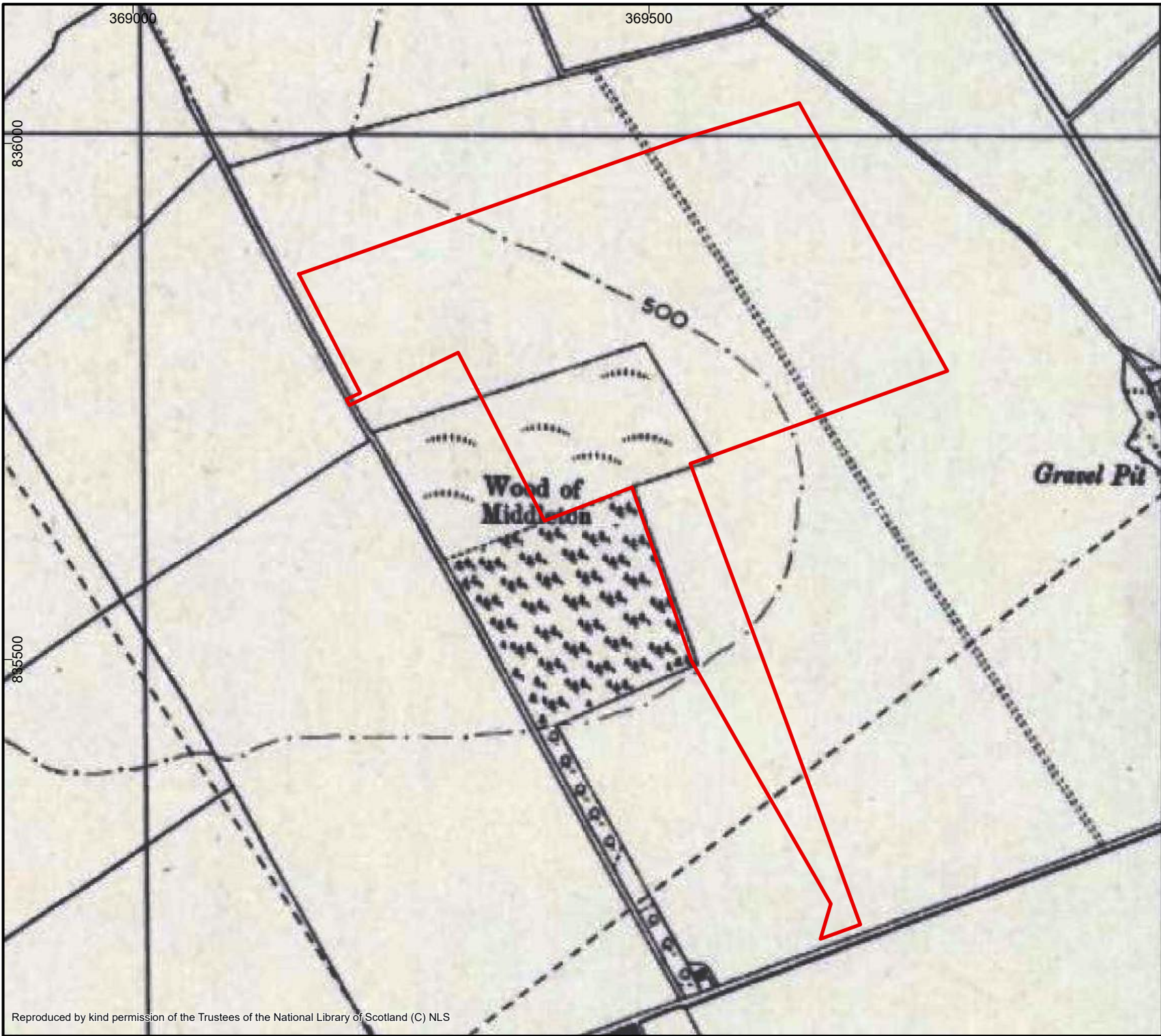
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SYSTEM
Coordinate System: British National Grid
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: OSGB 1936

SCALE
1:5,000 @ A4






Figure

6

Extract from the OS A Series
1959 map

Legend

 Site Boundary

FOR
Blackford Renewables Ltd

Drawn/checked:	CH/TL
DWG no:	01/28087/HIA/06/02
AOC Project No.:	28087

AOC
Archaeology
Group
(C) AOC Archaeology Group 2025



SYSTEM
Coordinate System: British National Grid
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: OSGB 1936

SCALE
1:5,000 @ A4

SCALE
0 200m



Service Layer Credits: Maxar, Microsoft

Figure

7

Extract from Satellite Imagery,
May 2016

Legend

 Site Boundary

FOR
Blackford Renewables Ltd

Drawn/checked:	CH/TL
DWG no:	01/28087/HIA/07/02
AOC Project No.:	28087



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SYSTEM
Coordinate System: British National Grid
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: OSGB 1936

SCALE
1:10,000 @ A4



Appendix 1: Asset Gazetteer

Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and Event



Asset/Event Number	1
Asset/Event Name	HOME FARM OF BLACKFORD, DOVECOT.
Type of Asset/Event	Listed Building
Listing No./NRHE Number	LB3027; NJ73NW 51
HER Number	NJ73NW0061; NJ73NW0056
Status	Listed Building- Category B
Easting	370489
Northing	835597
Parish	Auchterless
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	18th century circular, harled with rat course, conical roof with cock vane. Stone boxes in upper part.

Statement of Special Interest

Blackford House severe early 19th century whinstone has been reduced to single storey Old walled garden rubble in thin courses.

HER Record 13/12/2013- Farmstead, still in use, depicted on historic OS maps. The 1st edition (25 inch, surveyed 1867) shows an E-plan steading, open to the south with a horsemill within the western court and a rectangular building on the south side of the east court. To the south are two rectangular buildings and an L-plan building, with a walled garden to the south. Two smaller buildings are situated to the east of the steading, and a dovecot in the open area to the west of the steading. The layout is essentially unchanged on the 2nd edition (25inch, published 1901) although the horsemill is no longer shown and there had been some alterations and additions of small structures to the south. Current maps indicate some subsequent relatively minor changes. The dovecot (Listed Grade B) is 18th century in date, circular, harled with a rat course and conical roof with cock vane. There are stone boxes in the upper part.

HER Record 21/05/2020-Farmstead, in use, depicted on the 1st and 2nd edition OS maps. U-plan steading, open to the south east, building and dam to the southwest.

Asset/Event Number	2
Asset/Event Name	Middleton Of Blackford
Type of Asset/Event	Chimney (Period Unassigned), Farmhouse (Period Unassigned), Farmstead (Period Unassigned)
Listing No./NRHE Number	NJ73NW 18
HER Number	NJ73NW0017
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	370000
Northing	835200
Parish	Auchterless
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	(Location cited as NJ 701 352). Farm chimney of mid 19th century date. A neat circular-section brick chimney on a square stone base. A rarity in Aberdeenshire. J R Hume 1977.

Hume, J R. (1977a) The industrial archaeology of Scotland, 2, the Highlands and Islands. London. Page(s): 91 RCAHMS Shelf Number: J.4.11.HUM

HER Record 21/05/2014-Farm chimney of mid 19th century date. It is a neat circular-section brick chimney on a square stone base, a rarity in Aberdeenshire. Part of the farmstead of Middleton of Blackford (NJ73NW0034)

Asset/Event Number	3
Asset/Event Name	Blackford
Type of Asset/Event	Country House (Period Unassigned)
Listing No./NRHE Number	NJ73NW 23
HER Number	NJ73NW0032; NJ73NW0019
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	370260
Northing	835720
Parish	Auchterless
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	<p>(Location cited as NJ 7026 3572). Blackford (mentioned in 1654, 1702 and 1723). Site of manor; remains of mansion house. Writing in 1723, William Walker reported that 'Blakfoord is a pretty new house, built after the English modell, anno MDCCXXII...'. It then belonged to Alexander Forbes, whose father had bought the estate of Blackford from his father-in-law, Alexander Gellie, in c. 1702. A possession of the Forbeses until 1851, it appears that during the 16th century and probably earlier, Blackford had belonged to a branch of the garden family.</p> <p>Early in the 19th century, Alexander Forbes' 'fine new house' seems to have been replaced by a new mansion; unroofed in the 1940's, the central portion of this has since been converted for use as a modern house.</p> <p>[Additional bibliography cited].</p> <p>NMRS, MS/712/95.</p> <p>W Kennedy 1818; J Robertson 1818.</p> <p>NMRS REFERENCE:</p> <p>Auchterlees, Blackford Home Farmhouse was reduced to single storey. Information from Demolitions catalogue held in RCAHMS Library.</p> <p>Bogdan and Bryce, N and I B D. (1991) 'Castles, manors and 'town houses' survey', Discovery Excav Scot, 1991. Page(s): 25</p> <p>Coventry, M. (2008) Castles of the Clans: the strongholds and seats of 750 Scottish families and clans. Musselburgh. Page(s): 202,217,219 RCAHMS Shelf Number: F.5.21.COV</p> <p>Kennedy, W. (1818) Annals of Aberdeen from the reign of William the Lion to 1818; with an account of the city, cathedral and university. Aberdeen. Page(s): vol. ii, 491, 493</p> <p>Robertson, J. (1843) Collections for a History of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff, Spalding Club. Aberdeen. Page(s): 507-8</p> <p>Scottish Castle Survey. (1988) 'A directory of the owners and occupiers of the castles, manors and 'town houses' {c.1050-c.1707} of Scotland: Grampian Region'. Aberdeen. Page(s): 9, no.9/3 RCAHMS Shelf Number: B.2.1.CAS</p> <p>HER Record 22/05/2014- Remains of a 17th to 19th century designed landscape of Blackford House</p>

HER Record 08/01/2020- Remains of mansion house and site of manor. The U-plan house is depicted on the OS 1st and 2nd edition maps, but is mentioned from at least 1654. Writing in 1723, William Walker reported that 'Blakfoord is a pretty new house, built after the English modell, anno MDCCXXII'. It then belonged to Alexander Forbes, whose father has bought the estate of Blackford from his father-in-law Alexander Gellie in circa 1702. A possession of the Forbeses until 1851, it appears that during the 16th century and probably earlier, Blackford had belonged to a branch of the Garden family. Early in the 19th century, Alexander Forbes's 'fine new house' seems to have been replaced by a new mansion. It was unroofed in the 1940s, the central portion of this has since been converted for use as a modern house. A stone lined ice-house lies in the grounds near to the main house.

Asset/Event Number	4
Asset/Event Name	Maryfield
Type of Asset/Event	Farmhouse (Period Unassigned)
Listing No./NRHE Number	NJ73NW 35
HER Number	NJ73NW0063
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	370340
Northing	836040
Parish	Auchterless
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	No further information recorded on Canmore https://canmore.org.uk/site/161482/maryfield

HER Record 28/06/2018- Farmstead, still in use, depicted on historic OS maps. It is shown on the 1st edition OS map as a quadrangular steading with an opening at the eastern corner. There is an attached horsemill to the north and two associated buildings to the north and east. On the 2nd edition OS map buildings have been added to the east and west. Current OS maps show the steading has been altered to U-plan, with some sections roofless. The horsemill, building to the west and one of the buildings to the east have been removed. The remaining building to the east is depicted as roofless and there are alterations to the building to the north.

Asset/Event Number	5
Asset/Event Name	East Redhill
Type of Asset/Event	Farmhouse (Period Unassigned), Farmstead (Period Unassigned)
Listing No./NRHE Number	NJ63NE 18
HER Number	NJ63NE0041
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	368600
Northing	836700
Parish	Auchterless
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	HER Record 05/05/2010-The farmstead is still in use. It is depicted on the first edition OS map of 1867 as a U-shaped steading open to the northeast with an L-shaped steading to the northeast, three rectangular buildings and enclosure to the southeast and a sluice to the north.

By the second edition map of 1888, the L-shaped steading has been removed, while the north wing of the U-shaped steading has been extended southeastwards. The three buildings to the southeast have been replaced by an L-shaped farmhouse, and the sluice is depicted as a milldam. The original steadings and farmhouse appear to survive, but new buildings have been added to the north, west and east

Asset/Event Number	6
Asset/Event Name	Westfield
Type of Asset/Event	Farmhouse (Period Unassigned)
Listing No./NRHE Number	NJ63NE 24
HER Number	NJ83NE0168
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	369310
Northing	836200
Parish	Auchterless
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	<p>HER Record 18/01/2021- Farmstead still in use. On the 1867 1st edition OS map this is shown as a C-shaped building with a smaller L-shaped building to the east. The larger building has a square enclosure attached to it on the south. The 1888 2nd edition OS map shows that the north wing of the larger building has been extended and has no enclosure to the south, but there is a square enclosure to the north of the building. The smaller building has a square enclosure attached to the east and a possible horse-mill. Both of these buildings are shown on the modern OS maps in modified form.</p> <p>Desk Based Assessment (May 2010 - June 2013)</p> <p>CFA Archaeology Ltd undertook an assessment of the existing baseline conditions present at the proposed substation site in terms of cultural heritage interests.</p> <p>A desk study and field survey identified no features of cultural heritage interest within the proposed development site. Twenty undesignated archaeological features and sites were identified within 1km of the centre of the proposed substation, relating mostly to medieval and later settlement and land use but also providing evidence of prehistoric activity in the landscape. Three statutorily protected receptors within 3km of the proposed site were also identified as having the potential to experience adverse effects through changes to their settings.</p> <p>Overall, the construction and operation of the proposed Rothienorman substation would not cause any significant effect on cultural heritage assets.</p> <p>Funder: Scottish and Southern Energy</p> <p>CFA Archaeology Ltd</p>

Asset/Event Number	7
Asset/Event Name	Blackford Smithy
Type of Asset/Event	Smithy (Period Unassigned)
Listing No./NRHE Number	NJ63NE 25

HER Number	NJ63NE0074
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	369470
Northing	835130
Parish	Auchterless
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	No further information recorded on Canmore- https://canmore.org.uk/site/160681/blackford-smithy HER Record 17/01/2023- Site of a smithy depicted on historic OS maps. The 1st edition shows a group of three rectangular buildings arranged in a U-plan around a garden area. The 2nd edition also shows a well. The present building on the site, named Smithy Croft, appears to be modern.

Asset/Event Number	8
Asset/Event Name	Oldmill
Type of Asset/Event	Farmhouse (Period Unassigned)
Listing No./NRHE Number	NJ63SE 143
HER Number	NJ63SE0083
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	369270
Northing	834840
Parish	Rayne
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	NJ63SE 143 6927 3484

This farmstead is situated on the S bank of the Black Burn and comprises the ruins of a farmhouse standing immediately N of the heavily disturbed footings of a roughly U-plan steading. The farmhouse measures 13.4m from NNW to SSE by 6m transversely over walls 0.5m in thickness. The walls still stand to their full height (2.6m along the sides) everywhere except the SSE gable, which has been almost entirely removed to allow the insertion of an entrance 3.3m wide. There is a central doorway and flanking windows in the ENE side and a window midway along the WSW side. A doorway, which is set towards the SSE end of the WSW side, probably originally led into a scullery of which there is now no trace, but which is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Aberdeenshire, 1873, sheet xxxvi). The NNW gable contains fireplaces at both ground-floor and attic level, the former being flanked on the WSW by an alcove and on the ENE by a window.

The U-plan steading was open-sided to the N, and its W wing was twice the length of its E wing. The 1st edition of the OS map shows a horse-engine attached to the S end of the E wing, but this had been removed by the end of the 19th century and is not shown on the 2nd edition of the map (1901, sheet xxxvi.NW). Nothing is now visible of the small building that is depicted on the 2nd edition of the map immediately W of the range.

Visited by RCAHMS (JRS), 13 May 1999.

HER Record 22/10/2020- Remains of a farmstead, depicted on the 1st edition OS map of 1873 as a U-shaped steading open to the north with a horse-engine attached to the southeast corner and a farmhouse, with enclosed garden area, and well to the north. On the 2nd edition, the horse-engine is not depicted but new buildings have been added to the west of the steading

and to the northeast of the farmhouse. The farmhouse is depicted on the current edition (2006) as incomplete. The footings of the steading survive, but are not depicted on the map.

Asset/Event Number	9
Asset/Event Name	REDHILL
Type of Asset/Event	Earthwork
Listing No./NRHE Number	
HER Number	NJ63NE0040
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	368588
Northing	836417
Parish	
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	A gravel pit is depicted on the second edition OS map of 1888. It is depicted on the current edition (2006) as a disused pit.

Asset/Event Number	10
Asset/Event Name	OLDMILL
Type of Asset/Event	Documentary Record Only
Listing No./NRHE Number	
HER Number	NJ63SE0084
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	369011
Northing	834779
Parish	
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	Site of a now removed boundary stone which is shown only on the 2nd edition OS map. It marked part of the boundary between the former parishes of Auchterless to the north and Rayne to the south.

Asset/Event Number	11
Asset/Event Name	OVERHILL
Type of Asset/Event	Standing Structure
Listing No./NRHE Number	
HER Number	NJ63SE0086
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	368688
Northing	834860

Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and Event

Parish

Council

Aberdeenshire

Description

Farmstead still in use which is shown on the OS maps from the 1st edition map onwards. On the 1st edition map it is depicted as a collection of eight buildings. The steading is a modified U-shaped building, with the court open to the south-west and extensions on the gables of both wings. There are two small T-shaped buildings, the western of which has an attached enclosure. There is another enclosure to the south of the buildings. A pond with sluice is shown to the west of the quarry which is immediately north-west of the farm buildings. By the 2nd edition map most of the smaller buildings have been removed. There are two smaller buildings to the south of the quarry and a building to the south-east of the steading. The steading itself has been further modified and is almost completely enclosed apart from an opening in the south. The pond is marked as having a dam. The 2006 map shows that the buildings survive in use in modified condition and that the pond has been drained, but that its site has not been redeveloped.

Asset/Event Number

12

Asset/Event Name

MILL OF BLACKFORD

Type of Asset/Event

Mill

Listing No./NRHE Number

HER Number

NJ73NW0051

Status

Non-designated Heritage Asset

Easting

370556

Northing

835272

Parish

Council

Aberdeenshire

Description

Former corn mill, shown on the OS maps from the 1st edition onwards. On the 1st edition map it is shown as an L-shaped building and a long rectangular building. To the west is a pond with a sluice connected to a long lade which joins up to the ornamental cascade of ponds from the house of Blackford. By the 2nd edition map the pond at the foot of the cascade has been drained and the long rectangular building has been partially removed. The 2006 map shows that the mill building is still in use, probably in use as a residence.

Asset/Event Number

13

Asset/Event Name

BAIKIEHOWE MILL

Type of Asset/Event

Mill

Listing No./NRHE Number

HER Number

NJ63NE0054

Status

Non-designated Heritage Asset

Easting

369152

Northing

836621

Parish

Council

Aberdeenshire

Description

Farmstead depicted on historic OS maps.

Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and Event



Asset/Event Number	14
Asset/Event Name	Middleton Of Blackford
Type of Asset/Event	Farmstead (Period Unassigned)
Listing No./NRHE Number	
HER Number	NJ73NW0034
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	370110
Northing	835250
Parish	
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	HER Record 22/10/2020-Farmstead still in use. The 1st edition OS map (surveyed 1867) shows a U-plan steading with court open to the north-east, and a smaller rectangular building on the northeast side of the court. To the southeast is a rectangular building with garden enclosure. By the 2nd edition OS map the layout is essentially unchanged although another building has been added to the southwest side of the steading. The farmstead is noted as having a circular-section brick chimney on a square stone base (NJ73NW0017), which appears to be at the outer south corner of the U-plan steading. Modern OS maps show these two buildings as in use, but both have been modified.

Asset/Event Number	15
Asset/Event Name	BAIKIEHILL
Type of Asset/Event	FARMSTEADS, HORSE-MILLS, PUMPS
Listing No./NRHE Number	
HER Number	NJ63NE0093
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	369511
Northing	836618
Parish	
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	Farmstead depicted on historic OS maps. The 1st edition shows a shallow U-plan steading, open to the southwest, with an attached horsemill on the northeast. To the southeast is a square garden. By the time of the 2nd edition the northwest wing of the steading had been extended and a rectangular building added to the southeast. A pump is also shown beside the steading. The horsemill has since been removed and there have been further alterations and additions.

Asset/Event Number	16
Asset/Event Name	BAIKIEHILL CROFT
Type of Asset/Event	Standing Structure
Listing No./NRHE Number	
HER Number	NJ63NE0098

Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and Event



Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	369694
Northing	836703
Parish	
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	Small croft depicted on the OS 1st and 2nd edition maps. They show a long building of two compartments with a pump to the southwest.

Asset/Event Number	17
Asset/Event Name	BAIKIEHILL
Type of Asset/Event	Pump (Destroyed)
Listing No./NRHE Number	
HER Number	NJ63NE0099
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	369637
Northing	836992
Parish	
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	Site of a pump depicted on the OS 2nd edition map. Nothing was visible during walkover survey in 2021 by Mott Macdonald in advance of 33kV refurbishment works (NJ63NE0097).

Asset/Event Number	18
Asset/Event Name	WESTFIELD
Type of Asset/Event	STONES
Listing No./NRHE Number	
HER Number	NJ63NE0100
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	369392
Northing	836060
Parish	
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	Large pile of irregular stones, heavily overgrown, recorded during walkover survey in 2021 by Mott Macdonald in advance of 33kV refurbishment works (NJ63NE0097). It is likely to be modern, possibly related to the nearby track.

Asset/Event Number	19
Asset/Event Name	WESTFIELD
Type of Asset/Event	QUARRIES

Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and Event

Listing No./NRHE Number

HER Number NJ63NE0101

Status Non-designated Heritage Asset

Easting 369852

Northing 836303

Parish

Council Aberdeenshire

Description Remains of a quarry which is depicted on the OS 1st and 2nd edition maps. Recorded during walkover survey in 2021 by Mott Macdonald in advance of 33kV refurbishment works (NJ63NE0097). Now full of modern debris.

Asset/Event Number 20

Asset/Event Name OVERHILL

Type of Asset/Event DAMS, ENCLOSURES, FARMSTEADS, PONDS, SLUICES

Listing No./NRHE Number

HER Number NJ63SE0086

Status Non-designated Heritage Asset

Easting 368621

Northing 834854

Parish

Council Aberdeenshire

Description Farmstead still in use which is shown on the OS maps from the 1st edition map onwards. On the 1st edition map it is depicted as a collection of eight buildings. The steading is a modified U-shaped building, with the court open to the south-west and extensions on the gables of both wings. There are two small T-shaped buildings, the western of which has an attached enclosure. There is another enclosure to the south of the buildings. A pond with sluice is shown to the west of the quarry which is immediately north-west of the farm buildings. By the 2nd edition map most of the smaller buildings have been removed. There are two smaller buildings to the south of the quarry and a building to the south-east of the steading. The steading itself has been further modified and is almost completely enclosed apart from an opening in the south. The pond is marked as having a dam. The 2006 map shows that the buildings survive in use in modified condition and that the pond has been drained, but that its site has not been redeveloped.

Asset/Event Number 21

Asset/Event Name MIDDLETON OF BLACKFORD

Type of Asset/Event CHIMNEYS

Listing No./NRHE Number

HER Number NJ73NW0017

Status Non-designated Heritage Asset

Easting 370106

Northing 835229

Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and Event



Parish**Council**

Aberdeenshire

Description

Farm chimney of mid 19th century date. It is a neat circular-section brick chimney on a square stone base, a rarity in Aberdeenshire. Part of the farmstead of Middleton of Blackford (NJ73NW0034)

Asset/Event Number

22

Asset/Event Name

MILL OF BLACKFORD

Type of Asset/Event

QUARRIES

Listing No./NRHE Number**HER Number**

NJ73NW0052

Status

Non-designated Heritage Asset

Easting

370795

Northing

835378

Parish**Council**

Aberdeenshire

Description

Remains of a quarry depicted on the OS 2nd edition map.

Asset/Event Number

23

Asset/Event Name

HILL OF BLACKFORD

Type of Asset/Event

RIG & FURROW

Listing No./NRHE Number**HER Number**

NJ73SW0020

Status

Non-designated Heritage Asset

Easting

370403

Northing

834598

Parish**Council**

Aberdeenshire

Description

A large area of rig and furrow covering all of hill and slopes to the north. The hill was afforested on both 1st and 2nd edition OS maps.

Asset/Event Number

24

Asset/Event Name

HILL OF BLACKFORD

Type of Asset/Event

STONES (Destroyed)

Listing No./NRHE Number**HER Number**

NJ73SW0075

Status

Non-designated Heritage Asset

Easting

370072

Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and Event

Northings	834467
Parish	
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	Site of a boundary stone which is shown on both the 1st and 2nd edition OS maps. It marked a point on the former parish boundaries of Rayne to the west and Fyvie to the east.

Asset/Event Number	25
Asset/Event Name	HILL OF BLACKFORD
Type of Asset/Event	GROOVES, INSCRIPTIONS, STONES
Listing No./NRHE Number	
HER Number	NJ73SW0076
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	370378
Northings	834464
Parish	
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	Two boundary stones. The stone on the eastern slope is shown on the OS maps from the 1st edition map onwards. When visited by the RCAHMS in 1999 they were recorded as being of granite, rectangular in section and having the letter 'W' incised on the south face, standing for the Warthill estate and 'B' incised on the north face, standing for the Blackford estate. The stone on the summit of the hill measured 0.65 m high, 0.31 m breadth and 0.2 m thick and has a groove across the top indicating that the march runs east-west. The stone on the eastern slope is 0.44 m high, has the same breadth and thickness and lettering but no groove.

Asset/Event Number	26
Asset/Event Name	HILL OF BLACKFORD
Type of Asset/Event	COTTAGES (Destroyed)
Listing No./NRHE Number	
HER Number	NJ73SW0097
Status	Non-designated Heritage Asset
Easting	370091
Northings	834806
Parish	
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	Documentary Record Only

Asset/Event Number	27
Asset/Event Name	WESTFIELD, BLACKFORD
Type of Asset/Event	Evaluation

Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and Event



Listing No./NRHE Number

HER Number NJ63NE0087

Status Event

Easting 368912

Northing 835744

Parish

Council Aberdeenshire

Description A trial trenching evaluation was carried out by CFA in October and November 2022 in advance of the construction of a grid stability facility at land west of Westfield Blackford, Rothienorman. Historic map evidence suggests that this area was unimproved hill ground up until the period of agricultural improvements during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The evaluation covered 10 percent of the site area and identified two possible pits. A sherd of pottery recovered from the upper surface of one of these pits is believed to be of early prehistoric date. No further features were identified. An early prehistoric pit was also identified during the 2013 evaluation carried out within the adjacent area (NJ63NE0044).

Asset/Event Number 28

Asset/Event Name OVERHILL FARM, ROTHIENORMAN

Type of Asset/Event Evaluation

Listing No./NRHE Number

HER Number NJ63NE0088

Status Event

Easting 368918

Northing 835183

Parish

Council Aberdeenshire

Description A trial trenching evaluation was carried out by AOC Archaeology in March 2023 ahead of a proposed battery energy storage system. A total of 21 trenches were excavated across the development site but no archaeological features or artefacts were identified.

Asset/Event Number 29

Asset/Event Name WOOD OF MIDDLETON

Type of Asset/Event Evaluation

Listing No./NRHE Number

HER Number NJ63NE0089

Status Event

Easting 369300

Northing 835734

Parish

Council Aberdeenshire

Description A trial trenching evaluation was carried out by AOC Archaeology in March 2023 ahead of

Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and Event



proposed development. A total of 18 trenches were excavated across the area but no archaeological features or artefacts were identified.

Asset/Event Number	30
Asset/Event Name	GORDONSTOWN - ROTHENORMAN
Type of Asset/Event	Desk-based assessment; walkover survey
Listing No./NRHE Number	
HER Number	NJ63NE0097
Status	Event
Easting	370019
Northing	837574
Parish	
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	Desk-based assessment and walkover survey was carried out by Mott MacDonald in 2021 ahead of refurbishment works to the 33kV electricity network. A number of new features were identified: NJ73NW0090, NJ73NW0092, NJ73NW0093, NJ73NW0094, NJ73NW0095, NJ63NE0100, NJ63NE0101.

Asset/Event Number	31
Asset/Event Name	GLENS OF FOUHLAND - ROTHENORMAN
Type of Asset/Event	Desk-based assessment; walkover survey
Listing No./NRHE Number	
HER Number	NJ64NW0147
Status	Event
Easting	364507
Northing	835306
Parish	
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	Desk-based assessment and walkover survey was carried out by Mott MacDonald in 2022 ahead of refurbishment works to the 33kV electricity network. A total of 45 potential heritage assets were identified within the study area. Walkover survey recorded a number of known sites: NJ63NW0019, NJ63NW0020, NJ63SW0170, NJ63SW0184, NJ63SW0081, NJ63SW0191, NJ63NW0015. And identified a number of new features: NJ63SW0219, NJ63NE0090, NJ63NE0092, NJ63NE0094, NJ63NE0095, NJ63NE0096, NJ63SW0220, NJ63NW0081, NJ63NW0082, NJ63NW0083, NJ63SW0221, NJ63SW0222, NJ63NW0084.

Asset/Event Number	32
Asset/Event Name	Westfield
Type of Asset/Event	Pit (Period Unassigned)
Listing No./NRHE Number	

HER Number	NJ63NE 53
Status	Event
Easting	369248
Northing	835433
Parish	Auchterlees
Council	Aberdeenshire
Description	Archaeological Evaluation (14 October 2013 - 12 November 2013)

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at the site of a proposed

electricity substation to the west of the village of Rothienorman, as commissioned by Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) and required by Aberdeenshire Council.

A total of 152 trenches were opened across the site, with 98 in the south field (Field 1) and 54 in the north field (Field 2); a comprehensive sampling of 9% of the total area of the site was examined.

The sole feature of any potential archaeological significance was the cut feature 117004 in Tr.117 containing mottled soil and charcoal 117003; its age and function are uncertain.

Given the almost complete absence of significant material discovered within the assessment trenches, it is suggested that no further archaeological input is required in the field.

Information from Amey.

Project (6 December 2021 - 9 December 2021)

NJ 68971 35520 to NJ 71060 39340 Mott MacDonald were commissioned to provide historic environment advice in relation to the installation of a 33kv underground cable between Rothienorman and Gordonstown in Aberdeenshire.

The historic environment desk study and associated walkover survey identified a total of 19 possible heritage assets within the 100m study area surrounding the proposed UG cable route, and one outside of this. The assets ranged from farmsteads and buildings still in use to clearance cairns and disused 19th century pumps.

Information from J. Moorhouse - Mott MacDonald Ltd.

OASIS ID: mottmacd2-435776

Field Visit (6 December 2021 - 9 December 2021)

Gordonstown, Rothienorman

NJ 69143 35568 Site currently occupied by Rothienorman GSP. Nothing visible during walkover survey.

Information from J. Moorhouse - Mott MacDonald Ltd.

OASIS ID: mottmacd2-435776

Appendix 2: Assessment Scope and Criteria

ASSESSMENT SCOPE & CRITERIA

Scope of the Assessment

This report details the results of a Heritage Impact Assessment and aims to identify and map the nature of the heritage resource within the site and surrounding study area. Where possible, the assessment will evaluate the likely impact from Proposed Development, upon the known and potential heritage resource.

This report will include recommendations for mitigation measures and / or further archaeological works; where the archaeological potential of the site warrants, or where additional information on the site is required.

Further works could include additional research, monitoring of geotechnical investigations, programmes of archaeological surveying and / or field evaluation. The results of any further studies can be used to inform the nature of any subsequent mitigation measures (if required) and provide advice upon the scope and design of the Proposed Development.

The assessment has used the sources listed in the main text to identify and map heritage assets and other relevant find spots or evidence within the site and defined study area. Heritage assets are defined in national planning guidance and can include designated assets (Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings etc.), standing, buried or submerged remains, historic buildings and structures, parks and gardens and areas, sites and landscapes - whether designated or not.

Assessment Criteria

Archaeological Potential

Consideration of archaeological potential will be informed by the number, density and distribution of known heritage assets of a specific period and/or type within the Study Area. The proximity of such assets to the Site and/or the similarities/dissimilarities in topographical location between the Site and the location of known assets will also be a factor in determining potential. Previous land use on the Site will also be a consideration in assessing potential, as later disturbance may have removed or damaged earlier buried archaeological remains and therefore may have reduced the potential for archaeological remains to survive on Site. Consideration will also be given to evidence from landform change in the study area and the possibility that natural deposits such as colluvium or alluvium may have buried archaeological remains. The potential for surviving archaeological evidence of past activity within the Site is expressed in the report as ranging between the scales of:

- High – The available evidence suggests a high likelihood for past activity within the site and a strong potential for archaeological evidence to survive intact or reasonably intact;
- Medium – The available evidence suggests a reasonable likelihood for past activity within the site and consequently there is a potential that archaeological evidence could survive.
- Low – The available evidence suggests archaeological evidence of activity is unlikely to survive within the site, although some minor land-use may have occurred.
- Uncertain - Insufficient information to assess.

Buried archaeological evidence is, by its very nature, an unknown quantity which can never be 100% identified through desk-based assessment. The assessed potential is based on available evidence but the physical nature and extent of any archaeological resource surviving within the site cannot be confirmed without detailed information on the below ground deposits or results of on-site fieldwork.

Where known heritage assets are identified, the importance of such assets is determined by reference to existing designations where available. For assets where no designation has been assigned, an informed assessment has been made of the likely historic, artistic, or archaeological importance of that resource based on professional knowledge and judgement.

Adjustments to the classification (Table 2, below) are occasionally made, where appropriate; for some types of finds or assets where there is no consistent value, and the importance may vary. Levels of importance for any such areas are generally assigned on an individual basis, based on professional judgement and advice.

TABLE 1: Assessing the Importance of a Heritage Assets	
HIGH	Assets of high importance and rarity and those considered to be important at a national level., e.g. Scheduled Monuments (or non-designated assets of schedulable quality and importance), Category A Listed Buildings, Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes and Inventory Battlefields. Well preserved historic landscapes, whether inscribed or not, with exceptional coherence, time depth, or other critical factor(s).
MEDIUM	Assets of medium importance and rarity and those considered to be important at a regional level. Designated or non-designated assets including Category B and C Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas; well preserved structures or buildings of historical significance, historic landscapes or assets of a reasonably defined extent and significance, or reasonable evidence of occupation / settlement, ritual, industrial activity etc. Examples may include burial sites, deserted medieval villages, Roman roads and dense scatters of finds.
LOW	Assets of low importance and rarity and those considered to be important at a local level. Locally listed buildings or non-designated assets with some evidence of human activity which have the potential to contribute to local research objectives, structures or buildings of potential historical merit. Examples include assets such as historic field systems and boundaries, agricultural features such as ridge and furrow, etc.
NEGLECTIBLE	Assets of very low importance which are common. Heritage assets with very little or no surviving archaeological interest or buildings and landscapes of no historical significance. Examples include destroyed antiquities, buildings of no architectural merit, or relatively modern landscape features such as quarries, field boundaries, drains and ponds etc.
UNKNOWN	Insufficient information exists to assess the importance of a feature (e.g. unidentified features on aerial photographs).

The likely magnitude of the impact of the Proposed Development works is determined by identifying the level of change from the Proposed Development upon the 'baseline' conditions of the Site and the heritage resource identified in the assessment. This effect can be either adverse (negative), beneficial (positive) or neutral. The criteria for assessing the magnitude of impact are set out in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2: Criteria for Determining Magnitude of Impact	
LEVEL OF MAGNITUDE	DEFINITION
ADVERSE	
HIGH	Considerable impacts fundamentally changing the baseline condition of the receptor, leading to total or considerable alteration of the asset or its setting – e.g. complete or almost complete destruction of the archaeological resource; dramatic visual intrusion into the setting of the asset resulting in considerable adverse change; significant increase in noise or changes in sound quality; extensive changes to use. Considerable impacts to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, Inventory Battlefields, Listed Buildings, Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes, and World Heritage Sites.
MEDIUM	Impacts changing the baseline condition of the receptor materially but not entirely, leading to partial alteration of the asset or its setting – e.g. a large proportion of the archaeological resource damaged or destroyed; visual intrusion into key aspects of the setting of the asset; and changes in noise levels or use of an asset that would result in detrimental changes to character.
LOW	Detectable impacts which alter the baseline condition of the receptor to a small degree – e.g. a small proportion of the surviving archaeological resource is damaged or destroyed; minor severance, change to the setting or structure or increase in noise; and limited encroachment into character of a historic landscape.
NEGLIGIBLE	Barely distinguishable adverse change from baseline conditions, where there would be very little appreciable impact on a known asset, possibly because of distance from the development, method of construction or landscape or ecological planting, that are thought to have no long term effect on the significance of the asset.
NEUTRAL	
NEUTRAL	A change to the asset or its setting which does not result in harm or benefit. This may occur where there is a perceptible change, but that change does not diminish or enhance the significance of the asset or the ability to appreciate its significance
BENEFICIAL	
NEGLIGIBLE	Barely distinguishable beneficial change from baseline conditions, where there would be very little appreciable impact on a known asset and little long-term effect on the significance of the asset.
LOW	Minimal enhancement to an asset or its setting, such as removal of minor inappropriate features, limited improvements to setting or reduction in severance; slight changes in noise or sound quality; minor changes to use; resulting in a small improvement which would lead to enhancement of the ability to appreciate the significance of an asset.
MEDIUM	Changes to key attributes of an asset or its setting resulting in material enhancements which allow for greater appreciation of the asset and/or its setting. For example, removal of an inappropriate later addition allowing for the assets significance to be revealed; removal of an inappropriate feature in an asset's setting allowing the contribution of setting to the assets significance to be better understood or substantial reductions in noise or disturbance such that the significance of known asset would be enhanced.

HIGH	Substantial positive changes to an asset and key elements of its setting which would greatly enhance its significance and the ability to appreciate that significance; this might result from the removal of adverse or considerably distracting features from the setting of an asset; significant decrease in noise or changes in sound quality; changes to use or access.
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In certain cases, it is not possible to confirm the magnitude of impact upon a heritage resource, especially where anticipated buried deposits exist. In such circumstances a professional judgement as to the scale of such impacts is applied.



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