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## **Volume 7E Proposed Development (Onshore) Appendices**

Appendix 5-1 Historic Environment Desk-based  
Assessment

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# Volume 7E Appendix 5-1 Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>AHER</b>	Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record
<b>aOD</b>	Above Ordnance Datum
<b>AFU</b>	Advanced Flying Unit
<b>ADS</b>	Archaeological Data Service
<b>EIA</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment
<b>EIAR</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment Report
<b>GI</b>	Ground Investigation
<b>HEPS</b>	Historic Environment Policy for Scotland
<b>HESP</b>	Historic Environment Scotland Portal
<b>km</b>	Kilometres
<b>MHWS</b>	Mean High Water Springs
<b>MLWS</b>	Mean Low Water Springs
<b>NPF4</b>	National Planning Framework 4
<b>OnTI</b>	Onshore Transmission Infrastructure
<b>OS</b>	Ordnance Survey
<b>OWF</b>	Offshore Wind Farm
<b>RLB</b>	Red Line Boundary
<b>RCAHMS</b>	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland
<b>ZTV</b>	Zone of Theoretical Visibility

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Report background

1.1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by GoBe Consultants on behalf of Caledonia Offshore Wind Farm Ltd ('the Applicant') to prepare a Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment in regard to the proposed Caledonia Offshore Wind Farm (Caledonia OWF, 'the Proposed Development'), located to the west and south of Banff, Aberdeenshire.

1.1.1.2 This assessment covers terrestrial archaeology and built heritage (also referred to as 'cultural heritage') only and therefore focuses on the Proposed Development (Onshore) which comprises a Landfall Site, Onshore Cable Corridor and Onshore Substation Site and Onshore Grid Connection Cable Corridor from the Onshore Substations to the Grid Connection Point (cumulatively referred to as 'Onshore Transmission Infrastructure (OnTI)'). The OnTI Red Line Boundary (RLB) is shown within Figure 1-1 in Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 5: Supporting Figures. Where elements of the Proposed Development (Onshore) need to be discussed in separation, 'the Landfall Site', 'the Onshore Cable Corridor', 'the Onshore Substation Site' and 'the Onshore Grid Connection Cable Corridor' to the 'Grid Connection Point' will be used. The offshore elements of the Proposed Development are referred to as 'the Offshore Array' to distinguish this from the terrestrial elements.

1.1.1.3 This study is a technical appendix supporting Volume 5, Chapter 5: Terrestrial Archaeology and Cultural Heritage of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). This document is supported by five annexes:

- Annex 1 Terminology;
- Annex 2 Legislative and Planning Framework;
- Annex 3 Gazetteer of Heritage Assets;
- Annex 4 Site Walkover Survey Photographs; and
- Annex 5 Supporting Figures.

1.1.1.4 Separate assessments consider marine archaeology primarily focusing on the Offshore Array have also been prepared to accompany the Proposed Development consent applications.

1.1.1.5 Please refer to Volume 1, Chapter 4: Proposed Development Description (Onshore) of the EIAR for further details on the Proposed Development (Onshore).

## 1.2 Design Envelope

- 1.2.1.1 At this stage in the Proposed Development (Onshore) design process, information on exact locations of the OnTI and the construction methods that will be utilised are not available.
- 1.2.1.2 As a result, a design envelope (DE) approach has been adopted. The DE identifies the main components of the Proposed Development (Onshore) and a range of parameters. In line with the use of a DE approach it should be noted that the eventual built Proposed Development (Onshore) may differ from the scenarios considered within topic assessments but will not exceed the design envelope parameters considered.
- 1.2.1.3 The following section identifies the DE considered within this assessment, further details of design parameters considered is provided within Volume 5, Chapter 5: Terrestrial Archaeology and Cultural Heritage.
- 1.2.1.4 As described in Volume 1, Chapter 5: Proposed Development Phasing, three possible construction programme scenarios have been identified for the Proposed Development (Onshore).
- 1.2.1.5 The assessment of impacts presented in this appendix is based on the assumptions that the worst case scenario in regard to Terrestrial Archaeology and Cultural Heritage will be a combination of the Sequential Scenario (to be considered in regards to the ground intrusive works/elements required for and during construction works at the Landfall Site and Cable Corridor and Substation Site) and the Enabling Scenario (to be considered specifically in regards to the construction at the Substation Site and possible impacts to designated heritage assets).
- 1.2.1.6 In terms of terrestrial archaeology only, it is assumed that the differing scenarios would unlikely change the level of harm to archaeological remains as there would be no change in the spatial extent of the redline boundary considered/construction footprint.
- 1.2.1.7 The assessment considers the OnTI RLB and up to 2 x Onshore Substations co located within same Substation Site with a maximum height of 15m, length: 400m; Width: 250m, a total area of 100,000m<sup>2</sup>.

## 1.3 The Onshore Transmission Infrastructure

- 1.3.1.1 The OnTI RLB comprises the Landfall Site, an approximately 37 kilometres (km) Onshore Cable Corridor, Onshore Substation Site and Onshore Grid Connection Cable Circuits, with the Onshore Cable Corridor generally traversing across a rural landscape of lowland pasture. The Landfall Site is situated approximately 1km west of the village of Whitehills located to the west of Banff, with the southern extent of the Onshore Cable Corridor and the Onshore Substation Site located approximately 11.5km south-east of Turriff.

- 1.3.1.2 The OnTI consists of all works landward of Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS). This overlaps with offshore in the intertidal area (offshore assesses all works seaward of Mean High Water Springs (MHWS)).
- 1.3.1.3 The OnTI RLB is situated within an area of lowland, with the highest elevation standing at approximately 176m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at Deer's Hill within the eastern extent of the Onshore Cable Corridor circa 1.3km west of the Onshore Substation Site). The Onshore Cable Corridor intersects the River Deveron at its approximate centre circa 7km north-west of Cuminestown, and several of its smaller tributaries including the Burn of Boyndie, Burn of Brydock, Burn of Brackans, Burn of Monquhitter, and the Burn of Swanford.
- 1.3.1.4 The underlying bedrock geology throughout the OnTI RLB is varied though dominated by the Macduff Formation – Micaceous psammite, Semipelite and Pelite. Small pockets of Gardenstown Conglomerate Formation lie in the south-west of the OnTI RLB, and in the north small areas of Whitehills Grit Formation – Psammite and pelite are noted (British Geological Survey, Geology of Britain Viewer<sup>1</sup>).
- 1.3.1.5 Large areas of the OnTI RLB are overlain by Till from the Devensian. In small pockets across the OnTI RLB layer of Glaciofluvial deposits have been mapped (British Geological Survey, Geology of Britain Viewer).

## 1.4 Scope of document

- 1.4.1.1 This assessment was requested by the Applicant in order to determine, as far as is possible from existing information, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment resource within the OnTI RLB and its environs, and to provide an initial assessment of the potential impact of the Proposed Development (Onshore) on the heritage assets that embody that significance.
- 1.4.1.2 The Historic Environment, as defined in the Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (Historic Environment Scotland 2019<sup>2</sup>) comprises:
- 1.4.1.3 '...the physical evidence for human activity that connects people with place, linked with the associations we can see, feel and understand.'



## 1.5 Aims

1.5.1.1 The specific aims of this assessment are to:

- Outline the known and potential heritage assets within the OnTI RLB based on a review of existing information within a defined study area;
- Assess the significance of known and potential heritage assets through weighted consideration of their valued components;
- Assess the likely impact of potential development or other land changes on the significance of the heritage assets and their setting; and
- Identify those heritage assets that should be taken forward for detailed assessment as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

## 2 Planning Background

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1.1 There is national legislation and guidance relating to the protection of, and development on or near, important archaeological sites or historical buildings within planning regulations as defined under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013<sup>3</sup>. In addition, local authorities are responsible for the protection of the historic environment within the planning system.

2.1.1.2 The following section summarises the main components of the national and local planning and legislative framework governing the treatment of the historic environment within the planning process. Further detail is presented in Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 2: Legislative and Planning Framework

### 2.2 Designated heritage assets

2.2.1.1 Designated heritage assets are defined by Historic Environment Scotland as:

- Ancient monuments, which are designated through *scheduling* (that is, Scheduled Monuments);
- Buildings and other structures which are designated through *listing* (that is, Listed Buildings);
- Conservation areas;
- Historic marine protected areas;
- Gardens and designed landscapes; and
- Historic battlefields.

2.2.1.2 Designation is a formal acknowledgement of a building, monument or site's significance, intended to make sure that the character of the asset in question is protected through the planning system and to enable it to be passed on to future generations.

2.2.1.3 Statutory protection is provided to certain classes of designated heritage asset under the following legislation:

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (Scotland) 1997<sup>4</sup>;
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979<sup>5</sup>; and
- Marine (Scotland) Act 2010<sup>6</sup>.

- 2.2.1.4 The Planning (Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area Consent Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2015<sup>7</sup> set out the process for applying for and determining applications for Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area Consent.
- 2.2.1.5 The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013<sup>8</sup> includes legislation and guidance on procedures for dealing with planning permission applications that affect a Scheduled Monument or its setting, a Category A Listed Building or its setting, an Inventory Garden or Designed Landscape, an Inventory Battlefield or a World Heritage Site.
- 2.2.1.6 Further information regarding heritage designations is provided in Annex 2 to this document (Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 2: Legislative and Planning Framework).

## **2.3 National Planning Policy in Scotland**

- 2.3.1.1 The principal national policy advising on the importance, management and safeguarding of the historic environment is set out within Policy 7 'Historic assets and places' of the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (Scottish Government, 2023<sup>9</sup>).
- 2.3.1.2 The Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) (Historic Environment Scotland, 2019<sup>10</sup>) sits outside Policy 7 of NPF4, but should be used in conjunction with it as it sets out how to approach decisions in the planning system affecting the historic environment. HEPS is a policy statement directing decision making that affects the historic environment, but is not required to be followed as a matter of law or statute. Nevertheless, it is an important material consideration and provides key context to the background approaches to the identification and protection of heritage assets.
- 2.3.1.3 Further guidance is also given in the Planning Advice Note 2/2011: Planning and Archaeology (The Scottish Government, 2011<sup>11</sup>) which provides advice to planning authorities and developers on dealing with archaeological remains.
- 2.3.1.4 The Historic Environment Scotland Act became law in December 2014<sup>12</sup>. This established the role and function of Historic Environment Scotland (Àrainneachd Eachdraidheil na h-Alba) which replaced Historic Scotland and also took over the functions of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS). It also makes amendments to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997<sup>4</sup> and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979<sup>13</sup> as it is enacted in Scotland. The Historic Environment Scotland Act:
- Recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource;

- Requires applicants to provide proportionate information on the significance of heritage assets affected by the proposals and an impact assessment of the proposed development on that significance;
- Takes into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and their setting;
- Places weight on the conservation of designated heritage assets, in line with their significance; and
- Requires developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.

2.3.1.5 A selection of excerpts from NPF4 and the Planning Advice Note 2/2011 is presented in Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 2: Legislative and Planning Framework.

## **2.4 Local planning policy**

2.4.1.1 The OnTI RLB is situated within the administrative boundary of Aberdeenshire Council, which adopted the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan in January 2023 (Aberdeenshire Council, 2023<sup>14</sup>). The historic environment is addressed in Section 11 'The Historic Environment'.

2.4.1.2 The following policies outlined in that document are applicable to this assessment:

- Policy HE1 Protecting Listed Building, Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Sites (including other historic buildings); and
- Policy HE2 Protecting Historic, Cultural and Conservation Areas.

2.4.1.3 The above are presented in Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 2: Legislative and Planning Framework.

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1.1 The methodology employed during this assessment has been based upon relevant professional guidance including the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment (CIfA 2014, revised 2020<sup>15</sup>). Furthermore, the scope of this assessment was based on the approach presented in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report submitted to Aberdeenshire Council in December 2022. Responses from historic environment consultees and any other communications with consultees are presented in Volume 5, Chapter 5: Terrestrial Archaeology and Cultural Heritage.

### 3.2 Study Area

3.2.1.1 A study area of a 500m radius from the OnTI RLB was considered suitable to understand the known and potential archaeological resource. An additional study area of 5km based on a radial search of the Substation Site was considered for the purposes of the settings assessment presented in this desk-based assessment.

### 3.3 Sources

- 3.3.1.1 A number of publicly accessible sources of primary and synthesised information were consulted. These comprised:
- The Historic Environment Scotland Portal (HESP), which gives access to the database of all nationally designated heritage assets;
  - The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record (AHER), comprising a database of recorded archaeological sites, find spots, and archaeological events within the county;
  - National heritage datasets including Archaeological Data Service (ADS), OASIS, and CANMORE;
  - Historic manuscripts, surveyed maps, and Ordnance Survey (OS) maps; and
  - Relevant primary and secondary sources including those held in Wessex Archaeology's own library. Both published and unpublished archaeological reports relating to excavations and observations in the vicinity of the OnTI RLB were studied.
- 3.3.1.2 A bibliography of documentary, archive and cartographic sources consulted is included in the References section of this report.

## 3.4 Site visit

- 3.4.1.1 The OnTI RLB was visited between 27 November and 1 December 2023. Weather conditions were generally dry and clear with intermittent rain, frost and snow. A fieldwork record comprising digital photography is held in the project archive, however, pertinent photographs illustrating this desk-based assessment are included in Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 4: Site Walkover Survey Photographs.
- 3.4.1.2 The OnTI RLB site visit aimed to assess the general aspect, character, condition and setting of the OnTI RLB and to identify any prior impacts not evident from secondary sources. The site visit also sought to ascertain if the OnTI RLB contained any previously unidentified features of archaeological, architectural or historic interest. With the exception of dry stone walls dividing fields at the Landfall Site which are likely of post-medieval to early modern origin, no other features of interest were identified within the OnTI RLB during the course of the site visit.
- 3.4.1.3 A key objective of the site visit was the gathering of observations upon which to assess the potential for the Proposed Development (Onshore) to affect the settings of heritage assets (see Section 3.6). The results of this are discussed in Section 7.

## 3.5 Assessment criteria

- 3.5.1.1 The cultural significance or value of heritage assets may derive from a number of different aspects of its character. Cultural significance can be artistic, archaeological, architectural, historic, traditional, aesthetic, scientific and/or social (for past, present and future generations) and may be so due to intrinsic, contextual or associative characteristics. Such significance is inherent in the monument itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records related monuments and related objects. Within this document, significance is weighed by consideration of the potential for the asset to demonstrate the following value criteria:
- **Evidential value** Deriving from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity;
  - **Historical value** Deriving from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative;
  - **Aesthetic value** Deriving from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place; and
  - **Communal value** Deriving from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values but tend to have additional and specific aspects.

## 3.6 Settings assessment

3.6.1.1 Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting (Historic Environment Scotland 2016, revised 2020<sup>16</sup>) defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

*“the way the surroundings of a historic asset or place contribute to how it is understood, appreciated and experienced.”*

3.6.1.2 The aim of the setting assessment, presented in Section 7, was to explore the potential effects of the Proposed Development (Onshore) on the settings of designated and non-designated heritage assets situated within the wider context of the OnTI RLB.

3.6.1.3 The manner in which the setting assessment was undertaken was guided by the recommendations outlined in Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting (Historic Environment Scotland, 2016<sup>16</sup>). This guidance advocates a systematic and staged approach to the assessment of the implications of development in terms of their effects on the settings of heritage assets.

3.6.1.4 **Step 1** of the approach is to ‘*identify the historic assets*’. This initial step of the setting assessment has been carried out by undertaking a Scoping Exercise, the results of which are presented in Section 7.2. The exercise was informed by a 5km Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) (Figure 1-4 within Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 5: Supporting Figures ) and a review of designated heritage assets within and just outside of 5km.

3.6.1.5 The potential for the Proposed Development (Onshore) to effect change upon the settings of the heritage assets, and in turn harm their cultural significance, included in the Scoping Exercise was then assessed via the application of professional judgement, informed by observations made during the site visit.

3.6.1.6 Where it could be confidently determined that a heritage asset and its settings would not be affected by the development proposals, no further assessment was undertaken.

3.6.1.7 In cases where it could be anticipated that the development proposals may have the potential to alter the setting of a heritage asset, these assets were scoped in for further detailed assessment. These heritage assets were assessed on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with Steps 2 and 3 of the process outlined below.

3.6.1.8 **Step 2** is to “*define and analyse the setting by establishing how the surroundings contribute to the ways in which the historic asset or place is understood, appreciated and experienced.*” This stage of the assessment should consider:

- the present surroundings of the asset, including its relationship with other heritage assets;

- the way the asset is appreciated; and
- key views to and from the asset.

3.6.1.9 **Step 3** is to "evaluate the potential impact of the proposed changes".

3.6.1.10 Where the assessment indicates that there will be an adverse impact on the setting of a historic asset or place developers should consider design and siting proposals to mitigate this impact.

3.6.1.11 In accordance with the Historic Environment Scotland's guidance on impact assessment, settings impacts are considered to be "direct" but not physical, following the following paragraph in the guidance (HES, 2018 para. 44c<sup>17</sup>):

*"These are generally direct and result from the proposal causing change within the setting of a heritage asset that affects its cultural significance or the way in which it is understood, appreciated and experienced. Such impacts are generally, but not exclusively, visual, occurring directly as a result of the appearance of the proposal in the surroundings of the asset."*

## 3.7 Assumptions and limitations

3.7.1.1 Data used to compile this report consists of secondary information derived from a variety of sources, only some of which have been directly examined for the purposes of this study. The assumption is made that this data, as well as that derived from other secondary sources, is reasonably accurate.

3.7.1.2 The records held by the AHER are not a record of all surviving heritage assets, but a record of the discovery of a wide range of archaeological and historical components of the historic environment. The information held within it is not complete and does not preclude the subsequent discovery of further elements of the historic environment that are, at present, unknown.



## 4 Baseline Resources

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1.1 The following section provides a brief summary of the archaeological and historical development of the OnTI RLB and the study area, compiled from the sources summarised above and detailed in the references section of this report. The aim is to establish the known and potential historic environment resource that could be affected by the Proposed Development (Onshore).

4.1.1.2 All heritage assets identified within the study area(s) are listed in Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 3: Gazetteer of Heritage Assets.

### 4.2 Designated Heritage Assets

#### 4.2.1 OnTI RLB

4.2.1.1 There are no designated heritage assets within the OnTI RLB.

#### 4.2.2 Study Areas

4.2.2.1 Designated heritage assets within the study areas, that is the 500m study area around the Onshore Cable Corridor and the 5km settings study area surrounding the Onshore Substation Site, comprise two Scheduled Monuments, 15 Listed Buildings (one Category A, 13 Category B and one Category C), one Conservation Area (Whitehills Conservation Area), and one Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape (Hatton Castle, GDL00399).

4.2.2.2 The Scheduled Monuments comprise a dovecot at Gight Castle (SM8229) located approximately 5km south of the OnTI RLB, and a stone circle (SM9392) located approximately 4.7km east of the OnTI RLB (Onshore Substation Site). While the majority of the Listed Buildings are scattered across the rural landscape, the majority of buildings are sited within existing settlements, such as at Cuminestown approximately 5km to the north of the Onshore Substation Site. The only Category A Listed Building within the study area is Inchdrewer Castle (LB3049) which is located circa 360m from the Onshore Cable Corridor, approximately 5km south-west of Banff.

4.2.2.3 As part of the EIA Scoping Report, it was suggested that buffer zones of at least 100m surrounding designated heritage assets which are sited in close proximity to the Onshore Cable Corridor should be established in order to protect any potentially associated archaeological remains. The final iteration of the Onshore Cable Corridor route assessed in this desk-based

assessment has already taken such a buffer into account as all designated heritage assets are located at least 300m from the OnTI RLB.

- 4.2.2.4 There are no World Heritage Sites or Inventory Battlefields within the study area.
- 4.2.2.5 Designated heritage assets within the wider 5km study area and assessed as part of the settings assessment are further described in Section 7.
- 4.2.2.6 Designated heritage assets located within the study area are depicted in Figure 1-1 within Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 5: Supporting Figures.

## **4.3 Previous Investigations**

- 4.3.1.1 There have been very limited previous intrusive investigations, categorised as 'events' by the AHER within the OnTI RLB and study area surrounding the Onshore Cable Corridor, presumably due to a general lack of development. The locations of any known events are shown on Figure 1-2 within Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 5: Supporting Figures.
- 4.3.1.2 A series of archaeological works were undertaken for the Moray East Offshore Wind Farm (OWF). A programme of watching briefs and excavations (NJ66SE0330) were carried out along the Moray East cable route from landfall to the Moray East OWF Substation which partially fell into the western extent of the Onshore Substation Site. The works were carried out by CFA Archaeology from November 2018 to October 2019. Only two locations within the Onshore Substation Site revealed archaeological remains, the first one showing evidence of post-medieval ditches and pits (NJ84NW0110) and the second one containing undated ditches (NJ84SW0124). Considering the presence of multiple post-medieval farmsteads (NJ84NW0096, NJ84NW0095, NJ84SW0077, NJ84SW0078, NJ84NW0019, NJ84SW0081) within the immediate area surrounding the Onshore Substation Site, it is assumed that these features relate to agricultural activities linked to those.
- 4.3.1.3 At Moray East OWF Substation, further post-medieval evidence was encountered in the form of an individual pit and stone-built drain (NJ84SW0125). Just to the north of the Onshore Substation Site, the remains of a medieval stone-built corn drying kiln (NJ84NW0061) and five linear ditches were excavated (NJ84NW0062). The ditches were narrow and were tentatively identified as being of likely natural origin. While some possible worked flint flakes were found within them, these are unlikely to have been in situ and could have been redeposited here.
- 4.3.1.4 Overall, the Moray East offshore cable route archaeological investigations crossed high intensity farming areas which showed that agricultural activities had truncated most features uncovered. Due to this, features were often found underneath the topsoil. Most of the linear features encountered were shown to relate to post-medieval and modern

agricultural activities. In general, excavated features typically included round-house remains, pits (including fire pits), stone spreads and stone slabs, ditches (including linear, ring and curvilinear ditches), possible grain stores and gullies.

## **4.4 Archaeological and Historical Context**

4.4.1.1 The following section provides a brief summary of the archaeological and historical development of the OnTI RLB and the study area, compiled from the sources listed above. The potential for the likelihood of as yet unrecorded archaeological remains within the OnTI RLB is informed by the consideration of the known heritage assets within the study area, in conjunction with the geology and topography of the area.

4.4.1.2 Records obtained from HESP, AHER and other sources are listed in within Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 3: Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and illustrated in Figures 1-1 and 1-2 within Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 5: Supporting Figures.

### **4.4.2 Prehistoric**

4.4.2.1 The earliest known find within the study area dates from the Neolithic period. This comprises a polished stone axe found at Bridgend within the central section of the study area, approximately 275m north of OnTI RLB (NJ75NW0015). Aside from this, there is no noticeable increase in prehistoric activity until the Bronze Age period, evidence for which appears across the entire length of the Onshore Cable Corridor and varies in character. Known Bronze Age activity generally includes a mix of monuments such as cairns and finds such as urns.

4.4.2.2 Prehistoric cairns can be seen across the Scottish landscape and are characterised as small mounds of earth and stones. They represent a more frequent form of burial practice in Scotland than barrows which are common in England. There have been five possible cairns identified across the study area (NJ65NE0001, NJ74NE007, NJ75NW0016, NJ84SW0004, NJ84SW0005), the majority of these have been identified through historic documentary sources (such as historic maps) and have either been removed or ploughed out according to the AHER. It is, however, possible that traces of these remain, especially as their presence have not been tested through archaeological investigation. Only one the identified cairns lie within the bounds of the OnTI RLB, on the Hill of Tiperty within the northern half of the route (NJ65NE0001). The record for this feature indicates that the 1964 OS recorded it as being 10m in diameter and 0.4m high, however, the asset was not observed during the OnTI RLB walkover survey.

- 4.4.2.3 A further indication of Bronze Age funerary practice throughout the landscape is the presence of a number of cists, a term used to describe burials not obviously marked by a cairn or burial. Burial cists were typically inserted into natural knolls or earlier monuments. A possible cist cemetery has been identified within the OnTI RLB, near Auchinbadie (NJ65NE0008). In 1877 a large number of cists were found here, covered by a single flat stone, the name Auchinbadie has been interpreted as 'Field of Graves', which is thought to be a reference to the cist cemetery. It is not known if these cists are still present within the landscape or whether these were subject to any sort of investigation when they were found at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 4.4.2.4 A stone circle is thought to have been situated to the east of the OnTI RLB in close proximity to an identified cist burial in Boyndie (NJ66SW0009). It is noted on both the first and second edition OS mapping. However, it has since been destroyed and no trace remains.
- 4.4.2.5 Alongside the cairns and cists, a number of funerary urns have been identified within the study area (NJ65NE0012, NJ65NE0030, NJ65NE0016, NJ75SE0042), as well as three cremation burials found in Bridgend which consisted of holes dug in gravel (but no trace of urns) (NJ75NW0012).
- 4.4.2.6 Evidence of settlement and use of the landscape outside of funerary practices is limited, though four Bronze Age swords (NJ66SW0002) and an axe (NJ66SW0006) have been recovered from within the study area.
- 4.4.2.7 In addition to the above, a large number of cropmarks have been identified across the study area through aerial photography from across the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, including within the bounds of the OnTI RLB. Whilst these features have been noted as prehistoric in form and character, they have not been subject to intrusive archaeological investigations and as a result have not been identified as being from a specific Prehistoric period. Therefore, it is possible that these assets are not of archaeological origin at all, however, this would need to be confirmed by way of archaeological investigations.
- 4.4.2.8 Within the southern extent of the OnTI RLB, cropmarks of a possible double-ditched circular enclosure are visible on aerial photography (NJ74NE0045). A prehistoric pebble polisher was also identified within the OnTI RLB, within close proximity to the cist cemetery at Auchinbadie (NJ65NE0009). Within the same area, to the immediate south-west of the OnTI RLB, a large area of ring ditches and a palisaded enclosure has been located (NJ65NE0021). The cluster of assets here suggests that the cropmarks may indeed be of prehistoric interest and possibly relate to the other prehistoric finds and features.
- 4.4.2.9 There is no known evidence of Iron Age activity within the study area.

### 4.4.3 Early Medieval – Medieval (AD 1100-1500)

- 4.4.3.1 The transition from the Iron Age to Early Medieval in Scotland, especially within the Highlands and north Aberdeenshire, is subject to some debate. Though it is generally accepted that it began towards the end of the 3rd century, with the Picts dominating eastern Scotland and areas of the Highlands until the 9th century. Viking raids and settlement typically occurred from the 9th century onwards.
- 4.4.3.2 The archaeological record for the Early Medieval period is sparse, with only one recorded find within the study area from the period. The find is a Pictish Symbol Stone, depicting the symbols of an eagle above a beast (NJ75SE0056), located in the north of the study area approximately 350m west of the OnTI RLB.
- 4.4.3.3 Into the Medieval period the archaeological record within the study area also remains limited. Of those features and finds that have been recorded, a large area of Medieval ridge and furrow has been identified within the southern section of the OnTI RLB (NJ75SE0035). Ridge and furrow are the pattern of ridge and troughs created by the form of ploughing used during the period and are common within agricultural landscapes. Several other areas of ridge and furrow have been identified across the study area (NJ66SE0147, NJ75NW0023, NJ75SE0056), indicating a general increase in agricultural activities across this period which in turn suggests that more people were settling in the area.
- 4.4.3.4 There is evidence of three manorial seats within the study area within which the agricultural land would have been a part of (although there might have been further as yet unknown manorial sites as well). Possible manor sites have been suggested at the Hill of Alvah (NJ65NE0023), Auchinbadie (NJ65NE0028), and Rettie (NJ66SW0028).
- 4.4.3.5 To the north of the OnTI RLB, in Auchinbadie, a motte has also been identified (NJ65NE0006). A motte indicates a small hill in the centre of a castle complex on which a fort is positioned. The west and south sides of the motte at Auchinbadie were formed by natural slopes, which might be one of the reasons why this location was chosen. The remains of the motte are characterised by a slight bank along the top of the slope on the west side, and traces of a broad, shallow ditch on the north and east sides of the mound. Bones, three quern stones, sandstone and charred wood were found at the site.
- 4.4.3.6 Despite the presence of the manorial seats, the motte and evidence of agricultural practices, no settlement sites have been identified within the OnTI RLB or study area.

#### 4.4.4 Post-medieval (AD 1500-1800) – 19<sup>th</sup> century (AD 1800-1900)

- 4.4.4.1 The OnTI RLB and study area retained its rural character through the Post-medieval period. There are a large number of records pertaining to this period, which mostly consists of farmsteads and crofts, cottages, and barns indicating that agricultural practices continued to thrive. There are also a number of records relating to the educational and ecclesiastical buildings which served the local communities showing that these really started to flourish throughout the Post-medieval period. Those assets directly within the OnTI RLB are discussed in more detail in Section 7.
- 4.4.4.2 Alongside examples of the Post-medieval built environment are a number of records relating to rural industry; namely smithies, quarries and mill's including features associated with mills such as lades, sluices, and mill ponds. Whilst the majority of these features have either been destroyed or no longer serve their original purpose, several of them intersect within the OnTI RLB. These include mills at Auchenbadie (NJ65NE0043), Mallyrust (NJ65NE0057), Corsehill (NJ74NE0050), Wood of Shaws (NJ65NE0072), Rettie (NJ66SW0014), including quarries at Rettie (NJ66SW0054), Todholes (NJ66SE0137), and the Hill of Itlaw (NJ65NE0078).
- 4.4.4.3 Also present within the study area are two designed landscapes (notably not recognised as designated Inventory Gardens and Landscapes), associated with Dunlugas House (NJ65NE0096) and Eden House (NJ65NE0082) respectively. Dunlugas House's designed landscape is situated along the eastern boundary of the central area of the OnTI RLB, it was laid out during both the 18th and 19th centuries, none of the notable features that are still present within the landscape are situated within the study area or in close proximity to the OnTI RLB. Only the very southernmost extent of Eden House's landscape extends within the study area.
- 4.4.4.4 Other notable features within the landscape include Inchdrewer Castle (LB3049/NJ66SE002) situated approximately 360m north-east of the OnTI RLB, and a possible manor at Keithen (NJ74NE0009) situated approximately 310m east of the OnTI RLB. Inchdrewer was constructed originally as an L-shaped tower house in the early 16th century, but in the late 16th century a round tower containing a staircase was added to the south in addition to a long row of buildings on the north and south of the courtyard.
- 4.4.4.5 Limited information is available on Keithen, but the area is known to have belonged to the Cheynes family during the 17th century with documentary sources from 1724 referencing 'the dwelling place' as still belonging to a member of the family.
- 4.4.4.6 The earliest available mapping across the OnTI RLB is the first edition OS map from 1866 which largely reflects the present day landscape and field

boundaries, with large swathes of agricultural land interspersed between isolated farmsteads. Many of these farmsteads depicted on the map are still present within the landscape, and indeed some of these are even recognised as non-designated heritage assets. While the 1866 OS map was not available for reproduction for the purposes of this assessment, Figure 1-3 within Volume 7E, Appendix 5-1, Annex 5: Supporting Figures present the 1896-1913 Second Edition OS map which broadly reflects the same landscape as shown on the 1866 map.

#### **4.4.5 Modern**

4.4.5.1 Aside from developments within the larger settlements, such as at Banff and Turriff, and smaller isolated residential developments scattered across the study area, there have been relatively little changes within the OnTI RLB and study area from the start of the modern period. There are pockets of modern development which include wind turbines, substations and pylons, however, these have not greatly affected the agricultural landscape, at least not physically.

4.4.5.2 The only asset noted within the AHER data from the modern period is Boyndie Airfield (NJ66SW0140/NJ66SW0139) situated between 460 to 670m west of the OnTI RLB at the northern extent of the OnTI RLB. RAF Banff was constructed in 1942 and was home to the Number 14 (P) Pilots AFU (Advanced Flying Unit) until 1944 when it was used as a base for six squadrons, known as the Banff Strike Wing. The base was closed at the end of World War II and opened briefly by the Banff Flying Club in 1976, though it is now disused.

#### **4.4.6 Undated**

4.4.6.1 There are a variety of undated cropmarks and earthworks that have been noted across the OnTI RLB and study area. These were either identified through archaeological investigation or through the study of aerial photography and satellite imagery. While none of these features can be accurately dated, it is a fair assumption that much of this activity likely relates to prehistoric land use and settlement considering the wealth of known prehistoric features, especially those dating to the Bronze Age, within the study area.

## 5 Archaeological and Historic Potential

- 5.1.1.1 This assessment has found that the OnTI RLB has potential for Prehistoric, Medieval, and Post-medieval archaeological remains.
- 5.1.1.2 The presence of a variety of Bronze Age monuments including cists and cairns within both the OnTI RLB and study area suggests that prehistoric peoples were certainly active within the landscape when it comes to funerary practices. Settlement wise, these peoples would likely have been centred close to the River Deveron to access fresh water, food, and other natural resources. The presence of a cairn within the northern part of the OnTI RLB (NJ65NE0001) and the cist cemetery at Auchinbadie (NJ65SN0008) suggest that at least this area was part of a wider funerary landscape, and there are multiple instances of prehistoric cropmarks within the OnTI RLB (NJ66NW0008, NJ66NW0006, NJ74NE0045) and study area, albeit these have not been archaeologically investigated. Any remains of prehistoric date are likely to be of regional significance as they would feed into the wider understanding of the prehistoric landscape here, especially the prehistoric ritualistic landscape.
- 5.1.1.3 Evidence of medieval activity is mostly representative of agricultural activity and spread sporadically across the study area. The only asset of known medieval date overlapping with the OnTI RLB is an area of rig and furrow (NJ75SE0035). No known evidence of an associated settlement extends into the OnTI RLB or the study area.
- 5.1.1.4 Analysis of aerial photography and LiDAR imagery has shown that areas of ridge and furrow are present within the OnTI RLB. They form part of a much larger agricultural landscape, with further ridge and furrow noted across the study area. This indicates that the OnTI RLB may have been located within the agricultural hinterland of settlements, however, this does not necessarily mean that there is no potential for as yet unknown settlement activity within the OnTI RLB itself. The presence of three manors within the study area, and a possible motte alongside the agricultural features strongly indicates that the area had become settled during the Medieval period after what appears to have been a period of very limited activity between the Bronze Age and the Medieval period.
- 5.1.1.5 The AHER and historical maps have confirmed the presence of many Post-medieval farmsteads and crofts and associated features and buildings within both the OnTI RLB and study area. Those within the OnTI RLB (north to south) include Cairnhill Croft farmhouse (NJ66NW0012), Blairshinnoch farmstead (NJ66SW0006), Little Blairshinnoch croft (NJ66SW0101), Little Blairshinnoch well (NJ66SW0103), Blackhill Croft (NJ66SW0102), Todholes (a small destroyed building) (NJ66SE0136), Mallyrust mill pond (NJ65NE0057), Fountain Well (a well) (NJ65NE0080), Cairnhill Croft (different to the one mentioned above) (NJ75SE0096), Hare Moss Cottages farmstead (NJ74NE0085), Backhill farmstead (NJ74NE0033), a small



rectangular building at Backhill (NJ74NE0034), South Redbriggs farmstead (NJ74NE0044), Anderson's Croft (NJ84NW0049), The Moss of Swanford croft (NJ84SW0040) and East Swanford farmstead (NJ84SW0078).

- 5.1.1.6 In addition to the above, the OnTI RLB also intersects with an individual pit and linear ditch at Burnside (NJ84NW0110) at the Onshore Substation Site, and remnants of industrial activity including, for example, the site of a destroyed quarry (NJ66SW0054), Todholes former quarry (NJ66SE0137), a corn mill known as Mill of Ryland (NJ65NE0090), the site of a destroyed quarry at Hill of Itlaw (NJ65NE89), a destroyed mill dam known as Wood of Shaws (NJ65NE0072) and a sluice and possible pond at Corsehill (NJ74NE0050).
- 5.1.1.7 Remains of buildings referred to above may survive as sub-surface archaeological remains where they have been demolished or marked as 'site of' or 'destroyed' by the AHER, however, some of the Post-medieval farmsteads and associated buildings still survive today (as is the case with the East Swanford farmstead (NJ84SW0078) which overlaps with the Onshore Substation Site. Such remains are likely to be of local significance, which at best contribute to our appreciation and understanding of the rise of agricultural practices and how this led to the establishments of more communities.
- 5.1.1.8 At the Onshore Substation Site specifically, there is considered to be potential for Post-medieval remains associated with those previously identified as part of the programme of archaeological works undertaken for the Moray East OWF project.
- 5.1.1.9 Any remains within the OnTI RLB of previous local industry such as quarrying activities and milling would also contribute to our understanding of the rural communities which existed within the landscape during the period and would be of some local significance.
- 5.1.1.10 Additionally, it must also be noted that the undated features captured by the AHER, which consist of possible enclosure sites (NJ66NW0010, NJ66NW0007, NJ66SW0019), Edgar's Grave (site of possible grave) (NJ84NW0006) and a linear ditch gully feature (NJ84SW0124) may also be of interest should they indeed be of archaeological origin. However, due to a lack of investigations, this is currently unknown.

## 6 Impact Assessment on Terrestrial Archaeology

### 6.1 Introduction

6.1.1.1 This section provides an initial assessment of the potential effects of the Proposed Development in relation to archaeology, in reference to construction at the Landfall Site, within the Onshore Cable Corridor and at the Onshore Substation Site. The assessment considering settings impacts is presented in Section 7.

### 6.2 Potential impact

#### 6.2.1 Archaeological remains

6.2.1.1 The implementation of the Proposed Development (Onshore) is anticipated to entail the following sources of ground disturbance and excavations as a minimum:

6.2.1.2 Landfall Site, Onshore Cable Corridor and Onshore Grid Connection Cable Corridor:

- Preliminary site investigation works (including, for example, Ground Investigations (GI));
- Plant movement within the Onshore Cable Corridor and along any associated haul roads;
- Topsoil stripping (including for haul roads and compounds);
- Installation of the cable; and
- Soft landscaping works (levelling, remodelling after the cable has been buried).

6.2.1.3 Onshore Substation(s):

- Preliminary site investigation works (including, for example, GI);
- Setting up a secure construction compound within the Onshore Substation Site (which may require topsoil stripping for the compound and for the access road);
- Plant movement;
- Excavation of new foundations;
- Construction of the Onshore Substation(s);
- Establishment of new access points;
- Soft and hard landscaping which may require levelling and remodelling; and

- Erection of security fences, CCTV poles etc.

6.2.1.4 The aforementioned works have the potential to result in the damage to or loss of any buried archaeological features which may be present within their footprint. This could in turn result in a total or partial loss of significance of these heritage assets.

6.2.1.5 As mentioned above, there are multiple instances where the Onshore Cable Corridor crosses areas of possible prehistoric cropmarks. While it is possible that some of these are not of archaeological origin, at least a representative sample of these will likely need to be investigated prior to construction to determine their archaeological potential.

6.2.1.6 Where possible, the final cable route and any associated infrastructure and works required for construction (such as compounds) should avoid known areas of non-designated heritage assets. Furthermore, all 100m buffer zones surrounding designated heritage assets should be adhered to which also needs to be applied to the siting of compounds, access roads etc.

6.2.1.7 Any adverse impact to buried archaeological features would be permanent and irreversible in nature. This potential adverse effect could be reduced through the implementation of an appropriate scheme of archaeological mitigation which may comprise of a staged programme of archaeological works.

## 7 Potential Development Effects – Settings of Heritage Assets

### 7.1 Introduction

7.1.1.1 This section presents an assessment of the potential effects of the development proposals in relation to the settings of heritage assets, in accordance with the methodology set out in Section 3.6. In particular, this assessment focuses on potential impacts to terrestrial heritage assets from the proposed OnTI of the Proposed Development (Onshore), including, for example, the Onshore Substation(s).

7.1.1.2 Assessment of settings impact on terrestrial heritage assets from the Offshore Array will be considered elsewhere in a separate report and/or within Volume 5, Chapter 5: Terrestrial Archaeology and Cultural Heritage.

### 7.2 Scoping exercise

7.2.1.1 The scope of the OnTI RLB walkover survey was presented to the Archaeology and Built Heritage Officers advising Aberdeenshire Council, and Historic Environment Scotland in November 2023. For the Landfall Site and Onshore Cable Corridor, it was agreed that as much of this would be visited to determine the presence/absence of known and as yet unknown archaeological remains, especially where these intersect the OnTI RLB or are located immediately adjacent to it. In regard to the settings assessment, the following assets/asset groups were scoped in based on a review of a 5km ZTV produced by the Applicants landscape consultant, a preliminary desk based reviewed of available mapping of the known historic environment resource, and the local topography.

- North Main of Auchmaliddie, stone circle 500m south-west of (SM9392) located approximately 4.7km east of the Onshore Substation Site;
- Group of Listed Buildings at Cuminestown (including the Category B listed LB16110, LB16111, LB16107, LB16123, LB16122 and the Category C listed LB16106) located approximately 5km to the north of the Onshore Substation Site;
- Category B Cairnbanno House (LB16160) located approximately 1.2km to the south-east of the Onshore Substation Site;
- Category B Millbrex Church (LB9629) located approximately 1.5km to the south-west of the Onshore Substation Site;
- Hatton Castle Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape (GDL00399) located approximately 5km to the west/north-west of the Onshore Substation Site; and

- Fyvie Castle Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape (GDL00184) located just outside of the southern extent of the 5km ZTV. This asset is also in part recognised as a designated Battlefield (BTL22).

## 7.2.2 General site visit observations

- 7.2.2.1 The Onshore Substation Site is situated within a predominately rural landscape scattered with farmsteads, isolated residential dwellings and small dispersed settlements comprising of a few buildings. While the landscape is mainly in agricultural use (either for crops or pasture), there is some evidence of modern intrusion and infrastructure in the form of pylons (especially those connecting to New Deer Substation), wind turbines and the existing New Deer Substation and Moray East OWF Substation (adjacent to the New Deer Substation) which is located just to the south of the proposed Onshore Substation Site.
- 7.2.2.2 The topography of the study area is generally characterised by undulating hills creating various valleys and ridges which in part prevent long distance views by creating physical barriers. Areas of woodlands or smaller clumps of trees are generally more common within the northern half of the study area, with the largest area of woodland at and surrounding Hatton Castle (GDL00399). The slopes and high points of various hills have been developed for renewable wind energy use, and wind turbines are noticeable when traversing across the study area, although these are largely scattered and rarely form part of distinct larger onshore wind farms (that is, overall, there are seemingly little wind farms that exceed 6 turbines in a given cluster).
- 7.2.2.3 Despite the rolling hills within the study area, the landscape is relatively open between them, however, the ridges created by the hills do somewhat create natural barriers. There are various rivers, burns and other smaller watercourses within the study area which generally seem to run north to south and are generally situated along the lowest points of valleys.
- 7.2.2.4 The largest settlement within the 5km study area is to the north at Cuminestown. The village is located in a valley between two ridges created by surrounding hills bordering the course of the Burn of Monquhitter. The Listed Buildings at the village consist of a dovecot, a lodge, a monument, a church yard and a residential dwelling all located within the northern extend of the village. When visiting the village and traversing along its main roads (the B9027 and the B9170), it becomes clear that the ridge straddling the southern end of the village prevents any views to the landscape to the south (which is where the Onshore Substation Site is located). Comparatively, views to the north, south-west and west are more open.
- 7.2.2.5 Some of the Listed Buildings within the village clearly have a visual and/or historic connection (such as the churchyard and the monument), however,

they do not appear to have any meaningful interaction with the landscape outside of the village. Based on this, and the ridge that prevents views to the south of the village, the OnTI RLB does not fall within the setting of this group of Listed Buildings, and therefore, these assets have not been scoped in for further assessment.

- 7.2.2.6 Hatton Castle (GDL00399) overlaps with the western extent of the study area and lies between the B9170 (which connects to Cuminestown to the north-east), and the A947. The park is not publicly accessible, however, during the site walkover survey it was possible to drive along much of its northern, western and southern perimeters to take observations.
- 7.2.2.7 When travelling in a south-westerly direction along the B9170 from Cuminestown towards the asset, the highest points of the woodland at its eastern extent are noticeable at the highest points of the road. The road eventually drops towards the A947 which runs along the western extent of Hatton Castle.
- 7.2.2.8 Due to the dense woodland cover, no views inwards towards the core of the park (where associated Listed Buildings are located) were possible during the site walkover survey. Based on observations from the northern, southern and western boundaries of the asset, views from the perimeters are generally more open to the north-west, south, south-east and south-west. Notably, these do not currently extend towards the existing New Deer Substation and Moray East OWF Substation on account of intervening hills (such as the Hill of Lendrum and Steinman Hill circa 1km and 2.5km to the south-east and south respectively), and a north to south ridge created by Deer's Hill and Waggle Hill approximately 2.2km to the east.
- 7.2.2.9 The woodland and gardens of Hatton Castle were purposely designed to create an attractive setting to Hatton Castle (Category A Listed Building LB16431), the principal building located within the core of the park. Designed features, such as the walled garden, focus on the Listed Building, with the surrounding woodland providing an impressive backdrop. The woodland itself is based on the remains of an earlier late medieval estate, so land within the woodland was cleared for the purposes of siting the castle here, as opposed to the woodland purely being the result of ornamental planting (although some of this has no doubt been undertaken).
- 7.2.2.10 While the wider setting of Hatton Castle comprises rural land, this adds little to the cultural significance of the asset or those Listed Buildings contained within it.
- 7.2.2.11 Based on the ZTV and confirmed during the site walkover survey, there is no intervisibility between the Onshore Substation Site and Hatton Castle (GDL00399), and the Onshore Substation Site is not considered to form part of the setting of this asset. Due to this, the asset has been scoped out of further assessment.

- 7.2.2.12 Fyvie Castle (GDL00184) was initially scoped into the site walkover survey due to the landscape seemingly being more open to the south of the Onshore Substation Site and for potential intervisibility between the Onshore Substation Site and the asset. However, when travelling from the Onshore Substation Site towards Fyvie, it becomes clear that the topography drops to such a level that there is no intervisibility at all. Fyvie village and the park are located in a dip created by the slopes of two hills which effectively form a small valley. Walking around the northern edge of the grounds at Fyvie Castle, the fact that there is no intervisibility is reiterated. There are even limited views of the rural landscape that immediately surround the asset, and the principal elevations of the castle itself (which is a Category A Listed Building, LB9615) are directed towards the east and south, not to the north/north-east where the Onshore Substation Site is located. Based on these observations which confirm that the Onshore Substation Site does not fall within the setting of the asset, Fyvie Castle has been scoped out of further assessment.
- 7.2.2.13 Cairnbanno House (LB16160) is a farmhouse located approximately 1.2km to the south-east of the Onshore Substation Site. Due to the building being set back from the publicly accessible road which leads to the farm, it was only possible to take observations from that road (which runs approximately 170m north-west of the asset). While the landscape is generally more open here, it is undulating and gently rises to the west and north-west of the building. This rise, in addition to a small stretch of woodland along Little Water, currently limits views from the road adjacent to the farmhouse towards the existing New Deer Substation and Moray East OWF Substation. As the road is located at roughly the same level as the Listed Building, it is therefore anticipated that there would also be no intervisibility between the Onshore Substation Site and the Listed Building. Instead, views from the Listed Building appear to be directed towards the land to the south of the farmhouse and the agricultural land that surrounds it. The immediate setting of the farmhouse comprises the remains of the farm complex, and while the agricultural land immediately surrounding the farmhouse makes some contribution to its cultural significance, the Onshore Substation Site is not considered to form part of this. Based on this, Cairnbanno House is not scoped in for further assessment.
- 7.2.2.14 Millbrex Church (LB9629) is located approximately 1.5km to the south-west of the Onshore Substation Site along a country road connecting to the B9005 to the south. It is sited within a relatively open agricultural landscape with scattered residential properties and farmsteads. While the landscape surrounding it rolls gently, glimpses of the existing New Deer Substation and Moray East OWF Substation are possible from its north elevation and from within its associated churchyard, although this is more so of the associated pylons due to their height as opposed to buildings/structures of the substation. On account of the existing

substation being visible from this asset, it has been scoped in for further assessment in Section 7.3.

7.2.2.15 The North Main of Auchmaliddie stone circle (SM9392) is located close to the eastern edge of the study area within a private agricultural field off a country road connecting to New Deer to the north (approximately 4.7km east of the Onshore Substation Site). While access into the field was not possible, observations of it were made from the road edge. The stone circle was not visible from here; however, it is possible that it was obscured by the hedgerows or crops present within the field.

7.2.2.16 Although it is understood that the stones are not standing, they are of a distinctive white quartz so should generally be easily recognisable from the road. Long distance views from the road are possible, and thereby it is implied that these are also possible from the site of the stone circle, however, these primarily appear to be directed towards the south, south-east and south-west of the stone circle. However, without having access to the exact site of the stone circle, it is not known whether the Onshore Substation Site would lie in key views from this asset or not. While the existing New Deer Substation and Moray East OWF Substation is not visible in views when travelling along the road immediately to the east of the Scheduled Monument, the stone circle does sit on a more elevated position when compared to the road. As such, this asset has been scoped in for further assessment (see Section 7.4).

## **7.3 Millbrex Church**

### **7.3.1 Description of asset**

7.3.1.1 Millbrex Church (LB9629), which was designated in 1971, is a two-storey building constructed of red stugged ashlar. It is situated approximately 1.5km south-west of the Onshore Substation Site and was designed in the late 19th century by local architects John Bridgeford Pirie and Arthur Clyne. The principal elevation features a circular spirelet corbelled from buttresses in the north-west.

7.3.1.2 The church sits adjacent to a road and is surrounded by its associated churchyard which is enclosed by a low stone wall.

### **7.3.2 Cultural significance**

7.3.2.1 The cultural significance of Millbrex Church is predominantly derived from its aesthetic/ architectural and historic values. While the building appears to have undergone various phases of repair over time (which is evident when observing the mix of ashlar and brickwork at its principal elevation facing the road) and does have broken and/or boarded up windows, its original form, design and use can still be understood.



7.3.2.2 In addition to this, it retains attractive features such as the circular spirelet and the rose window (at west elevation) which add to its gothic style. The interiors could not be inspected during the site walkover survey, however, the official listing entry for the Listed Building notes that the original furnishings are not of special note. It also does not make a note of any other internal features, so it is assumed that much of its architectural and aesthetic interest is gained from the overall gothic design which is most evident from the outside.

7.3.2.3 The historic value is largely due to its association with the architects Pirie and Clyne, whose work was noted as being some of the most original and idiosyncratic work in 19th century Scotland. They primarily worked in Aberdeen and its surrounding area and concentrated on churches, however, they also designed public buildings in Aberdeen.

### **7.3.3 Description of setting**

7.3.3.1 The church is sited off a country road within an undulating agricultural landscape. Its principal elevation faces the road to the west and its associated churchyard extends to its east and north which is encased by a low stone wall. Various trees are present in the churchyard and along the north elevation which presumably were planted shortly after the church was constructed as ornamental trees to provide an attractive setting for the building.

7.3.3.2 Outside of this immediate setting, the church is surrounded by agricultural fields and scattered residential dwellings and farmsteads belonging to the community which the church was constructed to serve. At the time of the site walkover survey, the church was closed and partially boarded up, and there were no notices of services assuming that it is not in use, at least not regularly.

7.3.3.3 Due to its massing and the spirelet, it is a noticeable building when travelling along the country road as it is taller than the residential and farm buildings (which are generally bungalows or two storey buildings), however, the surrounding trees, especially those in the churchyard and along the northern elevation, somewhat screen views.

7.3.3.4 As mentioned previously, the existing New Deer Substation and Moray East OWF Substation is visible within long distance views across the wider agricultural landscape from the north elevation of the church and from within the northern extent of the churchyard. Such views, however, are mainly limited to the associated pylons due to their size, and the main structures of the substation are somewhat obscured by trees and the rolling nature of the landscape.

### **7.3.4 Contribution of setting to the cultural significance of the asset**

- 7.3.4.1 The immediate setting of the church along the road and within the churchyard is considered to be key to understanding its cultural significance. The placement of the church along the road and at a slightly elevated position allows an understanding of how this acted as a visual marker in the local community. The height and massing of the church means that it is more easily recognisable than the scattered residential properties, especially when travelling along the country road which also connects to the majority of the properties and farmsteads at Millbrex and New Millbrex.
- 7.3.4.2 Furthermore, the churchyard adds to the general aesthetic value of the asset and strengthens the ties to the local community.
- 7.3.4.3 The agricultural backdrop surrounding the assets does make some limited contribution to the cultural significance of the asset as it allows us to understand the need for a church within such a remote rural landscape to bring together the largely scattered and isolated community. However, this is considered to make a limited contribution only as the aesthetic and architectural interests of this church are considered to make the largest contribution to its cultural significance, and these can best be appreciated upon close inspection of the building and the churchyard.

### **7.3.5 Potential effects of the Proposed Development (Onshore)**

- 7.3.5.1 The site walkover survey has shown that the Onshore Substation Site lies within the wider agricultural backdrop setting of the church, and that it is possible that glimpses of it might be visible from the north elevation and the northern extent of the church (on account of the fact that the existing New Deer Substation and Moray East OWF Substation is visible). Despite this, the OnTI does not, however, lie within the immediate setting of the church (that is, along the road or the churchyard) which is considered to make the greatest contribution to the asset's cultural significance.
- 7.3.5.2 Furthermore, considering that trees have specifically been planted along the north elevation of the church and within the associated churchyard, it is assumed that views outwards from the church were not specifically designed to be made. Instead, views across the agricultural landscape are largely incidental based on the slightly elevated position of the church. Indeed, it would have likely been more important for the church to be seen and easily recognisable to act as a local marker, as opposed to being able to see the landscape from the church. The trees at the church are mainly planted in a linear pattern, indicating at least some level of deliberate ornamental planting.

7.3.5.3 Based on the above, while the Onshore Substation Site is located within backdrop views from this asset, it is not considered that this would create any adverse settings impacts or would otherwise lead to harm to the cultural significance of the church. Considering that hedgerow and treelines within views from the church towards New Deer Substation and Moray East OWF Substation are already common.

## **7.4 North Mains of Auchmaliddie, stone circle 500m SW of**

### **7.4.1 Description of asset**

7.4.1.1 The scheduled stone circle (SM9392), which was designated in 2000, represents the remains of a recumbent stone circle with only two surviving stones. It is located approximately 4.7km to the east of the Onshore Substation Site.

7.4.1.2 The two stones include the recumbent stone which measures 3m x 1.8m x 0.7m, and the possible west flanker, which is now fallen, and measures 2.5m x 1.3m x 0.7m. The stones are white quartz. Based on the site walkover survey, the stones are not visible from the publicly accessible road to its east.

7.4.1.3 The area included in the scheduled monument is a circular area centred on the surviving stones measuring 30m in diameter. This includes the remains of the stone circle and an area around it, within which, traces of activities associated with the construction and use of the monument may survive.

### **7.4.2 Cultural significance**

7.4.2.1 The significance of the stone circle is predominantly derived from its archaeological and historical/communal values.

7.4.2.2 The archaeological value of the stone circle especially relates to the potential for associated archaeological remains. While there is no above ground evidence of other stones that might have once formed part of the stone circle, there is potential that evidence for such is buried which is also likely why the scheduled area includes a 30m diameter surrounding the surviving stones.

7.4.2.3 The historic and communal values of the monument are derived from the monument's position within a group of recumbent stone circles which are unique to the north-east of Scotland. The monuments historic value is also derived from its ability to provide important information about the prehistoric ritual activity within this area; particularly due to the materials used in the construction of the monument which is unusual for monuments of this type. In terms of its communal value, this is tied to the value this

stone circle would have had for the community that constructed it (as communal value can also be applied to people in the past).

### **7.4.3 Description of setting**

- 7.4.3.1 The stone circle sits within an agricultural field (adjacent to a field access track) on a high point within the landscape (approximately 150m aOD). It is assumed that the stone circle was sited on the highest point within the approximate centre, however, this could not be corroborated during the site walkover survey as its location could not be verified from the publicly accessible road.
- 7.4.3.2 Outside of the field and access track, the stone circle is situated within a largely undulating agricultural landscape which is characterised by multiple hills which create ridges and valleys. While it is assumed that the stone circle forms part of a wider network of prehistoric monuments, no other known assets of such a nature are present within the study area.
- 7.4.3.3 When travelling along the road adjacent to the Scheduled Monument, views appear to be wide ranging from this location, however, they appear to be mainly focused to the south, south-east and south-west. As the ground gradually rises towards the site of the stone circle from the road, it was not possible to determine whether such views also extend to the west which is where the Onshore Substation Site is located.

### **7.4.4 Contribution of setting to the cultural significance of the asset**

- 7.4.4.1 The location of the stone circle at the top of the hill contributes to understanding its historic and communal interests. As with many prehistoric sites, it is generally assumed that this higher point was deliberately chosen so that the monument could be visible from the surrounding landscape. It is also assumed that views across the wider landscape from here would have also been important to the community that built it, however, this is not known (but generally widely accepted).
- 7.4.4.2 The wider agricultural background surrounding the asset adds little to the cultural significance of the asset. While it is likely that views from the asset across the wider landscape were indeed important, the content of those views, unless directly linking this monument to another, is arguably less important.

### **7.4.5 Potential effects of the Proposed Development (Onshore)**

- 7.4.5.1 At present, it is considered that the Proposed Development (Onshore), especially the Onshore Substation Site, would be unlikely to lead to

settings impacts or to harm the cultural significance of the Scheduled Monument. The 5km ZTV produced by the landscape consultant for the project suggests that the asset does lie within an area of high theoretical visibility, however, this could not be confirmed during the site walkover survey. Given the distance and the proposals for the Onshore Substation Site, there would unlikely be any harm to the cultural significance of the stone circle due to a change in views immediately adjacent to an existing substation, especially considering that the associated pylons of the existing substation are visually more intrusive than the actual structures of the substation. The proposed Onshore Substation Site is unlikely to block or otherwise prevent views across the wider landscape and overall would only results in the minimal loss of part of the expansive agricultural landscape.

7.4.5.2 Furthermore, based on observations from the edge of the field within which the stones are located, they currently do not appear to have an above ground presence, however, this would need to be confirmed by close inspection.

## 8 Conclusions

### 8.1 General

8.1.1.1 The effect of the development proposals on the known and potential heritage resource will be a matter that needs to be considered when evaluating the Proposed Development (onshore) against the Development Plan. This study has identified no overriding cultural heritage constraints which are likely to prohibit development, however, it notes that two designated heritage assets should be taken forward for further assessment as part of the EIA (namely the listed Milbrex Church (LB9629) and a scheduled stone circle (SM9392).

#### 8.1.2 Designated heritage assets

8.1.2.1 The Proposed Development (Onshore) would not lead to physical impacts to any of the identified heritage assets, however, this assessment has shown that there is potential for settings impacts, albeit limited, to Milbrex Church Listed Building (LB9629) and a scheduled stone circle (SM9392).

8.1.2.2 It is understood that the EIA will be supported by a range of visual material, some of which will be focused on heritage assets, such as the scheduled stone circle (SM9392), which will enhance the assessment to be presented in the Terrestrial Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Chapter of the EIAR (Volume 5, Chapter 5).

#### 8.1.3 Archaeological remains

8.1.3.1 This assessment has established that there is an archaeological interest within the OnTI RLB. This is defined as the potential for the presence of buried archaeological remains, in particular relating to the Bronze Age, Medieval and Post-medieval periods. This is derived from the presence of a Bronze Age cairn within the OnTI RLB indicating it likely lies within a wider funerary landscape. Furthermore, multiple sites of possible prehistoric activity have also been identified, in particular surrounding the proposed Onshore Cable Corridor. While these have been noted as possible sites based on aerial photography reviews only, the vast majority have not been archaeologically investigated, and so their potential is currently not known.

8.1.3.2 The Medieval and Post-medieval potential is largely due to the presence of a number of agricultural features across the OnTI RLB including ridge and furrow, farmhouses, and crofts. There is also potential for local industrial features to be present from past quarrying and mill activities.

8.1.3.3 Due to a lack of previous archaeological investigation within the OnTI RLB, the potential for and significance of any such remains could not be accurately assessed on the basis of the available evidence only, and it is

assumed that archaeological investigations will be required prior to the commencement of intrusive ground works within the OnTI RLB to evaluate at least a representative sample of areas of archaeological interest. It is likely that such works would focus on the potential prehistoric sites in particular, however, the scope of any archaeological works will be subject to consultations with the Archaeology Officer advising the LPA on archaeological matters.

## 9 References

- <sup>1</sup> British Geological Survey (2024) 'Geology of Britain Viewer'. Available at: [BGS Geology Viewer \(BETA\)](#) (Accessed 17/09/2024).
- <sup>2</sup> Historic Environment Scotland (2019) 'Historic Environment Policy for Scotland'. Available at: [Historic Environment Policy for Scotland | Historic Environment Scotland](#) (Accessed 17/09/2024).
- <sup>3</sup> Scottish Parliament (2013) 'Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013'. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2013/155/contents/made> (Accessed 17/09/2024).
- <sup>4</sup> UK Parliament (1997) 'Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997'. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/9/contents> (Accessed 17/09/2024).
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- <sup>9</sup> Scottish Government (2023) 'National Planning Framework 4'. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/> (Accessed 17/09/2024).
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- <sup>12</sup> Scottish Parliament (2014) 'Historic Environment Scotland Act 2014'. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/19/contents/enacted> (Accessed 17/09/2024).
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- <sup>14</sup> Aberdeenshire Council (2023) 'Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan'. Available at: <https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldpmedia/LDP2021/AberdeenshireLocalDevelopmentPlan2023IntroductionAndPolicies.pdf> (Accessed 17/09/2024).



<sup>15</sup> Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014, revised 2020). 'Standards and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment'. Available at: [https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CifAS%26GDBA\\_4.pdf](https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CifAS%26GDBA_4.pdf) (Accessed 17/09/2024).

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<sup>17</sup> Historic Environment Scotland (2018). 'Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook'. Available at: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=6ed33b65-9df1-4a2f-acbb-a8e800a592c0> (Accessed 17/09/2024).

## Historic Environment Record

Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record (AHER)

## Cartographic and Documentary Sources

1866 First Edition Ordnance Survey 25" Map (1:2,500)

## Online Resources

Archaeology Data Service - <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk>

British History Online - <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>

British Geological Survey, Geology of Britain Viewer - [BGS Geology Viewer - British Geological Survey](#)

Canmore - <https://canmore.org.uk/>

Historic Environment Scotland Portal - <http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/>

National Library of Scotland - [National Library of Scotland \(nls.uk\)](#)

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