

CEILWART TO BARMOUTH
MAINS REFURBISHMENT

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING (G1378)

Report No. 234

Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

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Introduction

In August and September 1996 Welsh Water upgraded the water main between Ceilwart and Barmouth.

An archaeological assessment was carried out in November 1995 (GAT Report No. 181), in which recommendations were made for marking the perimeter of specific sites to avoid accidental damage by contractors. It was also recommended that if construction works were carried out beyond the area previously disturbed, then those works were to be monitored by a watching brief.

Methodology

Trust staff visited the site before work began, and during the course of the refurbishment work. The last site visit took place on Tuesday 1st September. The course of the pipeline was walked between the covered reservoir at Eithin-fynydd (SH60022165) and Cae-Daniel (SH59911802) to identify any possible impact upon the sites previously identified.

Results

At the time of the last visit the works were largely complete, being 400 metres south of Eithin-fynydd. Three open trenches were examined, but all were located along the line of the previous, hand excavated, pipe trench, and no open trenches were noted at any time which had been dug through previously undisturbed material. The method by which the pre-existing pipe was replaced gave rise to some surface disturbance in the form of a low (< 100mm high, < 0.5m wide) ridge produced by the upthrust of ground material. This action, limited to the course of the existing pipe, did not affect any of the archaeological sites listed in the gazetteer.

The actual course of the existing pipeline was seen to deviate from that shown on the plans at two locations which had some bearing on the known archaeology. The first of these locations was south-east of Hendre-eirian, covering a length of some 250 metres, where the pipeline lay some 30 metres further west of site 10 than originally indicated: consequently there had been no disturbance of that site by the pipeline. The second location, some 300 metres south of Eithin-fynydd, showed the pipeline to pass between sites 5 and 6 rather than some 20 metres further west of site 6, a deviation covering some 200 metres. East of site 6 the pipeline ran through a gateway and may have originally disturbed the west end of site 5, which at best is only a slight feature of dubious integrity. Nonetheless there was some soil dumping around the west end of this site during the excavation of one of the access trenches and consequently due care was advised when redistributing the material for backfilling.

No other sites were deemed to be at threat from the current works either through excavation of access trenches or by any vehicular access adjacent to the course of the pipeline. Consequently no further archaeological work was carried out during the refurbishment.

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