



Archaeoleg Brython Archaeology

## Post-Excavation Assessment of Potential Wylfa Hotspot 17

Document Number B1703.AP.HS17.02

## Wylfa Newydd Development, Hotspot 17

Post-Excavation Assessment of Potential

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December 2021

B1703.AP.HS17.02

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Appendix I. AB 1703 Archaeoleg Brython Archaeology team

## Crynodeb

Comisiynwyd Archaeoleg Brython gan Horizon Nuclear Power Ltd. (HNP) i gyflawni rhaglen o waith cloddio archaeolegol rhwng 2017 a 2019 yn ystod gwaith clirio cynnar cyn cyflwyno cais Orchymyn Cydsyniad Datblygu (OCD/DCO) ar gyfer Orsaf Bŵer Wylfa Newydd ar Ynys Môn, Gogledd Cymru.

Wedi cwblhau'r cloddio commisiynwyd Wardell Armstrong LLP. ac Archaeoleg Brython gan HNP i ddarparu crynodeb o ganlyniadau'r gwaith ac i gyflawni rhaglen o waith ôl-gloddio rhwng Medi 2019 a Mawrth 2020 i asesu arwyddocâd a photensial yr archif a'r darganfyddiadau.

Adroddiad Asesiad o Botensial yw'r ddogfen hon ar gyfer archif a chasgliad arteffactau safle Hotspot 6 a gloddiwyd fel rhan o'r gwaith clirio cynnar.

Roedd cloddfa Hotspot 17 (NGR SH 34879257) yn mesur 100m<sup>2</sup> ac wedi ei leoli i asesu potensial y safle yn dilyn arolwg geoffisegol ac arolwg ffosi gan Wessex Archaeology. Wedi dadorchuddio'r safle nodwyd 'ynys' uchel o raeau. Ni ddargafyddwyd unrhyw nodweddion archaeolegol nag arteffactau wrth gloddio.

## Summary

*Brython Archaeology, commissioned by Horizon Nuclear Power Ltd. (HNP), undertook a phased programme of excavation in 2017-2019 in advance of the submission of a Development Consent Order (DCO) application for the construction of the proposed Wylfa Newydd Power Station on the Isle of Anglesey, North Wales.*

*Wardell Armstrong LLP. (WA) and Brython Archaeology was subsequently commissioned by HNP to provide a summary of the results of the archaeological excavation and to undertake a programme of post-excavation during September 2019 to March 2020 to assess the significance and potential of the site archive and finds.*

*This is an Assessment of Potential Report of the archive of Hotspot 17, which was excavated during early clearance works.*

*The excavation area of 100m<sup>2</sup> at Wylfa Hotspot 17 (NGR SH 34879257) was defined following a geophysical survey and evaluation by Wessex Archaeology to address the archaeological potential of the site. Upon stripping a high gravel 'island' was identified. During the excavation no archaeological features, deposits or finds were uncovered.*

# 1 Introduction

During August 2017 to January 2019, Archaeoleg Brython Archaeology CYF. (ABA), commissioned by HNP, conducted a phased programme of excavation of potential Prehistoric and post-medieval features at Wylfa Hotspot 17, Anglesey (NGR SH34879257) in advance of the submission of a Development Consent Order application (DCO) (PINS reference number EN010007) for the construction of the proposed Wylfa Newydd Power Station. The excavations at the Wylfa Newydd development site involved 30 open area excavations, with some undertaken as set piece excavations and others as strip map and sample excavations. In total 32 strip, map and sample areas, described as 'Hotspots' were identified, and organized into four zones referred to as 1a, 1b, 2 and 3 within the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; Horizon Nuclear Power, 2016; 2017). Fourteen of these areas were excavated by ABA (i.e. Wylfa Head, Area 7 and 8, and Hotspots 5 to 7-9, Hotspots 8 to 11-13 and Hotspots 14 to 17 [Figure 1]), totalling an area of approximately 25,578m<sup>2</sup>. This phase of fieldwork was concluded in January 2019. In February 2019 it was announced that the Wylfa Newydd project was being put into a suspended state. As a result of this all further works on the site have been suspended.

Prior to the excavation of the Wylfa Hotspot 17 site, it had been subject to an archaeological Desk Based Assessment (DBA) (Cooke *et al.*, 2012), magnetometer geophysical survey (Hopewell, 2011a; b; Hopewell 2012) and evaluation by Wessex Archaeology (2016a; 2016b; 2016c). During the evaluation a high gravel 'island' was identified.

Excavation of Hotspot 17 by ABA revealed no archaeological features, deposits or finds, and no environmental samples were taken.

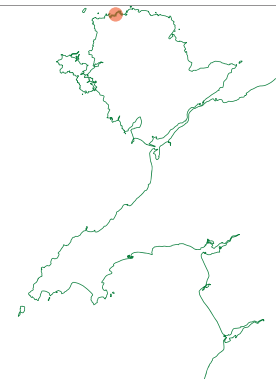
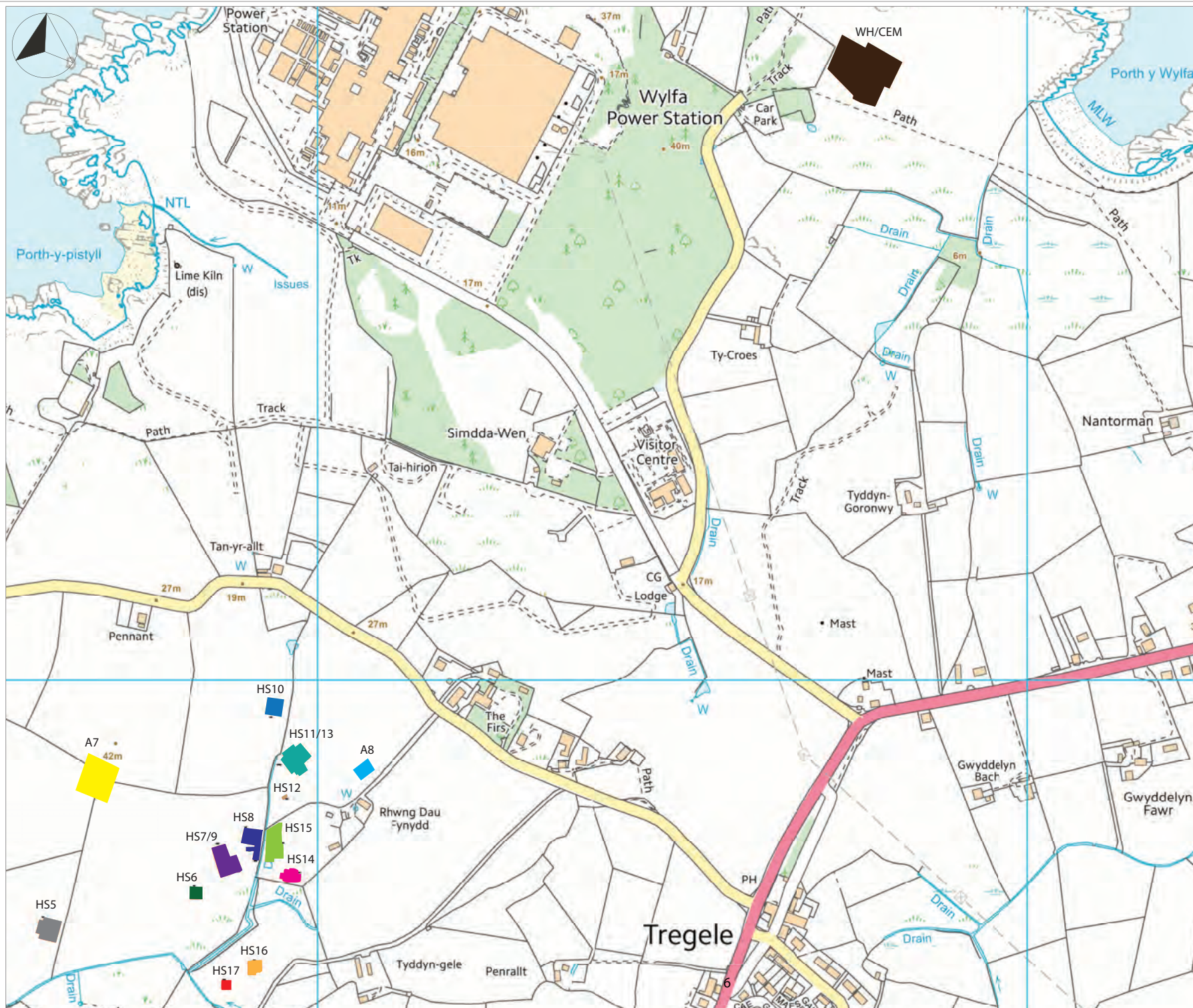
All archaeological works were undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI [Horizon Nuclear Power, 2016; 2017]), and in line with paragraph 5.8.21 of the overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1 [Department of Energy and Climate Change, 2011]). The work was monitored by Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service (GAPS), cultural heritage advisors to the Local Authority. WA have been employed by the HNP as cultural heritage consultants for the project and within this capacity have provided guidance and advice during the works. The key historic environment stakeholders are:

- Cadw – The principal Welsh government body responsible for the historic environment of Wales; and
- GAPS - The curators responsible for monitoring archaeological investigations undertaken as part of development in the region.

During the fieldwork and post-excavation work an archaeological record and archive of the site, AB1703 Hotspot 17, was created. WA was appointed by HNP to undertake a programme of assessment of the archaeological potential of the evidence accumulated during the excavations and ABA was selected to undertake a portion of this work under a sub-contract agreement with WA.

The purpose of this document is to report on the post-excavation assessment and analysis of the Hotspot 17 archive, and to create an ordered archive for deposition. This report is written and structured to conform to MoRPHE guidelines, the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' standards required of post excavation analysis works (CIfA 2014a; 2014b), and in line with the recommendations as stated in the ABA site summary report (ABA, 2018). Digital copies of this report are to be submitted to HNP and relevant stakeholders. The archive was stored in accordance to CIfA's standards and guidance (CIfA, 2014a: 2014b) while under the curatorship of ABA. The paper archive and digital data, including photographs will be lodged with the Royal

Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) in Aberystwyth on completion of the project. ABA will hold a digital version of the archive indefinitely.



**Figure 1**  
Location plan showing the excavated areas in the Wylfa Newydd Development Area

**Key - Excavation Areas**

- Wylfa Head/Cemetery
- Area 8
- Area 7
- Hotspot 5
- Hotspot 6
- Hotspot 7/9
- Hotspot 8
- Hotspot 10
- Hotspot 11/13
- Hotspot 12
- Hotspot 14
- Hotspot 15
- Hotspot 16
- Hotspot 17

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Drawn By: RN, DPN (edited CNV/VS)

Date: 19/10/18 (edited 06/12/19)

Location: SH 34990 93194

Project: AB1703

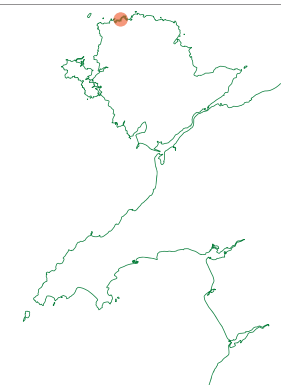
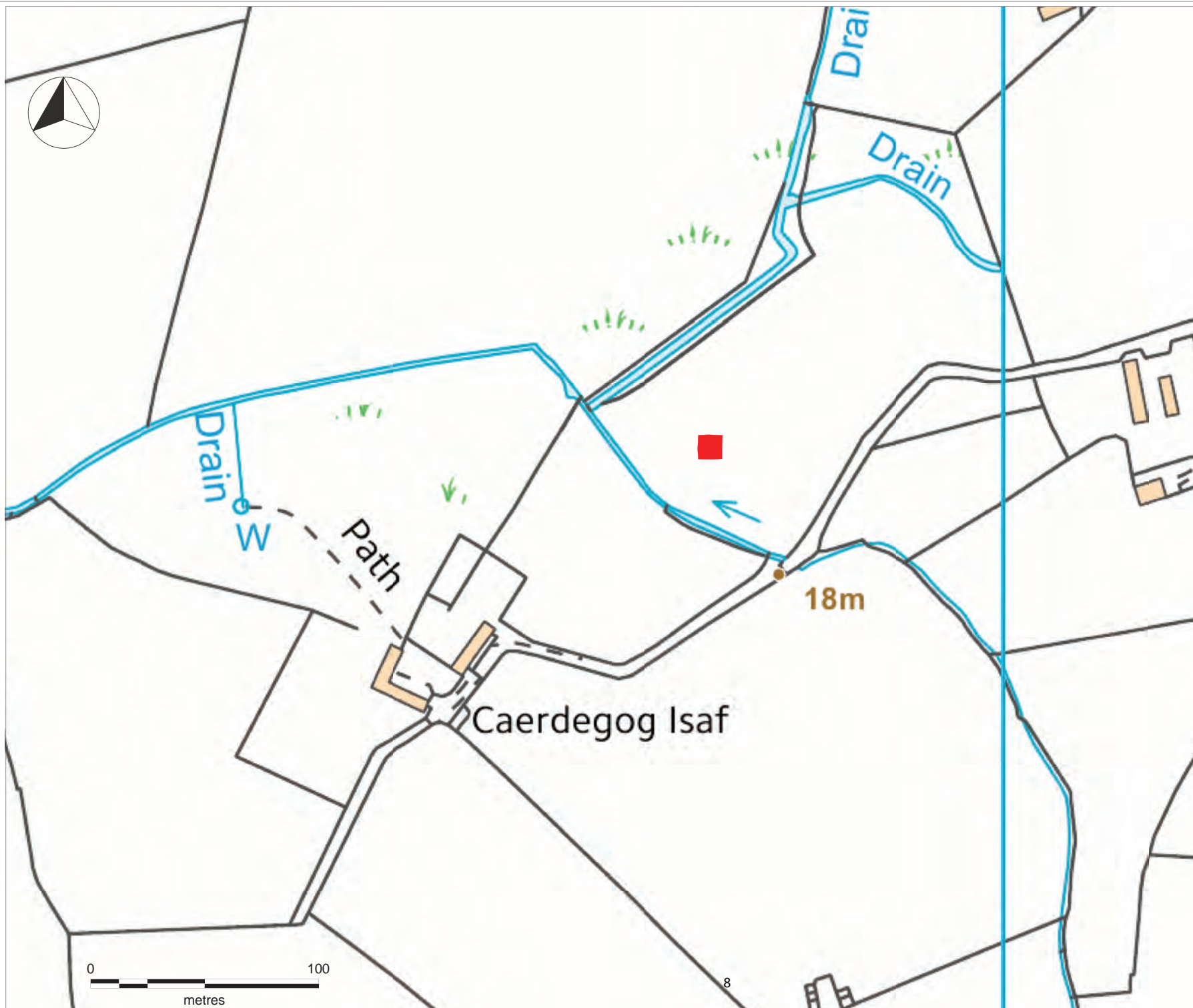
## 2 Project Background

### 2.1 Site Location

Hotspot 17, located in Hotspot Zone 1a, sits approximately 650m west of Tregale, in a relatively low-lying field, on a flat plateau at the edge of a marshy area to the north west. This field was previously labelled 'A11' during the archaeological trial trench evaluation (*Figure 2*). The plateau was notably raised from the marshy ground to the west and is likely to have been an island or promontory at the edge of a stream or small lake. The investigation area was at a height of approximately 18m AOD, centred on NGR SH 34879257, and measured approximately 100m<sup>2</sup>.

### 2.2 Geology and Topography

Superficial deposits in the area consist of Till, Devensian – Diamicton. These are sedimentary deposits which formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period, indicating a landscape dominated by Ice Age conditions. The underlying bedrock geology consists of Mica schist and psammite of the New Harbour Group. This is a metamorphic bedrock which formed between 635 and 541 million years ago during the Ediacaran period. These rocks were originally sedimentary, formed in deep seas, later altered by low-grade metamorphism (BGS, 2019).



**Figure 2**  
Location Plan, Hotspot 17.

**Key**

Hotspot 17

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Drawn By: CNV

Date: 22/10/18 (edited 01/11/19)

Location: SH34879257

Project: AB1703 Hotspot 17

## 2.3 Archaeological and Historical Background Data

Historic mapping and documentary sources consulted by ABA did not indicate the presence of archaeology within the limits of Hotspot 17. However, Anglesey is rich in archaeological sites and artefacts dating from the Mesolithic to the medieval period. The information below is summarised from reports and archaeological baseline assessments (Cooke *et al.*, 2012; Parry *et al.*, 2012; Jacobs, 2015; Wessex Archaeology, 2016a; ABA, 2017; Headland Archaeology, 2018), in addition to Archwilio (The Historic Environment Records of Wales) which should be consulted for detailed information.

Mesolithic finds generally consist of flint scatters and tools located at a number of locations across Anglesey. The closest Mesolithic activity recorded from the Wylfa Newydd development area was at Cemlyn Bay, located approximately 2km to the west of the existing decommissioned Wylfa power station, in the form of flint scatters, and three blade-like flint flakes (PRN 7046) recorded near lake Llyn Alaw, approximately 8km south-east.

Evidence for Neolithic to Late Iron Age activity is abundant, with Neolithic sites represented mostly by megalithic monuments, including chambered and passage tombs. A limited number of domestic sites have been recorded on Anglesey, with the closest being the Early Neolithic settlement at Llanfeathlu, located approximately 8km south-west of the existing decommissioned Wylfa power station.

Few Bronze Age settlements have been identified on Anglesey, however barrow construction and erection of standing stones and cairns remain visible throughout the Bronze Age, during which settlements tended to be clustered on high, defensible sites, and included roundhouses, hillforts and promontory forts. The closest Prehistoric Scheduled Monument, likely Bronze Age in date and consisting of three standing stones (ANO30 - the Meini Hirion standing stones), was located approximately 2.5km south-east of the existing decommissioned Wylfa power station. A possible Early Bronze Age burial chamber (PRN 3046) was identified at Cromlech, located 2km south-east. Prehistoric burials in the later part of the period appear to have moved away from the communal tradition with the appearance of individual urned cremations and cist inhumations. Arguably the most common feature type associated with the Bronze Age is burnt mounds. Evidence of these features are plentiful in the region and as many as twenty burnt mound deposits were identified within the footprint of the Wylfa Newydd development area. The closest recorded burnt mound (PRN 61102) is located east of Rhwng Dau Fynydd, approximately 1km south of the existing decommissioned Wylfa power station, and a burnt feature (PRN 66103) was recorded north-west of Caerdegog Isaf, located 1.3km south-west.

No Iron Age activity has previously been recorded at the site, however, a number of undated large enclosures and ring-gullies were identified in the development area during the evaluation phase, which may relate to the later part of the prehistoric period. The closest recorded Iron Age enclosure (PRN 61454) is found north of Penymorwydd, located approximately 4km south-east of the existing decommissioned power station at Wylfa.

The closest evidence of Roman activity to the Wylfa Newydd development site previously identified was a probable fortlet near Cemlyn Bay, near the western extent of the development area, and a Roman coin and brooch found at Cemaes Fawr Farm, located approximately 2km east. Christianity was introduced to Britain during the Roman period and became established later in the first millennium AD. Following the collapse of Roman imperial rule in Britain in the early 5th century, a degree of political continuity under established local leaders led to the eventual emergence of the House of Gwynedd, one of the early Royal Houses of Wales.

Evidence of early medieval to medieval activity within the vicinity of the site is scant and generally based on documentary evidence. The closest recorded medieval activity is a lime kiln at Penhryn

Mawr, located approximately 2.3km east of Wylfa, and saddle quern and medieval drain uncovered at Cemaes, located approximately 2km south-east. There are no known chapels/churches or settlements directly associated with the Wylfa Hotspot 17 site, or the early medieval cemeteries identified at Wylfa Head (located approximately 1.55km north-east), Area 7 (located 0.36km north-west) and Hotspot 11-13 (located 0.33km north-west), which is unusual as medieval cemeteries are typically associated with a chapel/church or settlement site. Two place names that are however spatially closely associated with the Wylfa Head site are:

- Tre'r Gof (township of the smith) – documented from the 12th century and is thought to have been a medieval township or hamlet with the commote of Talybolion.
- Wylfa (lookout point) – documented from the later medieval period and is the present farm of Wylfa that once were part of the township of Caerdegegog.

The precise location of the Tre'r Gof and Wylfa hamlet is unclear, therefore the two hamlets may have been associated with the Wylfa Head cemetery site, providing the populace interred here. Located 2km east-northeast of the Wylfa Head site, the 12th century church of Llanbadrig may also be associated with the cemetery. The parish of Llanbadrig sat within the commote of Talybolion, and there is some evidence that suggest that the parish encompassed much of north-west of Anglesey along with the parish of Llanfechell. The precise location of the Llanbadrig settlement is however unclear (ABA, 2017).

## 2.4 Original Geophysical Survey Results

Geophysical surveys were carried out during the assessment of the site (WYAS, 2015; Hopewell 2011a; 2011b; Hopewell, 2012). The surveys did not demonstrate the presence of significant archaeological remains within the excavation area.

## 2.5 Original Evaluation Results

Archaeological investigations undertaken in 2015-2016 indicated a fairly consistent non-archaeological deposit of 0.1-0.45m of brown sand loam topsoil, overlying 0.02-0.58m of yellow brown silt loam subsoil across Field Group 1, in which Field A11 is located. Natural deposits of orange brown sand or clay lay at 0.2-0.8m below ground level. Alluvial deposits of blue grey or grey brown sand clay were recorded in Trenches 342 and 749. Peat deposits of dark grey brown silt with a high organic content was recorded in Trench 1385. A total of 11 trenches were opened in Field A11, with eight of those containing recorded archaeology. Of these trenches six contained undated ditches, and three contained undated pits (Wessex Archaeology, 2016a). Trench 358, targeted as the Hotspot17 excavation, contained a high gravel 'island'. The 'island' was notably raised from the marshy ground to the west and is likely to have been an island or promontory at the edge of a stream or small lake.

## 2.6 Original Aims and Objectives

According to the WSI (Horizon Nuclear Power, 2016: 2017), the general aim of the excavations at the Wylfa Newydd development site was to gather additional information of the extent, condition, depth, character, quality, stratigraphic sequence and date of the archaeological remains within the excavation areas and to preserve the revealed remains, in record, in anticipation that their physical remains may be destroyed by future development works. The results of the investigations are to be disseminated through the deposition of an ordered archive at suitable repositories for both

physical and digital material, the deposition of a detailed report at the Historic Environment Record and the production of a publication article, at a level of detail appropriate to the significance of the results.

### 2.6.1 Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Aims

1. To ensure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the strip map and sample work.
2. To identify, investigate and record the character, nature, extent and relationships of the archaeological remains discovered, to the extent possible by the methods put forward in the specification.
3. To determine (so far as possible) the stratigraphic sequence and dating of the deposits or features identified.
4. To integrate the results of the work into the wider historic and archaeological context of the landscape and to address relevant regional research objectives where applicable and so far as is possible.
5. To disseminate the results through deposition of an ordered archive at the suitable repositories for both physical and digital material, the deposition of a detailed report at the Historic Environment Record (HER) and publication at a level of detail appropriate to the significance of the results.
6. To undertake the works in such a way as to allow sufficient data to be gathered to address the various research objectives outlined below. This includes the investigation and recording of features, the identification, recording and collection of artefacts and ecofacts (including environmental samples) and the use of appropriate analytical methodologies/techniques when examining the record/artefacts.

### 2.6.2 Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Objectives

The relevant archaeological framework documents identified in the WSI (Horizon Nuclear Power, 2016: 2017) were:

- Review of the Research Framework for the Archaeology of Wales: North West Wales – Neolithic and Early Bronze Age (Burrow, 2010);
- Review of the Research Framework for the Archaeology of Wales: North West Wales – Later Bronze Age and Iron Age (Gale, 2010);
- A Research Framework for the Archaeology of Wales – Romano British (AD 43-AD 410) (Davies, 2017);
- A Research Framework for the Archaeology of Wales: North West Wales - Early Medieval c. AD 400-1070 (Edwards *et al.*, 2016); and
- A Research Framework for the Archaeology of Wales: North West Wales – Medieval c.AD 1100 – 1539 (Longley, 2010).

As the evaluation identified a gravel 'island' as an area of high potential for prehistoric activity at the edge of wetland, the relevant archaeological research questions stated below were identified in the WSI for Strip, Map and Sample areas (Horizon Nuclear Power, 2017).

*Prehistoric;*

- Q.1. Are the possible structural features associated with isolated structures or part of a larger settlement?

- Q.3. What is the functional and stratigraphic relationship between the burnt mounds/spreads and other spatially associated features in particular reference to possible structural features (post holes) and ditch type features ('troughs')?
- Q.4. What relationships or patterns, if any, can be seen between these Prehistoric features and their wider landscape setting?

## 2.7 Field Methodology

The investigations were undertaken in accordance with the scope and methodology outlined in the WSI (Horizon Nuclear Power, 2016: 2017), and as described in the Site Summary Report (ABA, 2018). All works complied with ClfA's best practice guidance, regulations and standards (ClfA, 2014b: 2014c).

### 2.7.1 Surveying and Setting Out

The original excavation area was set out by Jones Brothers Balfour Beatty Joint Venture (JBBDJV). The excavation area was subsequently surveyed by ABA using a Leica Viva GPS system, all surveys were tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

### 2.7.2 Excavation and Sampling

#### 2.7.2.1 Mechanical Excavation

All mechanical excavation and stripping were undertaken by Wessex Archaeology. Topsoil and other deposits of overburden were removed using a tracked 360 degree excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All mechanical excavation was undertaken under direct archaeological supervision. Mechanical excavation proceeded to a depth sufficient to address the objectives of the excavation. Mechanical excavation ceased when the absence of any archaeological 'horizon' was adequately demonstrated. Spoil from the stripping operations were stockpiled in bunds outside of the archaeological excavation area. After the completion of mechanical excavation, both the spoil heaps and the stripped surface were scanned with a metal detector (Horizon Nuclear Power, 2016; ABA, 2018).

#### 2.7.2.2 Hand Excavation

After the removal of top- and subsoil, the area was manually cleaned. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were revealed (ABA, 2018).

#### 2.7.2.3 Recording

All excavated contexts were fully recorded in line with the standards set out in the WSI (Horizon Nuclear Power, 2016) using appropriate ABA pro-forma recording sheets. The photographic record was compiled using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels, these were taken as high-quality JPEG and RAW images, TIFF images will be created from RAW files for final archiving. Digital images were subject to managed quality control, curation

processes which will embed appropriate metadata within the image and ensure long term accessibility of the image.

#### *2.7.2.4 Paleoenvironmental Sampling*

General environmental sampling is usually undertaken in accordance with Historic England's (2011) environmental archaeology guide in sampling methods for post-excavation analysis. However, no environmental samples were taken during the Hotspot 17 excavation as no archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified.

#### *2.7.3 Archiving*

The creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of the archaeological archive followed in line with the regulations of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance (CIfA, 2014a; 2014b). Upon completion of the project the paper archive and all digital data including photographs will be lodged with the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) in Aberystwyth. Digital copies of the report will be submitted to Horizon who will then distributed to stakeholders. Printed versions will only be produced if specifically requested. ABA will hold a digital version of the archive indefinitely.

### 3 Excavation Results

No archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified during the excavation of Hotspot 17. The results of the excavation were first described in the ABA 2018 site summary report.

#### 3.1 Quantification of Excavation Data

Data Category	Number
Small finds	0
Environmental samples	0
Digital photographs	4 JPEG / 4 NEF
GPS surveyed digital excavation plans	118KB
Hand drawn plans	0
Hand drawn sections	0

#### 3.2 Phasing/Stratigraphic Sequence

No contexts were recorded during the Wylfa Hotspot 17 excavation, and no archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified. The topsoil was a light grey brown sand silt and no clear distinction between the topsoil and subsoil was observed (*Plate 1 and 2*). The natural horizon was a gravel clay.



Plate 1. Hotspot 17 after stripping. View from the South-East, 1m scale.



Plate 2. Hotspot 17 after stripping. View from the North-West, 1m scale.

## 4 Assessment of Potential and Significance

Hotspot 17 contained no archaeological features and no finds or environmental samples were recorded or retained during the excavation.

## 5 Discussion and Statement of Potential

Hotspot 17 was excavated because of the potential for archaeology indicated by the evaluation trenching, which revealed a ditch and gravel island. An area of 100m<sup>2</sup> was stripped under archaeological supervision, the site revealed nothing of archaeological note, no environmental soil samples were collected, and no material evidence was obtained.

## 6 Storage and Archive Deposition

At the time of writing the paper and digital archive was held at the ABA offices in Bangor, Gwynedd. Upon completion of the project, and with agreement with HNP and the relevant stakeholders, the paper archive and digital data, including photographs will be lodged with the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) in Aberystwyth, under an accession number yet to be assigned. ABA will hold a digital version of the archive indefinitely.

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# Appendices

## Appendix I. AB1703 Archaeolog Bryton Archaeology Team

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Ethan Bradley	Rocio Jimenez Diaz	Blazej Prus
Rose Britton	Mark Jones	Gary Reid
Ciara Butler	William Jones	Clair Richardson
Florencia Cabral	Trevor Jose	Louis Roper
Harry Careless	Callum Knauf	Kurt Russell
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Alonso	Karl Macrow	James Sinclair
Brett Connolly	Meagan Mangum	Robert Slabonski
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Rebecca Costella	Rodriguez	Luke Tremlett
Brenton Culshaw	Elena Matteacci	Michael Tunncliffe
Pedro da Silva	Georgina Merckel	Harri Twigg
Stuart Elder	Lucy Morrison	Kerri Waite
Thomas Eley	Tomasz Moskal	April Williams
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