

Prestatyn to Llanasa Sewage Pumping Main

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT



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February 1997

Report for Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water

CPAT Report Record

Report and status

CPAT Report Title	Prestatyn to Llanasa Sewage Pumping Main: Archaeological Assessment		
CPAT Project Name	Prestatyn to Llanasa Main		
CPAT Project No	710	CPAT Report No	217
Confidential (yes/no)	Yes	draft/final	Final

Internal control

	name	signature	date
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Revisions

no	date	made by	checked by	approved by

Internal memo

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Contracting Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (hereafter CPAT Contracts) was commissioned in January 1997 by Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water (Northern Division, Eastern Area) to carry out an archaeological assessment of the proposed pipeline route for the Prestatyn to Llanasa Sewage Pumping Main.
- 1.2 The assessment had been requested by the Curatorial Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust acting in their role as advisers to Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water, and a Brief had been prepared detailing the works required (AAB 197, December 2nd 1996). The assessment was considered necessary due to the lack of sufficient existing information to determine the likely impact of the scheme on the archaeological resource.
- 1.3 The Brief outlined a programme of work to assess the likely impact of the proposed scheme, consisting of a desk-top study of the most easily available primary and secondary sources, followed by a fieldwork survey of the pipeline corridor. A report summarising the data resulting from the assessment would then be produced identifying areas of 'greater' and 'lesser' archaeological sensitivity within the corridor and making broad recommendations on the siting of the pipeline corridor route which would seek to avoid or minimise damage to archaeological features.

2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND LAND-USE

- 2.1 The proposed scheme affects a corridor c.4.5 km in length from a new pumping station at SJ07898410, north of Prestatyn Golf Course Club House, to a new sewage treatment works at SJ12458335, immediately south of the railway line and the disused Point of Ayr Colliery Site (PRN 26558).
- 2.2 The scheme is located to the east of Prestatyn, running mainly to the south of the Chester to Holyhead Railway and north of the A548 coastal road (Fig. 1). At the eastern end the proposed corridor crosses the Prestatyn Golf Course and Prestatyn Gutter, and then runs through mainly undeveloped reclaimed marsh land not exceeding 10m OD in height, terminating on the west side of access road to the former Point of Ayr Colliery. The landuse is largely pasture and arable farmland with the former Warren located to the north of the railway line, which separates the route from the sand dunes and the foreshore. The central area of the corridor passes through several holiday camps and some permanent dwellings.
- 2.3 The solid geology of Carboniferous age comprises Holywell Shales and Gwespys Sandstone with a boundary to the east with Lower and Middle Coal Measures. The coal measures in the east are overlain by alluvial deposits in the fields of pasture which have been reclaimed by the construction of the coastline protection bank (PRN 26554), which runs from Talacre Harbour south-east to Ffynngongroyw.
- 2.4 Post-glacial drift deposits in the western section of the corridor are overlain by peat deposits which are located along the coastline following an east-west axis (Fig. 1). The deposits have been examined at several locations in close proximity to the west end of the corridor. Environmental sampling in 1991 at Nant Hall Road, centred on SJ070832, revealed between 1 and 3m of peat and possible marine sediments overlying the drift deposits in the southern sector of the site with marine and estuarine deposits on the seaward side to the north (Britnell 1991, 18). 1992 sampling in the same area (Thomas 1992, 59), including hand augering, verified these deposits.
- 2.5 The peat deposits form a boundary with a mixture of marine or estuarine alluvium west Greenacres and Dunkason's Caravan Parks. East of the caravan parks, old storm beaches form north-west to south-east alignments, before the large area of alluvium extends across the fields of pasture from Station Road to Tan-lan Road.

3 DESK-TOP STUDY

- 3.1 The desk-top study involved the examination of all readily available documentary, cartographic, pictorial and aerial photographic sources at the following repositories: County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, Welshpool; National Library of Wales (NLW), Aberystwyth; National Monuments Record (NMR), Royal Commission of Ancient and Historical Monuments (RCAHMW), Aberystwyth; Flintshire County Records Office, Hawarden (CROH).

Historical Background

- 3.2 The earliest documentary references to this area refer to "Gronantesmore", appearing in the Register of Edward the Black Prince (Part 1, 161, and Part 3, 272, 358). The register for Westminster dated, January 24th 1348, states ".....petition from the bishop of St. Asaph praying the prince to grant him at farm Gronandesmore with two acres of turbary there....." (Part 1, 161). The London register dated August 15th 1357 records ".....the moor called "Gronantesmore", which used to return 20 marks yearly, is now in the prince's hand, and that no one offers a farm of more than 101 for it,.....Order, also to drain the said moor by dykes in such manner as shall seem most profitable for the prince....." (Part 3, 358). The entry for August 22nd 1359 records ".....great bunds should be made between the said place (Gronantesmore) and the sea there, so that if this place should be destroyed by the sea overrunning the said bunds, then he and his heirs should be allowed 12d a year for every acre so destroyed...." (Part 3, 358).
- 3.3 Documentary references to lands in the townships of Gwespyr, Gronant and Picton deposited in the Mostyn Talacre Manuscripts at Hawarden Record Office form part of the Llanasa Deeds dating from 1378 (D/MT/246-448).
- 3.4 The earliest available map of the area is the 1610 Map of Flintshire by John Speede (Fig. 2). The map identifies the coastal townships of Prestatyn, Talacre, Gronant and Mostyn, although no further detail is shown.
- 3.5 The land that the proposed route crosses appears to have been owned primarily by two of the large land owning families of Flintshire. The western end of the corridor appears to have been part of the Nant Hall Estate owned by the Conways, a branch of the Conways of Bryneury, near Llandrillo-yn-Rhos (Pennant 1778, 5). The remaining and larger part of the land belonged to the Mostyns of Talacre. Piers Mostyn I (1495-1579), first member of the family to take the surname Mostyn, inherited an estate from his father, presumably at Talacre, which he later enlarged considerably by speculative buying of lands mainly in the parish of Llanasa (Mostyn 1925, 45).
- 3.6 A survey of the Talacre Estate (D/MT/859) was made in April 1617 as part of a legal dispute following the death of one Piers Mostyn. The survey refers to the value of the land; the valuation of the Warren being amongst the highest rated. The survey records the manor house and some formal gardens, which in the later survey of 1634 (D/MT/553) is referred to as a park of two acres surrounding the main house, with "Parke Issa" (Lower Park) on John ap Roberts land. This suggests some development of the parkland at this time on the lower ground, which would be north of the present A458. The Warren again received a fairly high valuation and later documentary records dated 1752 and 1757 (D/MT/568-7) refer to poaching on this Warren. The existence of the Warren, which would be licensed by the Crown, suggests that the Talacre Estate was of considerable importance and value by the early seventeenth century. The Warren and much of the coastal area are designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and are separated from the proposed corridor by the railway.
- 3.7 Seventeenth century documents in the Mostyn Talacre Mss. (D/MT/866-7) include correspondence dated 1669 between the Estate and Hugh Morris, who occupied land called Morva Weber and Morva Gwesbyr, part of the Talacre Warren Estate. The property may be the dwelling named "Ty'n-y-morfa" recorded on the OS drawings (Fig. 3) in 1834-5 in an area surveyed as "Gronant Moor". No access track to the property appears on this map but the 1870 OS map (Flintshire 2.6) records a track to the property through the estate woodlands. This access track will be crossed by the proposed route at its junction with the former main road.
- 3.8 An "Act for inclosing and draining Lands in the Parish of Llanasa in the County of Flint" was given Royal Assent on the 10th of June 1811 (D/LA/34). The parish is described as 1,600 acres which includes marshes, commons and wastes. The act states that Sir Piers Mostyn of Talacre is Lord of the Manor and already the owner of the commons and waste lands and part of the marshes with rights to "Free Warren", wrecks from the sea and part of the mineral rights within the parish. The northern area of the parkland, which is crossed by the proposed corridor route appears to have been developed

sometime after this enclosure act. In 1823, Sir Edward Mostyn, 7th Bart, had inherited the estate; he rebuilt the manor house and extended the parkland (NT1532, 1575).

- 3.9 The Ordnance Survey drawings, which predate the published 1st edition 1:2500 maps, were surveyed under the superintendence of R. Dawson. Plan 343 (NLW) covers the corridor of the pipeline, surveyed by W.R. Durrant 1834-5 at a scale of 2" to the mile. The map shows the area that the corridor will pass through comprising mainly small enclosed fields, with the central area surveyed as "Gronant Moor" (Fig. 3). Several features, presumably small areas of coppice or ponds are recorded in enclosed fields on the moor; these features are unrecorded on the 1839 Tithe Map or the published 1st edition OS maps, but lie outside the corridor of the pipeline.
- 3.10 A "Map of Talacre Estate in the Parish of Llanasa, Co. Flint belonging to Sir Edward Mostyn, Bt." dated c.1830 (D/LA/94) illustrates land ownership and mineral rights at this period. The map (Fig. 4) shows land already set aside for the railway, part of the northern woodland of the estate that the corridor crosses and the small field systems. At the eastern end of the proposed corridor, the stream bed has formed an oxbow, which is no longer evident.
- 3.11 The 1839 Llanasa Parish Tithe Map and the accompanying schedule for Gwespyr Township shows little change in landuse and ownership. The woodlands and ponds of the Talacre Estate and the carriage ways that connect the main house to Triangle Wood are shown. The development of the parkland appears to have continued throughout the mid-nineteenth century. The OS 1st edition (1872) records the layout of the estate at its peak. The map shows the areas of woodland now around the caravan parks, which were formally laid out by the estate.
- 3.12 Several routes were proposed for a steam railway link from Chester to the Holyhead mail boat during the 1830s. In December 1840, routes proposed by George Stephenson were examined on the ground and the Chester to Holyhead Railway Act was passed in 1844 (Baughton 1972, 32).
- 3.13 Coastal protection banks appear to have been in existence from 1787, constructed to protect areas from the west (Jones 1995, 10). The 1787 date has been added to the map of Talacre Harbour 1839-1952 (Fig. 5) and the bank (PRN 26554) is shown separating the reclaimed land from the marshes.. The reclamation of the marshlands and drainage schemes appear to have been systematically engineered from 1846. Documents dating 26.5.1846 relate to the appointment of Trustees to the Llanasa Embankment and Drainage scheme, including Sir Edward Mostyn (D/MT/863). Further documents relating to the scheme date 1885-6 (D/MT/863-4) with references to the trustees only. The harbour map shows the former Picton Pool, Point of Ayr Colliery and the proposed route of the railway. The 1890 colliery tramway (PRN 26556) follows the line of Tan-lan Road on the east side and the earlier Crockford's Tramway (PRN 26557) is located east of it.
- 3.14 The 3rd edition OS (1912, 2.5) records the site of the present Golf Club House at the west end of the pipeline as "Lichfield House", presumably constructed sometime after the previous OS survey, published 1899. There is no development in the areas on the present Greenacres or Dunkasons Caravan Parks, which the corridor crosses. The development of holiday homes has taken place mainly on land purchased by Flintshire County Council from the Mostyn Estate in 1919. The placing of caravans around Triangle Wood (Fig. 6) in the central area of the proposed corridor route has respected some of the woodland. Since the corridor follows the line of the road in this locality, it is assumed that no further infringement would be made on the woodland.
- 3.15 The Talacre Estate was sold by auction in November 1919 (Fig. 7), following directions from Sir Piers Mostyn, Bart. The house and grounds were purchased by an order of nuns who enclosed the grounds near the house within the high wall, which fronts the new A548, separating the pleasure grounds from the informal areas of woodland that the corridor route passes.

Archaeological Background

- 3.16 Small scale excavations and environmental sampling was undertaken by CPAT during September and October 1991 at Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn (PRN 17430, SJ070832). The area had been identified as of potential archaeological interest due to previous discoveries of Mesolithic and Neolithic flint scatters. Four shell middens of presumed Mesolithic/Neolithic date were recovered from the peat deposits (Britnell 1991, 18). Charcoal samples from these deposits later revealed a radiocarbon date $4890 \pm 80\text{BP}$ and $4700 \pm 70\text{BP}$ (associated with two cockleshell middens). Further work was carried out in 1992-3 (Thomas 1992, 59 and 1993, 50) which resulted in two radiocarbon dates of $5270 \pm 80\text{BP}$ and $5530 \pm 80\text{BP}$ being obtained from mussel shell middens (PRN 17395-6).

- 3.17 There is evidence that the area around Prestatyn and the Prestatyn Gutter has been subject to a series of marine transgressions between the Mesolithic and post Roman periods, as evidenced by the distribution of deposits of peat and estuarine clays. It has been suggested that during periods of rising sea levels, areas of elevated boulder clays remained above sea level and were occupied, accounting for the shell middens and other finds. During periods of regression, it is possible that lower lying areas were also occupied, only to be inundated during subsequent marine transgressions (Manley 1981). The extent of this occupation may be linked to the distribution of peat deposits, which are of themselves of considerable palaeoenvironmental potential. On the basis of existing evidence it would appear that the eastern extent of these deposits may be just west of Shore Road, Gronant (SJ090835).
- 3.18 An archaeological evaluation (PRN 26928) carried out by CPAT for Dwr Cymru in 1994 to assess the archaeological sensitivity of two alternative sites for the proposed sewage works, south of the railway line (Fig. 1) revealed no archaeological features but highlighted the presence of buried waterlogged deposits at the former margin of the dry and wetland areas.

Aerial Photographic Sources

- 3.19 The oblique photographic archive at CPAT revealed no sites directly along the proposed corridor. Vertical photographs from the Royal Air Force (RAF) and Ordnance Survey (OS) collection examined at the NMR revealed no evidence.

4 FIELD WORK SURVEY

- 4.1 A systematic field work survey was conducted during February 1997, covering the whole of the corridor. No new archaeological sites were revealed along the corridor. The sites which are already recorded on the SMR in close proximity to the corridor are given their primary record number (PRN), marked on Fig. 1 and included in the text.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Archaeological sites already recorded by the SMR and those revealed during the desk top study are all located outside the corridor route and are unlikely to be affected by the proposed scheme.
- 5.2 While no above ground archaeological sites were identified by the desk-top study or the field work survey, an area of potential archaeological sensitivity has been identified during the study of geological data. The main area of potential archaeological sensitivity is located in the fields of pasture at the west end of the corridor route, where peat deposits are located south of the railway (Fig. 9). Based on previous discoveries at Nant Hall Road (Britnell 1991, Thomas 1992-3), it is likely that these peat deposits are an eastern extension of the deposits already investigated and may contain further evidence of Mesolithic or Neolithic occupation, as well as containing significant palaeoenvironmental remains.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 6.1 CPAT Contracts would like to thank the various landowners for allowing access for the field walked survey and the staff at the following for their assistance and co-operation: County Sites and Monuments Record, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, Welshpool; National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth; National Monuments Record, Royal Commission of Ancient and Historical Monuments, Aberystwyth; Flintshire County Records Office, Hawarden.

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- Silvester, R.J., and Hankinson, R., 1994, *Prestatyn Sewage Treatment Works, Clwyd*. CPAT Report No.90.
- Thomas, D., 1992, Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn. *Archaeology in Wales* 32, 59.
- Thomas, D., 1993, Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn. *Archaeology in Wales* 33, 50.

Archive Sources

Flintshire County Record Office, Hawarden:

D/LA/103-5	D/LA/97	D/MT/862-4	PC/35/31	NT/1575
D/MT/1064	NT/1113	D/LA/34-5	D/LA/44	D/LA/54
FC/LA/3/24-6	FC/LA/6/15-39	FC/P/2/13	FC/C/6/659	
D/GY/104	D/GY/107	D/GW/B/476	D/MT/568-72	D/DM/1170/1
D/DM/941/1	D/MT/246-448	D/MT/551	D/MT/553	D/MT/866-7
PC/35/31				

Cartographic Sources

- 1610 Map of Flintshire, John Speede (British Museum Maps. C7. c5 ,19).
- c.1830 Map of Talacre Estate in the parish of Llanasa, Co. Flint belonging to Sir Edward Mostyn, Bt (CROH D/LA/93-4)
- 1834-5 Ordnance Survey Plan 343 2" : 1 mile
- 1839 Llanasa Tithe Map (NLW. NT/M.49)
- 1840 Plan of the lands near Llanasa belonging to Mr. Lloyd, surveyed by J. Bennison (D/GY/104)
- 1864 Plan of the property in the parish of Llanasa belonging to Trevor Lloyd Esq. (D/GY/109)
- 1872 Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:25,000 Flintshire Sheet 2.5
- 1890 Surface Plan of Point of Ayr Colliery (D/LA/105)
- 1872 Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:25,000 Flintshire Sheet 2.6
- 1872 Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:25,000 Flintshire Sheet 2.7
- 1894 Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 1:25,000 Flintshire Sheet 2.11
- 1912 Ordnance Survey 3rd edition 1:2500 Flintshire Sheet 2.5
- 1912 Ordnance Survey 3rd edition 1:2500 Flintshire Sheet 2.11
- 1919 Plan of the Talacre Estate, Flintshire, accompanies sale particulars. (CROH D/DM/223/9)
- 1732-1952 Plan of Picton Pool and Talacre Harbour (D/LA/97)
- 1970 Geological Survey of Great Britain.1:63,360, Rhyl Sheet 95 Solid and Drift
- 1974 Geological Survey of Great Britain.1:50,000, Liverpool Sheet 96 Solid
- 1975 Geological Survey of Great Britain.1:50,000, Liverpool Sheet 96 Drift

Aerial Photographic Sources**CPAT ARCHIVE**

Obliques

86-MB-0548-9

RCAHMW ARCHIVE

RAF 1:10,000 Verticals

RAF/3C/TUD/UK33/5062-3, Flight 16.1.1946

RAF/CPE/UK/2496/3319-20, Flight 11.3.1948

RAF/F21/58/2196/148-155, Flight 14.6.1957

ORDNANCE SURVEY

Height: 5,500 Verticals

Height: 7,700

Height: 15,500

OS/86-060/007-0025, 072-4, Flight 16.5.1986

OS/90-077/054-063, Flight 2.5.1990

OS/70-043/IR/34-36, Flight 19.4.1970

OS/70-326/IR/123, 901, Flight 13.9.1970

APPENDIX 1

PRESTATYN TO LLANASA SEWAGE PUMPING MAIN SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT BY CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed development involves the construction of a new sewage pumping main pipeline between the sewage pumping works at Talacre (SJ12458335) and a new pumping station near Prestatyn Golf Links Clubhouse (SJ07898410).
- 1.2 This area lies on the drained and reclaimed coastal fringe which land is largely used for holiday accommodation and pasture/arable farmland.
- 1.3 The Curatorial Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (hereafter CPAT Curatorial) in their capacity as archaeological advisors to Welsh Water have determined that an Archaeological Assessment is necessary to assess the implications of the proposed development on the archaeological resource. Accordingly a brief has been prepared by CPAT Curatorial (No AAB 197, dated 2nd December 1996) which describes the scheme of archaeological works required.

2 Objectives

- 2.1 The objectives of the evaluation are:
 - 2.1.1 to reveal by desk-based assessment, the nature, condition, significance and, where possible, the chronology of the archaeology within the area of the proposed development in so far as these aims are possible;
 - 2.1.2 to prepare a report outlining the results of the assessment, to identify areas where desk-top assessment alone cannot provide sufficient information and make recommendations for further work or mitigatory measures;
 - 2.1.3 to incorporate sufficient information on the archaeological resource for a reasonable planning decision to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the area affected by the proposed development;
 - 2.1.4 to identify and make broad recommendations for the management of the archaeological resource, including any further provision for that resource where it is considered necessary.

3 Methods

- 3.1 The assessment will be carried out according to the guidelines in the *IFA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Studies* and will involve the examination of all the readily available primary and secondary records relating to this part of the town, including documentary and cartographic sources. Archives and repositories will include the regional Sites & Monuments Record maintained by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, relevant records in the National Library of Wales and held by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, Aberystwyth, the County Record Offices at Hawarden and Ruthin, and records held by the county archaeologist of Denbighshire County Council. Borehole and test-pit data will be requested from the developers where appropriate.
- 3.2 The assessment will be supported by a field visit to determine the state of the identified archaeology and the presence of other sites not identified from the documentary sources and to make a photographic record of the area.
- 3.3 Following the on-site work an illustrated and bound report will be prepared according to the principles laid out in the Curatorial Brief (page 4). This will be in A4 format and contain conventional sections on: Site location, Topography and Geology; Historic Background; Catalogue of sites identified with

notes on their condition and significance, Conclusions and Recommendations and References, together with appropriate appendices on archives and finds.

- 3.5 The site archive will be prepared to specifications laid out in Appendix 3 in the Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1991).

4 Resources and Programming

- 4.1 The assessment will be undertaken by a skilled and experienced archaeologist who will also be responsible for undertaking the desk-based assessment. Overall supervision will be by Dr A Gibson, a senior member of CPAT's staff who is also a member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- 4.2 All report preparation will be completed by the same field archaeologist who conducted the assessment.
- 4.3 It is anticipated that the assessment and evaluation will take no more than ten days in all and that the subsequent report would be prepared immediately thereafter, dependent on the client's instructions and the arrangement of a suitable timetable. The date of commencement, at the time of writing, has yet to be agreed with the client, and will be dependent on the state of the site and negotiated access. The archaeological curator will be informed of the detailed timetable and staffing levels when agreement has been reached with the client.
- 4.4 Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.
- 4.5 CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance.

A.M. Gibson
Projects Manager
7th January 1997