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DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST LTD

REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON THE ABERBANC TO  
HENLLAN BRIDGE WATERMAIN SCHEME (CON92/04), 1994

Client: Dwr Cymru

Project Officer: Neil Ludlow

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3 July 1992

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Details of the Aberbanc to Henllan Bridge Watermains Scheme were forwarded to the Curatorial Section of Dyfed Archaeological Trust by Teifion Rees of Dwr Cymru for comment on 3 February 1992.

Following the initial comments made by the Curatorial Section of the Trust, Dwr Cymru were advised of the need for a detailed archaeological desk top assessment of the project to be prepared in order for detailed mitigatory measures to be drafted. This desk top assessment was produced by Dyfed Archaeological Trust on 3 July 1992. Dwr Cymru accepted the recommendations in the report and on 14 July 1994 commissioned a watching brief to be carried out on any archaeological sites affected by the scheme prior to and/or during the work, as part of the mitigation strategy. An archaeological report on the results of the watching brief was also commissioned.

## 1.1 Content and scope of the watching brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined by the Institute of Field Archaeologists as a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during an operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons - normally a development or other construction project - within a specified area where archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report.

The watching brief will be intended to allow, subject to resources, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits in advance of their disturbance or destruction and to provide an opportunity, if necessary, for the watching archaeologist to alert all interested parties to the presence of an archaeological find for which the resources allocated to the watching brief are insufficient to support satisfactory treatment.

The watching brief is not intended as a substitute for contingent excavation.

The client will be supplied with 3 copies of an archaeological report of the results of the watching brief. The report will be fully representative of all the information recovered. Normally it should be read in conjunction with the desk top assessment for the scheme which provides the historical framework for the watching brief. A copy of the report will also be deposited with Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Sites and Monuments Record.

## 1.2 Purpose and methodologies of the watching brief

The purpose of the watching brief is to undertake as complete a record as possible of any archaeological features affected by the client's scheme of works. In the case of larger archaeological sites it will seldom be possible or necessary to undertake a record of the entire site; the record will be undertaken only on those areas of the site that may be affected.

The primary stage of the watching brief for any scheme normally involves consultation of the desk top assessment for the scheme and/or consultation of Dyfed Sites and Monuments Record, which is maintained by Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Curatorial Section, for those sites affected by the scheme.

The client will normally advise Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Field Section of any changes in the proposed works resulting from their consultation of the desk top assessment, and of any sites which may still be affected by the scheme. The client will also provide the Field Section with a proposed schedule of works in order that a full field study may be performed on any affected site prior to the commencement of the works.

Work on or around those affected sites will be subject to the watching brief. The work will be closely observed by an archaeologist from the Field Section who will also undertake a full drawn, written and photographic record of any archaeological features which may be disturbed by the scheme, and any artefact or find exposed during the works. Recording will be carried out where necessary and when convenient: it is the Field Section's aim to minimise any disruption to the client's schedule. However, if archaeological features may be lost during the scheme, it may be necessary for the Field Section to request a postponement of the works in order that the archaeology may be recorded. Larger areas affected may require fuller excavation and/or survey.

## 2.0 RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

### 2.1 Area A

Area A of the watching brief corresponded to the section of pipeline trench between Henllan Bridge and the village of Henllan (see Appendix 6.1). It was, however, not possible to carry out the watching brief here due to a lack of communication between the contractors and Dyfed Archaeological Trust; the trench being backfilled prior to any Trust presence on the site.

However it appears that the archaeology affected here will have been minimal. The pipeline trench follows the middle of the B4334 throughout the length subject to interest, and any surface deposits and features will have already been disturbed. According to the contractors the road make-up lay directly upon the boulder clay, seen to lie on average 0.5m below the surface elsewhere within the scheme. There may therefore have been little archaeology to record.

### 2.2 Area B

Area B of the watching brief lay at the far NE of the scheme, where the E hedgebank of the field, 'Pencnwchau', indicated in 5.1 corresponds to the boundary of the ancient parish of Henllan. A length some 190m from the N termination of the trench was examined.

#### 2.2.1. Vegetation

The field/parish boundary hedgebank is a low earthwork supporting a variety of species. In addition to hawthorn, ash and oak, species of willow are present. No hazel was seen, however.

Field 'Pencnwchau' lay under particularly lush grass and appeared to have received an early hay cut. Rather than indicating a natural fertility it is more likely that fertiliser has been used. There is evidence that the field has, in the past, been dressed with lime - see 3.0 below.

#### 2.2.2. The Turf Strip

A 3m wide section of turf was stripped along the course of the trench. The E edge of the stripped area lay 2m W of the field/parish boundary, which was not affected. A 0.1m spit of turf with topsoil was removed, exposing natural clay loam at the N end, grading through boulder clay to shattered shale bedrock which lay close to the surface at the S end.

Where the S boundary of 'Pencnwchau' had been cut through, the hedgebank was seen to comprise a boulder clay core with a crest of clay loam broken down by root action. The bank was remarkably stone-free.

A variety of post-medieval material was recovered from the topsoil spoil - see 3.0 below.

### 2.2.3. The Trench Section

The trench itself was 0.5m wide and 1m deep. Its E edge lay 3m E of the field/parish boundary. The underlying geology exposed in section varied from N to S. At the N end a natural, undeveloped clay loam, orange-brown in colour and fairly stony, lay to a depth of 0.30m over a stiff yellow/grey boulder clay. The latter descended almost to the bottom of the trench where fine-grained, almost vertically bedded shales were visible. The top of the shales rose progressively southwards, the clay loam running out so that the boulder clay, and at the S end the shales, lay directly beneath the topsoil.

### 2.2.4. Archaeology

The only possible archaeological features observed in the trench section were a pair of features, 0.3m wide by 0.3m deep and 0.2m apart, seen in the E section 30m from the S field boundary and defined by their loamier fills. They were not observed in the W section; however, this had dried considerably and they may have been present but not visible.

### 2.2.5. Conclusion

The scheme did not affect the field/parish boundary, and so nothing could be ascertained as to its nature.

A variety of post-medieval finds lay within the topsoil, all of them probably stray finds.

2 possible archaeological features were observed, though no evidence for either their form (linear?), or date, was present.

### 3.0 THE FINDS

All finds encountered during the watching brief were recovered from the topsoil. All are post-medieval in date. All were discarded.

2 shards dark green bottle glass, 18th-19th centuries.

2 sherds gravel tempered ware, dark brown internal glaze, 18th-19th centuries.

1 sherd 'Mocha' ware, 19th-20th century.

1 fragment pantile, 18th-19th century.

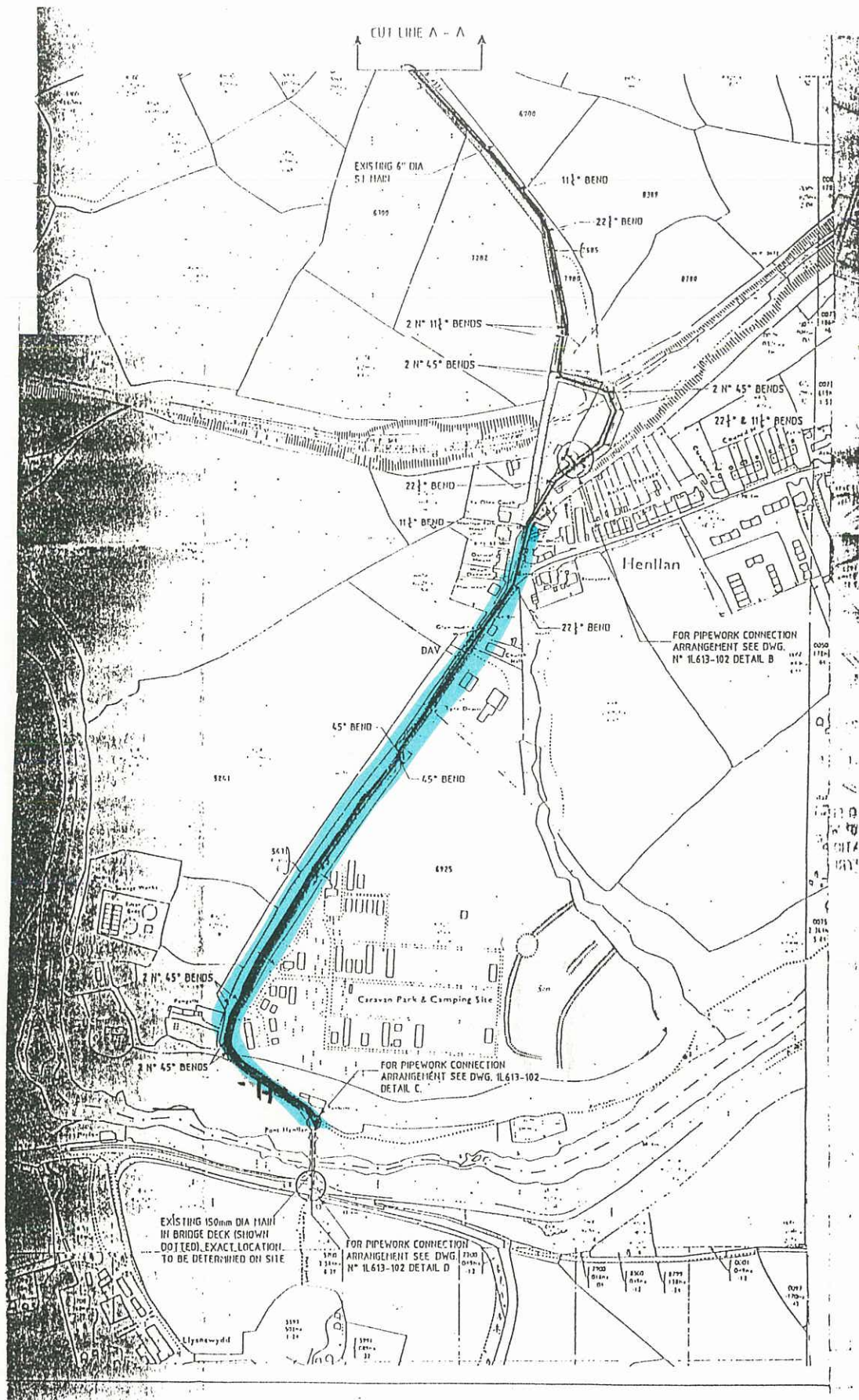
1 chunk white lime field dressing

Ironwork - 1 nailhead, 2 staples, and a flat plate, part of an implement? All corroded.



#### 4.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

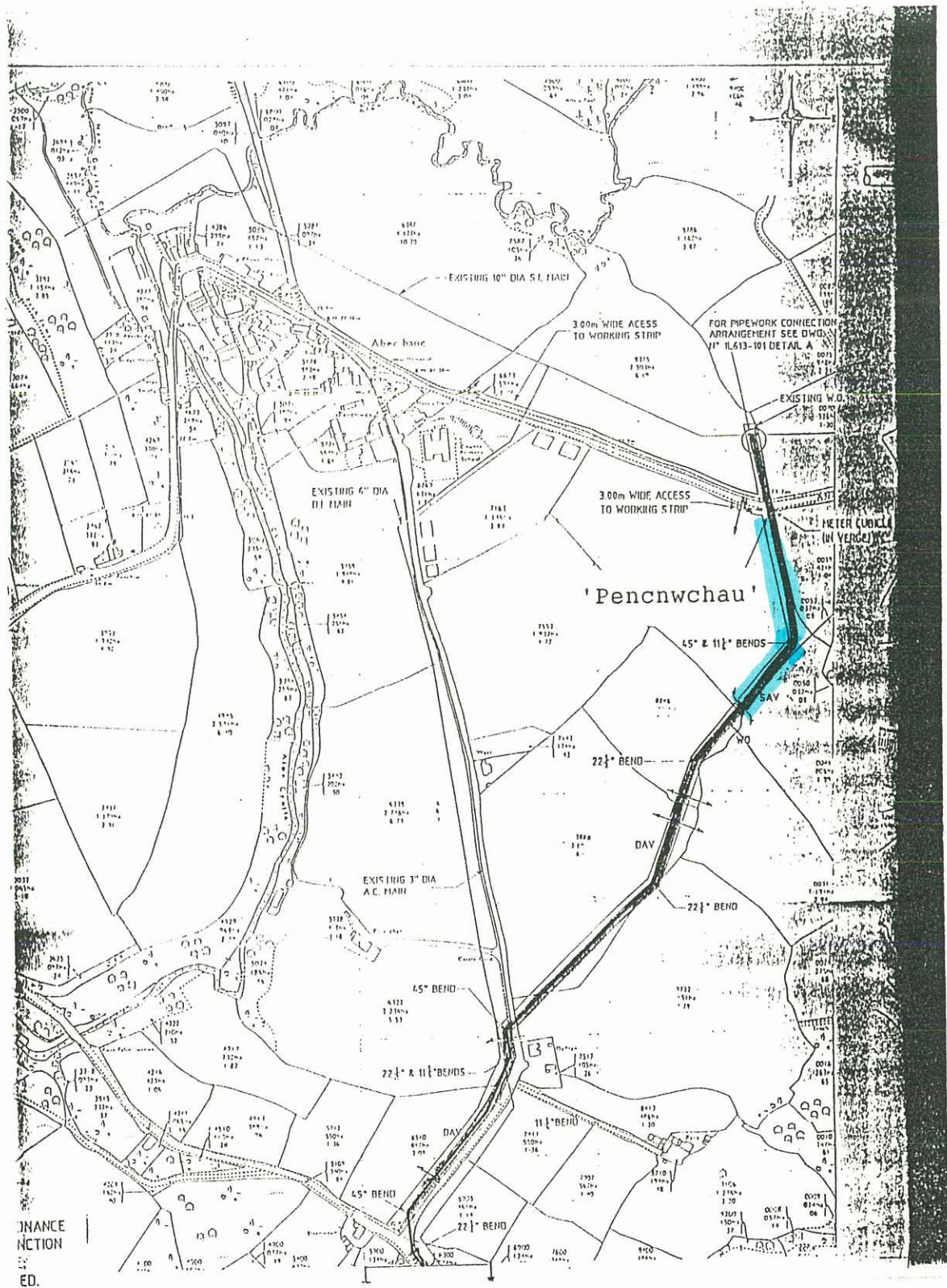
The Trust would like to thank Teifion Rees of Dwr Cymru, and scheme engineer Bill Thomas for his assistance on this watching brief.



5.1 Annotated engineers' plans showing areas subject to the watching brief (Drawing Nos. 1L613-101 & 102)

Area A





5.1 Annotated engineers' plans showing areas subject to the watching brief (Drawing Nos. 1L613-101 & 102)

Area B

## **DWR CYMRU/WELSH WATER : ABERBANC TO HENLLAN BRIDGE MAIN**

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### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT.**

#### *'Desk-Top' Assessment - content and scope*

This primary stage of assessment of the archaeological implications of any scheme involves consultation of Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Sites and Monuments Record for the area affected by the proposed scheme. Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Sites' and Monuments' Record is designated as a County Sites and Monuments Record in the Welsh Office Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning.

Consultation of the SMR Record will establish whether any known sites or monuments are affected by the scheme. However it is important to appreciate that the Record is not and cannot ever be a complete record of all traces of human activity in the landscape. It is rather a record of past archaeological work. Consultation of the Record is therefore followed up by a rapid search of relevant map and documentary sources, both published and manuscript. All Assessments carried out by Dyfed Archaeological Trust contain a full list of all sources consulted. All available aerial photographic collections held by the Trust are consulted and, if judged necessary, collections held by other bodies will be consulted. If sites or landscapes with special interest are affected the Trust would wish to consult the appropriate period or site type specialists or societies. (e.g historic gardens, railways, industrial archaeology)

All 'Desk-Top' assessments involve a field visit or visits to the scheme area by a professional archaeologist to check whether any previously unknown sites or monuments are affected by the scheme and to assess the overall landscape history of the area.

#### *Archaeological Implications*

- There are no known archaeological sites directly affected by the proposed course of the new water main.
- Two stretches of the line run through archaeologically sensitive areas that are described below and marked on the Scheme Drawings.

#### *Henllan Bridge to Henllan.*

The area between the Iron Age promontary Fort of Caerau and the church of St Davids is of general interest because there may be archaeological evidence to indicate the processes of settlement and landuse in the 'Dark Ages' - that is to say between the abandonment of the hillfort and the establishment of a christian cemetery and later on a church - St. David's, Henllan.

There are a number of possible archaeological 'traces' of this little understood process. Only one is really relevant to the Pipeline scheme - namely the possibility of human burials within this area.

#### *Parish Boundary.*

The second area of interest is at the northern end of the line where it is proposed to take the line along a field boundary hedge. The hedge marks the ancient parish boundary of Henllan and may have been built as a boundary bank. Although parish boundaries in Wales tended not to be firmly fixed until the 13th century AD they can perpetuate very much earlier estate and territorial boundaries. This is likely to be the case in Henllan.

#### **Recommendation.**

It is recommended that a qualified archaeologist be present to maintain a watching brief when the pipe trench is being cut between Henllan Bridge and Henllan and also when the pipe is laid alongside the hedge at the northern end of the line.

#### *Sources Consulted:*

Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Sites and Monuments Record

Tithe Map and Schedule of 1840 for Henllan Parish.

Early large scale Ordnance Survey maps.

Air Photographic cover: DAT's oblique air photographs.; Meridian 230/240/34928-30; 230/240/34951-4; RAF 1946 verticals: 106G/UK/1471/4250-4; 106 G/UK/1471/4010-3

Curatorial Section,

Dyfed Archaeological Trust

3rd July 1992.