

**South Wales Gas Pipeline Project  
Sites 217–220 and 297  
Land at Plasbach  
Llangynog  
Carmarthenshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**



*for*  
**Rhead Group**  
*on behalf of*  
**National Grid**


CA Project: 9150  
CA Report: 13145  
Event: DAT108863

July 2013

# South Wales Gas Pipeline Project Sites 217–220 and 297

## Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 9150  
CA Report: 13145  
Event: DAT102846

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## GLOSSARY

CA – Cotswold Archaeology  
 CAP – Cambrian Archaeological Projects  
 CPAT – Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust  
 DAT – Dyfed Archaeological Trust  
 GGAT - Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust  
 FTP – Felindre to Brecon gas pipeline  
 HER – Historic Environment Record  
 MHA – Milford Haven to Aberdulais gas pipeline  
 NAL – Network Archaeology Ltd  
 NLMJV – Nacap Land & Marine Joint Venture  
 UPD – Updated Project Design

## SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	South Wales Gas Pipeline Project
<b>Location:</b>	Sites 217–220 and 297, Land at Plasbach, Llangynog, Carmarthenshire
<b>NGR:</b>	Centred on SN 3310 1530 (Site 217); SN 3305 1530 (Site 218); SN 3295 1530 (Site 219); SN 3298 1533 (Site 220); SN 3277 1534 (Site 297)
<b>Type:</b>	Watching Brief
<b>Date:</b>	5 May 2006 (Site 217); 4 May 2006 (Sites 218, 219 and 220); September 2006 (Site 297)
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	To be deposited with RCAHMW (original paper archive) and Carmarthenshire Museum (material archive and digital copy of paper archive; accession number CAASG 2008.0282)
<b>Site Code:</b>	MHA06

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with construction of gas pipelines (part of the South Wales high pressure gas pipeline scheme) between Milford Haven and Aberdulais, and Felindre and Brecon, which were conducted between 2005 and 2007.

An undated pit was identified, as were several plough furrows and a former field boundary ditch shown on Ordnance Survey maps from the late 19th century until the late 20th century.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 NACAP Land and Marine Joint Venture (NLMJV), on behalf of National Grid, commissioned RSK Environment (part of the RSK Group) to manage the archaeological works (non-invasive surveys, desk based assessment, evaluation, watching brief, and open area excavation) on a 216km-long section of pipeline from Milford Haven (Pembrokeshire) to Brecon (in Powys). The high pressure gas pipeline (part of the 316km-long pipeline route from Milford Haven to Tirley in Gloucestershire) was required to reinforce the gas transmission network. The archaeological work performed in advance of this pipeline was undertaken in a number of sections by a number of archaeological companies. The westernmost section of 122km, from Milford Haven to Aberdulais, was investigated by CA (then Cotswold Archaeological Trust) during 2005–2007 with some additional excavation work carried out by CAP. The section of 89km, from Felindre to Brecon was investigated by CA during 2006–2007 and CAP during 2007. Assessment reports on the works were completed in January 2012 (NLM 2012a, 2012b) and the current reporting stage was commissioned in February 2013.

1.2 In May and September 2006 CA carried out an archaeological watching brief at Sites 217–220 and 297, Land at Plasbach, Llangynog, Carmarthenshire (centred on NGR: SN 3310 1530 (Site 217); SN 3305 1530 (Site 218); SN 3295 1530 (Site 219); SN 3298 1533 (Site 220) and SN 3277 1534 (Site 297); Fig. 1). The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the pipeline construction.

1.3 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with professional codes, standards and guidance documents (EH 1991; IfA 1999a, 1999b, 2001a, 2001b and IfA Wales 2008). The methodologies were laid out in an *Archaeological Management Plan* (AMP) (RSK 2006) and associated *Written Statements of Investigation* (WSIs) and *Method Statements*.

### ***The sites***

1.4 The sites are located within fields near the crest of a 102m-high hill, part of a range of high ground east of the River Cywyn (Fig. 1). The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as the Didymograptus Bifidus Beds (Mudstone) of the Ordovician Period; no superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2013).

### ***Archaeological background***

- 1.5 No archaeological remains were identified within the sites during the preliminary *Archaeology and Heritage Survey* (CA 2005). An earthwork enclosure is located at Plasbach, less than 100m north of the sites; the HER records this as a possible stock enclosure of uncertain date (PRN 5237). Castell-y-Garthen, a hilltop defended enclosure thought to be of Iron Age date, lies 500m west of the sites (PRN2140).

### ***Archaeological objectives***

- 1.6 The objectives of the archaeological works were:-
- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks; and
  - at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

### ***Methodology***

- 1.7 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the *WSI* (NLM 2006). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising stripping of the pipeline easement to the natural substrate (Fig. 1).
- 1.8 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 1.9 The post-excavation analysis and reporting was undertaken following the production of the UPD (GA 2012) and included re-examination of the original site records. Finds and environmental evidence was taken from the assessment report (NLM 2012a) except where the UPD recommended further work, in which case the updated reports were used. The archaeological background to the site was assessed using the following resources:-
- the *Archaeology and Heritage Survey* which was undertaken in advance of the pipeline construction and which examined a 1km-wide corridor centred on the pipeline centre line, including the then existing HER record (CA 2005);
  - Dyfed Archaeological Trust HER data (received May 2014)); and

- other online resources, such as Google Earth and Ordnance Survey maps available at <http://www.old-maps.co.uk/index.html>.

All monuments thus identified that were relevant to the site were taken into account when considering the results of the fieldwork.

- 1.10 The archive and artefacts from the watching brief are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Carmarthenshire Museum under accession number CAASG 2008.0282, along with a digital copy of the paper archive. The original paper archive will be deposited with the RCAHMW

## 2. RESULTS (FIGS 2–3)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the watching brief results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts, finds and environmental samples (palaeoenvironmental evidence) are to be found in Appendices A, B and C. Full, original versions of the specialist reports are contained within the archive.

### *Site 217 (Fig. 2)*

- 2.2 The yellow clay geological substrate was cut by a pit and a plough furrow. Pit 217003 was circular in plan with a bowl-shaped profile and was 1.15m wide and 0.3m deep. It contained silty clay fill 217004 which included sandstone fragments and a small amount of charcoal from which a sample yielded a single possible charred cereal grain and a large quantity of charred fuelwood. The pit was sealed by the subsoil.

- 2.3 North/south aligned plough furrow 217005 was also present and contained a modern brick fragment.

### *Site 218 (Fig. 2)*

- 2.4 The yellow clay geological substrate was cut by north-east/south-west aligned plough furrow 218003.

*Site 219 (Fig. 3)*

- 2.5 The yellow clay geological substrate and the subsoil were cut by north-east/south-west aligned plough furrows 219003 and 219005. Fill 219004 of furrow 219005 contained a sherd of late 18th to mid 19th-century pottery (Courtney, Appendix B).

*Site 220 (Fig. 3)*

- 2.6 The yellow clay geological substrate was cut by north-east/south-west aligned ditch 220005. This survived to a width of 1.3m and a depth of 0.1m and had a flat base but was too shallow for the nature of its sides to be determined. It was filled with brown clay silt 220006 which included a fragment of late 17th to 18th-century pottery and had been re-cut by parallel ditch 220003 which was 3m wide and 0.55m deep with a U-shaped profile. This re-cut was filled with clay silt 220004. Neither ditch was fully exposed within the site but both correspond to a former boundary depicted on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) Map and still shown on 1970s OS mapping.

*Site 297 (not illustrated)*

- 2.7 The yellow clay geological substrate was cut by north/south aligned plough furrow 297002.

*Discussion*

- 2.8 The single pit was undated and found in isolation. Aside from noting that it pre-dates a plough furrow, no further interpretation is possible. The remaining features relate to the medieval or later agricultural landscape.

### 3. PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Kelly Saunders assisted by Sian Reynish and Simon Ratty. This report was written by Jonathan Hart with illustrations prepared by Daniel Bashford. The archive has been compiled by Jonathan Hart and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The fieldwork was managed for CA by Clifford Bateman and the post-excavation work was managed for CA by Karen Walker.



#### 4. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2013 *Geology of Britain Viewer*. Online resource at <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> accessed 19 April 2013
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- NLM (Nacap Land and Marine) 2012a *Milford Haven to Aberdulais High Pressure Gas Pipeline: Archaeology Assessment of Potential for Analysis*
- NLM (Nacap Land and Marine) 2012b *Felindre to Brecon High Pressure Gas Pipeline: Archaeology Assessment of Potential for Analysis*
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**APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS****Site 217**

Context No.	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	W (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
217000		Topsoil	Brown-grey clay silt		0.2	
217001		Subsoil	Brown-grey clay silt		0.2	
217002		Natural	Yellow clay			
217003		Pit	Circular in plan, bowl-shaped profile	1.15	0.3	
217004	217003	Pit fill	Mid brown silty clay with charcoal and sandstone fragments	1.15	0.3	
217005		Furrow	N/S aligned, irregular profile	1.3	0.15	
217006	217005	Furrow fill	Mid brown-grey clay silt	1.3	0.15	
217007		Furrow	= 217005	1.4	0.1	
217008	217007	Furrow fill	= 217006	1.4	0.1	Mod

**Site 218**

Context No.	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	W (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
218000		Topsoil	Brown-grey clay silt		0.2	
218001		Subsoil	Brown-grey clay silt		0.2	
218002		Natural	Yellow clay			
218003		Furrow	NE/SW aligned, irregular profile	2.2	0.25	
218004	218003	Furrow fill	Mid brown-grey clay silt	2.2	0.25	
218005		Furrow	=217003	3.2	0.2	
218006	218005	Furrow fill	= 217004	3.2	0.2	

**Site 219**

Context No.	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	W (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
219000		Topsoil	Brown-grey clay silt		0.2	
219001		Subsoil	Brown-grey clay silt		0.2	
219002		Natural	Yellow clay			
219003		Furrow	NE/SW aligned, irregular profile	1.4	0.25	
219004	219003	Furrow fill	Mid brown-grey clay silt	1.4	0.25	Mod
219005		Furrow	E/W aligned, irregular profile	1.65	0.25	
219006	219005	Furrow fill	Mid brown-grey clay silt	1.65	0.25	

**Site 220**

Context No.	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	W (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
220000		Topsoil	Brown-grey clay silt		0.2	
220001		Subsoil	Brown-grey clay silt		0.2	
220002		Natural	Yellow clay			
220003		Ditch re-cut	NE/SW aligned, U-shaped profile	3.0	0.55	
220004	220003	Fill	Red-brown clay silt	3.0	0.55	
220005		Ditch	NE/SW aligned, flat base	1.3	0.1	
220006	220005	Fill	Mid brown clay silt	1.3	0.1	Mod

**Site 297**

Context No.	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	W (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
297000		Topsoil	Brown-grey clay silt		0.2	
297001		Natural	Yellow clay			
297002		Furrow	N/S aligned, irregular profile	0.4	0.1	
297003	297002	Furrow fill	Mid brown-grey clay silt	0.4	0.1	

## APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

### Ceramic Building Material (Hall 2008)

A modern brick fragment (107g) was recovered from furrow 217007.

### Pottery (Courtney 2008)

Context	Fabric	Period	Count	Weight (g)	Form	decoration
219004	PEAW	LC18-mid C19	1	27	Base of small bowl	Blue Transfer: scenic: Int-hunting scene and floral ext.
220006	MOTW	LC17- C18	1	2	Not known	None

PEAW (Pearlware): blue tinged white-glaze (from added manganese) on white earthenware body. This was used for tablewares: dishes, bowls, cups, jugs etc. They were usually decorated with transfer, painting or occasionally mocha. British, c.1780-1840.

MOTW (Mottled Fine-wares): vessels with a mottled brown glaze on thinly-potted fine, buff fabric. The majority of recognisable vessels were reeded tankards but larger globular forms (?posset/chamber pots) also occurred. Current dating is c.1675-1780, though less popular after c.1720.

## APPENDIX C: PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE BY JAMES RACKHAM

A single sample, 217000, was taken at site 217 from the fill of undated pit 217003. The sample was processed in the manner described in the assessment report (Giorgi and Martin 2009) with the additional refloating of the dried <2mm sample residue that had been retained whose flot volume is indicated in Table 1 as '2nd flot'. This second flot was then sorted for charred macrofossils and the residue re-dried and checked with a magnet to recover any further magnetic material.

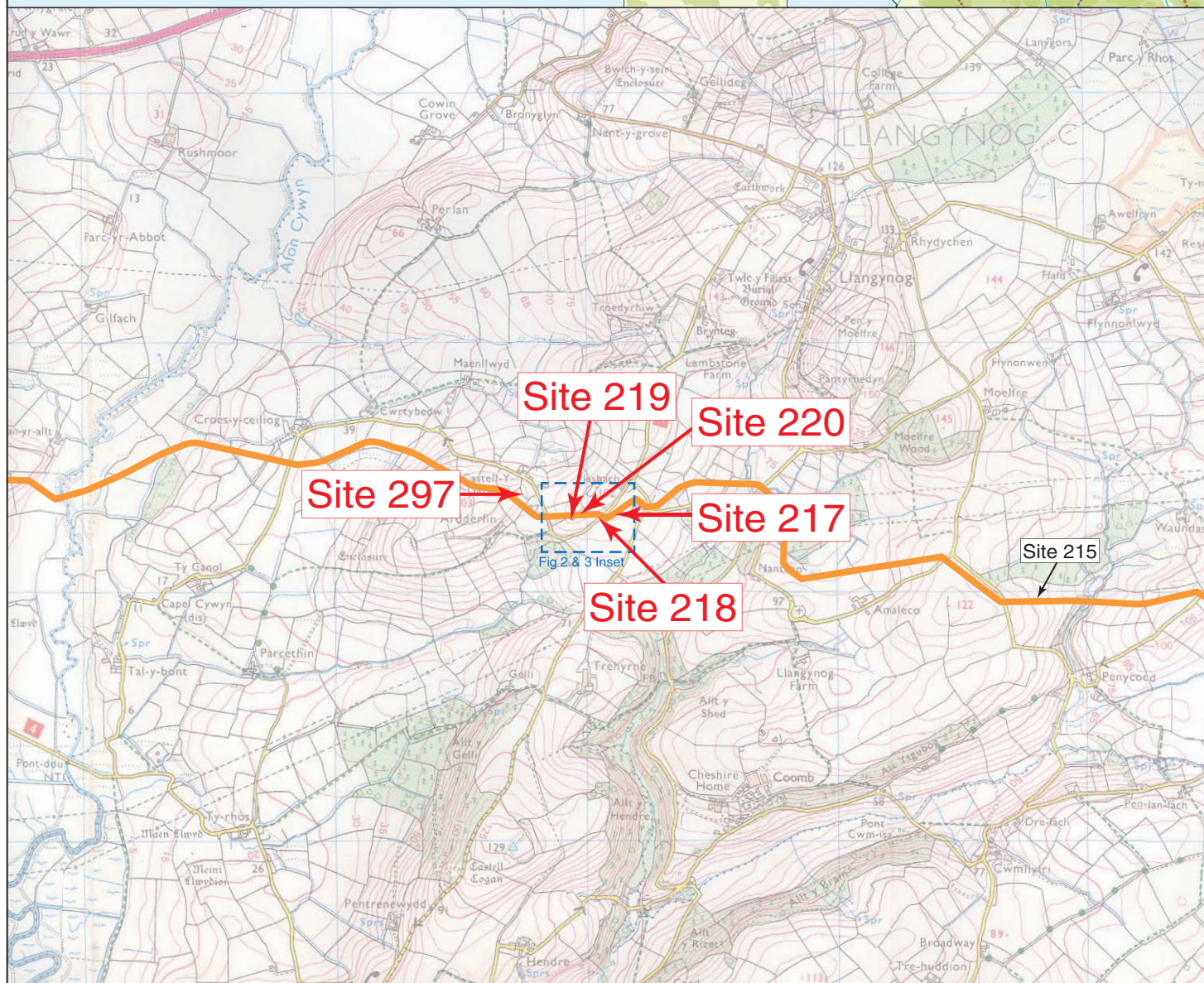
**Table 1** Data for the environmental sample from Site 217

Sample	Context	Vol. (l.)	1st Flot vol. (ml)	Charcoal vol. (ml)	2nd Flot vol. (ml)	Magnetic (g)*
217000	217004	20	>1mm =65 <1mm =50	1650	180	A

\* abundance rating – E= 1-10 items; D=11-50, C=51=100, B=101-200, A=>200; nd – no data

There were no archaeological finds from the sample although a relatively high magnetic component and the charcoal indicate the presence of fire debris. A single fragment of probable charred cereal grain and an indeterminate charred seed fragment were the only charred plant remains identified. A large charcoal component is present with nearly two litres recovered from the hand sorting of the first and second flots. However in the absence of dating for the deposit no further analysis has been undertaken.





- Milford Haven to Aberdulais pipeline
- Felindre to Brecon pipeline
- 0-75m contour
- 75m contour
- 200m contour
- 400m contour
- 600m contour



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#### PROJECT TITLE

South Wales Pipeline. Sites 217 - 220 and 297  
Land at Plasbach, Llangynog, Carmarthenshire

#### FIGURE TITLE

**Site location plan**

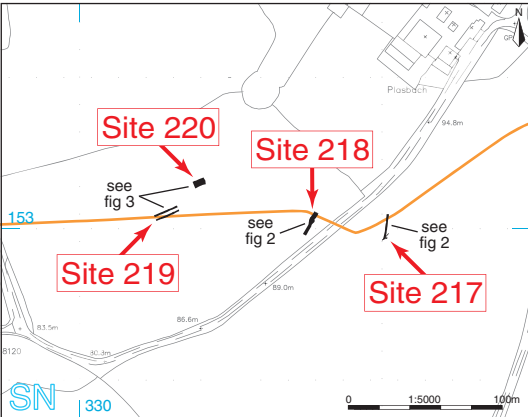
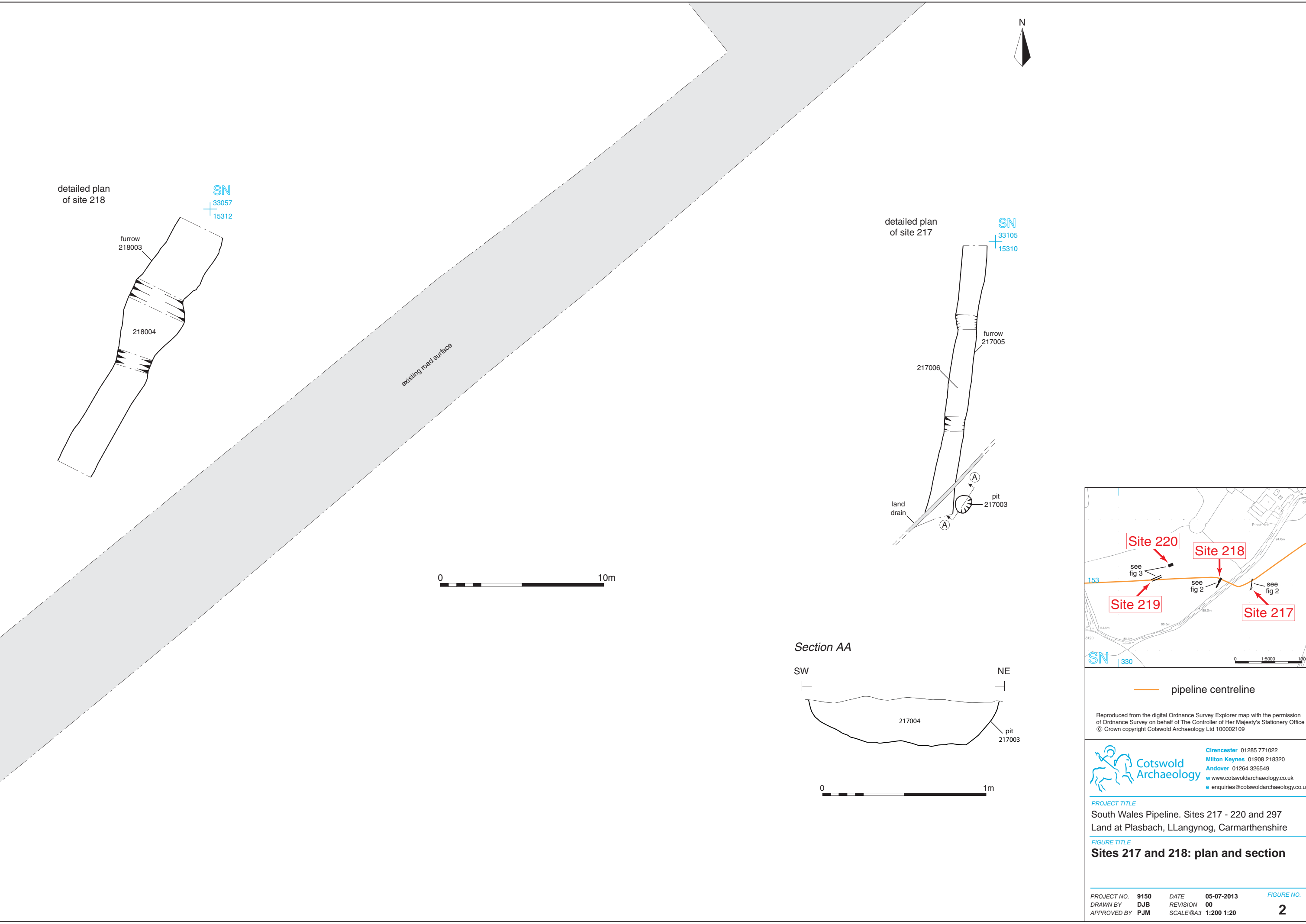
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FIGURE NO.

**1**



— pipeline centreline

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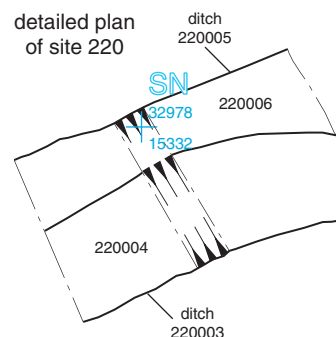
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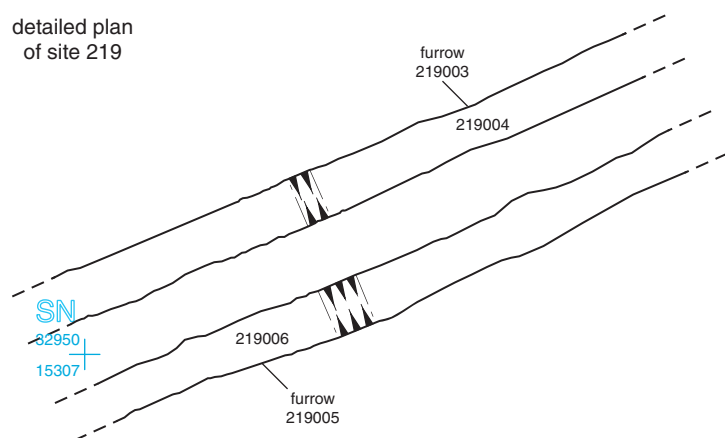
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FIGURE TITLE  
**Sites 217 and 218: plan and section**

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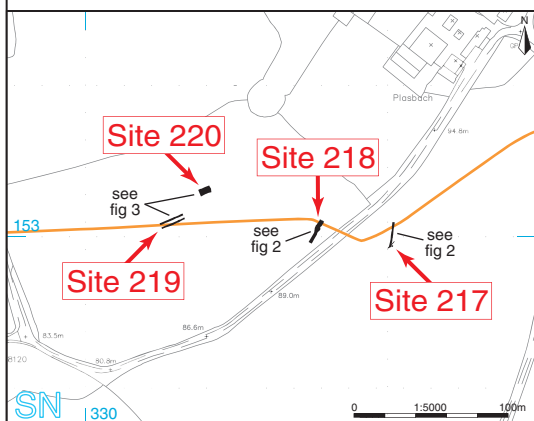


detailed plan  
of site 219



0 10m

— pipeline centreline



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FIGURE TITLE

Site 219 & 220: plan

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FIGURE NO.

3