

# Archaeological Observation

Twynllanan Phase 1 Mains  
Refurbishment Scheme

**Talsarn  
Carmarthenshire**

Laing O'Rourke for Dŵr  
Cymru/Welsh Water

NGR SN 77300 25870

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## 1. Non Technical Summary

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A programme of archaeological observation was undertaken by Border Archaeology on pipeline groundworks carried out by DCWW/Laing O'Rourke in the vicinity of the hamlet of Talsarn, Carmarthenshire, which lies within the Historic Landscape of Black Mountain and Mynydd Myddfai designated by CADW as being of Outstanding Historic Interest.

No archaeological deposits, finds or features were identified during this programme of archaeological observation. A significant number of the pits excavated were located in fields with heavily ploughed shallow soils often immediately overlying sandstone bedrock, which would appear to explain the absence of surviving archaeological features along this section of the pipeline route. Evidence of disturbance by previous road construction and utility groundworks was noted in a small number of pits excavated in the vicinity of the Cross Inn public house at Talsarn.

This archaeological observation confirmed that no structures, features or deposits of archaeological significance were damaged during the course of the engineering works.

### 1.1 Referencing Data Summary

Laing O'Rourke / DCWW Scheme / Works No: H19A

Monitoring Authority correspondence: Cambria Ref. 2004/Laing/163/CH

Laing O'Rourke / DCWW Map No (where applicable): H19A/16; H19A/17; H19A/18

## 2. Introduction

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This report details the archaeological observation (commonly known as a watching brief) programme undertaken by Border Archaeology for Laing O' Rourke, on behalf of Dŵr Cymru / Welsh Water (DCWW) in the vicinity of the villages of Talsarn and Llanddeusant (Carms.), these works forming part of the Twynllanan Phase 1 Mains Refurbishment Scheme (DCWW Scheme Ref. H19A). A report on the watching brief carried out on groundworks in the vicinity of Myddfai village as part of the same mains refurbishment scheme was issued in November 2005 (Report No: BA0540LUTY).

Charles Hill of Cambria Archaeology advised on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2004, that an archaeological watching brief should be carried out in specified areas of archaeological sensitivity along the pipeline route (Cambria Ref. 2004/Laing/163/CH). These areas correspond to Maps H19A/ 16, 17 and 18 supplied by DCWW / Laing O'Rourke.

The groundworks formed part of DCWW's refurbishment programme, the exact locations of which being determined by engineering considerations, archaeological observation being required in order to observe the excavation of access pits and to record as appropriate any remains, features and finds wherever located within the working area, thus providing a formal measure of the impact of the engineering works (whether positive or negative). The designated engineering method used for this scheme was pipebursting.

This report was completed in April 2006 after confirmation that no return to the area for water quality assurance reasons was envisaged. Copies of this report will be submitted to DCWW, Laing O'Rourke, Cambria Archaeology and the regional Sites and Monuments Record.

### 2.2 Soils & Geology

Two soil types have been identified in the area covered by this part of the Twynllanan Phase 1 Mains Refurbishment Scheme

In the vicinity of Talsarn, the predominant soil type consists of the cambic stagnogley soils of the FFOREST series (713c) comprising slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged reddish fine silty and fine loamy soils, some with a peaty surface horizon; the underlying geology consisting of drift from reddish sandstone and siltstone.

In the vicinity of Llanddeusant the predominant soil type consists of typical brown earths of the MILFORD series (541a), comprising well-drained fine loamy soils over rock; the underlying geology consisting of Devonian sandstone, siltstone, mudstone and slate.

## 3. Brief Historical & Archaeological Background

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The section of the pipeline route detailed in this report extends through the hamlet of Talsarn, situated approximately 2km NE of the village of Llanddeusant, which lies within the Historic Landscape Character Area of Llanddeusant-Capel Gwynfe (HLCA 233) forming a component of the Historic Landscape of Black Mountain and Mynydd Myddfai, which has been designated by CADW as being of Outstanding Historic Interest (CADW 1998, 8-11).

Limited evidence of prehistoric activity has been noted to the W of Talsarn, in the form of a standing stone, possibly of Bronze Age date, recorded in a field immediately S of Pant-y-Gwin Farm, situated approximately 0.8km W of the Cross Inn (Cambria PRN 8135; NGR SN 7651 2608).

The existing pattern of settlement in this area essentially dates from the medieval and post-medieval periods, consisting of widely dispersed, small farmsteads, set within a patchwork of small enclosed fields with no major foci of settlement. The site of a possible abandoned farmstead has been identified in a field to the S of Cwm Teldrum called 'Bailey Bach' (meaning 'little farmstead'). The farmstead (Cambria PRN 8128; NGR SN 7685 2690) was presumably abandoned well before the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, as neither the Llanddeusant tithe map of 1838 nor the OS 1<sup>st</sup> edition map of 1891 shown any building activity in Bailey Bach field itself.

The possible site of a church or chapel, presumably of medieval origin, has been identified in a field called 'Llan' situated N of Plasnewydd Farm (Cambria PRN 8138; NGR SN 7752 2596), situated on the road midway between the Cross Inn and Capel Talsarn. The place name 'Llan' is first recorded on the Llanddeusant tithe map of 1838 and usually denotes a church; however, no church or chapel is shown in this location on the tithe map and the existing farm buildings at Plasnewydd are of 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century date.

The existing foci of settlement in the immediate locality of the pipeline route are at Capel Talsarn, a cluster of cottages situated in the vicinity of a Calvinistic Methodist chapel founded in 1860 (NPRN 6400; NGR SN 77842607), and at the Cross Inn (NGR SN 77317 25858), a public house first documented in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (and probably of earlier origin) standing at an important crossroads where a long distance routeway (probably a drovers' road) running E-W from Trecastle to Twynllanan met with the road running N-S from Myddfai to Llanddeusant.

## 4. Methodology

The aim of the programme of archaeological observation was to locate and record any archaeological remains revealed during the course of the groundworks and to confirm that no impact on the archaeological resource occurred without recording.

The depth and complexity of deposits were assessed and a written record of all trenching and pits maintained using numbered proforma record sheets providing information regarding depth, stratum number, description, date of observation and name of personnel. The location of each observation point is given as both an NGR reference obtained using Global Positioning System (GPS) and a written description.

All groundworks were machine excavated under strict archaeological supervision using a toothless bucket and associated spoil was scanned for artefacts. A general photographic record was maintained using a 4 MP digital camera and a 35mm SLR camera.

## 5. Archaeological Observation

### 5.1 Table of Results

Pits where no archaeology was identified (NAI) are listed in the following tables by date, National Grid Reference, location description, observation point reference, soil profile description and assessment of archaeology and those where archaeology was present but not deemed significant according to the criteria below (NSA) are in addition highlighted in grey.

For the purposes of this report, significant archaeology is defined as that which is likely to contribute to a further understanding of the past within a local, regional, national or international context. Generally, unstratified remains are not considered archaeologically significant, although it is recognised that such items or remains may be of intrinsic value, in which case these will be retained.

Areas where the archaeological observation did not locate finds or features of significance are given limited stratigraphic relationship descriptions within the table. Further information regarding areas where no archaeology was located will be retained in the site archive.

Date	Location	Grid ref/pit or section no.	Description	Results
23/01/06	20m NE of Capel Talsarn at junction of road to Twynllanan and unclassified lane N to Myddfai	SN 77846 26111 Pit 01	Tarmacadam road surface >> former tarmacadam road surface >> tarmacadam sub-base >> grey angular stones (small and medium) 80% and sand bedding (for road surfaces) (< 45mm) >> moderately compacted reddish clayey silt, with 20% very small angular stones >> natural sandstone bedrock >> cut for water main	NAI
23/01/06	On unclassified road to Twynllanan immediately opposite Capel Talsarn	SN 77854 26098 Pit 02	Tarmacadam road surface >> tarmacadam and stone sub-base >> moderately compacted light red clayey silt sand with 70% very small angular stones (< 20mm) >> moderately compacted reddish clayey silt with 80% small and medium angular stones >> natural sandstone bedrock >> cut for water main	NAI
24/01/06	30m NE of Capel Talsarn at junction of road to Twynllanan and unclassified lane N to Myddfai	SN 77894 26114 Pit 03	Tarmacadam road surface >> tarmacadam sub-base >> small grey angular stone hardcore deposit >> moderately compacted reddish silty clay with 10% very small angular stones >> natural sandstone bedrock >> cut for water main	NAI
09/02/06	30m SW of road between Pant-y-Gwin	SN 76734 25932 Pit 04	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately	NAI

Date	Location	Grid ref/pit or section no.	Description	Results
	Farm and Blaencrynfe Farm		compacted reddish-brown silty clay	
09/02/06	50m SE of Pant-y-Gwin Farm	SN 76664 25996 Pit 05	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately compacted reddish-brown silty clay	NAI
09/02/06	30m SE of Pant-y-Gwin Farm	SN 76652 26009 Pit 06	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately compacted reddish-brown silty clay	NAI
09/02/06	20m SE of Pant-y-Gwin Farm	SN 76597 26060 Pit 07	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately compacted reddish-brown silty clay	NAI
09/02/06	30m W of Pant-y-Gwin Farm	SN 76546 26097 Pit 08	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately compacted reddish-brown silty clay	NAI
09/02/06	30m NW of Pant-y-Gwin Farm adjacent to lane to Gelli Farm	SN 76545 26132 Pit 09	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately compacted reddish-brown silty clay	NAI
19/01/06	In field outside Cross Inn P.H. Talsarn	SN 77294 25918 Pit 10	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately compacted orangey-grey silty clay >> redeposited, moderately compacted reddish-brown clayey silt with frequent sub-angular stones	NAI
19/01/06	In field c.30m NE of Cross Inn P.H. Talsarn	SN 77322 25923 Pit 11	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately compacted orangey-grey silty clay >> redeposited, moderately compacted reddish-brown clayey silt with frequent sub-angular stones	NAI
20/01/06	In field c.50m NE of Cross Inn P.H. Talsarn	SN 77386 25924 Pit 12	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately compacted orangey-grey silty clay subsoil >> sandstone bedrock	NAI
20/01/06	20m NW of Plasnewydd Farm	SN 77485 25942 Pit 13	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> sandstone bedrock	NAI
20/01/06	20m NW of Plasnewydd Farm	SN 77562 25971 Pit 14	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> sandstone bedrock	NAI
20/01/06	50m NW of Plasnewydd Farm	SN 77676 25993 Pit 15	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> sandstone bedrock	NAI
20/01/06	In verge/road c.50m SW of Talsarn Farm	SN 77744 26008 Pit 16	Tarmacadam road surface >> loosely compacted dark brown silty clay >> sandstone bedrock	NAI
20/01/06	In verge/road c.35m SW of Talsarn Farm	SN 77763 26028 Pit 17	Tarmacadam road surface >> loosely compacted dark brown silty clay >> sandstone bedrock	NAI

Date	Location	Grid ref/pit or section no.	Description	Results
20/01/06	On unclassified road immediately o/s Talsarn Farm	SN 77820 26063 Pit 18	Tarmacadam road surface >> sandstone bedrock	NAI
20/01/06	In field c.25m NE of Capel Talsarn	SN 77896 26119 Pit 19	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately compacted orangey-grey silty clay subsoil >> sandstone bedrock	NAI
20/01/06	In field c.100m NE of Capel Talsarn	SN 77979 26161 Pit 20	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately compacted orangey-grey silty clay subsoil >> sandstone bedrock	NAI
13/02/06	In field 10m E of Pant-y-Gelli Farm	SN 76535 26170 Pit 21	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> redeposited, moderately compacted reddish-brown silty clay with frequent small angular stones	NAI
13/02/06	In field 40m E of Pant-y-Gelli Farm	SN 76572 26256 Pit 22	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> redeposited, moderately compacted reddish-brown silty clay with frequent small angular stones	NAI
13/02/06	In field 10m E of Gelli Farm	SN 76606 26531 Pit 23	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> yellowish-brown silty clay subsoil >> redeposited, moderately compacted reddish-brown silty clay with frequent small angular stones	NAI
13/02/06	In field 30m S of Gelli Farm to E of trackway	SN 76651 26449 Pit 24	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> redeposited, moderately compacted reddish-brown silty clay with frequent small angular stones	NAI
13/02/06	In field 60m E of Gelli Farm	SN 76684 26512 Pit 25	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately compacted, reddish-brown silty clay with occasional small angular stones >> moderately compacted, reddish-brown silty clay with frequent small angular stones and shale	NAI
13/02/06	In field 65m E of Gelli Farm	SN 76690 26526 Pit 26	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> moderately compacted, reddish-brown silty clay with occasional small angular stones >> moderately compacted, reddish-brown silty clay with frequent small angular stones and shale	NAI
13/02/06	In field 90m E of Gelli Farm	SN 76713 26558 Pit 27	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> redeposited, loosely compacted greyish-brown silty clay	NAI
13/02/06	In field 100m NE of Gelli Farm	SN 76729 26613 Pit 28	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> loosely compacted light grey silty clay >>	NAI

Date	Location	Grid ref/pit or section no.	Description	Results
			redeposited, moderately compacted, reddish-brown silty clay with occasional large and frequent small angular stones	
13/02/06	In field adjacent to trackway 70m SE of Taldrum Farm	SN 76779 26709 Pit 29	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> loosely compacted greyish silty clay >> redeposited, moderately compacted, reddish-brown silty clay	NAI
24/02/06	In field 80m E of Taldrum Farm	SN 76812 26788 Pit 30	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> redeposited, moderately compacted, pinkish-brown clayey sand with occasional subangular stones	NAI
24/02/06	In field 120m E of Taldrum Farm	SN 76878 26845 Pit 31	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> loosely compacted and plastic, light grey clayey silt >> redeposited, moderately compacted to weakly cemented, reddish-brown clayey sand with moderate subangular stones	NAI
24/02/06	In field NE of Cwm Teldrum 80m SW of Cefngeudrum Farm	SN 77179 27075 Pit 32	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> redeposited, moderately compacted, reddish-brown sandy silt with moderate small angular stones	NAI
24/02/06	In field NE of Cwm Teldrum 80m SW of Cefngeudrum Farm	SN 77179 27075 Pit 33	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> redeposited, moderately compacted, reddish-brown clayey sand with moderate small angular stones	NAI
24/02/06	In field NE of Cwm Teldrum 100m W of Cefngeudrum Farm	SN 77194 27104 Pit 34	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> redeposited, moderately compacted, reddish-brown clayey sand with moderate small and medium angular stones	NAI
24/02/06	In field NE of Cwm Teldrum 130m SW of Cefngeudrum Farm	SN 77153 27146 Pit 35	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> redeposited, moderately compacted, reddish-brown clayey sand with moderate small and medium angular stones	NAI
24/02/06	In field NE of Cwm Teldrum 200m SW of Cefngeudrum Farm	SN 77081 27217 Pit 36	Loosely compacted dark brown silty clay (topsoil) >> loosely compacted light brown clayey sand with moderate small angular and subangular stones	NAI

## 6. Conclusion

No archaeological deposits, finds or features were identified during this programme of archaeological observation in the vicinity of Talsarn.

A significant number of the pits excavated were located in fields with heavily ploughed shallow soils often immediately overlying sandstone bedrock and therefore, surviving archaeological features would have been unlikely to survive. Evidence of disturbance by previous road construction and utility groundworks was noted in a small number of pits excavated in the vicinity of the Cross Inn public house at Talsarn.

This archaeological observation confirmed that no structures, features or deposits of archaeological significance were damaged during the course of the engineering works.

## 7. Copyright

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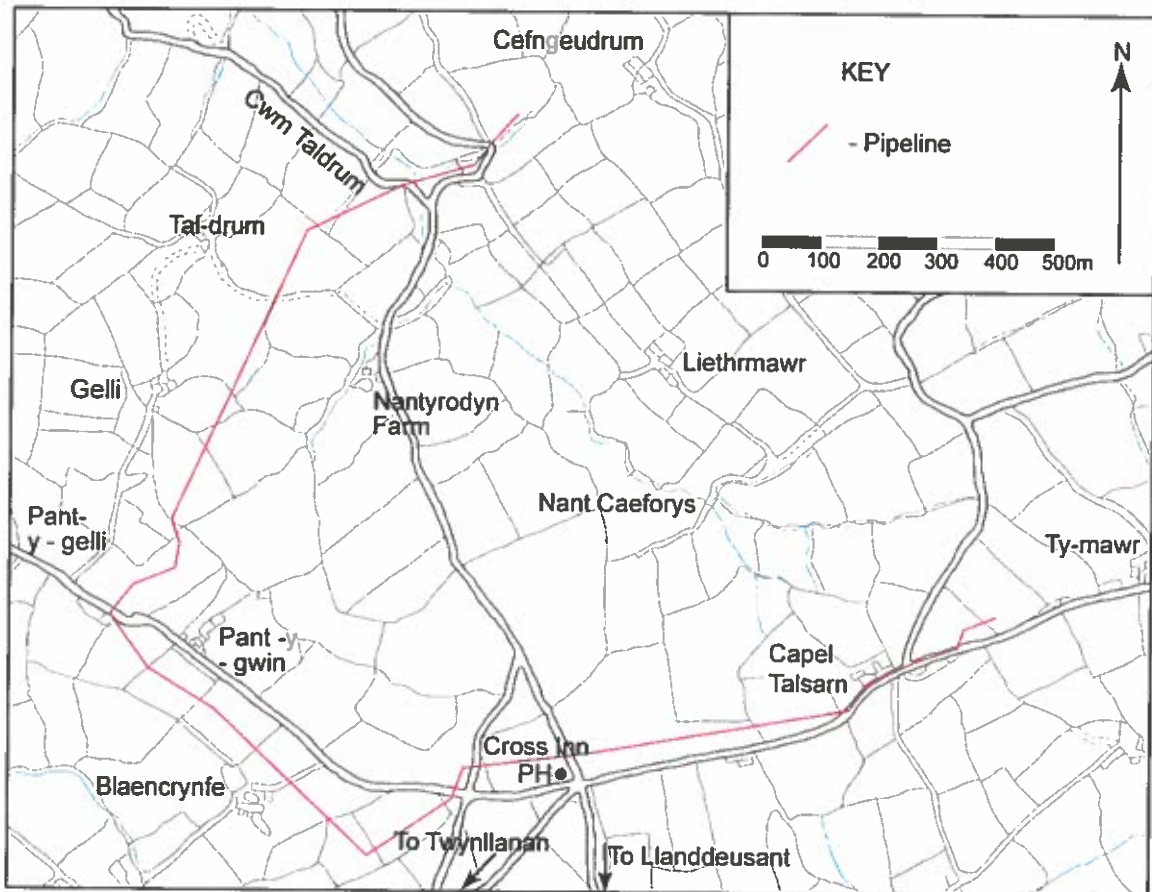
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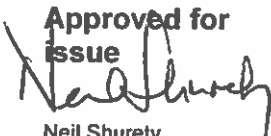
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## 9. APPENDIX 1: Dŵr Cymru/Welsh Water site plan





## Document Control

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