

LLANWENDA TO PENYGROES GAS PIPELINE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT (G1493)

Report No. 267

Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

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prepared for British Gas Transco

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Gwynedd Archaeological Trust Report No. 267

BRITISH GAS PIPELINE LLANWENDA - PENYGROES (G1493)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

British Gas are proposing to lay a mains gas pipe between the gas sub-stations at SH47855841, just east of Cae-moel farm, Llanwnda to SH47625301, just north of the B4418, Penygroes.

The extent of the area of interest has been taken as a strip 20m wide centred on the proposed route. The route largely encroaches upon improved pasture, with pockets of unimproved pasture, scrub and marshland especially in the area between Bryn-neidr and Cae Uchaf.

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (Contracts section) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological assessment of the route.

2. ASSESSMENT BRIEF

A brief was prepared by Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service. A report was requested to assess the likely archaeological impact of the proposals and to recommend mitigatory measures.

The requirement was for field search of the corridor of interest coupled with a desk-top survey in order to assess the impact of the proposals on the archaeological and heritage features within the pipeline corridor and close enough to it to be affected. The importance and condition of known archaeological remains were to be assessed and any other areas of archaeological interest to be identified. Measures to mitigate the effects of the pipeline scheme on the archaeology were to be recommended.

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust's proposals for fulfilling these requirements were, briefly, as follows:

- a) to identify and record the cultural heritage of the area to be affected by the proposals;
- b) to evaluate the importance of what was identified (both as a cultural landscape and as the individual items which make up that landscape); and
- c) to recommend ways in which damage to the cultural heritage can be avoided or minimised.

The work described in this report covers that carried out for an initial assessment, i.e. a desktop study and field visit. Recommendations are made for further assessment work if the status of a site is not known, and if it is likely to be affected by the route of the pipeline.

N.B. Full details of ancillary areas likely to be affected by the pipeline works, such as vehicle parking and turning areas, materials storage areas etc., have not yet been supplied. Experience shows that these areas are as likely to suffer damage as the actual land-take for the pipeline. If all such areas fall within the corridor of interest, they will have been covered, but in order that all areas affected may be subjected to the same level of survey, any information relating to areas affected outside the 20 m corridor should be notified to the Trust as soon as possible.

3. METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

3.1 Desk-top Study

Consultation of maps, computer records, written records and reference works, which make up the Sites and Monuments Record, was undertaken at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. Records (including early Ordnance Survey maps, tithe maps and schedules, estate maps and papers and

reference works – see bibliography) were consulted in the County archives at Caernarfon. Aerial photograph coverage of the whole route was examined using a set of colour vertical photographs taken in 1993 and held by the Countryside Council for Wales.

3.2 Field Search

The field search was undertaken on June 23rd and June 24th when the whole length of the preferred route was walked apart from field numbers 0076, 0070, 0065, 0056 and 0039 where Mr J Davies of Cefn Hendre, Llanwnda would not permit access until 9th July due to silage cutting. Conditions were generally fine for fieldwork, though a proportion of the land was extremely boggy or hidden by high vegetation, such as long grass, bracken and gorse scrub. The light condition was good for the time of year.

Sites identified were marked on copies of 1:2500 plans supplied by Transco, as accurately as possible without surveying. Detailed notes were made of the more important sites and photographs were taken of all potential sites identified.

3.3 Report

All available information was collated, and transferred onto a single set of maps at a scale of 1:2500 for convenience. The sites were then assessed and allocated to the categories listed below. These are intended to give an idea of the importance of the site and the level of response likely to be required, for ease of reference; descriptions of the sites and specific recommendations for further evaluation or mitigatory measures, as appropriate, are given in the relevant sections of this report.

In some cases, further investigation may result in sites being moved into different categories. The criteria used for allocating sites to categories are based on those used by the Secretary of State when considering ancient monuments for scheduling; these are set out in Welsh Office Circular 60/96; Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology.

3.4 Categories

Category A - Sites of national importance.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings and sites of schedulable or listable quality, i.e. those which would meet the requirements for scheduling (ancient monuments) or listing (buildings) or both.

Sites which are scheduled or listed have legal protection, and it is recommended that all Category A sites remain preserved and protected *in situ*.

Category B - Sites of regional or county importance.

Sites which would not fulfil the criteria for scheduling or listing, but which are nevertheless of particular importance within the region.

Preservation *in situ* is the preferred option for Category B sites, but if damage or destruction cannot be avoided, appropriate detailed recording might be an acceptable alternative.

Category C - Sites of district or local importance.

Sites which are not of sufficient importance to justify a recommendation for preservation if threatened.

Category C sites nevertheless merit adequate recording in advance of damage or destruction.

Category D - Minor and damaged sites.

Sites which are of minor importance or so badly damaged that too little remains to justify their inclusion in a higher category.

For Category D sites, rapid recording, either in advance or during destruction, should be sufficient.

Category E - Sites needing further investigation.

Sites whose importance is as yet undetermined and which will require further work before they can be allocated to categories A - D are temporarily placed in this category, with specific recommendations for further evaluation. By the end of the assessment there should be no sites remaining in this category.

3.5 Definition of Impact

The impact has been defined as none, slight, likely or considerable as follows:

None:

There is no improvement or construction impact on this particular site. (Sites identified as of particular importance are, where possible, avoided by the improvement proposals).

Slight:

This has generally been used where the impact is marginal and would not by the nature of the site cause irreversible damage to the remainder of the feature, *e.g.* a track or field boundary cut at right angles by the pipeline.

Likely:

In some instances the site in question is extremely close to the proposed route and may lie on the edge of, or just within the easement corridor and subject to its nature be removed or damaged.

Considerable:

The total removal of a feature or its partial removal which would effectively destroy the remainder of the site.

3.6 Definition of Mitigatory Recommendations

The alignment of the proposed pipeline avoids as far as possible sites of archaeological interest. Where a site is affected, mitigation measures will be included. For the purposes of this report the mitigation and rescue archaeology proposals as suggested by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust have been summarised as:

None:

No impact so no requirement for mitigation measures.

Detailed recording:

Detailed recording requires a photographic record, surveying and the production of a measured drawing prior to the commencement of the works on site.

Archaeological excavation works may also be required depending upon the particular feature and the extent and effect of the impact. Some of the sites would require dismantling by hand, to provide a detailed record of the method of construction and in the case of a listed structure, the salvage of materials for re-use and re-building.

Recording by photograph and description:

Recording by photograph and description requires a photographic record and survey work prior to the commencement of works on site. A measured drawing may be required in certain cases.

Watching brief:

At the commencement of the works on site, all sites affected by the works would need to be observed up to the end of the contract period.

Fence off and avoid:

It is recommended that the construction corridor avoids sites which are of particular importance, or which lie on the edge of the proposed corridor, and that these sites are clearly marked to avoid accidental damage.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Introduction

The vast majority of the area walked in the course of the fieldwork was enclosed pasture. The majority of features of archaeological or historical interest were associated with agriculture and domestic activity.

Sites noted from documentary sources were identified in the field where possible, and in addition a number of previously unrecorded sites were identified. These are included, with the rest of the sites, in the gazetteer. The total of sites allocated numbers in the gazetteer was 33.

4.2 Gazetteer of Archaeological Sites

The gazetteer is divided into two parts: in the first part are those sites (1-25) which are close to the route of the pipeline and are likely to be directly affected by construction work, or in danger of being affected during the establishment of the easement corridor, and this part of the gazetteer contains recommendations for mitigatory measures.

Many of the sites identified within the corridor are of local interest only, but nonetheless form an intrinsic part of the cultural landscape, and it is recommended that these sites are recorded at a basic level.

The second part of the gazetteer lists those sites (26-33) which lie in the study area and which are identified as being of archaeological or historical interest, but are unlikely to be affected by the pipeline.

4.2.1 Sites which are likely to be affected by the proposed pipeline.

1. Old Railway Line - SH47885837

Category C Impact: slight

The old railway line between Llanwnda and Rhyd-ddu runs west-east at right angles to the course of the pipeline at this point. The area is overgrown with vegetation and overhung by trees. The bed of the line is still visible but no laid tracks could be seen. This line is in the process of restoration.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: *Watching brief.*

2. Old Track - SH47915807

Category C Impact: slight

This track runs north-west from the fortified enclosure at Gadlys farm (PRN 585). It is a sunken vegetated track, 10m wide and 210m long, between the boundaries of field number 0013 to the north and numbers 8407, 9200 and 0092 to the south. The track terminates at the north-west corner of field number 0013 where it opens out beside the stream running east to west. It may be of Prehistoric or Roman date.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: *Watching brief and record section through deposits if relevant.*

3. Field System to the West of Gadlys - SH479579

Category C Impact: slight

There are marked height differences of 0.5m-1m between the fields in the field system to the

west of Gadlys. The fields are stepped from the north-west to the south-east following the slope. The fields in this system affected by the pipeline are numbers 8407, 9200 and 0083. All these fields contain improved pasture. There is a stone spread extending into field number 9200 at the northern end of the boundary between field numbers 0092 and 0083 suggesting the boundary continued at an earlier date. The marked breaks of slope between the fields suggest they may form part of a late Prehistoric or Roman field system connected with Gadlys.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Watching brief and record section through terraces if relevant.

4. Possible enclosure SH47985726

Category E Impact: slight

This feature consists of two elongated mounds set at right-angles to one another, and both are set into a curved kink within the adjacent field boundary. The boundary bears coppiced trees which appear fairly old (i.e. pre 19th century). The longer of the two mounds, 10m long, 1m wide and 0.5m high, runs parallel to the boundary bank. The other, 6m long and 1m wide, extends at right angles from the western end and curves slightly to the east. A disused field boundary also runs west to east just south of this feature. The field contains unimproved pasture and is very marshy in places.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Avoid.

5. Raised Platform - SH47975721

Category E Impact: considerable

A slightly raised rectangular grass-covered platform, roughly 6m by 2m, which is curved at the west end, runs alongside the field wall to the east of field number 0027. It crosses over a modern field drain at the eastern end. This feature is possibly the foundations of a long hut, although is more likely to be upcast from drainage work.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Avoid.

6. Features in Field 0016 - SH47985716

Category E Impact: likely

Field 0016 showed on the aerial photographs as containing several circular features. During field work the field was found to be marshy pasture with many unidentifiable low mounds: the circular features were not visible. Of particular note was a very prominent raised area against the north-east boundary wall at SH48015718. The mound lies just off the proposed route, and can be avoided. A drain runs north-east to south-west across the middle of the field.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Avoid the mound, and maintain a continuous watching brief during construction within the field.

7. Low Mound - SH47995712

Category E Impact: considerable

This feature is located close to the eastern boundary of field 0008. It consists of a discrete low mound c. 3m diameter. It may be upcast from drainage.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Avoid if possible, otherwise record and investigate in advance.

8. Old Boundary Wall - SH48015706

Category C Impact: slight

This feature runs south-west to north-east on the northern side of field 0004 and consists of a low stone wall of large rounded boulders. The parish boundary between Llanwnda and Llandwrog runs along this feature, and it is therefore of probable medieval origins.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Watching brief and record section through boundary.

9. Terraced Footpath - SH48185679

Category D Impact: slight

The footpath running north to south across field number 2280 is slightly terraced into the slope of the field. The field is under improved pasture. The path links two settlements which are well established by the 1840's, and so it is probably earlier than the 19th century.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Watching brief.

10. Features in Field 5935 - SH486563

Category D Impact: likely

This field of unimproved pasture exhibits many low mounds and ditches of archaeological potential although nothing specific was located.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Watching brief.

11. Brick-lined Cistern - SH48515595

Category D Impact: considerable

This brick-lined drainage cistern is located in a marshy area of unimproved pasture in field number 5200 to the west and close to the curving boundary of field number 5193.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: None.

12. Revetment Walling - SH48525528

Category E Impact: slight

There is a sharp break of slope in the south-west of field number 5530 with a change in vegetation from improved pasture to rough marsh which extends south-west to the field boundary. There are remnants of revetment walling visible around the base of the slope consisting mainly of large earthfast boulders with some dry stone walling.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Watching brief.

13. Track - SH 48405490

Category D Impact: slight

This short section of grassy track, 100m long and 6m wide, runs east to west at right angles to the line of the pipe. It is located in an area of scrub and unimproved pasture and is a remnant of an earlier feature.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Record section during watching brief.

14. Bank and ditch SH48385485

Category D Impact: slight

Partly obscured by scrub this feature extends from the northern end of the eastern boundary of field number 3984 into the centre. The field contains marshy unimproved pasture with areas of low scrub. The feature consists of a ditch flanked by banks of stone upcast. Although partly of modern construction, an earlier boundary appears to underlie the modern workings.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Watching brief.

15. Possible Structures - SH48345465

Category E/B Impact: considerable

The south-east corner of Field No. 3069 is separated from the remainder by a terraced bank, below which is a large number of boulders. Although a definite pattern is difficult to trace, there do appear to be distinct lines and mounds which suggest the presence of former structures. North-west of this area is another probable settlement site (site 30 below).

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Survey and limited examination perhaps combined with geophysical survey to gain a clearer understanding of the nature of the site, and to allow

appropriate mitigatory recommendations to be made.

16. Burnt Mound - SH48295432

Category B Impact: slight - considerable

A burnt mound (PRN 2342) is located between the two new drainage ditches which run east to west across the eastern half of field number 2734. The field contains very rough marshy pasture with areas of low scrub. The crescent shaped mound, 14m in diameter and 0.6m high, is partly concealed by scrub and is suffering severe erosion on its northern side. The mound opens onto a former stream on the south side, which is now dry.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Avoid.

17. Early Enclosures - SH48285426

Category E/C Impact: considerable

In the north-east corner of Field 2722 is the remains of a stone walled enclosure, marked by a line of earthfast boulders, with dispersed low banks suggestive of a former structure inside the enclosure. South of this is a disused stone boundary which crosses the field from west to east, and turns north at the east end. It should be possible to avoid the enclosure, but the stone boundary will be crossed.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Survey the remains in this field and those to the south (sites 18 and 19) before work starts. Carry out a geophysical survey of the area if a trial survey suggest this technique will work. Avoid and fence off the enclosure. Carry out a continuous watching brief in this field, and record a section through the field bank.

18. Stone Mound - SH48235418

Category E Impact: considerable

There is a large mound of field clearance stone among a group of trees in the south end of field number 2722. At the eastern end of this mound is a raised area of smaller stones which is possibly the remains of a wall, or may be part of a burnt mound. This feature may be associated with feature no. 19.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Record in advance followed by a watching brief.

19. ?Burnt Mound - SH48235417

Category E/B Impact: considerable

This feature is located on the south side of the boundary between field numbers 2722 and 2414 and may be associated with feature no. 18. It is a mound c.16m diameter consisting of small stones, of which some appear to be burnt. It is possibly a truncated Bronze Age burnt mound. There is a spring to the east of this feature, the stream from which has recently been re-routed, but it may formerly have served the mound.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Record in advance followed by a watching brief.

20. Area of Archaeological Potential - SH47955335

Category D Impact: likely

The south field wall of Field 0039 contains a strange kink within the boundary, of unknown function but possibly to aid sheep management, although there are slight indications that a building was once attached to the north side. South-east of this feature is a boulder strewn area of unimproved land with at least one disused field boundary running through it. Dense vegetation obscures further detail.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Most of the features lie east of the proposed route, and it should be possible to avoid the area of interest. However a basic photographic record followed by a watching brief is recommended.

21. Remains of a Structure - SH47935332

Category C Impact: considerable

This site appears to consist of the remains of a rectangular structure with additional structures or yards on either side lying down slope, but not obviously terraced into the slope. The remains are relatively fragmentary, and are visible as low turf covered walls. The site is not marked on the tithe map or the 25" OS county series map for 1913.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: This site would need to be fully recorded by excavation if it were to be affected. It is therefore recommended that the pipeline avoids the structures.

22. Old Boundary - SH47885326

Category D Impact: slight

The site appears as a possible terrace crossing from east to west. It is visible as a break of slope enhanced by the presence of boulders. There is no boundary marked in this location on the OS maps.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Watching brief and record section.

23. Track - SH47875324

Category D Impact: slight

A grassy track 4m wide runs 120m north-west from the southern boundary of field number 0033 to the boundary with field number 7633. The date of the track is not known, but it does run from Pant Ddu, which is at least 16th century in date.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Watching brief and record section if relevant.

24. Pond Remains - SH47865324

Category D Impact: considerable

A small pond 18m long and 14m wide is shown on the 25 inch County Series OS map of 1917 just to the east of the southern entrance to field number 0033. It is shown to have a straight side next to the field boundary with the rest being curvilinear. The south-western straight wall is still clearly visible as are parts of the north-western and south-eastern walls. A stream now cuts through the middle of this feature from north-west to south-east. It formerly supplied water to Pant Ddu.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Basic recording in advance followed by a watching brief.

25. Raised Platform - SH47855322

Category E Impact: considerable

Against the north-east boundary wall of field number 7917 is a raised rectangular platform c.15m long and c.8m wide. The platform is some 0.2m-0.3m high. There are three oak trees and one blackthorn growing on it, with several large boulders on the surface. It is probably the site of a former rectangular building, but there are no foundations visible. Its location would suggest it may have been a field barn, although a house site of medieval or early modern date is possible. There is a blocked entrance in the boundary wall adjacent to the road just to the west of the site.

Recommendation for mitigatory measures: Avoid if possible, otherwise record and investigate in advance followed by a watching brief.

Areas of unknown archaeological potential

Category E

Previous results from similar projects have shown that many sites can only be detected by excavation. A continuous watching brief along the line of the route is therefore an essential part of the evaluation procedure, with potential for discovering sites which would otherwise go unrecorded.

Recommended mitigatory measures: A continuous watching brief should be maintained during

the relevant stages of the pipeline works.

4.2.2 Sites within the study area which are not likely to be affected by the proposed pipeline.

26. Gadlys Fortified Farmstead - SH48055798

Category B

A fortified circular enclosure c.75m diameter surrounding the present farm and farm buildings (PRN 585). The breach on the west side is considered to be the original entrance. The track (site 2) leads north-west from this entrance. It is probably a hill-top settlement of late Prehistoric or Roman date.

27. Raised Platform - SH47955702

Category C

The parish boundary wall between field numbers 0008 and 0004 has two curves to the west of the course of the pipeline. To the north and within the curve of the boundary wall is a raised platform possibly denoting the site of an earlier structure. To the south also within a curve of the boundary wall are loose stones in which early walling may be discernible.

28. Raised Causeway - SH48515611

Category C

This feature is located in the gorge of Afon Llifon to the west of the course of the pipeline. It consists of a long mound, c.1.5m high and c.2m wide, bound on the southern face by upright slate slabs. At the western end are the remnants of a concrete bridge across the stream. A track running north-west from this bridge is cut into the side of the gorge on the opposite bank of the stream. There is a gully above the eastern end of the causeway leading into field number 5513 and a continuation of this line would cross the course of the pipeline at SH48575613.

29. Burnt Mound - SH48295494

Category B

A burnt mound (PRN 1388) in the centre of field number 3300 on the south bank of a small stream running west to east across the field. The mound is crescent shaped with an opening facing the stream which is c.10m across and 5m deep. The east end of the mound is 1m high rising to 1.5m to the west. The mound has an overall diameter of c.13m.

30. Stone Enclosure - SH48315467

Category C

Within an area of high archaeological potential in field number 3069 is a stone enclosure c.12m diameter which is heavily revetted into the slope. There are traces of a stone bank around the perimeter but dense rushes obscured the interior.

31. Burnt Mound - SH48175437

Category B

A burnt mound (PRN 2341) located in the west of field number 2734 to the south of a small stream running south to north at this point. The mound is crescent shaped with an overall diameter of 12m and up to 0.8m high. It is open to the stream on the northern side.

32. ?Burnt Mound - SH48175415

Category E

Against the eastern boundary of field number 1716 is part of a possible burnt mound of small stones in a field of uncleared stone.

33. Pant-du-bach Ruins - SH47735310

Category C

In the north-west of field number 5600 are the ruins of a small building with associated enclosure.

5. SUMMARY OF SITES AND RECOMMENDED ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK.

5.1 Sites which it is recommended to avoid

This section lists those sites which it is believed can be avoided with little disruption to the line of the pipeline, or which need to be avoided because of their archaeological importance.

4. Possible Structure
5. Raised platform
6. Features in Field 0016
7. Low mound
16. Burnt Mound
17. Early Enclosures
20. Features in Field 0033
21. Remains of structure

5.2 Sites requiring archaeological work prior to topsoil stripping

This section summarises the archaeological work which is recommended prior to fencing and topsoil stripping.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 15. Possible Structures | Geophysical survey and detailed recording |
| 17. Early Enclosures | Detailed recording |
| 18&19. Stone Mounds | Detailed recording |
| 24. Remains of Pond | Basic recording |

5.3 Sites requiring archaeological work during soil stripping

This section summarises the archaeological work which is recommended during topsoil stripping. The following sites should all be monitored as part of a watching brief.

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Old Railway Line | Watching brief |
| 2. Old Track | Watching brief |
| 3. Gadlys Field System | Watching brief |
| 8. Old boundary | Watching brief |
| 9. Terraced Footpath | Watching brief |
| 10. Features in Field 5935 | Watching brief |
| 12. Revetment Walling | Watching brief |
| 13. Track | Watching brief |
| 14. Linear Feature | Watching brief |
| 15. Possible structures | Watching brief |
| 17. Early enclosures | Watching brief |
| 18&19. Stone mounds | Watching brief |
| 22. Old Boundary | Watching brief |
| 23. Track | Watching brief |

Areas of unknown archaeological potential Watching brief

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7. NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

An initial assessment of the proposed route has identified a total of 33 sites, of which 8 lie outside the proposed route corridor. Of the 25 sites currently within the route corridor, three are thought to be of regional interest, six of local interest, nine other sites, and 7 sites that require further assessment before their status can be established.

Recommendations are divided into three principal groups: those sites which can or should be avoided; those sites which it would be difficult to avoid, but require further assessment or recording prior to construction work; and those sites which cannot be avoided (e.g. field boundaries and tracks) for which a watching brief is recommended.

The sites which are of unknown potential and which require recording and investigation before the construction fall into two discrete groups: the terracing and possible settlement at site 15, and the possible settlement and burnt mounds at sites 17, 18 and 19.

It is recommended that a watching brief is maintained during the ground disturbance and that provision be made for the adequate recording of any sites which are identified at this stage of the development.



Site 15: Enclosure



Site 29: Burnt mound



Site 21: Rectangular structure

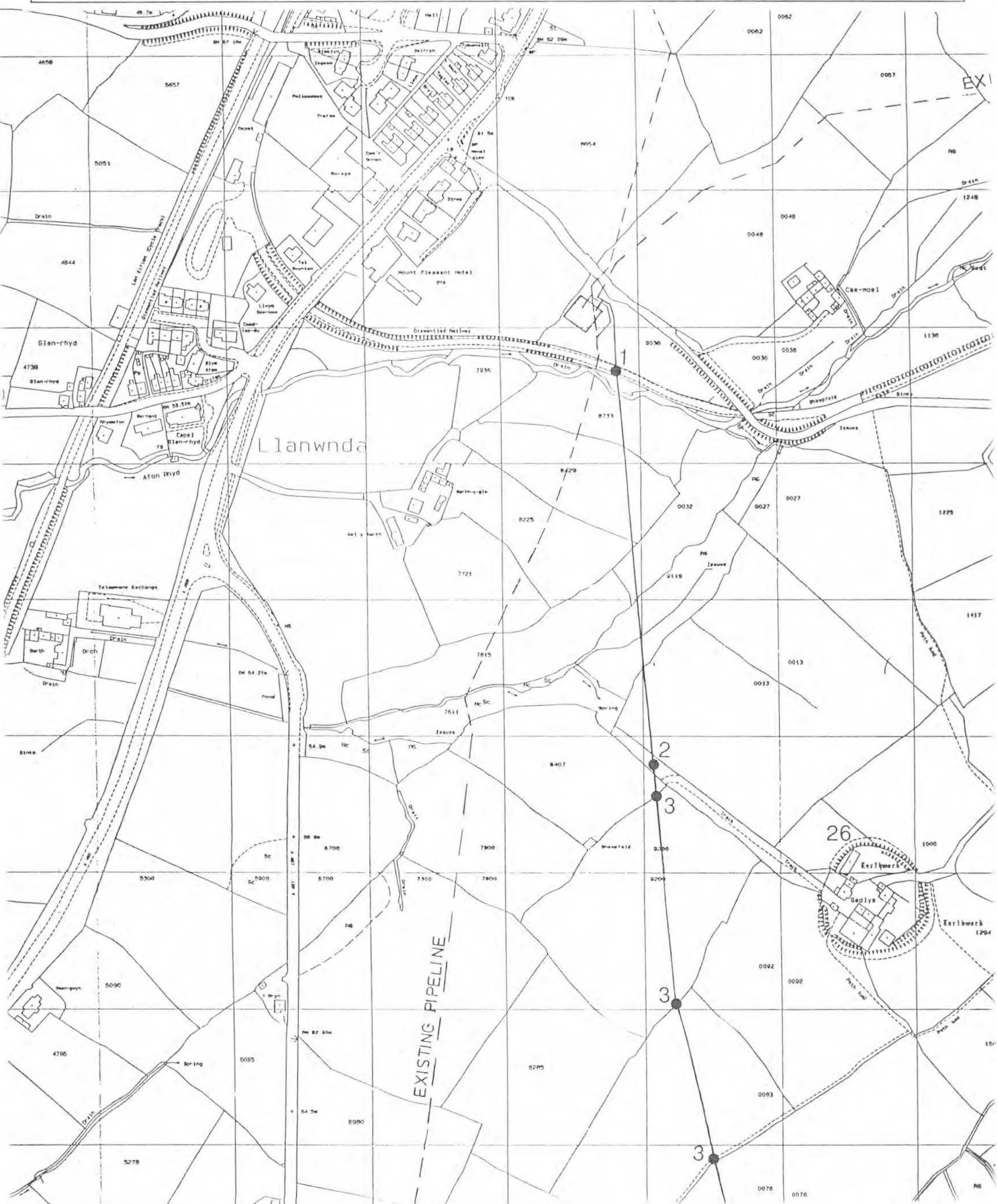


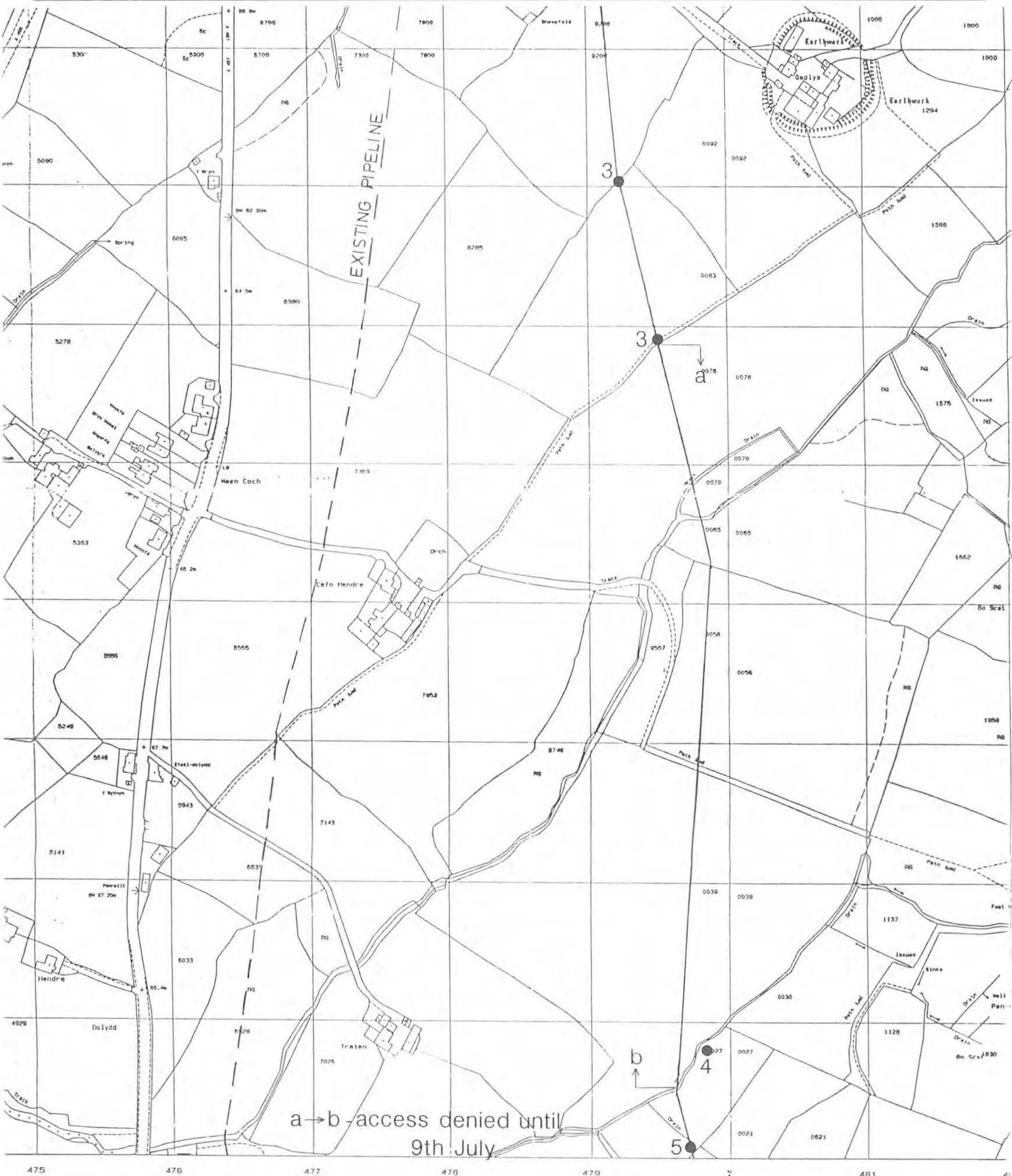
Site 25: Raised platform



Date 30/06/97

Client
BRITISH GAS TRANSCO





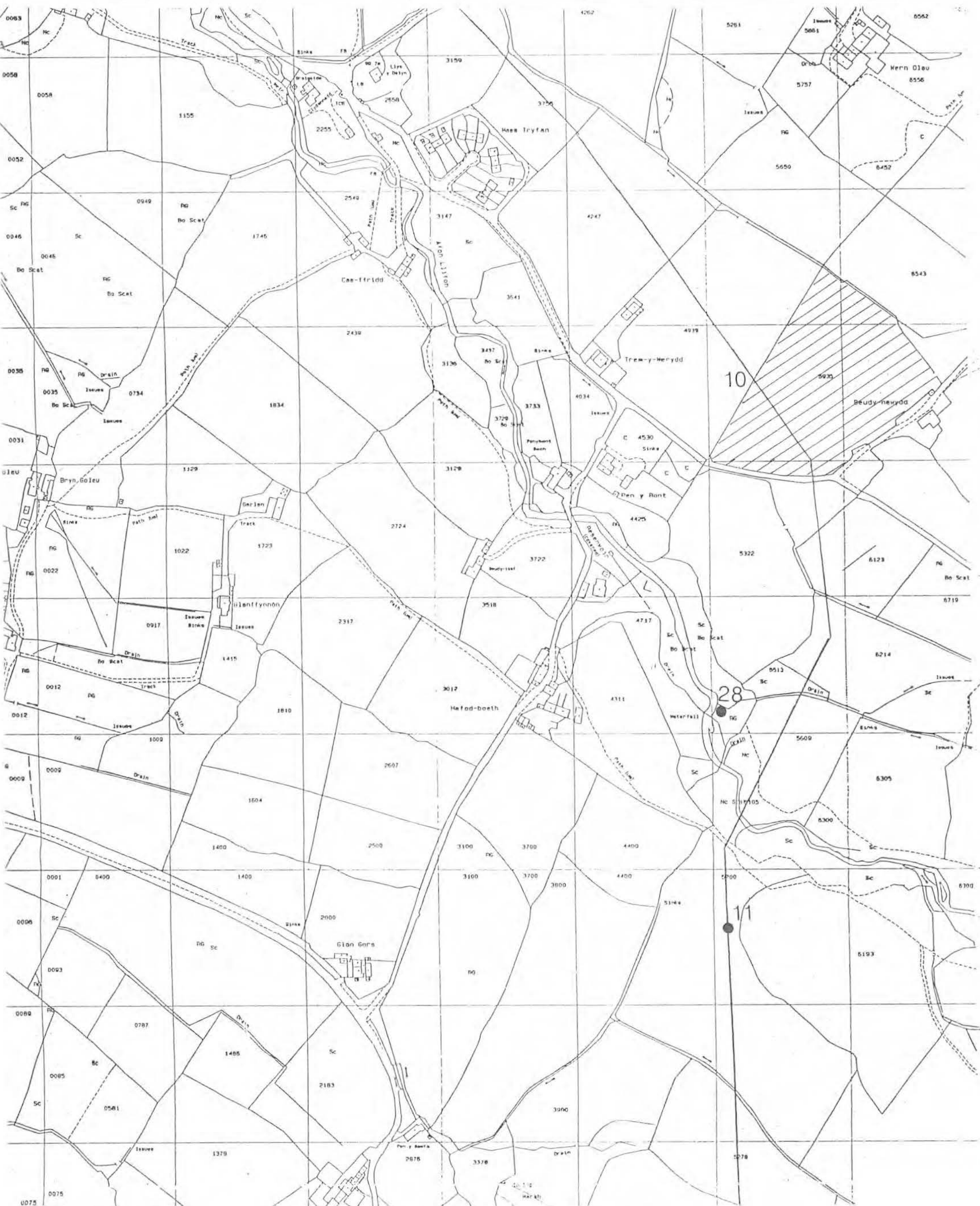
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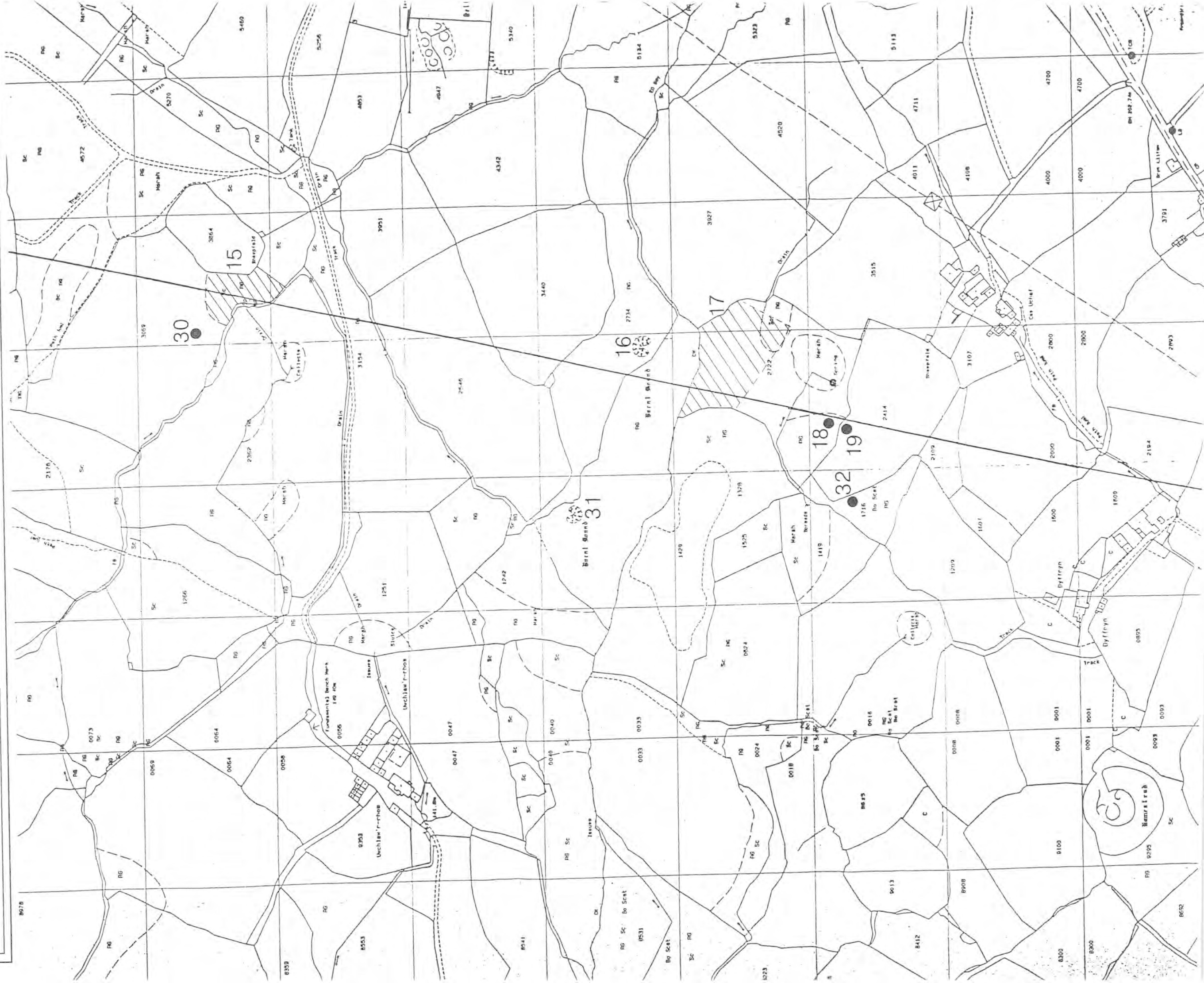


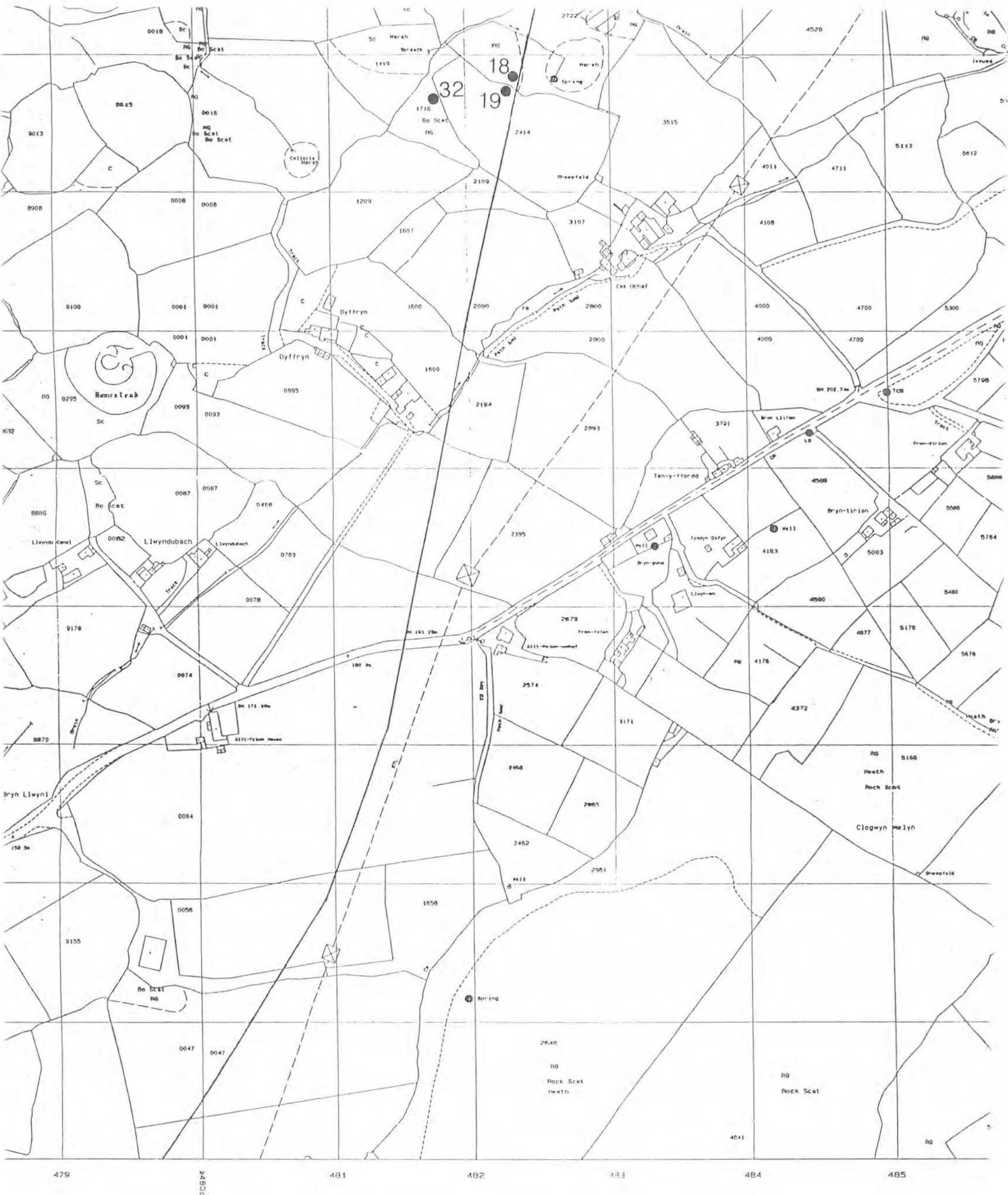


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