
Rhuddlan Bach Quarry

Anglesey



Archaeological strip/map/sample

GAT Project No. G1957

Report No. 718

February 2008

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Prepared for C & M Parry Limited

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By

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Rhuddlan Bach Quarry

Strip/Map/Sample

Figure List

Figure 1 – Site Location Maps .

Plate List

Plate 1 – West view of Watching Brief Area, also showing the frequency of the glacial boulders within the Morainic drift geology and detail of the existing limestone quarry face.

Plate 2 – West view across Watching Brief Area. Note frequent occurrence of glacial boulders.

Plate 3 - Southeast view of Watching Brief Area.

Plate 4 - East view of Watching Brief Area.

RHUDDLAN BACH QUARRY

Archaeological Strip/Map/Sample (G1957)

Summary

This report discusses the results of an archaeological Strip/Map/Sample within Phase I expansion at Rhuddlan Bach Quarry, Anglesey.

The Strip/Map/Sample monitored the topsoil removal of the southern portion of Phase I. The initial strip of the 75m by 50m area was carried out on the 3rd September 2007 and completed on the 18th February 2008. (Figure 1). No archaeological features were identified and all activity below the topsoil was interpreted as glacial in origin. It was determined that local agricultural use was limited to pasture.

1 INTRODUCTION

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (GAT) has been asked by C & M Parry Ltd. to conduct an archaeological Strip/Map/Sample at the Phase 1 extraction area at Rhuddlan Bach Quarry, Anglesey (NGR SH485809), as detailed in RML Ltd. drawing dated 30/06/2003.

Phase 1 is the first stage of a proposed quarry expansion programme and will be followed by extraction Phases 2, 3 and 4 (see Figure 1 for the location of the individual Phases).

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust conducted an archaeological assessment for a proposed wind farm within the local area (Flook, H. 1994 GAT Report 119). The report identified eighteen sites of archaeological interest within the local area. The environmental assessment of the proposed development, prepared for C W Parry Ltd. by RML Ltd. (2528/11/Environmental Statement (05/03)) incorporated the information from GAT Report 119 as well as supplementary information from the Historic Environment Record and the National Photographic Unit at the National Monuments Record. The environmental assessment recommended a scheme of archaeological works to mitigate the effects of the development on the archaeology (2528/11/Environmental Statement (05/03): 119).

2 SPECIFICATION AND PROJECT DESIGN

The Environmental Statement (2528/11/Environmental Statement (05/03)) contained recommendations for field evaluation in the form of trial trenches (though with the possibility of geophysical survey) within the proposed extraction area (designated as Phases 1 to 4; see Figure 1), and a building record of the farmstead at Rhuddlan Bach.

The subsequent archaeological design (GAT, July 2007) suggested that the evaluation work be completed in stages, beginning at Phase 1, with initial extraction taking place within the southern half of this area. The design proposed that the area be examined by strip/map/sample, an archaeological technique that required machine stripping under constant archaeological supervision, followed by examination of the exposed area. If complex archaeological remains are found, then a design for undertaking further works is submitted. If no complex archaeological remains are found, then a report would be produced describing the results of the strip, map and sample.

No specific brief has been provided for this work. The basic requirement, as detailed in Gwynedd Archaeological Trust Project Design (July 2007), was for a Strip/Map/Sample measuring 75m by 50m within the southern portion of Phase 1, in order to assess the impact of the proposals on the designated area. The importance and condition of known archaeological remains were to be assessed, and areas of archaeological potential identified. Measures to mitigate the effects of the construction work on the archaeological resource were to be suggested.

The remainder of Phase 1 and Phases 2 to 4 will be evaluated by trial excavation (with the possibility of a geophysical survey) at a later date.

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust's proposals for fulfilling these requirements are:

- Strip/Map/Sample
- Report

3 METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

The Strip/Map/Sample was initially undertaken on the 3rd September 2007 and completed on the 18th February 2008. The strip was conducted within the southern portion of the Phase I area detailed in the RML Ltd. drawing dated 30/06/2003 (Figure 1). The stripped area measured 75m by 50m. The initial strip on the 3rd September 2007 measured 40m by 25m and the remainder of the strip area was completed on the 18th February 2008.

A 25-tonne 360°-tracked excavator was used throughout the Strip/Map/Sample.

The archive is held by GAT under the project number G1957.

4 TOPOGRAPHY

The study area lies in a roughly undulating area that has been heavily influenced by glaciation, containing small rounded hills and surrounded by low-lying areas, many of which contain small lakes or marshy bogs. To the northeast are the lakes and marshes of Llyn Cadarn and Cors Goch and to the south is a broken limestone and millstone ridge.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The environmental assessment of the proposed development, prepared for C & M Parry Ltd. by RML Ltd. (2528/11/Environmental Statement (05/03)) stated that the known and identified archaeological features (as listed in GAT Report 119) located close to the proposed quarry extension were either outside the working limits of the proposed quarry, or had already been affected by quarry operations.

These features included:

- PRN1616 Castell Gadarn (NGR SH48688073), a series of collapsed stone walls that included a possible burnt mound. The site is currently buried by quarry waste and is located outside of the extraction area.
- PRN 2192 (NGR SH48708120), a possible hillfort located c.150.0m to the northeast of the proposed quarry. This site is located outside of the extraction area.
- Rhuddlan Bach farmhouse (NGR SH48788850) is close to the operations but is excluded from the area of extraction and is not affected. The farmhouse is derelict with surrounding enclosures and associated agricultural buildings. Parts of the house may be of 17th century date, but has been altered in the 19th century. Many features of interest remain, including a donkey mill and numerous small items of machinery of 19th century date.
- DBA 2: a potential feature within the confines of the proposed quarry extension has been identified (2528/11/Environmental Statement (05/03): 118). The feature is located within the Phase III zone to the east of Phase I (see Figure 1) and is described as an area of wetland that has been subject to previous topsoil stripping and disturbance. It is thought to be a potential location for a burnt mound (2528/11/Environmental Statement (05/03): 118).
- Apart from DBA 2, there is no evidence for the presence of archaeological features in the proposed extension.

6 RESULTS OF THE STRIP/MAP/SAMPLE

The topsoil strip revealed a thin spread of topsoil atop a glacial deposit of Morainic drift geology, which included extensive spreads of sub-rounded stones (Plates 1 & 2). The stones were not distributed in any structural fashion and were interpreted as glacial boulders. The shallow depth of the topsoil, coupled with the frequency of large glacial stones and boulders, suggested that the area saw limited agricultural use and was used mainly for pasture.

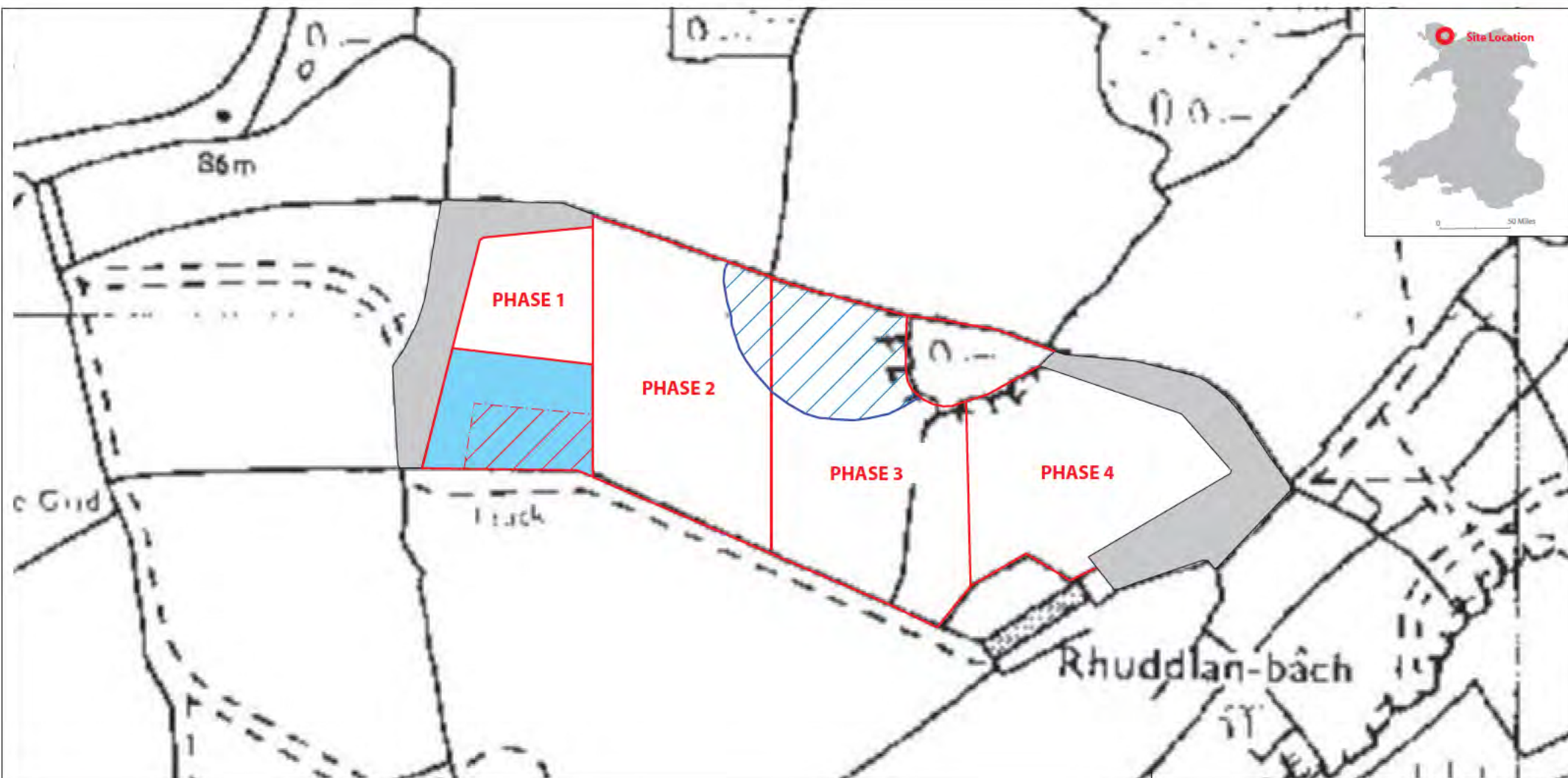
No archaeological features were identified or recorded and there was no evidence for prehistoric burnt mound activity.

7 SOURCES CONSULTED

IFA. 2001. *Institute of Field Archaeologists 2001 Standard and Guidance for an archaeological Strip/Map/Sample*.

Flook, H. 1994. Proposed Wind Farm, Prysan, Anglesey: Archaeological Assessment. Gwynedd Archaeological Trust Report **119**.

Roberts, J. 2007. Rhuddlan Bach Quarry: Archaeological strip/map/sample. Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. Report **698**.



Area Stripped: 03/09/2007



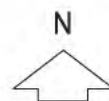
Area Stripped: 18/02/2008



Soil and overburden storage and screen mounds



Location of DBA2: Wetland Area/Potential Burnt Mound



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Figure 1. Site Location

Scale: 1:25000@A4



Plate 1: West view of Watching Brief Area, also showing the frequency of the glacial boulders within the Morainic drift geology and detail of the existing Limestone Quarry Face.



Plate 2: West view across Watching Brief Area. Note frequent occurrence of glacial boulders.



Plate 3: Southeast view of Watching Brief Area.



Plate 4: East view of Watching Brief Area.



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