

**Gas Main Replacement  
Maesydre and Main Street  
Caersws  
Powys**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

*for*  
**Grontmij**  
*on behalf of*

**Wales & West Utilities Ltd**


CA Project: 3473  
CA Report: 11153

July 2011

Gas Main Replacement  
Maesydre and Main Street  
Caersws  
Powys

Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 3473  
CA Report: 11153

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date	1 July 2011
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signed	
date	1 July 2011
issue	01

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## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)

Fig. 2 The site, showing location of observed groundworks (1:1250)



## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Gas Main Replacement, Maesydre and Main Street  
**Location:** Caersws, Powys  
**NGR:** Site A (Main Street) SO 0325 9198  
Site B (Maesydre) SO 0326 9219  
**Type:** Watching Brief  
**Date:** 13 and 16 June 2011  
**Location of Archive:** To be deposited with Powysland Museum  
**Accession Number:** A534/2011  
**Site Code:** MMC 11

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the replacement of a section of gas main on Main Street and the pipes servicing houses on the Maesydre estate at Caersws, Powys.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In June 2011 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Grontmij on behalf of Wales & West Utilities Ltd at Main Street (Site A), Maesydre (Site B) and Caersws, Powys (centred on NGR: SO 0325 9198 and SO 0326 9219 respectively; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken during the replacement of existing gas mains. Mr Mark Walters, Development Control Officer, Clwyd Powys Trust (CPAT) is responsible for the curation of the archaeological works. The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the development.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by Cotswold Archaeology (2011) and approved by Mark Walters, Development Control Officer, CPAT. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (IfA 2008), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991), and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

### ***The site***

- 1.3 The site comprises two areas: Site A comprised a trench, 39m in length and 1m in width, along Main Street with residential properties to the north and south, the Buck Hotel to the west and Manthrig Lane to the east. Site B comprised eight trenches, each c. 2m in length and 1m in width, on the Maesydre estate (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 122m AOD, with the ground level rising to 127m AOD to the north.
- 1.4 The underlying solid geology (Main Street; Site A) is recorded as Rhayader Mudstones Formation of the Aeronian to Telychian period; this is overlain by Alluvial Fan Deposits of the Quaternary period. The underlying solid geology (Maesydre; Site B) is recorded as Caerau Mudstones Formation of the Telychian period overlain by Till, Devensian (BGS 2011). The natural substrate was not identified during the watching brief.

### ***Archaeological background***

- 1.5 The replacement gas main on Main Street lies approximately 10m to the south-east of Scheduled Monument MG001, Caersws Roman Site. Caersws was a large Roman

centre (possibly the town of *Mediolannum*), with a fort being established 800m to the north-east of Main Street in the 1st century AD. A second fort, a more substantial structure in stone, replaced it in approximately AD 75, and lay to the north and west of Main Street. A sizable *vicus* grew up around the fort, which included a bath house excavated 300m to the south-west of the site. On the basis of this Roman activity, substantial areas of the village are Scheduled Monuments, although the proposed works do not extend into these areas.

- 1.6 In the vicinity of Main Street, an excavation at The Buck, 30m to the south-east of Main Street (CPAT Ref. **117882**), recorded a gravel surface associated with the *vicus* and an evaluation in 1991, 30m to the south recorded Roman postholes and pottery (CPAT Ref. **17284**). However, a watching brief in 2008 at Chapel Street, 30m to the south-east of Main Street, recorded no archaeological finds or features (CPAT Ref. **117885**).
- 1.7 The Maesydre replacement gas main lies outside of the Scheduled Roman Site. However, an evaluation 20m to the south of the Gas Main recorded evidence of Roman settlement and a section of Roman Road, running east/west (CPAT Ref. **117872**), and a substantial stone-built building was recorded 120m to the south-west (CPAT Ref. **17269**).
- 1.8 Both sites lie within the Caersws Basin Landscape of Special Historic Interest.

### ***Methodology***

- 1.9 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2011). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising the excavation of a trench, 39m in length and 1m in width, along Main Street (Site A, Trench 1, Fig. 2) and eight trenches (for insertion), each c. 2m in length and 1m in width, on the Maesydre estate (Site B, Trenches 2 to 9, Fig. 2). With the approval of Mark Walters, the watching brief on Maesydre ceased when the observation of eight trial holes concluded that the groundworks were not penetrating the made ground deposits associated with the construction of the housing estate and/or previous services.
- 1.10 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).

- 1.11 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. The site archive will be deposited with Powysland museum under accession number A534/2011. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

## **2. RESULTS (FIG. 2)**

- 2.1 The earliest deposit encountered on Main Street (Site A, Trench 1) was redeposited firm brown silty clay 104, revealed at a depth of 0.4m below present ground level (bpgl). The original cast iron gas pipe was located within this deposit. This was overlain by concrete bedding 103 for road surface 102 and hardcore deposit 101 for pavement 100.

- 2.2 At Maesydre (Site B, Trenches 2 to 9), the earliest deposit encountered was a greenish grey silty clay, 202, 302, 402, 502, 603, 705, 802, 902, at an average depth of 0.3m bpgl, containing the original cast iron gas pipe and other services associated with the housing estate. This deposit was overlain by hardcore, 201, 301, 401, 501, 601, 701, 706, 801, 901, for the road or pavement surfaces, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, 700, 707, 800, 900. Additional modern services were identified in Trenches 6 and 7.

- 2.3 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual was recovered.

## **3. DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see archaeological background above), the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks, which were all located within the fills of existing service trenches.

## **4. CA PROJECT TEAM**

Fieldwork was undertaken by Rebecca Riley. The report was written by Rebecca Riley. The illustrations were prepared by Lorna Gray. The archive has been compiled by Rebecca Riley, and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Laurent Coleman.

## 5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2011 Geology of Britain Viewer [http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer\\_google/googleviewer.html](http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html) accessed 23rd June 2011.

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2011 *Gas Main Replacement, Maesydre and main Street, Caersws, Powys, : Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief.*





## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

### Trench 1

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
100	Layer	Tarmac pavement			0.1	
101	Layer	Hardcore below 100			0.46	
102	Layer	Tarmac road surface			0.1	
103	Layer	Concrete bedding for kerb			0.14	
104	Layer	Dumped deposit			≥0.42	

### Trench 2

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
200	Layer	Tarmac pavement			0.08	
201	Layer	Hardcore below 200			0.31	
202	Layer	Mid greenish grey silty clay, waterlogged			≥0.19	

### Trench 3

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
300	Layer	Tarmac pavement			0.08	
301	Layer	Hardcore below 300			0.24	
302	Layer	Mid greenish grey silty clay, waterlogged			≥0.58	

### Trench 4

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
400	Layer	Tarmac pavement			0.08	
401	Layer	Hardcore below 400			0.22	
402	Layer	Mid greenish grey silty clay, waterlogged			@LOE	

### Trench 5

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
500	Layer	Tarmac pavement			0.08	
501	Layer	Hardcore below 500			0.22	
502	Layer	Mid greenish grey silty clay, waterlogged			≥0.56	

### Trench 6

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
600	Layer	Tarmac pavement			0.08	
601	Layer	Hardcore below 600			0.22	
602	Layer	Pinkish brown silty sand with brick fragment incl. Possibly the backfill of an electricity cable			0.1	
603	Layer	Mid greenish grey silty clay, waterlogged			≥0.5	

Trench 7

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
700	Layer	Tarmac pavement			0.09	
701	Layer	Hardcore below 700			0.21	
702	Layer	Concrete bedding for kerb			0.26	
703	Fill	Pink sand and gravel		0.55	0.2	
704	Cut	Cut of trench for BT cable		0.55	0.2	
705	Layer	Mid greenish grey silty clay, waterlogged			≥0.43	
706	Layer	Made ground for road surface 707			0.23	
707	Layer	Tarmac road surface			0.07	

Trench 8

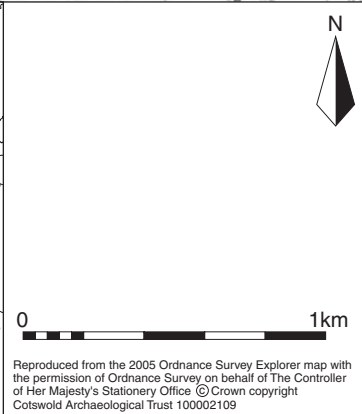
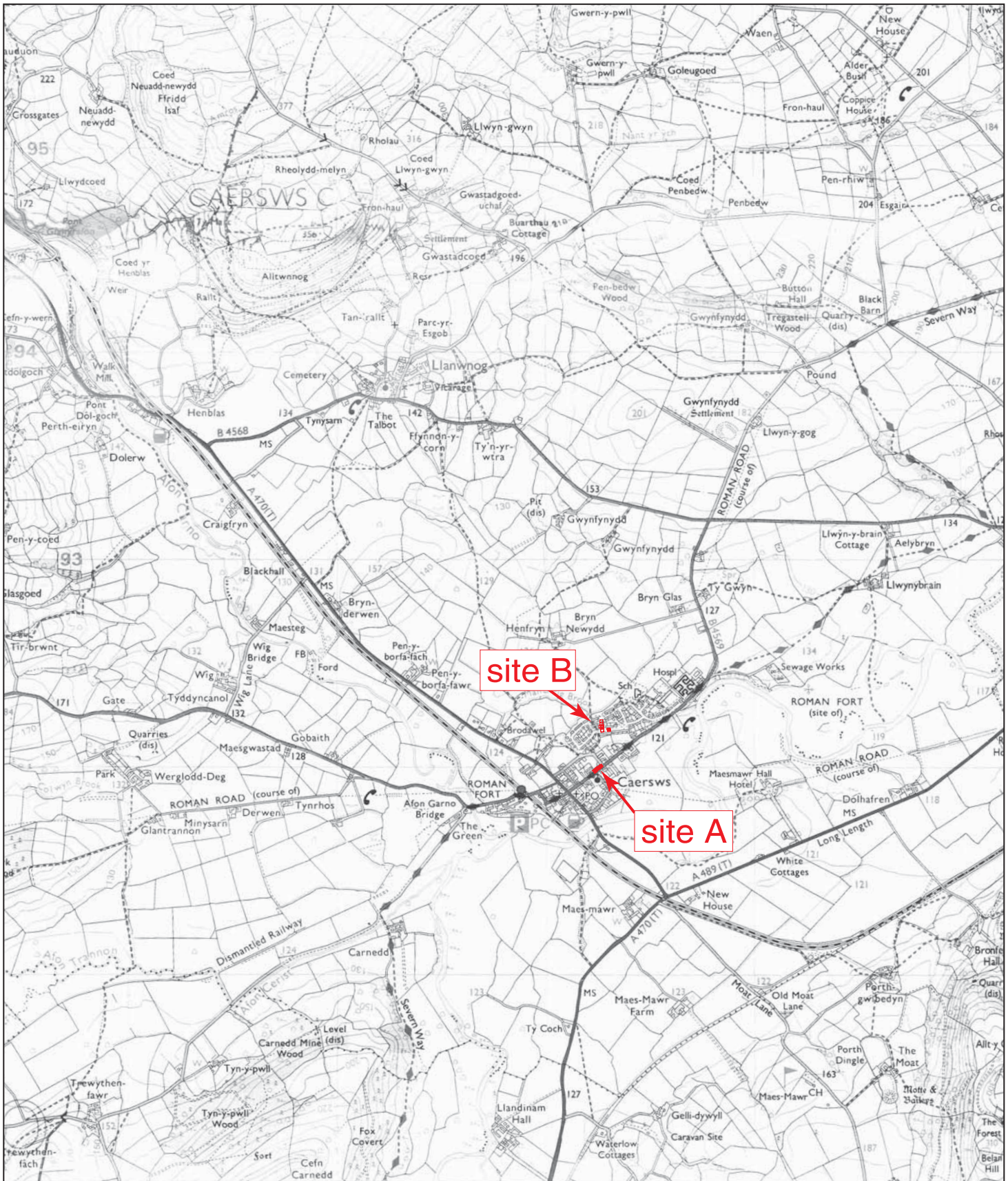
No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
800	Layer	Tarmac pavement			0.08	
801	Layer	Hardcore below 800			0.24	
802	Layer	Mid greenish grey silty clay, waterlogged			≥0.4	

Trench 9

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
900	Layer	Tarmac pavement			0.08	
901	Layer	Hardcore below 900			0.22	
902	Layer	Mid greenish grey silty clay, waterlogged			≥0.28	

**APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Gas Main Replacement, Maesydre and Main Street	
Short description	<p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the replacement of a section of gas main on Main Street and the pipes servicing houses on the Maesydre estate at Caersws, Powys.</p> <p>No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered.</p>	
Project dates	13 and 16 June 2011	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Caersws, Powys	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)	277m (Maesydre) and c. 37m (Main Street)	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	Site A (Main Street) SO 0325 9198 Site B (Maesydre) SO 0326 9219	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	N/A	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Laurent Coleman	
Project Supervisor	Rebecca Riley	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>	None	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>	None	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	N/A	None
Paper	Powysland Museum	Trench Recording Forms, Photographic Registers
Digital	Powysland Museum	Digital photos, GPS survey
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
<p>CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2011 <i>Gas Main Replacement, Maesydre and Main Street, Caersws, Powys: Archaeological Watching Brief</i>. CA typescript report <b>11153</b></p>		



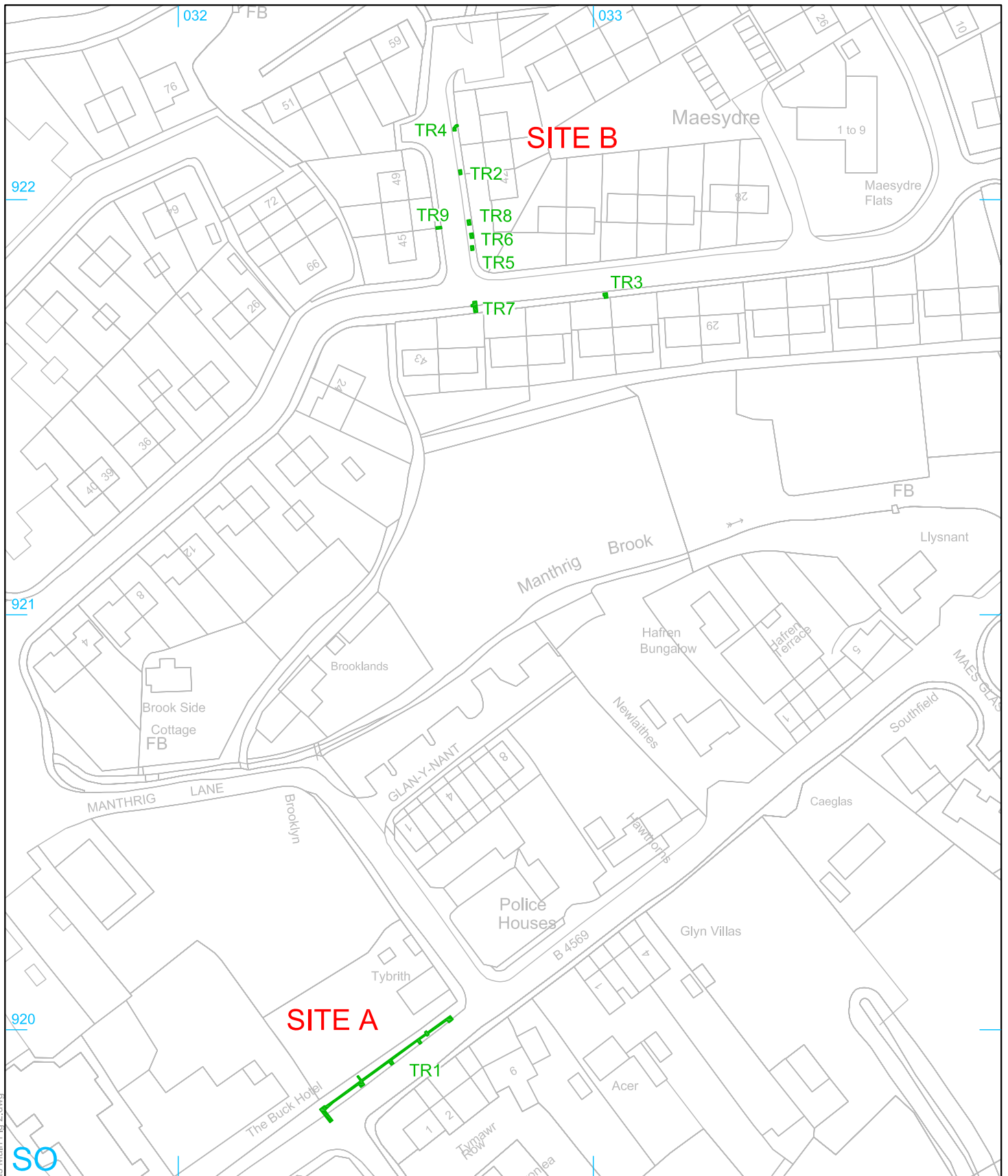
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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Gas Main Replacement, Maesydre and  
 Main Street, Caersws, Powys

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan

PROJECT NO.	3473	DATE	29-06-2011	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY	LG	REVISION	00	1
APPROVED BY	PJM	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	

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■ area of observed groundworks



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PROJECT TITLE  
**Gas Main Replacement, Maesydre and Main Street, Caersws, Powys**

PROJECT TITLE  
**The site, showing location of observed groundworks**

PROJECT NO.	3473	DATE	30-06-2011	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY	LG	REVISION	00	<b>2</b>
APPROVED BY	PJM	SCALE@A4	1:1250	



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