

# Upper Neuadd Dam Brecon Beacons National Park Powys

*Historic Building Recording*



for  
Skanska

on behalf of  
Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water

CA Project:5587  
CA Report: 15679

September 2015



Upper Neuadd Dam  
Brecon Beacons National Park  
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date	September 2015
issue	01

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## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Upper Neuadd Dam  
**Location:** Llanfrynach, Powys  
**NGR:** SO 89470 33071  
**Type:** Historic Building Recording

In July 2015, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) was commissioned by Skanska on behalf of Dwr Cymru\Welsh Water to provide a photographic survey of parts of the Grade II\* Listed dam at Upper Neuadd reservoir. A Heritage Statement written by CA in May 2015 summarised the history and heritage significances of the dam to support an application for Listed Building Consent for essential engineering works. It was indicated by the Brecon Beacons National Park that listed Building Consent was likely to be forthcoming but that a photographic record of the parts of the dam affected by the proposed works would be necessary in mitigation. This report accompanies and supports that record.

The proposed works entail the removal of the stone, inner order of the arched entrance to the tunnel at the eastern side of the spillway, works to remove the present pipework from within the tunnel, and the removal of the 3m thick brick/masonry “plug” at the north end of the tunnel to allow a direct connection from the reservoir. In addition, works will include the raising of the retaining wall extending south from the east side of this entrance, and the extension in concrete of the flat stone platform in front of the entrance, over which water passing through the tunnel behind the entrance will flow. The removal of the plain stone arched interior order and the works to the apron and retaining wall are to be temporary. The stone work will be stored until required for reinstatement.

The photographs were taken digitally in .Raw format at 18mpx resolution. The archive contains this data and a set of files converted to .jpeg (.jpg) format. This data has been submitted on CDs. An Excel spreadsheet forms the catalogue and this has been included on the CD and in hard copy at the end of this report. A selection of photographs accompanies this report.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### ***Outline***

- 1.1 In July 2015, Cotswold Archaeology was commissioned by Skanska, on behalf of Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water to provide a photographic Historic Building Record to fulfil an anticipated condition of Listed Building Consent for proposals to carry out works on the Upper Neuadd Reservoir Dam, Llanfrynach, Brecon Beacons National Park, Powys (centred on NGR SO 89470 33071 – Fig. 1).
- 1.2 The Dam was built as an addition to the earlier (and now Lower) Neuadd reservoir of 1880, and was completed in 1902. The dam needs remedial works, but in the short term, works are proposed to make the structure stable while longer-term solutions are prepared. The works have been approved in principle by Mrs Ffion Bevan, Senior Planning Officer (DC) to Brecon Beacons National Park, and she has indicated that planning permission is not required. However, as the dam is Listed Grade II\*, Listed Building Consent (LBC) will be required for the works. This report is designed to accompany the photographic record.
- 1.3 The survey was conducted on Tuesday 1st September 2015 by Peter Davenport.

### ***Location and landscape context***

- 1.4 The dam is located in the Taf Fechan valley high in the Brecon Beacons at 430m AOD (Fig. 1). The valley runs north-west to south-east, so the dam faces out to the south-east (Fig. 2). The hills either side of the valley reach 700m before rising northwards to 873m at the head of the valley at Pen y Fan and Corn Dû (Fig. 3). It is the highest reservoir in the valley, Lower Neuadd being just below and Pontstycill reservoir, the lowest, just above Dowlais.
- 1.5 The surrounding area is rough grassland/moor, although the valley below Lower Neuadd is heavily wooded with commercial conifers, actively managed and cropped. Around Lower Neuadd reservoir itself, the woodland is sparser and more mixed with alder and pine dominant, rather than the spruce below. On the lower slopes near the reservoirs and especially around the valley bottom there is much rhododendron.

### ***Objectives and scope***

- 1.6 The main objective of the survey were:
- To record those elements of the dam that would be affected by the works;

- The take a small number of extra photographs of areas indirectly affected and for context
- To record the viewpoints of each photograph on a plan

## 2 RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

*Planning Policy Wales (Edition 7: 2014)*

2.1 Paragraph 6.5.9 recognises the importance of protecting the historic environment and states that:

- *“Where a development proposal affects a Listed Building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”*

*Local Development Plan (2013)*

2.2 Policy 15: Listed Buildings, says that:

- *All listed building consent applications will be determined in accordance with National Policy as set out set out in Circular 61/96.*
- *Proposals for planning permission which impact on a listed building or its curtilage including the alteration, extension or change of use, whether internally or externally, will only be supported where it can be shown that there will be no significant harm to the special historic or architectural character and setting of the building or historic features.*
- *Conversion / Alteration / Extension / Change of Use of a listed building: The conversion, alteration, extension or change of use of a listed building will only be permitted where the following criteria are satisfied:*
  - a) *The proposal conserves the contribution made by the building to the character of the National Park.*
  - b) *The materials and finishes used in the building works are compatible in all respects with those of the existing structure,*
  - c) *The proposal conforms to all other relevant policies of this plan and national guidance,*
  - d) *The development would not have a detrimental effect on the setting of a listed or traditional building.*

### 3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The methodology employed during this assessment was based upon professional guidance including the *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (CIfA 2014).
- 3.2 General and detail images were taken of the areas directly affected and elevational information was also recorded photographically of the tunnel building and the retaining wall. Other more general images were recorded of the central dam structures, i.e. the towers and spillway. The viewpoints of the photographs were recorded on a site plan provided by Skanska (Fig. 2)
- 3.3 The photographs were taken digitally in .Raw format at 18mpx resolution with a Canon EOS 600D. The archive contains this data as well as a complete set of these files converted to .jpeg (.jpg) format. This data has been submitted on CDs. An Excel spreadsheet forms the catalogue and this has been included on the CD and in hard copy at the end of this report. A selection of photographs accompanies this report.

### 4. RESULTS

- 4.1 The most detailed coverage of this report was of the arched doorway into the tunnel building, as this was the only visible external area that will be partly demolished. Several apparently duplicate shots were taken to try to take best advantage of natural lighting. Elevation views as well as details of the stonework were taken (Figs 2-6).
- 4.2 As the eastern retaining wall will be altered this was photographed on both sides and, as well as general views, a series of straight-on exposures were made to allow the construction of a photomontage elevation record (Figs 7 and 8).
- 4.3 Beyond the apron, i.e., south, is a flat, grassed area, which will be terraced and take the water flowing out of the opened-up tunnel into the pool at the base of the spillway (Figs 9 and 10).
- 4.4 Inside the tunnel building the tunnel is nearly all brick-lined concrete, with some rock-finished stone work near the entrance (Fig. 11). It contains two large steel pipes which originally took water from different levels of the reservoir. The western one still



does it seems, feeding the present outfall below the apron. Both had valves controlled from the tower at walkway level (Figs 12-13). Another large-bore pipe rose up into the shaft at the north end rising into the tower. This has been long disconnected (Fig. 14).

- 4.5 The northern end of the tunnel to be opened up is just visible above the present water level on the north side of the dam. More pipes and control gear remain here (Fig. 15).
- 4.6 This all appears to be part of a level control system, now not functioning (Fig. 16).

## 5. REFERENCES

Cadw 2011 *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales* (Cardiff)

Cadw 2014 *Planning Policy Wales. Ch 6 Conserving the Historic Environment* (Cardiff)

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2015 *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment*

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2015 *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*

Dams of Wales 2015 [www.damsowales.com](http://www.damsowales.com) accessed 4<sup>th</sup> May 2015

Encyclopaedia Britannica

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/150337/dam/72085/The-19th-century>

accessed 5th May 2015

English Heritage 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (Swindon)

### **Cartographic sources**

1920	Ordnance Survey Map, 1:2,500
1937	Ordnance Survey Map, 1:2,500
1955	Ordnance Survey Map, 1:1,250
1970	Ordnance Survey Map, 1:2,500

## APPENDIX A: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Upper Neuadd Dam. Brecon Beacons National Park, Powys	
Short description	<p>In July 2015, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) was commissioned by Skanska on behalf of Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water to provide a photographic survey of parts of the Grade II* Listed dam at Upper Neuadd reservoir. A Heritage Statement written by CA in May 2015 summarised the history and heritage significances of the dam to support an application for Listed Building Consent for essential engineering works. It was indicated by the Brecon Beacons National Park that listed Building Consent was likely to be forthcoming but that a photographic record of the parts of the dam affected by the proposed works would be necessary in mitigation. This report accompanies and supports that record. The proposed works entail the removal of the stone, inner order of the arched entrance to the tunnel at the eastern side of the spillway, works to remove the present pipework from within the tunnel, and the removal of the 3m thick brick/masonry "plug" at the north end of the tunnel to allow a direct connection from the reservoir. In addition, works will include the raising of the retaining wall extending south from the east side of this entrance, and the extension in concrete of the flat stone platform in front of the entrance, over which water passing through the tunnel behind the entrance will flow. The removal of the plain stone arched interior order and the works to the apron and retaining wall are to be temporary. The stone work will be stored until required for reinstatement. The photographs were taken digitally in .Raw format at 18mpx resolution. The archive contains this data and a set of files converted to .jpeg (.jpg) format. This data has been submitted on CDs. An Excel spreadsheet forms the catalogue and this has been included on the CD and in hard copy at the end of this report. A selection of photographs accompanies this report.</p>	
Project dates	May and 1st September 2015	
Project type	Photographic Historic Building record	
Previous work	Heritage Statement by CA 2015	
Future work		
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Llanfrynach, Powys	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)		
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SO 89470 33071	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	none	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Richard Morton	
Project Supervisor	Peter Davenport	
MONUMENT TYPE		
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	N/A	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	N/A	N/A
Digital		Digital photos, pdf report
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology (2015) Upper Neuadd Dam, Brecon Beacons National Park, Powys: <i>Historic Building Recording Report No: 15679</i>		

**APPENDIX B: LISTED BUILDING DESCRIPTION**

Authority	<b>Powys</b>	Record No <b>84824</b>
National Park	<b>Brecon Beacons</b>	Date Listed: <b>28/07/2005</b>
Community	<b>Llanfrynach</b>	Date Amended
Locality	<b>Neuadd</b>	Date Delisted
		Grid ref: 302915 218769
		Grade II*

Name: **Dam at the Upper Neuadd Reservoir**

**Location**

Situated in the Taf Fechan valley some 9.6 km SW of Llanfrynach.

**History**

Dam to Upper Neuadd reservoir opened 1902, designed by George F. Deacon engineer of London, assisted by T. F. Harvey, Borough Engineer Merthyr Tydfil. Holme & King contractors. Deacon was also engineer to the Liverpool Water Board and designed the tower at Lake Vyrnwy in the 1880s and that at Norton (Cheshire). The architecture at Vyrnwy is based on the Gothic of William Burges, here Deacon seems to have been influenced by the massive detail of the American architect H. H. Richardson.

**Exterior**

Long dam of massive rock-faced squared blocks with tooled edges. Long straight dam with sloping face and quarter-round moulded stone coping, each side of centre spillway-dam flanked by two towers. Spillway is bridged by walkway on seven stone piers rising from the sloping face of the very high rock-faced stone main dam, the face curving out at base to a more gentle slope. This is flanked by raised sections to similar slope which carry the two towers. The W tower is much larger, square-plan, with banded rusticated angle piers, modillion cornice broken forward around piers, and tapered square finials at each corner, around stone spire. The S front has a large 3-light mullioned window with arched head, stone voussoirs, sandstone mullions and massive cast-iron glazing bars. W and E sides have low doors protected by stone balconies on the S. W tower is much shorter, square neo-classical building with the same banded rusticated angle piers, modillion cornice, but heavy blocking course above gabled to S. Low S lunette window with stone voussoirs and cast-iron glazing bars. Door each side with stone balcony on S. Extending from the base of the E side of the dam, below the main tower is a massively designed tunnel-outlet in Piranesi style, the arch framed in gargantuan rustication, the W side tapered, and the corbelled parapet with low centre gable over bronze plaque recording the completion of the dam in 1902. Brick tunnel lining. A platform in front of the tunnel covers an arched water outlet on the W side.

**Listed**

Graded II\* for its special interest as an architecturally-designed dam of spectacularly massive construction and definite character.

## APPENDIX C: CATALOGUE OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER (Digital)

Site Name	Upper Neuadd Dam	Proj. No	5587
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Site Code		Film No.	1	Acc. No	
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Frame no.	Date and Initials	Description; scale 2m unless otherwise indicated
<i>Orig files in RAW format; also saved as jpg, same frame nos.</i>		
IMG_7140	Sept 2015 PD	General view along dam to central towers to W (no scale)
7141	Sept 2015 PD	General view along dam to central towers to W (no scale)
7142	Sept 2015 PD	Deleted
7143	Sept 2015 PD	General view along dam to central towers to W zoomed in
7144	Sept 2015 PD	View to SSW from dam, east end
7145	Sept 2015 PD	View to SSW from dam, east end
7146	Sept 2015 PD	Central zone (spillway and towers), to W
7147	Sept 2015 PD	Central zone (spillway and towers), to W
7148	Sept 2015 PD	Water bypass tunnel building, to W
7149	Sept 2015 PD	Rear of E retaining wall to spillway, to SW
7150	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of E face of E retaining wall to spillway, to W
7151	Sept 2015 PD	E retaining wall to spillway, to NW
7152	Sept 2015 PD	E retaining wall step face, to N
7153	Sept 2015 PD	S end of E retaining wall and access steps leading behind
7154	Sept 2015 PD	The S end of the apron in front of the bypass tunnel building, to N
7155	Sept 2015 PD	N end of the E retaining wall, apron and outfall below, to E
7156	Sept 2015 PD	The spillway to NW
7157	Sept 2015 PD	Façade and entrance to bypass tunnel, to N
7158	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of arches over tunnel entrance (scale 0.5m divisions) to N and up
7159	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of tunnel entrance to NE
7160	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of arches over tunnel entrance (scale 0.5m divisions) to N and up
7161	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of tunnel entrance to NE
7162	Sept 2015 PD	Entrance to bypass tunnel, to NE (slightly less contrast, cloudy)
7163	Sept 2015 PD	Entrance to bypass tunnel, to N (slightly less contrast, cloudy)
7164	Sept 2015 PD	W wall of bypass tunnel building, and spillway, to E
7165	Sept 2015 PD	The E retaining wall, apron and outfall below, to ESE
7166	Sept 2015 PD	Entrance to bypass tunnel, to NE (slightly less contrast, cloudy)
7167	Sept 2015 PD	Entrance to bypass tunnel, to N (slightly less contrast, cloudy)
7168	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of arches over tunnel entrance (scale 0.5m divisions) to N and up
7169	Sept 2015 PD	Interior of tunnel to N (no scale)
7170	Sept 2015 PD	Entrance to bypass tunnel, to NE (less contrast, cloudy)
7171	Sept 2015 PD	Elevation view 1 E retaining wall
7172	Sept 2015 PD	Elevation view 2 E retaining wall
7173	Sept 2015 PD	Elevation view 3 E retaining wall
7174	Sept 2015 PD	Elevation view 4 E retaining wall
7175	Sept 2015 PD	Elevation view 5 E retaining wall
7176	Sept 2015 PD	Area S of apron, to NNE
7177	Sept 2015 PD	Area S of apron, to NNE

7178	Sept 2015 PD	Area S of apron, to N
7179	Sept 2015 PD	Area S of apron, to N further back with dam
7180	Sept 2015 PD	Area S of apron, to N further back with dam
7181	Sept 2015 PD	Spill way and dam towers, to NNW
7182	Sept 2015 PD	Outfall below apron, to E
7183	Sept 2015 PD	Entrance to tunnel for inside, to SSE (high contrast)
7184	Sept 2015 PD	S end of tunnel from inside, to S
7185	Sept 2015 PD	SW end of tunnel interior, to SW
7186	Sept 2015 PD	Steps at S end of tunnel to N (scales 1m)
7187	Sept 2015 PD	The N end of the tunnel and pipework, to N
7188	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of pipe work at N end of tunnel, to N
7189	Sept 2015 PD	North end of tunnel, brickwork to be removed (behind scale), to N
7190	Sept 2015 PD	Tar(?) tank at N end of tunnel, NW corner, to N
7191	Sept 2015 PD	View up into tower (grid at walkway level) from tunnel end, N to left
7192	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of worm gear on the draw off valve, to SE
7193	Sept 2015 PD	Drain and worm gear on removed cap to left
7194	Sept 2015 PD	E tower from walkway to W
7195	Sept 2015 PD	Entrance to tower and platform on N (right); note old ironwork barriers
7196	Sept 2015 PD	Corbelled roof over east tower, N to top
7197	Sept 2015 PD	Valve operating gear in the E tower at walkway level, to S
7198	Sept 2015 PD	Valve operating gear in the E tower at walkway level, to E
7199	Sept 2015 PD	View vertically down from the platform on the N side of the E tower, valve gear, pipe and steel panels in N face (no scale)
7200	Sept 2015 PD	Pen Ifan etc N from walkway (no scale)
7201	Sept 2015 PD	Pipes and steel panelling seen in 7199, to SW
7202	Sept 2015 PD	Top of arch to bypass tunnel and associated pipe work, to SW cf 7201
7203	Sept 2015 PD	As 7201 zoomed in (no scale)
7204	Sept 2015 PD	Steel panels in N side of tower, to SW (no scale)
7205	Sept 2015 PD	Upper part of steel panels and platform in N side of tower, to SW (no scale)
Backups	Lower res when main camera threatened to malfunction, all jpg.	
P1070141	Sept 2015 PD	Spillway and towers to NW (no scale)
1070142	Sept 2015 PD	West wall of tunnel building to E
1070143	Sept 2015 PD	E tower to NE and up
1070144	Sept 2015 PD	Tunnel building to NW
1070145	Sept 2015 PD	Spillway and towers to NNE (no scale)
1070146	Sept 2015 PD	Tunnel building to NW, from lower down
1070147	Sept 2015 PD	Tunnel building entrance arches to NE
1070148	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of soffit of voussoirs of tunnel building entrance outer arch (scale 0.5m divisions) to NE
1070149	Sept 2015 PD	Tunnel building entrance, to N
1070150	Sept 2015 PD	Tunnel building entrance, to N, zoomed in
1070151	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of arches over tunnel entrance (scale 0.5m divisions) to N and up
1070152	Sept 2015 PD	Tunnel to N
1070153	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of tunnel entrance to NE
1070154	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of tunnel entrance to NE
1070155	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of arches over tunnel entrance (scale 0.5m divisions) to N and up
1070156	Sept 2015 PD	Tunnel building entrance, to NNE, zoomed in
1070157	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of tunnel entrance W jamb to NW
1070158	Sept 2015 PD	Detail of tunnel entrance E jamb to NE
1070159	Sept 2015 PD	Tunnel to N



Figure 1. Upper Neuadd reservoir location plan

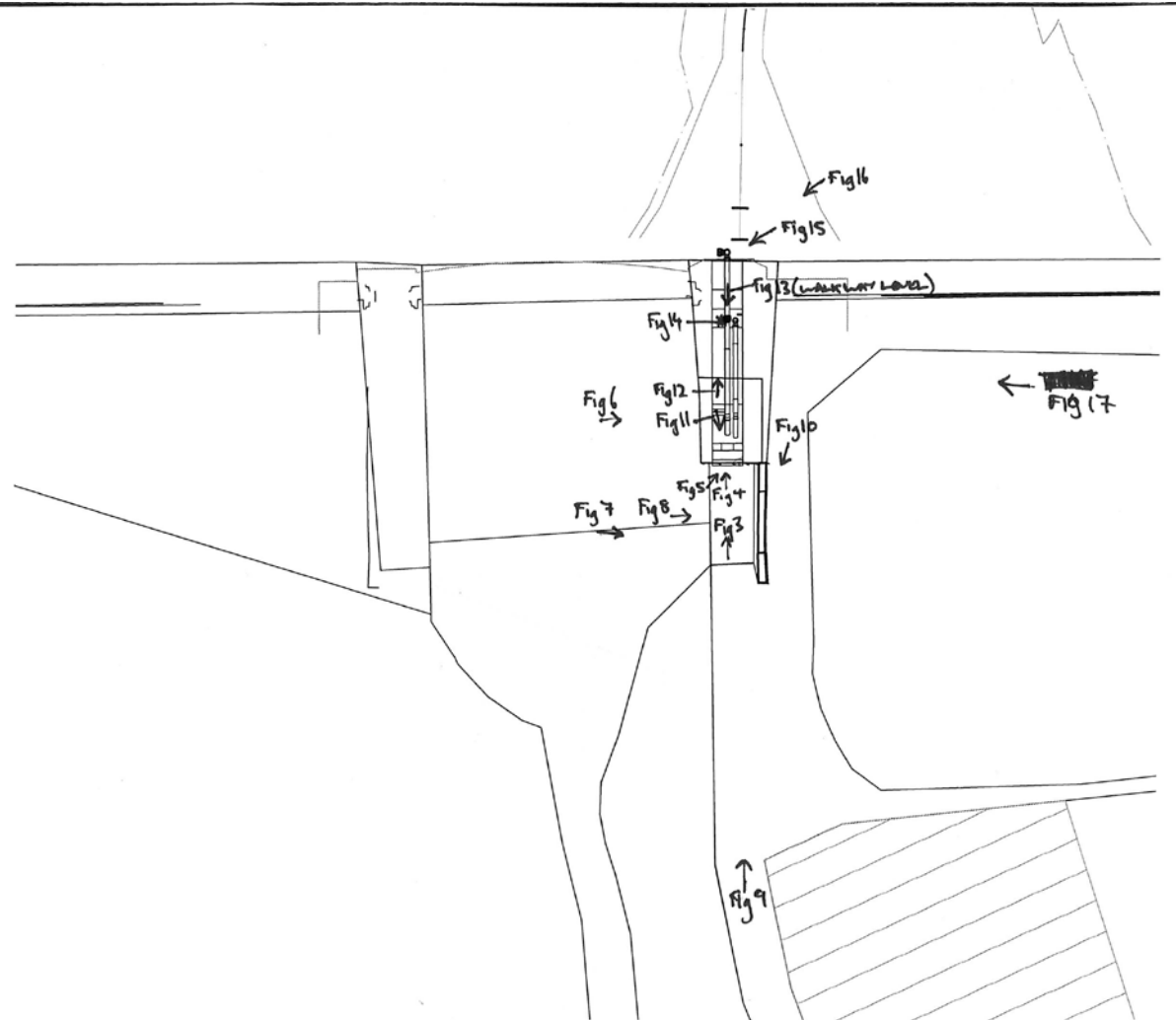


Figure 2 Site plan showing viewpoints of photographs





Figure 3. The south elevation of the tunnel building (scale 2m)



Figure 4. Detail of the arches of the doorway into the tunnel building (scale in 0.5m divisions)



Figure 5. The treatment of the jambs of the inner doorway to the tunnel building (scale 2m)



Figure 6. The western elevation of the tunnel building (scale 2m)



Figure 7. The eastern retaining wall from the spillway base and the lower outfall (scale 2m)



Figure 8. Photomontage elevation of the eastern retaining wall



Figure 9. The grassy area to be terraced to stop erosion by the new outflow from the tunnel



Figure 10 The top of the retaining wall and the grassy area beyond, which will be terraced, looking south-west (scale 2m)



Figure 11 The south end of the tunnel just inside the entrance, looking south (scale 2m)



Figure 12 The north end of the tunnel showing the base of the shaft in the tower and the pipework and control gear. The tunnel is to be driven through the brick work at the far end



Figure 13. Control mechanisms for the valves in Fig. 12, over the shaft in the east tower at walkway level, looking S (scale in 0.5m divisions)



Figure 14. Looking up into the shaft in the east tower, at the end of the tunnel to the grating shown in Fig. 13



Figure 15. The brick voussoirs of the tunnel visible on the north side of the dam and the pipe, valve and control gear, looking south-west



Figure 16 The north face of the east tower, showing inset steel duct and now-redundant presumed level control valve sites, looking south-west





Upper Neuadd dam, looking west



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