

Specification

For an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment:

Brondanw Estate, Gwynedd

Prepared for:
Renewables First

Project No: 2400

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SUMMARY

This Specification details the proposal for an archaeological desk based assessment and site visit associated with a hydro scheme between SH 62545 44192 and SH 61890 43545 located on the Afon Croesor just to the southwest of the settlement of Croesor, Gwynedd.

This document has been prepared by Archaeology Wales Ltd for Renewables First Ltd prior to the proposed submission of a planning application.

1. Introduction

The proposed development comprises plans for a hydro scheme between NGR SH 62545 44192 and SH 61890 43545 located on the Afon Croesor just to the southwest of the settlement of Croesor, Gwynedd (hence forth – the site). Information relating to the development has been supplied by Renewables First Ltd. This desk based assessment is to be undertaken prior to the proposed submission of a planning application. The local planning authority is Gwynedd Council (henceforth – GC).

This Specification has been prepared by Rowena Hart (MCIfA), Project Manager at Archaeology Wales Ltd (henceforth - AW) at the request of Renewable First Ltd. It provides information on the methodology that will be employed by AW during an archaeological desk based assessment of the site.

All work will conform to the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (CIfA 2014).

2. Development details & site description

The proposed development includes the installation of hydro scheme between NGR SH 62545 44192 and SH 61890 43545 located on the Afon Croesor just to the southwest of the settlement of Croesor, Gwynedd. The description below is taken from Croesor HEP: Planning Application Supporting Statement (Renewables First 2015):

An intake structure would be constructed taking water through a buried penstock pipe 1.3to the turbine house / outfall location. The penstock runs across open fields generally covered by grass pasture and/or bracken, stone walls separating the fields and a stone track. Generally the ground across the penstock route is rocky and fairly steep in sections, flattening out at the intake. There are sections which will require deeper trench digging where the ground surface undulates to ensure the penstock maintains a fall. The path will generally follow the natural contours of the valley. A buried 11kV line will run parallel to the penstock from a pole mounted transformer at the turbine house to the nearest available pole on the existing HV line.

3. Site specific objectives

The primary objective will be to assess the impact of the development proposals on the historic environment by means of a detailed desk top study and a site visit. This will help inform future decision making, design solutions and potential mitigation strategies associated with the development. The aim will be to make full and effective use of existing information in establishing the archaeological significance of the site, to elucidate the presence or absence of archaeological resource, its character, distribution, extent, condition and relative significance.

The work will include a comprehensive assessment of regional context within which the archaeological evidence rests and will aim to highlight any relevant research issues within national and regional research frameworks.

The work will result in a report that will provide information of sufficient detail to allow informed planning decisions to be made with regards to the likely impact of the proposed scheme on archaeological remains together with mitigation recommendations.

The report will consider all impacted areas to include:

- Intake structure
- Penstock pipeline
- Turbine House/Outfall location
- Access routes
- Compound location

4 The proposed archaeological work

The aim of the work will be to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site. The work will include the following elements:

- A detailed desk based assessment (Stage 1)
- A site visit (Stage 2)
- The production of an illustrated report

5 Method statement for a detailed desk based assessment (Stage 1)

The assessment will consider the following:

a) The nature, extent and degree of survival of archaeological sites, structures, deposits and landscapes within the study area through assessment of various readily available primary sources:

1. Collation and assessment of all relevant information held in the regional HER at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, within a 1.2km radius of the centre of the site.
2. Collation and assessment of the impact on all Designated sites (Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Historic Parks & Gardens, Conservation Areas) within a 1.2km radius of the centre of the site.

3. Assessment of all available excavation reports and archives (including unpublished and unprocessed material) affecting the site and its setting.
4. Assessment of all relevant extant aerial photographic (AP) evidence. This will include those held by the Central Registry of Aerial Photographs in Wales as well as internet sourced satellite imagery.
5. Assessment of archive records held at the County Archives, and as appropriate, National Monument Record files held by RCAHMW.
6. Records held by the developer or site owner e.g. bore hole logs, geological/geomorphological information, aerial photographs, maps, plans, LIDAR data
7. Assessment of environmental and artefactual potential of the archaeological deposits through existing data or by inference
8. Map regression analysis using all relevant cartographic sources e.g. All editions of the Ordnance Survey County Series, Tithe and early estate maps (as available).
9. LIDAR data as available through Welsh Government "Lle Portal" and Natural Resources Wales/Cyfoedd
10. Place name evidence
11. Historic documents (e.g. Charters, registers, Brondanw estate papers).
12. Assessment of the visual impact of the proposed development on the setting of known sites of archaeological importance.
13. Advice will also be sought from Richard Haslam regarding the historical potential of the area. His advice will be especially useful in detailing the architectural history of the structures within the study area and especially those at Parc.

b) The significance of any remains in their context locally, regionally and nationally and in light of the findings of the desk based study.

6 The Site Visit (Stage 2)

The site visit will be a visual walked search of the entire development area. The ground surface will be visually inspected for all earthworks, structures and finds. The location of any environmental archaeological deposits, or areas which may have a potential for such deposits, will also be taken into account along with the more traditional 'visible' archaeology.

All located sites or finds encountered during the visit will be accurately fixed by means of GPS. Each individual find or site location will have an accurate NGR reference attached. Where a close cluster of related features is identified a single NGR for the centre of the cluster will be used, and each constituent feature separately described in the text.

The character, function, condition, vulnerability, potential dating and relationship to other features of each identified site or find will be described fully. The importance of the site or find will be assessed in terms of local, regional or national significance.

A sketch survey of each identified site layout will be made with accompanying metric measurements

Written, drawn and photographic records of an appropriate level of detail will be maintained throughout the course of the project. Digital photographs, including metric scales, will be taken using cameras with resolutions of 14 mega pixels or above. Photographs will be taken in RAW format and archived as RAW, JPEG and TIFF.

7 The production of an illustrated report and the deposition of the site archive (Stage 3)

A report will be produced which synthesises the results of stages 1 and 2 and thereby assesses the total archaeological resource and potential within the development area.

The results will be presented in such a way that data and supporting text are readily cross-referenced. The regional HER Officer will be contacted to ensure that any sites or monuments not previously recorded in the HER are given a Primary Record Number (PRN) and that data structure is compatible with the HER. The historical development of the site will be presented in phased maps and plans comprising clearly, the outline of the site.

Within the report an attempt will be made to indicate areas of greater or lesser archaeological significance and the sites will be ranked in level of overall archaeological importance.

All relevant aerial photographs and historic maps will be included and be fully referenced. Any site photographs included in the report will be appropriately captioned and clearly located on a suitably scaled site plan.

The report will make recommendations regarding further stages of archaeological work (Field Evaluation, Watching Brief etc), considered to be necessary as part of the planning application determination processes and within construction phase in the event of planning permission being granted.

The report will specifically include the following:

1. a copy of the design brief (if available)
2. a location plan
3. all identified sites plotted on an appropriately scaled plan of the proposal site
4. a gazetteer of all located sites and finds with full dimensional and descriptive detail including grid reference and period
5. assessment of impact on any scheduled ancient monuments by the development
6. a proposed mitigation strategy for the safeguard of the archaeological resource before and during the proposed works

A draft copy of the report will be sent to Snowdonia National Park Authority for their comment and approval. Following approval copies of the report will be sent to: Renewables First Ltd and to Snowdonia National Park Authority and to Gwynedd Archaeological Trust for inclusion in the regional HER. Digital copies will be provided in pdf format.

The site archive

An archive of records relating to the preparation of the report will be prepared to the

specifications set out in *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991) Appendix 6 and UKIC's *Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation 2007*.

After an appropriate period has elapsed, copies of the report and archive index will be deposited with the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) and with Snowdonia National Park Authority. A copy of the report and archive index along with the full digital archive will also be deposited with the National Monuments Record, RCAHMW, Aberystwyth.

Other significant digital data generated by the survey (ie AP plots, EDM surveys, CAD drawings, GIS maps, etc) will be presented as part of the report on a CD/DVD. The format of this presented data will be agreed with the curator in advance of its preparation.

8 Resources and timetable

Standards

The desk based assessment will be undertaken by AW staff using current best practice.

All work will be undertaken to the standards and guidelines of the ClfA.

Staff

The project will be undertaken by suitably qualified AW staff. Overall management of the project will be by Rowena Hart (CMIfA).

Timetable of archaeological works

The work will be undertaken at the convenience of the client. No start date has yet been agreed.

Insurance

AW is an affiliated member of the CBA, and holds Insurance through the CBA insurance service.

Health and safety

All members of staff will adhere to the requirements of the *Health & Safety at Work Act, 1974*, and the Health and Safety Policy Statement of AW.