

Method Statement 2nd July 2024

In their response to planning application P2023/0861 dated 10th May 2024, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) requested a Method Statement setting out the actions to be taken to safeguard the water environment should any engineered soakaway / structures be identified during the phased removal of the tip located along the eastern edge of Gwrhyd Quarry.

In response to NRW's request, the proposed Method Statement wording overpage has been drafted based on the Quarry Operator's recent discovery of a section of pipe during the removal of a part of the tip, the details of which are provided below.

On 5th June, whilst removing material from the southern edge of the former tip in line with the approved Phasing Programme, the Operator uncovered a section of plastic pipe which was initially thought to be loose waste material within the tipped material. Further investigation revealed a further section of pipe and the Operator proceeded to trace the pipe to the north-west (towards the centre of the quarry). Part of the pipe was constrained, located beneath stockpiles of screened material from the tip and the mobile screening plant; consequently, it took approximately 1 week to trace the route of the pipe, but part of the pipe remains buried beneath the former tip.

The Operator instructed their surveyor to record the position of the uncovered section of the pipe, which is illustrated on the survey extract below.

The pipe was located on bedrock material so presumably would have been sited at the base of the tip when this mineral waste material was placed.

Having been notified by the operator of the pipe's presence, an inspection was undertaken by Carter Jonas LLP on 6th June where a photographic record of the section of pipe that was uncovered was undertaken. The operator took further photos when they uncovered more of the pipe when the screening plant had been relocated on 10th June. A copy of the photographic record is attached.

The photographs illustrate that there was no water flowing within the pipe and that the exposed end of the pipe (south -eastern end) was located well within the "red line" boundary of the Quarry planning permission. The other end of the pipe remains underneath the historical tip and will be uncovered in due course as and when the tip is removed in a phased manner.

The pipe appears to be a legacy structure which does not currently serve any operational purpose as there is no water flowing from the pipe. The pipe is broken in sections and will be removed to allow continuation of tip material removal in accordance with the approved phasing, to enable the underlying reserves to be accessed. As of the date of this note, the pipe remains in situ but will be removed imminently as its location is constraining mineral extraction operations.

On 11th June, Carter Jonas acting on behalf of the Operator notified the Mineral Planning Officer at Neath Port Talbot of the presence of the pipe. It was proposed that the actions summarised above could provide an appropriate basis for the scope of a method statement should any other pipes or structures of this nature be identified during the future ongoing removal of the tip.

It is suggested that the proposed wording setting out the scope for a Method Statement could be included as a condition attached to permission for planning application P2023/0861.

Method Statement – Proposed Course of Action:

Proposed Method Statement wording (To be included as a planning condition or if the wording can be agreed as the ‘Method Statement’ the condition could require the protocol in the approved Method Statement’ to be followed)

Should any potential drainage pipe or structure be identified beneath the former mineral tip at Gwrhyd Quarry the following protocol will be followed:

1. Notify the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) within a reasonable timeframe.
2. Survey and record as accurately as possible the location of the pipe / structure and its route / path.
3. Make a photographic record of the pipe / structure.
4. Confirm if there is any flow of water within/from the pipe / structure.
5. Should there be any water flowing within/from the pipe / structure, consult with NRW on appropriate measures to divert / stop any water flow so that it remains within the quarry in accordance with the approved Drainage and Surface Water Management Plan, dated October 2023
6. Subject to the above, remove the pipe / structure from its position to enable the phased removal of the tip to continue.
7. Submit a written record of the above to the MPA and NRW.



1. Looking north-west, showing end of pipe, located within quarry "Red Line" boundary with no water flow. Gap in pipe is shown where bulldozer excavated it initially. Remaining pipe section is seen with screen and stockpiles above.



2. Looking south-east, showing end of pipe towards boundary of the approved quarry area. Approximate location of W21 feature outside of the quarry is identified.



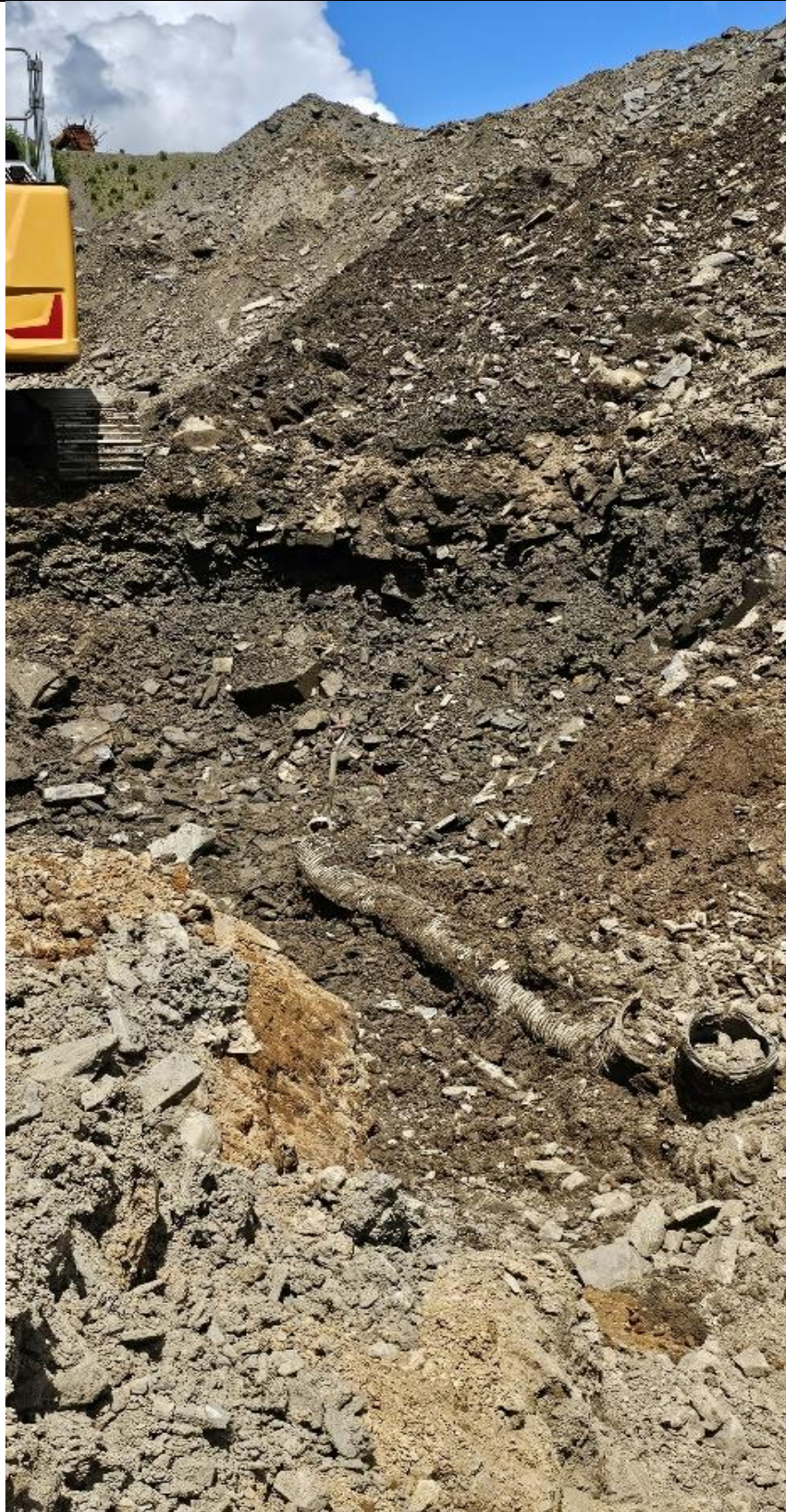
3. Close up view of end of pipe confirming no flow of water.



4. View of pipeline traced back to location of screen / screened material stockpile with mineral tip in background in process of being removed in line with Phasing Plan.



5. Remaining section of pipe. Pipe is visibly clear of any water and is seen to be surrounded by the overlying tip material.



6. Photo of pipe unearthed beneath previous location of mobile screen. The pipe “bends” at this location to the north on the western side of the tip before disappearing beneath the tip. As can be seen the pipe is full of rubble but free from water and is damaged in parts.



7. Section of pipe on edge of tip. Photo confirms the pipe is free of water.