

Pollution Incident Storyboard

Included: Information relating to the environmental impact of this incident, our initial investigations into the cause and the actions we have taken to prevent a recurrence.

Not included: Detailed root cause investigations and medium-to-long term actions or proposals for capital intervention

Details	
Reported By	Adam Davies
Email	Adam.Davies3@dwrcymru.com
Contact Number	07990715669
Incident Date	19/10/2025 16:32
10 Day Report Date	29/10/2025
WIRS/NIRS Number	2509390
SAP Number	317604898
Address & Postcode	Westcliff, Pennard, Southgate, Swansea, SA3 2AP
Grid Reference	SS5538787144
Catchment	Southwest
Incident Type	
Notification Type	POLFAX
Could this incident have been Self-Reported?	No
If Yes – How?	

Summary of events

Details	
Asset Type Cause	Other (Final Effluent pipe)
Asset Type Discharge Point	Other (as above)
Permit reference	BP0054701/V002
Responsibility	Infrastructure
Details of event	<p>19/10/2025 17:32 -Incident reported 20/10/2025 16:09 - Adam Davies 3</p> <p>Update 1: -</p> <p>Pollution tech attended to investigate report. Surcharge identified on gravel path leading down to Foxhole Bay: W3W <i>///sometimes.flown.package</i> - ammonia sample at P.O.D. = 1.60ppm. Additional ammonia reading taken d/s where rock strata transitions to beach = 0.00ppm. Discharge emanating from release point somewhere along the final effluent (FE) pipe: confirmed via dye-test. Isolation of Southgate PS and subsequent CCTV survey arranged for morning of 21/10/25. Updates to follow.</p> <p>21/10/2025 16:18 - Adam Davies 3</p> <p>Update 2: -</p> <p>CCTV survey from uncharted chamber identified a buried chamber approx. 45m d/s; unable to locate buried chamber due to steep, inhospitable terrain. There is a dogleg in the pipe at 45m that inhibits further camera investigation i.e. CCTV from u/s-to-d/s no longer feasible. Discharge continues ammonia reading from P.O.D. = 0.13ppm. Vegetation clearance of small section near downstream dogleg (near beach) proposed to facilitate identification of source/leak. Photos/update will be emailed directly to Local NRW Team.</p>

23/10/2025 11:11 - Adam Davies 3

Update 3: -

A small patch of vegetation was cleared on 22/10/25 to provide access for exploration: no hatch/chamber was found. Contractor to assist DCWW onsite tomorrow to perform CCTV (looking u/s) from hatch to identify issue. Course of action will be updated following outcome of CCTV.

24/10/2025 15:16 - Adam Davies 3

Update 4: -

Ongoing works are presently being undertaken on the final effluent line. Conditions are difficult with the inclement weather & dangerous terrain; we are making the site as safe as possible. Flows are being managed accordingly during works. Swansea Environmental Health Officers have been apprised of the situation.

Update 25/10 12:44 Gavin Ridgway

Repair crew have been to site cut into the pipe and removed the blockage, which was 2 x sampling containers, a permanent repair was unable to be completed due to the pipe being lined and unable to connect with couplings, a temporary repair has been undertaken with half a piece of plastic pipe over the cut out section weighted down flow has now returned with no seepage, a permanent repair will be undertaken during the week using resin patches to seal, further update to follow.

Impact Assessment

Weather conditions	Heavy Rain
Previous weather conditions	Heavy Rain
Watercourse affected (name)	Foxhole Bay
Substance released	Treated Sewage Effluent
Volume (may be an estimate)	
Likely environmental impact (DCWW assessment)	No Impact
Nature of impact	Land
Secondary impact	Water

Samples

Sample taken	Location	Result ppm (NH ₃ – N)
20/10/25	W3W ///sometimes.flown.package	1.67
20/10/25	W3W ///awaited.wrist.arise	0.00
21/10/25	W3W ///sometimes.flown.package	0.13



20/10/25 - W3W ///sometimes.flown.package
NH3 - N = 1.67ppm



20/10/25 - W3W ///awaited.wrist.arise NH3 -N
= 0.00ppm

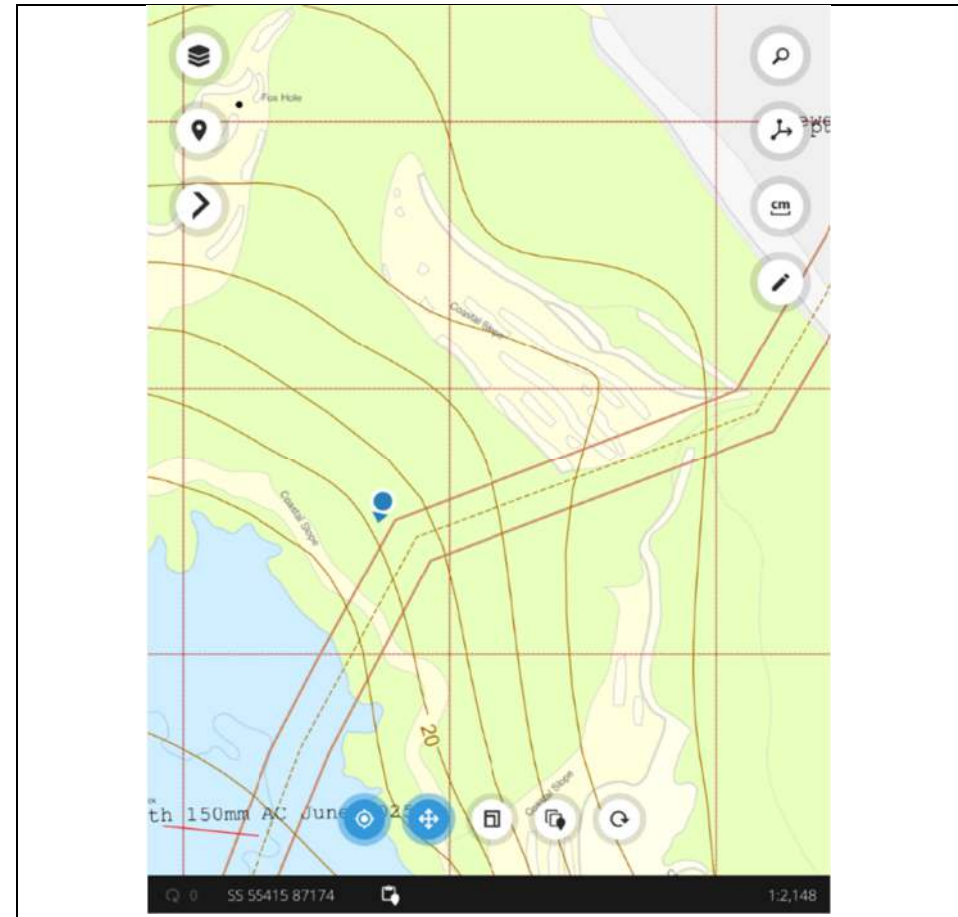


21/10/25 - W3W ///sometimes.flown.package
NH3 -N = 0.13ppm

Photographs – Location of effluent discharge & run-off



W3W ///sometimes.flown.package
Effluent has backed-up the line due to obstruction (metal sampling pot)
and has discharged from the nearest weak-point in the network



GIS location of photo opposite



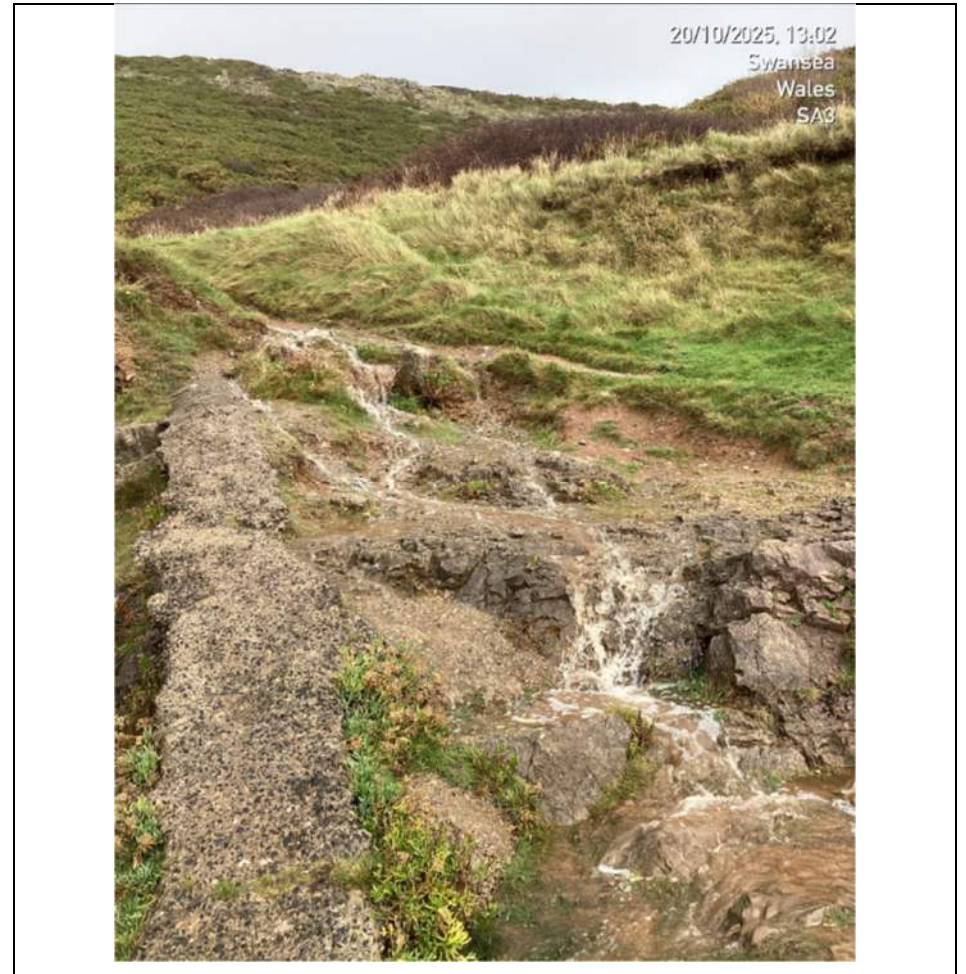
Flow of discharge down the footpath, leading toward rocks (bay)



Red arrow indicates hatch-plate access point (look



Hatch-plate d/s from discharge on footpath. The highlighted spot indicates where the metal sampling pot was wedged in the line (approx. 1m d/s from plate)



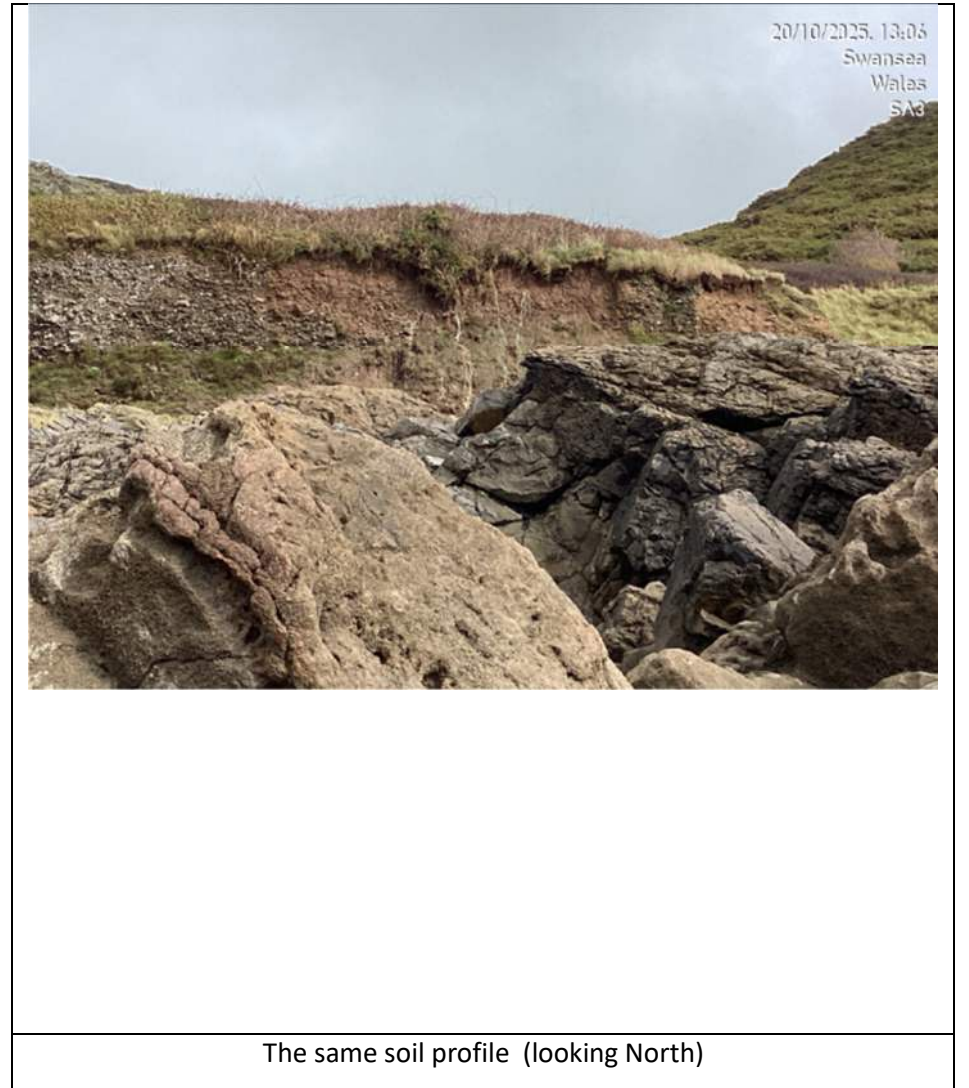
Direction of flow toward bay



Flow emanating from the footpath bifurcated/filtered through sub-soil, leaching out as seen above.



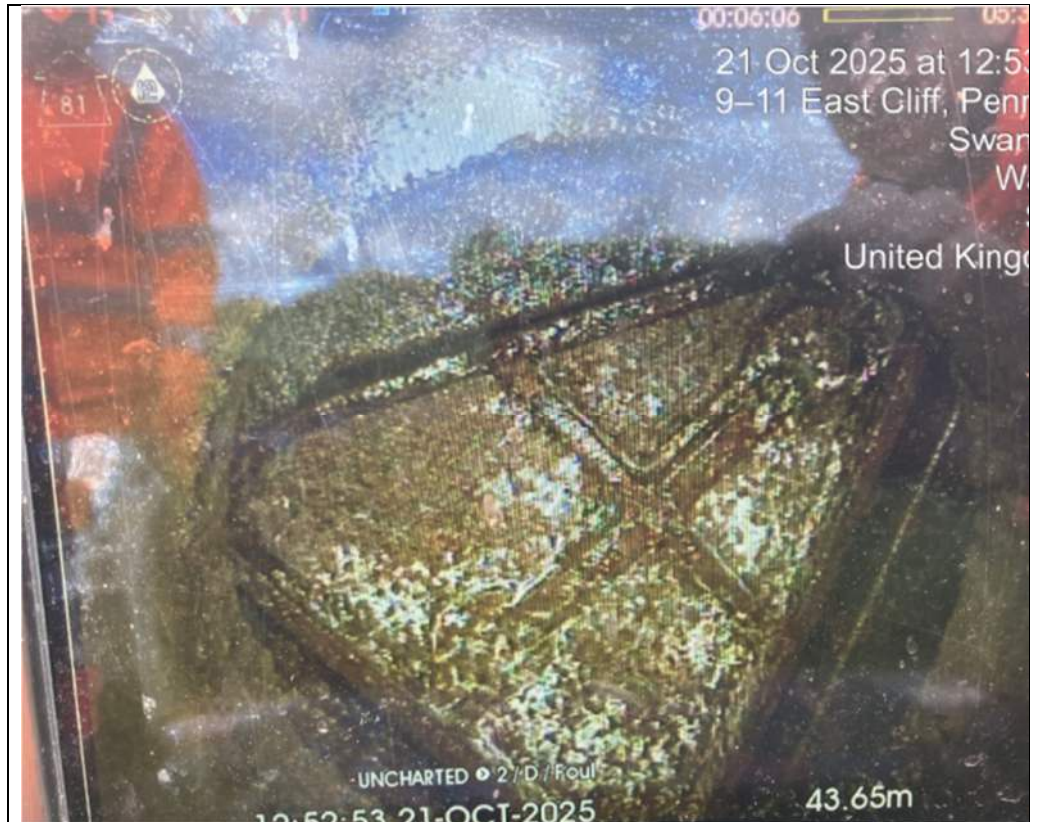
Sub-soil throughflow caused the muddy pools that can be seen above.



Photographs – CCTV survey/buried chamber identified – 21/10/25



Uncharted m/h on grass verge next to Eastcliff Rd

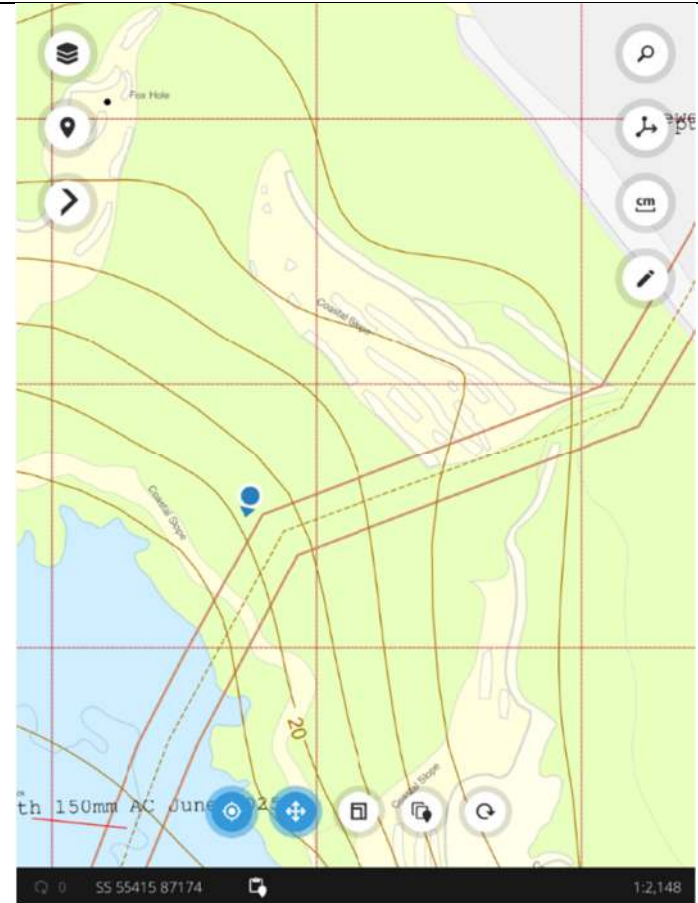


Buried chamber identified approx. 40m d/s (just before footpath begins steep descent)

Photographs – Vegetation cut-back – 22/10/25

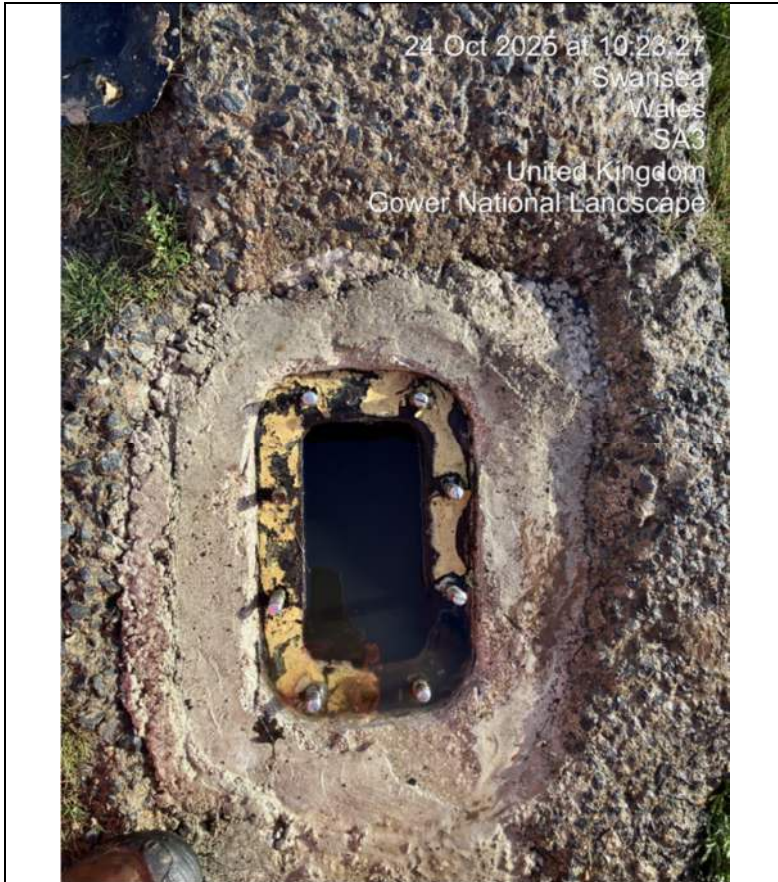


Approx. 10m² cut-back



Approximate location of cut-back

Photographs – Hatch-plate released – 24/10/25



Isolation/drain-down of Final Effluent (FE) line at Southgate PS required before civil works began



As opposite

Photographs – Temporary repair to mitigate discharge – 26/10/25



Once the pumps were switched back on, discharge escaped from the hatch due to lack of hermetic sea



Temporary repair to contain flow

Photographs – Excavation & Third-party item removal – 25/10/25

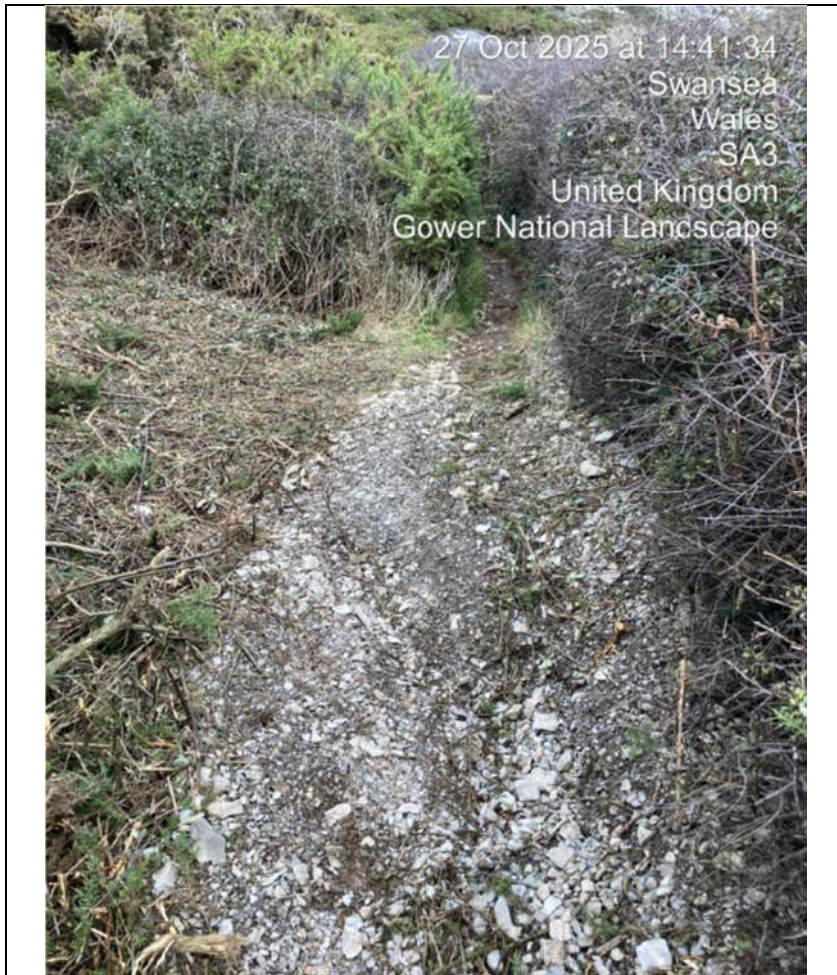


Excavation on FE line.



A large metal sampling pot (17cm x 11cm) was wedged within FE line. The plastic pot was lost during hatch-release, as it was used to scoop out standing water from the hatch.

Photographs – Discharge ceased – 25/10/25

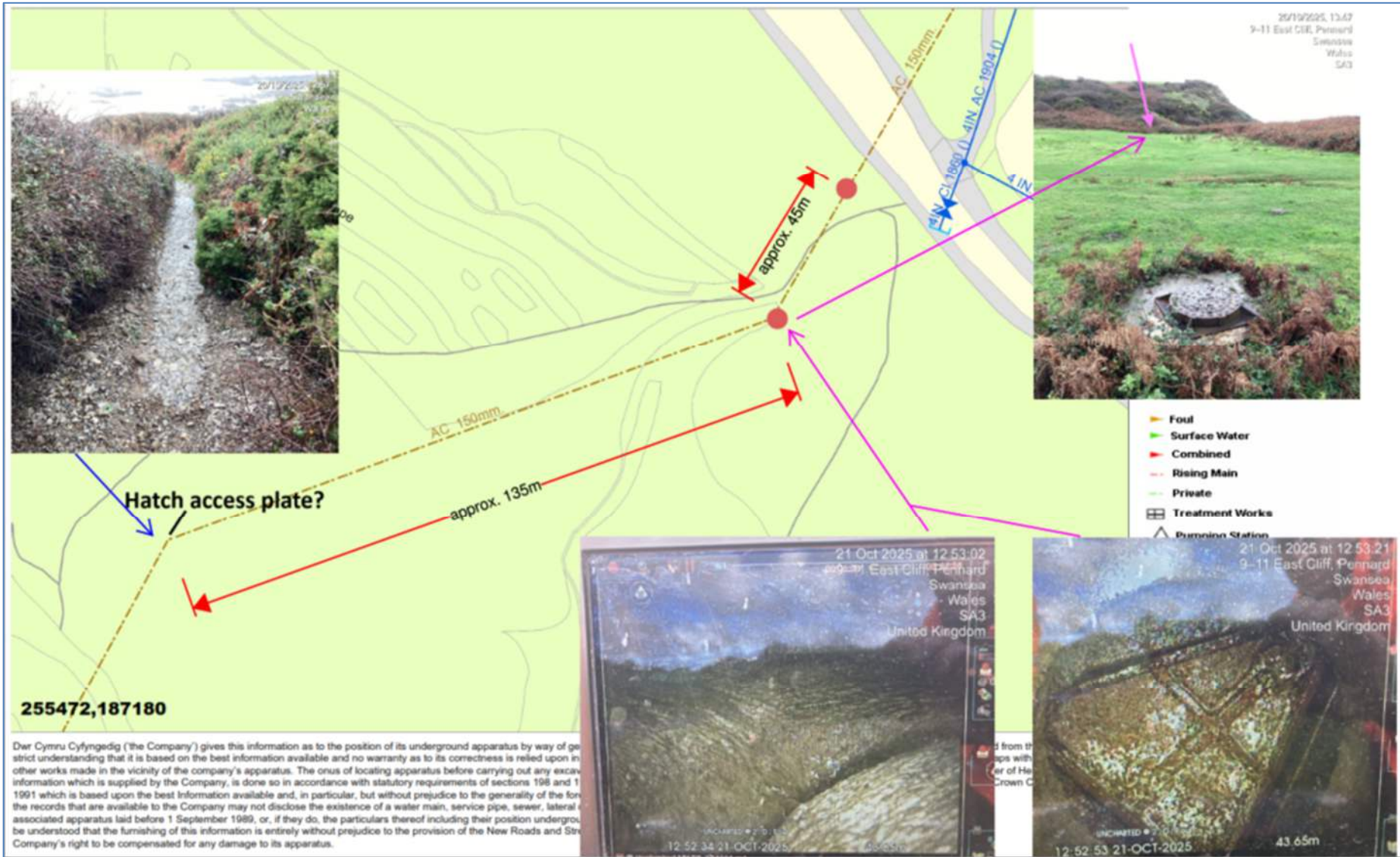


Following the removal of the metal sampling pot on 25/10/25, discharge ceased

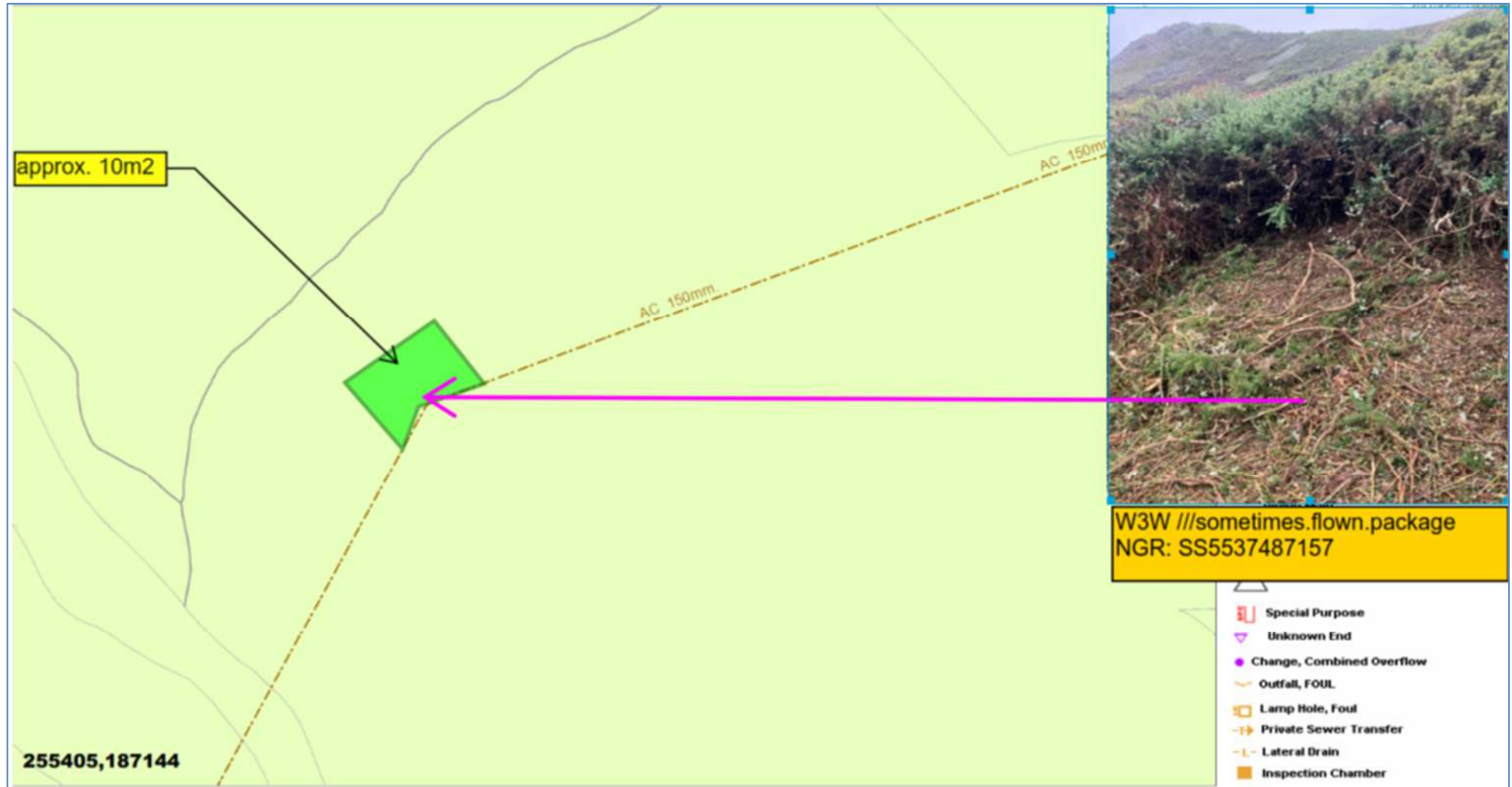


Following the removal of the metal sampling pot on 25/10/25, discharge ceased

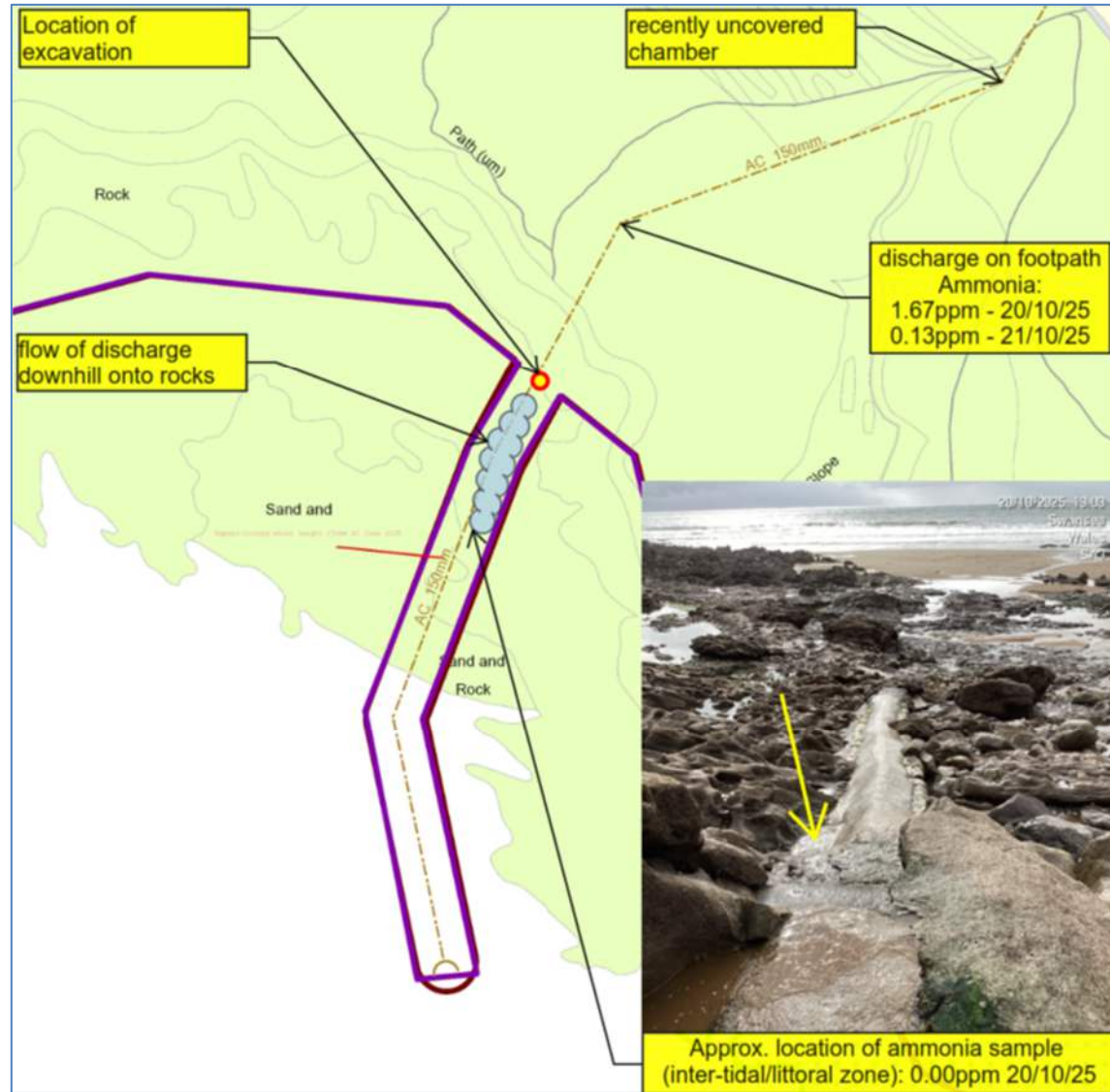
Plan – CCTV Survey – 21/10/25



Plan – Vegetation cut-back – 22/10/25



Plan



Performance History

Details	
Are you aware of previous issues with this asset?	Yes
Performance History (Screenshot)	-
Performance History Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CAT 3, 2012, Job No. 96314323• CAT 4, 2012, Job No. 92805015• CAT 3, 2014, Job No. 93531976• PCC, 2018, Job No. 94765137• PCC, 2019, Job No. 95118457• CAT 4, 2023, Job No. 96100081• CAT 3, 2024, Job No. 96600238• CAT 3, 2025, Job No. 96787021• WIRS 2502828

Cause and Actions taken

Details	
Primary Pollution Cause	Blockage-Partial
Secondary Pollution Cause	Water
Brief description of cause	A metal sampling pot, roughly the same diameter as the final effluent pipe (150mm), was discovered lodged in the pipe during the excavation. This caused the effluent to back up and discharge at the nearest release point (gravel footpath - W3W ///sometimes.flown.package).
Action taken (1)	Pollution Tech. attended site to document incident 20/10/25
Action taken (2)	CCTV arranged to camera from uncharted m/h at top of Foxhole Bay - 21/10/25. Identified buried m/h approx. 40m d/s.
Action taken (3)	22/10/25 - Approx. 10m ² cut-back of vegetation to inspect area around d/s dogleg of line, W3W ///sometimes.flown.package. No hatch/chamber was found.
Action taken (4)	24/10/25 - Hatch-plate released from effluent line W3W ///awaited.wrist.arise. CCTV performed and obstruction located approx. 1m d/s. Pumps isolated at Southgate PS for camera work. Obstruction could not be removed.
Action taken (5)	25/10/25 - Task raised to dig-down and expose line to remove obstruction. Metal sampling pot was found to be cause of blockage (a smaller, plastic sampling pot was retrieved that was lost down line during CCTV work, however this was not the cause of the blockage). Temporary repair instated as full repair was not possible at time.
Action taken (6)	Full repair scheduled: patch-liner with protective concrete covering.

Final Assessment

Dŵr Cymru consider that this incident should be considered as: -

Caused by a third party	Yes
Caused by a misconnection	No
No environmental impact	No
An ongoing incident that should be duplicated with an existing record	No
A pollution incident	No

Final Assessment Comments

Third Party Claim

A customer report came in on 19/10/25 of discharge along the footpath at Foxhole Bay. Initial site investigations revealed the discharge was upstream of the recent Capital lining scheme completed on the Final Effluent (FE) line during the Summer of 2025. After failed camera attempts (due to restricted/difficult access), the decision was made to release the nearest downstream hatch in order to perform CCTV. This revealed a blockage approx. 1m downstream of the hatch, where the FE pipe makes a sharp decline toward the beach (creating a slight bottleneck in the line*). The blockage was found to be a large metal sampling pot, with the effluent consequently releasing at the nearest weak point upstream.

[Originally, it was assumed that the liner had failed, however subsequent investigation proved this to not be the case].*

AGA colleagues have been consulted on their procedure for FE Sampling within the Southgate STW & SPS compound. The methodology described precludes any possibility of their in-house sampling equipment being transported as far downstream as it was found *[the sampling cup is lowered into the final effluent weir well to extract a sample. After this, the flow reaches the well containing the pumps]*. The metal sampling pot retrieved (17cm x 11cm) could not have passed through this pumped section without causing immediate damage/disruption to the infrastructure at that point. In addition, no missing equipment has been recorded, with the very same sampling cup having been used for many years up to the present. In a similar vein, there is no record (or need) for any BGA sampling being conducted on the FE line within this time period and at this location. In short, the process of elimination has ruled out DCWW as being culpable in this instance.

Given the historical context of ongoing issues at Southgate, it is plausible that an outside third party may have conducted unsanctioned sampling from several easily accessible inspection chambers *[see Appendix below]*. This is, of course, conjecture (as no definitive evidence is available), however it remains the only reasonable explanation as to the origin of the metal sampling pot that ultimately caused the blockage.

Given the rationale stated above, a *Third-Party Claim* is being submitted for this incident.

Appendix: AGA Sampling spot at Southgate Treatment Works (marked with red cross)



