

Abbey Pynford relocates historic Welsh building

Abbey Pynford has just moved a Grade-II listed Victorian fire station in its entirety, at Ystrad Mynach five miles outside Caerphilly in South Wales. The building, with a ground area of 18m², was moved previously its current position ten years ago from a location within the Borough, in order to preserve it due to proposed surrounding developments in that area and was then rebuilt brick by brick using cement mortar preventing it from being disassembled again.

This time, the reason for the relocation further across the same site, is to make way for a major new four-storey 24,000m² hospital complex being developed by main contractor HBG.

Preparations for the move took six weeks and the move itself took three days. The first operation undertaken by Abbey Pynford was the underpinning of the building using Pynford beams to provide the sturdiness and support required during the move. The building was then jacked up to a height of 2 metres, using auto props which then lowered the building onto the self-propelled trailer to complete the 400 metre move to the building's new location.

HBG's Project Manager, Andrew Cavil, has been responsible for commissioning the relocation work. He comments, "This type of work obviously has to be handled very carefully and doesn't allow for any mistakes. Abbey Pynford was chosen for its impressive record, so we had no doubts about their capability".

Abbey Pynford is widely recognised as being one of the UK's leading specialist ground engineering solutions companies. Usually though for its expertise in the complex fields of foundations, underpinning and piling, rather than lifting and moving buildings.

Nevertheless, when it comes to lifting and moving buildings and structures intact, the company has an equally impressive track record of high profile projects. They have relocated over 50 buildings, including moving the Belle Tout Lighthouse at Beachy Head back from the eroding chalk cliffs; saved two buildings associated with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link – Bridge House in Mersham and the Waterpoint at St. Pancras station – and moved the chapel at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

