

Don't drop it! Huge war relic unearthed in Barrow is carefully moved to new home



The Barrow Waterfront pillbox being lifted.

A HUGE war relic uncovered at the site of a major development has been preserved for future generations. The Second World War-era pillbox was found on land off Ramsden Dock Road where Cumbria County Council is carrying out clearance works for the Barrow Waterfront project.

Although construction bosses were aware the structure was buried underground, they were amazed to discover it was completely intact.

After being approached by residents on Barrow Island, including dog walkers who make use of the location, Cumbria County Council decided to take steps to carefully remove and preserve the pillbox.

Project lead David Haughian said the removal of the pillbox had been a delicate procedure.

"We were aware there was going to be a pillbox on the site but because of the vegetation and ecology, it was difficult to determine its condition until we dug it out," he said.

"We cleared the site and it became evident that the whole structure was there intact. A number of local people had said they would like to see it preserved and utilised."

Having checked with conservation authorities, the pillbox was not one which had been listed by English Heritage, and so an operation was launched to lift and move the structure.

Mr Haughian said: "Contractors excavated round the structure and then undermined it in order to get the lifting gear underneath. It was then lifted onto a crane and moved to a landscaped area of the waterfront."

About 28,000 pillboxes and other hardened field fortifications were constructed in England in 1940 as part of the British anti-invasion preparations. Around 6,500 of these structures still survive.

Morecambe Bay Partnership's heritage officer was also involved in the preservation of the pillbox. Although a future location for the relic has not yet been selected, it is hoped it will be positioned within the waterfront site, possibly as an artistic feature.