

UPGRADE TO POWER SUPPLY AT CAREYS CAVE

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So I've succumbed to Steve's entreaties and figured if this is a boring article, at least it filled some of his blank spaces.

Careys Cave was originally developed in 1968 and underground regulations at the time required 110v supply in the cave. The power was grid fed with the mains pole located on the hill above the cave with a feed to a 110v transformer located on a sub pole near the entrance.

A few years ago a bloke from the supply authority came around banging ID numbers on poles – he put one on the sub pole (thereby claiming it as property of the power company). A while later another bloke came around drilling test holes in the poles and condemned the sub pole. As the power company now owned the pole it fell to them to rectify this situation: due to the rocky terrain above the cave it was not going to be easy access for machinery and they decided it was better to replace the mains pole as well while they were at it,

thus beginning a long process of trying to come up with a solution. Over the next few years designers and engineers came and went, we got to about Plan F but ended up back with Plan A with modifications.

The final solution was to relocate a new mains pole down on the flat near the western site boundary and run the 240v feed underground to the cave entrance with a distribution board located in a new box at ground level (also housing a new 240v – 110v 5kva transformer). At the beginning of the epic I had pointed out to the power authority that we had been quite happy with the previous arrangement, they were the ones who wanted to change things, so in the end they agreed to supply both the new transformer and the cable and conduit to make all connections, including to the kiosk, if the Department of Lands undertook the installation. This has been duly done, the only problem being the ongoing inclement weather making for a somewhat mucky process and the trenches, while backfilled, have not been finished off so it will likely remain a construction site till summer.

Overall an excellent result in that there are no longer a pair of unsightly poles located above the cave, we have a new transformer feed as well as the bonus of distribution boards on the amenities block and sheltered area giving us power and lighting options there.

Now we just need to carry out a relighting job in the cave (must write that letter to Santa: please send truckloads of money, ho, ho) sigh.

...oh yes, and put a road back over the creek at the cave site entrance that washed away again in March, for the fourth time in about 12 months (letter to the Tooth Fairy: please send....)



Left. New power box at Careys Cave entrance.



Right. Power pole prior to the new work