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TREFIN

Settlement morphology, topography and archaeology

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to accompany
CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENTS.

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for Pembrokeshire Coast National Park
as part of a service level agreement with Cambria Archaeology.



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TREVINE - TREFIN

Name & Tenurial History

There are difficulties in explaining the place-name. The *tref* (farmstead) element is common in north Pembrokeshire, and is often combined with a personal name. But not, it seems, in this case; there is no local Iron Age hillfort or coastal promontary to identify as a *dinas/dun* for the second element. B.G.Charles favours *ddyn* (high ground) but admits that the local pronunciation with the emphasis on the second syllable makes this problematical. Nevertheless he feels that the rocky outcrop forming the village 'green' is thus incorporated into the place name.

The village was part of the secular possessions of the medieval Bishops of St. David's and described as such in the 'Black Book of St David's of 1326, a survey of the bishop's lands. But by the time of the Tithe Survey of 1841 (Llanrhian Tithe etc) the Bishop owned only meadows, some strips of land and a few house sites. The village was constituted and administered as a 'manor' by the bishops, and despite its size was not given urban status like Llawhaden or Abergwili, other episcopal holdings.

Economic History.

It is probable that Trevine was refounded and 'developed' in the late 12th or 13th centuries by one of the more energetic and 'entrepreneurial' of the mainly Norman bishops - possibly Thomas Bek (1286 -1293). Although the Palace is traditionally associated with bishop Martin, Bek's successor 1293-1327, this seems too late a date to found a new settlement. Such an enterprise was typical of the overall expansion and intensification of economic life across western Europe in a period of population growth. The Bishops were also Marcher Lords and were as anxious as any of their secular compatriots to increase their incomes from the agricultural yields of their lands and from fairs and trade. Certainly the Black Book indicates that the population even in 1346 was still mainly non-Welsh, with English and Flemish names which suggests a substantial plantation of immigrants, induced to settle by promise perhaps of favourable tenures and not too onerous services.

Trevine is surrounded by the relict features of the medieval agricultural landscape - the characteristic curving strips of former shares in open fields, preserved by being taken out of communal cultivation and hedged around, by areas of marshy common on the fringes of the settlement. These areas can be linked to the names of the large open fields in the Black Book. Modern removal of hedgebanks, improvement of marshy commons and some reduction of woodland has altered the historic landscape and degraded this pattern, but some still remains.

The mill at Aberfelin cove was an important economic resource for the Bishop and all were obliged to use it. It long outlasted the medieval period, continuing in use until 1918. It was scheduled as an ancient monument in 1961. Celebrated in the well known poem by Crwys it is now a stable ruin and before valley floor vegetation becomes too lush the course of the leat which powered it can be seen coming down the small valley. It became the focus of a small secondary settlement of fishermen and quarrymen, as the restored row of cottages on the north side of the cove attests.

It is possible that the slow erosion of the episcopal estate encouraged the continuing development of a settlement of small farmers, part fishermen and quarrymen where a more rigorously improving landlord would have swept away the archaic traces that the scattered pattern of land holdings in the 1846 Tithe Map indicate. In addition the rise of coastal shipping from small beginnings in the 16th and 17th centuries to the trade described above from Abercastell and quarrying at Porthgain and the possibilities of inshore fishing, also allowed Trefin to retain and increase its population in the post-medieval centuries, in marked contrast to other episcopal foundations inland, like Llawhaden. The north Pembrokeshire harbours of Abercastle, Porthgain and Abereiddi provided the only outlet for agricultural produce and imports of coal and other goods. Trevine benefitted from proximity to Abercastle.

Although, when George Owen compiled his list of Pembrokeshire fairs in the early 17th century, the single annual event on St Martin's Day, 11th November at Trefin was described only as 'a small fair', yet it survived into later centuries, Focussing on Carreg y Groes, it was also the occasion of election of a 'mock-mayor' 'enthroned' in the chair-like grouping of the 3 large boulders there. Trefor Owen, former Curator at St Fagan's describes such events thus: "The election of a mock-mayor . . . was a common feature of rustic celebrations, symbolizing a ritual over-turning of the established order . . . the practice has also been recorded at Llandybie, Carmarthenshire, in association with the fair, which as so often happened, replaced the old *gwylmabsant* of the parish . . . (Owen, 1991, 94.) This may have happened here, the fair replacing the saint's feast at Llanrhian. Another tradition was that the village women made special mutton pies for the fair, known as *pasteiod Ffair Fartin*. There can be few such focal sites within Pembrokeshire settlements like Carreg y Groes Trefin, with such a wealth of associations.

It is worth quoting from Richard Fenton:

"Abercastle, a small creek to which a few sloops belong, and carry on an export trade of corn and butter, returning with shop goods etc from Bristol and Liverpool; some of the smallest craft are employed in carrying culm, coal and limestone from Milford for the use of the neighbourhood, and here there is a large shop or store of the principle articles of country demand. . . . Long House is a very extensive and most excellent corn farm, held by lease under the Bishop of St David's, and was formerly the grange belonging to and adjoining the episcopal manor of Trefine or Trefdyn, now a straggling village, yet governed by a mock mayor choosen annually. There are of the episcopal mansion yet remaining fragments of walls over a large vault, similar to those under the palace of St David's. In the village it is traditionally known as Bishop Martin's palace; and it is likely to have been of his founding . . .

(R. Fenton, 1811 *Historical Tour through Pembrokeshire*.)

The early 20th century village with its shops, stores and pubs is well evoked in the excellent booklet *Trefin: Five Circular Walks*. The creation of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park in 1949 has provided the framework for the latest stage of Trevine's economic and social history - as a holiday location and base for walkers and others, with craft shops, youth hostel, sports facilities, accomodation and the Ship Inn. The attractions of Trevine for the seafaring community of north Pembrokeshire are

very much older - home, as the 1973 HMSO PCNP Guide puts it 'of countless "Cape-Horners"'.

Location and Topography

Although Trevine is located close to the north Pembrokeshire Coast (Aber Felin Bay is well under a km distance from the centre) it cannot be described as a coastal settlement proper. Its location is as a secondary settlement within Llanrhian parish chosen to intensify exploitation of good arable land, by the medieval bishops. Its continuing development however was and is stimulated by its coastal location.

The village is sited across the slopes on the north side of an east-west aligned valley, with continuing rising ground on its north side thus providing shelter from the high cliffs of the coast edge. Below the village, the ground continues to fall in level to the south to the valley floor, and then rises again. The aspect is more open to the northeast and east, across the now very large fields of Longhouse Farm. There is a fall in level from east to west down the length of Ffordd y Felin, that becomes a steep descent into Aberfelin itself.

The site was thus well chosen for shelter and aspect; there was access to a variety of economic resources or arable, meadow, rough pasture. The stream in the valley below was sufficient to power the mill. Water sources were available throughout the village as present day positions of springs and wells shown on large scale Ordnance Maps and the former existence of wells behind houses and the well at the west end and pump on Carreg y Groes demonstrate. Communications to the south to the parish centre of Llanrhian and the main coastal routes between St David's and Fishguard were not difficult.

Settlement Plan Form

The plan form of Trevine provides telling evidence for its foundation in the 12th or 13th centuries as a planned nucleated settlement, by the Bishops of St Davids. At the eastern end of the settlement is a triangular 'green' - Carreg y Groes, a rocky outcrop worn smooth by much traffic so that it forms a level platform sited at a 'T' junction of roads, with the village itself laid out in regular plots on either side of the main street, Ffordd y Felin. The Tithe map of 1846 provides additional evidence on the origins and development of the settlement. The initial 'planted' element to what may have been the original 'tref' around Carreg Groes was a 'row' of plots on the southern side of Ffordd y Felin abutting what were the bishop's meadows. On the opposite, northern side of the road, at a higher level, new house plots were created from the ends of the open field strips as the settlement expanded. It is possible that there was a contraction of settlement on this north side from the high point of 1326. A comparison between the Tithe Map (1846) and the First edition 6 inch 1887 (18?? shows) settlement once again occupying that area.

The 'magnate core' (see Angle for explanation of this term) namely the Bishop's Palace site, lies to the south east of this planned street, again in a location on the edge of the planted settlement that can be paralleled elsewhere. What of course makes Trevine unusual and distinctive is not just that this layout was deployed across a south-

facing slope, but that the building plots on the north and south side of the street had to be created by terracing into a rocky slope, producing the rock surface of the green and the two street levels separated by a grassed slope.

The settlement was, it would seem founded as a unit of economic development of these fertile coastal area and the lord's mill, at Aberfelin, was probably an early and integral part of the settlement (see above for later history). The existence of large open field cultivation, which until recently was visible in the landscape by means of fossilised 'strips' forming a regular pattern of small hedged fields, was combined with a strong seigneurial 'demesne' holding - the bishop's grange of Longhouse, also used as an episcopal dwelling. This has developed into a substantial farm.

The post-medieval development of the village was both facilitated and constrained by the medieval plan form. Settlement developed on the northern track, North End, from the 'T' junction along a lane formerly giving access to the open field bordering the coastal cliffs at Pwllolfa. In the second half of the 20th century this has provided a site on the eastern side of the lane for expansion into modern housing, with the imposition of the ubiquitous 20th century plan form of the curving cul-de sac with individual house plots as well as street frontage development. Characteristically the two non-conformist chapels are located at either end of the village - the Elim Baptist Chapel, founded c. 1843, at the western, 'Aberfelin' end of Ffordd y Felin, shoe-horned into a small plot on the street frontage. The Calvinistic Methodist (now Presbyterian) chapel and school house is larger, earlier and better endowed - founded in 1786 and rebuilt in 1834, on a site set back from the street at the north end of Ffordd yr Afon.

The first main breach in the medieval topography of streets, house sites plot and field boundaries may well have been Heol y Crwys. This track clearly cuts across the boundaries and alignments of the medieval strips abutting the main street and in 1846 might have served as a drove for stock to coastal grazing. Later it was extended as the slate quarry at Trwyn Llwyd was opened (operating between late 1860s and 1887). Modern housing has expanded off Heol Crwys and another branch road (Bryn y Derwydd) to cul-de-sacs has also been built over former fields fronting Ffordd y Felin to the west. On the south eastern fringes of the village are two farms - again typical of the way in which individual holdings were created out of the former communal systems of cultivation - Park Court and Cartlett House. It is possible that the site of bishop Martin's palace lies within Park Court.

Key Characteristics and Current Condition within the Conservation Area :

Whilst this statement does not cover architectural aspects of Trevine's buildings (the 'flesh' as it were on the topographical 'skeleton') it is concerned with their sites and the distribution of different types. The simplest building is the single storey cottage, most surviving examples being used as sheds. The best surviving example was listed in 1989 - No. 2, Ffordd Abercastell. There are some short terraced lines of buildings probably cottages in origin with a low second storey. There are also larger 'villas' - such as Crannog House. These different types of buildings are obviously of different dates, reflect different social levels and degrees of alteration. They vary in the degree to which they abut directly onto the street edge, some having a small front yard or

garden. The result is a pleasing variety, and an indented line of frontages, accentuated by different ground levels.

The most noticeable feature of the plan form itself are the rock cut or worn lines of the streets, the 'green' - the triangular rock platform of Carreg Groes - and the changes in level between the north and south sides of Ffordd y Felin. These preserve the grooves of innumerable carts and waggons across their surface where not covered by tarmac or grassed over.

partly within the Conservation Area:

The field pattern and land uses surrounding the village still bear traces of their medieval origins as communally cultivated open fields, rough, marshy areas of common pasture and waste and valley side and floor meadows. The routes of most of the tracks and footpaths used in the excellent 'Five Circular Walks' perpetuate the means of access out from the village to the fields and commons

Recommendations for Conservation of topography and historic landscape aspects.

The identification and interpretation of what are essentially historic landscape features would be facilitated by a Landmap exercise - unless their function and significance is understood it is difficult to pursue the need for active conservation and enhancement.

The demands of the car and the administration of road repairs and surfacing inevitably affect the visibility of the older rock cut or worn surfaces, celebrated in the local saying:

*Trefin faen galed
Cant o dau ar un garreg.*

Links should be established with the Highways Authority to ensure sensitive and appropriate treatment of road surfacing and repairs to preserve and display as much of the work rock surfaces and the edges of the cutss and grooves made in them.

The forthcoming *Tir Gofal* farm scheme might provide viable opportunities for farmers around the village to restore or enhance some of the former, waste, marsh commons or meadows. To put it another way, habitat creation or restoration in any bio-diversity plans etc should go with the historic grain, not against it.

SMR content; archaeologically sensitive areas; archaeological potential.

A photocopy of the SMR Record Map is attached (base map with permatrace overlay for post-medieval sites). The production of this statement has enhanced the base record. A list is given below of the record entries (prns - primary record numbers) with a brief description of the site or feature.

prn	short description
1297	Trwyn Llwyd - ruined quarry building within large quarry.
2853	general location for poss. med. chapel marked on Wm Rees's Map <i>South Wales in the 14th Century</i> , more likely a chapel within the Bishop's Palace.
2846	Medieval Bishop Martin's Palace - precise site unknown.
7573	slight earthworks in field - possibly part of the Bishop's Palace - earlier reports of 'fishponds' - but these would be on valley floor.
4629	Aberfelin Corn Mill - Scheduled Ancient Monument, Pe 376.
12,481	medieval documentary record of mill - prob. same site as 4629.
6389	Cartlett House LBII - 18th/18th c farmhouse gentrified in 19th C.
14019	Area of historic common - Sickly Common -extends up Ffordd y Felin
17913	Baptist Chapel.
17914	School - 19th c, now community uses
17915	Methodist, now Presbyterian Chapel.
23807	Quarry
23808	Trwyn Llwyd Quarry
32597	Trwyn llwyd Quarry

The most archaeologically sensitive area is that of Park Court and the field to the south-west. Any changes in land use here should be subject to archaeological evaluation.



Trwyn Llwyd

probable post-medieval development of house plots within a former landshare alongside an existing track to both the open fields and former common grazing in rough marshy land (now drained and enclosed)

Heol y Crwys giving access to coast edge quarries.

still unhedged strips or landshares within former large 'open fields' encircling the village.

Triangular rocky 'green' containing Carreg y Groes - indicative of a Norman planted settlement.

characteristic position of Chapel at the edges of the planned settlement

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Mill site - at only possible place close to the village whose main street leads directly to it.

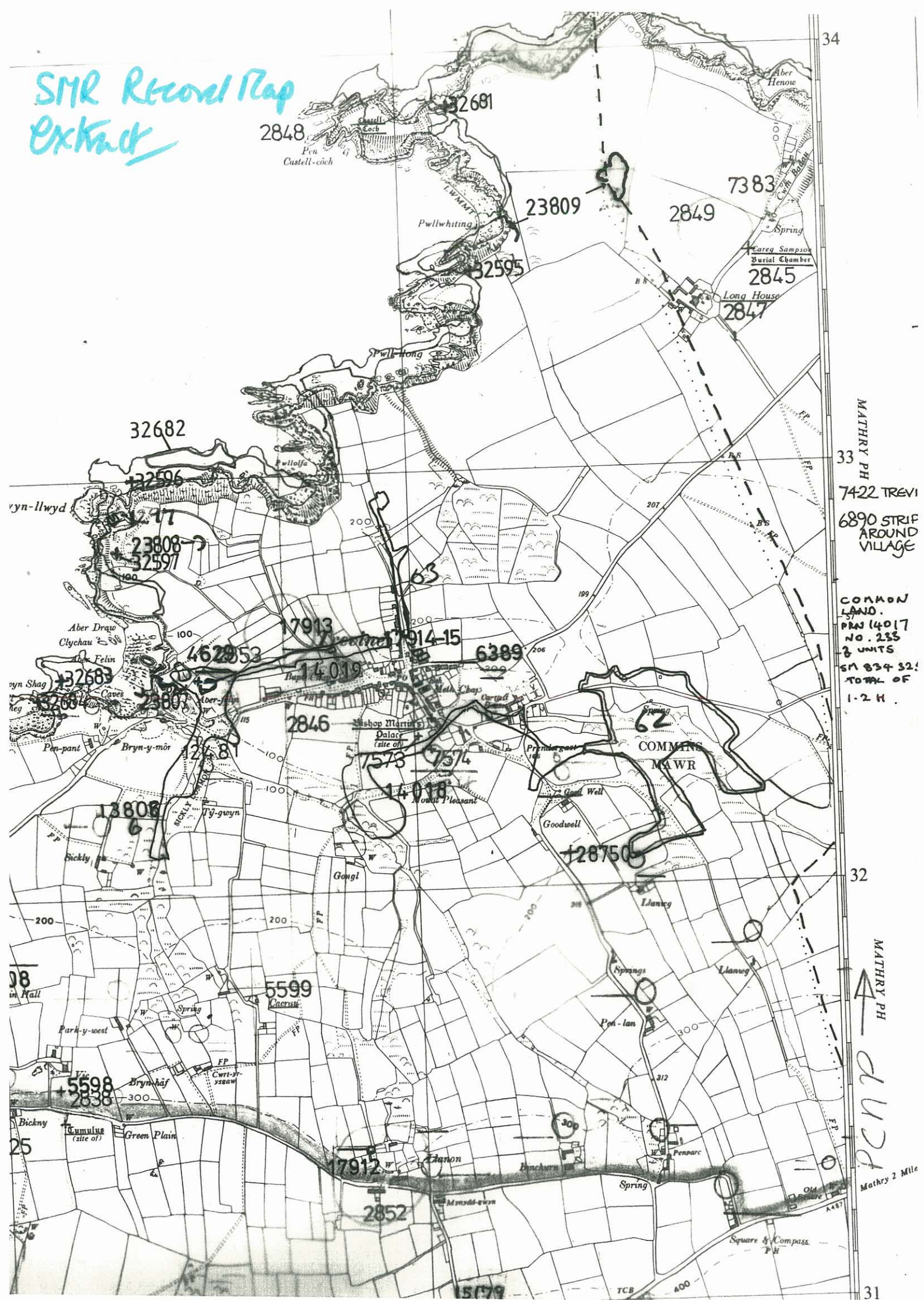
possible second stage of development with house plots carved out of southern ends of landshares or open field strips abutting the street - here at a higher level than to the south

Early planned 'row' of cottages with area of former Bishop's meadow to the south

General location of the former 'Bishop Martin's Palace' - a 'magnate core' on the edge of the planned settlement which subsequently develops as individual farms.

Trefain

SMR Record Rap
Extract



Trefin CONSERVATION AREA

THE CONSERVATION AREA IS COMPRISED OF ALL THE LAND WITHIN THE BOUNDARY AND ALL THE LAND AND STRUCTURES UPON WHICH THE BOUNDARY LINE FALLS

Scale 1:2500

August 1997

