



# **CARMARTHENSHIRE**

## **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION**

of four landscapes on the  
*Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Interest in Wales:*

**BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI**  
**TYWI VALLEY**  
**DOLAUCOTHI**  
**TAF AND TYWI ESTUARY**  
**VOLUME 1**

Grant aided by  
**Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments**

By:  
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## PREFACE

Natural forces and human activity acting together over the last six thousand years have contributed to produce a landscape of great beauty and variety in Wales, a national asset that is essential both to our national identity and to our individual 'sense of place' and well-being. The diversity and imprint of human activity on the landscape is everywhere to be seen, from the enigmatic stone monuments of the prehistoric period and the magnificent castles and abbeys of the medieval period, to quite commonplace and typical features like field boundaries that can often be of great age. But the landscape is more than just attractive scenery or a record of the past; it also provides a place for us to live, work and sustain ourselves, through farming, forestry, tourism and so on, processes that all shape, and will continue to shape, the landscape.

Recognising and raising awareness of the importance and wealth of the historic fabric of the landscape has been the central theme and message of the non-statutory, *Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales*, the first part of which, covering thirty-six 'outstanding' landscapes, was published in January 1998. This is being compiled as a joint initiative between Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), working in collaboration with the four Welsh Archaeological Trusts, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales and the Welsh unitary authorities.

The *Historic Landscapes Register* provides a first step, national overview of the historic content of the Welsh landscape. The next step, so essential to the process of informing the way in which aspects of the historic landscape may be managed, is to make available more detailed information about the character of this landscape at a more local level. This is achieved through a process known as historic landscape characterisation which has been developed in Wales jointly by Cadw, the CCW and the Welsh Archaeological Trusts. This involves the identification of geographically definable and mappable areas of historic character, as determined by the range and distribution of surviving archaeological and historical features and the main types of historical land use patterns or historic 'themes' that have shaped the area. The key historic characteristics of the area are then identified along with recommendations for their positive management.

This report is one of a series of historic landscape characterisation exercises being undertaken by the Welsh Archaeological Trusts with grant-aid from Cadw. These studies will initially concentrate on those areas identified on the *Historic Landscapes Register*, although it is accepted that the whole of the Welsh landscape can be said to be, in one way or another, historic. Information is being prepared in a form which





is compatible to the CCW's landscape assessment and decision-making methodology, known as *LANDMAP*. It will be made available to a wide range of organisations and will feed into various initiatives to protect and manage the Welsh countryside, most notably the *Tir Gofal* agri-environment scheme. It is also seen as making a particularly important contribution to raising awareness and heightening a feeling of local distinctiveness.

The *Historic Landscapes Register* and these characterisation exercises fully acknowledge the dynamic and evolving nature of the landscape. They promote the view that protecting the legacy of the past in the landscape is not to be achieved by preventing change or fossilising the landscape but rather by informing the process of change, creating tomorrow's landscapes without necessarily sacrificing the best of yesterday's.

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## *Rhagair*

Mae'r grymoedd naturiol a'r gweithgaredd dynol a fu'n gweithredu ar y cyd dros y chwe mil o flynyddoedd diwethaf wedi cyfrannu at y broses o gynhyrchu tirwedd o harddwch ac amrywiaeth hynod yng Ngymru, ased cenedlaethol sy'n hanfodol i ni o ran ein hunaniaeth genedlaethol a hefyd o ran ein lles a'n 'hymdeimlad o berthyn i le' unigol. Gellir gweld ymhobman yr amrywiaeth a'r olion a adawyd ar y tirwedd gan weithgaredd dynol, o henebion cerrig enigmatig y cyfnod cynhanesyddol a chestyll ac abatai gwych y cyfnod canoloesol, i'r nodweddion eithaf cyffredin a nodweddiadol fel ffiniau caeau a all yn aml fod yn hen iawn. Ond nid dim ond golygyfeydd deniadol neu gofnod o'r gorffennol yn unig yw'r tirwedd; mae hefyd yn darparu lle i ni fyw, gweithio a chynnal ein hunain ynddo, drwy gyfrwng amaeth, coedwigaeth, twristiaeth ac ati, oll yn brosesau sy'n llunio, ac a fydd yn parhau i lunio'r tirwedd.

Bu cydnabod a chodi ymwybyddiaeth o bwysigrwydd a chyfoeth ffabrig hanesyddol y tirwedd yn thema ac yn neges ganolog y gofrestr anstatudol, *Cofrestr O Dirweddau O Ddiddordeb Hanesyddol Eithriadol Yng Nghymru*, y cyhoeddwyd y rhan gyntaf ohoni, sy'n cwmpasu trideg chwech o dirweddau 'eithriadol' ym mis Ionawr 1998. Caiff y Gofrestr ei llunio fel menter ar y cyd rhwng Cadw, Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru a'r Cyngor Rhyngwladol ar Henebion a Safleoedd (ICOMOS) sy'n gweithio mewn cydweithrediad â





phedair Ymddiriedolaeth Archeolegol Cymru, y Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru ac awdurdodau unedol Cymru.

*Y Gofrestr o Dirweddau o Ddiddordeb Hanesyddol* yw'r cam cyntaf, trosolwg cenedlaethol o gynnwys hanesyddol tirwedd Cymru. Y cam nesaf, mor hanfodol i'r broses o lywio'r modd y gellir rheoli agweddau ar y tirwedd cenedlaethol, yw trefnu bod gwybodaeth fwy manwl ar gael ynglŷn â chymeriad y tirwedd hwn ar lefel fwy lleol. Cyflawnir hyn drwy broses a elwir yn nodweddïad tirweddau hanesyddol a ddatblygwyd yng Nghymru ar y cyd â Cadw, Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru ac Ymddiriedolaethau Archeolegol Cymru. Golyga hyn nodi ardaloedd o gymeriad hanesyddol y gellir eu diffinio a'u mapio'n ddaearyddol, yn ôl yr hyn a benderfynir gan ystod a dosbarthiad y nodweddïon archeolegol a hanesyddol sy'n goroesi a'r prif fathau o batrymau defnydd tir hanesyddol neu 'themâu' hanesyddol sydd wedi llunio'r ardal. Nodir nodweddïon hanesyddol allweddol yr ardal felly ynghyd ag argymhellion ar gyfer eu rheoli'n gadarnhaol.

Mae'r adroddiad hwn yn un o gyfres o ymarferion nodweddïad tirweddau hanesyddol yr ymgwymerir ag ef gan Ymddiriedolaethau Archeolegol Cymru gyda chymorth grant gan Cadw. Bydd yr astudiaethau hyn yn canolbwyntio yn y lle cyntaf ar yr ardaloedd hynny a nodwyd yn y *Gofrestr O Ddiddordeb Hanesyddol*, er y caiff ei dderbyn bod modd disgrifio tirwedd Cymru gyfan, mewn un ffordd neu'r llall, fel un hanesyddol. Mae gwybodaeth yn cael ei pharatoi ar ffurf sy'n cydweddu â methodoleg asesu tirweddau a gwneud



penderfyniadau Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru, sef *LANDMAP*. Bydd ar gael i ystod eang o sefydliadau a chaiff ei fwydo i fentrau amrywiol er mwyn diogelu a rheoli cefn gwlad Cymru, yn bennaf y cynllun agri-amgylcheddol sef, *Tir Gofal*. Caiff ei weld hefyd yn gwneud cyfraniad arbennig o bwysig i'r broses o godi ymwybyddiaeth a dwyshau'r ymdeimlad o arbenigrwydd lleol.

Cydnabyddar *Gofrestr O Dirweddau O Ddiddordeb Hanesyddol* a'r ymarferion nodweddiad hyn yn llawn natur ddeinamig y tirwedd sy'n parhau i esblygu. Hyrwyddant y farn mai nid trwy rwystro newid neu ffosileiddio'r tirwedd y mae diogelu treftadaeth y gorffennol yn y tirwedd, ond yn hytrach drwy lywio'r broses o newid, gan greu tirweddau'r dyfodol heb o anghenraid aberthu tirweddau gorau'r gorffennol.

*Richard Avent*

Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments

*Richard Kelly*

Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru





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## CARMARTHENSHIRE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION

### Characterisation of the four landscapes on the *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales*

#### INTRODUCTION

This report is a historic landscape characterisation of the four landscapes on the *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales*: Black Mountain and Mynydd Myddfai; Tywi Valley; Dolaucothi, and Taf and Tywi Estuary. For the purposes of this study the four areas have been conflated and then divided into 124 historic landscape character areas (numbered 133-257). Numbers 1-132 were used in the characterisation of Upland Ceredigion (Murphy 1999). The four landscapes on the *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales* (Cadw 1998) comprise approximately 420 sq kms in total, but in order to accommodate those parts of historic landscape character areas that lie across and outside the boundary of the register areas, the total area included in this study is 1195 sq kms (Figs. 1-8).

The report has been broken down into sections. The first section comprises: a general introduction, a statement on the purpose of the report, the four entries from the *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales*, methodology, an explanation of the GIS proforma, a description of the historic events which have helped shape the landscape and a consideration of the management of historic character. The second section consists of a description of each historic landscape character area, which are accompanied by a map. Section three consists of a selection of ground photographs, and section four a selection of aerial photographs. Section five, in a separate volume, deals with management priorities and section six, also in a separate volume, contains the historic landscape character area GIS proforma.

Historic landscape characteristics are the tangible evidence of the activities and habits of the people who occupied, developed, used and shaped the land to serve human needs in the past. They reflect the beliefs, attitudes, traditions and values of these people. They include the physical remains of all aspects of man's activities and exploitation in the past (above and below ground, known and potential), and our understanding, interpretation and even perception of those remains. They may reflect a variety of activities occurring at one time, or evolving functions in different periods of time. The various characteristics of a landscape interrelate and may, in some cases, overlap.

The Countryside Commission states that as managers we should be concerned with the historic character of the present landscape, and not with the study of the past for its own sake. It places the idea of 'historic landscape character' at the centre of its thinking. The aims of this project were to identify the characteristics of the present landscape of the register areas of Carmarthenshire, which bear witness to the historical processes which have created them, to provide a basic commentary on the categories of information used, to relate these to existing landscape types and to define the scope for creative action within a number of initiatives (including LANDMAP) which will guide the continuing evolution of the landscape, and thereby sustaining or even enhancing elements considered essential to the historic character of the areas.

This project received grant-aid from Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments.

Further information of this project and other landscape characterisation programmes within Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire can be obtained from *Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology*.





## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

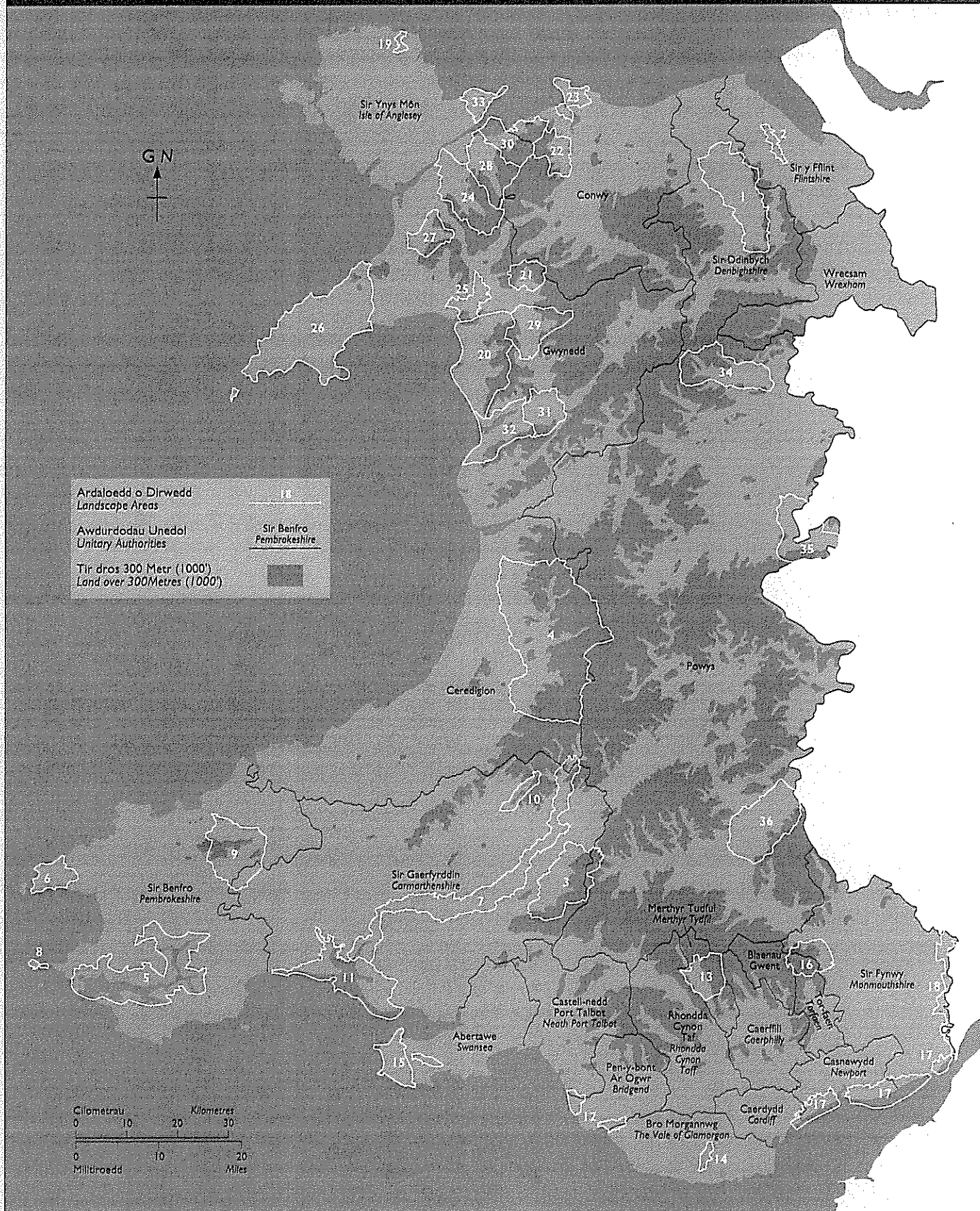
The authors wish to acknowledge the help of colleagues at Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology in producing this report: Jenny Hall, Richard Jones and Heather James. Frances Murphy kindly undertook the proof reading. Thanks are also due to Dave Thompson and Dafydd Gwyn, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, for permission to reproduce their introduction and statement on the purpose of the report, methodology statement, the GIS proforma and the section on historic environment management.



**THE STUDY AREA - EXTRACT FROM THE REGISTER OF LANDSCAPES  
OF OUTSTANDING HISTORIC INTEREST IN WALES**



# YR ARDALOEDD O DIRWEDD AC AWDURDODAU UNEDOL THE LANDSCAPE AREAS AND UNITARY AUTHORITIES





## ABER AFONYDD TAF A THYWI TAF AND TYWI ESTUARY

*Aber Afonydd Taf a Thywi.*

*Taf and Tywi Estuary.*



Hawlfraint y Goron: CBHC/Crown Copyright: RCAHMW.

### Disgrifiad o'r tirwedd

Mae'r ardal arfordirol yma o forydau, iseldiroedd arfordirol, twyni tywod a barrau tywod rhynglanw yn gorwedd ar ochr ogledd ddwyrain Bae Caerfyrddin ar arfordir De Cymru. Tu cefn i'r eangderau hir o dwyni tywod ar ochr ogleddol ddwyrain Bae Caerfyrddin, ar ochr dwyreiniol a gorllewinol cegau aberoedd Afonydd Taf, Tywi a'r Wendraeth, mae ardaloedd helaeth o gorsdir isel. Mae'r ardal gyfan yn cynnwys tystiolaeth amrywiol o weithgaredd o'r cyfnod cynhanesyddol hyd y cyfnod diweddar yn ogystal â'r drefn ganoloesol Hugden o gaeau agored ar y gefn arfordirol isel i'r gorllewin o Lacharn.

Mae'r arfordir presennol yn un sy'n newid, oherwydd symudiadau parhaus y tywod, ond mae waliau môr a thraeniau, ac o'u blaenau forfeydd y daw'r llanw drostynt, yn diogelu'r tir a adenillwyd. Trwy ddefnyddio cyfraniad o dystiolaeth archeolegol, astudiaeth o nodweddion creiriol a rhai byw yn y tirweddau presennol, a ffotograffau o'r awyr, a ffynonellau cartograffig a dogfennol, darganfuwyd sut yr esblygodd y tirwedd hwn, a grëwyd yn bennaf trwy waith dynol.

Ar derfyn gogledd y gors orllewinol neu Gors Lacharn a moryd Gwendraeth mae etifeddiaeth ddaearogol o linell o glogwyni môr gyda chyfordraeth wrth eu bôn. Er bod gwaith chwarela wedi'u dinistrio erbyn hyn, yr oedd unwaith ogofâu yng nghalchfaen Coygan Bluff, a oedd ger glan y môr ar un adeg, lle cafwyd defnydd o'r cyfnod Uwch Palaeolithig.

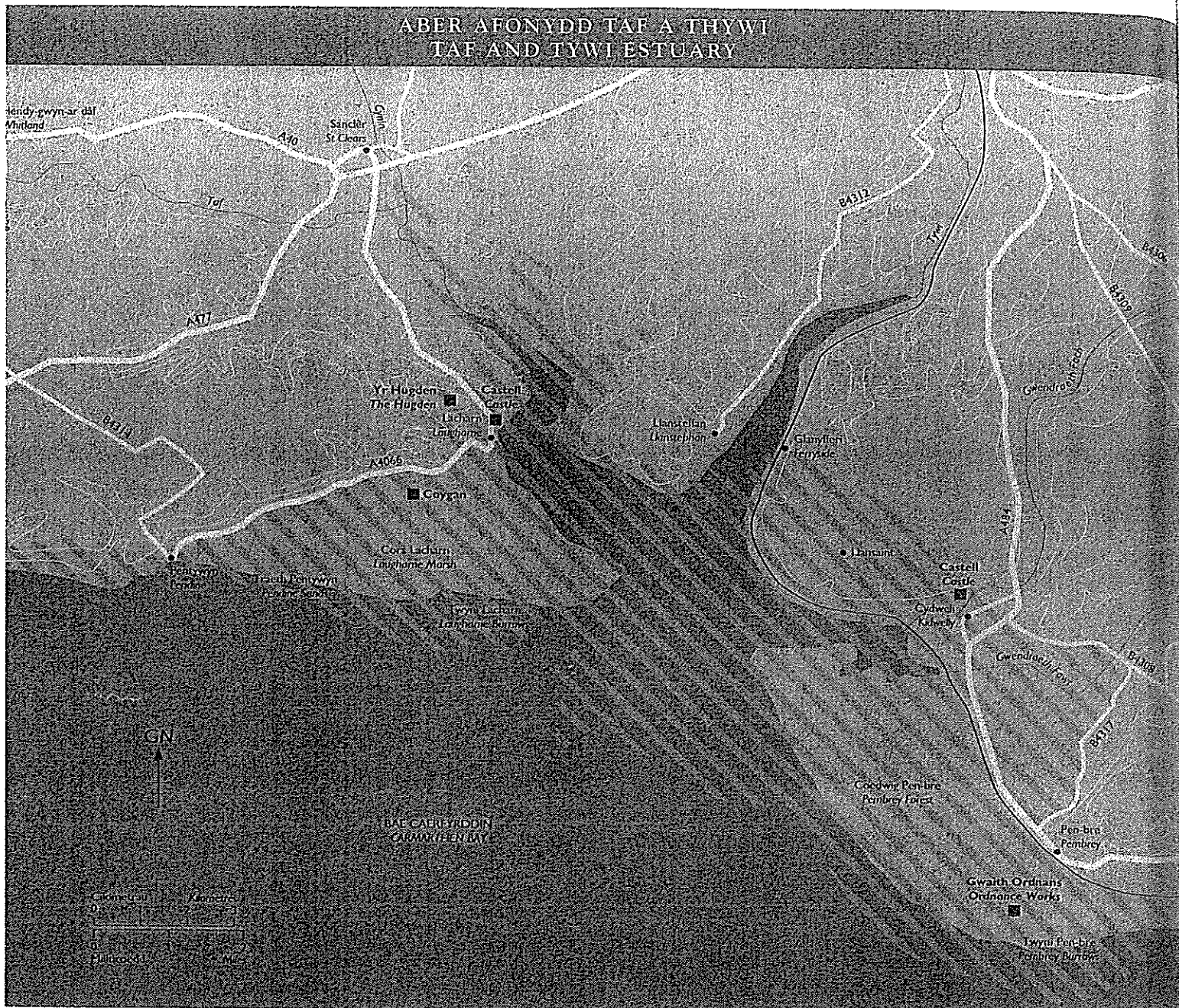
### Landscape description

This littoral area of estuaries, coastal lowlands, sand dunes and intertidal sand bars lies across the north east side of Carmarthen Bay, on the South Wales coast. Behind the long expanses of sand dunes on the north east side of Carmarthen Bay, on the east and west sides of the estuary mouths of the Rivers Taf, Tywi and Gwendraeth, lie large areas of low lying marsh land. The whole area contains diverse evidence of activity from the prehistoric to the recent past and includes the Hugden medieval open field system on the low coastal ridge west of Laugharne.

The present coastline is a changing one, owing to continuing sand movement, but sea walls and drains, fronted by tidally inundated morfeydd or salt marshes, safeguard the reclaimed land. Archaeological evidence, the study of relict and active features in the present landscape, and the use of aerial photographs, cartographic and documentary sources, have been successfully combined to reconstruct the evolution of this largely man-made landscape.

The geological inheritance of a line of former sea cliffs with a raised beach at their base form the northern boundary of the western, or Laugharne Marsh and the Gwendraeth estuary. Although now quarried away, caves in the limestone of Coygan Bluff on this former coastline have produced Upper Palaeolithic material, and excavation of the hillfort there prior to quarrying yielded a long occupation sequence from the Neolithic to the





Gwelwyd hefyd wrth gloddio'r fryngaer a oedd yno cyn y chwarela ddilyniant hir o breswyliaeth o'r cyfnod Neolithig i'r Canol Oesoedd cynnar. Mae angen rhagor o ymchwili i ganfod ble yr oedd y morlin yn ystod y cyfnodau Rhufeinig a chanoloesol, ond mae'n sicr bod trefi cestyll Cydweli a Lacharn yn llawer mwy agored i'r môr gynt nag yn awr.

Ni ellir canfod erbyn hyn o ble yn union y daeth llawer o'r darganfyddiadau o'r cyfnodau cynhanesyddol a chanoloesol a gafwyd yn Nhwyni Lacharn, ond mae lleoliad tomennydd cregin o fewn y ddwy gyfundrefn dwyni, lle cafwyd crochenwaith canoloesol, o bwysigrwydd hanfodol i bennu trefn amser y newidiadau i'r morlin a'r gwaith cau tir. Byddai'n fuddiol pe gellid eu cloddio y dyddiau hyn.

Yr oedd yr hen Witchett Brook yn rhannu Cors Lacharn yn Gors Ddwyrainiol a Gorllewinol, a defnyddiwyd yr un orllewinol fel tir pori ar forfa heli yn y Canol Oesoedd cyn adeiladu unrhyw furiau rhag y môr, ac efallai y bu hefyd aneddiadau yn yr un cyfnod ar y safleoedd ychydig uwch ar y

early medieval. More research is required to establish the position of the coastline in the Roman and medieval periods, but there is no doubt that the castle towns of Kidwelly and Laugharne were much more open to the sea than at present.

Many of the finds of prehistoric and medieval date from Laugharne Burrows cannot now be provenanced, but the position of shell middens within both dune systems, which have produced medieval pottery is crucial to the chronology of coastal change and enclosure. They would benefit from modern excavation.

The former Witchett Brook divided Laugharne Marsh into East and West Marsh, the latter used as saltmarsh pasture in the Middle Ages before any sea walls were built, and there may also have been medieval settlement on the slightly raised sites of some of the present day farms on East Marsh. Although partly within the present Ministry of Defence range at Pendine, traces of 17th century sea walls survive and the successive enclosures of the early 19th century are well preserved. Access

Gors Ddwyreiniol, lle saif ffermydd 'nawr. Mae olion muriau môr o'r 17ail ganrif a chyfres o waith cau tir o ran gyntaf y 19edd ganrif wedi'u cadw'n dda er eu bod yn rhannol o fewn tir saethu'r Weinyddiaeth Amddiffyn ym Mhentywyn. Yr oedd tramffordd a chilfachell fach, Railsgate Pill, yn darparu mynediad o chwarel Coygan i'r afon yn Lacharn, ac mae'r rhain wedi'u cadw'n dda hyd heddiw fel tystiolaeth o oes ddiiflanedig o fasnach trwy borthladdoedd bach y morydau, masnach a barhaodd hyd yr Ail Ryfel Byd.

Fel yn Lacharn, yr oedd modd cau tir Cors Pen-bre oherwydd fod twyni tywod wedi datblygu ac yn rhoi cysgod rhag y môr. Mae hanes diwydiannol Pen-bre a chanlyniadau hynny yn fwy cymhleth gyda cyfres hynod o gamlesi cynnar yn arwain at geiau a mannau llwytho llongau. Datblygwyd y rhain i allforio glo caled maes glo De Sir Gaerfyrddin, o tua dechrau'r 18fed ganrif ymlaen. Aent ar draws tir a gaewyd o'r môr rhwng Twyni Pen-bre a'r tir mawr yn ystod rhan olaf y 17ail ganrif, os nad yn gynharach. Mae olion cloddwaith i'w gweld o'r awyr ac ar wyneb y ddaear yn y ddwy Gors, yn dangos technegau trin a thraenio tir ar dir amaeth, a welwyd gan bobl y gwelliannau amaethyddol, er enghraifft Charles Hassall yn gynnar yn y 19edd ganrif, fel y man i arbrofi gyda thechnegau amaethyddol modern. Mae hyn yn wahanol iawn i'r drefn Hugden o eiddo Corfforaeth Lacharn lle goroesodd caeau agored canoloesol a ddyrennir yn gymunedol, heb eu cau hyd heddiw, hwythau hefyd o fewn terfynau'r ardal hon.

from Coygan quarry to the river at Laugharne was provided by a tramway and small creek, Railsgate Pill, still well-preserved, evidence for the now vanished era of coastal trade which persisted in the small estuary ports until the Second World War.

The enclosure of Pembrey Marsh was, like Laugharne, made possible by the development of sheltering seaward sand dunes. Its industrial history and legacy is more complex with a remarkable series of early canals leading to shipping places and quays. These were developed to export the anthracite coal of the South Carmarthenshire coalfield, from the early 18th century onwards. They led across lands enclosed from the sea inland of Pembrey Burrows by the late 17th century, if not earlier. Earthwork traces of cultivation and drainage techniques in both Marshes are evident both from the air and on the ground on farmlands seen by improvers, such as Charles Hassall in the early 19th century, as test beds for modern agricultural techniques. This contrasts with the remarkable survival, in the Hugden belonging to Laugharne Corporation, of a medieval open field system, still communally apportioned and unenclosed, which has been included within the boundaries of this area.

Twentieth century changes are more evident on Pembrey Burrows, now covered in a forestry plantation of the 1920s. A variety of industrial uses in the early 20th century culminated in a wartime airfield and a Royal Ordnance Works, one of whose surviving structures is now a Scheduled Ancient



*Castell Lacharn.*  
*Laugharne Castle*



Mae newidiadau'r 20fed ganrif yn fwy amlwg ar Dwyni Pen-bre, sydd 'nawr wedi'u gorchuddio gan blanhigfa goed o'r 1920au. Defnyddiwyd y tir hwn at wahanol ddibenion diwydiannol yn gynnar yn yr 20fed ganrif gan arwain at faes awyr yn ystod y rhyfel a Gwaith Ordans Brenhinol, ac mae un o'i adeiladweithfeydd a oroesodd 'nawr yn Heneb Cofrestredig. Bu gweithgareddau chwaraeon a hamdden yn nodwedd bwysig o'r defnydd a wnaed, ac a wneir, o'r tir hwn yn yr 20fed ganrif, o ymdrechion y teulu Campbell a Parry Thomas yn 'Babs' i dorri'r record am y cyflymder uchaf ar dir yn yr 1920au ar hyd Traeth Pentywyn, hyd at greu Parc Gwledig ar Dwyni Pen-bre yn yr 1980au. Yr oedd Bar Caerfyrddin yn enwog am longddrylliadau ac mae nifer ohonynt i'w gweld yn amlwg ac o fewn cyrraedd ar y trai, tra dateglir rhai eraill o dro i dro gan y tywod sy'n symud yn barhaus. Yn olaf, rhaid cofio am Lacharn oherwydd y cysylltiadau llenyddol gyda'r bardd Dylan Thomas a'i olwg ef ar fywyd mewn cymuned fach Gymreig yn ystod canol yr 20fed ganrif.

Monument. Sport and leisure activities are, and have been, an important feature of 20th century uses of the area, from the land-speed record attempts by the Campbells, and Parry Thomas in 'Babs' in the 1920s along Pendine Sands, to the creation of a Country Park in Pembrey Burrows in the 1980s. Carmarthen Bar was notorious for its shipwrecks, a number of which are prominently visible and accessible at low tide, while others are revealed periodically by the ever-shifting sands. Finally, Laugharne must not be forgotten for its literary associations with the poet Dylan Thomas and his insights of life in a small Welsh community during the mid-20th century.

#### CRYNODEB

<i>Rhif cyf</i>	HLW (D) 9
<i>Rhif map mynegai</i>	11
<i>Map AO</i>	Landranger 158, 159
<i>Sir flaenorol</i>	Dyfed
<i>Awdurdod unedol</i>	Sir Gaerfyrddin
<i>Prif ddymodiadau helaeth</i>	Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys: Safleoedd o Ddiddordeb Gwyddonol Arbenig Tŷyni Lacharn a Phentywyn ac Arfordir Pen-bre; Safleoedd Gwarchodaeth Cestyll Cydweli a Lacharn; Ardaloedd Cadwraeth Lacharn a Llan-saint.
<i>Meini prawf</i>	1, 3, 5
<i>Cynnwys ac anwyddocâd</i>	Ardal helaeth o iseldir arfordirol, clogwyni, corsydd, twyni tywod a barrau tywod rhynglaniu o fewn moryddau Afonydd Taf, Tywi a'r Wendraeth, sy'n cynnwys tystiolaeth amrywiol o weithgaredd o'r cyfnod cynhanesyddol ymlaen. Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys: tystiolaeth o breswylad o'r cyfnod Uwch Palaeolithig hyd at y cyfnod canoloesol cynnar; trefi a chestyll canoloesol Cydweli a Lacharn, trefi gaeau agored ganoloesol Hugden (Lacharn), adennill tir ar ffurf muriau rhag y môr, draeniau, camlest a cheiau o'r 17ail ganrif ac wedi hynny; diwydiant a choedwigaeth diweddar a maes awyr o'r Ail Ryfel Byd a Gwaith Ordans Brenhinol, nifer o longddrylliadau a safle'r ymdrech i dorri'r record cyflymder uchaf ar dir gyda 'Babs' ar Draeth Pentywyn; cysylltiadau llenyddol â Dylan Thomas.

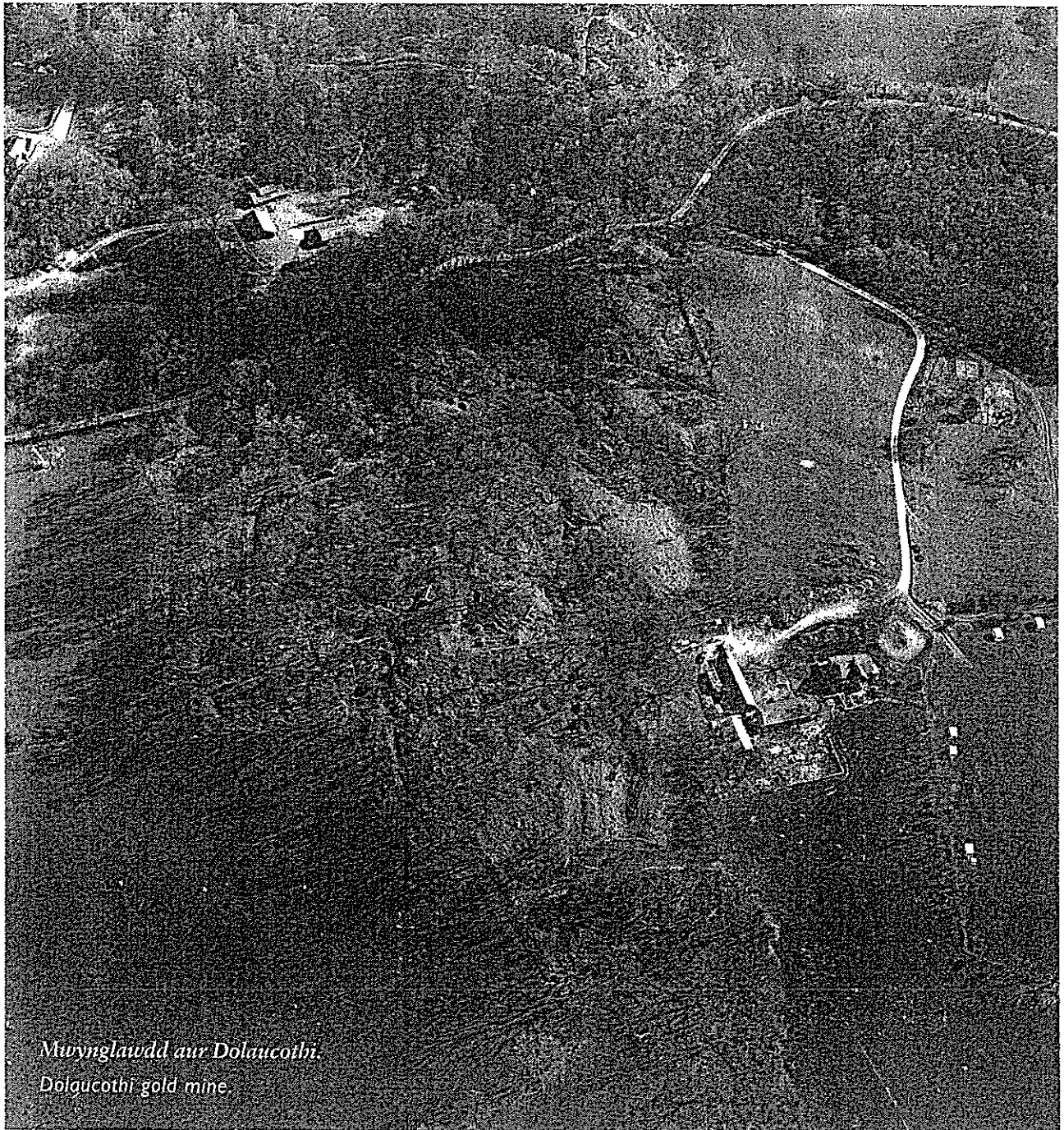
#### SUMMARY

<i>Ref number</i>	HLW (D) 9
<i>Index map no.</i>	11
<i>OS map</i>	Landranger 158, 159
<i>Former county</i>	Dyfed
<i>Unitary authority</i>	Carmarthenshire
<i>Principal area designations</i>	The area includes: Laugharne and Pendine Burrows and Pembrey Coast Sites of Special Scientific Interest; Kidwelly Castle and Laugharne Castle Guardianship Sites; Llansaint and Laugharne Conservation Areas.
<i>Criteria</i>	1, 3, 5
<i>Contents and significance</i>	An extensive area of coastal lowland, cliffs, marshes, sand dunes and intertidal sand bars situated within the estuaries of the Rivers Taf, Tywi, and Gwendraeth, containing diverse evidence of activity from the prehistoric period onwards. The area includes: evidence of occupation from the Upper Palaeolithic to the early medieval periods; the medieval towns and castles of Kidwelly and Laugharne, the Hugden (Laugharne) medieval open field system; land reclamation in the form of 17th century and later sea walls, drains, canals and quays; recent industry, forestry, a World War II airfield and Royal Ordnance Works, several shipwrecks and the site of 'Babs' land-speed record attempts on Pendine Sands; literary associations with Dylan Thomas.

## Ffynonellau detholedig / Selected sources

- R. Avent, 'The Early Development of Three Coastal Castles', in H. James, editor, *Sir Gâr: Studies in Carmarthenshire History*, Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society Monograph Series (Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society: Carmarthen 1991), 4, 167–188.  
T. James, 'Where Sea Meets Land: The Changing Carmarthenshire Coastline', in *ibid.*, (1991), 143–166.  
I. Soulsby, *The Towns of Medieval Wales* (Phillimore: Chichester 1983), Laugharne, 158–160.

## DOLAUCOTHI



*Mwynglawdd aur Dolaucothi.  
Dolaucothi gold mine.*

Hawlfraint y Goron: CBHC/Crown Copyright: RCAHWW.

### Disgrifiad o'r tirwedd

Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys rhan uchaf estynfeydd canol Afon Cothi a'i dyffryn tua'r gorllewin i Fynydd Mallaen ar gyrion deheuol Mynyddoedd Cambria. Mae llawr gwastad, ond cul y dyffryn yn codi'n raddol o 120m uwchben SO yng nghymer Afon Cothi â'r Afon Twrch ym Mhumsaint, hyd at oddeutu 200m uwchben SO yng ngogledd ddwyrain yr ardal. Mae'r cefnau a'r bryniau crymaidd isel yn codi'n serth uwchlaw llawr y dyffryn rhwng 250 a 400m uwchben SO. Prif

### Landscape description

The area comprises the upper part of the middle reaches of the River Cothi and its valley west of Mynydd Mallaen on the southern fringes of the Cambrian Mountains. The flat, but narrow valley floor rises gently from 120m above OD at the Cothi's confluence with the Twrch at Pumsaint, to about 220m above OD in the north east of the area. The low rounded hills and ridges on either side rise steeply above the valley floor to between 250 and 400m above OD. The prime

bwysigrwydd yr ardal yw ei thystiolaeth greiriol am gloddio am aur yn y cyfnod Rhufeinig ac yn ddiweddarach.

Mae mwynglawdd aur Dolaucothi ar dirwedd o elfennau a oroesodd o'r parcdir a ffermydd bychan ar osod sy'n dal ar waith. Cyflwynwyd Stad Johnes i'r Ymddiriedolaeth Genedlaethol ym 1941 a bu'r teulu'n gymorth i drefnu gwaith archeolegol cynnar ar y safle a gwarchod darganfyddiadau neilltuol o waith aur Rhufeinig yn yr ardal a gedwir bellach yn yr Amgueddfa Brydeinig ac Amgueddfa Caerfyrddin. Mae enw lleol y safle, sef Ogofâu, yn arwydd y goroesodd tystiolaeth helaeth am waith tanddaearol a brig o adeg y Rhufeiniaid ac efallai o'r 17ail, 19edd a dechrau'r 20fed ganrifoedd. Er ei bod yn anodd gwerthfawrogi'r nodweddion llai yn wyneb y coedlannau brasddeiliog sy'n gorchuddio'r rhelyw o'r safle, mae'r prif waith brig, mynedfeydd a ffosydd i'w gweld yn glir ac wedi'u dehongli'n dda ar lwybrau trywydd trefnys yng nganol y mwynglawdd. Yr Ymddiriedolaeth Genedlaethol sy'n rhedeg y cyfleustra dehongli ac mae'n cynnwys rhannau tanddaearol sylweddol sy'n agored i'r cyhoedd.

Yn dilyn cyfnod egniol o waith ymchwil archeolegol yn gynnar yn y 1970au caed rhagor o wybodaeth, nid yn unig am y modd y bu'r Rhufeiniaid yn cloddio am aur, ond hefyd am y tirwedd cyfoes. Ar ôl y gwaith cloddio archeolegol caed tystiolaeth am fodolaeth y gaer Rufeinig ym Mhumsaint y buwyd ym amau ei bod yno am gyfnod maith. Yr oedd wedi'i lleoli ar y dolau yng nghymer Afonydd Twrch a Chothi er mwyn rheoli man croesi'r Cothi. Yr oedd wedi'i lleoli hefyd ar ffordd Rufeinig o Lanymddyfri tua'r gogledd ar hyd Sarn Helen.

Bu arolwg hefyd ar yr 8km hynod o ffosydd dŵr cyfuchlinol neu draphontydd dŵr a gludai'r dŵr o flaenddyfroedd yr Afon Cothi ar hyd llechwedd serth y dyffryn i'r mwynglawdd. Yr oedd ffosydd byrrach i gludo dŵr o'r Afon Annell, sef terfyn

importance of the area is in its relict evidence for Roman and later gold mining.

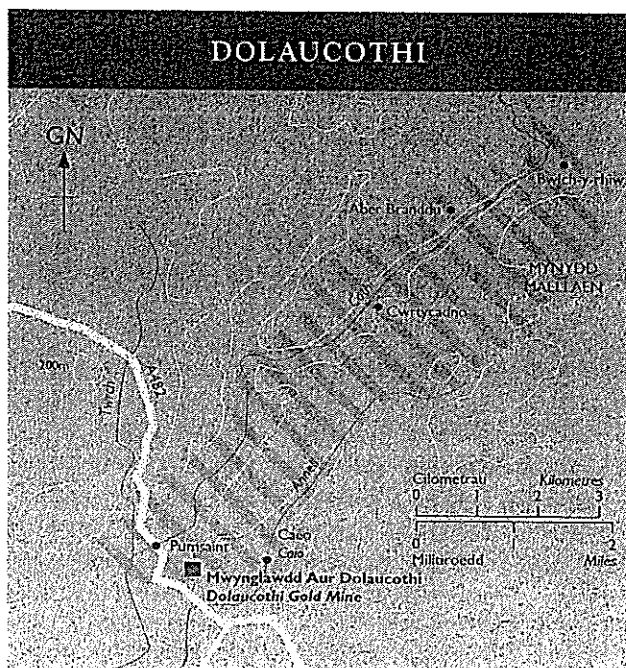
The gold mine at Dolaucothi is sited within a landscape of surviving elements of parkland and of still active small tenant farms. The Johnes Estate was presented to the National Trust in 1941 and the family had been instrumental in organising early archaeological work on the site and preserving outstanding finds of Roman goldwork from the area, now in the British and Carmarthen Museums. The local name of the site, Ogofâu (caves), indicates the survival of extensive surface and underground evidence of working in Roman times and perhaps 17th, 19th and early 20th centuries. Although the deciduous woodland covering most of the site makes the setting of some of the slighter features difficult to appreciate, the main opencasts, adits and trenches are clearly visible and well interpreted in laid out trails which cover the core of the mine. The interpretive facility run by the National Trust also includes significant underground sections which are open to the public.

An active period of archaeological research in the early 1970s resulted in extending not just knowledge of the Roman operation of the mine, but also the contemporary landscape. Excavations demonstrated the existence of the long suspected Roman fort at Pumsaint, sited on meadowland (dolau) at the confluence of the Rivers Twrch and Cothi, controlling the crossing of the latter. It was also sited on a Roman route from Llandovery north along Sarn Helen.

Survey was also carried out on the remarkable 8km length of contour leats or aqueducts which conveyed water from the headwaters of the Cothi, along the steep southern side of the valley to the mine. There were shorter lengths of leats bringing water from the River Annell along the eastern limits of the

*Ffos ddŵr i'r chwith o'r ffordd yng  
nghanol golygfa i lawr dyffryn Cothi rhwng  
Bwlch-y-rhiw ac Aber Branddu.*

*Aqueduct to the left of road in the middle of view down  
the valley between Bwlch-y-rhiw and Aber Branddu.*



Hawlfraint y Goron: CBHC/Crown Copyright: RCAHWW.

dwyreiniol yr ardal. Serch hynny, ni chadwyd y rhannau olaf hyn mor dda yn wyneb coedwigo ac aredig yn ddwfn yn y cyfnod diweddar, ac maent yn dal yn fregus dros ben a byddai'n hawdd iawn eu difrodi'n ymhellach.

Yr oedd y dŵr a gludid trwy'r ffosydd dŵr yn cael ei gadw mewn tanciau a'i ryddhau'n ffrydlif i sgwrio wynebau'r creigiau a gliriwyd; yr oedd y dechneg olchi hon yn nodweddiadol o'r holl fwyngloddiau cynnar ac nid oes angen casglu'n syth eu bod o'r cyfnod Rhufeinig. Yn sicr, yn ôl y gwaith archeolegol mwy diweddar awgrymir y bu cyfaddail melino o'r 17ail ganrif ar y safle a oedd yn anhysbys o'r blaen. Gan hynny crys adnoddau cudd archeolegol yn yr ardal fel a awgrymwyd gan arwyddion fod adeilad Rhufeinig o statws uchel ger y gaer, a ddatgelwyd yn ddiweddar mewn arolwg geoffisegol.

Hefyd mae'r ardal yn cynnwys aneddiad cnewyllo hanesyddol Cao lle trigai'r rhelyw o'r gweithwyr yng nghyfnod olaf y mwyngloddio yn y 1930au. Nid yw'r aneddiadau eraill ym Mhumsaint a Chwrtycadno namyn pentrefi bach mewn ardal glasur o aneddiadau gwasgareddig. Mae coedwig fodern Cao ar ochr ogleddol y pentref yn cuddio'i chanolbwynt mewn rhwydwaith dramwyfeydd a oedd yn cynnwys ffyrdd ucheldir y Porthmyn tua'r dwyrain ar draws Mynydd Mallaen a thu hwnt. Enghraifft brin yw'r siarter tir a oesodd o'r 9fed ganrif fel nodiadau ar ymylon Efengylau Llandeilo sy'n awgrymu y gallasai Cao fod yn ganolfan stad amryfal o'r Oesoedd Tywyll. Byddai ymchwil ar y tirwedd yn dangos yn llawnach elfennau cryf o barhad a gwreiddiau hynafol y patrymau dibenion tir ac aneddiadau a geir heddiw lle gallasai'r mwyngloddiau fod yn ganolbwynt. Hyd yn oed gyda thramwyfeydd modern ymddengys yr ardal yn anghysbell, sef ffactor a ofalodd am oroesiad tan yn ddiweddar yr arferion gwerinol megis y dyn hysbys neu ddewin gwyn Cwrtycadno, a phwysigwydd yr ardal yn hanes anghydfurfiaeth Cymru.

area. However, these latter lengths are less well-preserved because of afforestation and deep ploughing in recent times, and they remain extremely fragile and highly vulnerable to further damage.

The water carried by the leats was stored in tanks and then released in torrents to scour the cleared rock faces; the technique known as hushing is characteristic of all early mining and need not automatically be of Roman date. Certainly, more recent archaeological work suggests a previously unrecognised 17th century mill complex on the site. The area thus remains one of great archaeological potential as suggested by the hints of a high status Roman building close to the fort, revealed recently by a geophysical survey.

The area also includes the historic nucleated settlement of Caio, where most of the workers from the last phase of mine operations in the 1930s lived. The other settlements of Pumsaint and Cwrt-y-cadno are but hamlets in a classic area of dispersed settlement. The modern Caio forest on the north side of the village obscures its nodal position in a communication network which included upland Drovers' routes extending east across Mynydd Mallaen and beyond. The rare survival of a 9th century land charter as marginalia in the famous Llandeilo Gospels suggest that Caio may have been the centre of a Dark Age multiple estate. Landscape research would more fully demonstrate the strong elements of continuity and ancient origin to the present day patterns of land use and settlement in which the gold mines may, at times, have played a focal role. Even with modern communications the area appears remote, a factor which allowed the late survival of traditional folk practices such as that of the dyn hysbys or white wizard of Cwrt-y-cadno, and the importance of the area in early Welsh nonconformist history.

#### GRYNODEB

Rhif cyf.	HLW (D) 8
Rhif map mynegai	10
Map AO	Landranger 146
Sir flaenorol	Dyfed
Awdurdod unedol	Sir Gaerfyrddin
Prif ddynodiadau helaeth	Mae rhan helaethaf yr ardal o feum Ardal Amgylchedd Arbenig Mynyddoedd Cambria. Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys Safle o Ddiddordeb Gwyddonol Arbenig Mwyngloddiau Aur Dolaucothi a Henebion Cofrestredig raphontydd dŵr Annell, Cothi a Dolaucothi.
Meini priod	2, 5
Cynnwys ac arwyddocâd	Rhan o iseldir dyffryn afon a stad o dir ar gyrion deheuol Mynyddoedd Cambria, yn cynnwys tystiolaeth dda am gloddio am aur o'r cyfnod Rhufeinig tan yn ddiweddar. Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys: caer Rufeinig, gweithfeydd aur brig a thauddaeiarol a chysundrefn unigryw o ffosydd dŵr; tystiolaeth ddogfennol hanesyddol am ddaliadau tir diweddarach o'r 9fed ganrif.

#### SUMMARY

Ref number	HLW (D) 8
Index map no.	10
OS map	Landranger 146
Former county	Dyfed
Unitary authority	Carmarthenshire
Principal area designations	The larger part of the area is within the Cambrian Mountains Environmentally Sensitive Area. The area includes Dolaucothi Gold Mines Site of Special Scientific Interest and the Annell, Cothi and Dolaucothi aqueducts Scheduled Ancient Monuments.
Criteria	2, 5
Contents and significance	Part of a lowland river valley and landed estate situated on the southern fringes of the Cambrian Mountains, containing well-preserved evidence for goldworking from Roman and recent times. The area includes a Roman fort, surface and underground gold workings and an unique system of leats; historical documentary evidence of later, 9th century land holding.

#### Ffynonellau detholedig / Selected sources

- B.C. Burnham, and A.E. Annels, *The Dolaucothi Goldmines* (University College Cardiff: Cardiff 1983).  
 Glanville R.J. Jones, 'Tir Telych', the Gwestfau of Cynwyl Gaeo and Cwmwd Cao', *Studia Celtica*, 28 (1994), 81-95.  
 P.R. Lewis, and G.D.B. Jones, 'Dolaucothi Gold Mines I: The Surface Evidence', *Archaeological Journal*, 49 (1969), 244-272.  
 S. Rees, *A Guide to Ancient and Historic Wales: Dyfed* (HMSO: London 1992).





## DYFFRYN TYWI TYWI VALLEY

*Castell Dryslwyn.*  
*Dryslwyn Castle.*





## Disgrifiad o'r tirwedd

Mae Dyffryn Tywi'n ymestyn tua'r de orllewin o darddle'r afon yn ne Mynyddoedd Cambria, trwy Fynydd Mallaen a brynau a chefnau isel, tonnog Sir Gaerfyrddin, hyd at ei haber ym Mae Gaerfyrddin. Mae'r dyffryn oddeutu 90km o hyd gyda'i led yn amrywio, ond anafnynch y bydd yn lletach na chilometr ar draws llawr y dyffryn. Ar y cyfan derbynir bod Dyffryn Tywi'n ymestyn o Lanymddyfri hyd at Gaerfyrddin, ond yma uned ddaearyddol y dyffryn, llawr y dyffryn, y gorlifdir a'r brynau ar y naill ochr a'r llall yw'r ardal a ddynodir, sy'n ymestyn o argae Llyn Brianne ger y blaenddyfroedd hyd at yr aber. Prif arwyddocâd y dyffryn yw ei leoliad i grŵp unigryw o barciau a gerddi wedi'u cynllunio, a'i gysylltiadau hanesyddol ac artistig â'r agwedd Ddarluniadwy a grynhir ar ei gorau yng ngherdd le-ddisgrifiadol John Dyer, Aberglesni, sef Grongar Hill a gyhoeddwyd ym 1726:

'Now, I gain the mountain's brow,  
What a landskip lies below!  
No clouds, no vapours intervene,  
But the gay, the open scene  
Does the face of nature show,  
In all the hues of heaven's bow!  
And, swelling to embrace the light,  
Spreads around beneath the sight.  
Old castles on the cliffs arise,  
Proudly tow'ring in the skies!  
Rushing from the woods, the spires  
Seem from hence ascending fires!  
Half his beams Apollo sheds  
On the yellow mountain-heads!  
Gilds the fleeces of the flocks:  
And glitters on the broken rocks!'

Parhaodd y traddodiad disgrifiadol hwn trwy gydol y 19edd ganrif hyd at y ganrif hon, a chan hynny trysorir Dyffryn Tywi fel tirwedd yn gyffredinol. Bu bonedd y sir yn noddi gwaith yr arlunwyr a'r beirdd tua diwedd y 17ail a dechrau'r 18fed ganrifoedd. Y Fychaniaid, Gelli Aur, oedd y prif, er nad yr unig, deulu yn yr ardal, a hoffai eu disgynyddion fwyfwy godi'u plastai a'u tai mewn mannau i fanteisio ar olygfeydd gwyh y dyffryn.

Mewn llawet achos yr oedd teuluoedd bonedd y 18fed ar 19edd ganrifoedd yn ddisgynyddion uchelwyr Cymreig o'r 15fed i'r 17ail ganrifoedd a chroniclwyd eu hachau, tylwythau a'u tai gan y diweddar Uwchgaptin Francis Jones, Herodr Cymru. Yr oedd Francis Jones yn gwneud defnydd cyson o ddisgrifiadau o'r tai a'u lleoliad a gaed gan feirdd o ddiwedd y Canol Oesoedd, megis Lewis Glyn Cothi, sydd yn ei gywyddau'n cyfleu gwerthoedd tirweddau'r Canol Oesoedd yn yr ardal hon. Er gwaethaf y distryw a'r esgeulustod, mae llawer o blastai a thai pwysig yn yr ardal, a cheir darganfyddiadau newydd hyd heddiw.

Yr ardal hon oedd perffeddwlad Ystrad Tywi. Parhaodd y rhelyw o'r uned diriogaethol hon dan reolaeth y Cymry a arweiniwyd gan yr Arglwydd Rhys a'i disgynyddion tan ddiwedd y 13edd ganrif, er y bu brwydrau ffyrnig amdani. Mae'r etifeddiaeth o gestyll cerrig yn ogystal a'r mwntiau cloddio a phren a bwrdeisdrefi a grewyd yn y Canol Oesoedd yn parhau i oruchafu'r tirwedd. Goroedd rhai ohonynt gan

## Landscape description

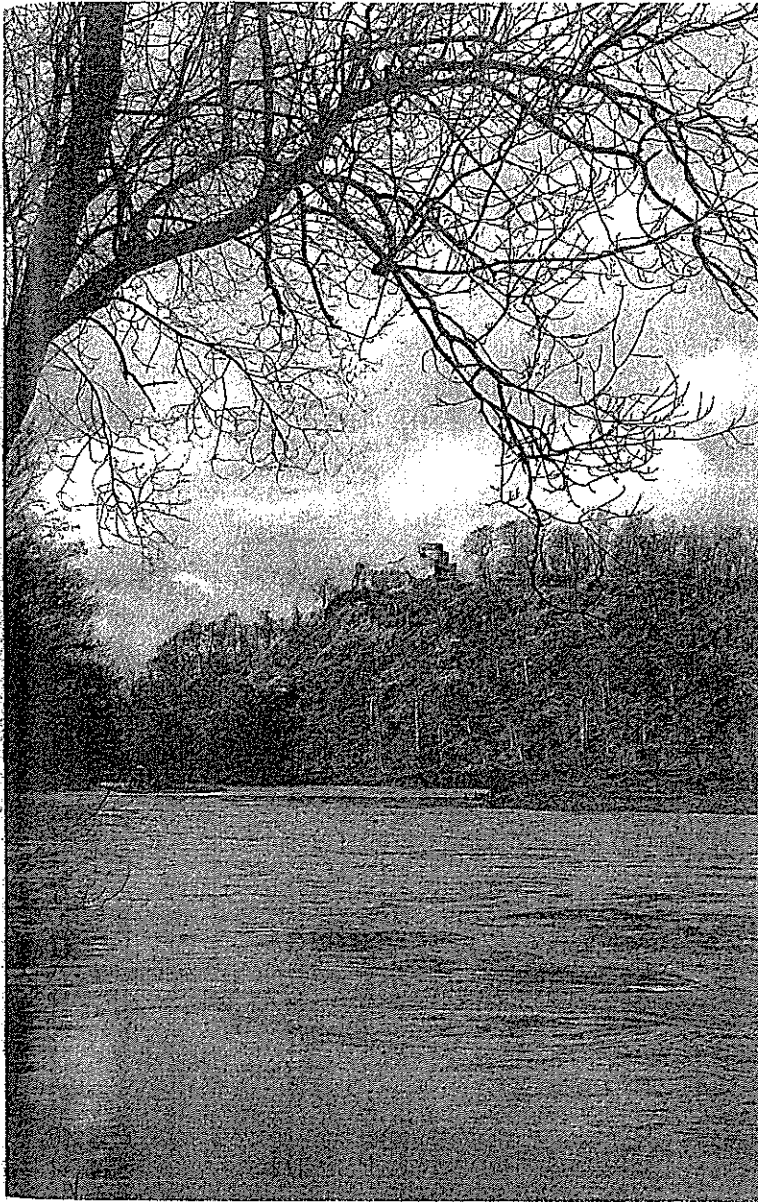
The Tywi valley extends south westwards from the source of the river in the south of the Cambrian Mountains, through Mynydd Mallaen and the low, rolling hills and ridges of Carmarthenshire, to its estuary mouth in Carmarthen Bay. The valley is some 90km in length and of varying widths, but rarely more than a kilometre wide across the valley floor. The Vale of Towry or Dyffryn Tywi is generally understood to extend from Llandovery to Carmarthen, but the area identified here is the geographical entity of the valley, valley floor, flood plain and hills on either side, which extends from the Llyn Brianne reservoir near the headwaters, to the estuary. The principal significance of the valley is as setting for a unique group of planned parks and gardens, and its historic, artistic associations with the Picturesque which are best summarised in John Dyer of Aberglasney's loco-descriptive poem Grongar Hill published in 1726:

'Now, I gain the mountain's brow,  
What a landskip lies below!  
No clouds, no vapours intervene,  
But the gay, the open scene  
Does the face of nature show,  
In all the hues of heaven's bow!  
And, swelling to embrace the light,  
Spreads around beneath the sight.  
Old castles on the cliffs arise,  
Proudly tow'ring in the skies!  
Rushing from the woods, the spires  
Seem from hence ascending fires!  
Half his beams Apollo sheds  
On the yellow mountain-heads!  
Gilds the fleeces of the flocks:  
And glitters on the broken rocks!'

This descriptive tradition continued through the 19th and into this century, and as a result there is a widespread popular sense of the Tywi valley as a cherished landscape. Late 17th and early 18th centuries artistic and poetic perceptions were fostered by their patrons, the county gentry. The area was dominated, but not exclusively, by the Vaughans of Gelli Aur and their many cadet branches who increasingly preferred to site their houses and mansions to take advantage of the scenic prospects of the valley.

The 18th and 19th centuries gentry families were in many cases descended from the Welsh uchelwyr (noblemen) of the 15th to 17th centuries, whose ancestry, descent and houses have been chronicled by the late Major Francis Jones, the Wales Herald. Jones makes constant use of the descriptions of houses and their settings by such late medieval bards as Lewis Glyn Cothi whose cywyddau (stanzas) give a sense of medieval landscape values in this area. Despite destruction and neglect, the area still contains many important houses and mansions, and new discoveries continue to be made.

The area was also the heartland of Ystrad Tywi. Much of this territorial unit remained in Welsh control under Lord Rhys and his descendants until late in the 13th century, albeit one heavily fought over. The legacy of stone castles as well as earth and timber mottes and planted medieval boroughs still dominate the landscape. Some survived and developed, but others, like Dryslwyn and Dynevor Newton, did not. The siting

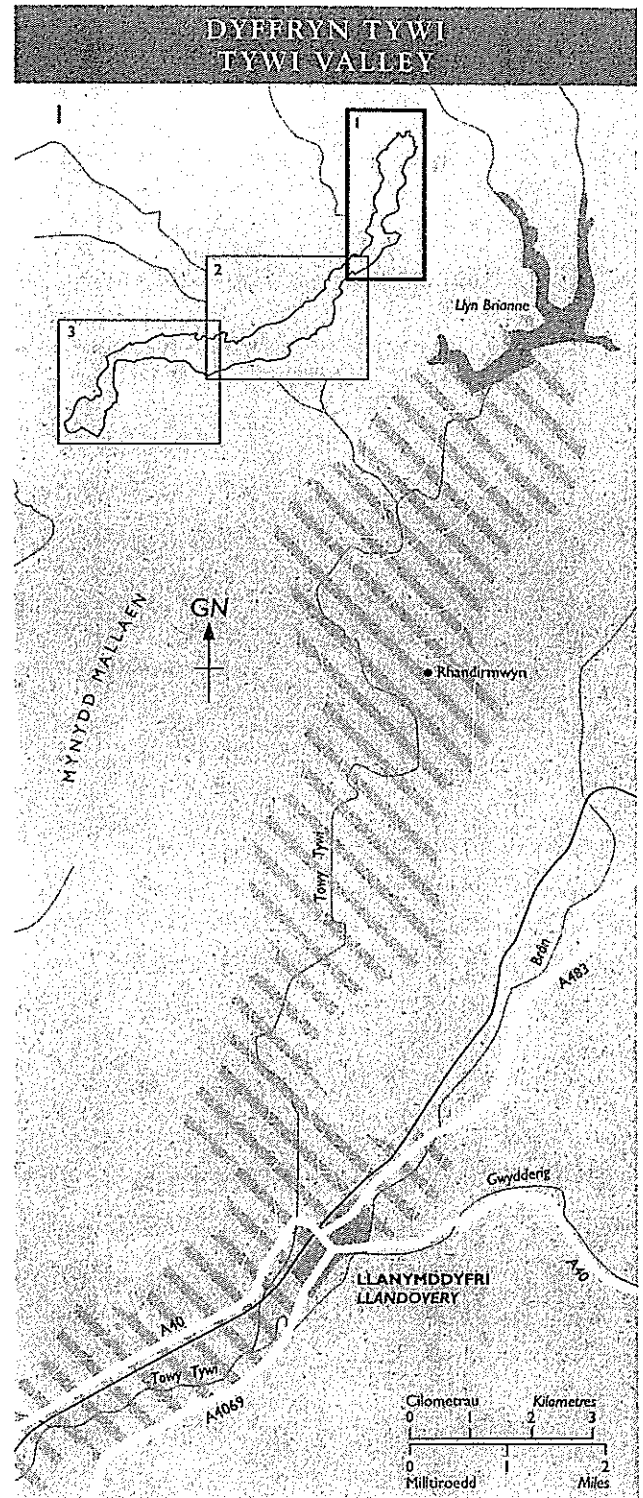


Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments.

*Castell Dinefwr.*  
*Dinefwr Castle.*

ddatblygu, ond methodd eraill, megis Dryslwyn a Dinefwr Newton. Yr anghenraid cyson am dramwyfeydd ar hyd dyffrynnoedd yr afonydd a bennodd leoliad y cestyll a'r bwrdeistrefi, fel yn achos y caerau Rhufeinig militaraid cyn hynny, yn ogystal â'r awydd i'w sefydlu a'u rheoli o ganlyniad. Mae'r Tywi'n afon fywiog iawn a gall newid ei chwrs yn sylweddol ar lawr y dyffryn. Effeithiodd hyn ar ffyrdd, rhyddau a phontydd ar draws y dyffryn ac ar ei hyd, gan greu cryn hanes a chymhlethdod o ran patrwm y ffyrdd Rhufeinig a chanoloesol a oroesodd, ac o ran y tollbyrth, ffyrdd a rheilffyrdd yn y dyddiau modern cynnar.

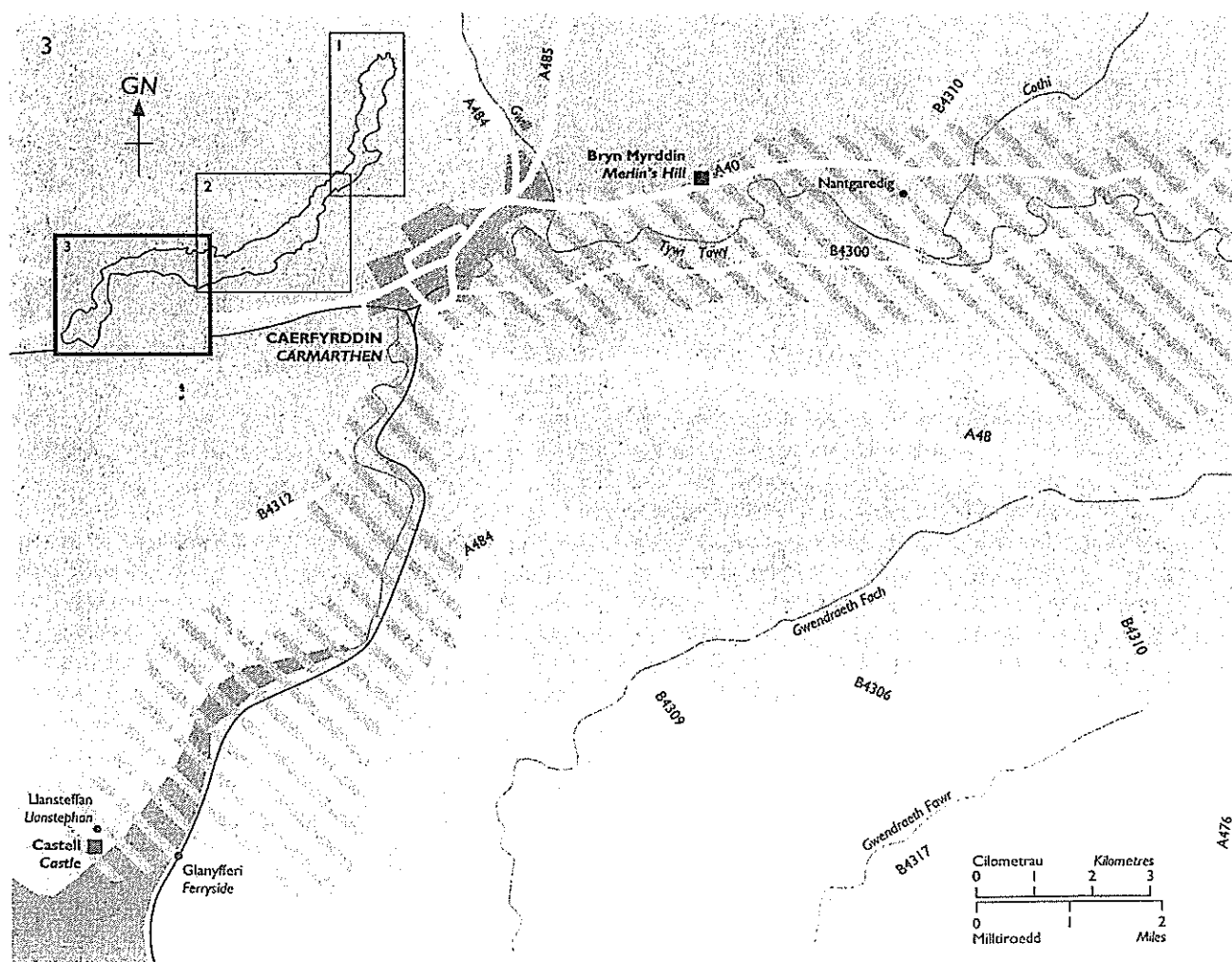
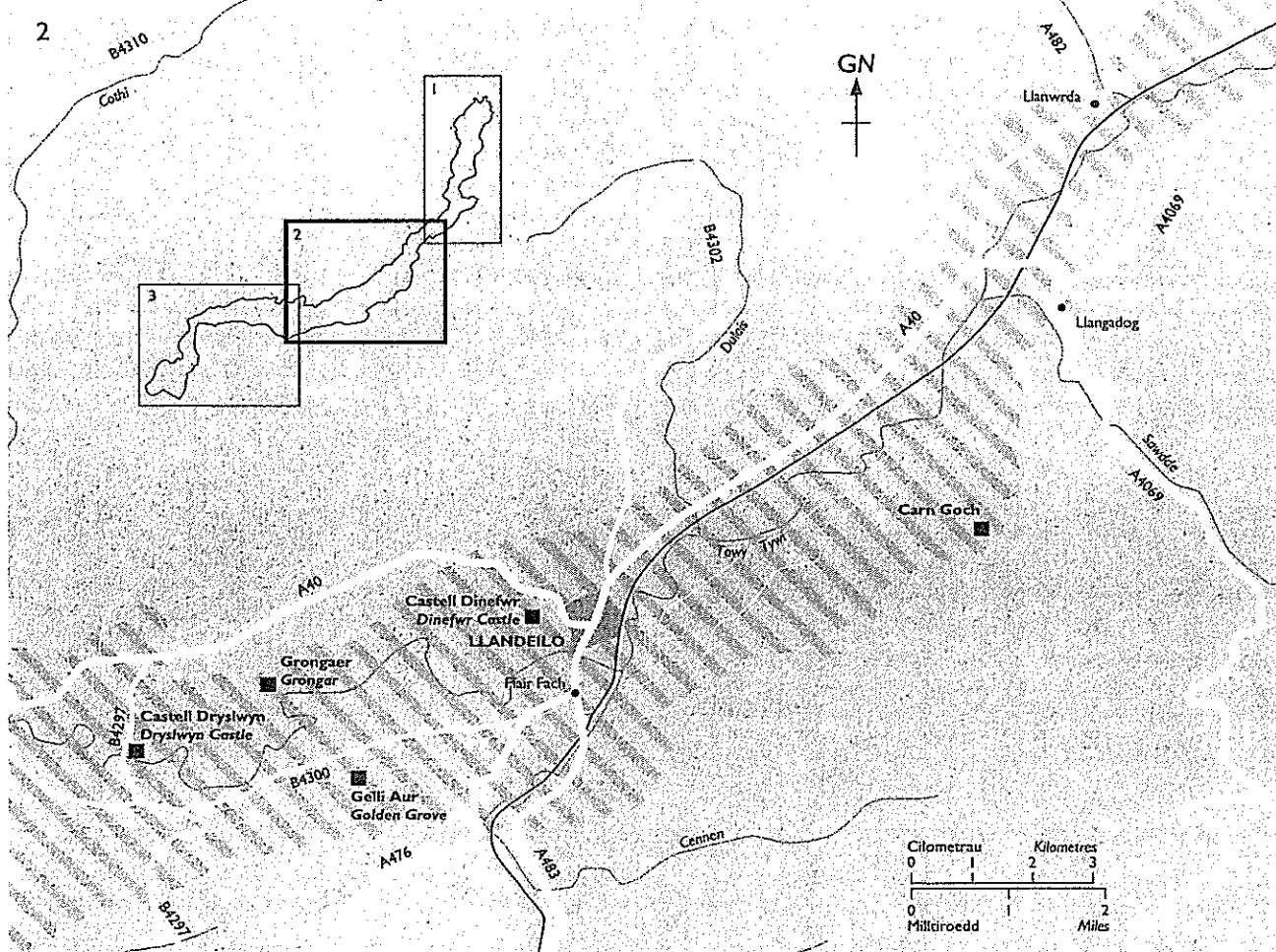
Gall crynodiad uchel ar bori yn ffermio y cyfnodau modern a modern cynnar ar lawr y dyffryn, sef y tir hwnnw a ddisgrifiwyd ym 1946 yn Arolwg Dibenion Tir Prydain fel 'y tir gorau i fuchesi godro yn y sir', guddio tystiolaeth tirwedd creiriol a thystiolaeth gladdedig paleoamgylcheddol am batrymau amaethyddol cynharach a mwy amrywiol.



of castles and boroughs, like the earlier Roman military strongpoints of forts, have been dictated by that constant necessity in river valleys of communications, and the consequent desire both to establish and to control them. The River Tywi is a particularly active one and subject to radical course changes across its valley floor. This has affected both linear and cross-valley roads, fords and bridges, and gives depth and complexity to the surviving pattern of Roman and medieval routes, and to early modern turnpike, road and rail lines.

The heavy concentration on grazing of modern and early modern farming in the valley floor, in what the Land Utilisation Survey of Britain described in 1946 as 'the best quality dairying land in the county', may overlay relict landscape and buried

# DYFFRYN TYWI TYWI VALLEY



Yn sicr, yn ôl tystiolaeth y coetiroedd hynafol a oroesodd a'r dystiolaeth ddogfennol o'r Canol Oesoedd am batrymau economaidd coedwigol, awgrymir fod coedlannau trwchus ar lechweddau'r dyffryn. Amgylchedd cynhanesyddol a phatrymau aneddiadau dyffryn Tywi yw'r rhai y gwyddys lleiaf amdanynt. Serch hynny, mae'n amlwg yn ôl rhyw gymaint o waith archeolegol ad-hoc a wnaed y ceir gwrymiau rhewlifol ar loriau'r dyffryn, gyda phosibiliadau am wybodaeth am aneddiadau a dibenion tir cynhanesyddol. Ar hyn o bryd nid oes tystiolaeth am breswylad o Oes yr Haearn ar lethrau isaf a lloriau'r dyffryn i ategu patrwm y bryngaerau mawr prin megis Carn Goch a Bryn Myrddin sydd â'u trem tua'r dyffryn islaw.

palaeoenvironmental evidence for more diversified, earlier agricultural régimes. Certainly surviving areas of ancient woodland and medieval documentary evidence on forest-based economic régimes suggest heavily wooded valley sides. The prehistoric environment and settlement patterns of the Tywi valley are the least known. It is however apparent from small-scale, ad hoc, archaeological work that there are glacially deposited raised areas of ground on the valley floors, with potential prehistoric settlement and land use information. Evidence for Iron Age occupation on the lower valley sides and valley floors is at present lacking to complement the pattern of large, infrequently sited hillforts such as Carn Goch and Merlin's Hill overlooking the valley.

#### CRYNODEB

<b>Rhif cyf</b>	HLW (D) 5
<b>Rhif map mynegai</b>	7
<b>Map AO</b>	Landranger 146, 159, 160
<b>Sir flaenorol</b>	Dyfed
<b>Swyddurdod unedol</b>	Sir Gaerfyrddin (Ceredigion)
<b>Prif ddynodiadau belaeith</b>	Mae ardal fach yng nghanol ochr ddeheuol y dyffryn ym Mharc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog. Mae ardal y blaenddyfroedd o fewn Ardal Amgylchedd Arbennig Mynyddoedd Cambria. Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys: Ystad Dinefwr, Dolydd Dryslwyn a rhan o Safleoedd o Ddiddordeb Gwyddonol Arbennig Cwm Doethie - Mynydd Mallaen; Safleoedd Gwarchodaeth Castell Dinefwr, Castell Dryslwyn a Chastell Llansteffan; Henebion Cofrestredig caer a thref Rufeinig Moridunum Demetarum; Ardaloedd Cadwraeth Caerfyrddin (amrywiol), Llandeilo, Llangadog, Llangathen (Aberglasney), Llansteffan a Llanyddysfri.
<b>Meini prawf</b>	3, 5
<b>Cynnwys ac arwyddocâd</b>	Dyffryn hir, cul yr afon sy'n enwog am ansawdd ei golygfa o'i tharddle yn ne Mynyddoedd Cambria hyd at ei haber ym Mae Caerfyrddin, ac yn cynnwys coridorau ffyrdd hynafol a lleoliad i grŵp o dirweddau digymar wedi'u cynllunio. Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys: bryngaerau o Oes yr Haearn; caerai Rhufeinig; cestyll a muntiau o'r Canol Oesoedd; tai bonedd, parciau a gerddi wedi'u cynllunio o'r cyfnod ôl-ganoloesol; tirweddau Darluniadwy, artistig hanesyddol mawr eu parch a'u bri.

#### SUMMARY

<b>Ref number</b>	HLW (D) 5
<b>Index map no.</b>	7
<b>OS map</b>	Landranger 146, 159, 160
<b>Former county</b>	Dyfed
<b>Unitary authority</b>	Carmarthenshire (Ceredigion)
<b>Principal area designations</b>	A small area on the central southern side of the valley is within the Brecon Beacons National Park. The area of the headwaters is within the Cambrian Mountains Environmentally Sensitive Area. The area includes: Dinefwr Estate, Dryslwyn Meadows and part of the Cwm Doethie-Mynydd Mallaen Sites of Special Scientific Interest; Dinefwr Castle, Dryslwyn Castle and Llanstephan Castle Guardianship Sites; Moridunum Demetarum Roman fort and town Scheduled Ancient Monuments; Carmarthen (various), Llandeilo, Llangadog, Llangathen (Aberglasney) and Llansteffan Conservation Areas.
<b>Criteria</b>	3, 5
<b>Contents and significance</b>	A long, narrow river valley of renowned scenic quality from its source in the south of the Cambrian Mountains to its estuary in Carmarthen Bay, containing ancient route corridors and the setting for an unrivalled group of planned landscapes. The area includes: Iron Age forts; Roman forts; medieval castles and motes; post-medieval gentry houses, designed parks and gardens; highly cherished and celebrated historic artistic Picturesque landscapes.

## Ffynonellau detoledig / Selected sources

- L. Hughes, *A Carmarthenshire Anthology* (Christopher Davies: Llandybie 1984).  
Francis Jones, *Historic Carmarthenshire Homes and their Families* (Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society and Dyfed County Council Cultural Services Department: Carmarthen 1987).  
J. E. Lloyd, *A History of Carmarthenshire*, 2 vols. (London Carmarthenshire Society: Cardiff 1935).  
S. Rees, *A Guide to Ancient and Historic Wales: Dyfed* (HMSO: London 1992).

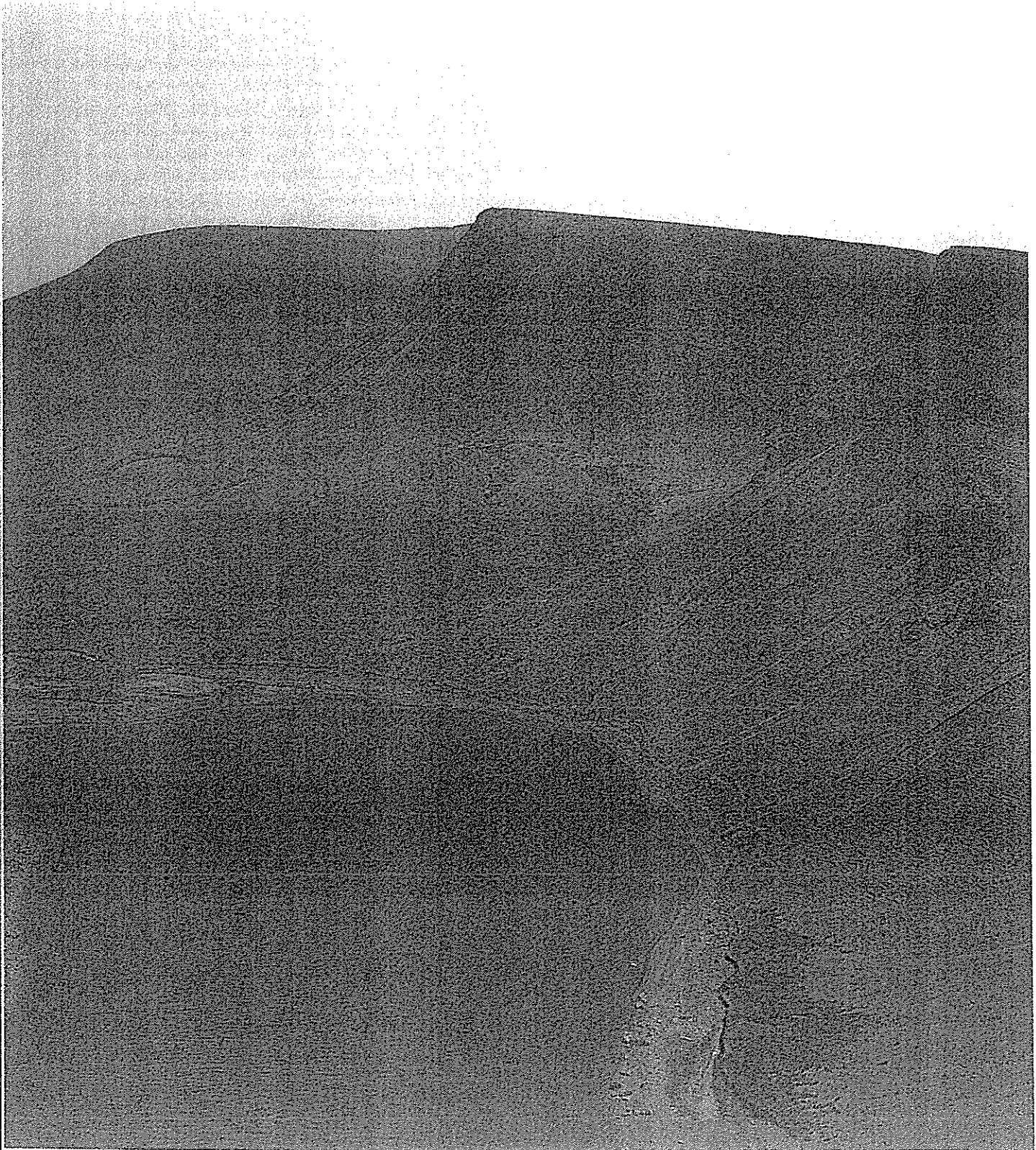




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# Y MYNYDD DU A MYNYDD MYDDFAI BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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*Bannau Sir Gaer a  
Llyn y Fan Fach.  
Bannau Sir Gaer and  
Llyn y Fan Fach.*

## Disgrifiad o'r tirwedd

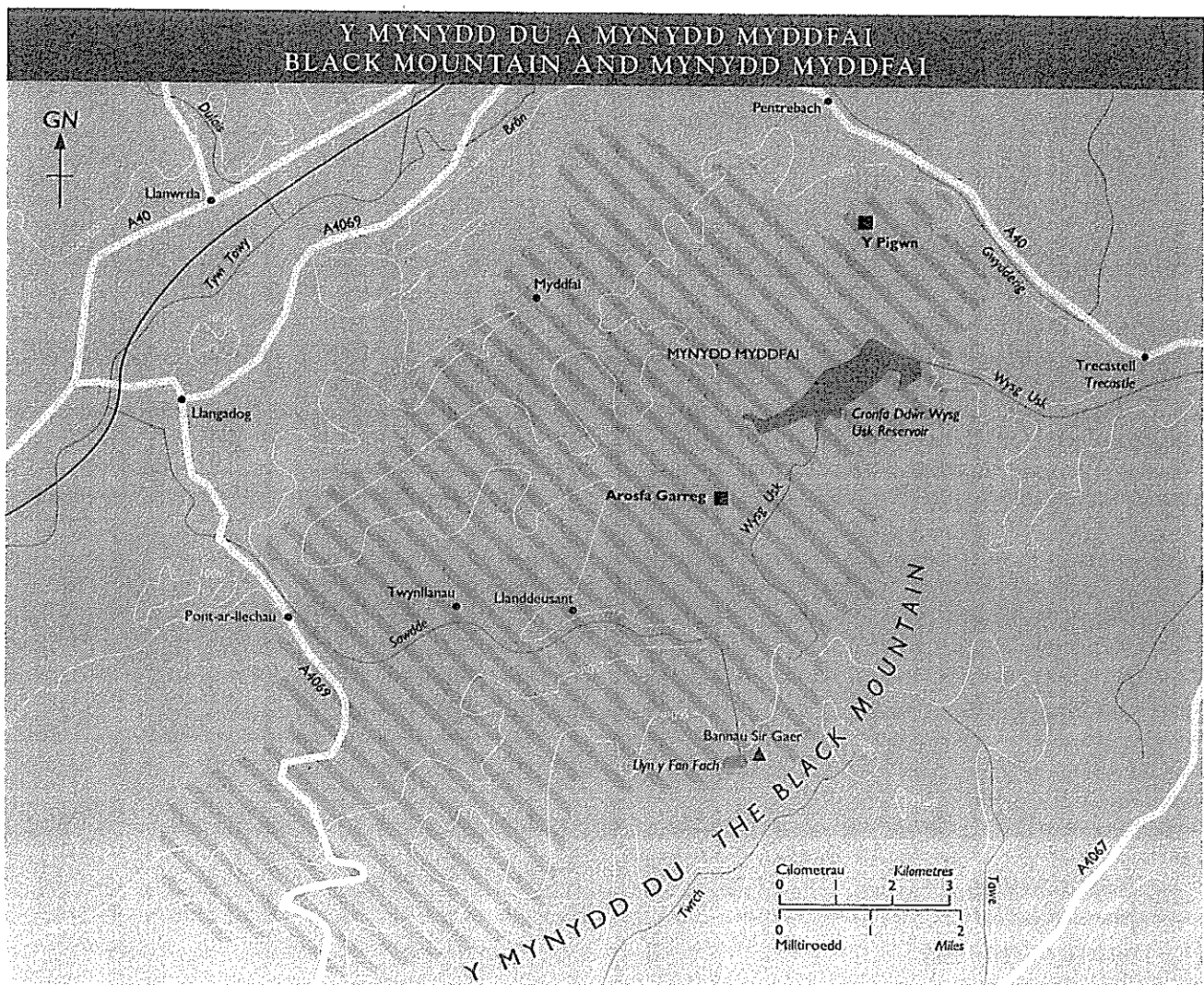
Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys troedfrynau a llethrau ar ochr ogledd orllewin y Mynydd Du, wedi'i hamgylchynu gan Fynydd Myddfai i'r gogledd, 440m uwchben SO a chefnen o fryniau ychydig yn is i'r de orllewin, sydd yn edrych dros ddyffryn yr Afon Tywi i'r dwyrain o Llandeilo. Mae amryw o ddyffrynnoedd bach, serth yn rhannu'r ardal ac yn goruchafu drosti mae'r cribau ar hyd cefn deuddwr y Mynydd Du, a'r uchaf ohonynt yn codi rhyw 800m uwchben SO yn y de ddwyrain. Mae yn yr ardal dystiolaeth gyfoethog ac amrywiol o ddefnyddiau ar dir sydd yn enghraifft o'r rhyng-berthynas ddeinamig rhwng ucheldir ac iseldir sydd mor nodweddiadol o gymaint o Gymru, o'r cyfnod cynhanesyddol i'r gorffennol agos.

Ar y llethrau isaf a lloiau rhai, er nad y cyfan, o'r dyffrynnoedd cul a serth ar ochr ogledd orllewinol Mynydd Myddfai a'r Mynydd Du, ceir pentyrrau bach a mawr o addeilion tai hirion cerrig sychion. Yn ddiweddar mae'r rhain wedi cael eu mapio, eu cynllunio a'u hastudio yn fanwl, ond hyd yma ni bu gwaith cloddio ar un ohonynt. Nid oes sicrwydd i ba gyfnod y perthynant, ond yn fras, ar sail morffolegol, tybir eu bod o'r Canol Oesoedd. Ceir awgrym, fodd bynnag, o ddefnydd llawer cynharach ar yr ucheldir, yn Oes yr Efydd, pan oedd yr hinsawdd yn fwy ffafriol, yn y nifer fawr o garneddau amlwg, meini hirion mwy lleol a dau grŵp o gylchoedd cerrig ac, mewn rhai mannau,

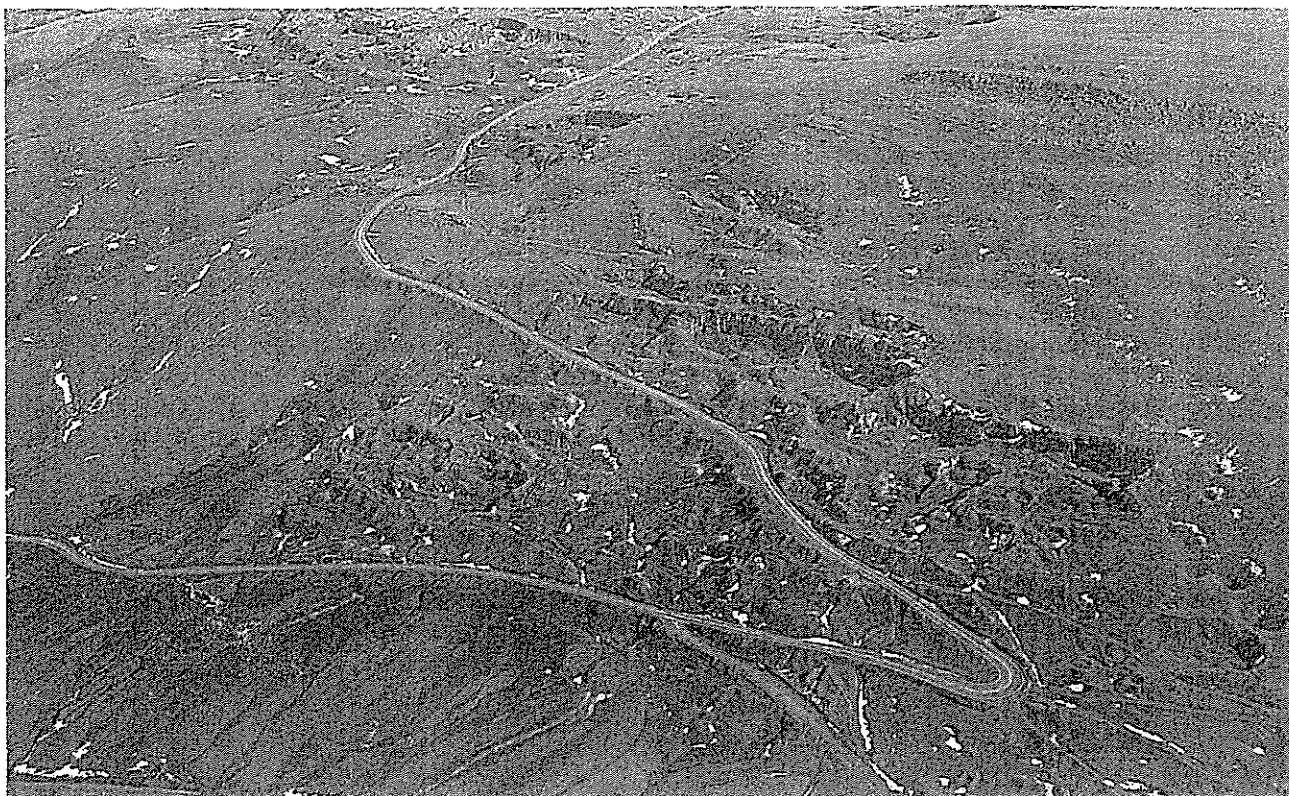
## Landscape description

The area comprises the foothills and slopes on the north west side of the Black Mountain, bounded by Mynydd Myddfai on the north at 440 m above OD and a ridge of slightly lower hills to the south west, which overlooks the Tywi valley east of Llandeilo. The area is heavily dissected by small, steep-sided valleys and is dominated by the summits along the Black Mountain watershed, the highest of which rise to about 800m above OD in the south east. The area contains rich and diverse evidence of land use exemplifying the dynamic interrelationship between upland and lowland that is so typical of much of Wales, from the prehistoric period to the recent past.

On the lower slopes and narrow valley floors of some, though significantly not all, the steep-sided valleys on the north west sides of Mynydd Myddfai and the Black Mountain, are small and large agglomerations of ruined, drystone-walled longhouses. These have recently been mapped, planned and studied in detail, but to date none has been excavated. Their date range is uncertain though conjectured, on broadly morphological grounds, to be medieval. Much earlier, Bronze Age use of the uplands is suggested however, during more favourable climatic conditions, by numerous large and prominently sited cairns, more localised standing stones and two groups of stone circles and, in some places, of regularly laid out field systems whose walls are partly sealed by peat.







Hawlfraint y Goron: CBHC/ Crown Copyright: RCAHMW.

cyfundrefnau caeau rheolaidd eu trefn a'u waliau wedi'u selio'n rhannol â mawn.

Yn y parth trosiannol, rhwng y gweundir agored a'r caeau amgaeedig a'r coetir, mewn rhai mannau, ceir sawl hyd o arglawdd sylweddol a ffos, a gellir profi fod rhai ohonynt yn mynd yn ôl o leiaf i'r 16eg ganrif. Torrir ar y terfyn hwn gan nifer o ffyrdd a thraciau sydd yn brawf o'r rhyng-berthynas ddeinamig rhwng yr ucheldir agored a'r tirwedd o aneddiadau gwasgaredig a chaeau bach, amgaeedig ar y llethrau isaf. Yn y cyswllt hwn, nid oes sicrwydd a oedd y tai hir yn gartrefi parhaol neu'n hafotai mewn cyfundrefn drawstrefa.

Er bod defaid erbyn hyn wedi disodli gwartheg fel y prif stoc ar y gweundir agored, mae pori tymhorol yn dal yn rhan o economi ffermio y ffermydd cyfagos. Ceir nifer o hen gorlannau cerrig sych, adfeiliedig erbyn hyn, ar ymylon y gweundir ac yn ddwfn o'i fewn. Er na wnaed unrhyw arolwg mewn dyfnder hyd yn hyn, mae'n dra thebygol bod arferion pori wedi dylanwadu'n drwm ar batrwm llystyfiant presennol yr ucheldir, ac mae amryw o olion cloddio, eiddil ond arwyddocaol, yn brawf o'r ymdrech barhaus i wella'r borfa.

Er yr edrychir ar yr ucheldir agored erbyn hyn fel rhwystr i dramwyo, ymhob un o'r cyfnodau cynnar, tan ddyfodiad y ffordd dyrpeg, yr oedd llwybrau'n ei groesi. Yr oedd dau wersyll martsio Rhufeinig yn yr ardal, sef y Pigwn ac Arosfa Garreg, yn rheoli dwy ffordd ar draws y mynydd a oedd yn gwasanaethu fel y prif lwybrau o ddyffryn yr Afon Wysg i ddyffryn yr Afon Tywi hyd at y 1790au. Maent yn canolbwyntio, yng ngodrefnyddiau'r Mynydd Du a Mynydd Myddfai, ar ddau aneddiad cnewyllo, Myddfai a Llangadog, a gawsant eu bodolaeth o ffeiriau a marchnadoedd tymhorol yr ardal o'u cylch. (Mae Llangadog ar hyn o bryd y tu allan i'r ardal a ddisgrifir yma).

Mewn amseroedd diweddar, y prif symbyliad i ysgogi defnyddio ucheldiroedd yr ardaloedd cyfagos oedd llosgi calch, a oedd y prif wrtaith o ddiwedd y 17ail i ganol y 19edd

### *Chwareli ôl-ganoloesol ar y Mynydd Du.*

*Post-medieval quarries on the Black Mountain.*

The transitional zone between the open moorland and enclosed fields and woodland is, in some parts of the area, marked by lengths of substantial bank and ditch, sections of which can be shown to be of at least 16th century in date. This boundary is breached by many roads and tracks which are the physical evidence of the dynamic interrelationship between the unenclosed uplands and the landscape of dispersed settlement and small enclosed fields on the lower slopes. In this context, it is uncertain whether the longhouses are permanent settlements or the summer dwellings of a transhumance régime.

Although sheep have now replaced cattle as the main stock grazed on the open moorland, seasonal grazing is still part of the farming economy of the adjacent farms. A number of large regular, but now ruinous, drystone-walled sheepfolds are sited both on the edge of the open moorland and deep within it. Although no extensive survey has yet been undertaken, it is highly likely that the present vegetational pattern of the uplands has been heavily influenced by grazing practices and many slight but significant earthwork traces attest to the constant effort to improve that grazing.

Whilst the open uplands are now perceived as a barrier to communication, in all earlier periods until the turnpike road era, they were criss-crossed by routes. Roman marching camps within the area at y Pigwn and Arosfa Garreg control two cross-mountain roads which served as major routes from the Usk to the Tywi valleys until the 1790s. They focus in the foothills of the Black Mountain and Mynydd Myddfai on two nucleated settlements, Myddfai and Llangadog, whose economic *raison d'être* were seasonal fairs and markets for the surrounding region. (Llangadog is currently outside the area described here).



ganrifoedd. Ceir palimpsest o olion rhychau cert dwfn yn dringo i fyny i safleoedd y chwareli a'r odyrnau. Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys cannoedd o odyrnau, o rai bach, cynnar o dywyrch i rai mawr o gerrig sychion.

Mae ardaloedd o hen goetiroedd sydd wedi goroesi o fewn y troedfrynau amgaeidd yn awgrymu bod llawer o'r caeau bach, afreolaidd wedi cychwyn fel tir a adenillwyd (daliadau preifat) o fforestydd ehangach eu maint. Mae'r ardal yng nghwmwd Perfedd, a ddaeth yn hwyr o dan reolaeth boliticaidd yr Eingl-Normaniaid; ni chafodd yr iaith Gymraeg na'r trefnau daliadaeth, cyfraith a chymdeithas Gymreig erioed eu disodli'n llwyr. Nid oes fawr o ddogfennau o'r Canol Oesoedd, ond mae ffynonellau chwedlonol yn ddadlennol. Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys lleoliad chwedlau enwog Merch y Llyn yn Llyn y Fan Fach, un o hynafiaid Meddygon enwog Myddfai. Mae'r ffermydd a gofnodwyd yn y chwedlau yn dal i fodoli heddiw, ac felly'n dyddio o'r 12fed ganrif hwyrach, gan fod y chwedlau a gofnodwyd yn y 14edd ganrif yn Llyfr Coch Hergest yn cysylltu Rhiwallon y Meddyg a llys yr Arglwydd Rhys o'r Deheubarth.

In recent times, the most important impetus for exploitation of the uplands from adjacent areas was lime production, the main fertiliser from the late 17th until the mid-19th centuries. A palimpsest of deeply rutted cart tracks ascend to the quarry and kiln sites. The area contains hundreds of kilns from small, early, sod kilns to large drystone-walled structures.

Areas of surviving ancient woodlands within the enclosed foothills suggest that many of the small, irregular fields originate as assarts (private holdings) from a more extensive forest cover. The area lies within the commote of Perfedd which came late under Anglo-Norman political control; Welsh language, tenure, law and social systems were never wholly superseded. Medieval documentation for holdings and land use is sparse, but folklore sources are revealing. The area contains the locus for the famous legends of the Lady of the Lake in Llyn y Fan Fach, ancestress of the hereditary Physicians of Myddfai (Meddygon Myddfai). The farms recorded in the legends still exist and may thus be of 12th century date, since the legends recorded in the 14th century Red Book of Hergest link Rhiwallon the Physician to the court of the Lord Rhys of Deheubarth.

#### CRYNODEB

<i>Rhif cyf</i>	HLW (D) 1
<i>Rhif map mynegai</i>	3
<i>Map AO</i>	Landranger 160
<i>Sir flaenorol</i>	Dyfed (Powys)
<i>Awdurdod unedol</i>	Sir Gaerfyrddin (Powys)
<i>Prif ddynodiadau helaeth</i>	Mae'r ardal gyfan o fewn Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog. Mae'r ochr ddeheuol yn cynnwys rhan o Safle o Ddiddordeb Gwyddonol Arbennig y Mynydd Du.
<i>Meini prawf</i>	2, 3, 5
<i>Cynnwys ac arwyddocâd</i>	Tirwedd ucheldir tonnog sy'n cynnwys mynyddoedd a throedfrynau a rennir gan ddyffrynnoedd ar ochr ogledd orllewinol y Mynydd Du, yn gyfoethog o dystiolaeth o amrywiol ddefnydd ar dir o'r cyfnod cynhanesyddol hyd y gorffennol agos. Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys: olion angladdol a cofadeiliau seremonïol o Oes yr Efydd; gwerysilloedd martsio a ffyrdd Rhufeinig; aneddiadau canoloesol a chysfndrefnau caeau; chwareli ac odyrnau calch o'r cyfnod ôl-ganoloesol; cysylltiadau hanesyddol chwedlonol a'r Ferch o Llyn y Fan a Meddygon Myddfai.

#### SUMMARY

<i>Ref number</i>	HLW (D) 1
<i>Index map no.</i>	3
<i>OS map</i>	Landranger 160
<i>Former county</i>	Dyfed (Powys)
<i>Unitary authority</i>	Carmarthenshire (Powys)
<i>Principal area designations</i>	The area is entirely within the Brecon Beacons National Park. The southern side includes part of the Black Mountain Site of Special Scientific Interest.
<i>Criteria</i>	2, 3, 5
<i>Contents and significance</i>	A rolling upland landscape comprising mountains and foothills dissected by valleys situated on the north west side of the Black Mountain, rich in diverse evidence of land use from the prehistoric period to the recent past. The area includes: Bronze Age funerary and ritual monuments; Roman marching camps and routes; medieval settlements and field systems; post-medieval quarries and limekilns; historic legendary associations with the Lady of Llyn y Fan and the Physicians of Myddfai.

## Ffynonellau detoledig / Selected sources

B. D. James, *Myddfai, Its Land and Peoples* (Privately published 1992).

A. Ward, 'Transhumant or Permanent Settlement? – Linear House Foundations along the Afon Clydach on the Black Mountain, South-East Carmarthenshire', in H. James, editor, *Sir Gâr: Studies in Carmarthenshire History* (The Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society: Carmarthen 1991), Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society Monographs Series 4 (1991) 1–22.

## **PURPOSE OF REPORT - AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

(section by D Thompson and D Gwyn (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust)

The following uses for historic landscape characterisation were identified by Cadw.

Planning, including large-scale intrusions such as:

- roads
- wind-farms
- mineral extraction
- large-scale landfill/waste disposal
- reclamation
- water schemes
- major settlement
- major industrial development

Management of land by:

- large corporate landowners
- farmers
- industrial companies
- water or electricity companies
- forestry industry
- National Trust

Advice to conservation agencies including:

- Cadw
- Countryside Council for Wales
- Environment Agency
- local authorities
- national parks

Developing local landscape frameworks for managing agencies by means of:

- Tir Gofal (Tir Cymen, ESAs)
- Cadw
- Countryside Council for Wales
- local authorities
- national parks

Providing information

- Contributing to academic understanding of landscape
- Stimulating further research
- Raising public perception of the landscape
- Preparation of policy statements by public bodies



## HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

(section by D Thompson and D Gwyn (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust))

Characterisation is defined as the process of identifying and defining the particular characteristics which make each area distinctive, and is rapidly emerging as the basis for a unified approach to describing and understanding the environment (Countryside Commission et al, 1997, 4). Ultimately, in order to be of any practical use, this has to be translated into the management of physical things.

At present there is no standard, accepted methodology for establishing the historical characterisation of landscape, although previous work on Llyn has suggested a practical approach based on the concept of 'character areas'. However, comparable current studies in England, such as the Cotswold AONB Historic Landscape Type Characterisation, are based on the principal of the predominant form of the present landscape [which] is identified principally by the existing patterns of enclosures within areas of landscape. Rippon's study of the Gwent Levels (Rippon, 1996) shows a different way forward and was the first published study in Wales. Unfortunately, the approach adopted here is relevant to only a limited number of parts of Wales.

For the purposes of this study the four landscapes on the *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales* have been divided into 124 historic landscape areas. These are described in section 2. Their location in relation to each other is shown on Figures 1-8



## EVOLVING HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION METHODOLOGY

(section by D Thompson and D Gwyn, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust)

'Characterisation' is a contribution towards the overall historic landscape initiative currently being funded by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, Countryside Council for Wales and ICOMOS UK. Its principal aim is to provide information to aid the management of the historic environment.

Historical landscape characteristics are the tangible evidence of the activities and habits of the people who occupied, developed, used and shaped the land to serve human needs in the past; they reflect the beliefs, attitudes, traditions and values of these people. They include the physical remains of all aspects of human activities and exploitation in the past (above and below ground, known and potential), and our understanding, interpretation and even perception of those remains. They may reflect a variety of activities occurring at one time, or evolving functions in different periods of time.

The Countryside Commission (in its document *Views from the Past*, 1996) states that as managers we should be concerned with the historic character of the present landscape, and not with the study of the past for its own sake. It places the idea of 'historic landscape character' at the centre of these ideas.

Characterisation is defined as *the process of identifying and defining the particular characteristics which make each area distinctive*, and is rapidly emerging as the basis for describing and understanding the environment. Historic landscape characterisation is one dimension of this approach: it sets out to identify the principal historic components within the current landscape. It is the great depth of human activity which underpins much of that which we feel is important and helps give an area its local distinctiveness. Historic landscape characterisation set out to establish the historic depth within the modern landscape by identifying its principal historic components.

The term 'historic character' is generally preferred to 'historic landscape', as it is now accepted that all landscape is historic in that it reflects, to a greater or lesser degree, the processes which have occurred in history and which have formed its present appearance.

At present there is no standard, accepted methodology for establishing the historical characterisation of landscape, but recent work on Llyn and elsewhere in Wales has suggested a practical approach based on considering the evidence as a series of themes which may provide an answer. At a landscape level, what is significant in historical terms includes field boundary patterns (whether they are irregular or regular, their size, date *etc.*), settlement patterns (whether scattered or nucleated, date of origin *etc.*); the relict remains of earlier periods which are to be found in upland or marginal landscapes; the effect of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century estates on the landscape; the impact of industry, military installations and so on.

The dominant historic themes or patterns in a locality help define local historic character. The combination of these characteristics give an area its local distinctiveness, and it is the definition of areas of local distinctiveness which leads to character areas. The concept of 'character areas' differs somewhat from comparable current studies in England, such as the Cotswold AONB, which are based on Historic Landscape Types where *the predominant form of the present landscape [which] is identified principally by the existing patterns of enclosures within areas of landscape*.

The process of characterisation can be briefly summarised as -

(one or several) components	→	dominant patterns
(one or more) dominant patterns	→	coherent character
coherent character (with definable limits)	→	character area
(several) character areas	→	local landscape

Characterisation is a practical tool intended to aid management in its broadest forms. In order to be of any practical use, this has to be translated into the management of 'landscape tangibles' (*i.e.* the evidence for historical processes and periods in the present landscape). It is essential, therefore, that the key historic landscape characteristics are features and/or patterns to which can be applied management prescriptions whose success or otherwise can be measured for monitoring purposes.



The reports emanating from this work contain a number of elements. The first part of the report contains general information concerning the background to the project, the methodology employed, a glossary of terms and general management issues. The second part contains information relating the specific area under study including: (a) historical background, (b) key historic landscape characteristics and (c) conservation priorities, and is accompanied by a map and a ground and aerial photograph.





## GIS PROFORMAE

(section by D Thompson and D Gwyn (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust))

This section contains instructions on filling in the GIS-linked recording forms created as part of the project. The form consists mainly of 'tick boxes' compatible with a table to be created (for example) in MapInfo, and has now been standardised across Wales. The GIS tables used by LANDMAP, and the form contains a number of fields which are intended to cross-reference to LANDMAP exercises. In this study the data collected on the proformae has been converted to LANDMAP GIS tables. These tables are reproduced as an appendix to this report.

The form is loosely divided into four parts - the first identifies the area by name, number, project and location; the second is a list of historic landscape 'themes' which is intended to act both as a check-list and to ensure systematic recording of all character areas (which can be transferred to database) to a certain level; the third list other relevant and management information; while the fourth is the principal link to LANDMAP.

The completed LANDMAP forms are included in Volume 3.

### PROJECT NO

This simply records the individual project number each Trust assigns to the particular project (e.g. G1527).

### AREA

This is the name of the area as used in the project: this will usually be based on a geographical, historical or cultural association.

### HLCA NO.

It has been agreed that there should be a unique (Wales, rather than regional) reference number for each character area (especially as some will inevitably cross Trust boundaries) for ease of reference. This number doesn't need to contain any information in itself (e.g. county identifier), so the simple idea of numbering from 1 upwards has been adopted. Based on previous experience, it is unlikely that each Trust will end up with more than a thousand areas, so the following allocation of HLCA (historic landscape characterisation areas) reference numbers will be used

DAT 1- 999

CPAT 1000 -1 999

GAT 2,000 - 2,999

GGAT 3,000 - 3,999

In this report the number sequence is 133-257.

### HLCA NAME

As above, a historic, cultural or simple geographic name is preferred (e.g. Creuddyn), otherwise a more general topographical description (e.g. rolling meadow) might be more appropriate.

### LOCATION

A six figure central grid reference should be sufficient.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

This should be succinct, preferably fewer than c. twenty words. This summary should help justify the decision on 'evaluation' made below (e.g. for Llandudno Outstanding example of planned 19th century seaside resort).

### THEMES

For each theme, all those descriptions which apply to the area should be ticked. Boxes should be ticked where significant evidence at a landscape scale exists within an area. The ticked boxes will form the basis of the free-text description below: this description should refer to all the ticked boxes and supply



supporting information. It is inevitable that more than one box (i.e. theme type) will be ticked for each area.

#### BOUNDARIES

This should record briefly how the boundary of an area has been defined, and whether the boundary is definite or indicative only.

#### MANAGEMENT/CONSERVATION PRIORITIES

This summarises the key historic landscape components which underlie (and are essential to) the character of the area and therefore need to be managed if the historic character of the area is to be maintained. This can be a summary of the relevant part of the main area entry.

#### PRINCIPAL CURRENT LAND USES

This field summarises the broad principal land uses within the area in an attempt to try to identify which future management mechanisms (e.g. AWAES for agriculture, UDPs for residential/urban areas) might be relevant to managing the area.

#### PRINCIPAL REFERENCES

Simply a list of which sources in the bibliography are most relevant to this area.

#### RECORDED BY / DATE

Name and date of compiler following standard practice.



## HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA (HLCA) FORM

PROJECT NO. DAT 55

AREA UPLAND CEREDIGION

HLCA NO.

HLCA NAME

LOCATION

ORGANISATION ACA (DAT)

LANDMAP REF.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

**THEMES** (tick where significant evidence exists)

#### AGRICULTURE (Field pattern)

Unenclosed/open ☐ Evolved/irregular ☐ Regular (small) ☐ Regular (medium) ☐ Regular (large) ☐  
Large enclosures ☐ Med. strips ☐ R+F ☐ Varied ☐ Degraded ☐ Other ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

#### AGRICULTURE (Field boundary)

Dry-stone wall ☐ Stone-faced bank ☐ Stone-faced bank with hedge ☐ Hedge ☐ Distinctive hedgerow trees ☐  
Earth bank ☐ Dyke ☐ Ditches ☐ Mortared walls ☐ Slate pillars ☐ Pale ☐ Sheepfolds ☐ Post+wire fence ☐ Other ☐  
Not present/Unknown ☐

#### FORESTRY

Ancient woodland ☐ Other broadleaved woodland ☐ Plantation ☐ C20 Forestry ☐ Scrub/unmanaged ☐ Coppice ☐  
Charcoal burning ☐ Other ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

#### COASTAL/MARITIME

Sea defences ☐ Intertidal features ☐ Harbour/fishing ☐ Other ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

#### RELICT ARCHAEOLOGY

Prehistoric settlement/fields ☐ Medieval settlement/fields ☐ Prehistoric ritual ☐ Post-medieval settlement/fields ☐  
Other ☐ Scattered ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Loosely dispersed scatter ☐ Dense scatter ☐ Clustered ☐ Ribbon ☐ Nucleated - planned ☐ Nucleated - organic ☐  
Business/commercial ☐ Other ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

#### BUILDING TYPE

Farmhouse ☐ Cottage ☐ Terraced housing ☐ Shops ☐ Place of worship ☐ Processing ☐ Distinctive vernacular style (specify in character summary) ☐ Other ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

#### PRINCIPAL BUILDING MATERIAL

Stone - random ☐ Stone - coursed ☐ Clay/earth ☐ Wood ☐ Brick ☐ Concrete ☐ Other ☐

#### PRINCIPAL ROOFING MATERIAL

Slate ☐ Tile ☐ Thatch ☐ Stone tile ☐ Concrete tile ☐ Metal ☐ Other ☐

#### INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Quarrying ☐ Mining ☐ Manufacturing ☐ Mill ☐ Brewery ☐ Metal processing ☐ Other processing ☐  
Craft/cottage ☐ Rural industry ☐ Other ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

#### COMMUNICATION

Footpaths ☐ Tracks ☐ Lanes-winding ☐ Lanes-straight ☐ Major road ☐ Ports/docks ☐ Airfields ☐ Bridges ☐  
Communications towers ☐ Public rail ☐ Industrial rail ☐ Other rail ☐ Canal ☐ Other ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

#### MILITARY

Prehistoric ☐ Roman ☐ Early medieval ☐ Anglo-Norman ☐ Edwardian ☐ Welsh ☐ Tudor ☐ Civil War ☐  
C19th ☐ WWI ☐ WWII ☐ Other ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

**ORNAMENTAL / LEISURE**

Deer park ☐ Parkland/garden ☐ Garden/park ☐ C20 ☐ Tourism ☐ Sports facilities ☐ Hunting estate ☐  
Other leisure ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

**ECCLESIASTICAL**

Cemetery ☐ medieval ☐ Cemetery ☐ modern ☐ Church ☐ medieval ☐ Church ☐ post medieval ☐ Monastic ☐  
Chapel ☐ nonconformist ☐ Other ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

**RESOURCES**

Power generation ☐ Power distribution ☐ Water supply ☐ Peat cutting ☐ Other ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

**BURIED ARCHAEOLOGY (not relict)**

Cropmark/parchmark ☐ Urban deposits ☐ Find scatters ☐ Palaeoenvironmental evidence ☐ Other ☐  
Not present/Unknown ☐

**HISTORIC ASSOCIATIONS**

Placename ☐ Artistic ☐ Folklore/legend ☐ Events ☐ Literary ☐ Persons ☐ Other ☐ Not present/Unknown ☐

**BOUNDARIES**

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**OTHER STATUS(non historic)**

AONB ☐ eSAC ☐ GCR ☐ LNR ☐ NNR ☐ NPA ☐ RAMSAR ☐ RIGS ☐ SSSI ☐ LOHIW ☐ Other ☐

**MANAGEMENT / CONSERVATION PRIORITIES****PRINCIPAL CURRENT LAND USES**

Arable - fodder ☐ Arable -cereal ☐ Pasture -dry ☐ Pasture - wetlands ☐ Traditional hay meadows ☐ Orchards ☐ Horticulture ☐  
Bog ☐ Marsh ☐ Fen ☐ Reclaimed ☐ Saltmarsh ☐ Cliff top ☐ Open moorland ☐ Woodland ☐ Residential/urban ☐  
Tourism ☐ Recreational/open space ☐ Retail ☐ Manufacturing ☐ Derelict ☐ Industrial ☐ Defence ☐ Other ☐

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH****PRINCIPAL REFERENCES**

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**RECORDED BY****DATE****LANDMAP EVALUATION**

Outstanding ( National) ☐ High (Regional) ☐ Moderate (Local) ☐ Low ☐ Unknown ☐

**LANDMAP TOLERANCE TO CHANGE (CONDITION)****LANDMAP MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES****ASSESSED BY****DATE**

## EVENTS THAT HAVE HELPED SHAPED THE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE OF CARMARTHENSHIRE

### *HISTORIC ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS*

Pre-Norman administration of west Wales was based on small kingdoms *orgwledydd*, which had been established before the 8th century AD. One such *gwlad* was Ystrad Tywi (literally 'Tywi Valley'), within which most of the study area lay; to the west of the Tywi estuary lay the *gwlad* of Dyfed and in the early 11th century both *gwledydd* became part of the kingdom of Deheubarth which occupied most of southwest Wales (Rees 1951, 19). Within each *gwlad* were smaller units of administration or estates known as *maenoriau*, attested to have existed by the 9th century and which were composed of a number of 'townships' or *trefi* (Sambrook and Page 1995, 3).

By the 12th century two additional administrative tiers had been introduced - the *cantref*, literally a group of 100 *trefi*, each of which was subdivided into a number of *cwmwdau* into which the *trefi* were grouped. Each commote contained a *maerdref*, a special *tref* adjacent to the king's court or *llys* where the bondsmen who farmed the demesne lands lived, near or amongst the numerous officials and servants who served the court. In conjunction the king or lord was also provided with an upland township which would meet the requirements of summer pasture (*hafodydd*) for his livestock (Sambrook 1995, 13-14). It is not possible to identify the *llysoedd* and *maerdrefi* of all the commotes within the study area.

The river Tywi was an important boundary of great antiquity, separating Cantref Mawr on the north bank from Cantref Bychan (specifically Cwmwd Iscennen) and Cantref Cydweli on the south bank (Rees, 1932). It follows that the area experienced a chequered history of tenure and was troubled by warfare until the end of the 13th century.

Cantref Mawr occupies an important position within the national consciousness as the last of the great south Welsh princedoms, enjoying a renaissance under Rhys ap Gruffydd, 'The Lord Rhys', from his *llys* at Dinefwr during the late 12th-century. It continued to be an independent lordship, retaining native customs and systems of tenure until 1284 when it was reorganised within the new County of Carmarthen. Cydweli had been in Anglo-Norman hands since c.1110 but Iscennen also remained nominally independent, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan, until 1284 (Rees 1953, xv). Across the Tywi estuary, the Dyfed *cantref*, Gwarthaf, was subdivided into a number of Anglo-Norman lordships from c.1110 onwards.

Anglo-Norman territorial divisions, despite the introduction of changes in tenurial systems, almost invariably followed the existing divisions even if some *cwmwdau* were split from their original parent *cantref*. Whilst the Lordship of Kidwelly, for example, was coterminous with Cantref Cydweli, the Lordship of Carmarthen comprised *cwmwdau* from both Cantrefs Mawr and Gwarthaf (Rees 1951, 24-5; Richards 1969, 253). The Lordships of Llanstephan, St Clears and Laugharne represented former *cwmwdau* of Cantref Gwarthaf - the latter becoming one of the most heavily anglicised areas of southwest Wales for which the mock name 'Laugharneshire' was later coined. The system of parishes formalised during the 12th- and 13th-century, and the hundreds established in 1536 (Rees 1951, 55-6) appear also to have respected the pattern of *cwmwdau*.

The effect of these divisions upon the landscape has been profound, particularly with regard to settlement patterns. The pattern of field systems has also been dictated by the nature of tenure, as has the development, or otherwise, of Medieval towns, while the regional style of buildings - especially ecclesiastical buildings - could be influenced by their location in Anglo-Norman or Welsh-held communities.

### *PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENT AND BURIAL SITES*

While there are many dozens of iron age enclosed settlements and hillforts, scores of bronze age standing stones and hundreds of bronze age burial mounds in the study area, the impact of ancient man on the historic landscape is relatively insignificant. It is only on unenclosed moorland such as Area 240 that burial mounds form an important element of the landscape. Here summit cairns are prominent features and may represent the only obvious impact of prehistoric man on the landscape.





There is no evidence for any of the iron age settlements in the study area having field systems associated with them - they sit isolated in the modern landscape - and therefore their influence on the historic landscape is not great, though there is the possibility that territories may have been incorporated into later administrative units. This theme has not however been researched in southwest Wales. Some settlements such as Castell Cogan (Area 179) and Merlin's Hill (Area 183) are prominent archaeological sites, but they exert no pressure on the surrounding landscape. Of all the iron age settlements, only the massive rubble rampart of Carn Goch hillfort (Area 222) is a strong landscape component, exerting an influence not just over the immediate area but also the surrounding landscape.

#### ROMAN SETTLEMENT

The Roman period has had a significant impact on the landscape of the study area which exhibits a sequence of marching camps, at least two forts, one of only two Roman towns in Wales and the only identified gold mine in Britain.

It has been argued that the Roman conquest of southwest Wales was a relatively low-key affair and that the indigenous iron age tribe, the *Demetae*, were peaceful, since there is little evidence of military action in the region during the campaigns of the 40s and 50s AD. However, finds of pre-Flavian pottery (from before the 70s AD) at Llandovery suggested that the fort (*Alabum*) had possibly been established by the 50s AD as part of a forward campaign from the upper Usk valley (James 1982, 8). The main thrust of the Roman campaign appears to have been waged during the 70s AD when the two superimposed marching camps at Y Piwgn, and the larger one at Arosfa Garreg, were constructed (all in Area 240). It was accompanied by an advance down the Tywi Valley to Carmarthen (*Moridunum*) and the establishment of the fort there, linked to Llandovery by a road. A further fort, so far undiscovered, probably lies somewhere between the two ie. near Llandeilo. The fort at Pumsaint (*Louentium*) was probably constructed during the same period (James 1992, 7).

Llandovery Roman fort (Area 214) forms a distinctive feature of the landscape still being represented by a raised rectangular area within which lies the church of Llanfair-ar-y-bryn. Pumsaint Roman fort, lying beneath the present village (Area 241), was constructed in association with a nearby gold mine that is still represented by a complex of adits, leats and hushes at Dolaucothi (Area 243). The network of Roman roads built to connect the forts has influenced landscape development at a fundamental level - many of their general courses have been followed by later or even modern roads.

The site of the Roman fort at Carmarthen (Area 181) has been recognised through excavation and several watching briefs, and lay in the area of the Medieval town, on a natural plateau defined by scarp slopes on two sides (James 1992, 8-9). It was associated with a quay on the Tywi estuary, and also a bridge which between them encouraged the growth of a civil settlement outside the east gate of the fort. It became a town - the *civitas* capital of the *Demetae* - and was enclosed within timber defences in the late 2nd-century, refortified in stone in the 3rd- and 4th-century, and featured an amphitheatre beyond its east gate (James 1992, 32-3). The defended circuit and street plan of the town have had a profound effect on subsequent development - the modern Priory Street more-or-less follows the line of the main east-west Roman street, at the west end of which lies St Peter's parish church which may have been constructed over the Roman west gate. Present streets and built-up areas follow the line of the Roman defences leaving the centre of the area comparatively free of development. The amphitheatre similarly proved an obstacle around which subsequent streets were diverted.

No formal villa site has been firmly identified although possible candidates have been proposed at Abercyfor, southeast of Carmarthen (Area 187; James 1980, 16) and Llys Brychan, near Llangadog (Area 225; Jarrett 1962). Romano-British farmsteads, and the continued occupation of small defended settlements, have been recognised outside the study area. In addition, a field system at Trefenty near St Clears (Area 155) may also have its origins in the Roman period.

#### MEDIEVAL CASTLES

The majority of dateable castles within the area are a product of the initial phase of the Anglo-Norman conquest of southwest Wales. However, there are a small number of undated earthwork castles, while Carmarthenshire is notable for its group of well preserved Welsh castles. Together they comprise some of Britain's finest Medieval sites.



The castle was the fundamental tool in Norman subjugation of their newly-acquired territories. Their establishment within Carmarthenshire begins in 1093 when William FitzBaldwin erected an earthwork castle, now gone, at Rhydygors near Carmarthen (Area 181; James 1980, 34-5). Abandoned 6 years later it was the precursor of Henry I's more permanent Carmarthen Castle (Area 181), which had been built as a motte-and-bailey by 1109. The area was rapidly carved up between a number of individuals, each of whom erected a castle at the head of his lordship or sublordship. The important masonry castles at Kidwelly (Area 159), Laugharne (Area 149) and Llansteffan (Area 141) in the Tywi and Taf estuaries were established, as the *caputs* of newly-created Marcher lords, in the first quarter of the 12th century (Avent 1991, 167-8); all three were ringworks. The motte-and-bailey at St Clears, just outside the study area at the head of the Taf estuary, may be contemporary. Essential to their long-term survival, and indeed the success of the Anglo-Norman conquest as a whole, was the facility for maritime supply and the coastal location of these early castles was a deliberate choice. Nevertheless the evidence suggests that the castle in southwest Wales was always primarily a centre of regional government and, for this reason, they were predominantly sited at, or near, existing administrative centres - strategic considerations in the narrow, military sense appear always to have been secondary.

At the same time, an independent Anglo-Norman incursion was being made into the upper Tywi Valley from the east, during which Llandovery Castle was established by 1116 (Area 212; Soulsby 1983, 162). Castell Meurig motte-and-bailey, near Llangadog (Area 235), may represent part of the same campaign.

However, the heartland of the area, the old Cantref Mawr and Cwmwd Iscennen south of the Tywi, remained in Welsh hands until the later 13th century. Two earthwork castles in the Tywi Valley may represent campaign castles erected during Anglo-Norman attempts, in the mid 12th-century, to gain control of the area; the motte-and-bailey at Allt-y-ferin (Area 191) marks its boundary with the Lordship of Carmarthen and may be the 'Dinweilir' mentioned as the site of a muster in 1159 (Jones 1953, 61), and abandoned soon afterwards while the small motte at Llanegwad (Area 191) may be the castle burnt by the Welsh in 1203 (Jones 1952, 82) - a borough was afterwards established, possibly under the patronage of the native princes.

The princes established castles themselves. Dinefwr Castle (Area 195), the *caput* of Cantref Mawr, was in existence by the 1190s and Dryslwyn, lower down the valley (Area 224), is broadly contemporary (Webster 1987, 89-104); both have cylindrical keeps that may have been erected under Welsh tenure. Carreg Cennen, at the head of Welsh Cantref Bychan (Area 256) was also a castle of the Princes of Deheubarth but all three were heavily rebuilt after their capture in the later 13th century.

Equivocal evidence for earlier fortifications lies beneath Dryslwyn Castle (Webster 1987). Both Llansteffan and Allt-y-ferin, however, were demonstratively adapted from Iron Age promontory forts.

Castles are a dominant feature of the landscapes within which they lie, not only for their purely visual impact - often recognised in later 'Romantic' estate design eg. at Dinefwr (Area 195) - but also representing a primary element in a number of landscapes influencing all subsequent boundaries, routeways and development.

#### MEDIEVAL CASTLE-BOROUGHES

One of the most, if not *the* most, enduring physical legacies of the Anglo-Norman conquest of south Wales are towns. An essential strategy of the conquering lords was the construction of castles outside which were established settlements of immigrants who would eventually gain economic control of the region. At some locations topographic evidence indicates that the provision of a defended civil settlement was integral to the foundation of a castle. Such a site is Kidwelly (Area 159), where outer enclosures designed to accommodate a settlement might have been laid out at the same time as the castle (Murphy 1997, 151-53). Outside other castles houses may initially have been located in the outer ward of the castle, but usually settlements were allowed to develop outside the castle gates. Laugharne (Area 149) is a good example of this. Here a small cluster of houses seems to have been provided with defences at an early period. Later documentation makes it clear that by the end of the Medieval period the settlement had expanded outside the defensive circuit (Murphy 1987). The formalisation of settlements into boroughs by granting a charter often happened several centuries after the settlement's foundation. For instance at Llandovery burgesses are first mentioned in 1185 (Arber-Cooke 1975, Vol 1, 82), but a charter was not granted until 1485 (Soulsby 1983, 163). It is in the coastal zone of the



Tywi, Taf and Gwendraeth valleys that the concept of towns and boroughs was most readily accepted, and where consequently towns flourished. Here to the towns of Carmarthen (Area 181), Kidwelly (Area 159), Laugharne (Area 149), Abergwili (188) and St Clears (just outside the study area) can be added Llansteffan, which though never granted a charter had many of the functions of a small borough. Concomitant with the founding of these town was the introduction of alien tenurial systems and farming methods. Such developments as open three field farming systems were introduced. In the heavily Anglicised coastal zone the effects of this introduction are still readily apparent in the historic landscape and are discussed below.

Outside the coastal zone up the Tywi valley from Carmarthen and Abergwili, the lengthy wars between the Welsh princes and Anglo-Norman lords ensured a difficult start for the Anglo-Norman planted boroughs. Eventually such towns as Llangadog (Area 206) and Llandovery (Area 212) developed into boroughs, but they have remained small. The effect of these boroughs on the surrounding historic landscape has been less marked than those of the coastal zone. Nevertheless, open field systems were employed, the evidence for which is shown on manuscript maps and recorded in documents, but is not now obvious in the historic landscape.

In response, and in imitation of the Anglo-Norman boroughs, the Welsh princes founded towns. Dryslwyn (Area 224) was established on the hill adjacent to a castle. Following Edward I's conquest of Wales the town passed into English hands, but it never seems to have been particularly extensive or successful and eventually drops out of history in the 15th century (Soulsby 1983, 133-34). The site of the town is represented by massive earthworks. Like Dryslwyn, Dinefwr (Area 195) developed outside the gates of a castle. A small town under Welsh patronage, it was divided into a Welsh and English borough by the English. The English borough was established several hundred metres away from the castle, and became the more successful of the two. Both were unable to compete with the growing influence of Llandeilo (Area 202), and had fallen into decay by the late 15th century (Griffiths 1991, 205-26). The territory of the boroughs came to form the demesne of the Dinefwr estate which in turn was transformed into a landscaped park in the 18th- and 19th-century.

#### TOWNS AND VILLAGES

The pattern of rural settlement is a distinctive feature of the Carmarthenshire landscape, primarily characterised by dispersed farms; nucleations are few while villages are primarily Post-Medieval, and often linear in form. This is typical within areas held under native forms of tenure.

Where nucleated settlements do occur it is primarily within areas subject to Anglo-Norman administration and tenure, being particularly concentrated in the Tywi estuary within the former Lordships of Laugharne, Llansteffan and Kidwelly (Areas 149, 141 and 159). Settlement began in earnest after the establishment of the castle-boroughs of Carmarthen and Kidwelly in 1100-1110 (Soulsby 1983, 102, 152). The native economy and tenurial systems were reorganised along manorial lines and accompanied by the establishment of centrally planned settlements. Some of these settlements may have been planted around *de novo* churches; Llanybri and Llansaint churches (Areas 153 and 169), for example, are chapelries within the parishes of churches with possible pre-Norman origins, and have Latin dedications. The two churches occupy distinctive, central positions from which roads and tracks radiate, and the villages lie within well-defined former open field strips. The Anglo-Norman Lordship of Carmarthen is not characterised by nucleated settlements though settlement at the demesne manor of the borough of Carmarthen, at Llanllwch (James 1980, 41-44), is clustered around the church (just outside Area 179). Abergwili (Area 186), meanwhile, was established as a small borough by the Bishop of St Davids in the 1280s (James 1980b, 19) and comprised two planned rows either side of the existing Carmarthen-Llandovery Roman Road.

The majority of the Tywi valley remained under Welsh tenure until the mid 13th-century (Rees 1951, 40-41). However, the traditional view of pre-Norman Welsh society, that the inhabitants of the country lived in scattered homesteads and had a natural aversion to urban life, is deceptive. Although people did commonly inhabit scattered *tyddynod* on hereditary lands, there were also conditions under which some settlements could become nucleations. For instance, late Medieval law texts may reflect earlier conditions when they refer to small hamlets *ortrefgordd* which were specifically required to comprise nine houses, and some *maerdrefi* may have become developed settlements (Sambrook 1995, 13).



So while early nucleations in the Tywi Valley are few, some may have their origins in such settlements. Both Llanegwad (Area 191) and Llangadog (Area 206) were, like Abergwili, established under the bishops in the later 13th-century (Sambrook 1995); Llanegwad was eventually constituted as a small borough, and may in fact have earlier origins. Llandeilo (Area 202) certainly has earlier origins having been regarded as a town by 1213 when it was 'destroyed' (Soulsby 1983, 160) and so may have been established under the native princes. At the political centre of the commote of Iscennen was the Ferdre (*maerdref*) estate at Carreg Cennen (Area 256) where a small estate was worked by 13 bond tenants who were in the charge of a reeve and subject to its own legal court (Rees, 1924, 200). Felindre Sawdde, near Llangadog (Area 204), was granted an annual fair in 1383 and may have been *amaerdref* (Sambrook 1995, 14); its unusual rectangular morphology and the accompanying strip fields are unique within the upper Tywi valley, and may be relatively modern, but an earlier Welsh origin has been recently argued (ibid.).

Not all of these settlements prospered. Llanegwad and Llandeilo, for example, were situated on or close to the Roman road and both had market rights, but Llanegwad did not expand; perhaps Llandeilo, with its ecclesiastical tradition, had come to be regarded as the regional capital of the middle Tywi Valley from an early period. The castle-boroughs eg. Carmarthen, Kidwelly, Llandovery and Laugharne mostly flourished until overtaken by the industrial towns of the 19th century, and Carmarthen was the largest town in Wales until the mid 19th-century (James 1980, 52). The two native boroughs of Dryslwyn and Dinefwr however failed, the latter partly due to competition from the more accessible Llandeilo. St Clears (just beyond Area 147) never developed beyond a mere village, and its centre shifted northwards when the A40 was turnpiked in the late 18th century. There is little evidence for deserted formal nucleations but at Marros near Laugharne (Area 137), present development around the church is all from the 19th century, possibly on the site of an earlier settlement.

Map evidence suggests that most villages within and on the fringes of the Tywi Valley are Post-Medieval, having been established during the 18th- and earlier 19th-century as informal clusters of cottages around a focal point which was normally a church (Llanarthne, Area 189, Llansadwrn, Area 210, Cilycwm, Area 215 and Myddfai, Area 232), but could also be a chapel (Peniel, Area 183 and Carmel, Area 190), mill (Felindre, Area 191), or railway station (Ferryside, Area 172 and Nantgaredig, Area 191). Not all are nucleations; Capel Dewi for example is a linear development either side of a road whilst Ferryside occupies two parallel streets. Ashfield Row, near Llangadog (Area 206) is a planted row of the mid 19th century.

Only a small part of the overall area lies within the 19th century industrial belt, but includes Burry Port harbour which was established in the first half of the 19th century as a coal port serving the Gwendraeth Valley collieries (Ludlow 1999). Industry was quick to take advantage of the port facilities and the company owners had, by the 1860s, begun construction of worker housing; Burry Port is, next to Carmarthen, now the second largest settlement within the area.

#### *SUBURBAN AND MODERN DEVELOPMENT*

Parts of the Carmarthenshire landscape are distinguished by high-visibility housing development of the 20th century, which has occurred in both town and country. Linear development both within and between Pembrey and Burry Port (Area 158) has doubled the built-up area within the 20th century. Carmarthen (Area 181) has undergone considerable development, characterised by social housing, on its east side, whilst 20th century building at Johnstown on the west side practically constitutes an entire new settlement.

Council housing is also a feature within the countryside and represents the major part of the pre-existing villages at Carmel (Area 190), Llanfihangel Aberbythych (Area 193) and Llanarthne (Area 189). Extensive construction of private housing has led to the development of 'new' linear villages in rural areas near Carmarthen like Cwmffrwd and Llangynwr (Area 187), and Peniel (Area 183), and also Rhosmaen and Ffairfach near Llandeilo (Area 202) while Nantgaredig (Area 191), Llangain (Area 179), Broadway (Area 173) and Llanwrda (Area 210) have doubled in size with similar housing.

It is the piecemeal development of such private housing during the late 20th-century that is so characteristic of lowland Carmarthenshire. It is particularly concentrated along route corridors such as the A40(T) and the A48, and close to urban centres such as Llandovery (Areas 214, 228). Its dispersed character contributes much to the present-day appearance of the countryside. Such housing is largely





absent from upland areas which, in the east of the study area, largely lie within the Brecon Beacons National Park.

### *INDUSTRY*

Land-use in the study area is primarily agricultural. However, the south Wales coalfield extends into the far southern end of the area to dominate its Post-Medieval landscape.

Industry has left physical evidence from a very early period, predominantly associated with waterpower. The Roman gold mines at Dolaucothi (Area 243) are represented by a complex of adits, leats, spoil-heaps and hushes which are still prominent features of the landscape. Most Medieval settlements were served by a water-powered grist mill, which often persisted into the recent Post-Medieval period and are frequently represented by working, or still-traceable leats. The woollen industry was never a characteristic of the study area but was practised on a small scale from the Medieval period through to the 19th century. Towns each featured a fulling mill while a concentration of mills on the lower Gwendraeth Fach included two fulling mills and an 18th century tucking mill (Area 159). Cloth production within the study area during the 18th- and 19th-century was almost exclusively a cottage industry but factories were erected at Llanswawel and Tregyb near Llandeilo. Windmills were never a prominent feature of the Carmarthenshire landscape.

Lead ore deposits in the Tywi Valley near Carmarthen (Areas 183 and 187) were worked from the 18th- and mid 19th-century from which a number of pits, and an engine house, survive (James 1980, 56), while the abundant supply of running water led to the establishment of a number of early ironworks. Copper ore deposits north of Kidwelly were also worked from an early date, the processing of which was undertaken at a waterpowered stamping works erected just outside Area 174 in c.1721 (Ludlow 1991, 85). However, tinplate represented the main industry of the Llanelli district which in fact came to be known as 'Tinopolis' and in 1737 the stamping works at Kidwelly was converted/rebuilt as a tinplate works (ibid) - only the second in Great Britain. Another early works was established at Carmarthen in 1748 (James 1976, 31). Both these works had a profound effect upon subsequent development leading to the construction of worker housing during the 19th century (James 1991, 56). Several brickworks were established within the Kidwelly - Burry Port area in the 19th century to exploit the local silica clays (eg. Area 171). However, the two towns never fully industrialised which is one reason for their lack of growth relative to the new towns of the 19th century. Industries within Carmarthen, for example, were products of agricultural services eg. woollen mills, tanneries and sawmills (ibid.) and to this day the urban areas are not primarily characterised by their industrial heritage.

The greatest industrial development, moreover, took place outside the historic towns, where there is a history of early coal mining activity. According to Leland coal pits were being dug in the lower Gwendraeth Valley in the mid 16th-century (Ludlow 1999, 24) and coal production intensified during the 18th century, extending from its centre around Trimsaran into the Pembrey/Burry Port area (Area 158). Closure of these collieries had begun during the late 19th-century and intensified after the First World War when the remaining local collieries were amalgamated under single ownership (ibid.). It was completed after the Second World War.

A harbour was established between 1819 and 1836 at Burry Port to serve the coal industry, but its facilities soon encouraged the development of other industries which by the later 19th century included a copperworks, tinplate works, white lead works, lead and silver works, and a foundry (Ludlow 1999, 30-31); the power station which formed such a dominant feature of the Burry Port landscape during the later 20th century was finally demolished in the 1990s. The remote marshlands of Pembrey Burrows to the west attracted more antisocial industries such as munitions, which were manufactured within Area 167 during the early 20th century (Page 1996, 15).

The Carboniferous Limestone belt runs between the valleys of the Gwendraeth Fach and Gwendraeth Fawr, up to the Black Mountain in the east. A number of 18th century lime kilns are situated in the coastal regions of the study area, and just beyond the northeast end are the extensive 19th century quarries of the Llandybie region, the limeworker settlement of Carmel lying on the fringes within Area 190. However, the main limestone workings lie in Area 239 on the Black Mountain. Here the pits, kilns and spoil heaps of the 18th- and 19th-century limestone quarrying and lime-burning industry form the main element of the historic landscape.



Apart from major modern quarries such as Coygan (Area 151), which has had a massive impact on the historic landscape, stone quarrying in the study area, though ubiquitous, has been small-scale and usually sufficient to provide local building materials. Outside the coastal plains and valley floors, virtually every character area has evidence for past stone extraction.

The study area has, during the later 20th-century, suffered the industrial decline typical of much of Great Britain. Modern industries are products of agriculture and are mainly represented by food and milk-product processing, exemplified by the creamery at Llangadog (Area 206). Most towns have industrial estates on their fringes, but the modern industry with the greatest impact on the landscape is tourism and leisure, with the development of caravan parks at St Ishmaels and Pendine (Areas 171 and 139).

### BUILDINGS

Carmarthenshire, like much of southwest Wales, is primarily a landscape of dispersed farms and small, linear villages the buildings of which are predominantly 19th century. The characteristic farmstead comprises a range of farm-buildings around a house that dates from the 19th century, identical with the domestic housing of the same period being two-storeyed, gabled and featuring four downstairs rooms around a central through-passage, end chimneys on both gables, segmental or square-headed openings in each bay, a slated roof and a rendered/pebble dashed exterior; when un-rendered brick quoins and surrounds are often used. Two distinct but nevertheless similar styles can be recognised in the farmhouses of the study area. The first belongs in the vernacular tradition. In these cases houses have an asymmetrical plan, with one bay of rooms substantially larger than the other and containing a substantial fireplace which is evidenced from the exterior by a massive chimney. Windows are small and placed asymmetrically, reflecting the room plan. Structures are sometimes one-and-a-half storey, rather than two. Because of the poor quality stone and mortar used, buildings in the vernacular tradition are usually rendered to prevent damp penetration. The second class of buildings belong in the 'polite' Georgian tradition. These structures were often built by or on behalf of an estate. They tend to be larger than houses in the vernacular tradition, with symmetrically-placed rooms and windows. Windows are larger, and externally there is a harmonious whole to the design. Because of the use of better quality stone, exteriors might be left un-rendered.

This domestic house-style is characteristic across most of Wales, but represents *re-building* rather than initial settlement. Such extensive rebuilding has erased a rich regional style. Carmarthenshire was formerly noted for its farmhouses in the longhouse tradition, which formed a distinct regional group concentrated within, but by no means confined to the more upland areas of the county, and by the earlier 19th century constituted the 'typical' Carmarthenshire farmhouse (Peate 1946, 51-84). These houses were of rubble masonry or, in lower regions, cob walling, with an internal division into the house and byre, and thatched queen-strut roofs with stone or wicker chimneys. Such houses have now all but gone and none survive in their original form (RCAHMW 1917, fig. 11).

Masonry and cob appears always to have been the main building material within the area. No Medieval house survives unaltered but a property opposite Carmarthen Castle (Area 181) retains the core of a 15th century jettied house (Dyfed Archaeological Trust 1986, 34), next to the remains of a possible 16th century cellared house (Carmarthen Museum Record), while two thatched, Medieval masonry houses with corbelled chimneys survived until recently in Kidwelly (Area 159).

Substantial masonry houses with corbelled chimneys still form the core of a number of rural properties, the homes of the *uchelwyr* or minor gentry of the 16th- and 17th-century. The houses are usually in the sub-Medieval tradition being asymmetrical, often single-pile, with an outshot, and sometimes built around a chimney which backs onto the entry (Smith 1988, 447-8); some are long-houses featuring a byre. They tend to be concentrated in the upper Tywi Valley and the foothills of the Brecon Beacons, but this may reflect survival rather than the original pattern.

At the other end of the social scale are the buildings of informal upland settlement, be it temporary or permanent. Characteristic of the high moorland of the upper Tywi Valley are crude, rectangular dry-stone structures, often with sunken floors, given the generic name 'long-hut' and a date broadly within the earlier Post-Medieval period (Sambrook 1999). None survives complete. They appear to have been primarily associated with transhumance pastoralism, representing '*hafodydd*' or summer homesteads. In



this they are distinct from the similar houses associated with 18th- and 19th-century squatter settlement on the fringes of common land, the ruins of which are a prominent visual features of these landscapes.

Urban buildings of the period could often be of similar poor quality. Llandeilo's main street was described in 1800 as comprising 'straw-thatched houses of the poorest description' (Soulsby 1983, 162) while the large village of Llansawel was described in similar terms, with 'no stone bridges over the two rivers, only wooden footbridges; and nearly all the houses were straw-thatched, many being hardly better than huts' (Sambrook and Page 1995, 23).

Assemblages of buildings with a distinctive architectural signature are not common in the study area. The best example is undoubtedly the buildings of the Dolaucothi estate (Areas 241, 142, 244) which were built in a pattern-book style in the 1850s. Buildings in or close to the former demesne of Golden Grove/Gelli Aur (Area 193) also possess a distinctive, or rather several distinctive styles. Other estates do not seem to have imposed any one architectural style, though the major rebuilding of farms belonging to the Broadway estate, near Laugharne, in the 1820s (Areas 143, 147) lend a coherence to the historic landscape.

Farm-buildings are in many character areas one of the most dominant historic landscape elements. Across the whole of Carmarthenshire, 19th century rebuilding of farm-buildings was broadly contemporaneous with the rebuilding of farmhouses. Almost all pre 20th century farm-buildings are stone-built with slate roofs. Size, arrangement and location of buildings was dictated by wealth and status. Small farms on upland fringes or on poor quality land (Areas 255, 185) usually have just a single small range of farm-buildings, which on the poorest of farms may be attached and parallel to the house. The most common type is for one-two-or-three ranges of buildings - barn, cow shed, stable, pig-sty - arranged around a yard close to the house. In estate planned farms the farm-buildings may be positioned semi-formally around a yard, as in Area 143. The larger the holding, the larger the size and types of farm-building and the more likely they are to be positioned a distance from the house. At the upper end of the social and economic scale, Newton House, Dinefwr has a magnificent courtyard containing stables and coach-houses close to the mansion, with a home farm located a kilometre away (Area 195). Corrugated iron buildings of 1930-50 are found at most farms, as are modern steel and concrete agricultural buildings.

Late 20th-century housing in a variety of styles and materials, either as individual units or in small estates, is a common element of the study area, and in some character areas are one of the dominant landscape elements.

### *CHURCHES AND CHAPELS*

The Anglo-Norman conquest of Carmarthenshire was accompanied by the re-organisation of its churches along Latin lines with a greater emphasis on administration. However, there is little evidence that churches were either re-dedicated or re-sited. A large number of them are therefore rural churches, often inaccessible and far from historic centres of habitation, with circular churchyards enclosing wells or springs. In addition, those that were subsequently associated with castles and boroughs often stand some distance away, in a pattern quite distinct from the church-castle association normally seen in planted settlements.

Carmarthenshire's rural historic churches have often therefore had little influence on subsequent settlement. However, they are still a primary feature of many landscapes, respected by the subsequent development of boundaries and routeways; they are often a distinctive visual feature, many of them being landmarks visible for many miles while some of the coastal churches have become navigation aids. They are, in the main, rather simple structures. There is no 'typical' plan-form but they generally consist of a nave and chancel, often with a porch and are almost entirely unvaulted (Ludlow 1998); those churches with towers, however, form regular groups within which exist similarities eg. Llanddowror (Area 147), Marros (Area 137), and Llanllwch (Area 181). The churches of the upper Tywi Valley, reflect an entirely different tradition; predominantly rebuilt in the late 15th- and 16th-century as large, unvaulted double-naved churches, in the 'hall-church' tradition and usually with west towers. There is a good survival of Medieval timber roofs in the region, eg. the wagon-roofs at Llandingat (Area 212) and Myddfai (Area 232); at the latter a rood-loft stair recess, of possible Jacobean date and Laudian inspiration, projects from the nave south wall.





Simple churches comprising just a chancel, and a nave with a bellcote, occur in all areas (*ibid.*). Size is variable, however, and its correlation with status, and parish size, is usually as might be expected. Urban churches tend to be large eg. Carmarthen (Area 181), Kidwelly (Area 159) and Laugharne (Area 149). In contrast, many upland parish churches are small, their parishes having been served by numerous former chapels-of-ease. There appears to be no real correlation between church size and type with function or ownership; monastic cells are often small and there is no real example of great episcopal investment in collegiate churches - Llangadog (Carmarthenshire) is really no more than a typical church for its area.

Characteristic of the area is the lack of original dressed stone, due to both the cost of importing suitable limestone and rebuilding, though some original work does survive (*ibid.*). However, much surviving church fabric may be of later rather than earlier date, for example few remaining towers are any earlier than the later 15th-century. This late date renders meaningless the recent attempts to map their distribution relative to Anglicised and non-Anglicised areas; indeed, several towers with Jacobean openings, for example Llandeilo Fawr (Area 202), are probably from c.1600. Some correlation does however exist between tenurial patterns and ostentation - for example the Decorated, cruciform former priory church at Kidwelly (Area 159) whose tower and a spire from c.1400 form a distinctive visual feature of the region, lies within an Anglicised lordship, whilst Laugharne (Area 149) and Llandawke (Area 147) churches within the Anglo-Norman Lordship of Laugharne exhibit good Decorated and/or Perpendicular mouldings.

Kidwelly is the only survivor of four monastic churches within the study area. Llandovery Priory was short-lived, being suppressed in 1185. Carmarthen's priory and friary (Area 181) were both destroyed after the Dissolution but their enclosures continued to dictate subsequent settlement, while the pattern of monastic holdings and land use, including those of Talley Abbey just beyond the study area, influenced field systems and continued to affect landscape development in the Post-Medieval period when they were acquired as great private estates and parks.

Extensive church rebuilding was undertaken during the 18th- and early 19th-century, most of it associated with the contemporary gentry estates (*ibid.*). Very little good-quality neo-Classical material survives, however, and such churches as were constructed in this style were rebuilt later in the 19th century. An exception survives at Capel Gwynfe (Area 233), where the church - now the church hall - is crude neo-Classical, from 1812-18. Many churches were in fact rebuilt, or at least refitted, to non-Conformist principles.

The earliest Welsh non-Conformist chapels date to the 17th century but within the study area none are earlier than the 18th century, and it was after the schism with the established church in 1811 that building began in earnest. Few of Carmarthenshire's larger settlements lack a chapel, usually Independent, Calvinist-Methodist or Welsh Baptist, and dating from the 19th century. The best - and the earliest - are in the towns, for instance Carmarthen (Area 181) which features Heol Awst built in 1726 (James 1980, 54) and the English Baptist Chapel, designed in neo-Classical style by George Morgan in 1872 (Hilling 1975, 167). The establishment of a chapel in a rural area could lead to new nucleation, eg. Capel Dewi (Area 187), Carmel (Area 190) and Peniel (Area 183), or polyfocal settlement at existing villages eg. Pendine and Pumsaint (Areas 139 and 241).

### *FIELDS*

The most immediate feature of any landscape is its pattern of fields and boundaries. Characteristic of most lowland areas of Carmarthenshire is a pattern of small irregular fields with earth banks topped with hedges. How and when this landscape developed is still a matter of debate.

The boundaries exhibit a remarkable degree of coherence right across the study area. There are pockets where dry-stone walls, mortared walls and rubble banks are found, but from the Taf and Tywi estuaries up to the finges of the Black Mountain at over 250m earth banks topped with hedges are ubiquitous. Many of these hedges contain distinctive trees which lend a wooded aspect to much of the landscape.

In general, the Carmarthenshire landscape had evolved into its present form by the time of the first widespread detailed mapping, ie. the tithe surveys of the 1830s and 1840s. Estate maps, where they survive, are generally from the late 18th-century and similarly show a landscape much as today. Earlier sources are considerably more equivocal. Early 17th-century surveys of the lower Tywi Valley and its



environs contain a number of descriptions of contemporary, private enclosure of land that had previously been unenclosed common (Rees 1953), with fields of fairly large and regular form. Surrounding a number of these areas eg. Alltuncnedda (Area 175) and 'Mynydd Kyvorth' (Area 185) are smaller irregular fields which, it must be assumed, predate these enclosures. However, these small irregular fields are typical of the pattern of enclosures that occurs throughout much of lowland Carmarthenshire and are particularly characteristic of valley sides in fairly poorly drained areas - a substantial percentage of the area. Such a comparison suggests that these landscapes are, at the latest, all late Medieval in origin.

However, some enclosed landscapes may be earlier. The date of the unique system of square, regular fields north of Trefenty (Area 155) is a matter of dispute, but the area enclosed by the fields - 700 metres square - may be significant in that the rigid Roman land division of 'centuriation' was laid out to a grid whose sides each measured 20 actus ie. 710 metres (Potter 1987, 101). Though centuriation was usually (but not exclusively) practised in the vicinity of *coloniae*, and no evidence has come to light that it was practised elsewhere in Britain (Rivet 1964, 101), the Trefenty system may confirm the survival of very early boundaries and the potential for a prehistoric origin for other field systems.

The survival, furthermore, of open field strips in the present system of boundaries has an interesting distribution, and is a characteristic of Anglo-Norman settlement; good examples exist around Laugharne (Areas 147-149), Llanybri (Area 153) and Kidwelly/Llansaint (Area 169). There is strong coastal and/or lower Tywi- and Taf-valley emphasis in the distribution of former open fields, though examples also exist on the fringes of the Medieval boroughs of Llangadog (Area 235) and Llandovery (Area 213). In fact, so characteristic are strip fields that where they do not survive, they may never have been employed, and there is little evidence that strips in any area have been replaced by different field patterns, for example the 'typical' pattern of small irregular fields.

At Laugharne, three unique, related open field systems survive: The Hugden (Area 148), Whitehill Down (Area 145) and The Lees (part of Area 143). In these three areas, owned by Laugharne Corporation and granted to the burgesses of Laugharne by Sir Guy de Brian in the 13th century, open field cultivation is still practiced. Strips in the fields are divided by low baulks or defined by ridge and furrow and held by different farmers, though the strips are no longer shared out on an annual basis and they are all now under pasture rather than arable cultivation.

Contemporary writers such as George Owen of Henllys suggest that the late 16th-century landscape of southwest Wales was generally unenclosed (Owen 1892), and may define a period when much further enclosure had begun. A pattern of larger, more regular fields is distinctive of other areas of Carmarthenshire and can be seen, for instance, in a broad belt north of Laugharne (Area 149), south of Llansteffan (Area 152) and in many areas of the Tywi valley. These fields are very similar to those known to be former common land, and may similarly represent 16th- and early 17th-century enclosure of hitherto open land.

Physical evidence for ridge-and-furrow ploughing, and lynchets, is widespread but dispersed, and forms no definable pattern. It is by no means confined to Anglicised areas or those practising open field agriculture and can occur in small irregular fields of relatively poor quality, located within the heartland of the Welshry eg. near Cwrt-y-cadno (Area 248). In Carmarthenshire it appears to have been a means of draining of heavy soils in a variety of areas. Some of it may, however, be the result of steam-ploughing. By far the best tract of ridge and furrow in Carmarthenshire lies on Laugharne Marsh (Area 143). This however is rather specialised ridge and furrow, perhaps a better term for it would be ridge and drain, or ridge and vurnow. It was not formed until after the draining of Laugharne Marsh in 1660.

In summary, considerably more research needs to be undertaken on the development of pre-1750 field systems within southwest Wales before any definitive statements can be made.

#### *SEA WALLS, DRAINS AND MARSH RECLAMATION*

The Carmarthenshire coastline is by no means static and has been subject to considerable change within the historic period. In particular, the Taf and Tywi estuaries have been subject to much change and reclamation.



From the later prehistoric period down to Medieval times, the coastline west of Laugharne (Area 143) probably comprised salt marsh with fresh and brackish-water lagoons. It formed part of the demesne of the Medieval Lordship of Laugharne (National Library of Wales 10118E Vol 1). In 1595, the first record of dwellings occurs, either on the fringes of the marsh or on islands of higher ground, as it is likely that the marsh was subjected to flooding and tidal inundation in the winter months. It was not until 1660 when Sir Sackville Crow came into possession of the marsh that a scheme of drainage was initiated with the construction of sea walls (Murphy, forthcoming) allowing the establishment of new farms, and by the late 18th-century Laugharne Marsh comprised the best farmland in the county. A further, large sea-wall was however constructed at the east end of the marsh in 1800-10 (James 1991, 150). A Ministry of Defence research establishment now occupies most of the marsh.

Pembrey Burrows, to the east of the Tywi estuary (Areas 156-7, 160-63 and 167-8), is a system of sand dunes of comparatively recent origin. They have been forming at the mouth of the River Gwendraeth Fawr since before the 17th century but probably no earlier than the Medieval period (James 1991, 159). Alongside their development have been a series of reclamations, around an initial nucleus formed by a tongue of dry land at the foot of Mynydd Penbre which was represented in the manor of Caldicot, first mentioned in the 13th century (Page 1996, 13). It was extended as the result of reclamation in c.1629 with the construction of a sea-defence called 'The Bulwarke' but the northern half of the area was still subject to regular inundation until a further sea-wall, Banc-y-Lord, was constructed in 1817-18 (James 1991, 156). This reclamation was accompanied by the formation of marsh and dune-slacks to the east of the dry land. The coastline had extended almost to its present line by the early 19th-century and most of the seaward part was already occupied by sand hills, called 'Great Outlet' on the Pembrey tithe map of 1841 and represented as common land. However, the area was not finally won from the sea until the 1850s when the embankments beneath the present Llanelli-Carmarthen road and the Great Western Railway main south Wales line were constructed (Ludlow 1991, 84), and an extensive Enclosure Award was granted (CRO AE3), but it remains very wet and marginal. The area was later occupied by an airfield, a stop line and munitions factory. It is now largely beneath planted coniferous forest.

The estuaries of both the Tywi and the Gwendraeth beyond the sea-walls are occupied by saltmarsh (Area 178). This marsh extends up the Tywi to Carmarthen (Area 180), where it has been subject to differing degrees of reclamation and is now a multi-period landscape, most of it - in its present form - of relatively recent origin. However, the present course of the river in the northern half of the area appears to have remained fairly constant since at least the Medieval period when several areas of saltmarsh, held directly from the crown as common, seasonal grazing land, are mentioned in contemporary accounts (James 1980, 42-44). An area of common land also lay to the south of the area at Morfa Uchaf, near Ferryside.

#### *MOORLAND AND COMMON LAND*

Legally it is important to distinguish between common land, and land that used to be termed 'waste' or 'mountain'. 'Common' was defined as land in which burgesses, freemen of a manor, lordship, sub-lordship or township exercised certain rights, such as grazing or the cutting of peat. 'Waste' may have formed part of the demesne of a lord, or in the Post-Medieval period owned by an estate or considered to have been Crown land. With a rising population from the late Medieval period, both forms of unenclosed land came under considerable stress and were subjected to enclosure. Once enclosed it is virtually impossible to detect the difference between former common or former waste.

There can be little doubt that the extent of common and unenclosed land in the lowlands of Carmarthenshire was formerly much more extensive than that which survived to be recorded in the first large-scale mapping of the late 18th- and early 19th-century. In 1278-82, Sir Guy de Brian granted free common to the burgesses of Laugharne from land to the north of the town almost to St Clears (Area 147; Williams, n.d.; Davies, 1955). This was clearly a considerable tract of land, but by the early 19th-century it had been reduced to a very small tract of low-lying wet ground. It is now no longer common (Rural Surveys Research Unit 1988). A similar situation probably pertained in all other parishes of lowland Carmarthenshire. For instance immediately to the north of Abergwili village in Area 183 a small extent of common recorded on the tithe map has now been encroached upon and divided into two, and close to Llangadog, Carreg Sawdde Common was encroached upon in the 19th century (Area 205). It seems clear that in the Medieval period cultivated and settled land was bordered by extensive tracts of common and waste, which was gradually encroached upon. Even with considerable research it would probably been impossible to establish the former extents of this common.



In upland Carmarthenshire the sizes and extents of commons and/or unenclosed moorland have probably remained relatively static over several centuries. This is mainly due to relief and altitude. For instance, Mynydd Mallaen (Area 247) is a high plateau flanked by steep slopes with enclosed farmland on the surrounding valley floors. Clearly in this type of situation there is little or no scope for piecemeal encroachment onto common land. The Black Mountain (Areas 239, 240) is by far the largest block of unenclosed common in the study area. The northern limit of this common presents a remarkable distinct and static boundary with enclosed farmland (Areas 211, 233). For much of its length this boundary is defined by a (collapsed) dry-stone wall and rubble bank. This boundary stands in sharp contrast with other zones of change between enclosed and unenclosed land in Wales where the normal pattern of successive episodes of encroachment and retreat is represented by relict fields and abandoned settlements. On the less steep and lower-lying western- and southern-side of the Black Mountain this pattern of abandonment is evident.

#### *FORESTRY AND WOODLAND*

Estates considered timber an important resource and went to considerable lengths to conserve trees and ensure new planting was undertaken. As today, most woodland lay on steep valley sides - land that had very little other economic use - and was and is of some antiquity. Correctly managed woodland could provide timber for building and ship-building, bark for tanning and dyeing, and coppice for fuel and charcoal, as well as providing ornamental features in the parks and gardens. The legacy of this management is still evident in the landscape as the most heavily wooded areas of Carmarthenshire lie in or close to the centres of the great estates of the 17th-, 18th- and 19th-century. The value of timber can be judged from documents consulted by Francis Jones (1962, 264) in his study of the Golden Grove estate. In 1757, John Vaughan of Golden Grove advertised the sale of 6,620 trees on the estate dispersed across three parishes. Richard Chitty of Sussex was the highest bidder for the trees with a sum of £10,300. It is clear from the documentation that the trees were confined to the demense and just a few of the many dozens of farms which comprised the estate, and that their felling would by no means denude woodland. Farm leases in the Golden Grove archive state exactly how management of timber was undertaken. For instance in the 1680 lease of Carreg Gwenlais farm the lord retained the right to 'cutt down Timber trees and wood' (Murphy and James 1992, 9), and at Carreg Gwenlais in 1768 the estate retained 'all timber trees and trees likely to become timber and all coppices of wood and underwood'. The tenant was not allowed to 'fell, cut down, lop, top or uproot and timber or other trees' and was obliged to plant ten saplings of oak and ten of ash and 'sufficiently fence them so that they may become timber'.

Unlike many other Welsh counties the impact of 20th century afforestation on the landscape has been muted, mainly due to the limited amount of unenclosed or poor quality land available for planting. However, on particular types of landscape, such as steep valley sides and open moorland in the northeast of the county, no other single process has had such a dramatic effect upon the historic landscape than afforestation. The ethos, methods and techniques behind this afforestation is set out in a Forestry Commission book of 1959 (Edlin). Early inter-war afforestation concentrated on relatively lower-lying ground and steep valley sides, and often involved replanting of old estate woodlands and filling in the gaps between old established deciduous woods. The steep valley sides of the upper Tywi and upper Cothi, and the hilly ridges of Myddfai parish are examples of such planting (Areas 217, 228, 249). Later planting, in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, concentrated on high unenclosed moorland. Here very large blocks of conifers blanked vast tracts of former open moorland (Areas 238, 245, 252). At Pembrey (Area 162) the blanket planting of conifers over sand dunes has created a modern lowland forest.

#### *ESTATES, PARKS AND GARDENS*

One of the events most immediately recognisable in the Carmarthenshire historic landscape has been the creation of the great gentry estates, parklands and gardens during the 17th-, 18th- and early 19th-century. The history of the gentry families, from which the development of this parkland landscape can partly be charted, has been chronicled by the late Major Francis Jones (Jones 1987). Six of the historic parks and gardens within the study area are entered in the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales, as PGW (Dy) - (CAM).





The Tywi Valley/Myddfai landscape area, in particular, is significant principally for its unique group of planned parks and gardens and for its historic associations with the Picturesque movement. As a result there is a widespread popular sense of the area as a 'cherished' landscape. Many of these estates are now neglected, derelict and often difficult to differentiate from the surrounding landscape; many more however survive sufficiently to give a strong parkland aspect throughout the landscape area. The most important of these great estates include, with their parks, those of the Vaughans at Golden Grove (Area 193; PGW (Dy) 10), the Rices (Rhys) at Dinefwr (Area 195; PGW (Dy) 12), the Dyers at Aberglasne (Area 192; PGW (Dy) 5) and the Jones at Abermarlais (Area 209). The first three estates have retained their houses, now 19th century in form but retaining significant earlier elements at Aberglasne and Dinefwr, both of which have been restored and are open to the public. Elements such as icehouses, stables and carhouses, home farms and the assemblage of service buildings associated with great houses of the period, also survive. In addition, significant artificial landscape elements survive in the form of walled and terraced gardens, planted trees and groves, and ha-has etc, the establishment of which involved the wholesale alteration of historic boundaries, often completely obscuring underlying landscapes. Within the immediate Tywi hinterland lies Middleton Hall (Area 188) emparked under the Paxton and Abadam families, and Cilgwyn (Area 228) under the Gwynne-Holfords; both have lost their houses and most buildings but the former is the site of the new National Botanical Garden of Wales.

Most of these estates were accumulated during the 18th century - when the houses were generally rebuilt and most of the parks and gardens were laid out - but many have earlier origins. Abermarlais, for example, was a manorial centre during the Medieval period, with its own fair and possibly a nucleation (Sambrook and Page 1995, 22) which was swept away under subsequent parkland development. Aberglasne is associated with an early walled, arcaded garden. Most of the early estates, moreover, developed around gentry houses first mentioned in the late 16th- and early 17th-century when the new *uchelwyr* were becoming firmly established as the county squirearchy. Many of these families retained occupancy until the 20th century but an equal number claimed early origins via ambiguous pedigrees. However, in a parallel trend, new houses and parks - often established by cadet branches of the same gentry families - were sited to take advantage of the scenic views of the Tywi Valley and other areas within the region in an aesthetic trend that received impetus from the Picturesque movement.

The Dolaucothi landscape area is dominated by three great estates. Edwinsford (PGW (Dy) -) and Aberannell (both Area 253), unlike the Tywi Valley estates but like so many others in Britain, evolved from former monastic granges during the late 16th-century - in this case, both belonging to the Premonstratensian Talley Abbey. Edwinsford has had a significant impact both in terms of landscape and built heritage, as has the third, Dolaucothi (Areas 241-243; PGW (Dy) 7), with the distinctive architectural signature applied to tenant farms and cottages.

The impact of gentry parks and landscapes becomes less evident towards the south and west of the study area, particularly in the Taf/Tywi Estuary landscape area; however, the garden at Llanmiloe (Area 139, PGW (Dy) 1) retains significant historic elements.

### COMMUNICATIONS

The rivers Taf, Tywi and Gwendraeth form a plexus of historic routeways, both maritime as represented by their estuaries and natural harbours, and on land as their valleys lie between the coast and the higher ground of the central Wales massif. All east-west routes must still pass through Carmarthen.

The Tywi Valley has therefore, since the Roman period at least, been one of the great route corridors through south Wales, known as 'The High Road' in the early 19th-century and now represented by the A40(T). It connected the fort at Llandovery (*Alabum*) with the town at Carmarthen (*Moridunum*) along the interface between the Tywi floodplain and the rising ground to the north (mainly within Areas 182 and 196/201). It represents the natural path for human traffic and may perpetuate a much earlier route. A second Roman road ran southeast to northwest between *Moridunum* and the fort at Loughor (*Leucarum*), crossing the valleys of the Gwendraeths Fach and Fawr and followed by the present B4306 (partly within Area 187). A third ran from *Moridunum* to the fort at Llanio (*Bremia*) near Llanddewi Brefi on the approximate line of the present A485 (partly within Area 183); the course of the road between Llandovery and Llanio, via Areas 214, 257, 253 and the fort at Pumsaint (*Louentium*) has recently been established by aerial photography.



The upper section of the Tywi Valley road had probably become disused by the Medieval period and, until the 18th century, the course chosen for the main Llandeilo to Llandovery section of the 'High Road' followed the line of what is now an unclassified road along the ridge between the Tywi and the Afon Dulais (John Ogilby's late 17th-century map book). The broad course of the Roman road was reverted to for the earlier 18th-century mail route (CRO, Cawdor Map 106) and by 1771 had been enacted as a turnpike along its entire route (Lewis, 1971, 43). The road was enhanced in c.1824 under Thomas Telford when stretches near Llanegwad and Llangathen (Area 191), and Manordeilo (Area 196/201) were straightened.

The Roman town of Carmarthen (Area 181) was also a flourishing port (James 1992, 32-33), while the siting of the castles at Carmarthen and Kidwelly (Area 159), and their early towns, was chosen for their situation along navigable stretches of the Tywi and Gwendraeth Fach estuaries respectively. Both developed into important ports which, in the Medieval period traded as far afield as Gascony (Lodwick and Lodwick 1972, 121-123). The quay at St Clears beyond Area 149 never developed anything more than a local traffic while the ferries between Ferryside and Llansteffan (Areas 172 and 141) and across the Taf estuary (Areas 146 and 149) had little affect on subsequent settlement. Despite competition from rail, commercial traffic between Carmarthen and Ireland and the West Country continued until the end of the 19th century. The quay at Kidwelly, however, had begun to silt during the 18th century, just as the exploitation of coal seams was beginning within its hinterland, and in 1766 Thomas Kymer began a canal between his Gwendraeth Valley collieries and a new quay downstream of the old in Area 171 (Ludlow 1999, 24).

Kymer's Canal ushered in a new age of overland and maritime communications. Two more canals connecting the coalfield to new Kidwelly wharves were cut, and in 1819 construction began on an entirely new harbour in the sand-dunes of Pembrey (Area 158). The harbour had silted up by 1830 and a new one was established at Burry Port and was more-or-less complete by 1836, as a result of which Burry Port developed as an entirely new town. The harbour reached a peak of activity in the second half of the 19th century but began to decline after the First World War and largely ceased operations after the Second World War, most of the harbour fittings being removed during the early 1980s (Ludlow 1999, 3).

The harbour was served by a number of canals, the most important of which - the Kidwelly and Llanelly Canal - was converted into a railway line from 1866, 14 years after the GWR had constructed their main south Wales line through Kidwelly and Carmarthen across the marshes of Pembrey Burrows and the Tywi estuary (Areas 156, 158, 171 and 178; Ludlow 1999, 28-30). The former is disused but the latter is still the main Great Western line.

The nature of rail transport and the advanced engineering of the 19th century had made it possible to break free of the higher ground to exploit not only the coastal marshes but also the Tywi Valley floor. The line from Carmarthen to Llandovery (mainly through Areas 182 and 196) was opened by the Llanelly Railway and Dock Company in 1858 (Gabb, 1977, 76) and, in 1871, was acquired by the London and North Western Railway; it is still operational as the 'Heart of Wales' line. The railways influenced the settlement pattern with the development of new villages around stations at, for example, Nantgaredig (Area 191) and Ferryside (Area 172), and their embankments, even when disused, form prominent features within the landscape.



## MANAGING HISTORIC CHARACTER

(by D Thompson and D Gwyn, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust)

### Rural land-use change

There have been many pressures on the rural environment and the countryside over the last 50 years as a result of changes in land use and shifting priorities for agriculture (the principal rural land use). Agricultural intensification and the maximisation of productivity were the priorities up until the mid-1980s, and as a consequence the character of rural landscapes changed dramatically during this period as hedgerows and trees were removed to create more efficient farming systems. Reclamation of the hills and marginal land led to the removal of significant upstanding archaeological sites and palimpsest landscapes.

Currently, due to agricultural over-production and a general greater awareness of and concern for the quality and protection of the rural environment, the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy provides a number of incentives to farmers and landowners to manage their land in an environmentally sensitive manner. The recently introduced all-Wales Tir Gofal scheme includes provision for the conservation of certain habitats as well as sites and features of archaeological and historic landscape interest.

However, of the estimated 27,000 farms in Wales, only c. 600 farms per year are currently entering into such agreements, which leaves the vast majority outside any formal management scheme, and so many important archaeological sites and landscape features continue to be lost. The challenge therefore is to identify historic landscape priorities for conservation, protection, enhancement or even restoration both within the scheme and without it.

Three of the principal advantages of an approach using character areas are that (a) it is able to identify and map both local distinctiveness and national importance; (b) by identifying physical features which can be managed it can feed directly into land management and development planning strategies; and (c) it sets the management of individual features within their local landscape context, allowing emphasis to be placed on those features which best define local landscape character. It can assist in management plans by setting priorities for management and enhancement, highlighting intrinsic values, and encouraging links to multi-purpose management.

Characterisation is about management: if we are going to manage effectively, we must know what is there, what is important and what we want to do with it. Character areas can tell us what is distinctive (*i.e.* important both locally and nationally) about a particular area, and therefore what needs to be managed in order to retain that area's distinctiveness (character).

### General considerations

Positive management should be aimed at halting and, if necessary, reversing any trends that can be shown to be causing unacceptable damage to the historic landscape resource. If at the same time management can actually enhance the historic landscape, then that is even better. It is essential that such management is continuous, and contains provisions for monitoring and review.

One of the basic tenets underpinning management is that we should be aiming to continue (rather than halt) the past evolution of the landscape: to do this we must first identify what is important and significant in historic landscape terms. It is the overall historic character of the present landscape (as evidenced in important and significant groupings and patterns) which we should aim to retain, but in order to do this we must concentrate management actions at the level of individual components. We must identify, conserve and enhance the local and regional historic diversity of our landscapes.

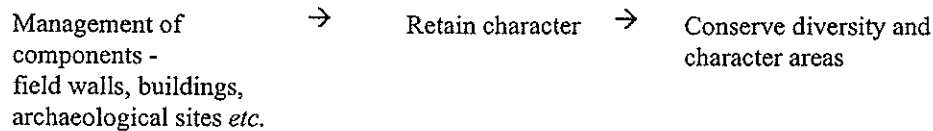
Agri-environment and other rural initiatives offer the opportunity to integrate the needs of the historic environment with modern land-use requirements to produce a workable, effective management system. More importantly, they should result in a working, viable landscape, which should provide ways and means for the various human activities in an area to be integrated with each other and with conservation, at the same time providing opportunities for study, research, education, interpretation and quiet enjoyment.





This means that sites and features of historic landscape interest are positively managed for their own sake, rather than just left unimproved. It is important that the management of such features is integral to the management of the farm, or the scheme, as a whole, rather than an isolated, unrelated activity.

By working at the most basic level, management can be used to retain the general historic character of the area -



A management plan should specify conservation objectives for a site/area and how they will be monitored: it should identify points at which some response will be made if monitoring shows that a feature is changing: it should establish what activities/processes will be the subject of monitoring: it should establish what management of on-going activities is required; and identify the types of development or activities which might adversely affect the site.

Not all the sites and features which comprise the historic environment require the same detailed level of management: some sites can be adequately managed by the application of simple, general strategies, while more complex sites merit more detailed, site-specific, problem-led responses.

#### **Mechanisms - general**

It is envisaged that characterisation has many potential applications to management including -

- assisting in developing landscape conservation and enhancement projects, by identifying elements and patterns of the historic environment which are considered either typical of a local area (provide local distinctiveness) or are of particular importance (rare at a national level);
- targeting resources within grant-aid by government and other organisations towards conserving elements and patterns of the historic environment in the same way;
- developing policies for unitary development plans;
- assisting in determining planning applications, especially large-scale developments such as roads, wind-farms, mineral extraction, large-scale landfill, waste disposal, reclamation, water schemes, major settlement and major industrial development;
- aiding the management of land by farmers, and large corporate landowners such as industrial companies, water or electricity companies, the forestry industry and the National Trust;
- providing baseline information for local areas against which future change can be monitored, for example as part of the new Tir Gofal scheme;
- providing general information not already on the SMR which can be used to inform advice given as part of a number of rural initiatives such as Tir Gofal, Woodland Grant Schemes *etc.*;
- providing advice in a rural framework to conservation agencies including Cadw, Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency, local authorities, national parks and others;
- providing information to a number of wider initiatives, including contributing to our academic understanding of landscape, stimulating further research, raising public perception of the landscape, and the preparation of policy statements by public bodies.



### **Mechanisms - specific**

*Tir Gofal* is open to applications from farmers throughout Wales. Within the scheme, payments will be made to farmers for observing 'codes of good environmental practice', one of which is care and enhancement of the historic environment. As the scheme is a 'whole farm' scheme, it allows archaeological management strategies sensitive to the character of the landscape as a whole to be integrated with farming practices. Characterisation is useful for monitoring purposes, as it sets out the wider historic environment framework within which individual farm plans will sit. It can also help prioritise management within a broader landscape context.

*Unitary Development Plans* address 'land use' issues. They may take into account LANDMAP initiatives which involve a certain level of historic characterisation.

*Countryside strategies* are the responsibility of local authorities (together with others), which have a general duty under section 1 of the Countryside Act, 1981, to have regard to the desirability of conserving the natural beauty and amenity of the countryside in the exercise of their functions relating to land. Countryside strategies principally address management of the countryside in areas outside settlement limits, but they are also a mechanism, at least in part, of implementing development plan policies. In Wales, such strategies are supported by CCW.

*Local authorities* have a number of powers which have implications for the management of the historic environment including the power to establish Country Parks (section 7 of the Countryside Act 1968); the ability to declare Local Nature Reserves (section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949); the ability to enter into access agreements with landowners (section 64 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949); the ability to buy derelict land (often of industrial archaeological interest) for reclamation purposes (section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949); the duty to make Tree Preservation Orders where appropriate (section 198 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990); and the duty to apply The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 which controls the removal of certain important hedgerows (from section 97 of the Environment Act 1995). Other powers are treated separately below.

Some local authorities have a countryside warden service which would benefit from characterisation information.

*Local Agenda 21 programme* At Rio, governments committed themselves to setting up national targets for safeguarding and improving the environment. Local Agenda 21 and Local Biodiversity Action Plans provide the means of meeting these targets, and of promoting the principles of sustainable development, at a local level. Both initiatives are about embracing a conscientious vision of the long-term future by identifying what matters locally and paying serious attention to the global costs of maintaining local lifestyles.

This has implications for archaeology and the historic environment? At a local level, sense of place is a fundamental aspect of quality of life. The present day landscape underpins our sense of the place in which we live. Much of its character and distinctiveness is derived from the historic environment (archaeology and the built heritage in all its forms). The historic environment is of course both fragile and non-renewable. We have a responsibility to maintain it so that future generations can also appreciate and benefit from it in the same way that we do. However, the landscape is not static. Just as today's landscape is a product of the changing relationships between people and their environment through time, so it must be allowed to continue to change.

The point of sustainability is that it promotes change which meets the needs of the future whilst retaining the integrity of the historic environment. In order to do so decisions have to be made about the relative importance of different elements. Traditionally, evaluation has been based on individual sites, with particular examples being selected out for special protection (known as scheduling). However, it is the sum total of archaeological features not individual sites which give landscape its grain and it is often the more ordinary features that create 'local distinctiveness'. In order to ensure that decisions about the future of the historic environment are made on a secure basis, sound information needs to be gathered. Historic landscape characterisation work of the kind being carried out by the Trusts provides historic environment audits, from which decisions of this kind can be made.



*Biodiversity Action Plans* LBAPs are a means by which Local Government Authorities can implement the biodiversity recommendations established after the Rio Summit. They achieve this by building up local partnerships and taking account of both national and local biodiversity priorities to develop strategies for the conservation of species and habitats of local significance. As we are still at the early stages of our involvement, more information will be forthcoming at a later date, but it is already obvious that the type of general information coming from characterisation projects will be able to feed into such plans.

At a general level, archaeology is of relevance to LBAPs because it raises awareness of the historical origins of the contemporary environment. There are no purely 'natural' environments in Britain; the landscape is the product of millennia of human activity. Our knowledge of the changing relationship between people and their environment through history allows us to understand the land-use activities which have led to the creation of contemporary landscapes, and comment from an informed historical perspective on those practices which could be encouraged in order to protect and conserve particular landscapes and ecosystems.

*Access* is a key issue in the countryside, if we are to enjoy the landscape and all its inherent interests and in turn engender understanding and respect for the countryside and the way it works. In addition to the rights of way network, a bill has recently gone Parliament with proposals to provide greater access to open areas of the countryside. As many of the best-preserved and most fragile palimpsest archaeological sites and landscapes lie within these areas, this has potential implications for archaeological management.

Historic landscape characterisation can identify these areas (i.e. where there are well-preserved yet fragile archaeological remains) and thus highlight the potential management problems if the areas are 'opened up' to public access. It may even be that such areas could be excluded from unfettered access under new legislation, either permanently or on a temporary basis.

Characterisation also has the potential to inform leaflets, trails and other interpretative material.

*Tourism* The Wales Tourist Board (WTB) has the strategic responsibility for encouraging people to visit Wales and for the provision of tourist facilities. In recent years tourism has become one of the most important growth sectors of the economy. Unitary authorities all have a tourism strategy of some description, and historic characterisation has a part to play in sustainable 'green tourism' in that it can help identify local distinctiveness which can be used both to attract visitors (by way of advertising), create atmosphere and to inform quality initiatives such as local walks, guides and other recreational activities. It can also direct visitors to areas with a robust historic environment, and away from those which are particularly fragile.

*Management agreements* In addition, local authorities have the ability (under section 39 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981) to enter into management agreements with landowners. This is an area which could be explored further from the historic environment perspective, as such agreements could cover not only individual monuments but also historic landscape characteristics (such as boundary types).

*Other local authority programmes* Local authorities have programmes for economic development, highways maintenance, environmental education and coastal protection. These would all benefit from the information which is being compiled through the characterisation projects, and, in the other direction, the safeguarding of the historic environment would benefit from those drawing up these programmes having direct access to historic landscape characterisation data. In fact, information at this broad level would probably be more useful than detailed, site-specific SMR data.

*Forestry Commission* Information from characterisation projects will be invaluable in contributing to new national and regional indicative forestry strategies, indicating where new proposals for planting are likely to be acceptable (or unacceptable) from an historic environment perspective. On a day to day basis, it can provide information at a landscape level which can inform proposals for new planting. It will be particularly useful when considering proposals under any of the challenge schemes.



*Environment Agency* is responsible for producing Local Environment Action Plans (LEAPs) and Catchment Management Plans (CMPs). The historic environment does not have a high profile in either of these, and both could therefore benefit from information which characterisation can provide.

*Other bodies* Historic landscape characterisation information can be used to educate and inform a wide range of organisations and individuals including statutory agencies, voluntary bodies (RSPB, Woodland Trust, North Wales Wildlife Trust, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, National Trust) town councils, community councils, farming unions and others. It is our experience that often it is easier to explain the importance of, and inherent interest of, the historic environment by using historic characterisation, than by the more traditional means of individual archaeological sites and excavations.

Local distinctiveness and a sense of place, which are of undoubted interest to people, can all be conveyed by such means, and the potential importance of this aspect of characterisation cannot be emphasised too strongly.





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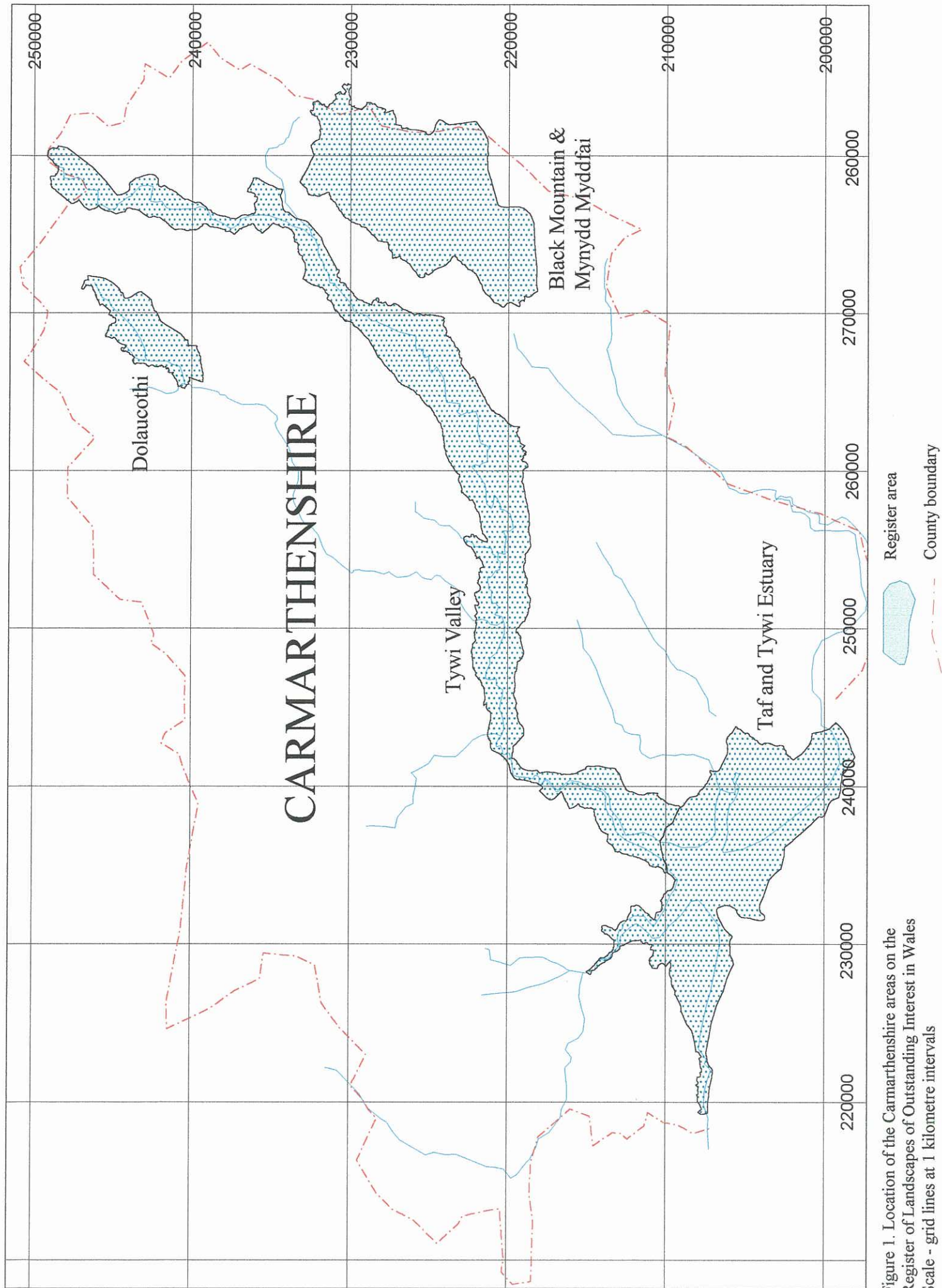


Figure 1. Location of the Carmarthenshire areas on the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Interest in Wales  
Scale - grid lines at 1 kilometre intervals



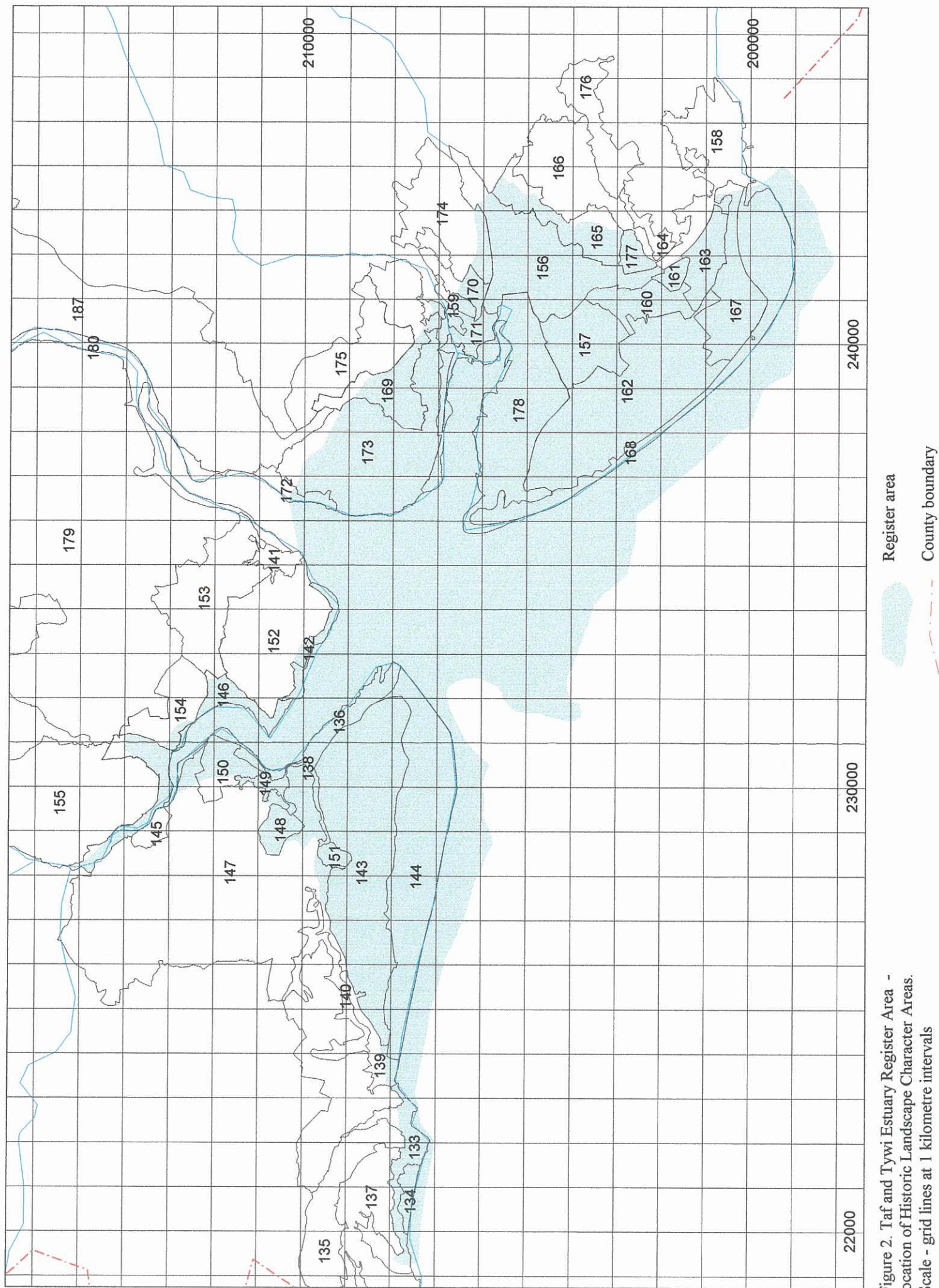


Figure 2. Taf and Tywi Estuary Register Area - location of Historic Landscape Character Areas. Scale - grid lines at 1 kilometre intervals





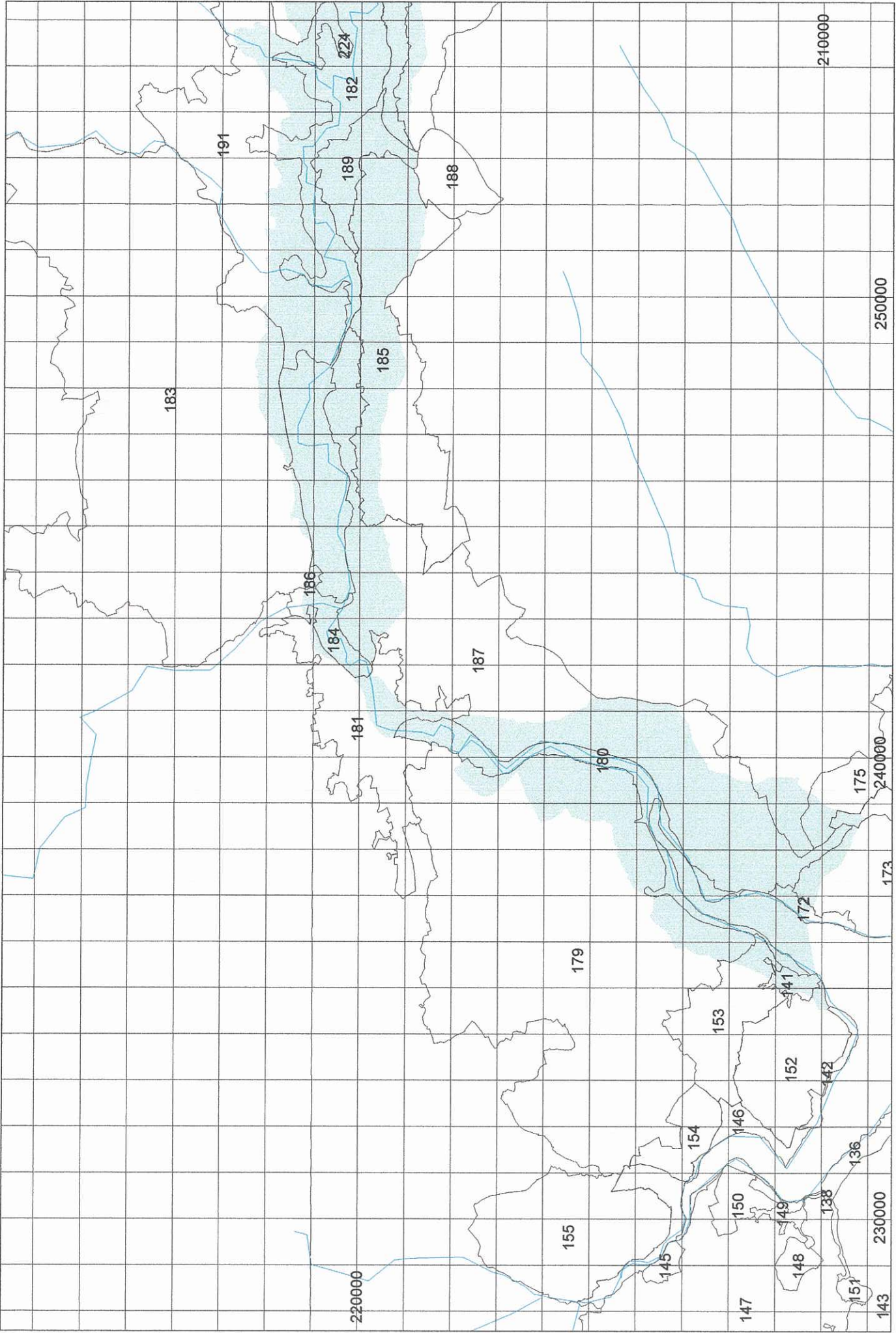


Figure 3. Tywi Valley Register Area - western part - location of Historic Landscape Character Areas.  
Scale - grid lines at 1 kilometre intervals

Register area  
County boundary





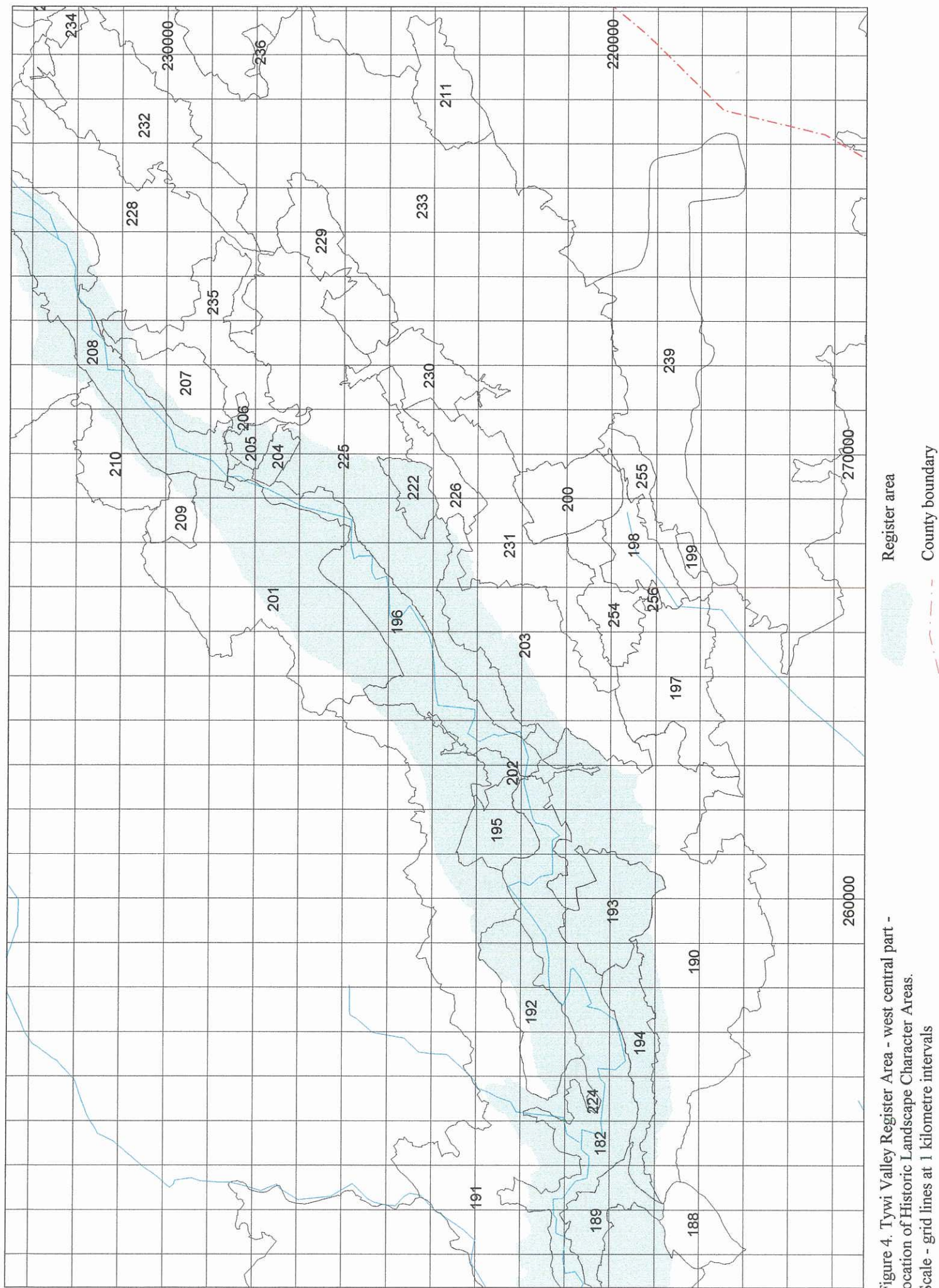
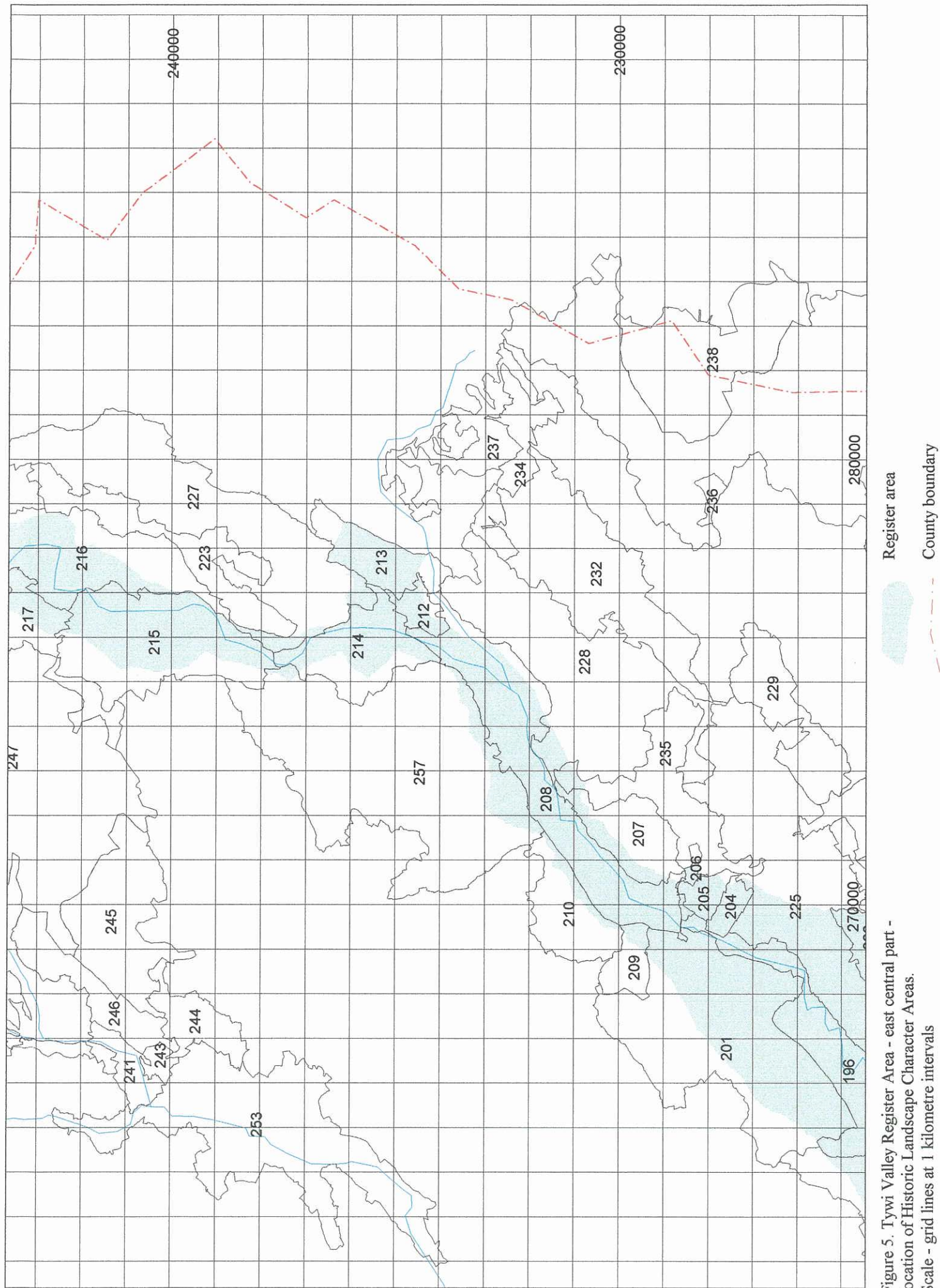


Figure 4. Tywi Valley Register Area - west central part - location of Historic Landscape Character Areas. Scale - grid lines at 1 kilometre intervals









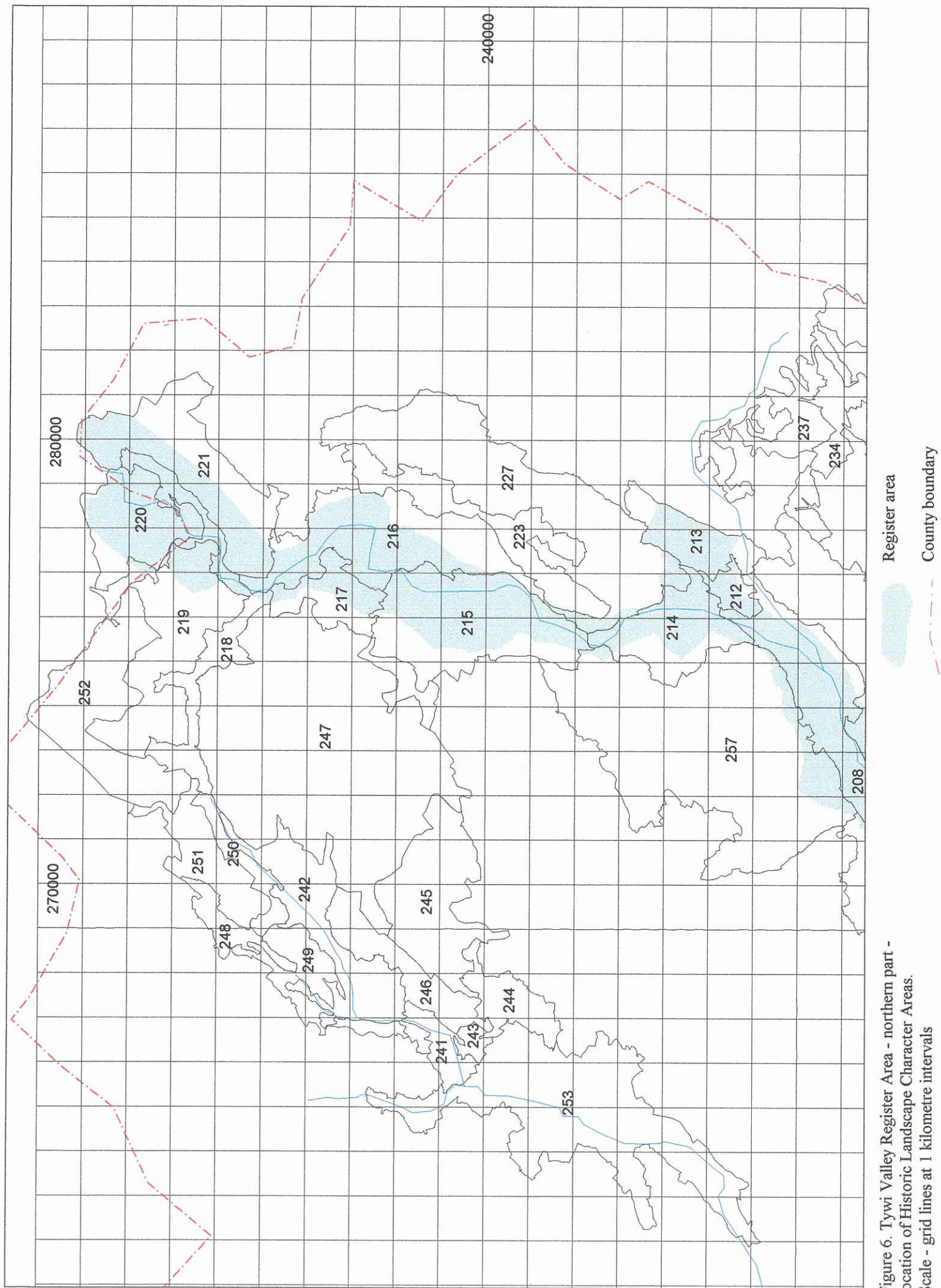


Figure 6. Tywi Valley Register Area - northern part -  
location of Historic Landscape Character Areas.  
Scale - grid lines at 1 kilometre intervals





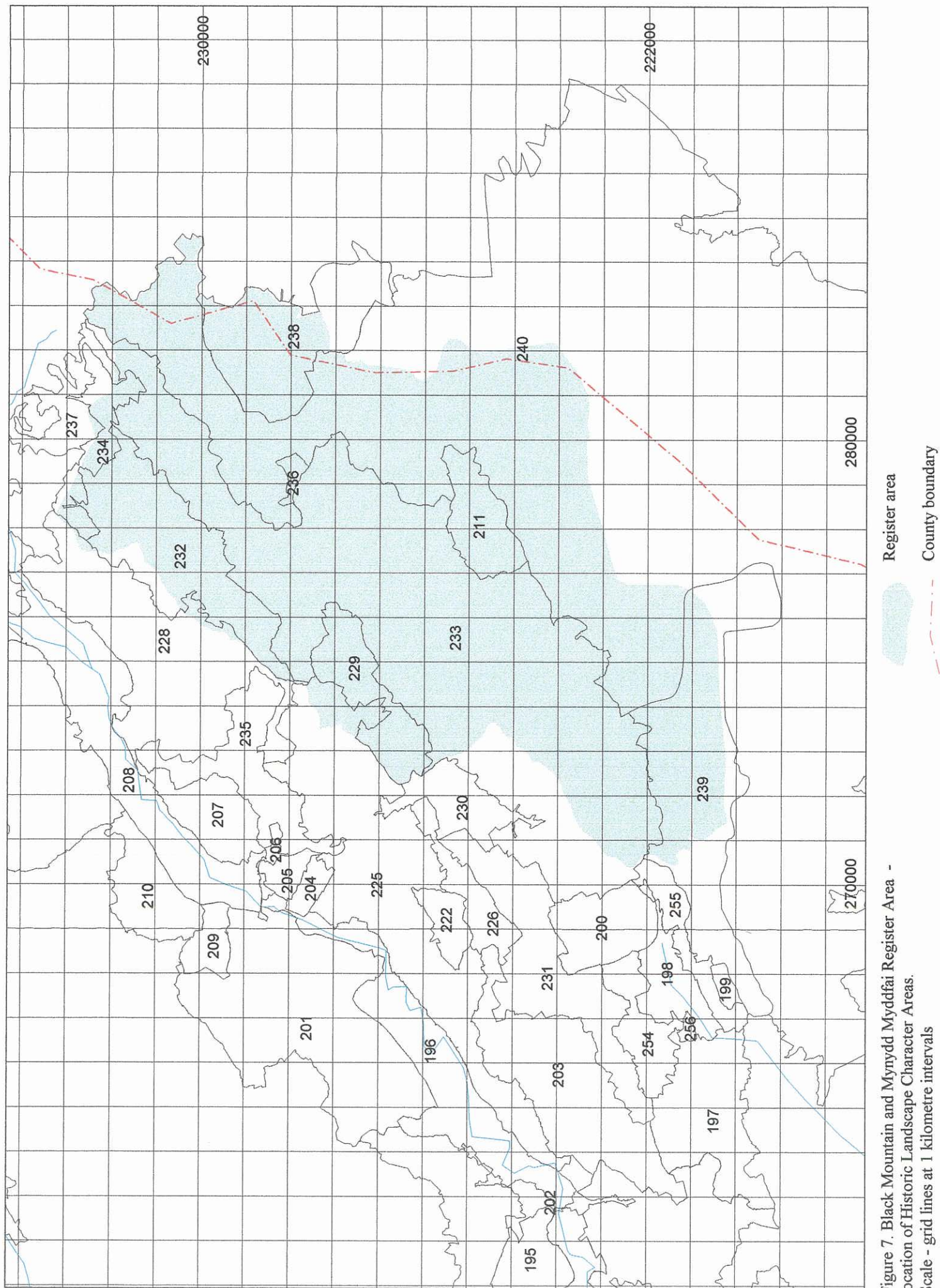


Figure 7. Black Mountain and Mynydd Myddfai Register Area -  
location of Historic Landscape Character Areas.  
Scale - grid lines at 1 kilometre intervals





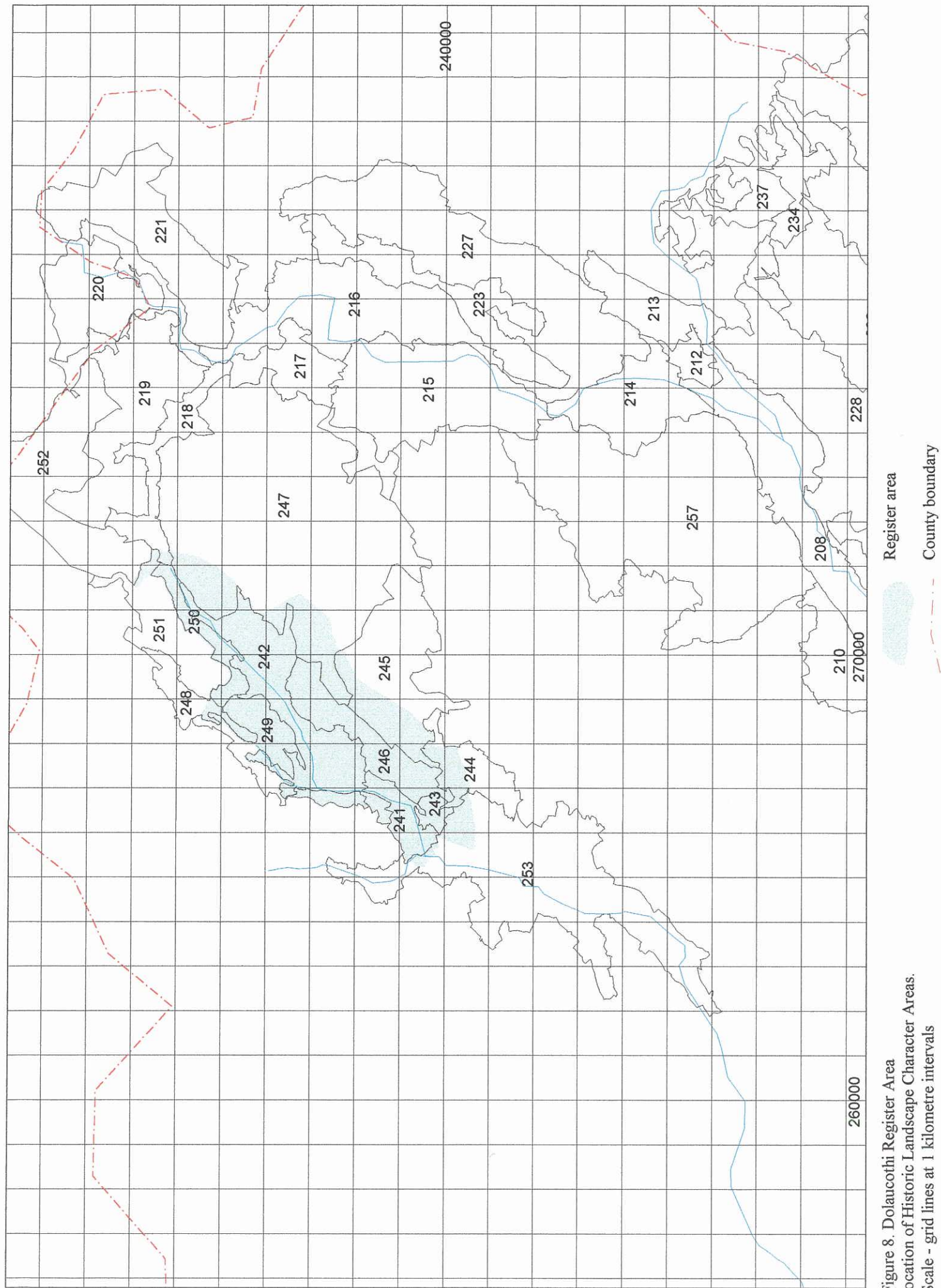


Figure 8. Dolaucothi Register Area  
 Location of Historic Landscape Character Areas.  
 Scale - grid lines at 1 kilometre intervals





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## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 133 MORFA BYCHAN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 195081

AREA IN HECTARES: 192.5

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#### Historic Background

An area of Marros parish that, during the historic period, has always belonged to the Lordship of Laugharne (see Areas 147, 149 etc.). As this land lies on cliff top, steep coastal slopes and steep valley sides, and contains low cliffs and scree slopes, it is likely to have always been of marginal use, and it appears to have been held as common land until the 19th century. A scattering of clearance cairns (now mostly removed during land improvement), low boulder banks and deserted settlement remains on the less steep parts of the coastal slope, attest to former settlement and cultivation, perhaps in the Medieval Period (Murphy 1988). A cottage at Morfa Bychan was occupied until the late 19th-century at least (Curtis 1880). Subdivision of part of the land occurred following a Parliamentary Enclosure Award of 1864 (Chapman 1992, 71), but this had little overall effect on the landscape and the boundaries created soon fell into disuse. Further 19th century economic use of the area is attested by lime kilns and limestone quarries along the valley of Morfa Bychan, and by exploratory mining on the coastal slope below Top Castle. During the Second World War sea defences were constructed - two massive anti-tank walls survive and intertidal structures can occasionally be seen in the shifting sands on the beach. In the second half of the 20th century a small water pumping station has been constructed close to the foreshore, and a forestry plantation established at Teague's Wood.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This is a very exposed area and comprises steep, craggy valley sides and coastal slopes rising from sea level to over 125m. Land use mostly consists of moorland with ?ancient deciduous woodland on sheltered valley sides at Morfa Bychan, and a 20th century conifer plantation at Teague's Wood. Nearly all historic landscape components are relict; they consist of low boulder boundaries, a couple of earth boundary banks, limestone quarries and lime kilns, and Second World War defences.

The archaeology of this relatively small area is rich and complex, and, in addition to the relict landscape features mentioned above, includes two Iron Age promontory forts, four Neolithic/Bronze Age chambered cairns, a Bronze Age burial mound, a possible burnt mound, Medieval and Post-Medieval deserted settlements including possible long-huts, and evidence for limestone processing in the form of quarries and lime kilns.

There are virtually no buildings.

This is a well defined area. It is bounded to the south by the sea and on other sides by cultivated land (Areas 135, 137 and 147).

#### Conservation priorities

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

Ground photograph: 1

Aerial photographs: 68, 71, 72

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 134 MARROS MILL**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 207075**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 40.71**

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#### **Historic Background**

In the Medieval Period, this area constituted part of the demesne of the Lordship of Laugharne within the parish of Marros, held under manorial tenure. A mill is first recorded here in 1307 (NLW 10118E Vol. 1), and was still present when a survey of the Lordship was carried out in 1595 (Laugharne Corporation). The demesne of Laugharne formed the core of the later Westmead Estate, which was broken up and sold in 1821. It is not known when the mill ceased to function and was transformed into a dwelling. Nor is it certain when the other holdings in the area were founded - Underhill, Hammers End and Payetts Well - although as most of the parish was under open field cultivation in the Medieval period (Murphy 1988), these farms with their small irregular fields may have been established in the 16th- or 17th century, as the open fields were abandoned in favour of consolidated holdings and one is associated with a hollow-way. All four holdings were well established by 1821, when they were sold (Treherne 1925-26, 18). Payetts Well and Hammers End farms are now abandoned, and their former fields reverting to scrub. Later, more anti-social land-use includes the sowing of mines near Payetts Well against the threat of sea-borne invasion during the Second World War.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This area consists of a sloping shelf of land, lying between sea level and 70 metres, bounded by the sea to the south and by a steep coastal slope to the north. A system of small irregular fields bounded by earth banks and stone-faced banks has been established across this area, but many of the fields have been abandoned and are reverting to scrub and moorland. Those fields under cultivation lie close to Underhill and Marros Mill, and comprise both pasture and arable. Because of the exposed aspect, hedges, where present, are not in good condition and are often derelict, requiring wire fences as extra support. There is no woodland. There are two deserted stone-built farms. The extant buildings probably date to the 19th century but Hammers End is associated with a Medieval-early Post-Medieval hollow-way.

Archaeology within the area is fairly diverse and includes a number of possible prehistoric sites, represented by burnt mounds and a round barrow, Marros Mill itself, which may have Medieval origins (Rees 1932), a possible holy well and associated Post-Medieval cottage, Medieval - Post-Medieval farmsteads and associated earthwork features, and the site of a Second World War minefield.

None of the buildings are distinctive.

Marros Mill is a distinct character area, and well defined by the sea to the south and by steep bracken and moorland covered slopes on other sides.

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. However decay evident in the boundary hedges and the boundary walls is beginning to erode the historic character of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph: 2**

**Aerial photographs: 71**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 135 MARROS MOUNTAIN**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 217088**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 309.00**

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#### **Historic Background**

Archaeological survey has shown that during the Medieval period this area, which formed part of the demesne of the Lordship of Laugharne and was held under manorial tenure, was cultivated as an open field system associated with a small settlement. However by 1595, and probably even earlier, the area was under a regime of rough grazing or moorland - 'Mountain' (Laugharne Corporation) - and the settlement had been deserted (Murphy 1998). In the Post-Medieval period, probably as late as the late 18th- or early 19th-century, several small-holdings - Merrimans Gate, Thorning Pit and Ciliau-coch - were carved out of the moorland (Marros Tithe map, c. 1840). Each of the stone-built cottages of these holdings were surrounded by several small fields. These settlements were abandoned by the later 19th-century. After the Second World War a conifer plantation was established across the western part of Marros Mountain, and in the 1980s much of the evidence for the Medieval open field system was erased during land improvement. Following this land improvement several farms were constructed.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This former agricultural landscape lies across the crest and over the north- and east-facing slopes of a rounded hill which ranges in height from 70m to 145m. The greater part of the area consists of bracken and gorse moorland, though the western end is planted with a dense conifer plantation, and the eastern side has undergone much recent improvement. This improvement consists of the establishment of several farms, some with substantial agricultural buildings, complete with new systems of tracks and field systems. The farm dwellings range from temporary structures to substantial modern houses. On the northern fringes of the Mountain moorland has been converted to improved pasture and divided by wire fences. Low boundaries of a medieval field system lie on the moorland and beneath the forestry plantation.

Archaeological sites within the area are typical of moorland landscapes and include the possible sites of a Bronze Age standing stone, round barrows and ring barrows, and a possible prehistoric settlement site. Medieval and Post-Medieval sites are primarily associated with the relict agricultural landscape and include deserted cottages and farmsteads, ridge-and-furrow, and Post-Medieval field systems. There is also a Moravian meeting-house site.

None of the buildings are distinctive.

Marros Mountain is a distinct landscape area even allowing for recent land improvement. It is bordered by high quality enclosed land to the south (Area 137) and to the north (Area 147). Only to the south-east where the Mountain borders the coastal slope and steep valley of Morfa Bychan is there difficulty in defining an exact boundary.

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. It is however important that the surviving remains of the former strip-field system and its associated features are not erased during any future land improvement scheme or during felling operations in the forest. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph: 3**

**Aerial photographs: 66, 67, 72**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 136 LAUGHARNE SALTMARSH**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 305103**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 142.10**

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#### **Historic Background**

An area of saltmarsh which has mainly developed since the construction of the sea wall of Area 143 in 1800-10. However, at the far north end of the area, beneath the castle and town of Laugharne, lie 'The Green Banks', an area of saltmarsh which has historically been held of the Lordship of Laugharne as tidal common land.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This area solely comprises unenclosed, developing salt marsh lying just above average High Water Mark and crossed by meandering streams and pills.

The only recorded archaeological feature is the use of 'The Green Banks' as common land. There are no recorded fish-traps, sea-defences or wrecks within the area.

There are no buildings.

This is a distinctive landscape area mainly lying between Laugharne and Pendine Marsh (Area 143) to the west and the Taf estuary to the east.

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

**Ground photograph: 4**

**Aerial photographs: 78, 103, 104**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 137 MARROS

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 199082

AREA IN HECTARES: 363.70

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#### Historic Background

Marros formed part of the demesne of the Lordship of Laugharne, held under manorial tenure. At the death of Sir Guy de Brian, Lord of Laugharne, in 1307 it is recorded that 26 tenants held 26 *carucates* of land (NLW 10118E Vol. 1); a *carucate* is about 120 acres of arable land. Evidence from archaeological survey of Marros Mountain (Area 135) suggests that this arable land was cultivated under an open field or strip field system and later documentary evidence supports this suggestion (Murphy 1988, 31). A survey of 1595 (Laugharne Corporation) records just 14 tenements at Marros. The same document indicates that by then the open field system had been replaced or was undergoing replacement by consolidated holdings of small hedged fields. Thomas (1969) argues that a nucleated settlement - the village of Marros, centred on St Lawrence's Church which has elements dating to the 13th- or 14th-century (Ludlow 1998) - accompanied the open field system. If he is correct then the modern settlement pattern of dispersed farms probably dates from the 16th century, when the open field system was undergoing transformation. There may be place-name evidence for Post-Medieval coal-mining at the far south-west of the area. Several houses have been constructed in the area in recent years.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Marros lies on an undulating landscape of low rounded hills ranging in height from 40m at the extreme south-western end to over 150m in the centre. The historic landscape consists of scattered farms set in a landscape of small- to medium-sized irregular fields of improved pasture, probably with 16th century origins. Fields are defined by hedges set on earth banks. Alongside roads hedges are in good condition, elsewhere they are less good and are tending to become neglected in places and supplemented or replaced by wire fences or are overgrown. There is little woodland. There has been limited nucleation around St Lawrence's Church, mainly represented by the former church house and National School. In general, dwellings are of 19th - or 20th-century date, the older stone-built, the more recent of brick or rendered concrete. Most farms have a range of stone-built outbuildings as well as large modern farm buildings. In recent years some farmers have developed the traditional agricultural regime into a system partly based on tourism, with the construction of horse riding stables, a clay pigeon shoot and a small golf course.

There is a relative lack of diversity in the recorded archaeology. A possible ring barrow has been recorded, and there is evidence, in the form of earthwork and/or cropmark features, for several Iron Age defended enclosures. There are documented Medieval settlement(s) of various forms including the church of St Lawrence at Marros. A possible beacon site is present, and a boundary stone may mark the boundary with Pembrokeshire at Waters Edge, but Post-Medieval sites are mainly in the form of farmsteads, cottages and bridges, but include a possible mine and a possible kiln site.

St Lawrence's Church, with medieval components, is Grade II listed and is associated with the former church house and National School. None of the other buildings are distinctive; all are stone-built with slate roofs.

Marros is a well defined area as its enclosed farmland is bordered by the moorland of Marros Mountain to the north and east (Area 135), the steep coastal slope (Area 133) and the sea to the south, and conifer and deciduous woodland to the west.

**Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay that is evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape, and although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph: 5**

**Aerial photographs: 66, 67, 71**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 138 SIR JOHN'S HILL**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 304098**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 22.22**

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#### **Historic Background**

Although this area lies within the demesne of the Lordship of Laugharne, held under manorial tenure, its economic value has probably always been low due to the fact that most of it is represented by cliffs. Historic maps record it as wooded, as it is today. However, there is a documented medieval settlement at Cyn Gaddael at the far western end of the area. Several abandoned stone-built cottages, as well as an abandoned building known as Salt House and the present Salt House Farm, are probably evidence for a squatter settlement of 18th- or 19th-century date. The abandoned buildings were occupied until 1947. These dwellings are either located on the steep wooded slope above the cliffs, or at the foot of the cliffs on the edge of former salt marsh. A scenic walk - New Walk - was built across this area in the 19th century. The name Sir John's Hill is reputed to refer to Sir John Perrot, Lord of Laugharne in the late 16th-century, who was notorious within the area for his acquisitiveness, and is the title and subject of a poem by Dylan Thomas.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This area comprises a former Old Red Sandstone sea-cliff which rises from the saltmarsh and reclaimed marsh (Area 143) to over 70 metres. Nearly all the area is either vertical cliff or very steep slopes and is cloaked in ?ancient deciduous woodland. Towards the crest of this area, where the land begins to level out, one or two abandoned stone-built cottages are masked by trees. A scenic walk leads through this area from Laugharne.

Apart from the documented medieval settlement at Cyn Gaddael there is no other recorded archaeology within the area.

Apart from Salt House Farm, a late 19th-century house in the vernacular style, the only buildings are the stone-built ruins of 19th century houses and cottages in woodland.

This relict cliff line provides a clear boundary between the reclaimed marsh (Area 143) to the north and rolling farmland to the south (Area 147), and is a very distinct historic landscape area.

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. However, consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland.

**Ground photograph: 6**

**Aerial photographs: 75, 77**



## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 139 PENDINE AND LLANMILOE**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 232084**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 82.61**

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#### **Historic Background**

Pendine was a manor of the post-Conquest Lordship of Laugharne, held of the de Brian lords from the 13th century; the village itself lies in Area 147. On the tithe survey of c. 1842 (Pendine tithe map) a small settlement of four houses and a lime kiln is shown on the shoreline, hard against the foot of a steep slope, with a cluster of houses further up the hillside at New Inn. At Llanmiloe to the east stood Westmead Mansion in its grounds, and Llanmiloe House (Laugharne Parish tithe map). The former holding was owned by John Perrot, Lord of Laugharne, in the 16th century but the present house was built by Sir Sackville Crow in the 17th century (Lloyd 1986, 56). The latter dates to the 1720s and was acquired for military use during the Second World War when a Ministry of Defence research establishment was set up on the marsh to the south (see Area 143). A tourist industry developed at Pendine during the latter part of the 19th century and the 20th century. At first development was low-key, consisting of the construction of villas, a public house and a small hotel. However, since the Second World War Pendine and Llanmiloe have experienced large-scale changes with the building of extensive holiday and caravan parks, and the foundation of a Ministry of Defence research establishment, worker housing for the latter in the form of small estates including 'prefabs' - now rare survivors of post-war social housing - and more recent brick and concrete dwellings. A narrow band of land from Llanmiloe to Pendine is now continuously developed with housing, shops and caravan/holiday parks.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This area occupies the coastal fringe at Pendine and comprises former reclaimed marsh, sand dune, and the lower built-up hillside of the coastal slope lying between 5 m and c.30 m above sea level. Apart from Llanmiloe House, the earliest surviving development consists of cottages, a hotel and public house, and 19th century villas on the sea front and coastal slopes. This early development has been swamped however by caravan/holiday parks on the reclaimed marsh at Pendine, and by housing development at Llanmiloe for workers at the nearby Ministry of Defence research establishment. Included in this housing is a small estate of post-war 'prefabs'. Most of the housing is of a more recent date. The Museum of Speed, celebrating the attempts on the land-speed record on Pendine sands in the 1920s, has recently been established on the sea front.

Recorded archaeology is restricted to the Post-Medieval-modern sea defences at Pendine.

Buildings are all stone-built with slate roofs. Llanmiloe House is an imposing structure of several periods, but the central block is probably from the 1720s; the well-preserved Edwardian garden, mainly from 1908-12, is entered as ref. number PGW (Dy) 1 (CAM) in the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales (Whittle, 1999).

The Pendine and Llanmiloe historic landscape character area is contained and therefore well defined. It stands in sharp contrast to the steep, wooded coastal slope (Area 140) and enclosed farmland (Area 147) to the north, and sand dunes (Area 144) and reclaimed marsh (Area 143) to the south.

#### **Conservation priorities**

The only conservation priorities concern Llanmiloe historic park and garden.

**Ground photograph: 7**

**Aerial photographs: 73**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 140 WESTMEAD WOOD**

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**GRID REFERENCE:** SN 239094

**AREA IN HECTARES:** 142.60

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#### **Historic Background**

Part of the Lordship of Laugharne, held under manorial tenure during the post-Conquest period. Though the steep slopes of this area are now heavily wooded and a distinctive landscape area, historic maps (Pendine tithe map, c. 1842; Laugharne parish tithe map, c. 1842; Particulars of the Westmead Estate, 1821) demonstrate that this has not always been the case and that up until the 1840s much was farm-land with associated structures, apart from at its western end. Given the steepness of the slope, however, it is unlikely to have ever been productive land, and it is probable that during the latter part of the 19th century regeneration of woodland took place. This has been supplemented in the 20th century by plantations. At the western end woodland recorded on the tithe map of Pendine parish may have been planted in conjunction with the foundation of Westmead house in the 17th century (see Area 139).

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This historic landscape area rises from the reclaimed marsh (Area 143) to the south. It is a former sea-cliff line, now inland, represented by steep south-facing slopes that rise from 20 m to 140 m. They are cloaked with secondary deciduous woodland, much of it 19th century, and 20th century conifer and broadleaf plantations. The area has not been searched for old boundaries that may exist beneath the woodland.

Recorded archaeology is limited. There is a possible Bronze Age standing stone and a possible Iron Age hillfort. St Cadoc's well, in an area of limestone springs, may have medieval origins.

There are a number of Post-Medieval structures, all stone-built with slate roofs but none of which are distinctive, or listed. They include a mill, farms, cottages and dwellings, a smithy and the Home Farm of Westmead House (see Area 139).

The Westmead Wood historic landscape character area is a distinctive area and well defined, separating the low-lying reclaimed marsh to the south (Area 143) from rolling, hilly farmland to the north.

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area, though some consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland.

**Ground photograph:** 8

**Aerial photographs:** 73

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 141 LLANSTEFFAN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 351107

AREA IN HECTARES: 52.35

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#### Historic Background

Llansteffan is a village dominated by a steep-sided hill to the south, whose summit is occupied by a well-preserved Iron Age promontory fort within which lies a fine masonry castle. This had been established by the Normans by 1146, as the manorial *caput* of the commote and lordship of Penrhyn (Avent 1991, 168-72). The village has no proven early Medieval history; the church dedication is now rendered as the Celtic St Ystyffan - said to have been a follower of St Teilo - but the original dedication may have been post-conquest and to the Latin St Stephen (Ludlow 1998). The 'discovery of the tombstone of Hywel Dda' at the church, reported in 1876, is entirely spurious. It was a parish church during the post-Conquest period and was granted, in c.1170, to the Knights Hospitaller at Slebech Commandery by the then Norman Lord of Llansteffan, Geoffrey Marmion (Ludlow 1998). The Slebech grant included a fishery and ferry across the Afon Tywi. The Marmion lords had been succeeded by the de Camvilles by the late 12th century (Avent 1991, 174), and the castle was occupied into the 16th century. By the latter part of this century, however, a mansion house, 'The Plas', had been established on more level ground to the north of the castle, and was the main seat of the Lloyds of Llansteffan until it was rebuilt further to the south in the 1780s (Jones 1987, 165). Llansteffan has a long tradition of shipping and was termed a port in the later Medieval period, trade with France and Spain continuing into the 17th century (James n.d.). By the 14th century Llansteffan had a market and two fairs (Rees 1932) but there is no evidence to suggest that the settlement constituted a town proper, and it was not granted a charter. Its topography in fact suggests that it was never anything more than a large village, and while some properties retain long, strip-like plans these may have arisen from tofts rather than burgrave plots. In 1844 it was still a dispersed nucleation, centred around the junction by the church and bordered by a common along the shoreline, (tithe map). However the ferry was still operational (see Area 153) and in its heyday Llansteffan boasted 8 public houses (James n.d.). The present 'Green' to the north of the village is a later 19th-century creation.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Llansteffan historic landscape area encompasses a wide variety of historic landscape components. Situated on the western side of the Tywi estuary where low sea banks protect the lower-lying elements of the settlement, Llansteffan lies on rising ground that achieves heights of 50 m at the castle. The core of the settlement is clustered around the Medieval parish church of St Ystyffan and along a single street. Dwellings, shops and public houses here are stone-built with slate roofs and predominantly date to the late 18th- and early 19th-century. A secondary historic nucleus fronts the estuary. Here, however, stone-built cottages and more substantial 19th century structures have been supplemented with late 20th-century development in a variety of styles and materials. Linking the two historic nuclei are small estates of 20th century housing, individual dwellings, sports fields and other low-key services. On the outskirts of the settlement to the south lies The Plas with its home farm and now degraded parkland. The Medieval castle of Llansteffan dominates the town high on its hill above the Tywi estuary. Medieval masonry remains of this castle are substantial, and earthworks reflect the Iron Age defensive character of the site. The steep gorse- and scrub-covered slopes of the hill on which the castle sits are included in this area.

Recorded archaeology in this area is mainly represented by buildings and former structures, but there is an earthwork complex near The Plas - a farmstead?, and an unknown settlement site to the west, while a possible dovecote is recorded in the name 'Clomendy'.

There are some distinctive buildings. The castle is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a Grade I listed building, mainly from the 13th century. St Ystyffan's Church is a Grade B listed building with substantial medieval components. Plas mansion is a Grade II listed building from the late 18th century.

Post-Medieval buildings also include former inns, one of which is Grade II listed, a mill, a pound, a smithy, non-Conformist chapels and two K6-type telephone boxes, both Grade II listed.

A well-defined landscape area being confined to the developed area of Llansteffan village, and the castle hill.

**Conservation priorities**

Conservation priorities centre on the Llansteffan Conservation Area and individual listed buildings. Other than these it is important to maintain the nucleated coherence of the settlement by preventing ribbon- and dispersed housing outside the village.

**Ground photograph: 9**

**Aerial photographs: 84**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 142 BLACK SCAR**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 331098**  
**AREA IN HECTARES: 61.13**

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#### **Historic Background**

This is a narrow area of steep coastal slopes and cliffs, which formed part of the Medieval Lordship of Llansteffan, held under manorial tenure. It has had limited economic value, but there are a number of limestone exposures which were, towards the east of the area, extensively quarried during the 18th- and 19th-century. The stone for the 'Freething' sea-wall at Laugharne was derived from these quarries (James n.d.).

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This is essentially a narrow band of coastal sea-cliff rising to over 90 m. It is in part composed of Carboniferous Limestone. In these limestone areas there is considerable evidence of quarrying and limestone processing, including the remains of substantial 18th- and 19th-century lime kilns, and the inclines and slides by which the stone was carried to the foreshore for transportation across the Taf estuary for the 'Freething' sea-wall at Laugharne. The only other historic landscape component consists of a small stand of ?ancient deciduous woodland on the less precipitous slopes at the western end of the area.

Apart from a Roman findspot, recorded archaeology is confined to quarrying features.

There are no buildings.

The steep, and on occasions vertical, slopes of this area separate the estuaries of the Taf and Tywi from the rolling farmland to the north (Area 152). It is therefore a very distinct historic landscape area.

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

**Ground photograph: 87**

**Aerial photographs: 83**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 143 LAUGHARNE AND PENDINE MARSH

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 281086

AREA IN HECTARES: 958.00

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#### Historic Background

From the later prehistoric period until Medieval times, this area probably comprised salt marsh and patches of rough pasture on marginally higher ground, interspersed with fresh and brackish-water lagoons. In a borough charter of 1278-82 (Williams n.d.) it is stated that Sir Guy de Brian granted certain privileges and rights to the burgesses of Laugharne 'in the marsh of Talacharn called Menecors'. However, it is clear that Sir Guy kept the greater part of the marsh in his own hands as part of the demesne of the Lordship of Laugharne, as on his death in 1307, 1000 acres of pasture in 'le Marcis' were recorded in an *Inquisition post Mortem* (National Library of Wales 10118E Vol. 1). In 1595, the first record of habitations occurs, when the 'dairies' of Hurst House, East House and Brook House were noted in a survey (Laugharne Corporation). These three dwellings are either on the fringes of the marsh or on islands of higher ground. The term dairy indicates pasture, perhaps on a seasonal basis, as it is likely that the marsh was subjected to flooding and tidal inundation in the winter months. Prior to 1595, Sir John Perrot, Lord of Laugharne, cheated the burgesses of Laugharne out of their share of their marsh, adding it to the demesne established by Guy de Brian. Sir John used the marsh for large-scale sheep farming. However, a small part of the marsh known as 'The Lees' remained in the hands of the burgesses and was later cultivated using an open- or strip-field system (Davies, 1955). The Lees is still owned by Laugharne Corporation, though in character it is indistinguishable from the rest of the marsh. It was not until 1660 when Sir Sackville Crow came into possession of the marsh that a scheme of drainage was initiated with the construction of sea walls (Murphy, forthcoming). Drainage allowed for the establishment of new farms - a process that was complete by the tithe survey of the 1840s - and by the late 18th-century Laugharne Marsh comprised the best farmland in the county. Charles Hassall (1794, 15) described how the land could be made more productive by ridging-up the land by the use of the Dutch Plough. Drainage work continued in the 19th century. A large sea-wall armoured with stone, and a quay, were constructed at the east end of the marsh in 1800-10 by George Watkins of Broadway and connected to Coygan Quarry by a tramway (James 1991, 150), and in c. 1840 a wall across the Witchett Brook was built. Watkins's work seems to have been part of wide-ranging improvements as most of the farms (all part of Broadway estate) were rebuilt in c.1820 in a 'Georgian' style and provided with good ranges of outbuildings. A Ministry of Defence research establishment has been founded across part of the south and southeast portion of this historic landscape character area.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This historic landscape character area consists of flat land some 6km by 1.5km just a few metres above sea level. It is characterised by regularly-shaped fields of pasture. These fields are divided by drainage ditches which are usually accompanied by wire fences, though in the central area of the Marsh, south of Coygan Quarry, low hedges parallel some of the ditches. Towards the eastern end of the Marsh fields become less regular and tend to reflect the dendritic pattern of the pre-drainage salt marsh. Two phases of sea wall separate this area from the salt marsh to the east. Pasture is the dominant land use, mostly improved, but with pockets of unimproved ground. There is limited arable and no old woodland. Towards the western edge the land is becoming neglected and rushes are growing. Ridge and furrow, or rather in this instance ridge and drain, is everywhere apart from between the two phases of sea wall at the eastern edge. This ridge and furrow is a distinct component of the historic landscape. The settlement pattern is of dispersed farms. Farm buildings are generally two-storey and stone built. Farmhouses are in a 'Georgian' style and farms were provided with large ranges of outbuildings which were usually located formally around a yard. These early 19th-century estate farms lend a distinctive architectural signature to the area. Farms have modern agricultural buildings associated with them. The Ministry of Defence research establishment across part of the southern portion of this historic landscape character area has erased many landscape components. Many new buildings and tracks and have been constructed and the planting of shelter belts and scrubby woodland to shield the establishment from view have further altered the character of part of the area.

All recorded archaeological features relate to the reclamation and land-use described above.

There are some distinctive buildings. Date stones on several of the farms indicate a major period of rebuilding in c. 1820 by the Broadway estate. Hurst House and its farm buildings are both Grade II listed.

This is a very distinct character area with clear boundaries between it and its neighbours.

**Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. The drainage system and pattern of ridge and furrow are important and unusual historic landscape elements; it is important that the drains are maintained and the ridge and furrow preserved. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photograph: 10**

**Aerial photographs: 75, 77**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 144 LAUGHARNE AND PENDINE BURROWS**

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**GRID REFERENCE:** SN 280074

**AREA IN HECTARES:** 730.60

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#### **Historic Background**

An area of sand dunes fronting Laugharne Marsh (Area 143), which probably began to form in the second millennium BC in common with other coastal areas of South Wales (Higgins, 1933). The discovery early in the 20th century of shell middens in the dunes, seemingly associated with prehistoric finds, supports an early date for sand incursion (Cantrill, 1909). The dunes lay within the Lordship of Laugharne during the Medieval period, but were clearly of little economic use. The present system of an unbroken chain of dunes from Pendine to the Taf estuary is fairly modern. Terry James (1991, 148-51) has demonstrated that the Witchett Brook opened out through the dunes as late as the 1830s, when a dam and engine house were constructed across it. Since the Second World War a Ministry of Defence research establishment has used the dunes for tests, and many installations have been constructed within them.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This is a very extensive system of sand dunes, running for over 9 km from Pendine in the west to the Taf estuary in the east. It is 1km to 1.5km wide between Laugharne Marsh (Area 143) and High Water Mark. Historic landscape components are confined to the modern period and comprise many installations, buildings and tracks associated with the Ministry of Defence research establishment.

Recorded archaeology similarly mainly relates to the Ministry of Defence and to Post-Medieval drainage schemes but there is a possible settlement site, of unknown date (prehistoric?) and several findspots and middens.

Distinctive buildings are confined to the recent Ministry of Defence structures.

This is a distinct landscape area, and effectively separates Pendine beach and foreshore from Area 143 to the north.

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

**Ground photograph:** 11

**Aerial photographs:** 74, 75



## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 145 WHITEHILL MOOR**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 290133**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 43.42**

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#### **Historic Background**

Whitehill Moor lay within the Medieval Lordship of Laugharne and comprised part of the lands granted to the burgesses of Laugharne by Sir Guy de Brian in 1278-82 (Williams, n.d). The burgesses farmed the land in an open- or strip-field system, a system that is still used on Whitehill Moor to this day. The moor is divided into numerous strips or shares, each separated by a baulk called a landscar or landsker (Davies, 1955). The strips are no longer allotted to burgesses on an annual basis, but are awarded for life. In the past this system would have been under arable cultivation, but by 1955 only a few strips were farmed in this manner, and today the moor is used for hay and the overwintering of cattle.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This is essentially one large field which rises gently from sea level on the Taf estuary to 40m at its western edge. It is part of the surviving open field system of Laugharne. Arable cultivation is no longer carried out at Whitehill Moor, but the strips or shares survive. The majority of the shares run across the full width of the field from east to west, though at the northern end shorter, narrower strips run from north to south. Strips are divided by low narrow turf baulks. In some parts of the moor these baulks are almost undetectable, but they mostly survive as very low earth banks or on steeper slopes as lynchets. The moor is separated from the surrounding land by a earth bank topped with a hedge. It is cut for hay in July-August and grazed by cattle in the winter. There is no woodland.

Recorded archaeology is limited to a possible Medieval settlement associated with the field system.

There are no buildings.

Whitehill Moor is a rare survivor of an open field system and is therefore characteristically different from the surrounding historic landscape areas, the flood plain of the Taf to the northeast (Area 146), and the enclosed farmland to the north, west and south (Area 147).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. The continued use of the area as a shared field by the burgesses of Laugharne ensures that its character is maintained.

**Ground photograph: 12**

**Aerial photographs: 48, 79**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 146 TAF VALLEY RECLAIMED MARSH

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 310127

AREA IN HECTARES: 245.40

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#### Historic Background

This is a fairly extensive landscape area consisting of several discrete patches of former salt marsh on either side of the Taf Estuary, but mainly to the east. It is clear that the marshland had formed by the Medieval period when it lay within the Lordships of Laugharne to the east, Osterlow in the centre and St Clears to the west, lands that were mainly held under manorial tenure. The eastern part of the area, Mwche Marsh, was known as 'Mundegy Marsh' in the Medieval period when its economic value lay mainly in the ferry to Laugharne which was operational until the 1950s (James, n.d.). In about 1214, Rhys ap Gryffydd granted the western part of this area to the Cistercian Abbey at Whitland, as part of Osterlow Grange (Williams, 1990), but it was probably always marginal land, while the northern end of the area appears to have been common land of St Clears borough. On the dissolution of the abbey in 1539, Sir John Perrot acquired the Whitland estates, including Osterlow (Benson 1996). His son, Thomas, married Dorothy sister of the Earl of Essex, and their daughter, Penelope, married Sir William Lowther, a well known astronomer, who died at Trefenty in 1615 (ibid.). It is probable that the Trefenty estate encompassed the lands of the former grange. The estate later passed into the Drummond family, whose land leases of the late 17th-century document the construction of sea defences and enclosure of salt marsh in the western part of Area 146, around the mouth of the Afon Cywyn (ibid.). The sea-wall across Mwche Marsh, to the east, was constructed shortly after 1812 under the Morris family of Carmarthen and Llansteffan, who had acquired Mwche Farm in 1791 (James, n.d.). Tithe maps of the 1840s clearly show these sea walls and enclosures (Llandeilo Abercowin, Llanstephan, Laugharne Parish).

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This area comprises former unenclosed salt marsh lying just above sea level, which had developed by the Medieval period. Formerly unenclosed, the larger areas of marsh have from the late 17th-century onwards been enclosed by low sea walls, now represented by low earth banks, and have been drained and divided into 'fields' by ditches. Scrubby hedges run alongside some of the ditches, but these are no longer stockproof and wire fences provide additional boundaries. Salt marsh has continued to develop outside the sea walls, in some instances to over 100m. Summer rough grazing is the predominant land use and there are no settlements, or woodland, in this area.

Recorded archaeology mainly comprises the flood defences mentioned above and associated pumps etc.

There are a few buildings, but none are distinctive. They include Post-Medieval masonry bridges over the Afon Cywyn and Nant Degi, a small ferryhouse building at Black Scar Point and two nearby lime-kilns.

A distinct historic landscape area with clear boundaries with neighbouring areas. On all landward sides the land rises into a landscape of rolling hills, fields and farms.

#### Conservation priorities

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. However, in order to maintain the character of this area, it is important that the drainage ditches are repaired and kept free-flowing.

Ground photograph: 13

Aerial photographs: 48, 80, 102

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 147 LAUGHARNE PARISH, PENDINE AND LLANDDOWROR

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 280115

AREA IN HECTARES: 2528.00

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#### Historic Background

A very large historic landscape area comprising much of the eastern half of the Medieval Lordship of Laugharne, and lying in Laugharne, Llandawke, Llanddowror, Llansadurnen and Pendine parishes. The greater part comprises Laugharne parish which, in this area, was partly common land in the Medieval period. In 1278-82, Sir Guy be Brian granted free common to the burgesses of Laugharne in lands to the north of the town almost to St Clears (Williams, n.d.; Davies, 1955). However, it is clear from a 1307 *Inquisition post Mortem* (National Library of Wales 10118E Vol. 1) that Sir Guy reserved arable and other lands within the parish for the demesne of Laugharne. Several places and tenants are named, though the form of settlement and field system employed is not known. It is probable that in the 13th- and 14th-century settlements consisted of small nuclei or loose clusters set in fields of shared arable, surrounded and separated by common. A small area of common survived at Broadmoor/Upper Moor in 1842 (Laugharne tithe map), but had clearly been encroached upon by squatters and much reduced in size. Some land close to Laugharne clearly consisted of open- or strip-fields; modern fields at Sir John's Hill reflect this early system and there are many references to the creation of fields from strips in 16th- and 17th-century documents in the National Library of Wales. It is likely that new, isolated farms were created with the abandonment of the open field systems. Llansadurnen parish was similarly farmed in an open field system, which according to manuscript sources was finally abandoned in the late 18th- or even early 19th-century. There is no trace of such a system in the modern landscape. In the 19th century a loose cluster of farms lay around the St Sadwrn's church; a possible Dark Age foundation, the present church dates to 1859 (Ludlow, 1998). Pendine is in many respects similar to Llansadurnen, though documentary sources suggest that engrossing and enclosure of the open field system here was almost complete by the 18th century. The holding now occupied by Pendine Great House may be medieval - the first recorded occupant was William Barret in the earlier 16th century (Jones 1987, 147), but the house stands next to the parish church of St Margaret, with elements dating to the 12th century (Ludlow, 1998). It is not possible to ascertain the extent of any accompanying medieval settlement but in the 19th century, a loose cluster of farms and other dwellings lay around the church possibly reflecting an old settlement pattern. The isolated church of St Odoceus at Llandawke is of Medieval date, and is possibly of Dark Age foundation. In 1840 (tithe map) Llandawke was a tiny parish of one land holding. What appear to be enclosed strips show on the tithe map, indicating the former presence of an open field system. The date of enclosure of such a system and the pre-modern settlement pattern is entirely unknown. Unlike the above which in the Medieval period all lay within the Lordship of Laugharne, Llanddowror was a separate lordship (Rees 1932), which may reflect pre-conquest land division. Certainly the dedication of the church to St Teilo (or Cringat) suggests a pre-Conquest foundation. A nucleated settlement around the church was in existence by the mid 19th century, a settlement that had been given an extra lease of life by the construction of a turnpike road in the late 18th century. Documentary evidence for the existence of an open field system at Llanddowror has not been researched, and though there is physical evidence in the modern landscape to indicate such a system was employed, its date of enclosure is unknown. The essential character of this historic landscape area has changed very little since the surveys for estate maps of the late 18th century, and tithe maps of c. 1840, were undertaken. Modern dwellings have been constructed, but as these are either dispersed across the landscape replicating the pattern of old established farms, or are grouped in the semi-nucleated settlements of Pendine, Llanddowror and Llansadurnen, they tend to emphasise historic patterns.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This very large area runs from a few metres above sea level on its southern fringes at Brook to over 150m at its highest point. It consists of rolling hills, sometimes with deeply incised valleys. Many of the steeper valley sides are covered with deciduous woodland, at least some of it ancient, intermixed with which are some small conifer plantations. However, the overriding characteristic of this area is enclosed

pasture with a settlement pattern of dispersed farms and small villages. Fields are irregular and mostly small- to medium-sized, though with larger enclosures at higher levels. Boundaries are of variable date and consist of earth banks topped with hedges, with very occasional mortared walls. Hedges are in good condition and generally stockproof and vary from the heavily managed to the overgrown. Distinctive hedgerow trees are present in some areas, and these with the overgrown hedges and the small stands of woodland give a wooded appearance to certain parts of this area. Only at higher levels has there been some loss of hedges, but this is not severe and wire here provides the stockproof boundary. In the villages of Pendine, Llansadurnen and Llanddowror settlement is clustered around the churches. Older dwellings consist of farms and cottages of mainly 8th- and 19th-century date supplemented by later 20th-century dwellings in a variety of styles and materials. However, modern development has not overwhelmed these villages. Rural settlement is dominated by large farms dispersed across the landscape. Farmhouses are mainly of 19th century date and stone-built, often with a range of stone-built out-buildings which have been supplemented by modern farm buildings in recent years. Modern dwellings have been constructed, but in a low-key manner; and Cross Inn is the only substantial cluster of houses outside the historic villages.

In such a large area the archaeology is accordingly rich and diverse, and most periods are represented. There are a number of standing stones, and possible standing stone sites, Iron Age settlement sites, Medieval settlements, churches and mills, and a large number of Post-Medieval cottages and farmsteads.

Buildings are mainly stone-built with slate roofs. The Medieval churches at Llandawke and Pendine, which have medieval components, are Grade II listed, while that at Llanddowror is Grade B listed. However, distinctive buildings are comparatively uncommon, and there are few gentry houses. Pendine Great House, with its gate-piers, is Grade II listed, and is probably 17th century with later alterations. There are 10 more listed buildings, all Grade II and mainly agricultural but including one K6 telephone kiosk.

To the south, southwest and east this area is well defined by several landscape areas of widely differing characteristics. To the southwest lies the open moor of Marros Mountain (Area 135) and a steep coastal slope (Area 133). To the south is modern development at Pendine and Llanmiloe (Area 139), a relict, heavily wooded cliff line (Area 140) or reclaimed marsh (Area 143). The town of Laugharne (area 149) and extant or enclosed open field systems (Areas 145, 148, 150) lie to the east. Definition elsewhere is problematic, there being no clear boundary - generally to the north and west there is a less coherent landscape, field size varies but tends towards the large and regular, and settlement becomes more dispersed.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Pendine, Llanddowror and Llansadwrnen villages have maintained their nucleated character. In order to maintain this character ribbon- and dispersed-settlement on the fringes of the villages should be discouraged. Outside the villages most of the historic landscape components are in good condition. However, decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photograph: 14**

**Aerial photographs: 48, 67, 69, 72, 73, 76, 77, 78, 79, 104**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 148 THE HUGDEN

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**GRID REFERENCE:** SN 290104

**AREA IN HECTARES:** 66.86

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#### **Historic Background**

An area of land that was held under manorial tenure of the Medieval Lordship of Laugharne. In 1278-82 Sir Guy de Brian, Lord of Laugharne, granted certain lands, including 'The Hugden', to the burgesses of Laugharne (Williams, n.d.). The burgesses farmed The Hugden using a strip- or open-field system. This system of farming has continued to the present day and has been described by Davies (1955). Strips of land would have been allotted on an annual basis to the burgesses of Laugharne and Llansadurnen, but by 1842 this practice had ceased and strips had been amalgamated into 20 shares which each burgess held for life. One shilling is paid annually to Laugharne Corporation per share; one share averages 7-9 acres and is made up of 5-12 strips. Contained within each share is one major strip that lies across the crest of The Hugden and several subsidiary strips on lower, sometimes steep, slopes. Strips are divided by earth baulks called landcars or landskers. Since 1842 a hedge has been established dividing the major shares in two.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

The Hugden is essentially an unenclosed rounded hill over which a system of open field farming is practised. The hill rises from 50m on its southern flanks to over 110 m at its highest point. In the past arable farming was undertaken. Several years ago some of the strips in the system were ploughed, but none were noted under this form of cultivation in 1999. The strips are now used for hay and the overwintering of cattle. The longest and widest strips within the field lie over the crest of the hill; these are poorly marked on the ground. Lesser strips which lie on the flanks of the hill are better defined and earth baulks between strips are clearly visible, particularly where they run down steep slopes or across slopes. In the latter instance they form lynchets over 1m high which in some instances are covered with scrub or gorse. Some of the less-favoured strips have been abandoned and have reverted to scrub and bracken. A single 19th century hedge on a low bank lies across the crest of the hill, but The Hugden is separated from the neighbouring enclosed farmland by further hedges on banks which belong to the surrounding historic landscape area. There are no wooded areas.

Recorded archaeology is limited to agricultural features.

There are no buildings.

This open field system is a distinct and clearly defined historic landscape area. It is surrounded by enclosed land (Area 147).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. The continued use of the area as a shared field by the burgesses of Laugharne ensures that its character is maintained.

**Ground photograph:** 15

**Aerial photographs:** 76, 78

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 149 LAUGHARNE TOWN AND BROADWAY**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 301108**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 51.10**

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#### **Historic Background**

Laugharne is a small town and medieval borough in which there has been considerable survival of historic features. An Early Christian Monument and a possible long cist cemetery suggest a pre-Norman foundation for St Martin's church at Laugharne (Ludlow 1998). However, it was the foundation of an Anglo-Norman castle by 1170 that led to the development of a town at Laugharne. A settlement probably grew outside the castle soon after its foundation, and around the small inlet which became a port. In 1278-82, Laugharne was granted borough status and lands were bestowed on it by Sir Guy de Brian (Williams, n.d.). Topography and later documentary evidence indicates that the early town of just over 30 dwellings was walled, and that the settlement quickly expanded outside these walls (Murphy, 1987). A later licence to wall the town, of 1465 (Delaney and Soulsby, 1975; Soulsby 1983) does not seem to have been acted on. The late Medieval farmstead or manor-house of Roche Castle lying to the west of Laugharne was tenurially distinct from the borough. Laugharne seems to have been a fairly successful small town throughout the Medieval period, and by 1595 over 161 burgage plots were recorded (Laugharne Corporation). Although this number of plots seems to have remained fairly constant through to the mid 19th-century, important changes had by then taken place, as recorded by Mary Curtis (1880). In the latter part of the 19th century Laugharne became a fashionable 'resort' town. Many of the modest dwellings of an earlier period were rebuilt in the fashion of the day. By the mid 19th-century the town lost both its fashionable status, and the remnants of its coastal trade, and suffered stagnation and decline. Since the Second World War a small housing estate has been built outside the core of the historic town. In recent years many of the older properties have been renovated and new houses in a variety of styles and materials constructed within the historic core and on the outskirts. Broadway, a 'suburb' to the southwest of the town, has witnessed much recent development. A holiday complex has been built at Glan-y-môr to the east of the town, and a caravan park to the north.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

The small town of Laugharne centres on the Medieval castle. This structure dominates the foreshore and the town. One of the key characteristics of the town are the elegant stone-built and stucco 18th- and 19th-century buildings that flank King Street, culminating in the town hall and Castle House. Houses on other streets tend to be less imposing, but nevertheless stone-built cottages and terraces of small houses, usually rendered and colour-washed, with slate gable roofs provide a uniformity of style. Within the historic core more recent housing has been low-key in character, and consists of single dwellings or small estates. Larger developments comprise an estate of council houses overlooking the town to the south with a school adjacent, and a cluster of dwellings in a variety of styles and materials at Broadway. St Martin's church, a cruciform structure of the mid-15th century, lies to the north of the town with a loose cluster of mainly 19th century housing. 20th century linear development connects this area with the main town. Tourist industry development consists of a large holiday complex of chalets at Glan-y-môr, a caravan park at Ants Hill and less intrusive works associated with Dylan Thomas's Boathouse and Laugharne Castle.

Recorded archaeology within the town mainly represents its Medieval history - the castle, church, town walls and mill site, and its Post-Medieval domestic structures. However, there is an Iron Age enclosure at Glan-y-môr, while the Early Christian Monument and cist cemetery at the church have been noted. There was little Post-Medieval industry but there is a lime-kiln on the foreshore and a smithy at Broadway. The late Medieval farmstead at Roche Castle has an associated Post-Medieval cockpit.

The distinctive nature of many of Laugharne's buildings has been noted. In addition to the castle, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and comprises two Grade I listed buildings and a Grade II listed building. There are a further 51 listed buildings, all Grade II or II\*; they are primarily 18th century and domestic, and include the town hall, but also the Medieval church.

This is a very distinct historic landscape area, and stands in sharp contrast to the surrounding agricultural land (Areas 147, 148, 150).

**Conservation priorities**

Conservation priorities centre on the Conservation Area and individual listed buildings. Other than these it is important to maintain the nucleated coherence of the settlement by preventing ribbon- and dispersed-housing outside the township.

**Ground photograph: 16**

**Aerial photographs: 78, 104**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 150 DELACORSE**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 303116**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 115.20**

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#### **Historic Background**

An area immediately east and north of the town of Laugharne, which lay within the Medieval Lordship of Laugharne and was held under manorial tenure. It was probably included within a grant of land made to the burgesses of Laugharne by Sir Guy de Brian in 1278-82 (Williams, n.d.), and was farmed by the burgesses of Laugharne under an open field system. This system seems to have been used throughout the Medieval period but was coming to an end by the early modern period, as documents of late 16th- and 17th-century date contain many references to the creation of closes within the East Field of Laugharne. It is unclear why the East Field should have been subjected to piecemeal enclosure whilst The Hugden (Area 148) remained an open field system, and other presumed open fields were engrossed and carved up into large regular enclosures. Whatever the reason, piecemeal enclosure has created a distinctive pattern of long curving fields that mirror the pattern of strips within the Medieval open field system. It is likely that the two farms in this area, Delacorse and Maesyderi, were created as the open field system was transformed into that of the present day. Cottages, possibly squatter settlements, were established in the 18th- or 19th-century on the steep slopes overlooking the Taf estuary. These are now abandoned and the slopes are heavily wooded.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

A small area consisting of enclosed strip- or open-fields lying on gently sloping hillsides of pasture, ranging in height from 25m to almost 100m. The fields reflect the former strips and consist of long curving enclosures, though some have coalesced since the 19th century into more regular, rectangular fields. Boundaries consist of banks topped with hedges. Some distinctive hedgerow trees are present, but apart from secondary woodland on steep coastal slopes, which masks cottages abandoned last century, there is no substantial afforested ground in this area. Farmhouses are stone-built, and slate-roofed with outbuildings; Maesyderi has modern outbuildings.

Recorded archaeology is represented by a standing stone and a possible Early Christian inscribed stone.

There are few distinctive buildings but Mapsland has a late Georgian, Grade II listed double-pile farmhouse.

The field pattern in this area distinguishes it from the surrounding enclosed land (Area 147).

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape component are in good condition. Some decay is evident in a number of boundary hedges and this will begin to affect the area's future historic character if not addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph: 17**

**Aerial photographs: 104**



## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 151 COYGAN**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 284092**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 28.61**

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#### **Historic Background**

This small Carboniferous Limestone out-lying hill is characterised by its archaeology and modern industry. Cave deposits examined in the 19th- and 20th-century and containing evidence from the Palaeolithic period and more recent periods testifies to the archaeological importance of the area. The cave has now been destroyed by quarrying, as has the Iron Age fort that lay on the summit of the hill. Excavations on the fort in the early 1960s (Wainwright 1967) revealed a wealth of evidence for prehistoric, Roman and Dark Age occupation of the site. Limestone quarrying, which has now removed the greater part of the hill, was well under way in the early 19th-century when a tramway was built to link the works with a newly constructed quay 2 km to the east. The tithe map of 1841 (Llansadurnen parish) records five lime kilns at the base of the hill. As noted above, the area is now dominated by a large quarry.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This is a distinct historic landscape area and consists of a Carboniferous Limestone outlier, which forms a hill rising from reclaimed marsh, at sea level, to over 60m. The whole is now dominated by a large, modern limestone quarry. This has removed the summit of the hill and most of its eastern flanks. The remainder of the hill is now covered with scrub and rough ground.

The recorded archaeology has been noted above.

There are no distinctive buildings.

Though characterised by its archaeology, this historic landscape area is distinctive and contrasts with the reclaimed marsh (Area 143) to the south and enclosed farmland (area 147) on other sides.

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

**Ground photograph: 18**

**Aerial photographs: 65, 75**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 152 LAQUES

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 332106

AREA IN HECTARES: 510.30

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#### **Historic Background**

An area of undulating country featuring fairly large fields with irregular boundaries and dispersed farmsteads, all the result of the amalgamation and enclosure of fields under emerging gentry families such as the Lloyds of Laques (and The Plas, Llansteffan) in the 17th- and 18th-century. This landscape can be contrasted with those, for example in Area 153, in which the curving shape of former open field strips was fossilised by the Post-Medieval boundaries. To the south-east, in fact, part of the area may have lain within the medieval 'Broadlands Park' (Rees 1932), and have remained unenclosed until the Post-Medieval period. Elements of the Medieval landscape also include Pentowyn Farm, to the west of the area, which was a 120 acre grange granted to St John's Priory, Carmarthen, between 1115 and 1130 by the lord of the Manor of Llangain Alfred Drue (Jones 1991, 4). It contains the site of a chapel apparently dedicated to St Teilo, possibly with pre-Conquest origins (James, n.d.). At the dissolution Pentowyn fell to the Lloyd family of Llansteffan and is now owned by the National Trust. The central farmstead of Laques, with a name derived from the Old English 'lac' (stream), is known to have been occupied since the 14th century when it was the seat of the Reed family; it was acquired by the Lloyds of Llansteffan in 1616 (Jones 1987, 97). Lord's Park farm to the south is, by contrast, an example of a possible medieval settlement reorganised by the Lloyds according to a system of home and tenant farms, typical of 18th century estate re-organisation (James n.d.) and exhibits a farm-house and outbuildings, of good quality, from the late 18th- or early 19th-century. To the east of the area, on the Tywi foreshore, is a spring traditionally dedicated to St Anthony and regarded as an ancient holy well. An adjacent early 19th-century villa was built to take advantage of the sea views by a Captain Scott, typifying the appreciation of natural beauty that had been acquired by the emerging leisured classes (James n.d.).

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This small historic landscape area lies between the confluence of the Rivers Tywi and Taf and is, in its present form, early Post-Medieval. It rises from sea level into a landscape of rolling hills that achieve a maximum height of over 130m. Most of the land is farmed, the majority of which is improved pasture. There are small stands of ?ancient deciduous woodland on steep slopes, but apart from these this is a very open landscape. Fields tend towards being medium-sized and regular, particularly at higher levels, with boundaries consisting of earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are well maintained; few are overgrown, and distinctive hedgerow trees are rare. The settlement pattern is of dispersed farms.

Recorded archaeology, in addition to the Medieval and Post-Medieval landscape features noted above, includes Neolithic finds at Pentowyn, two possible Bronze Age standing stones, two possible Iron Age hillforts.

There are some distinctive buildings but none are listed. Farms consist of substantial stone-built dwellings with slate roofs, in the Georgian tradition, usually with a range of stone-built out-buildings as well as modern structures; with the exception of Laques which retains Jacobean features but was extended after 1747 (Jones 1987, 97). There are also Post-Medieval cottages and a school.

To the south this area is extremely well defined by the sea cliffs/coastal slope of Area 142. Similar good boundary definition exists to the west against reclaimed salt marsh (Area 146), and to the east against Llansteffan village. To the north the exact boundary between this historic landscape character area and Area 153, the enclosed strip fields, is less defined but nevertheless these two character areas are distinct.

**Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. Some consideration should be given to the management of hedgerows and to deciduous woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photograph:** 19

**Aerial photographs:** 82, 83

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 153 LLANYBRI AND LLANSTEFFAN STRIP FIELDS

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 343120

AREA IN HECTARES: 427.60

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#### Historic Background

The area comprises a substantial part of the parish of Llansteffan, to the north-west of Llansteffan village and around the small nucleation of Llanybri. Llansteffan had been established as an Anglo-Norman manor, and the caput of the commote and Lordship of Penrhyn, by the mid 12th century. It was a parish during the Medieval period, in which the former chapelry of St Marys at Llanybri had its origins as a chapel-of-ease (Ludlow 1998). The dominant feature of the present landscape is a pattern of fields which tend to be long and narrow with curved boundaries. These are particularly concentrated south-west and north-east of Llanybri, and are the product of the fossilisation of post-12th century open field strips within 17th- and 18th-century field boundaries established under gentry families such as the Lloyds of Llansteffan and Laques. The landscape can thus be contrasted with that of Area 152 within which Post-Medieval enclosure, under the same landowners, effaced any pattern of earlier field systems. Llanybri was a demesne manor of the Lords of Llansteffan and Penrhyn and appears to be an early nucleation around a central open space, adjacent to a chapel dedicated to St Mary that had been established, as 'Morabrichurch', by the 14th century at least (Rees 1932) and was, in the 16th century, called 'Marbell Church' (RCAHM, 1917, 197). An area of common land lay within the village and may have Medieval origins. Pendegy Mill, some 700m west of the village, is the site of the Medieval 'Mundegy Mill'. Rees (1932) depicts Llanybri as a borough, and though the designation is most unlikely the settlement did lie at the junction of seven routeways. The landing-place of Llansteffan ferry which has possible pre-Conquest origins (Davies 1989, 27) and was crossed 'in a boat' by Gerald of Wales in 1188 (Thorpe 1978, 138) lies to the east of the area.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This historic landscape character area comprises a system of enclosed, former field strips lying across a band of rolling hills that achieve a height of approximately 100m close to the village of Llanybri, and run down to sea level by the estuaries of the Taf and Tywi. Most land is farmed; the majority is improved pasture, though there is a little arable. On steep slopes are small stands of deciduous woodland, but trees are not common, and essentially this is an open landscape. Settlements consist of the hamlet of Llanybri and dispersed farms. Much recent residential development in a variety of styles and materials on the edge of the historic core has doubled or trebled the size of the settlement. Dispersed farms are usually stone-built with a range of outbuildings, both stone-built and modern. These farms are set in a landscape of small, irregular fields. On historic maps and in certain areas on the ground it is possible to detect enclosed strips in the modern field system - clearly the modern system evolved out of an open field system. Enclosed strips survive best on steep slopes to the north and east of Llanybri and to the west of Llansteffan. Over recent decades, on flatter ground, there has been a tendency to merge the enclosed strips into larger more regular fields, and it is more difficult to detect the former presence of an open field system. Boundaries to the fields consist of earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are generally in good condition, but on the steep slopes to the north of Llanybri they are becoming very overgrown, and to the west of Llansteffan some are becoming derelict.

Earlier features within the landscape include a scheduled Bronze Age standing stone which, during the medieval period, was a known landmark called 'Welsh Cross' (Rees 1932). There is at least one more standing stone, and two round barrows. An inscribed stone is possibly recorded in a place-name at Llanybri, and a spring/holy well lies to the south-east.

Distinctive buildings include the Grade II listed Medieval chapel of St Mary which exhibits a low west tower from the 16th century but has become ruinous since 1917, the 19th century Holy Trinity Church and a non-conformist chapel. The core of the settlement consists of stone-built farms, houses and cottages of probable 19th century date with a former inn and smithy; other buildings include Pendegy mill, a bridge, farms and cottages.

This historic landscape character area is similar to Area 152 to the south, with scattered farms and medium-sized fields, and though the historical process that have helped form the two areas are different, the boundary is not well defined. A similar lack of definition exists between this area and Area 187, to the north, and Area 154 to the north-east. Reclaimed salt marsh (Area 146) provides a good boundary to the west, and Llansteffan village (Area 141) clear definition to the east.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Conservation priorities in this area concern Llanybri village and the surrounding land. The village has maintained its nucleated character despite modern development. Ribbon- and dispersed-development on the outskirts of the village should be discouraged. Many hedgerows have been lost; this and decay evident in others is seriously eroding the historic character of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photograph: 20**

**Aerial photographs: 84**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 154 LLANDEILO ABERCOWIN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 312131

AREA IN HECTARES: 185.90

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#### Historic Background

During the medieval period Llandeilo Abercowin was a demesne manor and sub-lordship of the Lordship of Osterlow or Ystlwyf (Rees 1932), coterminous with the ecclesiastical parish of Llandeilo Abercowin. The former parish church of St Teilo may be a pre-conquest foundation, but the present (ruined) structure is later Medieval; the church is said to have been reconstructed under Richard de Laundrey, Lord of Llanddowror and Llandeilo Abercowin in c.1270 (RCAHM 1918, 83). Area 154 includes that part of the Lordship of Llansteffan which contained the landholding (of uncertain status) of Pentrewyn, now represented by a farmstead; it may have been the site of a further chapelry to Llansteffan apparently known as 'Eglwys Trewyn' in the 14th century (Rees 1932). By the late Medieval period the sub-lordship of Llandeilo Abercowin was owned by the Dwnns of Penallt, Kidwelly (Jones 1987, 100), who were to become one of Wales' leading gentry families and commentators. The Morgans of Muddlescwm, also near Kidwelly, had acquired the holding through marriage by 1488 (ibid.) and it may be they who were responsible for the construction of the 16th century manor house next to the church, which is traditionally (but spuriously) known as 'Pilgrim's Rest' from its location on the supposed pilgrim's route to St Davids (Hartwell Jones 1912, 372), and the possible site of a ferry to Laugharne; the manor may have been accompanied by a former settlement. The landscape is characterised by fairly large but rather irregular fields which appear, like those in Area 152, to be the result of the amalgamation and enclosure of fields, possibly in part comprising open strips, since ridge-and-furrow has been recorded to the north of the area (Marshall 1985, 19). This amalgamation occurred during the 17th- and 18th-century either under the Mansels who had acquired the holding in c.1600, the Dawkins who succeeded them in 1660 (Jones 1987, 100), or their successors, from 1791, who also held Pentrewyn (ibid.). It was complete by 1840 at least (tithe map). The farm of Cwm Celyn, on the foreshore, has associations with Glyn Jones, the Anglo-Welsh author of many stories and poems set around the Taf estuary (James, n.d.).

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This is a small but nevertheless a reasonably distinct historic landscape area of fairly large fields with irregular boundaries, in an area of undulating hills that rise from the estuary of the River Taf to a maximum height of over 90m. Almost all the land is under improved pasture, apart from some small stands of secondary deciduous woodland and scrubby ground on steep slopes overlooking the estuary, and patches of rushy ground in some hollows. Dispersed farms characterise the settlement pattern, set in a landscape of medium-sized fields which tend to be regular in shape, and probably 17th- or early 18th-century in date. Boundaries to the fields consist of earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are in good condition, well maintained with few distinctive hedgerow trees.

Additional archaeological features include elements of earlier landscapes such as the two pairs of Bronze age standing stones at the north end of this area, 'Maen Llwyd' and 'Meini Llwydion'; one of the sites has been excavated and a number of dispersed features, with little discernible pattern or function, was noted (Marshall 1985, 19). Two burnt mounds also lie near Cwm Celyn.

Pilgrim's Rest is a Grade II listed building from the 16th century with a vaulted undercroft; it is still occupied and lies next to the ruined Medieval church of Llandeilo Abercowin, of which the earliest surviving detail is from the 15th century. Other buildings are stone-built, with slate roofs, but are not distinctive and farms such as Pentrewyn, with a historic core, now consist mostly of large modern outbuildings. A Post-Medieval smithy formerly stood at the north end of the area.

Though a relatively distinct historic landscape area, it is not easy to define clear boundaries between Area 154 and Areas 153 and 187 to the east and north. It is similar, but separate from Area 152 which

lies a little way to the south. There is better boundary definition to the south and west against reclaimed salt marsh (Area 146).

**Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area, although the slight decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is a problem that needs to be addressed.

**Ground photograph:** 21

**Aerial photographs:** 80, 81

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 155 TREFENTY

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 296154

AREA IN HECTARES: 832.80

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#### Historic Background

An area occupying most of the southern half of the Medieval Lordship of Osterlow (Ystlwyf) which mainly lay between the Rivers Cynin and Cywin, and which was roughly coterminous with the parish of Llanfihangel Abercowin. The caput of the lordship was at Trefenty where there is a fine motte-and-bailey castle, and the former parish church. The castle had probably been abandoned in favour of Trefenty House by the later Medieval period, but the earliest fabric of the present building is 18th century. Ystlwyf was a possession of the Anglo-Norman lords of St Clears until 1171 when it was acquired by Rhys ap Gruffydd, who granted the area to the Cistercian Abbey at Whitland in 1214, as part of the large Osterlow Grange (Williams, 1990). The remainder of the lordship became amassed within the Marshal inheritance during the earlier 13th century and was a member of the Earldom of Pembroke (Ludlow forthcoming) until the mid 16th-century, when it was acquired by the Perrot lords of Laugharne (Jones 1987, 185). It is possible that the administrative centre of the grange was at Pant-dwfn. It is likely that in common with most other granges land was let and farmed by tenants, who established the precursors of modern farms. Topography in the form of ridge and furrow east of Trefenty indicates that at least some of the land was cultivated by an open- or strip-field system. However, a 15th century valuation notes that cheese and sheep/wool composed the greater part of the value of the grange, with oats providing a small proportion (Benson 1996), suggesting a degree of enclosure at this date. The parish church also lay on a putative pilgrimage route to St Davids (Hartwell Jones 1912, 372) - see Area 154. Sir John Perrot added to his Ystlwyf holdings at the Dissolution in 1539 when he acquired the grange. His son, Thomas, married Dorothy sister of the Earl of Essex, and their daughter, Penelope, married Sir William Lowther, a well known astronomer, who died at Trefenty in 1615 (Jones 1987, 185). Benson (1996) considers Lowther's association with the estate as of the utmost importance for landscape history, as he suggests that it was he who was responsible for establishing the long straight boundaries that divide the area into large compartments, and are such a characteristic feature of the landscape. Later 17th century leases name 'the Great Division', 'Chief Line' and 'thwarte hedges' which indicate that this major compartmentalisation of the landscape had by then taken place. It is not entirely clear whether the subdivisions of the landscape are pre- or post-dated by the long straight boundaries, but it does seem that by the mid 17th-century all the present day elements of the historic landscape were in place. An alternative explanation is that the system may be much earlier in date. The division of the landscape into enclosures that average 700 metres square may be significant in that the rigid Roman land division of *centuriation* was laid out to a grid of square enclosures whose sides each measured 20 *actus*, the equivalent of 710 metres (Potter 1987, 101). *Centuriation* was usually, but not exclusively practised in the vicinity of *coloniae* in order that each veteran would receive an equal share, but it does represent a system of rapid land division that could be imposed on other unenclosed areas; however no further evidence has come to light that it was practised in Britain (Rivet 1964, 101). Trefenty Farm passed through the Drummond and Plowden families before being acquired by its present owners, the University of Wales (Jones 1987, 185).

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Lying between the Rivers Taf, Cywyn and Dewi Fawr, the Trefenty historic landscape of rolling hills and open valleys rises from sea level and achieves a maximum height of over 50 m. Almost the entire area is under improved pasture; there is very little woodland, arable land or rough ground. The settlement pattern is one of dispersed farms, which are generally quite large holdings. Farms lie within a most unusual field system which comprises long, straight boundaries, up to 4 km in length, dividing the landscape into very large compartments, up to 700 m square. The date origin of this system is unknown, but it was certainly present by the 17th century. These large compartments are subdivided into smaller, irregular enclosures. Boundaries consist of earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are well maintained, very few are overgrown and distinctive hedgerow trees are rare. There has been some loss of hedges over recent decades. There is evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation which pre-dates the



hedged enclosures of this area, and at the north end the system is partially interrupted by the A40 which more-or-less follows the line of the late 18th century turnpike road.

Earlier landscape features include three possible round barrows, two possible standing stones, and a burnt mound from the Bronze Age. The motte-and-bailey at Trefenty, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, exhibits no evidence for masonry. Other archaeological features comprise a Post-Medieval clay-pit which represents the only other economic activity in the area.

Trefenty is a double-pile house mainly from the 18th century and a Grade II listed building; its outbuildings are also Grade II listed. St Michael, Llanfihangel Abercywyn, is largely medieval and also a Grade II listed building, though now ruinous. In the churchyard are scheduled Medieval memorial slabs (the so-called 'pilgrim's graves'). Farms are generally quite large holdings with stone-built, slate-roofed farmhouses that are in the main in the vernacular tradition and date mostly to the late 19th-century. Most farms possess one or two ranges of 19th century stone-built outbuildings as well as a range of modern structures. Other Post-Medieval buildings include a turnpike toll gate and former smithy on the A40, a mill on the Dewi Fawr, and a former school.

The unusual field system defines this historic landscape area to a profound degree. To the south and west this area is well defined by reclaimed salt marsh (Area 146).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area, as most of the historic landscape components are in a reasonable state of preservation. However decay evident in some of the boundary hedges and the loss of others is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photograph:** 22

**Aerial photographs:** 47, 48, 79

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 156 PINGED MARSH

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 424043

AREA IN HECTARES: 555.30

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#### Historic Background

Pinged Marsh is a coastal lowland area of comparatively recent origin. It developed at the mouth of the River Gwendraeth Fawr behind and to the east of the great dune complex of Pembrey Burrows (see Areas 157, 161-163, 167-168 and 178), over a period of time but mainly during the Post-Medieval period. The dunes acted as a sea-wall and also impeded drainage of the land behind them, which in time, because of sedimentation, could be reclaimed. The development of a marshland landscape had begun by 1609 when the area was allocated to the foreignry of Kidwelly Lordship. A contemporary survey noted 'the marsh on both sides the bridge called Pont y Spowder' (Rees, 1953, 209) ie. Spudder's Bridge, the late Medieval masonry structure that still crosses the Gwendraeth Fawr towards the east of the area. Contemporary land-use was common pasture; part of the area is depicted on an Estate Map of c.1681 where it is labelled 'Common' (James, 1991, 153) bounded by an inlet to the south-west called Salthouse Pill. 160 acres of the common had been enclosed by 1638, under the local landowner Sir Richard Vaughan and the Mayor and Burgesses of Kidwelly (James 1991, 152). The north side of the area had been drained by 1766 when the industrialist Thomas Kymer constructed his canal from Pont-iets to Kidwelly, an earthwork which still forms the northern limit of the character area. Meanwhile, Penybedd Farm at the far southern end of the area had been established between 1681 and 1841 (Pembrey tithe map). However, it is clear that much of the area was still marshland and subject to regular inundation into the early 19th-century, and much of Kidwelly's contemporary maritime trade was carried out from Frankland Quay which formerly lay on the Gwendraeth Fawr 800 m south-west of Spudder's Bridge. At least two stretches of sea defence were constructed within the area, both of them bounding drier land to the south and south-west against the Gwendraeth Fawr estuary to the north. The first is shown on the Ordnance Survey first edition and is at least 18th century in date, but it can no longer be traced. It did, however, permit the construction of a canal from coal-pits on the high ground to the south of the area, to a shipping place on the estuary, by the Lord of the Manor of Pembrey, the Earl of Ashburnham, in 1796-1801 (James 1991, 155). A short canal was established by George Bowser in 1806 from Pinged Village to a tramroad which crossed the marsh to a shipping place on the Gwendraeth Fawr. A third canal was excavated by Pinkerton and Allen in 1814-24, on behalf of the Kidwelly & Llanelly Co., between a junction with Ashburnham's Canal through Pinged Marsh to Frankland Quay. It received Bowser's Canal and had a spur leading west to Trimsaran over an aqueduct, but was replaced by a railway line in 1865 (Ludlow 1999, 30). Work on the canal was interrupted by regular inundation and as a result a further sea-wall, Banc-y-Lord, was constructed by Pinkerton and Allen in 1817-18. This is a substantial earthwork lying towards the west of the landscape area (James 1991, 156). In 1830 and 1842 private Acts of Parliament were passed to enclose parts of Pinged Marsh over which the Earl of Ashburnham's tenants had previously had right of pasture (Jones 1983, 31). However, it was not until the completion, in 1850, of the embanked A484, accompanied by the canalisation of the Gwendraeth Fawr beneath a new bridge ('Commissioners Bridge'), the construction of a further embankment along roughly the same line to carry the Great Western Railway's main South Wales line in 1852 (Ludlow 1991, 84), and an extensive Enclosure Award in 1854 (CRO AE3), that the area was finally won from the sea, but it still remains very wet and marginal.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This area of reclaimed marsh consists of flat, low-lying land barely a few metres above sea level. The essential landscape components are a mixture of 18th- to 20th-century infrastructure, with post-1854 settlements and field systems. Pre-Parliamentary Enclosure features are still extant and testify to land use prior to the establishment of the present-day field- and settlement-pattern. These include the various phases of sea walls, Kymer's and Bowser's Canals, and the Pembrey & Kidwelly Canal, the latter two landscape components still evident though now derelict. Penybedd Farm is the only major pre-1854 settlement. The Parliamentary Enclosure field system of 1854 consists of small- and medium-sized regular fields, with the smaller, very regular fields to the eastern side of the area and medium-sized

slightly less regular fields to the west. Ditches are the most common boundary type. These are sometimes accompanied by scrubby hedges and/or wire fences. Towards Pinged on the eastern side of the area hedges are more substantial, but generally overgrown and rarely stock-proof. Pasture is the main land use. The quality of pasture varies considerably from improved land close to Penybedd to rough, rushy ground over most of the area, through to wet ground with standing water at Pant-teg. There is no woodland. The main South Wales railway line is a prominent component of the historic landscape, as are Second World War defences, including anti-tank blocks alongside the railway.

Most archaeological features are Post-Medieval; the canals, aqueduct, sea-walls, quays and railways noted above all survive as physical evidence to varying degrees.

The masonry Spudder's Bridge is 14th- or 15th-century and a Grade II\* listed building. Penybedd Farm, the only major pre 1854 settlement, consists of a stone-built farmhouse with a range of substantial stone-built outbuildings, now in poor condition. Other buildings comprise dwellings of later 19th- and 20th-century date, dispersed across the landscape; none are distinctive. Of particular note are terraces of 20th century housing built in Mansard style. In recent years a small industrial unit has been constructed.

Pinged Marsh is a distinct and well defined historic landscape character area. To the north and east it is bounded by rising ground with long-established farms and field systems (Areas 165, 170, 174). To the west lies an area of industry and leisure facilities (Area 157), and salt marsh to the northwest (Area 178).

#### **Conservation priorities**

Historic landscape elements such as drainage ditches and hedges require maintenance if this area is to retain its character. Major farm buildings in this area are in a very poor condition and probably beyond repair. Care should be taken that the impressive Second World War defensive features are not removed from the landscape.

**Ground photograph:** 23

**Aerial photographs:** 89, 90

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 157 PEMBREY AIRFIELD

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 399037

AREA IN HECTARES: 250.30

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#### Historic Background

A small and discrete area of dune slacks behind Pembrey Burrows and occupied by the former Pembrey Airfield (Page 1996, 15). The burrows themselves are a system of sand dunes which has built up largely during the historic period, and the slacks are the result of various phases of reclamation. The landscape area is almost coterminous with the Manor of Caldicot which was first mentioned in the 13th century (Page 1996, 13), and was extended as the result of reclamation in c.1629 with the construction of a sea-defence called 'The Bulwarke'. The northern half of the area was still subject to regular inundation until a further sea-wall, Banc-y-Lord, was constructed by Pinkerton and Allen in 1817-18 (James 1991, 156). The area was later incorporated within the Manor of Pembrey, under the Ashburnham family, and is shown divided into medium-sized irregular fields on the Pembrey tithe map of 1841. Of the two farms shown on this map, one - Towyn Mawr Farm - appears to occupy the site of one of the three farms shown on an Estate Map of c.1681 (James, 1991, 153). Part of the extreme north-east section was subject to parliamentary enclosure in 1854 (Carms R O, AE3). A 19th century brick-kiln was formerly situated in the southern part of the area, presumably utilising pockets of alluvial clay (Ordnance Survey 6" first edition, Sheet LIII SW). The area was also crossed from north-west to south-east by the man-made Swan Pool Drain, which had probably been established by 1762 to empty a pond formerly lying in Area 163, to the south east, into a former creek beyond The Bulwarke. The airfield was initially a series of grassed runways established as a fighter station, but the present layout dates from 1941-44 after it had become home to 1 Air Gunnery School (Page 1996, 15, 20). It is now a motor-racing circuit and, since 1996, a light aircraft aerodrome.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Pembrey Airfield lies on reclaimed marsh at/or close to sea level, protected from the sea by an earth-built sea wall. It is now essentially a 20th century landscape, as all earlier landscape elements were lost when the airfield was established in 1940, with two exceptions - a stretch of Ashburnham's Canal which was constructed in 1796-1801 that crosses the north-eastern corner, and Banc-y-Lord which is a substantial earthwork forming the north edge of the area. The farms and their fields recorded in 1841 and the Parliamentary Field system established in 1854, were swept away by the construction of Pembrey Airfield prior to the Second World War. Some of the major buildings from the airfield survive, mostly in a derelict state, including an 'F'-type synthetic trainer shed, but a Gunnery Training Dome survives in good condition. Parts of the runways of the airfield have been incorporated into a motor racing circuit, and other parts are used by Pembrey Airfield for light aircraft. New buildings have been constructed to serve both these functions. The area also contains a small, modern RAF headquarters/installation.

Recorded archaeology is limited to the distinctive Post-Medieval features.

The 20th century buildings are distinctive.

Pembrey Airfield is well defined to the north where a sea wall separates it from salt marsh (Area 178), and to the west where it borders forestry (Area 162). On other sides it is the modern components of this historic landscape character area which differentiate it from its neighbours.

#### Conservation priorities

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. The Gunnery Training Dome is a listed building. Other old airfield structures are in poor condition - it is difficult to envisage what change of use could be found to assist in their preservation, if desirable.

Ground photograph: 24

Aerial photographs: 90, 91

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 158 PEMBREY AND BURRY PORT

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 438010

AREA IN HECTARES: 359.40

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#### Historic Background

Pembrey and Burry Port, in their present form, are a product of the burgeoning coal industry of South-east Carmarthenshire during the 18th and early 19th century. Pembrey, however, has much earlier origins; the parish church is dedicated to St Illtud, and as a coastal church with early post-Conquest documentary references, may be a pre-Conquest foundation. It was granted to the Benedictines of Sherborne Abbey, Dorset, by Roger of Salisbury, Lord of Kidwelly, in 1120 (Ludlow 1998). A medieval chapelry, Capel Cynnor, formerly lay in the steep valley north of Burry Port, but its site had been engulfed beneath Cwm Capel Colliery by 1840 (Jones 1983, 18). During the later Medieval period Pembrey, with Maenor Penrhyn to the north, was at least initially held of the Lordship of Kidwelly, as both a Welshry and a foreignry (Rees 1953, 200). It enjoyed manorial status at least as early as 1361 under the Butlers, who possibly held it as a demesne manor, but by 1630 under the Vaughans it had become independent of Kidwelly Lordship (Jones 1983, 18), and was in 1896 described as a private manor with regular court leets (Jones 1983, 29). It was acquired by the Ashburnham family in 1677. Pembrey Court, the caput of the manor, lies to the west of Area 158 as 'Court Farm' and is a fine 16th- or early 17th-century masonry house, now in ruins (Lloyd 1986, 56); its lands lie outside this area. In contrast the coastal strip, 'Tywyn Bach', remained common pasture until the 19th century (Ludlow 1999, 23), and there is little further evidence of human activity until the 18th century when the lime trade with the Gower led to the establishment of several lime kilns. Of greater importance is the establishment, in the early 18th century, of coal pits at Gwscwm north of Burry Port (Ludlow 1999, 24), and a large number of further pits opened in the character area throughout the 18th- and earlier 19th-century. It was to carry this coal that a harbour was established at Pembrey, in 1819, on land acquired from the Ashburnham estate. The harbour had silted up by 1830 and a new one was established at Burry Port and was more-or-less complete by 1836, as a result of which Burry Port developed as an entirely new town. The harbour reached a peak of activity in the second half of the 19th century but began to decline after the First World War and largely ceased operations after the Second World War, most of the harbour fittings being removed during the early 1980s.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This complex, mainly urban, historic landscape character area spreads across the coastal plain and up the lower slope of coastal hills to a maximum of 100 m. It consists of several small historic industrial and residential core areas: Pembrey village, Pembrey harbour, Burry Port harbour and Burry Port village, which are now joined by 20th century development. The small nucleated core of Pembrey, which comprises the oldest settlement in the area and is centred on the church and Court Farm, have now very much been lost amongst 19th- and 20th-century development. Pembrey harbour, which was never fully developed, survives among the sand-dunes to the west of the area. Its successor, Burry Port Harbour, was dependant upon a communications network which began with canals and tramlines in the 1830s, and also featured a turnpike road. The Kidwelly & Llanelly Canal was superseded by a railway in 1866 (Ludlow 1999, 28). The service infrastructure also included a customs house, coastguard station, lighthouse and lifeboat station. Served by the above elements were a number of associated industries which began with the establishment of a copper works in the 1850s. The development of housing, and the establishment of a number of chapels and churches, began under the impetus of the proprietors of these industrial ventures from 1850 onwards (Ludlow 1999, 29). Indeed the whole area is one of terraced stone- and brick-built 19th century residential development, infilled with 20th century housing in a variety of styles and materials. Evidence for 19th- and early 20th-century manufacturing industry, and the 20th century power generation on which the settlements depended, has now virtually been erased. Its infrastructure survives, however, in the harbours themselves, for example, and the main GWR railway which opened in 1852 and is still in use. The current work on a Millennium Coastal Park will convert the semi-derelict harbours into tourist/leisure facilities, landscape the former industrial sites, and create a coastal path.

The archaeology of the landscape area is primarily connected with its industrial development and has been outlined above.

St Illtud's Church, Pembrey, is a Grade A listed building with much surviving late 16th-century detail. The 16th- or 17th-century Court Farm, that is Pembrey manor house, the largest pre-Renaissance house in Carmarthenshire 'rich in corbels, tall chimneys and mullioned windows' (Lloyd 1986, 56), is a Grade II listed building but now a shell. The outer harbour at Burry Port, and a bridge over the Kidwelly & Llanelly Canal are also Grade II listed.

Pembrey and Burry Port is a distinctive historic landscape character area and stands in sharp contrast with neighbouring areas which are predominantly rural/agricultural in character (Areas 161, 163, 164).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. However, care and consideration should be given to the important industrial remains in this area during programmes of restoration and renewal.

**Ground photograph: 25**

**Aerial photographs: 97**

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA:  
**159 KIDWELLY**

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 407068

AREA IN HECTARES: 61.81

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**Historic Background**

Kidwelly is a small town and medieval borough in which there is considerable survival of historic landscape features. It exhibits little evidence for the pre-Conquest period, although the commote within which it lies bears the same name as the settlement. In 1106 it was granted by King Henry I to Bishop Roger of Salisbury (Avent 1991, 167) who built the castle by 1114, when St Mary's Church was established as a cell of Sherborne Abbey. The civil settlement appears to have been coeval occupying a defended area that was in effect the southernmost of three outer baileys lying along the north side of the Gwendraeth Fach. Initial settlement appears to have been encouraged among Flemish immigrants, who established a cloth industry (Soulsby 1983, 153). The Kidwelly area passed between Anglo-Norman and Welsh hands during the 12th- and early 13th-century, which doubtless impeded urban development and may have prevented the expansion of the town into the northern bailey(s), but did not impede Kidwelly's role as a trading port which began in the early 13th century. The more settled conditions of the later 13th- and 14th-century, under the tenure of the Chaworths and, from 1327, the Duchy of Lancaster, permitted expansion beyond the defended area onto the southern shore of the Gwendraeth Fawr, around St Mary's Church, and a suburb also developed north-west of the defended area. No charter appears to have been preserved but in 1609 the town was referred to as 'an ancient borough' consisting of a mayor and three alderman, whose burgesses had 'very large and great privileges' (Rees 1953, 178). They were granted two weekly markets in 1268 but had been granted freedom of tolls as early as 1106-14 (Morris 1975, 62). The town defences were rebuilt in stone in the 1280s but the defended area was nevertheless 'destroyed' in the Glyndwr rebellion of 1403 (Soulsby 1983, 153). Subsequent development occurred mainly within the suburbs and by the 1530s this 'new town' was 'three times as bigge as the Old' (Smith 1910, 59), the latter accounting for only 18 burgages out of a total of 171 (Rees 1953, 179-192). Kidwelly entered into decline at the end of the Medieval period and in 1630 was, with the rest of the Lordship, sold to the Carbery earls who held it until 1804 when it passed to the Cawdor estate (Jones 1983, 18). The castle was still 'meetly kept up' in the 1530s (Smith 1910, 59) but was abandoned soon after and, with the rents in the 'old town', became decayed, while the town generally was, in 1609, described as 'very poor and out of all trade' (Rees 1953, 178). Its borough privileges, however, enabled mercantile activity to continue and there was something of a rebirth in Kidwelly's fortunes during the late 17th- and early 18th-century. Trade was conducted from the town quay on the Gwendraeth Fach below the bridge, but this proved inadequate to cope with increasing mercantile activity through the 18th century, and new quays were established on the Gwendraeth Fawr at Frankland and Muddlescwm east of the town (Ludlow 1991, 84). The establishment of Kymer's Canal in 1776-8 took yet more trade away from the town and sea-borne trade had ceased to be a factor in Kidwelly's development by the mid 19th-century. The Great Western main South Wales railway line was directed through Kidwelly, with a station, in 1859. There has been much 20th century development to the south of the river including a large, post-Second World War housing estate east of St Mary's church.

**Description and essential historic landscape components**

The town centres upon the castle which was later rebuilt in stone, but retains the original arrangement of an inner bailey flanked by three outer baileys in line along the north bank of the Gwendraeth Fach. All three outer baileys may initially have been intended for urban civil settlement, but only the southern appears to have been developed. The earthwork defences were topped with a stone wall in the 14th century and a late Medieval masonry house survived within the walled area until the 20th century (Williams 1991, 198). The suburb south of the Gwendraeth Fawr, along Causeway and Lady Streets, developed after the establishment of St Mary's church. Many properties within this initial suburban area, and those to the northeast of the walled area, along the Llansaint and Carmarthen Roads, appear to represent former burgrave plots. Some development appears to have occurred along Station Road prior to the establishment of the station in 1859. The town hall was situated above the south gate but had

been replaced by c.1600 by a new hall at the junction of Lady Street and Causeway Street (Soulsby 1983, 153-4); this has now gone. A number of mills were situated on the Gwendraeth Fach including, immediately south of the castle, a corn mill and fulling mill, the race for which can still be seen (Ludlow 1991, 84).

Recorded archaeology relates to the town's Medieval and Post-Medieval history.

Buildings are mainly 18th- and 19th-century, stone with slate roofs but distinctive buildings are few. The castle is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and Grade I listed building, the surviving town wall gateway is Grade II\* listed, and St Mary's Church, fine cruciform structure, the surviving fabric of which mainly dates to the 14th century (Ludlow 1998) is Grade A listed; there is little evidence for the conventual buildings but these are not likely to have been extensive (Williams 1991, 195). There are only two more Grade II listed buildings, both 18th- and 19th-century. However, the area of the former town quay has been largely undeveloped and some of the late 18th-century warehousing still survives. Subsequent urban development along Station Road, and to the south and east of the town, occurred during the 19th century and is frequently terraced, including 'Gwendraeth Town', a terrace of worker housing erected for the employees of Kidwelly Tinplate Works in 1881 (Ludlow 1991, 84). Linear development from the 20th century connects these elements and extends beyond to the south and east.

This is a very distinct historic landscape area, and stands in sharp contrast to the surrounding agricultural land (Areas 169, 170 and 171).

#### **Conservation priorities**

Conservation priorities are concerned with the Kidwelly Conservation Area and with domestic and other buildings of the town, listed and unlisted. Insensitive development in the core of the town should be discouraged. Kidwelly is a reasonably compact nucleated settlement. Extensive ribbon development and dispersed housing on the fringes of the town should be discouraged.

**Ground photograph: 26**

**Aerial photographs: 70, 88, 94**



## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 160 BROOKLANDS**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 408024**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 144.90**

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#### **Historic Background**

A very distinct area of former salt marsh behind, and to the east of Pembrey Burrows (see character areas 156, 157 and 162), which developed when the coastline around the burrows lay considerably further east and south than it does at present. At least part of the area was referred to as 'King's Marsh alias Pembrey Marsh' in a survey of 1638 (James 1991, 152), when it appears to have represented open salt marsh set aside for use by the burgesses of Kidwelly, of which sixty acres had recently been enclosed by Sir Richard Vaughan. These enclosures are probably the fields shown on the estate map of Caldicot Manor of 1681 as the 'King's Warth' ('Morfa Brenin' on the Pembrey tithe map, 1841). The four large enclosures, variously subdivided, in the northern half of the area are shown with boundaries identical to those of today, but with variations in subdivision. One of these boundaries, however, represents the line of the sea wall constructed as 'The Bulwarke', probably in 1629 (James, 1991, 152). The area is crossed from north to south by the man-made Swan Pool Drain, which had probably been established by 1762 to empty a pond formerly lying in Area 163, to the south east, into a former creek beyond The Bulwarke, in Area 157. Much of the remainder of Caldicot Manor now lies beneath Pembrey Airfield (Landscape Area 157). The farmstead of Brooklands itself is a later creation and is not shown on the Pembrey tithe map of 1841. During the Second World War a Command Stop Line was constructed between Cardigan Bay and the Bristol Channel, part of the defences of which follow Swan Pool Drain (Page 1996, 20).

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This area consists of flat, reclaimed marsh at, or close to sea level. It is now mostly improved pasture which has been divided into medium-sized irregular enclosures by ditches, dating to the 17th century. In some instances scrubby hedges line the ditches; these are supplemented by wire fences. Alongside tracks hedges are in better condition and are mostly stock-proof. There is no woodland.

Recorded archaeology is limited to drainage features.

There are no distinctive buildings. The later 19th century Brooklands Farm has recently been rebuilt in brick, has a large assemblage of modern farm buildings and is the only settlement in this area. Two Second World War pill-boxes lie within the area.

The borders of the Brooklands historic landscape character area are only well defined to the west against forestry (Area 162). To the northwest lies the modern landscape of Pembrey Airfield (Area 157), and to the northeast the later enclosed land of Pinged Marsh (Area 156). To the south lies more forestry (Area 161) and more intensively enclosed and settled reclaimed marsh (Area 163).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. The drainage ditches and hedges should be maintained.

**Ground photograph: 27**

**Aerial photographs: 90**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 161 PENYBEDD WOOD**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 415017**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 33.73**

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#### **Historic Background**

For the general landscape history of Penybedd Wood see Landscape Areas 160, 162 and 163. Area 161 may represent the core of the tongue of dry land at the foot of Mynydd Penbre around which reclamation occurred from the 17th century onwards, but does not appear to have formed part of the Medieval and Post-Medieval Manor of Caldicot (James 1991, 153). The Pembrey tithe map of 1841 and the Ordnance Survey 6" first edition of 1891 show the area as a small patch of unenclosed land. It was planted with conifers after the Second World War.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This very small historic landscape character area comprises a post-Second World War coniferous plantation. The land lies barely above sea level, and unlike the surrounding areas it does not consist of reclaimed marsh, but of low sand dunes. Areas of wind-blown sand have a very limited economic use, therefore it was not subject to enclosure in the historic period, and caused it to be planted for forestry. A small picnic site has been established in the forestry.

There is no recorded archaeology within the area.

There are no buildings.

This is a distinct historic landscape area with clear boundaries with neighbouring areas which consist of enclosed former marsh (Areas 156, 160, 163), or residential development (Area 158).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

**Ground photograph: 125**

**Aerial photographs: 96**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 162 PEMBREY FOREST**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 385027**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 863.90**

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#### **Historic Background**

Pembrey Forest occupies the greater part of Pembrey (or 'Towyn') Burrows, an area of sand hills of comparatively recent origin (see also Landscape Areas 156, 157, 160, 161, 163, 168 and 178). The Burrows developed at the mouth of the River Gwendraeth Fawr over a long period. Alongside this a series of reclamations occurred around an initial nucleus formed by a tongue of dry land at the foot of Mynydd Penbre, partly represented by the Medieval Manor of Caldicot which was more-or-less coterminous with Area 157 - Pembrey Airfield (James 1991, 153). The Burrows themselves have developed since the 17th century at least but, according to James, are no earlier than the Medieval period - the earliest date to which shell-midden sites observed within the area can be attributed (James 1991, 159). Sea-walls constructed during the 18th- and early 19th-century extended dry land further north and west of the airfield area, into the area of the Burrows, and dune slacks appear to have developed to the southeast of the original tongue of dry land in the area now occupied by Landscape Areas 163 and 167. The Manor of Caldicot had been merged with the Manor of Pembrey (under the Ashburnhams) by the early 19th-century, when the coastline had extended almost to its present line and most of Area 162 appears already to have been occupied by sand hills, called 'Great Outlet' on the Pembrey tithe map of 1841 and represented as common land. However, the tithe map also shows enclosures to the extreme west and southwest of the area around a farm, Towyn Canol, also shown in 1891 (Ordnance Survey 6" first edition, Sheet LVII NW). During the Second World War, gun emplacements relating to Pembrey Airfield, and the Command Stop Line running from the Bristol Channel to Cardigan Bay, were constructed east-west across the burrows. The entire character area has been planted with coniferous forest since the 1940s.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

There are few historic landscape components in what is in essence a band of sand dunes some 5 km wide and 2 km long over which a conifer plantation has been established. The dunes are substantial, and achieve heights of over 20 m. Only a very small portion of land now under forestry was enclosed farm land, not sand dune; this has not been examined to see if former field boundaries and structures survive, but the outlines of yards, buildings etc. associated with Towyn Canol are shown on the modern Ordnance Survey 1:2500. Prior to the conifer planting, a munitions factory was established at the southern end of this area. The storage bunkers and infrastructure of this factory constitute some of the most important components in the historic landscape, as do the scattered Second World War defensive structures within the forest.

Recorded archaeology is limited to the shell midden, drainage features, and the site of Towyn Canol Farm.

Distinctive buildings are limited to two Second World War gun emplacements and a bunker.

Pembrey Forest is a distinctive and well defined historic landscape area on all sides except to the south. To the south both the forestry and installations associated with the munitions factory spill into Area 167. To the west lies unafforested sand dunes (Area 168), to the north salt marsh (Area 178) and to the east reclaimed marsh (Areas 157, 160).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. The main areas of concern are the Second World War defensive remains and structures associated with the munitions factory. Care should be taken during felling so that these features are not damaged.

**Ground photograph: 28**

**Aerial photographs: 91, 93**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 163 MEUSYDD**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 419010**  
**AREA IN HECTARES: 130.30**

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#### **Historic Background**

A character area which has developed behind and to the east of Pembrey Burrows (Area 162). The eastern area comprises sand hills of comparatively recent origin, having developed since the 17th century at least but no earlier than the Medieval period (James 1991, 159). Reclamations made in Areas 156, 157 and 160, during the 18th- and early 19th-century, were accompanied in Area 163 by the development of marshland and dune slacks, to the southeast of a tongue of dry land which lay at the foot of Mynydd Penbre. This area, which formed part of the Manor of Pembrey, appears to have been wet and marshy, and was partly occupied by a pond, 'Swan Pool', shown on a map of 1762 and still present at the end of the 19th century (James 1991, 154). References to the Swan Pools of Pembrey occur in manorial records of 1642 when they apparently harboured swans and fish for the table of the Lords of the Manor of Pembrey (Jones 1983, 19). The remainder of the area appears to have been called 'Black Marsh', an element which occurs in three of its present field names. A channel, 'Swan Pool Drain', had probably been constructed by 1762 in order to drain the area, and emptied into a former creek beyond the sea defences to the north-west (see Area 157). Reclamation of the marsh occurred after 1762 (James 1991, 154); it appears to have been piecemeal, leading to a discrete landscape area of small, irregular fields which were all under different owners/tenants in 1841, and without settlements (Pembrey tithe map). The eastern half of the area was crossed by the Pembrey Canal, which was constructed in 1823-4 to serve the former 'old' harbour at Pembrey in Area 158 (Nicholson 1991, 126). The farmstead, Meusydd, has been established since 1841 and lies adjacent to a track converted into a spur railway from the GWR main line in the early 20th-century, to serve the former Royal Ordnance Factory in Area 167 (Page 1996, 15). During the Second World War a Command Stop Line was constructed between Cardigan Bay and the Bristol Channel, part of the defences of which follow Swan Pool Drain (Page 1996, 20).

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

The area is a distinct landscape of reclaimed marsh just above sea level which is now unimproved pasture, divided into a patchwork of irregular roughly rectilinear fields by ditches, wire fences and post-and-rail fences. All boundaries are post-1762 and there are no mature trees. There is a scatter of dwellings and outbuildings. The northern limit of the area is defined by the embankment of the GWR West Wales main line which opened in 1852 (Ludlow 1999, 28).

Recorded archaeology is limited to the later Post-Medieval period and there appear to be no earlier landscape features. Swan Pool Drain still functions but the remains of Pembrey canal, shown in 1891 (Ordnance Survey 6" First Edition, Sheet LIII SW), are no longer clear. The railway embankment survives and there is a Second World War pillbox.

The dwellings and outbuildings are mostly 20th century, agricultural, and in a variety of materials.

This is well-defined historic landscape area bonded by Pembrey and Burry Port to the north (Area 158), the large enclosures of Area 160 to the west, and Pembrey Country Park (Area 167) to the south and east.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Apart from the maintenance of the drainage ditches and other boundaries, there are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area.

**Ground photograph: 29**

**Aerial photographs: 96**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 164 MYNYDD PENBRE WOOD

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 427023

AREA IN HECTARES: 49.60

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#### Historic Background

An area of wooded scarp occupying the north-western slope of Mynydd Penbre which, in the historic period, represented a sea-cliff line (James 1991, 147). Mynydd Penbre represented the greater part of Maenor Penrhyn during the Medieval period, which, with the manor of Pembrey, was initially held of the Lordship of Kidwelly as both a Welshry and a foreignry (Rees 1953, 200). It enjoyed manorial status at least as early as 1361 and had, by 1630, become independent of Kidwelly Lordship (Jones 1983, 18). The area was probably wooded throughout the Medieval period (Williams 1981, 5). The southern end, called 'Court Wood', lay within the curtilage of Pembrey Court, the caput of the manor (see Area 158), and the area also contains Coed y Marchog ('Knight's Wood') which was given the same name in 18th century documents (Williams, 1981, 5). The remainder of the area is split between Coed and Coed Rhyal; Coed is a farmstead that is shown in 1891 (Ordnance Survey 6" First Edition, Sheet LIII SW). At least four coal levels were operational within Coed Rhyal in the earlier 19th-century, but had closed by 1891 (OS first edition, Sheet LIII SW), while quarries lay near Coed and in Court Wood. In addition, at the foot of the south-west end of Mynydd Penbre lay Craig-lon Colliery which was established in the 18th century, extended in the 19th century, amalgamated with other local collieries as 'Pembrey Collieries Ltd' in 1918, and closed in the 1930s (Ludlow 1999, 31). The southwest end of the area was used as a firing range in the Second World War. A conifer plantation has now been planted across part of the area.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

The area occupies a steep, north-west facing scarp slope dropping from 100 m to just above sea level in an area averaging 150 m in width; it is wider at its southern end where the hillslope turns towards the east, and this latter area contains two Iron Age hillforts (Williams, 1981). It is thickly wooded, predominantly with oak scrub which is largely secondary. The area is predominantly unenclosed but there are remains of ridge and furrow, and plough lynchets with prehistoric origins, to the south (Williams 1981, 11-12), while the far north end is divided by a series of boundaries into irregular rectilinear enclosures, and the central area, around Coed Farm, the only settlement, features a large enclosure. An extensive 20th century conifer plantation occupies a large portion of this area. The Court Wood quarry can still be seen but there is now little physical evidence for the former coal mines. Some artificial hollows and platforms to the south-east relate to use as a firing range in the Second World War (Williams, 1981, 12).

Recorded archaeology is rich and diverse, including the two Iron Age hillforts, two possible Bronze Age round barrows, agricultural features including an ?Iron Age field system, Medieval ridge and furrow, and Post-Medieval industrial features ie. quarries and coal pits.

There are no distinctive buildings.

This historic landscape area contrasts sharply with more level ground at the foot of the hillslope to the north and west (Area 166) and the summit of Mynydd Penbre to the south and east (partly occupied by Area 176).

#### Conservation priorities

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

Ground photograph: 30

Aerial photographs: 99

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 165 LLANDYRY AND PINGED STRIP FIELDS

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 426043

AREA IN HECTARES: 223.30

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#### Historic Background

A strip of land southeast of Pinged Marsh (Area 165) which, like Areas 164 and 165 etc., formed part of Pembrey Manor during the Medieval period and, with Maenor Penrhyn to the north-east, was initially held of the Lordship of Kidwelly as both a Welshry and a foreignry (Rees 1953, 200). It enjoyed manorial status from at least 1361 under the Butlers, who possibly held it as a demesne manor, and by 1630 under the Vaughans it had become independent of Kidwelly lordship (Jones 1983, 18). However, 'one tenement in the said foreignry (of Kidwelly) at a place called Pinget (sic), late in the tenure of John Ungood, containing six acres of lands or thereabouts' had been claimed as part of the Kidwelly demesne in 1609 (Rees 1953, 206). Ridge and furrow cultivation appears to have been carried out within at least part of the area, and it is apparent from the Pembrey tithe map of 1841 that the boundaries within the area, and around Pinged in particular, represent the enclosure of former field strips. This has given rise to rectilinear enclosures which are like those within Area 166, but in 1841 the process appears to have been less well advanced in Area 165, and may therefore have been a relatively recent phenomenon. The present farms Ty Mawr, Ty-canol, Ty Cornel and Moat all appear to be no earlier than the late 18th-century. The area lies within the parish of Pembrey and to the north is Llandyry, a chapel-of-ease, which in 1353 was, with Pembrey Church, granted to the New College of Leicester (Ludlow 1998). There is no firm evidence for the pre-conquest religious use of the site. It was granted burial rights in 1876. Area 165 enters the coalfield at its far north-eastern end and it is here that the greatest landscape change occurred with the establishment of a number of coal-pits and iron-workings, some of them as early as the 17th century (Thomas, 1937, 2) and, in 1814-24, a spur of the Kidwelly & Llanelly canal which led to the Trimsaran collieries (see Area 156). It was replaced by a railway line in 1865 (Ludlow 1999, 28). Piecemeal 20th century housing development has occurred, and a later 20th-century poultry farm now occupies part of the area (see also Area 166).

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

The area is a narrowish southwest-northeast running strip with a general downhill trend to the north-west, from 20 m to just above sea level. It comprises irregular, medium-sized rectilinear enclosures which, particularly around Pinged and Llandyry, represent former strip fields. Boundaries mainly belong to the 18th- and early 19th-century and are earth banks with hedges, some of which are overgrown and have distinctive trees, enclosing both improved and unimproved pasture. Field evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation has been noted at two localities within the northern part of the area. There is little woodland. Settlement is characterised by dispersed farms though there are loose nucleations at the historic sites of Llandyry and Pinged. There is physical evidence for a number of early iron- and coal-pits in the area, some as early as the 17th century. The Kidwelly & Llanelly Canal/railway embankment survives along with the aqueduct built at Moat in 1814-24.

Recorded archaeology is mainly characterised by the industrial features noted above, and structures. However, an Iron Age defended enclosure has also been recognised.

Llandyry Church is a Medieval cruciform church restored in 1876 (Ludlow 1998), but the remainder of the buildings within the area appear to be no earlier than the 18th century and most date to the second half of the 19th century and 20th century. Dwellings comprise small farmhouses, other small houses and cottages. 19th century dwellings are stone-built, two-storey and three-bay in the vernacular tradition. 20th century dwellings are in a variety of styles and materials. There are several 19th century cottages, houses and cottage sites, and a school at Pinged, as well as late 20th century dwellings. 19th century farm outbuildings are stone-built and relatively small, usually consisting of just one range. However Moat is a substantial farmstead comprising good quality buildings from the 18th- and early 19th-century. The canal overbridge at Moat is Grade II listed.

This is a fairly distinct historic landscape area which contrasts sharply with the reclaimed marsh to the north and west (Area 156). The boundary with Area 166 to the south and east is less well-defined, but the outlines of the former field strips are better-preserved in Area 165 than in Area 166.

**Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area, but some consideration should be given to the management of hedges which are becoming overgrown and may eventually become derelict.

**Ground photograph: 31**

**Aerial photographs: 105**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 166 WAUN BAGLAM

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**GRID REFERENCE:** SN 435037

**AREA IN HECTARES:** 359.40

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#### **Historic Background**

Formerly part of the Medieval Manor of Pembrey (see Areas 158, 164-5) this is an area of rectilinear enclosures derived from former strip fields. Some are shown as field strips on the Pembrey tithe map of 1841, but the process of enclosure was more advanced than in Area 165. It may have begun in the 17th century, prior to the reclamation of Pinged Marsh (Area 156) which was undertaken from the 18th century onwards. Cilrehedyn may be the site of a Medieval settlement and Berth Farm may be the tenement 'Tir y Bearth' which was in the freehold possession of Thomas Jenkin John ap John, from the Lordship of Kidwelly, in 1609 (Rees 1953, 204). Place-name evidence suggests the management of at least part of the area as a Post-Medieval plantation. During the early 18th-century coal production spread into the area from its nucleus of early pits around Trimsaran and Moat, and pits were recorded at Waun Baglam itself (Ludlow 1999, 24). There has been little 20th century housing development but a later 20th-century poultry farm now occupies a substantial part of the area (see also Area 165).

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

The area comprises irregular, medium-sized rectilinear enclosures occupying a general downhill trend to the north-west, from 120 m to 20 m, representing former strip fields enclosed from the 17th to the early 19th-century. Boundaries are earth banks with hedges, generally overgrown and enclosing mostly unimproved pasture. There are substantial pockets of deciduous woodland particularly around Wern and Berth farms, and some neglected hedges have distinctive trees giving the landscape a wooded appearance; such woodland, however, is probably all secondary. Settlement is characterised by dispersed farms whose buildings appear to belong mainly to the 19th- and 20th-century, but Berth Farm may have 17th century origins (Rees 1953, 204), and the morphology of Waun Baglam/Tyllwyd and Bryn-dias suggest that they may have developed as squatter settlements on the edge of Waun Baglan Common (Area 176) in the 18th- and early 19th-century.

Recorded archaeology includes a Bronze Age standing stone to the south-west of the area, a possible Bronze Age round barrow and an Iron Age defended settlement. There is physical evidence for coal-pits and mines from the early 18th-century onwards.

Buildings within this area mostly comprise farmsteads which are generally late 19th- and 20th-century in date, and stone-built with slate roofs, a scatter of 19th century cottages and other houses, and a little late 20th-century dispersed residential development. Farmhouses are small, two-storey and three-bay, in the vernacular tradition and old farm buildings where present are small, often of just one range and stone- or brick-built. Cottages are stone built.

This is a fairly distinct historic landscape area which contrasts with the hillslope of Mynydd Penbre (Area 164) and Parliamentary Enclosure (Area 176) to the south and east. The boundary with Area 165 to the north and west is less well-defined, but the outlines of the former field strips are better-preserved than in Area 166.

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. However, the decay which is evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area, and this problem needs to be addressed.

**Ground photographs:** 32

**Aerial photographs:** 99, 100



## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 167 PEMBREY COUNTRY PARK**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 417004**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 271.80**

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#### **Historic Background**

A character area comprising part of Pembrey Burrows (see Area 162), to the east of which lie part of the dune slacks that developed behind them (see also Area 163). The area is distinctive for its recent industrial and leisure-related land use. The Burrows are an area of sand hills of comparatively recent origin, having developed since the 17th century at least and are no earlier than the Medieval period (James 1991, 159). Reclamations made to the north of the area during the 18th- and early 19th-century, in Areas 156, 157 and 160, were accompanied by the development, in Areas 163 and 167, of marshland and dune slacks to the south-east of an original tongue of dry land which lay at the foot of Mynydd Penbre. Area 167 belonged to the Manor of Pembrey but was common land in 1841 when it formed part of the 'Great Outlet' on the Pembrey tithe map. The area was developed as an industrial site in the late 19th-century when the Nobel Dynamite Company established a factory (Page 1996, 15); this was later purchased by the government and operated as the Royal Ordnance Factory. It became an industrial estate after the Second World War but was largely derelict by the early 1970s when it was acquired by the local authority, who developed it as a Country Park - now Wales' leading tourist attraction. The post-war era also saw the establishment of the Ashburnham Golf Links in the eastern half of the area.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

The landscape now existing in this area is almost entirely a 20th century creation. It comprises unenclosed sand hills and dune slacks/marsh lying just above sea level, which is partly forested and partly occupied by Pembrey Country Park, light industrial units and a golf course. The latter uses have all been accompanied by the profound alteration of the original landscape and topography. Many features relating to the 20th century military/industrial use of the area survive in various conditions, and include buildings, shelters, railway lines and tracks, bunkers, pillboxes etc..

There is little underlying landscape archaeology but to the far east of the area, where it is occupied by the golf course, it is crossed by the standing earthwork of Stanley's Embankment, an inclined tramway established in the 1820s to convey coal from Stanley's New Pit, in Pembrey, to Pembrey Old Harbour (Nicholson 1991, 126). A second tramway conveyed coal from the Pembrey Canal to the harbour (see Area 163).

There are no distinctive buildings,

A very distinct landscape area contrasting with the built-up area to the east (Area 158), the system of late 18th-century enclosures to the north (Area 163), the coniferous forest plantation to the west (Area 162) and the unenclosed sand hills to the south (Area 168).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. Care should be taken during tree felling that the Second World War features and other 20th century landscape elements are not damaged.

**Ground photograph: 33**

**Aerial photographs: 95, 96**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 168 PEMBREY BURROWS**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 376026**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 444.10**

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#### **Historic Background**

The area occupies that part of Pembrey (or 'Towyn') Burrows which is not planted with coniferous forest, ie. a narrow strip averaging some 150 m wide on the seaward side of Area 162 (Pembrey Forest). The Burrows developed at the mouth of the River Gwendraeth Fawr over a long period, alongside a series of reclamations around an initial nucleus formed by a tongue of dry land at the foot of Mynydd Penbre. The Burrows have developed since the 17th century at least but, according to James, are no earlier than the Medieval period - the earliest date to which shell-midden sites observed within the neighbouring Area 162 can be attributed (James 1991, 159). Their seaward development continues, and that part occupied by Area 168 has only developed since 1830 (James 1991, 155). The area was incorporated into the system of Second World War defences around Pembrey Airfield and Ordnance Factory.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

An unenclosed maritime area of sand hills, just above sea level but individually rising to over 2 m, which have developed since 1830. A shifting environment though partly stabilised through marram-grass planting.

Two Second World War gun emplacements occupy the northern part of the area, otherwise it features no recorded archaeology.

There are no distinctive buildings.

A very distinct landscape area bounded by High Water Mark to the south and west, an area of saltmarsh to the far north (area 178), and coniferous forest plantation (Area 162) and the 20th century military/leisure landscape of Area 167 to the north and east.

**Ground photograph: 34**

**Aerial photographs: 95**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 169 KIDWELLY AND LLANSAINST STRIP FIELDS

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**GRID REFERENCE:** SN 389085

**AREA IN HECTARES:** 345.60

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#### **Historic Background**

An area lying within both the Medieval borough limits of Kidwelly to the east, and St Ishmael to the west which was held as a foreignry of Kidwelly Lordship (Rees 1953, 175-212). It has a good documented Medieval and Post-Medieval history. The area was granted to Bishop Roger of Salisbury in 1106 (Avent 1991, 167), which heralded its reorganisation along manorial lines. It passed between Anglo-Norman and Welsh hands during the 12th- and early 13th-century, but more settled conditions prevailed in the later 13th- and 14th-century under the tenure of the Chaworths and, from 1327, the Duchy of Lancaster. Within St Ishmael foreignry to the west is the church of All Saints at Llansaint, which lies at the centre of a nucleation now generally agreed to be the site of the 'Halkyn' or 'Hawkin' shown on early maps (James 1991, 144-5; Rees 1953, 174). The nearby field names 'Park Whitland' and 'Park y Prior' may commemorate former monastic land. Part of the eastern half of Area 169, which lay within the borough of Kidwelly, was called 'Shilland Field' (sharelands?) during the early Post-Medieval period and was divided into common pasture above 90 m and open field strips below. A nearby area, 'Burghylle', may have belonged to Kidwelly Priory (Barnie and James, 1977, 45). Strips belonging to the lord of the manor (Coed yr Arglwydd), and a local family called Barret, are recorded in tenement names of 1609 (Rees 1953, 207); the former name suggests the presence of woodland that was felled in the Medieval period. In 1630 the lordship of Kidwelly was sold to the Carbery earls who held it until 1804 when it passed to the Cawdor estate (Jones 1983, 18); subsequent development has been small-scale.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

An area lying between 25 m and 150 m, of a general southerly aspect. The manorial nature of tenure within the area during the Medieval period has given rise to a landscape characterised by its relict field strip system, the former strips of which were still apparent in 1840 (Kidwelly and St Ishmael tithe maps). There is little woodland, all of it secondary. There is the usual scatter of farmsteads and cottage sites. Within the foreignry of St Ishmael to the west, a nucleation around Llansaint Church - which occupies a distinct, central location within the village - lies at the focus of a number of roads within a discrete area of former field strips. The main Kidwelly-Ferryside road follows the line of a ?Medieval routeway called the 'Ferry Way', which led from Kidwelly to the Llansteffan Ferry over the Tywi estuary (Rees 1932). A spur from this route is one of the routes that converges on Llansaint and was known as the 'Portway'. This half of the area is now all improved pasture with long, medium-sized enclosures divided by earth banks with low hedges, predominantly well-maintained. The eastern half of the area, which lay within the borough of Kidwelly, features numerous strip lynchets below 90 m, above which was common pasture (Barnie and James, 1977, 45) which may have been seasonal. The landscape here also features an overgrown hollow-way, 'The Summerway', recorded in 1396. This area would seem to have been embanked and hedged by the 16th century and there are a number of relict boundaries and boundary stones (Barnie and James, 1977, 42). However, the direction of a turnpike road through the area between 1763 and 1811, ie. the present A484 (M S C Evans 1988, 66), affected a reorganisation of some of the boundaries; the earlier route followed a similar course and its boundaries are still present. This eastern half is basically an area of improved pasture but there is some bracken on steep slopes. The long, medium-sized enclosures are divided by earth banks with hedges, some of which are becoming overgrown and derelict with distinctive trees, but are well-maintained along the roadsides. In both areas the present settlement pattern is mainly one of dispersed farms, and there has been little modern development within the nucleation of Llansaint.

Recorded archaeology, in addition to the features mentioned above, includes elements from underlying landscapes such as two (possibly three) standing stones and two possible round barrows, from the Bronze Age, and a possible Bronze Age henge or Iron Age hillfort. The Medieval All Saints Church, Llansaint, with a landmark tower, is Grade B listed. The area also features a number of natural springs

and wells, some of which are mentioned in late Medieval accounts and the possible site of a chapel dedicated to St Thomas near Kidwelly (Rees, 1932). Later archaeology is mainly represented by buildings.

Farmhouses are generally 19th century, stone-built and slate-roofed, two-storey, three-bay, rendered and in the vernacular tradition. Most farms have two or more ranges of stone-built, 19th century outbuildings as well as modern agricultural buildings. Llansaint village is characterised by a cluster of 19th century stone-built houses around the church surrounded by a loose girdle of farmsteads and modern residential development. There is a former smithy in Llansaint, and two pounds.

This is a fairly distinct historic landscape area which contrasts with the pattern of more regular enclosures to the south and east (Area 173) and the large, very regular enclosures to the north and west (Area 175).

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Llansaint village is a conservation area. In order to maintain its nucleated character, ribbon- and dispersed-development close to the village should be discouraged.

**Ground photograph:** 35

**Aerial photographs:** 87, 88, 94, 101

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 170 HOLLOWAY FORMER STRIP FIELDS**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 413066**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 76.10**

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#### **Historic Background**

An area within the Medieval borough of Kidwelly (see Area 159), which has a good documented Medieval and Post-Medieval history, representing former town fields. The Kidwelly area (and later lordship) was granted to Bishop Roger of Salisbury in 1106 who established the borough (Avent 1991, 167), but it passed between Anglo-Norman and Welsh hands during the 12th- and early 13th-century. More settled conditions prevailed during the later 13th- and 14th-century under the tenure of the Chaworths and, from 1327, the Duchy of Lancaster. At least the western half of the area appears to have lain within the estate of Muddlescwm, a holding just to the east within the foreignry of the lordship, as in 1487 'one rood at Le Halwey' (Holloway) was granted to William Howe and Joan, his wife, by Trahaiarn ap Morgan of Muddlescwm (Jones 1985, 17). Kidwelly's industrialisation through the 18th- and 19th-century has also left evidence within the landscape in the form of a railway line and a former brick and silica works. The area is crossed by the A484 Kidwelly Bypass and some late 20th century development has occurred along side roads, but the overall impression is one of dereliction.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

A small area of fairly small fields lying between 5 metres and 20 metres, representing a system of former strip fields associated with the Medieval borough of Kidwelly. The former strips are most pronounced to the west, around Holloway Farm which has Medieval origins; they are less apparent to the east where there has been some reorganisation of boundaries. Boundaries throughout are earth banks, now overgrown and becoming derelict, dividing fields of unimproved pasture which are becoming neglected. There is no woodland. Kidwelly bypass which crosses this area has led to further fragmentation of the field system.

A former spur from the GWR main West Wales line, which was established in the 1870s to convey ore and stone from the quarries on Mynyddygarreg, and tinsplate from the former works east of Kidwelly (Ludlow 1991, 84), runs through the area. The 'Dinas' brick and silica works formerly lay to the west of the area (Ordnance Survey 6" First Edition, Sheet LIII. NE, 1891). The only other archaeological site recorded in the area is a former Post-Medieval smithy on the A484.

There are few buildings. Holloway was mentioned in 1487 and its name may suggest Medieval origins for the east-west road upon which it lies; the house is still standing but no early elements have been noted.

A historic landscape area of long, narrow enclosures distinct from Kidwelly town to the north and west (Area 159), the larger irregular fields to the east (Area 174) and the marsh/former marsh to the south (Areas 156 and 171).

#### **Conservation priorities**

Many of the historic landscape components are in poor condition - there is pressure on this area from neighbouring Kidwelly. If this landscape is to survive, then such features as hedgerows require maintenance.

#### **Ground photographs:**

**Aerial photographs: 88**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 171 KIDWELLY BURROWS**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 401064**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 129.30**

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#### **Historic Background**

An area of marsh and sand-hills on the north side of the Gwendraeth Estuary. Its history is linked with that of the borough of Kidwelly (see Area 159), and the foreignry of St Ishmael within which the western half of the area is situated (see Areas 169 and 173), and it was particularly affected by Kidwelly's industrialisation during the later 18th- and 19th-century. In 1766-8 Thomas Kymer established a quay on the south side of the Gwendraeth Fach estuary, and a canal (later a railway, now gone) to convey coal from his mines in the Trimsaran/Pontiets area, and in 1852 the GWR West Wales main line was taken through the area (Ludlow 1999, 28). A brickworks and a silica works, now gone, were established next to the railway lines in the later 19th century. There has been little recent permanent development; tourism and leisure are now the main activities and the western half of the area has, since the 1970s, been occupied by a large caravan and chalet park, while Kymer's canal and quay were restored under the Manpower Services Commission in the 1980s.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

An area of marsh and sand-hills lying between just above sea level and 10 m, which probably has early rather than later origins, the trend on the northward side of the Gwendraeth Estuary being for erosion rather than deposition. A more stable environment permitted the construction, in 1766-8, of Thomas Kymer's Canal and, in 1852, of the GWR main line. The 'Dinas' brickworks and silica works formerly lay either side of the railway line (Ordnance Survey 6" First Edition, Sheet LIII. NW, 1891). There are 19th- and 20th-century sea-defences to the south of the area. The area is, by and large, enclosed with straight boundaries represented by hedges which are becoming overgrown.

Recorded archaeology in the area consists only of those features noted above ie. Kymer's quay and canal, the railways, the former brick- and silica works, and the sea-defences. Kymer's quay has been restored and there are some associated stone buildings, now derelict.

There are no distinctive buildings.

This is a distinct historic landscape area of sand hills and marsh, lying between unenclosed muddy saltmarsh (Area 178) and the rising, bank-enclosed ground to the north (Area 173).

#### **Conservation priorities**

Many of the older historic landscape components, such as hedges, are in poor condition and some of the more recent industrial elements require maintenance if they are to survive. These problems will have to be addressed if the historic character of this area is to survive.

**Ground photograph: 37**

**Aerial photographs:**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 172 FERRYSIDE**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 367102**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 56.69**

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#### **Historic Background**

The area now occupied by the settlement of Ferryside formed part of the Medieval holding of St Ishmael (see Area 173) which was a foreignry of Kidwelly Lordship and, tenurially, was an Englishry centred upon the demesne manor of St Ishmael (Rees 1953, 175-212); it also belongs within St Ishmael parish. The settlement developed around the landing stage of a ferry across the Tywi estuary, to Llansteffan, which may have pre-Conquest origins (Davies 1989, 27). It is mentioned as early as c.1170 when it was granted to the Knights Hospitaller at Slebech Commandery (see Area 141), and was crossed 'in a boat' by Gerald of Wales two decades later (Thorpe 1978, 138). The main Kidwelly-Ferryside road follows the line of a ?Medieval routeway called the 'Ferry Way', which led to the ferry from Kidwelly. Ferryside is the possible site of a Medieval chapelry dedicated to St Leonard (Rees 1932), and a fish-weir, both of which belonged to Whitland Abbey (Rees 1953, 208). A settlement may have developed here during the Medieval period. There is an 18th century dwelling (Grade II listed) within a village that is shown on the St Ishmael tithe map of 1840 as a cluster of dwellings around the ferry, with some straggling development along the foreshore. The direction of the GWR West Wales main line through the village in 1852 (Ludlow 1999, 28), with the establishment of a station, initiated a new wave of development, and in the 20th century Ferryside has become regarded as a desirable place to live, chiefly for its fine views across the estuary to Llansteffan Castle.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

The built-up area of Ferryside which lies between just above sea level and 50 m (at its highest point), on the eastern shore of the Tywi estuary. It comprises ribbon development along the north-south road parallel with the railway line, which has mostly occurred since 1859; there are terraces from c.1900 and much 20th century building. Housing is mainly to the north of the station, development along both the Kidwelly road, and the road to St Ishmaels, having been limited by the steepness of the hillside.

Recorded archaeology is mainly in the form of buildings but, in addition to the ferry site and possible lost chapel site noted above, also includes finds of prehistoric date from Cockle Rock in the far south of the area.

Most buildings are 19th- and 20th-century, are in a mixture of stone and brick, rendered concrete, and other materials with slate and concrete tile roofs. However, there is an 18th century dwelling which is a Grade II listed building, and St Thomas' Church which was established in the early 20th-century (not listed). In addition are a lifeboat station, the railway line and station, and a former brickworks.

This historic landscape area lies between High Water Mark and the agricultural land to the east (Areas 173 and 187).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

**Ground photograph: 38**

**Aerial photographs: 86**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 173 ST ISHMAEL

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 382088

AREA IN HECTARES: 723.90

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#### Historic Background

An area possibly referred to in a pre-Conquest source when St Oudoceus was attacked by the wild men from 'the rocks of Pen Allt', whilst making his way to a crossing of the Tywi estuary (Davis 1989, 27). The parish church of St Ishmael probably also has pre-Conquest origins, but was first mentioned in 1115 when it was granted to Sherborne Abbey, Dorset, of which St Mary's, Kidwelly, was a cell (Ludlow 1998). The Medieval holding of St Ishmael was a foreignry of Kidwelly Lordship (Rees 1953, 175-212) centred upon the demesne manor of St Ishmael (Rees 1932), the nucleus of which may have lain in the vicinity of the present parish church where the remains of a Medieval settlement of some nature lie beneath High Water Mark immediately west of the church (Nigel Page, *ACA pers. comm.*). Nearby is an area of former common-land. Alternatively, the manor-house may be represented by Penallt House, a building thought to be a grange of Kidwelly Priory by Rees, 1932, but with remains of a purely secular nature, chiefly from the 16th century (Davis 1989, 27-33). Penallt was the home of the important Dwnn family, one of Wales' leading gentry families and commentators, from at least 1393 when John Dwnn was described as 'of Pennolth' (Jones 1984, 145), but had been abandoned long before 1800 (Davis 1989, 27). The 18th century mansion at Pengay represents a third contender for the manor-house site (Jones 1984, 148). The landscape area is crossed by the Kidwelly to Ferryside road which is marked as a Medieval route - 'The Ferryway' - by Rees (1932). The coastal road along the foreshore, which passes both St Ishmael and Penallt, may also have early origins (Davis 1989, 27). These historically-important dwellings and farms provide the context for the development of the present landscape of medium-large, irregular fields, which may be derived from medieval strip fields, and were probably enclosed during the 17th century. The earliest map of the area, the St Ishmael tithe map of 1840, depicts a landscape much as today, with the present pattern of fields and scattered farmsteads. The present small settlement at Broadlay developed from a couple of labourer's cottages around the farm. Twentieth century development also includes the provision of Second World War defences at St Ishmael.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

An area of medium-large, irregular fields, that possibly evolved from strip fields during the 17th century, lying between sea level and 125 m. Now all supporting improved pasture, the fields are divided by banks with hedges in fair-good condition and generally well-maintained, though a few are overgrown and some are becoming derelict; those north-east of Ferryside exhibit some distinctive trees. Some roadside banks near the coast to the west of the area have stone facing. There are some small areas of woodland and scrub, particularly on the steeper coastal slopes around St Ishmael, but it is probably all secondary. A number of large, historically important farms lie in the area, but all are stone-built, slate-roofed and with modern outbuildings. Settlement is mainly dispersed, but the cluster of buildings at Broadlay has 19th century origins. The Tywi estuary foreshore has been re-shaped as a cutting for the GWR main West Wales line, which opened in 1852 and is still operational (Ludlow 1999, 28).

Despite the size of the area, the recorded archaeology is limited. Several possible Bronze Age standing stones are suggested by field names, and there is a possible Medieval cross. An Iron Age hillfort is present. Post-Medieval sites include farmsteads and cottages, a mill and millrace, sandpits, the railway, sea defences and a Second World War battery and lookouts at St Ishmael.

There are a number of distinctive buildings. The landmark Medieval parish church of St Ishmael is Grade B listed, and a Medieval dovecote at Coleman Farm is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and Grade II listed building. The 16th century Penallt mansion is Grade II listed, but the 18th century Pengay mansion is unlisted. Generally farmhouses in this area are 19th century, stone-built, two-storey and three-bay, with examples in both the vernacular tradition and the 'polite' Georgian style. Most



farms have relatively large 19th century farm outbuildings, sometimes arranged semi-formally around a yard, as well as modern agricultural buildings. Modern residential development is limited to a few scattered dwellings and some ribbon development at Broadway.

This is a fairly distinct landscape area bounded by the Tywi estuary and Ferryside (Area 172) to the west, the coastal marsh (Area 171) to the south, and an area of smaller, narrower enclosures (Area 169) to the east. Only the boundary with Area 187 to the north is indistinct, but the fields in the latter area are rather more regular.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photograph:** 39

**Aerial photographs:** 87, 101

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 174 MORFA BACH

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 430069

AREA IN HECTARES: 366.70

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#### Historic Background

A foreignry of the Lordship of Kidwelly (Rees 1953, 205-212), with a very good recorded, post-Conquest landscape history. The southern half of the area was, from the 14th century at least, occupied by the holding of Muddlescwm, while the Medieval Glyn Forest extended into the north of the area around Morfa Bach (Rees 1932). Muddlescwm was first mentioned in 1342 when it was granted to Thomas Peerys (Jones 1985, 15). The exact status of the holding, and the nature of its tenure are unknown. In 1394 John Vachan granted a lease on the 'manor' of Muddlescwm 'except a wood at Modelyscom and a tenement in Le Langstret', and it may be associated with a former settlement, but it was always answerable to the foreignry court at Kidwelly (ibid.). In 1408 it comprised '2 messuages, 4 carucates, 12 acres of meadow, 100 acres of wood, and 8 acres of marsh and pasture' (ibid.); it may be that enclosure of the manorial lands had already begun. By the mid 15th century the Dwnns of Penallt (see Area 173), who became one of Wales' leading gentry families and commentators, had acquired the holding. Area 174 was subject to a fairly detailed survey in 1609 in which Cwm Hêd, as 'Combeheade', was described as a 'moor... containing two acres or thereabouts'. Between it and Muddlescwm was a common belonging to the freeholders of the foreignry, while Morfa Bach was also common grazing and contained 4 acres 'or thereabouts' (Rees, 1953, 209). Muddlescwm later passed to the Morgans, then the Mansels, and is now a freehold farm. This area was only marginally affected by the coal industry which left its mark on most of the surrounding landscape areas, but a coal washery established at Muddlescwm, now demolished, was still operational until c.1990. Kymer's Canal of 1766-6, taken over by a railway in 1865 (see Areas 156 and 171), forms the southern limit of the area,

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

An area of large, rectilinear enclosures lying between 5 m and 90 m which, at least in part, probably date to the late Medieval period. The well-defined blocks of deciduous woodland at Coed Mawr, Cwm Hêd and Morfa Bach may also be Medieval, and represent ancient woodland. Present land-use is now all improved pasture with a small amount of arable. The fields are divided by earth banks with hedges which are generally well-maintained, though a small number are becoming overgrown; wire fences are widespread. Settlement comprises scattered farms and dwellings which are mostly 19th century or modern.

Archaeology recorded within the area belongs mainly to the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods, but does include a Bronze Age standing stone. The remains of a Medieval chapelry, associated with a well, Capel Mihangel, lie just west of Muddlescwm (Jones 1985, 12). A second chapelry and well, Capel Teilo, which was mentioned in 1593 (Jones 1991, 255-259) lies towards the north of the area. Post-Medieval sites and structures are mainly associated with the coal industry and include Kymer's Canal, Muddlescwm quay and bridges, the later railway lines and sidings, the former coal washery and a public house.

The present mansion house at Muddlescwm is 17th century but has earlier origins, and may be associated with a Medieval settlement; it was unlisted in 1999. Other farms are mostly 19th century with stone-built, two-storey, three-bay farmhouses in the vernacular tradition, though some 20th century houses are present. Many farms have relatively large ranges of 19th century farm outbuildings, some arranged semi-formally around a yard, as well as modern agricultural buildings.

A distinctive historic landscape area of large, possibly Medieval enclosures distinct from the reclaimed marsh to the south and east (Area 170) and the smaller, former strip fields to the north and west (Area 170).

**Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland.

**Ground photograph: 40**

**Aerial photographs: 174**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 175 ALLT HILLTOP

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**GRID REFERENCE:** SN 397090

**AREA IN HECTARES:** 344.80

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#### **Historic Background**

An area that was held as a foreignry of the Medieval Lordship of Kidwelly, which in 1106 was granted by King Henry I to Bishop Roger of Salisbury (Avent 1991, 167). It passed between Anglo-Norman and Welsh hands during the 12th- and early 13th-century until the more settled conditions of the later 13th- and 14th-century under the tenure of the Chaworths and, from 1327, the Duchy of Lancaster. The pattern of large, regular fields suggests that it may represent fairly late enclosure, and part of it at least it may have lain within Allt Cunedda common which was described in 1609 as 'free and common of pasture for all manner of cattle' (Rees 1953, 208-9). The field name Park-y-lan suggests that a section of the northern part of the area may in contrast have been ecclesiastical land. Enclosure of the common begun in c.1575 when Edward Downley and Henry Vaughan of Kidwelly enclosed 'two closes' occupying seven acres of the common 'and converted the same to their own use' (ibid.). The farms Penlan-uchaf and Penlan-isaf are derived from a larger holding which may represent such an initial stage of enclosure. The process of enclosure was drawn out, however, and the core of the common, lying to the east of Area 175, was still unenclosed in 1841 (St Ishmael tithe map). Around its margin were several farms including Allt and Penlan-uchaf, but these do not appear to have developed from squatter settlements. In 1630 the Lordship of Kidwelly was sold to the Carbery earls who held it until 1804 when it passed to the Cawdor estate (Jones 1983, 18). There has been no subsequent development in the area.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

An area occupying the southern flank of Allt Cunedda, between 100 and 160 m. It is distinguished by a pattern of large, fairly regular enclosures, with earth banks supporting well-maintained hedges, probably established during the 16th- and 17th-century. Land-use is nearly all improved pasture and there is no woodland. Farms are scattered but there is a significant cluster around the former Allt-Cunedda common to the north-east.

Archaeological features include a Bronze Age round barrow and cist to the south, and possible round barrows and standing stones are suggested by field names to the north. A large Iron Age hillfort beyond the northern edge of the area gives the hill its name.

The farms generally appear to be 18th- or 19th-century, stone-built and slate roofed, of two storeys and three bays, and in the vernacular tradition. 19th century stone outbuildings are present on most farms and arranged informally. Farms have extensive modern outbuildings.

This is a well-defined historic landscape area, distinct from the smaller, narrower enclosures of Area 169 to the south, east and west, and the irregular enclosures of Area 223 to the north.

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph:** 41

**Aerial photographs:** 87, 101

**HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA:  
176 MYNYDD PENBRE ENCLOSURE**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 448034**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 216.50**

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**Historic Background**

An area of former common on Mynydd Penbre. Mynydd Penbre represented the greater part of Maenor Penrhyn during the Medieval Period which, with the manor of Pembrey, was initially held of the Lordship of Kidwelly as both a Welshry and a foreignry (Rees 1953, 200). It enjoyed manorial status at least as early as 1361 and had, by 1630, become independent of Kidwelly Lordship (Jones 1983, 18). Physical evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation has been recorded at Cwm-y-Rhyfel to the east of the area, but most of Area 176 was unenclosed common land, which Rees called 'Mynydd Rhos' (Rees, 1932). It remained so from the Medieval period until the mid-19th century when it was enclosed - privately, as no Act of Parliament survives. Much of the common may have been wooded, like Area 164, during the Medieval period (Williams 1981, 5). Waun Baglam/Tyllwyd and Bryn-dias, in Area 166, may have developed as squatter settlements on the edge of the common in the 18th- and early 19th-century, and the peripheral development around Heol-ddu just beyond the west end of the area may have similar origins but is probably later, associated with a nearby quarry. The 20th century has seen the construction of a number of scattered, single dwellings.

**Description and essential historic landscape components**

An area of regular, rectilinear enclosures, probably 19th century, with straight roads and tracks, occupying former common land on top of Mynydd Penbre at an average height of 165 m. The boundaries, roads and tracks belong to the mid 19th-century, the former being earth banks with hedges that are mostly unmanaged, overgrown and becoming derelict, and supplemented by wire fencing. Land-use is pasture, both improved and unimproved. There is no deciduous woodland, but a large area to the west, Waun Baglan Wood, was planted with coniferous forest in the later 20th century. The dispersed farmsteads and housing are mainly 19th- and 20th-century, but it has been suggested that Bigyn may have Medieval origins.

Recorded archaeology is limited and includes a possible Bronze Age round barrow, a possible Iron Age hillfort and a quarry. In their present form the buildings are not distinctive, are of 19th- and 20th-century date and are in a variety of materials.

Farmhouses and other dwellings are either late 19th century, stone-built, two-storey or one-and-a-half storey and three-bay, relatively small and in the vernacular tradition, or modern. Farm outbuildings are not common, and where they exist are small, generally one range, and late 19th- or 20th-century.

A well-defined historic landscape area distinct from the pattern of smaller, irregular enclosures to the northwest (Area 166) and the largely unenclosed woodland to the southwest (Area 164).

**Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. However, the decay evident in many of the boundary hedges is eroding the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed.

**Ground photograph: 42**

**Aerial photographs: 98, 99**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 177 PINGED MARSH - UNENCLOSED OUTLIER**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 420025**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 50.07**

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#### **Historic Background**

An area of Pinged Marsh (Area 156) that has remained unenclosed. Pinged Marsh is a coastal lowland area which developed at the mouth of the River Gwendraeth Fawr behind, and to the east of the great dune complex of Pembrey Burrows (see Areas 157, 161-163, 167-168 and 178), over a period of time but mainly during the Post-Medieval period. However, the area was still subject to regular inundation into the early 19th-century, and despite the provision of 18th- and 19th-century sea-defences, and the construction of a railway embankment in 1852, it remains very wet and marginal. It has never been subject to settlement.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This is a small pocket of flat, unenclosed land at the foot of Mynydd Penbre, barely a few metres above sea level, comprising unimproved wet pasture. The main (GWR) South Wales railway line, opened in 1852, forms its western edge. The area is crossed by the former Kidwelly & Llanelly Canal which was constructed in 1814 - 1820 and superseded by the Burry Port and Gwendraeth Valley Railway, which was laid over the canal in 1866 (Ludlow 1999, 30), the embankment of which still survives. A spur from the canal also survives as an earthwork crossing the area; it conveyed coal to the main canal from the pits above Coed (Area 164).

There is no recorded underlying archaeology.

No buildings are present within the area.

This is a distinct and well defined historic landscape character area. To the north, south and east it is bounded by rising ground with long-established farms and field systems (Areas 165 and 166), and to the west by the enclosed area of Pinged Marsh (Area 156).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

**Ground photograph: 43**

**Aerial photographs: 96**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TAF & TYWI ESTUARY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 178 PENBRE SALT MARSH**

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**GRID REFERENCE:** SN 384054

**AREA IN HECTARES:** 641.20

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#### **Historic Background**

An area of saltmarsh on both sides of the Gwendraeth estuary. The southern side has mainly developed since the construction of Banc-y-lord, the great sea-wall which forms the southern edge of the area, in 1817-18 (James 1991, 156-7 - see Area 156). The northward side of the estuary has been subject to erosion rather than deposition, but this area featured a quay, Berwyn (or 'Ballast') Quay, until the mid 19th century (Morris 1988, 77). A quay was established at Pill Tywyn at the end of Ashburnham's Canal, in c.1801 apparently before the construction of Banc-y-lord (James 1991, 156-7). Nearby lay the outlet of Swan Pool Drain, which drained the former marshland to the east (see Area 163)

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This area solely comprises unenclosed, developing salt marsh lying just above average High Water Mark and crossed by meandering streams and pills. The embankment of the South Wales main railway line, opened in 1852 (Ludlow 1999, 28), forms the northern edge of the area.

The only recorded archaeological features are the quays described above, sea-defences and two wrecks.

There are no buildings.

This is a distinctive landscape area mainly lying between High Water Mark and the sand hills of Pembrey Burrows to the south (Areas 156, 157, 162 and 168), and Kidwelly Burrows to the north (Area 171).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

**Ground photograph:** 44

**Aerial photographs:** 92

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 179 LLANGYNOG - LLANGAIN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 355152

AREA IN HECTARES: 4058.00

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#### Historic Background

A large area which was formerly divided between the lordships of Llansteffan (Penrhyn commote) and Carmarthen (Derllys commote, specifically Maenor Gain). This area was re-organised under manorial tenure between 1109 when Carmarthen Castle was founded (James 1980, 23), and 1146 with the establishment of the castle at Llansteffan (Avent 1991, 168-72). Llangynog may be an important pre-Conquest religious centre with its circular churchyard and associated large cropmark enclosures in neighbouring fields (Ludlow 1998), but is now represented by a 19th-20th century dispersed settlement lying 1 km from the church, which was formerly a chapelry of Llansteffan parish. Llanllwch - the demesne manor of Carmarthen - lay to the north (Area 181), and some of the neighbouring land within Area 179 may also have been held as demesne; within the manor itself significant areas of former ridge and furrow have been noted. The presence of arable is recorded at Alltynap at the very north end of the area which, as 'le Cnap', belonged to the Augustinian Priory of St John at Carmarthen (James 1980, 42). The name 'Parc-y-splots' immediately to the south indicates the former practise of ridge and furrow. Maenor Gain appears to have been coterminous with the present parish of Llangain which, however, is a Post-Medieval creation. St Cain (Keyne), Llangain was formerly a chapelry belonging to Carmarthen Priory but may represent a pre-Conquest foundation (Ludlow 1998). Between 1115 and 1147 a ploughland ie. 120 acres at 'Egliskein' (Llangain) was granted to Carmarthen Priory by the lord of the manor Alfred Drue (Jones 1991, 4). The present village, however, is entirely later Post-Medieval in origin (Jones 1991, 3). It has been suggested that the *caput* of the manor was either at Green Castle, a 16th- or early 17th-century mansion-house site overlooking the Tywi estuary associated with a landing-place, or at a small motte-and-bailey that formerly existed nearby (ibid.). An area held as common land lay immediately south of Alltynap (James 1980, 42) and four further areas of common had largely been enclosed by the early 19th-century (Llansteffan, Llangynog and Llangain tithe maps), the enclosure around Glog-ddu and Llwyn-gwyn probably as a result of squatter settlement. A large portion of the northern part of the area is labelled 'Forest' by Rees (1932) but within the area lay Cwrt Malle, a moated site held of Maenor Gain, granted to Robert de Malley, a former deputy Justiciar of South Wales, in 1312 (James 1988, 108). It later passed to the Philipps of Picton Castle. Substantial holdings dating from at least the 17th century are known to have existed at Cwrt Hir, Gilfach ap Rosser, Maes Gwyn, Pant-yr-athro, Pilroath, Wern Corngam and Wern-ddu (Jones 1987), but none of the present farms retain earlier features and did not form large estates. Cored Roth is the site of a Medieval fish-weir and watermill (Rees 1932), the latter later becoming a woollen factory (Jones 1991, 3). Otherwise there was little industry, and only scattered 19th- and 20th-century settlement. Llangain is the only substantial settlement cluster, and the fringes of its very small historic village core have experienced extensive housing development in recent years. To the south at Pant-yr-athro is a holiday complex.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This very large historic landscape character area of undulating and hilly ground which rises from sea level against the River Tywi to the east and the River Taf on the southwest, achieves a maximum height of over 140 m along its northern fringes. The northern boundary of the area is defined by a north-facing scarp slope, and many deeply incised streams within the area have produced further steep-sided valleys and hills. Despite its large area, the Llangynog-Llangain historic character area is remarkably coherent, consisting in the main of dispersed large farms set in a landscape of small- to medium-sized fields. Field boundaries comprise earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges survive in a variety of conditions; generally they are well maintained, but tending to become overgrown and neglected on the northern, higher levels. Wire fences usually supplement hedges. Distinctive hedgerow trees are not common except on the eastern side. Apart from the higher levels to the north where there is some rushy ground, poor quality grazing and even a small peat bog, almost all farmland in this area consists of improved pasture. Broadleaf woodland which cloaks many of the steep valley sides and may be ancient has been



supplemented since the Second World War with conifer plantations; this gives a wooded aspect to parts of the northern and eastern fringes of the area. The dominant settlement pattern is one of dispersed farms and other dwellings, but there is a nucleated development at Llangain and dispersed modern housing along the roads close to Carmarthen.

Recorded archaeology from such a large landscape area takes in a range of sites from all periods. However, all features relate primarily to agricultural land-use.

St Cynog, Llangynog, is a Medieval church, while St Cain, Llangain was rebuilt in a slightly different location from its predecessor in 1871 (Ludlow 1998). Important sites within the area include Cwrt Malle which represents one of only four moated sites in Carmarthenshire. Another possible moated site lay between Cwrt Malle and Wern Congam (James 1988, 107) and there are 16th- or 17th-century domestic remains at Green Castle. However, the only listed buildings are the Grade II listed house at Fern Hill and its Grade II listed stables. Farmhouses are generally stone-built, two-storey, three-bay of 19th century date, and mostly in the vernacular tradition, though there are examples in the 'polite' Georgian style. With such a large area there is clearly a variety of outbuildings associated with the farms, but most are fairly substantial, stone-built and 19th century, often of two or more ranges and sometimes arranged semi-formally around a yard. Most farms have large modern agricultural buildings. Modern housing in a variety of styles and materials is concentrated in small estates at Llangain and dispersed along the roads close to Carmarthen, though there is a scatter of recent dwellings right across the landscape.

A large but well-defined historic landscape area, distinct from the smaller former strip fields to the south (Area 153), the larger irregular enclosures to the south-west (Area 154), the unusual and undated system of very large, regular square enclosures to the west (Area 155), the dry valley and raised bog to the north, and the saltmarsh of the Tywi estuary to the east (Area 180).

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. The spread of modern housing is also affecting the character of this area. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photograph:** 45

**Aerial photographs:** 45, 46, 80

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 180 TYWI TIDAL FLOOD PLAIN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 399147

AREA IN HECTARES: 364.80

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#### Historic Background

The tidal floodplain on both sides of the River Tywi is a landscape of many periods, though most of it - in its present form - is of relatively recent origin. However, the present course of the river in the northern half of the area appears to have remained fairly constant since at least the Medieval period, when the west bank lay within the Lordships of Carmarthen and Llansteffan and the east bank belonged to the Lordship of Kidwelly (Rees 1932). Several areas of saltmarsh are mentioned in contemporary accounts, when it was held directly from the crown as common, seasonal grazing land, as the place-names 'Morfa Brenin' and 'King and Queen's Marsh' demonstrate (James 1980, 42-44). An area of common land also lay to the south of the area at Morfa Uchaf, near Ferryside.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

The tidal floodplain of the River Tywi stretches from Llansteffan in the south to Carmarthen in the north, a distance of approximately 10 km. Land in this area consists in the main of recently accumulated silts and sands. This is markedly so in the southern part of the area where there is just Llansteffan beach and salt marsh. Further upstream deposits are older, and comprise saltmarsh; nevertheless, they are subjected to frequent tidal inundation. The history of drainage and reclamation here has not been researched; however, south of Carmarthen where the valley opens out into a flood plain approaching 1 km wide, drainage ditches and wire fences divide the area into rough, seasonal pasture. Except for an area around Pil-roath and Coed Marsh, there does not seem to have been any attempt at concerted drainage of the area by the construction of sea defences, and the lack of enclosure or any immediately detectable physical evidence of formal drainage systems eg. *eithergrip*, or *ridge and vurrow*, in the southern half of the area, suggests that it has always remained undrained marsh and sand.

Recorded archaeology is confined to such maritime, intertidal features as fish-traps, wreck sites and navigation markers of Post-Medieval date. However, a Bronze Age findspot has been recorded near Llansteffan.

Buildings are limited to a Post-Medieval lime-kiln.

This is a well-defined landscape area lying between High Water Mark and the enclosed, rising ground to the east (Area 187) and west (Area 179). Only to the north, where the area merges with the tidal marsh below Carmarthen town (Area 181), is the boundary indistinct.

#### Conservation priorities

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

Ground photograph: 46

Aerial photographs: 45

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 181 CARMARTHEN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 411198

AREA IN HECTARES: 733. 10

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#### Historic Background

The built-up area of the town of Carmarthen, a Roman *civitas* capital, Medieval borough and county town in which there has been considerable survival of historic landscape features. The Roman town of *Moridunum* had been established by the early 2nd century as an eastern suburb of a fort from 75 AD (James 1992, 32). A Dark Age presence is represented further east by the *clas* church of St Teulyddog, and possibly by the parish church of St Peter which partly overlies the Roman west gate. Carmarthen's post-Conquest history (this account of which is based on James 1980, and Lodwick and Lodwick 1972) begins with the establishment of a castle in 1093, not on the present site but at Rhydygors to the south of the landscape area. This was abandoned in favour of the present castle site in 1109, which was doubtless chosen for strategic reasons overlooking a bridging point possibly used by the Romans, but far enough from the *clas* and St Peters Church - which together were subsequently termed 'Old Carmarthen' - to not be regarded as an interference. A royal foundation, the castle developed as the focus for a small borough - New Carmarthen - which received a charter under Henry II, and masonry defences in the 1230s. A substantial suburb developed along the route west of the town (Lammas Street) and between the walled town and St Peters Church, along King/Spilman Streets. In 1275 there were 181 burgesses but the elevation of Carmarthen to a county town in 1282 doubtless provided an impetus for increased settlement. The former *clas* church of St Teulyddog had been reorganised as an Augustinian priory in 1125, and a Franciscan friary was founded to the west of the town between 1272 and 1282. Carmarthen had been subject to a number of attacks during the 12th century, and was besieged by both Glyndwr in 1407 and during the civil war. However, domestic development was never seriously impeded and it remained the most important town in Wales, and one of the largest, until the Industrial Revolution. The demesne manor of the borough of Carmarthen lay at Llanllwch, 4 km west of the town, with a nucleus around the mill and medieval church. Although the manor was administrative rather than a territorial unit, and lay mainly beyond this character area where it is commemorated in the name Manor Farm, significant areas of former ridge and furrow have been noted around the church itself. From the 14th century onwards the demesne was farmed out to customary tenants for rent. Carmarthen became the centre of a number of industries in the 18th century, many of them taking advantage of monastic watercourses such as the ironworks established by Robert Morgan on the priory site in 1748, and the paper mill and woollen factory that were supplied by the friary leat, while Johnstown developed as a settlement west of the town. Carmarthen was integrated with the rail network in 1852. However, since the later 19th-century its development has been chiefly as an agricultural and regional administrative centre, for among other things education and healthcare.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

The historic town spreads along the north bank of the River Tywi from its core at the castle overlooking the bridge, although development has now spread along both banks. A substantial part of the eastern half of the historic town covers an area once occupied by the Roman town of *Moridunum*, which has had a substantial impact on the present topography and street-plan. Evidence of this is visible in a rectangular area, still largely undeveloped, that follows the line of the late 2nd-century defences either side of the axial Priory Street (James 1992, 32). The castle is a motte-and-bailey, and in a functional continuity the bailey was occupied from the 1780s until the 1920s by a gaol, originally designed by John Nash, and from 1938 by County Hall. The castle developed as the focus for a borough represented by the present Guildhall Square, Nott Square, Quay Street and Bridge Street, which received defences in the 1230s. The suburb around King Street and Spilman Street was walled in the early 15th-century and the civil war defences have influenced the street-plan in the western part of the historic town. The friary and priory which formed such a feature of Carmarthen's Medieval topography have now gone. The site of the former is now occupied by a Tesco superstore while the latter is playing fields. However, redevelopment within the core of the historic town has been minimal, and most property boundaries reflect medieval burgage plots. The axial Priory and Lammas Streets were, until recently, arterial

routes. Carmarthen is characterised by a number of good quality former town houses that are mainly concentrated in the centre of the town, while most 18th- and 19th-century building is located at its periphery. The cottages and terracing of Priory Street were regarded as of poor quality by contemporary observers. Industry has had comparatively little impact on the morphology and environment of the town, which has been mainly influenced by retail, education and healthcare development. A theological college was established in 1848, an art college in 1854 and a technical college in 1927, and three secondary schools were established in the 19th- and 20th-century. A psychiatric hospital was established in 1865 and a large regional general hospital was established on a virgin site to the north of the town in the 1960s. Substantial council housing was built in the 1950s-60s at Park Hall and at Tregynwr, to the south of the town. Ribbon-development of small retail outlets occurred at Pensarn, along the route south of the town, during the later 20th century and expanded with the relocation here of the main Royal Mail sorting office in the 1980s. The establishment of the southern bypass in the mid 1980s led to the development of large, out-of-town retail outlets between the bypass and the technical college. One of these stores now occupies the site of Rhydygors House, a former gentry house. The completion of the eastern bypass in 1999 will presumably have a similar impact upon the east of the town, and upon Area 186.

Recorded archaeology comprises features from the Roman - Modern periods. Excavation has revealed much of the Roman street-plan and buildings, details of the Roman fort, as well as the Roman amphitheatre to the east of the town. The castle was a motte-and-bailey, the motte of which still survives crowned with 13th century (and later) masonry. Little, however, survives of the town walls and the only other Medieval building is St Peters Church, but the civil war earthwork defences survive in part. Both the Medieval friary and priory sites have been excavated.

There are a large number of listed buildings - c.190 in this landscape area - which are mainly town houses reflecting Carmarthen's county town status. Also included are John Nash's guildhall, and the market, both from the 1770s, the Medieval castle and parish church, the Medieval church at Llanllwch, later churches and chapels, and St Davids Hospital. The County Hall, from 1938, was designed in the style of a French chateau by Sir Percy Thomas. The present bridge is also from the 1930s and occupies the site of the Medieval bridge.

This built up area is distinct from the surrounding rural areas (Areas 179, 180, 184 and 187) to the south and west. Character areas to the north and east have yet to be defined.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Conservation priorities centre on the Conservation Area and individual listed buildings.

**Ground photograph: 47**

**Aerial photographs: 44**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 182 YSTRAD TYWI: CARMARTHEN - LLANDEILO

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 530209

AREA IN HECTARES: 1752.00

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#### Historic Background

A very long, but narrow area stretching from Carmarthen in the west to Llandeilo in the east, which lies in the fertile alluvial floodplain of the River Tywi and includes short stretches of two of its tributaries, the Afon Cellyn and Afon Dulas. The valley was the major historic route corridor into West Wales. The Roman road from Carmarthen to Llandovery followed the interface between the alluvium and the solid geology of the north side of the Tywi, and is more-or-less followed by the modern A40(T). The Roman road forms the northern edge of this area between White Mill and Nantgaredig. Here it crosses alluvial deposits, which suggests that the course of the Tywi has been fairly stable since an early period, perhaps as far back as the Bronze Age as three round barrows are situated near White Mill. During the Medieval period, moreover, one of the ox-bow lakes, near Abergwili, was used as a fish-pond by the Bishops of St Davids. During this period the river formed one of the major boundaries of Carmarthenshire, separating Cantref Mawr on the north bank from Cantref Bychan (specifically Iscennen) and Cydweli on the south bank (Rees, 1932). As such the landscape area has experienced a chequered history of tenure, and was troubled by warfare until the end of the 13th century. Cantref Mawr remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284, Cydweli had been in Anglo-Norman hands since c.1110 but Iscennen remained nominally independent, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan, until 1284 (Rees 1953, xv). Three bridges cross the Tywi between Carmarthen and Llandeilo, all with Medieval origins, and a ferry operated at Glantowylan. The Tywi breaks its banks at least once a year., while the wooded nature of the valley was commented upon by contemporary writers who appear to be including the floodplain. Leland, in the 1530s, remarked that the Dryslwyn area for instance 'was a place full of difficulte and encombrance to passe through' (Smith 1906). However ridge and furrow, which has been noted throughout the area, attests to former arable cultivation of this very fertile soil by the later Medieval period at least. Settlement on the floodplain itself has always been minimal but does occur on raised 'islands' within the alluvium, of which that at Glantowylan may have been the site of *avill*. Settlement, however, is mainly in the form of isolated farms of which Beili-glas, Pentre Davis and Ro-fawr may have early origins. The landscape had been enclosed with the present pattern of regular fields by the time the tithe surveys were conducted in the second quarter of the 19th century, a process which was probably undertaken during the 18th century. No major estate cores lie within this area. Later forms of transport also utilised the valley. A turnpike, established in 1763-71 (Lewis, 1971, 43) more-or-less followed the line of the Roman Road and the entire area is crossed by the former LNWR main West Wales railway line which was opened, as the 'Vale of Towy Line', by the Llanelli Railway and Dock Company in 1858 (Gabb, 1977, 76). A canal, the Golden Grove Canal, cut through part of the eastern half of the floodplain in the 17th century, and was used to convey coal from the Tywi to Golden Grove Mansion in Area 193 (Sambrook 1995, 75). There is, however, no real industrial history and the area was always agricultural; leisure meanwhile is represented by an 18th- or early 19th-century racecourse in a loop of the river at Glantowylan.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

The alluvial flood plain of the Tywi was described in the Land Utilisation Survey of Britain, of 1946, as 'the best quality dairying land in the county' (Cadw/ICOMOS, 1998, 27). The area averages one kilometre in width and gains less than 20 m in height over the 20 km between Carmarthen and Llandeilo. Sections of the river are in a cycle of erosion and deposition; some meanders of the Tywi are active, and oxbow lakes are present most notably to the east of Abergwili where the Bishop's Pond is now a nature reserve, and to the west of Dinefwr Park, Llandeilo, but these are old and the majority of the flood plain is stable and has long been enclosed. The fields are small- to medium-sized and tend towards the regular, though many different patterns from the small irregular to the large regular are present. Field boundaries comprise hedges without banks and earth banks topped with hedges. The former are planted on the valley floor presumably to facilitate flood-water drainage. The condition of these boundaries varies. In some locations, such as between Abergwili and Whitemill, they are well

maintained and in good condition, but elsewhere they have broken down completely and the hedges are either derelict or gone. Ditches also form some boundaries. Wire fences supplement all historic boundaries. Virtually the whole of the valley floor is now under improved pasture. Woodland is now virtually non-existent, but distinctive trees, in hedgerows, isolated or in small clumps right along the valley, but particularly those close to the estate cores of Dinefwr and Golden Grove/Gelli Aur, provide a 'parkland' aspect. Apart from 'islands' of slightly higher ground, the whole of this area is subject to at least one episode of flooding each winter. It is on these 'islands' that the several farms are located. Of the major routeways the A40(T) runs on elevated ground to the north, and the area is skirted by the B4300 to the south. The old railway line which was built on a low embankment to avoid flooding is a distinctive feature of the floodplain.

Recorded archaeology is of relatively low density. Findspots include Bronze Age finds and a Roman coin hoard. There are three Bronze Age round barrows near White Mill, one scheduled, and at least one Bronze Age standing stone. The Roman Road and the LNWR railway line survive as field evidence, and the line of the Golden Grove Canal is just visible. There are watermill sites, and two lost chapels, from the Medieval period.

There are few distinctive buildings. Of the three Tywi bridges the stone-built Pont Llandeilo Rwnws, built in 1786, is Grade II listed; there are several minor bridges. Golden Grove and Dryslwyn station buildings survive within the area and are now private dwellings, as is one of the Golden Grove lodges. There are few farmsteads and cottages but Glantowylan, Beili-glas, Pentre Davis, Ro-fawr and the home farm of Abercothi mansion, which was established by 1857 (Jones 1987, 1), are substantial. These and other farmhouses are generally 18th- or 19th-century stone-built structures in the 'polite' Georgian style. Farms have substantial ranges of stone-built outbuildings, some arranged semi-formally around a yard. Most farms have large modern agricultural buildings.

This section of Ystrad Tywi is very distinctive and has boundaries defined by the foot of the valley sides. In most locations this boundary definition is very strong, but close to Nantgaredig (Area 191) and on the south side of the valley near to Llandeilo (Area 190) there is a zone of change, rather than a distinct border.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the landscape components in this area are in good condition. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photograph:** 48

**Aerial photographs:** 36, 36, 38, 39, 41

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 183 ABERGWILI - LLANEGWAD PARISH

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 477247

AREA IN HECTARES: 5017.00

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#### Historic Background

A large area north of the River Tywi. To the south it is dominated by three bluffs overlooking the river, the eastern of which was occupied by the large hillfort at Merlin's Hill. This may have been the centre of a large territory (taking in most of Area 183) and might have approached *oppidum* status - it has been suggested that the population was forcibly cleared to the new Roman town of *Moridunum* (Williams 1988, 11). However, there is no demonstrable physical evidence for any Iron Age field systems in the area. Much of the area's subsequent development was affected by its association with the main Roman road into West Wales, which forms the southern limit of the area (see below). During the historic period most of the area lay within the southern half of the commote, and later hundred, of Widgega (Rees 1932). This was acquired by King Henry I soon after the establishment of the castle at Carmarthen (James 1980, 23) and was held from the crown as the part of the 'Honour' of Carmarthen. The eastern part of the area, east of the River Cothi, lay within the commote/hundred of Cetheiniog, which was held of the independent Welsh lordship of Cantref Mawr until 1284 when the two areas were united with the establishment of the county of Carmarthen. The relative homogeneity of the present landscape may represent a historical unity of land-use - much of the area lies above 200 m and may always have been pasture. The church and borough of Abergwili was a possession of the Bishops of St Davids and the 'Bishop's mill' lies within this area; there is no evidence, however, for extensive episcopal agricultural holdings. The south-eastern part of the area belonged within Maenor Frwnws, an extensive grange belonging to Talley Abbey which extended into Area 191 (Richards 1974, 119). It may have formed part of the original grant by Rhys ap Gruffydd during the 1180s-90s and is mentioned in 1324 and 1589 (ibid.). The later Manorial Roll of Talley, of 1633 (Owen 1894, 92-107), gives the location and extent of most of Talley's granges but Maenor Frwnws was omitted, possibly due to its having been split up. Neither its tenurial, agricultural or pastoral customs are known, but it is likely that, in common with most other granges, land was let and farmed by tenants who established the precursors to the modern farms. Within the curtilage of the grange lies St Michael, Llanfihangel-uwch-Gwili ('Llanfihangel Llechweilir') which, however, was always a chapel-of-ease to Abergwili parish and therefore a possession of St Davids Cathedral (Ludlow 1998). A possible Knights Hospitaller holding is reflected in the place-name Yspty Ifan but this has yet to be established. No gentry estates appear to have developed from Talley land within this area and the nearby Wern-drefi house, from the 17th century, appears not to occupy former monastic land (Jones 1987, 196). There were, however, a number of early gentry houses within the area including Castell Pigyn, which belonged to the bishop in 1561 (Jones 1987, 26) but was later privately owned. Gilfach-y-berthog is said to date from 1327 and was possibly the home of Llewelyn Foethus who established a chapel near Allt-y-ferin. Cwmgwili was in existence by c.1460, Hendre Hedog belonged to the Lloyds of Llansteffan in 1575, Allt-y-gŵg, Gelli-fergam, Hengil and Pen-y-banc Ucha had been established by 1600, and Beili-glas, Esgair-holiw, Pant-yr-ystrad and Pen-y-banc Issa by at least the 17th century (Jones 1987). None of these was the centre of a large estate and there are no estate landscapes within this area. Industry has left its mark in Felingwm where a number of mills, of varying function, were powered by the fast-flowing Cothi, and a number of former lead mines were sunk in the area of the bluffs overlooking the Tywi. Twentieth century development has been minimal, but modern development has occurred along the A485 road, resulting in linear development and small nucleations at Peniel and Rhydargaeau.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Despite its very large size, this historic landscape area is coherent, comprising as it does rolling hills of enclosed pasture and dispersed farms. From the junction of the valley floor of the River Tywi to the south at 15 m above sea level, this area rises steeply to over 100 m, and continues to rise in a series of rounded hills interspersed with deeply incised valleys to over 240 m. Valley sides are steep and often cloaked with ancient deciduous woodland. However, most of this area is enclosed under rich pasture, with the vast majority improved grazing and very little rough grazing and unimproved land. Fields are

small- to medium-sized and irregular. Boundaries are universally of earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are generally well maintained at lower levels, though gaps are opening in some examples. At higher altitudes there is a tendency for them to be neglected and here there is some dereliction. Wire fences supplement most boundaries. Distinctive hedgerow trees are present, but not common. The old established settlement pattern is predominantly one of dispersed farms, with clustering at White Mill and Felingwm-uchaf. Modern ribbon development has taken place along main roads. Within this area are three important routeways. The most important is the east-west corridor along the southern limits in the Tywi valley along the interface between the alluvium and the solid geology of the north side of the river. Here the A40(T) - which in 1999 was upgraded as part of the Carmarthen eastern bypass - is based on a turnpike route, which in turn follows the course of the Carmarthen to Llandovery Roman road. Running close to the western boundary of the area is the north-to-south A485 Carmarthen to Llandeilo road which also follows the general course of a Roman road. The B4310 runs north-to-south across the eastern section of the area.

Recorded archaeology from such a large landscape area takes in a range of sites from all periods. However, notable sites include the large hillfort at Merlin's Hill and the Roman road. Prehistoric and Medieval archaeology relates primarily to agricultural land-use but Post-Medieval features include chapels, mills and lead mine shafts.

St Michael, Llanfihangel-uwch-Gwili, a landmark church with Medieval origins and an unusual early 17th-century tower is Grade B listed. Few of the gentry houses retain early fabric but Cwmgwili, mentioned in c.1460, now mainly 18th century but with 16th- or 17th-century features, is Grade II listed. Gilfach-y-berthog was extensively remodelled in 1692 and is Grade II\* listed, with Grade II listed stables and barn. The 18th- and 19th-century White Mill is Grade II listed. Gelli-fergam, mentioned in the late 16th-century is now a substantial double-piled house with a walled garden. Esgair-holiw retains no early features but is associated with a former water-mill. Traditionally farms are stone-built, two-storey, three-bay and generally of 19th century date and in the vernacular tradition, though there are examples in the more 'polite' Georgian style. Farms have one or two ranges of stone-built, 19th century outbuildings, very occasionally arranged semi-formally around a yard, together with modern agricultural buildings. Modern dwellings tend to be in small estates at Peniel and Rhydargaeau, in ribbon development alongside the A485, or as dispersed houses which are mostly situated alongside the main roads. This modern development is in a variety of styles and materials.

The boundary of this area to the south against Ystrad Tywi (Area 182) is very well defined at the foot of the valley floor. To the north there is similar good definition where high common land enclosed by Act of Parliament in the 19th century provides a distinctive landscape signature. Area 191 to the southeast is very similar in character to this area, but generally of lower altitude - there is no clear-cut boundary between the two. Areas to the east and west have yet to be defined, but they contain many similar components to Abergwili-Llanegwad Parish historic character area.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Modern ribbon development is also starting to affect the character of this area along the main route corridors. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photograph: 49**

**Aerial photographs: 40**



## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 184 MORFA MELYN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 426206

AREA IN HECTARES: 132.20

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#### **Historic Background**

The tidal floodplain of the River Tywi and its tributary the Gwili where it occurs immediately beneath the town of Carmarthen. The present course of the river is a series of loops which appear to have remained fairly constant since at least the Medieval period, when the north-west side of the river lay within the Borough of Carmarthen and the south-east side belonged to the Lordship of Kidwelly (Rees 1932); both had been established in the early 12th-century. Several areas of marsh are mentioned in contemporary accounts, when the area appears to have been used solely as seasonal grazing land, presumably held of the crown as common land, as was 'Sylly' at the north end (James 1980, 44). The town rental of 1675 mentions 14 acres in 'Morfa Uchaf', and 'a bank thereto annexed' (ibid.), possibly a flood defence; however an area called 'The Island' was in dispute with Kidwelly lordship due to minor changes in the river's course (James 1980, 42). Some limited enclosure had taken place by 1842 (Carmarthen St Peters tithe map) when formal drainage systems appear to have been introduced, but the area was, and still is, subject to frequent inundation. Several clay pits were excavated in the floodplain during the 19th century and it has been suggested that the clay for the ramparts of Roman Carmarthen was derived from the flood-plain (James 1992, 22). The LNWR railway, opened in 1871 but now occupied by the new bypass, forms the north-west edge of the area, and the old A40 - following the line of the Roman Road to Llandovery, and a later turnpike - passes through it on an embankment. Some ribbon-development has occurred alongside the road during the late 19th- and 20th-century, usually on embanked platforms around a farm and dairy; the development included a bus depot that closed in 1998.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

Short lengths of the Tywi valley, and the lower Gwili valley, lying at or close to sea level. The area is subjected to flooding at exceptionally high tides and regular flooding during the winter months of high rainfall. The cycles of river deposition and erosion are also quite active in this area. Consequently there is no settlement in this historic landscape area, and, apart from close to Abergwili where there are fields surrounded by hedges, enclosures are poorly defined by wire fences and/or ditches. The whole area is under pasture. Apart from occasional small trees in some hedges and scrubby woodland alongside the rivers, it is essentially a treeless landscape. In 1999, the Carmarthen eastern bypass, which crosses this area, opened. Lengths of river bank were armoured as part of the engineering works associated with the bypass.

Recorded archaeology is limited. The Roman road has been mentioned and two watermills have been tentatively located within the area. A firing range was established in one of the loops in the 20th century.

None of the buildings, which mainly date from the 19th- and 20th-century, are distinctive.

The area is distinct from the rising ground to the northwest and southeast, but the boundary with the floodplain to the west (Area 181) and east (Area 182) is less well-defined.

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

Ground photograph: 50

Aerial photographs: 49

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 185 LLANGYNWR - LLANARTHNE PARISHES

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 485190

AREA IN HECTARES: 1207.00

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#### Historic Background

A large area that was formerly unequally divided between two commotes, and later lordships. Kidwelly commote, represented by Maenor Cunnor (Llangynwr parish), lay to the west, and Iscennen, represented by Maenor Vouwen (Llanarthne parish) lay to the east (Rees 1953, 174). The farm 'Ffos-y-ffin' records the presence of the boundary. Kidwelly had been in Anglo-Norman hands since c.1110 but Iscennen remained nominally independent, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan, until 1284 (Rees 1953, xv). In 1327 Kidwelly passed to the House of Lancaster followed by Iscennen in 1340 (ibid.). Despite this duality of tenure, land management during the historic period appears to have been much the same in both parts of the area, which were held as Welshries during the Medieval period (Rees 1953, 220), though some possible ecclesiastical land is recorded as a field-name in the east of the area. In fact much of the higher land immediately to the south of this area was common pasture, part of Mynydd Kyvorth and Mynydd Ucha commons, the majority of which was enclosed by a number of private individuals - major freeholders such as the Stepneys, Morgans and Philippses - during the 16th- and early 17th-century as recorded in some detail in 1609 (Rees 1953, 243-9). It is thus probable that Area 185, with its smaller, more irregular fields, was enclosed at an earlier date, possibly in the form of later Medieval encroachments. There is, however, a *hafod* (seasonal pasture) place-name towards the west of the area, and a *hendre* place-name to the east. The tithe maps of Llangynwr (1842) and Llanarthne (1848) parishes depict the then pattern of enclosures and farms to be very similar to today's. To the east of the area, a former large, single holding, Penddaulwyn, mentioned in the late 17th-century, had split up into five separate farms by the late 18th-century (Jones 1987, 147), one of which was part of the Cawdor estate. Later development has been minimal, but industrial activity is represented by a substantial number of lead mines sunk to the west of the area near Cystanog.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This area consists of the hilly southern valley side of the River Tywi which rises from the valley floor at approximately 20 m above sea level on its northern edge to over 140 m on the rounded hills to the south. It is a rural area with a settlement pattern of dispersed farms and other dwellings. The field pattern is one of small, irregular enclosures, possibly late Medieval in origin - as encroachments onto fairly marginal, north-facing land - surrounded by earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are in a variety of conditions, but tend towards the overgrown and contain small trees and bushes. Some are derelict. Wire fences supplement most of these historic boundaries. There are numerous small stands of deciduous woodland and some larger stands in the north-eastern portion of the area (secondary in the shallower valleys), which together with several small conifer plantations and the overgrown hedges lends a wooded aspect and a distinctive character to this historic landscape area. Where the distribution of woodland is at its most dense and where hedges are overgrown, land-use is dominated by unimproved pasture with much rushy and wet ground. Elsewhere, particularly towards the southern and south-western boundary, improved pasture dominates, and hedges tend to be better maintained.

Recorded archaeology includes an inland Iron Age promontory fort at Cae'r Castell from which an important Class III Early Christian Monument was apparently recovered. There are possible round barrow and standing stone sites from the Bronze Age, and possible holy well and cross sites. Post-Medieval archaeology features a typical range of sites, mainly buildings, including mills, smithies, wells, bridges, farms, possible kilns, cottages, a chapel and a school.

There are few distinctive buildings. Cwm-du House was recorded in 1500 (Jones 1987, 46) but retains no early features. In the area of improved pasture the farmhouses are generally small- to medium-sized, comprising two storeys and three bays, stone-built with slate roofs, late 18th- or 19th-century in date and usually in the vernacular tradition, with an informal arrangement of stone outbuildings and modern farm buildings. On the poor quality land farms are smaller with a few but notable number of single-

storey dwellings which are assumed to be of rendered stone but might be earth or clom built. These small farms have a limited number of small outbuildings, usually in one range.

This historic landscape area is fairly well defined. To the west and north lie areas of larger, richer farms set in medium-sized fields of improved pasture (Areas 182,187 and 189). The National Botanical Garden of Wales (Area 188) lies to the east. To the south the historic landscape area has yet to be defined, but it consists of a ridge of medium-sized fields and widely dispersed farms.

**Conservation priorities**

Some of the historic components of this landscape are in an advanced state of decay. Hedgerows across much of the area are a particular problem; they will continue to decay and erode the historic character of the area if left unmanaged. Some consideration should also be given to the management of the ancient and more recent broadleaf woodland.

**Ground photograph:** 51

**Aerial photographs:** 42, 50

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 186 ABERGWILI

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 438209

AREA IN HECTARES: 12.24

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#### **Historic Background**

The built-up area of the former borough of Abergwili. It is clear that Abergwili has pre-Conquest origins. It developed along the Roman road from Carmarthen to Llandovery, whose course was roughly followed by the modern A40(T) until the village was bypassed in 1999. It was a possession of the Bishops of St Davids, maybe as the result of a pre-Conquest grant, while the church, which is also dedicated to St David, is probably a pre-Conquest foundation (Ludlow 1998). In addition, Abergwili is named in an early 11th-century source as the site of a battle (Jones 1952, 12). It was certainly in episcopal hands by 1220 when Rhys Grug was bound to restore 'all the lands at Abergwili' to the Bishop (James 1980, 19), but part of the church was granted to Carmarthen Priory in 1267. Organised settlement dates to 1283-7 when the college at Llangadog was moved to Abergwili under Bishop Thomas Bek (*ibid.*), constituted for 22 prebendaries, 4 priests, 4 choristers and 2 clerks (Lewis, 1833). In 1334 Bishop Henry Gower added a precentor, chancellor and treasurer and the college had an annual revenue of £42 in 1536 (Ludlow 1998). Borough status was conferred on the settlement which remained small. In 1326 there were only 25 burgages (Soulsby 1983, 69) and it is unlikely that the settlement extended beyond its present confines. However, there was a market every Friday and at least one annual fair (*ibid.*). The college was again moved under Bishop Thomas Barlow in 1541, to Brecon, and the buildings, which were arranged around a cloister some 150 m east of the church, were converted into a palace for the Bishop. This survived various alterations and additions until 1903 when it was consumed by fire, and rebuilt (Soulsby 1983, 69 n.). The pre-1999 A40(T) route was turnpiked in 1763-71 (Lewis, 1971, 41) and the area is bounded to the north by the former LNWR main West Wales railway line which was opened, as the 'Vale of Towy Line', by the Llanelly Railway and Dock Company in 1858 (Gabb, 1977, 76). Twentieth century development includes the new Bishops Palace, constructed on the site of the stables in 1972 when the old palace was acquired by Carmarthenshire County Council to house its County Museum, a primary school and council housing, while the construction of the Carmarthen Eastern Bypass (A40) in 1999 along the northern edge of the area will reduce traffic through Abergwili and may have an economic impact.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

Abergwili is a compact nucleation within the Tywi floodplain just above the level of the alluvium, the core of which is a single property row each side of the A40(T) road which follows the line of the Roman road through the Tywi Valley. The south-western quarter of the area is occupied by St David's Church, with a large yard, and by the former Bishop's Palace with its park, now open to the public. Of the properties, those immediately north of the church appear to represent medieval burgrave plots. There has been 20th century infill but the embankment of the former LNWR railway line forms a barrier to development to the north.

Recorded archaeology is mainly represented by built features but includes a possible round barrow to the north-west of the area.

Buildings in the historic core either side of the A40(T) are small houses of rather poor quality, and in their present form largely from the 18th- and 19th-century, and mainly terraced; however, earlier features have been noticed in a number of examples. The church was rebuilt in 1840-43 (Ludlow 1998) and is a Grade B listed building, while the old Bishops Palace is Grade II listed, thought to have been rebuilt much in its pre-1903 form. Also in the area are a former turnpike tollhouse, Abergwili railway station, a chapel, the school, the old vicarage and a council estate, and late 20th-century housing in a variety of styles and materials.

This is a well-defined landscape area distinct from the farmland on all sides.

**Conservation priorities**

This is a developed area and therefore there are few historic landscape conservation priorities. In order to maintain the nucleated character of the village ribbon- and dispersed-housing on the outskirts of the settlement should be discouraged.

**Ground photographs: 52**

**Aerial photographs: 43**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 187 CROESYCEILOG - CWMFFRWD

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 408150

AREA IN HECTARES: 2671.00

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#### Historic Background

A large area divided unequally between the former commotes (later lordships) of Kidwelly to the south and west, and Iscennen to the east (Rees 1953, 174). The living landscape has great time-depth in that the course of the present B4309 partly follows the line of the Roman Road between the fort at Loughor (*Leucarum*) and Carmarthen (*Moridunum*), and Abercyfor, near Cwmffrwd towards the north of the character area, is one of Carmarthenshire's more convincing sites for a Roman villa (James 1980, 16). The church of St Ceinwr, also to the north of the area at Llangynwr, may have pre-Conquest origins and was an important Medieval parish church. The Lordship of Kidwelly had been in Anglo-Norman hands since c.1110 but Iscennen remained nominally independent, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan, until 1284 (Rees 1953, xv). In 1327 Kidwelly passed to the Duchy of Lancaster followed by Iscennen in 1340 (*ibid.*). Despite this duality of tenure, land management during the historic period appears to have been much the same in both parts of the area which, with the exception of the southern part of the area which lay in the foreignry of St Ishmael (Rees 1953, 175-212), were held as Welshries during the Medieval period (Rees 1953, 220). In fact much of the higher land to the south and east of this area was common pasture, part of Mynydd Kyvorth and Mynydd Ucha commons, the majority of which was enclosed by a number of private individuals - major freeholders such as the Stepneys, Morgans and Philippses - during the 16th- and early 17th-century as recorded in some detail in 1609 (Rees 1953, 243-9). It is thus probable that Area 187, with its smaller, more irregular fields, was enclosed at an earlier date, possibly in the form of later Medieval encroachments. The 'Island' of Cystanog, in the Tywi Valley to the north of the area, contained 'small quantities' of the lordship of Widigada 'commonly called *yr ynys ucha*, which parcels are intermingled in and among the Duchy lands' (Rees 1953, 235). Abercyfor had become the site of a gentry house by the 16th century, when it was a residence of the Dwnns of Kidwelly, noted commentators of the time (Jones 1987, 1). Another early house is at Beaulieu Fawr. The gentry house at Iscoed, in the south of the area, was first recorded in the early 17th century and remained in the hands of the Mansel family until 1772 when a new mansion was built; both were sold to the Pictons after 1804 and their environs were emparked (Jones 1987, 94-95). Towy Castle, despite its name, appears to be a new house from the late 18th-century, first mentioned in 1794 (Jones 1987, 182). A further gentry house at Cystanog has gone; land within its curtilage was exploited for lead mining in the late 18th century. The B4300 along the south bank of the Tywi is marked on early 19th century maps and its presence encouraged the growth of a village around the nonconformist chapel at Capel Dewi; however 'Chapel Dewi' was mentioned in the early 17th-century (Rees 1953, 301). A further 19th century new village, with a contemporary church, lies on the B4309 at Cwmffrwd south of Carmarthen; both villages have been subject to much 20th century development.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This very large historic landscape area lies across low rolling hills on the southern and eastern side of the lower Tywi valley. It rises from sea level at the River Tywi to heights of over 120m on the summits of rounded hills southwest of Cwmffrwd. The area is characterised by scattered farms set in medium-sized irregular and regular fields of improved pasture. There is a little rougher and rushy ground, particularly at higher levels. Fields are defined by earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are generally well maintained, though some neglect is evident in those at higher levels. Some hedges possess distinctive hedgerow trees. Stands of deciduous woodland are concentrated on steep valley sides, with few small conifer plantations on high ground. There is an area of former parkland around Iscoed Mansion. The settlement pattern is dominated by dispersed farms. Farmhouses mostly date to the late 18th- and 19th-century, are stone-built and rendered, with slate roofs, of two storeys and of three bays. Most are in the vernacular tradition. Stone-built farm buildings are associated with the farms. On the larger farms these are substantial and occasionally laid out on a formal basis, but most are of one or two ranges informally located in the farm yard. Large modern farm buildings are present on most holdings. Superimposed over this ancient pattern of dispersed farms are more recent settlement patterns.

Croesyceilog is a small linear hamlet with a core of 19th century stone-built houses and cottages interspersed with which are modern dwellings, mostly brick-built. Cwmffrwd is essentially a 20th century village of individual houses, small housing estates and garages, though it includes some older 19th century elements, strung out along the A484 and a B-road. Capel Dewi similarly has an old core, but is essentially a 20th century hamlet. Several other major and historic roads in addition to the A484 - which lies on the route of a presumed Roman road - radiate out from Carmarthen across this area. All of these routes have attracted 20th century linear development. Other 20th century components of the landscape comprise National Grid power lines and a water pumping station.

Recorded archaeology from such a large landscape area takes in a range of sites from all periods. Features relate primarily to agricultural land-use but the Roman road and possible villa at Abercyfor, and the Post-Medieval lead mine at Cystanog, deserve note.

There are some distinctive buildings. Iscoed mansion, rebuilt with brick facing between 1790 and 1804, is with its outbuildings Grade II listed, but semi-derelict; it features fine views across the estuary and retains some internal detail. Bryntowy Mansion, Llangynwr, built in the 1830s, is Grade II listed. The landmark medieval church at Llangynwr, without a tower, is not listed, nor are the largely 18th century Iscoed old mansion and Abercyfor House.

To the west the tidal flood plain of the River Tywi (Area 180), to the northwest Carmarthen town (Area 181) and to the north the plain of the River Tywi (Area 182) provide clearly defined boundaries to this area. To the south Area 173 has many similar historic landscape components to this area, and here there is a zone of change, rather than a clear defined border. Area 185 which provides the southern boundary to the northern part of this area is characteristically distinct, but again a zone of change is present rather than a hard-edged border. To the east, historic landscape areas have yet to be defined.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photographs: 53**

**Aerial photographs: 45, 85**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 188 THE NATIONAL BOTANICAL GARDEN OF WALES

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 526179

AREA IN HECTARES: 222.00

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#### Historic Background

A landscape area occupied by the National Botanic Garden of Wales which is coterminous with the former Middleton Park, a landscape which was largely the creation of William Paxton between 1789 and 1824. However, a mansion had existed on the site since at least the 17th century and the area contains features that may relate to prehistoric and Medieval occupation of the site. Most of this history has been taken from Ludlow, 1995. Henry Middleton is said to have built the first mansion in the mid 17th-century and in 1670 the settlement, in whatever form, contained 17 hearths. A warren and fishpond may have been associated with this early phase. The estate passed to the Gwyn family in c.1740. The park lands may have been amassed to form a compact unit by 1789 when Paxton purchased the estate. Under Paxton the mansion was demolished and rebuilt on a different site by the architect Samuel Pepys Cockerell in 1793-5, and a formal parkland had been established by 1815. This was characterised by its extensive use of water features including a chain of lakes and cascades, conceived on a large scale by an unknown landscape designer, possibly William Emes or John Webb, and probably carried out by Paxton's engineer James Grier. A walled garden, stable block, servant's quarters etc. were added by both Cockerell and his successor. Paxton died in 1824 and the estate passed to Edward Adams. The formal parkland features were neglected and much of the land was let out to tenants, giving it a distinctly agricultural feel by the time the Llanarthne tithe map was drawn up in 1849. The water features, however, appear to have been maintained until the present century when the state was acquired by the Hughes family. The hall was gutted by fire in 1931, to be demolished in the 1950s under Carmarthen County council who has acquired the park in the late 1930s, and the parkland continued to deteriorate. Since 1996, however, it has been developed as the National Botanic Garden of Wales.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This historic landscape area consists of the former gardens and park land of Middleton Hall; these are currently being restored and transformed into The National Botanic Garden of Wales. The landscape forms a compact oval in plan, divided equally by a south-north flowing stream which joins the westward-flowing Afon Gwynon at the area's northern end, and rises to 120 m at its highest point. Pre-park landscape features include an area of ridge-and-furrow and possible lynchets. The former stream was dammed in 1800-1815 to form a series of ornamental lakes, while the latter was embellished by a series of bridges, waterfalls and cascades. A number of chalybeate springs occur in the park. Middleton Hall has now gone apart from the servant's block, while other buildings and yards survive. Elements of the garden and park remain, though in a dilapidated and/or much neglected condition, including the lakes which had silted-up but are being reinstated, other water features, and drives. The parkland is now mostly improved and unimproved pasture with a little rougher ground, with stands of deciduous trees, and its general open character is the only testimony to its former use. The park boundary is mainly in the form of a low earth bank, with a hedge, but to the north-east is a broken down mortared stone boundary wall. Internal subdivision is mostly by wire fence, with some earth banks and hedges. A massive glasshouse currently under construction, built on the site of the old formal gardens, will be the centrepiece of the new gardens.

With the exception of the pre-parkland features noted above, a ?prehistoric findspot and the earlier mansion site, which may be represented by an earthwork platform, recorded archaeology is mainly in the form of parkland features and buildings. These include the site of the hall which was a broadly neo-Palladian structure, formal gardens, a glasshouse site, an orchard and at least two bath-houses supplied by the chalybeate springs.

The servants' block, from the 1840s, survives but has been transformed virtually beyond recognition into dwellings. The stable block (Grade II listed), double-walled garden, ice-house, and home farm,



from 1800-1850, also survive to various degrees and have been restored. There are also the water features which survive in the form of dams, a cascade, a waterfall and bridges, most of them dating from 1800-1815. Lodges survive, though they are now private dwellings

This historic landscape area lost many of its distinctive components over several decades and has begun to merge with and take on the characteristics of the surrounding farmland. However, the current restoration and building programme will re-establish and create new historic landscape elements, thus separating it from the surrounding areas (Areas 185, 190 and 191).

**Conservation priorities**

This area is currently under restoration/renewal. Conservation of the historic landscape forms part of this programme of works.

**Ground photograph: 54**

**Aerial photographs: 51**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 189 LLANARTHNE

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 526199

AREA IN HECTARES: 244.30

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#### Historic Background

A small area around the nucleation of Llanarthne, roughly coterminous with an area that lay within the commote of Iscennen but belonged to the Bishops of St Davids, probably as the result of a pre-Conquest grant. Field names immediately south-west of the village containing *Henllan* and *Llandre* elements suggest the presence of a *clas* church, and a rectangular cropmark has been observed which belongs to a later successor. Either this, or the present church which is dedicated to St David, may be the 'Llanadneu' mentioned as a 'Dewi' church in the 12th century 'Poem to Dewi' by Gwynfardd Brycheiniog (Ludlow 1998). St Davids was not a parish church during the post-Conquest period. It was a possession of the Bishop as a prebend of the collegiate church at Brecon, appropriated to the Prior of the Knights Hospitaller in England by Bishop Thomas Bek in 1290 (Ludlow 1998). Iscennen, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan within which it lay, remained nominally independent until 1284 (Rees 1953, xv-xvi), and native systems of tenure were maintained. The present nucleation, which is informal and rather dispersed, is therefore probably Post-Medieval in origin and only about 10 dwellings are depicted on the Llanarthne tithe map of 1848. The western half of the area is occupied by three farms bearing the name 'Bremenda' which represent the break-up of a larger holding. This appears to have occurred between 1697 and 1789 when it was a possession of the Golden Grove estate (Jones 1987, 13). The estate may be responsible for the present pattern of large regular fields which are probably 18th century in origin. The LNWR main West Wales railway line formerly passed through the area, with a station at Llanarthne. It was opened, as the 'Vale of Towy Line', by the Llanelly Railway and Dock Company in 1858 (Gabb, 1977, 76), which provided impetus for further development, although the Golden Grove Arms inn had already been established under the patronage of the estate. Small-scale development has continued into the late 20th century.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Llanarthne village and historic landscape area lies on a gently sloping terrace on the south side of the River Tywi. The northern edge of the area lies at a level of 20 m, just a few metres above the flood plain of the Tywi, while the southern limit, against the steep valley side achieves a height of 30 m - 40 m. The area is centred on the village of Llanarthne. The historic elements of the village now consist of the Medieval church and two public houses of 19th century date. Post-war housing development, mostly late 20th century and in a variety of styles and materials, surrounds the historic core and includes a council estate. The village sits in a landscape, probably 18th century in origin, which comprises medium-large fields of rich, improved pasture and dispersed farms. Earth banks topped with hedges are ubiquitous. Hedges are well maintained, and many possess distinctive trees. There is little woodland. A disused quarry lies to the west of the area. The B4300 and the abandoned LNWR railway line both run through this area.

Recorded archaeology is represented by the clas/chapel site and the present church of St David, which is Grade B listed. There is also a possible Bronze Age standing stone, a possible holy well, a fulling mill site and a possible kiln.

There are a number of distinctive buildings, including a Grade II listed smithy. Bremenda-ucha, Bremenda-ganol and Bremenda-issa are 'commodious farmhouses of superior type', much altered in the mid 19th century (Jones 1987, 13). Generally farmhouses are stone-built with slate roofs and of two storeys, of the late 18th- and 19th-century, and in the polite Georgian tradition rather than the vernacular, though examples of the latter are present. Stone-built 19th century farm outbuildings tend towards a formal layout on the larger farms, less so on smaller farms. Most farms have large modern farm buildings. Other buildings include a bridge, two inns and two chapels. The railway station has gone.

Llanarthne historic landscape area is not easy to define as it shares many historic landscape components with its neighbours. However, to the south the steep and wooded valley side of the Tywi does provide a reasonably clear-cut border between this area and Areas 185, 188, 190. To the north the flood plain of the Tywi (Area 182) is very similar to this area in many respects. Here there is a zone of change rather than a hard-edged border.

**Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation and therefore there are few historic landscape conservation priorities. Llanarthne village is still a nucleated settlement. Ribbon- and dispersed-housing on the outskirts of the village should be discouraged in order to preserve the settlement's character.

**Ground photograph: 55**

**Aerial photographs:**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 190 LLANFIHANGEL ABERBYTHYCH

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 585189

AREA IN HECTARES: 2294.00

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#### Historic Background

A very large character area bisected by the valley of the Afon Cennen. It occupies the central part of Iscennen commote which, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan within which it lay, remained nominally independent of Anglo-Norman rule until 1284 when it was acquired by John Giffard. In 1340 it became a member of the Duchy of Lancaster (Rees 1953, xv-xvi). The nature of this tenure may be reflected in the pattern of small- and medium-sized irregular fields which characterise the area, and may be late Medieval in origin, like similar fields in Area 185 towards the west end of the Tywi Valley which appear to pre-date the late 16th-century enclosure of their margins. Evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation, however, has been recorded in the western part of Area 190. The present pattern of enclosures and farms had nevertheless evolved by at least the early 19th-century, and is depicted as such on the tithe maps of Llanfihangel Aberbythych (1837) and Llanarthne (1848) parishes, though all early settlement is shown as dispersed. Possible ecclesiastical land lies to the west of the area and the origins of Talhardd, a farmstead on the low-lying ground on the west side of the Cennen, are said to be as a 13th century grange of the Premonstratensians at Talley (Rees 1932). However, it is not listed among the former possessions of the abbey in an early 17th-century rental (Owen 1894, 92) which may have been compiled after it had spilt from the estate. The present house is sub-Medieval but a nearby *maerdy* place-name, derived from a reeve or *maer*, may be associated with a monastic holding or the Tregib estate in Area 203 (Sambrook and Page 1995, 17). The only other early gentry house is Derwydd, to the south-east of the area, an important holding which was referred to in 1550 as the home of Rhydderch ap Hywel ap Bedo (Jones 1987, 55), with a garden remodelled in 1889 (Whittle 1999). Cellifor to the west is at least late 17th-century (Jones 1987, 29), now rebuilt, while Caeglas and Cefncethin to the east were established in the late 18th-century (Jones 1987, 20, 27), though none of the latter houses were associated with large estates. A railway was constructed along the Cennen Valley between Ammanford and Llandeilo in 1841 by the GWR, but 19th- and 20th-century development has been limited. Although there was some limestone extraction in the area, immediately beyond to the southeast intensive extraction was undertaken from the 19th century onwards giving rise to a number of settlements. These are concentrated on the fringe of the area, which also features new concentrations at Carmel, Milo and Pant-y-llyn.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Llanfihangel Aberbythych character area rises from the Tywi valley on its northern edge at 20 m above sea level to over 250 m on its southern boundary. It includes the lower valley of the Cennen and the Marlais valley. It essentially consists of land that is entirely enclosed by small- and medium-sized irregular fields with a settlement pattern of dispersed farms. Land-use is almost entirely pasture, with a little arable. The pasture is mostly improved, though there is rougher and rushy ground in the Temple Bar/Milo area. There are numerous small stands of deciduous woodland, particularly on steep valley sides, some of which may be ancient. Field boundaries are of earth banks topped with hedges, and may be late Medieval in origin. Hedges are generally in good condition, though there is evidence of some neglect and dereliction at higher levels. Occasionally hedges are overgrown, and a few possess distinctive trees. At lower levels towards the Tywi valley farms tend to be larger than on higher ground. Superimposed over the ancient settlement pattern of dispersed farms are 19th- and 20th-century villages and hamlets, linear development and dispersed dwellings. Both Milo and Carmel villages have 19th century cores consisting of stone-built dwellings and chapels, but both have late 20th-century additions in the form of dwellings in a variety of styles and materials. Pant-y-llyn is a 19th century row of workers cottages built to serve limestone quarries close by. Dispersed and linear 19th- and 20th-century residential development is mostly strung along the A476 and A483(T) roads, with concentrations close to Llandeilo and at Derwydd.

Recorded archaeology is of relatively low density and low diversity. A group of Bronze Age burnt mounds lie near the Cennen, and there are possible round barrow and standing stone sites. There are two Iron Age hillforts. A Roman road south of Llandeilo may be preserved in the line of field boundaries. There is an inscribed stone in the eastern part of the area, which appears to relate to the pre-Conquest church at Llandeilo Fawr (Area 202), and possible holy wells and crosses are recorded as place-names. Post-Medieval features include quarries, lime-kilns and possible kilns to the south of the area, bridges, a mill, a possible smithy, a possible pound or fold, and cottages. The railway opened by the GWR in 1841 is still operational and a dominant feature of the landscape.

There are some distinctive buildings. Talhardd farmhouse, which is Grade II listed, is largely sub-Medieval, probably of 16th century date, with 17th century fittings and late-Georgian remodelling; it was once thought to have been moated. Derwydd is Grade II\* listed and incorporates an early 16th century house and possibly also the remains of a 15th century house. It contained 18 hearths in 1670 and was thus among the largest in Carmarthenshire at the time (Jones 1987, 55). House and garden are entered as ref. number PGW (Dy) 6 (CAM) in the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales (Whittle, 1999). The far west end of the area is dominated by Paxton's Tower, a Grade II listed folly erected on an outlying part of the Middleton estate in c.1807-10, and there are two Middleton lodges. Farms lying at lower levels towards the Tywi valley tend to be larger than those on higher ground, and their respective buildings are of a higher quality, often with three-storey 18th- and 19th-century dwellings in the Georgian tradition. The stone-built buildings on the larger farms, which are mostly 19th century, are also larger and often arranged in a formal basis around a yard. However, the predominant farmhouse style is the stone-built, slate-roofed dwelling of two storeys and three bays in the vernacular rather than the polite tradition. The masonry, mostly 19th century farm buildings on these smaller holdings tend to smaller and less formally arranged, often consisting of just one range. Most farms have large modern farm buildings associated with them. There are a number of 19th century chapels.

This character area is fairly well defined along its northern edge with on its boundary with Areas 182, 193, 194 and against the town of Llandeilo (Area 202). To the south character areas have yet to be defined, but there is at least in part a clear border between this area and a limestone ridge. To the east there is no clear definition between this area and Areas 197, 203, as all three areas possess similar historic landscape components, but rather a zone of change.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photograph: 56**

**Aerial photographs: 33, 39**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 191 NANTGAREDIG - DERWEN FAWR

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 535233

AREA IN HECTARES: 2789.00

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#### Historic Background

This is a very large character area lying on the northern side of the Tywi valley and stretching from Nantgaredig in the west to beyond Llandeilo in the east. The valley was the major historic route corridor into West Wales and the Roman road from Carmarthen to Llandovery followed the interface between the alluvium and the solid geology on the north side of the Tywi, whose course is now more-or-less followed by the modern A40(T). During the historic period most of the area lay within the southern half of the commotes, and later hundreds, of Cetheiniog and Maenordeilo (Rees 1932). The two commotes were held of the independent Welsh lordship of Cantref Mawr until the establishment of the county of Carmarthen in 1284. The relative homogeneity of the present landscape may represent a historical unity of land-use. Ridge and furrow cultivation has been recorded in the Tywi floodplain but this northern margin may always have been largely pasture, and north of Llanegwad lay an area of waste or common called 'Killardun Forest' (Rees 1932). Enclosure within the area, furthermore, may have been of relatively late date, the majority of the fields being medium-sized and regular. Llanegwad is the only early nucleation within the area. It may represent a pre-Conquest church and settlement with a radial system of boundaries possibly perpetuating an infield-outfield system (Sambrook 1995, 59). It is the site of a parish church, a motte and later - under the patronage of the Bishops of St Davids - a small borough, now a village. To the north at Allt-y-ferin is a second motte which belonged to the Lordship of Carmarthen to the east (Area 183), and may be the site of the 'Dinweilir' taken by the Welsh and recaptured in 1159 (Jones 1952, 61). It was associated with a former chapel. The remainder of the area is divided between the parishes of Llangathen and Llandeilo Fawr. At the confluence of the rivers Cothi and Tywi lay the core of Maenor Brunus, mentioned in the 12th century Llandaff Charters but probably pre-Conquest in origin (Richards 1974, 119), with a chapel at Llandeilo Rwnws on the banks of the Tywi and another near Pontargothi. The significance of the location was such that it was named (as 'Ystrad Brwnws') as the site of a battle between the Normans and the Welsh in 1116 (ibid.); the use of the Tywi Valley as a routeway led to its being the site of a further battle, near Derwen Fawr, in 1257 (Rees 1932). Maenor Brwnws was granted, at an unknown date but probably during the late 12th century, to the Premonstratensians at Talley (ibid.). The post-dissolution grange was represented by the gentry houses of Wythfawr and Ystradwrallt, which had been established by the 1540s (Jones 1987, 199); the latter may retain the 'Ystrad' element from Ystrad Brwnws. Penllwynau also lay in Llandeilo Rwnws estate and was later a gentry home (Jones 1987, 150). Cilsaen near Llangathen is a late Medieval house that became part of the Golden Grove estate in the 17th century (Jones 1987, 32) but its origins are earlier, being associated with the later princes of Deheubarth and termed 'manor' in early Post-Medieval documentation. Court Henry has 16th century origins and is associated with a small area of 19th century parkland and *ade novo* 19th century church (Lloyd 1991, 37-46), while a second area of parkland at Allt-y-ferin is contemporary with the house of 1869 (Jones 1987, 6). The establishment of modern communications also influenced the settlement pattern. A turnpike, established in 1763-71 (Lewis, 1971, 43) more-or-less followed the line of the Roman road. The straight courses through Pontargothi and Derwen Fawr were however constructed under Thomas Telford in the 1820s (Carms Record office, Cawdor Maps 172) with the subsequent development of the two villages, and Felindre. The area is also crossed by the former LNWR main West Wales railway line which was opened, as the 'Vale of Towy Line', by the Llanelly Railway and Dock Company in 1858 (Gabb, 1977, 76). The present settlement of Nantgaredig is entirely modern and developed around the railway station.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

A very large character area on the north side of the Tywi Valley and including part of the lower Cothi valley. It rises from the flood plain of the Tywi at 20 m OD in a series of low rounded hills that achieve a maximum height of over 120 m. The whole area is enclosed by medium-sized fields which are under pasture, nearly all of which is improved - there is very little rough or rushy ground. The fields are divided by earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are generally well maintained and in good

condition. Many possess distinctive trees. There are numerous small stands of deciduous woodland, particularly on steep valley sides where it may be ancient, with conifer plantations on the very steep valley sides of the Cothi. Dispersed farms provide the dominant settlement pattern. Older survivors, such as Llethr Cadfan provide time-depth to the settlement pattern not readily obvious in the extant buildings. Superimposed on to this ancient pattern of dispersed farms is a more recent nucleated settlement pattern. Llanegwad village has Medieval origins but surviving buildings indicate that its development belongs to the 18th- and 19th-century, with rapid expansion in the 20th-century. Felindre is a loose cluster of 19th- and 20th-century dwellings, but other nucleated, clustered and linear villages such as Nantgaredig, Pontargothi and Derwen Fawr, while having a small core of 19th-century buildings, are now essentially late 20th-century developments. The area has, like much of the Tywi Valley, a parkland feel and small areas of 19th century emparking surround Allt-y-ferin House and Court Henry. The low accessible hills to the north of the flood plain allowed for the development of an important east-west routeway along the Tywi valley, from the Roman to the modern period, represented by the present A40(T). The modern settlements described above, except for Nantgaredig which developed around a railway station, tend to be located along this road.

The recorded archaeology of such a large landscape area includes a range of sites from all periods. The majority of archaeological features relate to agricultural land-use but there are also two motte castles, of which Allt-y-ferin was added to an Iron Age inland promontory fort, Bronze Age standing stones and a henge monument at Nantgaredig.

The parish church of Llanegwad was rebuilt in the 1840s and like the 19th century church at Court Henry is unlisted. The Grade II listed Llethr Cadfan farmhouse and its Grade II\* listed granary are both 17th century, and the early 19th-century Llwynhelig House and stable-block are also both Grade II listed. The area otherwise has a relative lack of distinctive buildings but the largely 18th- and 19th-century Court Henry, which is Grade II\* listed, preserves an earlier core and the home farm has good quality masonry buildings. Farmhouses are generally of 18th- and 19th-century date, stone built with slate roofs. Most are of two storeys and three bays, in the Georgian tradition, but larger examples are present. Associated with the larger farmhouses are large assemblages of farm buildings, these are often arranged in a semi-formal basis reflecting the higher status of the holdings. Farmhouses in the vernacular tradition are present, but in a lesser number than those in a polite style. Smaller farmhouses and those in the vernacular tradition tend to have a more limited and smaller collection of farm buildings, often compacted into a single range.

The boundaries of this area are not clear cut as most of the neighbouring areas share similar historic landscape components. Part of the boundary to the south lies against the flood plain of the Tywi (Area 182), Dinefwr Park (Area 195) and Llandeilo town (Area 202); these provide reasonably clear definition. Elsewhere to the south, and to the west and east there is no hard-edged border between this area and Areas 183, 192 and 201, but rather a zone of change.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a good state of preservation. However, some consideration should be given to the maintenance of hedgerows and to the management of old deciduous woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Llanegwad village is a proposed Conservation Area. Development here should respect this proposal.

**Ground photograph: 57**

**Aerial photographs: 35, 37**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 192 LLANGATHEN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 575217

AREA IN HECTARES: 418.20

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#### Historic Background

A compact landscape area on the north side of the River Tywi which has been occupied since at least the Iron Age, and has always contained at least one high status holding. The area lies between the river and the Tywi Valley Roman road (see Area 191), and is dominated by Grongaer Hill and its large Iron Age hillfort, which may have been the centre of a large territory covering all of Area 192 and beyond. During the historic period most of the area lay within the southern half of the commote, and later hundred, of Cetheiniog (Rees 1932), held of the independent Welsh lordship of Cantref Mawr until the establishment of the county of Carmarthen in 1284. The hillfort may have continued to influence prestige and tenurial patterns into the Medieval period. The Medieval Lordship of Allt-y-gaer, centred on Cwm Agol to the south of Grongaer Hill, possibly evolved from a pre-Conquest estate held as a *maerdref* or under similar, or communal tenure (Owen 1892). A second high-status Medieval site, later a possession of the Golden Grove estate, lay at Cilsan to the east (Jones 1987, 32). The nearby Berllandywyll may also have Medieval origins (Jones 1987, 8). The area moreover contains the church of St Cathen, Llangathen, which may have pre-Conquest origins (Ludlow 1998) and is the centre of a large parish of some importance, as reflected in its size, although it is not accompanied by any significant nucleation. By the late Medieval period, however, a further high status dwelling had been established at Aberglasne immediately east of the church (Jones 1987, 2). It was acquired by Bishop Rudd of St Davids c.1600 and was later the home of the Dyers, one of whom, John Dyer, composed his famous poem 'Grongar Hill', an early celebration of the Romantic, in 1726 (Andrews 1989, 79). A small area of parkland landscape accompanies Aberglasne House, and the environs of Cilsan have been remodelled along 'polite' principles. The comparative regularity of the medium-large fields in the remainder of Area 192 suggests enclosure within the 16th-17th centuries. Llangathen village developed under the patronage of the Phillipses of Aberglasne during the 19th century. It has remained small, despite the development of a later 20th century housing estate.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Llangathen character area consists of two low hills with the village of Llangathen and Aberglasne house and gardens nestling in the saddle between them. The hills rise steeply from 20 m OD from the flood plain of the Tywi to a maximum of 143 m. All the farmland is enclosed and divided into small- to medium-large irregular fields and is under a regime of improved pasture. There is very little rushy or rough ground. Boundaries are earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are well maintained on the lower slopes, but neglected and derelict at higher levels. Indeed, the hedges on the summits of the hills are now entirely broken down and the land here is taking on an unenclosed appearance, although here, as elsewhere, wire fences provide and or supplement older boundaries. Distinctive hedgerow trees are present, particularly close to Aberglasne, and these, together with stands of woodland on steep hillsides and the hedgeless hilltops, lend a parkland aspect to the landscape. Farms are dispersed, but concentrated on the south-facing slopes overlooking the Tywi valley. Farmhouses are generally of late 18th- and 19th-century date. The settlement at Llangathen, centred on the Medieval church, comprises a loose cluster of 19th century farms and houses and 20th century dwellings. Below the village lie Aberglasne house and gardens.

The landscape area is dominated by the Iron Age Hillfort on Grongaer, while there is a possible round barrow and a possible further hillfort. Other possible archaeological sites include a moated enclosure at Cwm Agol and a holy well. Post-Medieval quarries lie south of Llangathen.

Distinctive buildings include the Grade B listed Medieval parish church of St Cathen, Llangathen which has an early 17th century south aisle and chapel with a fine contemporary monument to Bishop Rudd. Aberglasne House is a Grade II\* listed building and has early elements, but externally seems to be a three-storey house dating to the late 18th- and early 19th-century. Associated with the house are other



buildings and garden features, including a gatehouse, former domestic outbuildings, a lodge, two courtyard ranges and two coach-houses, all individually Grade II listed (7 in all), walled gardens and a pond, and a Grade II\* listed arcaded walk that dates to at least 1783. The house and gardens, entered as ref. number PGW (Dy) 5 (CAM) in the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales (Whittle, 1999), are currently being restored. Associated with the house and Llangathen village are the half-timbered, early 20th-century Village Hall, a poorhouse, primary school and Post Office, while two nearby buildings are known as Bishop Rudd's bath and pigeon house. Further distinctive buildings within the village include the Farmers Arms public house, Hill House, a Post-Medieval chapel and the later 20th-century Gellinewydd housing estate. There is a Medieval - Post-Medieval fortified dwelling at Allt-y-gaer, and earlier Post-Medieval houses at Cilsan and Berrlandwyll. Farmhouses are stone-built with slate roofs, of two storeys and generally of late 18th- and 19th-century date with examples in the polite as well as the vernacular tradition. Farm outbuildings are stone-built and of 19th century date, some with a semi-formal arrangement.

This character area is well defined to the south where it rises from the Tywi valley (Area 182), less well to the north, where it tends to merge with Area 191.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. The gardens and buildings at Aberglasne are currently undergoing a programme of restoration and conservation. Llangathen village is a Conservation Area. Historic landscape conservation priorities must not conflict with this designation.

**Ground photograph:** 58

**Aerial photographs:** 35, 36

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 193 GOLDEN GROVE/GELLI AUR**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 597199**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 385.90**

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#### **Historic Background**

A small area on sloping ground to the south of the River Tywi. It is coterminous with the northern half of Llanfihangel Aberbythych parish and largely comprises Golden Grove Park, an estate landscape of the 17th- to 19th-century. It occupies the central part of Iscennen commote which, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan within which it lay, remained nominally independent of Anglo-Norman rule until 1284 when it was acquired by John Giffard. In 1340 it became a member of the Duchy of Lancaster (Rees 1953, xv-xvi). The parish church of St Michael, Llanfihangel Aberbythych, has a circular churchyard and a possible early Michael dedication. Although there is no documentary evidence for a church here prior to the early 17th century, the tradition that it was originally located elsewhere is highly dubious (Ludlow 1998). A high-status house appears to have been present at Golden Grove from the 16th century under the Vaughans, later Earls of Carbery, and afterwards, under the Earls of Cawdor (Jones 1987, 84). There is no evidence for any previous settlement or dwelling of importance (Jones 1962, 259). The house was rebuilt in 1754-7 and again in 1826 after the early 18th century house had apparently been demolished. The former site, however, continued to be used as a walled kitchen garden and was modified several times until the present day. On a more elevated position and about a kilometre from the sites of the earlier mansions, the new house was designed by the architect Wyattville (Whittle 1999). The Vaughans were pioneers of agriculture and silviculture and, at its height, the Golden Grove estate comprised over 50,000 acres spread through southwest Wales (Jones 1962, 258). Under estate management, the village of Golden Grove/Gelli Aur was developed around St Michael's church, and later in the 20th century, council housing was erected to the north. Golden Grove house was occupied by the US Air Force during World War II and in 1952 a lease on the house and park was granted to Carmarthenshire County Council who used the site as an Agricultural College (Jones 1987, 84); the buildings are now a satellite for Carmarthen College of Technology and Art (Wildlife Illustration), whilst part of the grounds is designated as a country park.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

The core of this area, which lies on gentle north-facing slopes between 20 m and 180 m on the south side of the Tywi valley, comprises the demesne of Gelli Aur. As much of the former parkland of Gelli Aur has now decayed and taken on a character similar to the surrounding landscape, this character area is somewhat larger than the former demesne. Tree planting, garden terraces and pleasure grounds of the 19th century, including an arboretum, survive, but much of the grounds and land outside the former parkland to the south of the mansion have been planted with conifers during the second half of the 20th century. To the south of the extant mansion, the site of the old mansion is marked by a walled garden, a lake and a canal. The demesne is surrounded by a mortared wall, but this is now in a poor state of repair. Included in this area is the village of Llanfihangel Aberbythych. This is essentially an estate village, and the mid 19th-century church, a school, dwellings and lodges built in a Victorian Tudor Gothic style, together with other estate buildings away from the village provide a distinctive architectural signature to this area. To the south of the old mansion the straightened length of the B4300 and the straight road that leads to Cilsan Bridge across the Tywi attest to former estate management. Outside the demesne farmland has been enclosed into small- to medium-sized fields by earth banks and hedges. Hedges contain distinctive hedgerow trees and these together with small stands of trees extend the parkland aspect of Gelli Aur beyond the former demesne. Modern development is limited to dispersed dwellings close to the B4300 and to a small estate of clapper board Council houses.

Recorded archaeology is dominated by estate features such as the park and gardens which include a possible deer park and rabbit warren. A possible holy well site lies within the curtilage, as does a Post-Medieval quarry.

Golden Grove house, a large mansion in 'Tudor-Gothic' style, erected in 1826-32, is Grade II\* listed, and with the gardens is entered as ref. number PGW (Dy) 10 (CAM) in the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales (Whittle 1999). The park also contains lodges and a cottage. A toll house lies beyond the park to the west, as does the village with its distinctive estate buildings. St Michael's church was entirely rebuilt in c.1850 to the designs of the architect (Sir) George Gilbert Scott and is currently unlisted.

With the demise of Gelli Aur estate this once distinct character area has become similar to bordering areas. However, the combination of a particular building signature, surviving garden and park elements and conifer plantations serve to mark it out from its neighbours (Areas 182, 190, 194).

#### **Conservation priorities**

The main conservation priorities in this area concern Gelli Aur. Although some elements of the old park, gardens and associated buildings are in good condition many are not; consideration should be given to a programme of restoration/conservation. Care should be taken during felling of conifer plantations that no damage occurs to historic landscape elements. Outside the park, decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed.

**Ground photograph: 59**

**Aerial photographs: 34**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 194 ALLT PANT MAWR

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 561195

AREA IN HECTARES: 294.10

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#### Historic Background

A relatively small landscape area mainly occupying steeply sloping ground to the south of the River Tywi. It lies within the parishes of Llanarthne and Llanfihangel Aberbythych in the central part of Iscennen commote which, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan within which it lay, remained nominally independent of Anglo-Norman rule until 1284 when it was acquired by John Giffard. In 1340 it became a member of the Duchy of Lancaster (Rees 1953, xv-xvi). Rhydarwen, a farmstead at the centre of the area, has Medieval origins (Jones 1987, 171), and the pattern of small fields beneath the wooded slopes of Allt Pant Mawr may have been established before the Post-Medieval period. Visually, the west end of the area is dominated by Paxton's Tower, a folly built for the Middleton estate within Area 188. The B4300 along the south side of the Tywi valley, established by the early 19th century, passes through this area. The upper slopes of Allt Pant Mawr were subject to conifer plantation in the later 20th century.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Lying on the south side of the Tywi valley, this character area consists of steep and heavily wooded north-facing slopes below which lies a sloping shelf of farmland and woodland that runs down to the flood plain of the Tywi. From the Tywi at 20 m OD the land rises to over 150 m at its southern limit. The woodland on the steep slopes is a mixture of conifer plantation and deciduous trees. The more gently sloping land, which lies in the shadow of the steep slope, is enclosed into a system of small regular fields which have a strong north-south, down-slope trend and possible early origins. Boundaries are of earth banks and hedges. Hedge quality varies from the well maintained to the overgrown and semi derelict. Wire fences supplement the hedged boundaries. Distinctive hedgerow trees are common. Some land is under improved pasture, but there is much rushy and unimproved ground, and scrubby woodland has invaded some former fields. This latter feature in combination with the distinctive hedgerow trees and conifer and broadleaf trees lends a heavily wooded appearance to the area. Settlement is one of dispersed small farms, smallholdings, cottages and other dwellings along the B4300.

There is little recorded archaeology within this predominantly sloping area, being limited to a burnt mound, a prehistoric findspot and two Post-Medieval quarries.

Distinctive buildings include Rhydarwen, a Grade II\* listed medieval house, 'strongly-built' with a stair turret at each end and a 16th century wall painting (Jones 1987, 171), altered in the 18th century. Most farm buildings are 19th century, two-storey, stone-built with slate roofs in the vernacular tradition, although some in the Georgian tradition are present.

This is a distinct area, distinguished from its neighbours (Areas 182, 189, 190, 193) by its high density of woodland, its north-south field system and the modest size of its farms and buildings.

#### Conservation priorities

The decay that is evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland.

Ground photograph: 60

Aerial photographs: 39

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 195 DINEFWR PARK

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 617225

AREA IN HECTARES: 229.20

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#### Historic Background

These background notes have been taken from Professor Ralph Griffiths's recent study (1991) of the castle and borough of Dinefwr, and from the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales (Whittle 1999). It has long been thought that Dinefwr was the seat of the Welsh princes of Deheubarth. Griffiths has demonstrated, however, that this was not the case and that it is likely that nothing of note existed on the site until Rhys ap Gruffydd (Lord Rhys) erected a castle soon after 1163. It is possible that Lord Rhys built a masonry castle, as a reference of 1213 implies stone walls. At this date Lord Rhys's youngest son, Rhys Gryg, was besieged in the castle by two of Lord Rhys's grandsons. It is likely that the round keep at the castle was built by Rhys Gryg between 1220 and 1233. The castle remained in family hands until the reign of Edward I. Extensive repairs and additions were made to the castle by the English Crown in the 1280s. During latter years of Welsh rule a small settlement - 'Trefscoleygyon' or 'vill of the clerks' - developed outside the castle. By 1294 the town of Dinefwr had 26 burgages, a weekly market and annual fair. The end of the 13th century saw Dinefwr become a twin-town. This consisted of an 'old' town on the hill containing 11 Welsh burgesses, and a 'new' town - soon to be called 'Newton' - containing 35 burgesses of mostly English descent. Newton was located some distance away on the site of the later mansion, Newton House. In 1310 the castle, towns and demesne of Dinefwr were granted to Edmund Hakekut and later to his son. The Hakekut family held their position, apart from a short break, until 1360. Repairs to the castle were carried out under the Hakekuts. A survey of 1360 indicates that Newton was a successful settlement with 46 burgesses. A charter was granted to the towns in 1363, but this seems to have marked a high point in the towns' fortunes. The castle and towns were besieged in 1403 during the Glyndwr rebellion. Following the revolt the towns and castle were granted to Hugh Standish. The Standish family had little interest in south Wales, and both the castle and towns went into decline. In 1433 responsibility for the towns and castle was separated, and the towns and demesne were granted to John Perrot. His cousin married Gruffydd ap Nicholas, and so began the long association with the Gruffydd family. By the time that Gruffydd ap Nicholas's grandson, Rhys ap Gruffydd, was attainted of treason in 1531 his family had built a mansion among the ruins of the former town of Newton, although 'Newton' was still marked on Saxton's map of Carmarthenshire of 1578. The age of the towns and castle had come to an end. However, Newton Mansion continued to be occupied by the Rice (Rhys) family and was partly rebuilt between 1595 and 1603, again in c.1660, and in c. 1757-1779, and then in its present form in 1856-1858 by Richard Kyrke Penson, retaining many features from c.1660. The present landscape was emparked between c.1590 and c.1650 (Milne 1999, 6). The park walls were completed in c.1774 and enclosed a large landscaped area of over 200 ha with a small formal garden, walled gardens and a suite of domestic structures. There are some remains of underlying landscapes, including an east-west terrace that may represent part of the Carmarthen-Llandovery Roman road, and traces of roads and trackways that may be Roman and/or Medieval. A Roman milestone and a coin hoard have also been recorded near Dinefwr Castle while sherds of amphorae and Samian ware have been found in the vicinity of Dinefwr Farm (Crane 1994, 6). The central part of the area includes the old parish church of St Tyfi, Llandyfeisant, which has Medieval origins. It is now redundant and used by the Wildlife Trust *West Wales*; the record in RCAHMW 1917, 110, of 'Roman tesserae' beneath the church appears to be entirely erroneous.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Dinefwr character area includes the whole of Dinefwr Park, plus small areas outside which were associated with the estate such as the Home Farm. The park lies on hilly ground on the northern side of the Tywi valley, immediately to the east of Llandeilo town, and achieves a height of over 90 m. Tree-covered slopes rise sharply from the valley floor to Dinefwr Castle which forms, along with Newton House, the two main foci of the park. The castle stands in a commanding position, overlooking long stretches of the valley. The masonry remains mostly belong to the 13th- and 14th-century, and to estate

repairs of the 18th- and 19th- century. The castle is currently being conserved by Cadw. Earthworks outside the castle form part of the outer defence, but probably also mark the site of the small town of Dinefwr. Newton House, the main residence of the Dinefwr estate, provides the second focus in the park. Nothing now remains above ground of the Medieval town, Newton, on which the original mansion was built. The current house dates to the mid 17th-century, but had a new facade built in the 1850s in a Gothic style. The house and most of the parkland is owned by the National Trust. A fine collection of stone-built service buildings arranged around a courtyard lies close to Dinefwr House. Other elements of the gardens and park such as a walled garden, icehouse, dovecote and ponds survive. The 18th century park retains much of its planting. Individual trees, clumps, and more extensive stands of woodland survive. The open character of the park remains - especially the deer park on the western side - though wire fences divide the eastern part of it into large enclosures of pasture. The southeastern corner of the park - Penlan Park - has been municipalised and laid out with tarmac paths. The isolated and redundant Medieval church of Llandyfeisant lies in the area. Those field boundaries that surround the park are earth banks topped with hedges.

Recorded archaeology mainly relates to the parkland landscape and its features, including a rabbit warren, but underlying features include a possible Bronze Age ring ditch. Roman archaeology includes a milestone, possible roads and tracks and a coin hoard. Features relating to the Medieval settlement of Newton probably underlie present enclosures.

Dinefwr Park contains many distinctive buildings, and with the garden is listed as PGW (Dy) 12 (CAM) in the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales (Whittle 1999). The Medieval Dinefwr Castle is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a Grade I listed building. St Tyfi's Church, Llandyfeisant, heavily restored in the 19th century, is a Grade II listed building. Dinefwr (Newton) House, the summer house, and the inner and outer courtyard ranges are Grade II\* listed while the ha-ha, fountain, dairy cottage, dovecote, deer abattoir, icehouse, home farmhouse, corn barn and byre/ stable range are individually Grade II listed (9 in all). A bandstand lies in Penlan Park.

Dinefwr park is a distinct character area and stands in sharp contrast with the surrounding farmland (Areas 182, 191) and with the urban setting of Llandeilo (Area 202).

#### **Conservation priorities**

No conservation priorities are given here as most of this area is owned and managed by the National Trust and by Wildlife Trust *West Wales*, while Dinefwr Castle is managed by Cadw. Most of the area also lies within a Conservation Area and also contains a number of SSSIs.

**Ground photograph: 61**

**Aerial photographs: 32**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 196 YSTRAD TYWI: LLANDEILO - LLANGADOG

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 662250

AREA IN HECTARES: 769.40

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#### Historic Background

A long, narrow area stretching from Llandeilo in the west to Llangadog in the east, which lies in the fertile alluvial floodplain of the River Tywi and includes a short stretch of one of its tributaries, the Afon Dulais. The valley was the major historic route corridor into West Wales and the Roman road from Carmarthen to Llandovery, which forms the north-western edge of this character area, was constructed along the interface between the alluvium and the solid geology of the north side of the Tywi, and was more-or-less followed by a later turnpike and the present A40(T) - see also Area 182. The River Tywi in this area is particularly active and subject to constant and radical course change across its valley floor, cutting and re-cutting its way through the alluvium and leaving behind a complex of meanders and ox-bow lakes (Ludlow 1999, 21). Evidence from maps, documents and aerial photography suggests that the course has changed greatly even since the Post-Medieval period. The Roman road was therefore directed along the higher ground just off of the valley floor, and settlement on the floodplain itself has always been minimal; there are now no farms or dwellings within the area. However, the landscape had been enclosed, in the present pattern of regular fields, by the time the tithe surveys were conducted in the second quarter of the 19th century; the process was probably undertaken during the 18th century. Earlier and prehistoric environments and settlement patterns of the Tywi Valley are among 'the least known' (Cadw/ICOMOS 1998, 28), but the interface between the floodplain and higher ground would have been an important area of activity for early human communities in the region, providing easy access to the resources of the river and its associated wetlands whilst providing a dry occupation site. *Ad hoc* archaeological work has suggested that there are glacially deposited raised areas of ground on the valley floor (*ibid.*), and peat deposits have been noted between the alluvium and the underlying geology elsewhere within the Tywi Valley, for example at Abergwili and Pensarn, near Carmarthen (Page 1994, 4,9). Here they were thought either to represent 'islands' in the floodplain, or a drying of the floodplain, while Bronze Age stray find sites, and possible round barrows, testify to prehistoric activity within the area. During the Medieval period the river formed one of the major boundaries of Carmarthenshire, separating Cantref Mawr on the north bank from Cantref Bychan on the south bank (Rees, 1932). As such, the landscape area has experienced a chequered history of tenure and was troubled by warfare until the end of the 13th century. Cantref Mawr, unlike Cantref Bychan which was subject to 12th century conquest and reconquest, remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 (Rees 1953, xv). There never appears to have been a bridge across the Tywi between Llandeilo and Llangadog, but a possible ford, and perhaps a Medieval battle site, are suggested by the name 'Rhyd-y-Saeson' near Llangadog. A turnpike, established in 1763-71 (Lewis, 1971, 43) more-or-less followed the line of the Roman road although the course through Cwm-Ifor was straightened under Thomas Telford in the 1820s (Carmarthenshire Record Office, Cawdor Maps 172) with the subsequent development of the village. The entire area is crossed by the former LNWR main West Wales railway line which was opened, as the 'Vale of Towy Line', by the Llanelly Railway and Dock Company in 1858 (Gabb, 1977, 76).

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

The flood plain of the River Tywi between Llandeilo and Llangadog rises a little over 20 m over 9 km. It averages 1.5 km in width. This stretch of the Tywi, unlike the lower section between Carmarthen and Llandeilo (Area 182), has an active erosion and deposition cycle over long stretches of its course, with shifting meanders. In these locations the marshy, scrubby and rough ground is present. Elsewhere the floodplain has been divided into a rather loose pattern of medium- to large-sized irregular and regular fields of improved pasture by hedges without banks and earth banks topped with hedges. The former are planted on the valley floor presumably to facilitate flood-water drainage. The condition of these enclosures varies considerably. In certain locations, particularly close to the river, hedges are virtually redundant and wire fences run along the earth banks. In other areas hedges are well maintained and in good condition. Many hedges possess distinctive hedgerow trees. There is no woodland and no

settlement in this character area. The wooded nature of the valley, however, was commented upon by early writers including Leland in the 1530s (Smith 1906), who appears to be describing the floodplain. The railway line which runs along the floodplain on a low embankment is a distinctive landscape element.

Recorded archaeology is limited but includes Bronze Age finds and possible round barrow sites near Llandeilo and Cwm-Ifor. Other later features include road and rail bridges, stations and other railway furniture. The importance of buried deposits within the floodplain cannot, however, be overstressed.

There are no distinctive buildings.

The loose field systems and lack of settlement and woodland on the flood plain of the Tywi provides a distinct character area and stands in contrast to the surrounding area of occupied land (Areas 191, 201, 202, 204, 205 and 225).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area, but some consideration should be given to the management of hedgerows, the decay of which is beginning to affect the character of this area.

**Ground photograph:** 62

**Aerial photographs:** 29, 30



## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 197 TRAP

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 647185

AREA IN HECTARES: 634.30

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#### Historic Background

A small character area within the foothills of the Black Mountain, once part of Maenor Llys which occupied the eastern part of Iscennen commote. Iscennen, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan within which it lay, remained nominally independent of Anglo-Norman rule until 1284 when it was acquired by John Giffard. In 1340 it became a member of the Duchy of Lancaster (Rees 1953, xv-xvi). Area 197 may have formed part of the estate of the *maerdref* of Carreg Cennen (see Area 198); at any rate a gentry house, Cwrtbrynbeirdd, had been established within the area by the late Medieval period, which may indicate the subdivision of a larger estate. Cwrtbrynbeirdd is a hall-house occupied by Morris Owen in the 15th century (Jones 1962, 259) and may be associated with the enclosure of common land in the neighbouring Area 199 with its rabbit warren. The surrounding system of medium-sized, curvilinear enclosures contrasts sharply with the smaller, more irregular enclosures of the remainder of the character area and it may be that the landscape was reorganised with the establishment of the house, which was later part of the Golden Grove estate (Jones 1987, 17). Carreg Cennen house was *ade novo* establishment of the nabob Thomas Wright Lawford in 1806 and has no link, apart from the name, with Carreg Cennen Castle (Area 256), but it appears to occupy the site of a Medieval grange to Talley Abbey (Owen 1894, 35). The area, like much of Llandeilo Fawr parish, has an ecclesiastical signature; further monastic land lay to the east, a Medieval chapel (of ease to Llandeilo Fawr?) lay south of Cwrtbrynbeirdd, and a cist cemetery lay to the west. A further chapel may have been present near Trap where the present nucleation, however, belongs to the late 19th- and 20th-century; the present landscape had been established by the time the tithe map of Llandeilo Fawr parish had been drawn up (1841), but the mill and a roadside inn, the Cennen Arms, are the only buildings shown at Trap.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Trap character area lies across the open valley of the Cennen below Carreg Cennen Castle. The bottom of the valley lies at approximately 100m while the sides rise up to over 200m on the south side, with much Carboniferous limestone outcropping. The area is enclosed into a series of small irregular fields apart from on the south side close to Cwrtbrynbeirdd where medium-sized more regular enclosures prevail. Earth banks with hedges comprise the boundaries to all fields, though wire fences supplement most hedges. Hedges vary in condition, but tend towards the overgrown. Some farms have neatly maintained hedges. There is a slight tendency to neglect hedges at higher levels. Many hedges possess distinctive trees, and these together with overgrown hedges and the many small stands of deciduous trees lend a wooded appearance to the landscape. Several small conifer plantations are present in this area. Pasture is the predominant land-use, and while much is improved, there are large pockets of unimproved and rushy ground both on the valley sides and valley bottom. The settlement pattern is of dispersed farms and houses with a loose cluster of buildings at Trap. The dispersed houses and farmhouses are also mainly 19th century in date and in the vernacular tradition. Higher status and more ancient buildings such as the large sub-Medieval and later house at Cwrtbrynbeirdd and the farm at Llwyndewi provide a greater time-depth and greater social and economic stratification to the landscape. Most older farm outbuildings are 19th century and stone-built, but have modern farm buildings associated with them.

Recorded archaeology includes two Bronze Age burnt mounds, while from the Medieval period are a cist cemetery and a possible holy well. Archaeological features along the limestone ridge which forms the southern edge of the area mainly relate to limestone processing, such as quarries, lime kilns and limeworks.

There are a number of distinctive buildings. The remains of the Medieval Capel Dewi are both scheduled and Grade II listed. Immediately to the north is Cwrtbrynbeirdd (Grade II listed) which has 15th-16th century origins, with an original single cusped lancet and later alterations. Carreg Cennen

House (Grade II\* listed ) is a later gentry house, begun in 1806 possibly to designs by the architect S P Cockerell, and is a fine example of a small Georgian country house with a remarkable staircase hall and a Grade II listed, specialised apiary building retaining its principle features. A formal range of 18th - 19th century farm buildings lies at Llwyndewi. The buildings at Trap are mainly 19th century, stone-built with slate roofs, with houses in both the vernacular- and polite Georgian-tradition. Interspersed with these are late 20th century dwellings in a variety of styles and materials, however, the mill may be earlier and there is a K6 telephone box. The dispersed houses and farmhouses are also mainly 19th century in date and are stone built with slate roofs, and while many are in the vernacular tradition and are of two storeys and three bays, there are examples in the polite Georgian style. Most older farm outbuildings are 19th century, stone-built with the more substantial examples in a semi formal arrangement, though often they are of just one range.

This character area though well defined to the south where it runs up against unenclosed high ground, is less well defined on other sides. To the south, east and west the neighbouring character areas (Areas 190, 203, 231, 254, 198 and 255) contain similar characteristics and there tends to be a zone of change, rather than a hard-edged boundary, the exception being the small character area (Area 256) of Carreg Cennen Castle to the east.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Part of this area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photograph: 63**

**Aerial photographs:**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 198 UPPER CENNEN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 683193

AREA IN HECTARES: 246.20

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#### Historic Background

A small character area occupying the upper valley of the Afon Cennen within the foothills of the Black Mountain, once part of Maenor Llys which occupied the eastern part of Iscennen commote. Iscennen, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan within which it lay, remained nominally independent of Anglo-Norman rule and held under native tenurial systems until 1284 when it was acquired by John Giffard. In 1340 it became a member of the Duchy of Lancaster (Rees 1953, xv-xvi). Area 198 lies at the political centre of the commote, represented by the farm-names *Ferdre Fawr* and *Fach*, which represent the former *maerdref* estates of Carreg Cennen Castle and *llys* (Area 256). Here, by 1284 at least, a small estate was worked by 13 bond tenants who were in the charge of a reeve, subject to its own legal court and responsible for the maintenance of the lord's mill, labour and the carriage of produce. They held their land by inheritance, with perpetual right to their holdings (Rees, 1924, 200), while they also paid rent on Pedol (Area 240) and other holdings within the Black Mountains which may indicate that they were responsible for the summer pasturing of the lord's livestock (Sambrook and Page 1995, 14). The adjacent farm-name 'Rhandir' records the shareland process. After 1284, the bondmen petitioned the crown for maintenance of their rights to farm their hereditary lands. The estate may, nevertheless, have contracted into the present pair of farms at an early date. The pattern of enclosures presumably belongs to a post-shareland transitional phase; the irregular nature of the fields and their small size suggests, however, that they are not late creations. The present landscape was in place by at least 1839, when the tithe map for Llangadog parish was drawn up.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

The Upper Cennen character area consists of the deeply incised Cennen valley and its tributaries. The valley bottom lies at approximately 150 m, the sides rise to over 200 m. On the south side the valley sides are steep, parts of those on the northern side are precipitous. The valley sides are heavily cloaked in deciduous woodland. The land lies under improved pasture which has been divided into small irregular fields by earth banks and hedges. Hedges are generally in good condition, and well maintained, though there is some neglect and dereliction; wire fences supplement all hedged boundaries. Farmsteads dispersed across the landscape provide the settlement pattern and are generally 19th century in date, vernacular and informal.

There is very little recorded archaeology in what is a small character area, being restricted to two earthworks of unknown nature, a Bronze Age findspot and a possible well site.

There are no distinctive buildings. Farmhouses are generally 19th century in date, stone-built with slate roofs, of two-storeys and three bays, and in the vernacular tradition. Associated old farm buildings are stone-built and again of 19th century date, relatively small and usually in an informal arrangement with the farmhouse.

Though this is geographically a distinct area, its historic components are shared with neighbouring areas (Areas 197, 200, 254 and 255) and therefore its boundaries tend to be a zone of transition, rather than a hard-edged border. Carreg Cennen Castle character area (Area 256) is an exception as a clear boundary exists here.

**Conservation priorities**

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). There are, however, few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. The decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph: 64**

**Aerial photographs: 52**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 199 BEDDAU Y DERWYDDON

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 677182

AREA IN HECTARES: 37.60

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#### Historic Background

A small character area represented by a limestone, dry-stone walled enclosure measuring 400 m north-south by 1000 m east-west, occupying the junction of enclosed farmland and unenclosed moorland of the Black Mountain. The area was once part of Maenor Llys which occupied the eastern part of Iscennen commote. Iscennen, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan within which it lay, remained nominally independent of Anglo-Norman rule and held under native tenurial systems until 1284 when it was acquired by John Giffard. In 1340 it became a member of the Duchy of Lancaster (Rees 1953, xv-xvi). The enclosure is probably later Medieval/early Post-Medieval in origin and enclosing moorland that had probably been former common grazing. Within the enclosure are a large number of pillow-mounds, probably contemporary with the enclosure and representing a rabbit-warren associated with either Cwrtbrynbeirdd or Carreg Cennen grange (Area 197), Iscennenmaerdref (Area 198) or Carreg Cennen Castle (Area 256) - the name Pâl-y-cwrt occurring within the area suggests the former. The wall and pillow-mounds are disused, but survive. Subsequent activity has mainly comprised limestone extraction and processing.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Beddau y Derwyddon character area lies on the northern slopes of the Black Mountain at a height of approximately 320 m, comprising enclosed moorland and rocky limestone outcrops. The dry-stone enclosure wall is in a fair state of repair for most of its course. Most of the land is under rough grazing, but in recent years sub-division of the lower, northern parts by wire fences has been accompanied by pasture improvement. A single-track road crosses the area alongside which are the remains of earth-and-stone built lime kilns. There are no buildings, but concrete platform foundations indicate that some form of structure recently stood by the road.

Recorded archaeology includes the wall, lime-kilns and building sites mentioned above, and the pillow-mounds which are a Scheduled Ancient Monument. In addition are several possible Bronze Age round barrows/clearance cairns, and a subsidiary enclosure of unknown nature.

There are no further buildings.

The area is well defined by the stone wall which surrounds it, and stands in sharp contrast with the open moorland to the south (Area 240), and farmland enclosed by earth banks and hedges to the north (Area 255).

#### Conservation priorities

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). There are, however, few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area, though some consideration should be given to the means and methods by which the distinctive enclosure dry-stone wall can be maintained.

Ground photograph: 65

Aerial photographs:

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 200 DAFADFA

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 690209

AREA IN HECTARES: 339.00

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#### Historic Background

A discrete character area lying on the northwest facing lower slopes of the Black Mountain, once part of Perfedd commote of Cantref Bychan, which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans advancing from the east under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon but was subject to episodes of Welsh rule until 1276 when it was granted to the Gloucestershire knight John Giffard (Rees 1953, xv). It retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period by which time, at least, Perfedd was divided into two *maenorau*, this character area lying within Maenor Gwynfe. The area appears to have comprised unenclosed moorland, probably held as common or 'waste', until the Post-Medieval period when the present pattern of relatively large, regular enclosures was established. A sheepfold, in the north of the area, has given the two farms Dafadfa Uchaf and Dafadfa Isaf their names and can therefore be assumed to pre-date them; the farms were present by the early 19th-century and are marked on the Ordnance Survey 1" Old Series. The landscape had assumed its present form by 1839 (Llangadog tithe map) and there has been little subsequent change.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Dafadfa is a roughly rectangular character area which lies on a hilly and undulating south-facing slope between the heights of 250m and 320m. The land is entirely enclosed in a system of medium-sized fairly regular enclosures. On lower slopes fields are small and tend to be irregular rather than the regular; at higher levels they are larger and more regular. Fields are divided by earth banks topped with hedges. At higher levels hedges are becoming overgrown and neglected, with gaps opening in them, but at lower levels they are generally well managed. Wire fences supplement all hedges. Distinctive hedgerow trees are rare, and woodland is confined to a couple of small secondary copses and plantations on the lower slopes. Land-use is almost entirely improved pasture, with a little rougher, rushy ground. The settlement pattern is of widely dispersed farms and, overall, the enclosure- and settlement pattern indicates a landscape that has only been colonised in relatively recent times, perhaps the 18th century.

Recorded archaeology is limited to the sheepfold and a Bronze Age burnt mound.

Farmhouses are stone-built with slate roofs, date to the 19th century and are in the vernacular tradition. Stone outbuildings are also 19th century and are relatively small. Most farms have large modern agricultural buildings associated with them. There is also a 19th century chapel.

This is a distinct character area. It contrasts with the areas to the south, west and east (Areas 198, 233 and 255) which contain smaller irregular fields, woodland and a denser but nevertheless dispersed settlement pattern, and with the areas to the north, northeast and northwest (Areas 231 and 254) which have a looser enclosure and settlement pattern.

#### Conservation priorities

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). However, there are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. The decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Otherwise maintain as existing.

Ground photograph: 66

Aerial photographs: 22, 56

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 201 CWM-IFOR - MANORDEILO

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 667276

AREA IN HECTARES: 1509.00

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#### Historic Background

This is a large character area lying above the interface between the alluvium and the solid geology of the north side of the Tywi, and part of the main historic route corridor into West Wales. The Roman road from Carmarthen to Llandovery followed this interface. It forms the southeast edge of the character area (see Area 196) and its course has been more-or-less followed by the modern A40(T). The Roman road may perpetuate the line of an earlier routeway, or at least activity, as testified by stray finds of Bronze Age date found on or close to the road, including a gold hoard. The line of the Roman road was, however, abandoned during the Medieval and earlier Post-Medieval periods, until it was turnpiked in the 18th century. During the intervening period a routeway from Llandeilo to Llandovery, later with a toll-house, was established along the higher ground through the centre of this character area (Ludlow 1999, 24), when it lay within the southern half of the commote, and later hundred, of Maenordeilo (Rees 1932) which was held of the independent Welsh lordship of Cantref Mawr until the establishment of the county of Carmarthen in 1284. The relative homogeneity of the present landscape may represent a historical unity of land-use. The landscape had been enclosed, in the present pattern of irregular fields, by the time the tithe surveys were conducted in the second quarter of the 19th century, but the process may have been undertaken at an earlier date, possibly during the late Medieval period. Settlement on the floodplain itself has always been minimal but does occur on raised 'islands' within the alluvium, mainly in the form of isolated farms of which Glanrhyd-isaf may have early origins. The remains of an adjacent field system may be Medieval. On the higher ground, Post-Medieval building platforms, trackways etc. attest to former settlement around Banc-y-gwyn. The character area lay within the large parish of Llandeilo Fawr and has a strong ecclesiastical signature, perhaps representing the core of the pre-Conquest *Patria* of St Teilo. The many chapels-of-ease to the parish may have early origins and include several within this character area. One of these chapels was still visible in the early 19th-century when it became the site of a dwelling, Capel Isa, built on land originally belonging to the Abermarlais estate in Area 209 (Jones 1987, 21). The lower valley side is occupied by two, formerly three, more 'polite' houses and gardens, with a degree of emparking which has characterised the landscape. The most important is Glanbrydan, established during the later 18th century but extended, and laid out as a parkland landscape, between 1838 and 1887 with the construction of a lodge (Ludlow 1999, 26). Down Farm, is little more than a large farm whilst Dirleton near Llangadog Bridge has now largely been lost. The pattern of small farms within and around the area had been established by the early 19th-century, but there have been landscape changes including the loss of further farmsteads and the coalescing of fields near the valley floor, and the diversion of the turnpike road in the 1820s with the subsequent development of a village, with a church, at Cwm-Ifor (see Area 196). The nucleation at Manordeilo, too, is a creation of the 19th century and is not even named on the Ordnance Survey Original Surveyors' Drawings, Sheet 189, of 1812. Its greatest expansion has in fact occurred since 1964 (Ordnance Survey, 1:10000), and is still going on with new dwellings under construction at the northeast end.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

The Cwm-Ifor - Manordeilo character area occupies an area of rolling hills on the north side of the Tywi valley. From the valley floor at approximately 40 m the hills rise to a maximum of 160 m, though generally they lie between 50 m and 90 m. This is essentially a landscape of small irregular fields and dispersed farms. Land-use is almost entirely of improved pasture. Fields are divided by earth banks and hedges. Hedges are generally in good condition and well maintained, but there is some dereliction on low ridges north of Cwm-Ifor, close to Abermarlais (Area 209) at the eastern end of the area and on high ground to the north. Distinctive hedgerow trees are common, particularly in the areas of derelict hedges north of Cwm-Ifor. There are numerous copses and woodland stands, some possibly ancient, particularly on east and north-facing slopes of the Afon Dulais. The parkland at Glanbrydan and to a limited extent the old park of Dirleton merge and influence the surrounding agricultural landscape. The

old established settlement pattern of dispersed farms consists mainly of stone-built houses of the 18th- and 19th-century. Although the date range of these surviving buildings is limited, a considerable economic and social range is present from gentry houses such as Glanbrydan House with its lodges and associated home farm, down to small dwellings in the vernacular tradition. Superimposed over the pattern of dispersed farms is a more recent linear and nucleated settlement pattern. Buildings of this pattern mostly date to the 20th century and tend to be concentrated along the A40 road, though the 19th century hamlet at Cwm-Ifor has been transformed into a small nucleated settlement by modern housing development.

Recorded archaeology mainly relates to the settlement already discussed, but includes an unknown cropmark, a possible round barrow and standing stone, as well as the gold hoard and stray finds. There are at least three Medieval chapel sites, a field system and a possible well, and Post-Medieval building platforms, leats, trackways and bridges around Banc-y-gwyn. The site of Dirleton House and park still contains landscape features.

Distinctive buildings include the Grade II listed Capel Isa, built in 1812-13 by Thomas Bedford of Llandeilo as a large, two-storeyed building, originally square in plan but extended west by one bay in the 19th century and now with a three-bayed southern facade. There is an associated, Grade II listed stable-range. The present Glanbrydan House and lodges are not listed, but the 'tower house' (former coach-house) is Grade II listed, probably built in 1885 to designs by S W Williams of Rhayader. Larger farms with concomitant larger farmhouses often in the Georgian tradition tend to be located on the lower slopes closer to the Tywi valley. These larger farms usually have a large assemblage of stone outbuildings in a formal arrangement. However the most common type of farm is a simple two-storey, three bay house in the vernacular tradition with a small group of outbuildings, sometimes compacted into a single range. Most farms have large, modern agricultural outbuildings associated with them. There are a number of early 19th-century cottages. St Paul's Church, Cwm-Ifor, is late 19th-century and on a new site but the chapel is from 1836. Further nonconformist chapels lie at Manordeilo and Hermon. An early 19th-century turnpike trust milestone on the A40(T) is Grade II listed, and an earlier toll-house lies on the old mail road.

This is not an easy area to define, as neighbouring areas possess similar characteristics. Only to the south against Area 196, the flood plain of the Tywi, is there good definition. Elsewhere it is a zone of change.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph: 67**

**Aerial photographs: 28**



## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 202 LLANDEILO

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 628221

AREA IN HECTARES: 131.30

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#### Historic Background

Llandeilo occupies a central position within the Tywi valley, once part of the lordship of Cantref Mawr which remained independent of Anglo-Norman rule until the establishment of the county of Carmarthen in 1284. However, settlement within the character area has earlier origins. The town stands astride the Llandovery (*Alabum*) -Carmarthen (*Moridunum*) Roman road, possibly at a junction with a further Roman road running south towards Loughor (*Leucarum*) suggesting that a bridge over the Tywi was present. A Roman fort midway between Carmarthen and Llandovery is to be expected in the area of the town and a possible site in the vicinity of Rhosmaen has been proposed (James 1992; Sambrook and Page 1995, 4). Settlement does appear to pre-date that at neighbouring Dinefwr (Area 195) in the form of the church of St Teilo (later the parish church of Llandeilo Fawr), supposed to have been established in the 6th century (Samuel 1868, 74), and mentioned in the pre-Conquest Lichfield Gospels (Ludlow 1998). By the 9th century Llandeilo Fawr was the most influential of the ecclesiastical communities in the district (Sambrook and Page 1995, 4), possessing two (formerly three) ECMs, and a spring in the large churchyard. It was appropriated to the Premonstratensian Abbey at Talley by Rhys Gŵg in c.1215 (Price 1879, 166). The town is believed to have its origins within this small ecclesiastical community. It had certainly been established by 1213 when the 'town' was attacked and 'completely burned' (Jones 1952, 87), but its growth appears to have been encouraged by the Bishops of St Davids who acquired the town and *patria* in the late 13th century, and by 1306 it contained 30 burgesses and 11 other tenants (Soulsby 1983, 160). The town was granted a weekly market and three annual fairs (Willis-Bund 1902, 263-9), held in the large marketplace northwest of the church. A mill was also present and at least one subordinate chapel lay within the character area, but the Medieval town appears to have been confined to the area around the churchyard, the marketplace, Bridge Street, and the lower part of Rhosmaen Street. A bridge is mentioned in 1289 (Soulsby 1983, 161) but the present structure was erected in 1848 by W Williams of Llandeilo replacing an earlier bridge downstream. Ffairfach developed as a settlement in the shadow of the town, south of the bridge, and was recorded as the site of an annual fair by George Owen in 1601 (Sambrook and Page 1995, 22). East of Ffairfach but within Area 202 lies the site of Tregyb, a former mansion established by the 16th century (Jones 1987, 186) on the site of a 14th century vill which may have had its own market (Rees 1932). A nearby 'maerdy' place-name, derived from a reeve or *maer*, may be associated with the monastic holding in Area 190 or the Tregyb estate (Sambrook and Page 1995, 17). Subsequent urban development was slow and probably did not occur until the 18th century. However, by 1841 the town had expanded to the north and west (Llandeilo Fawr tithe map) while the town was considered important enough to be the site for the County Midsummer Quarter Sessions (Soulsby 1983, 162). It was also a stage on the Mail Road which followed the course of the Roman road (and modern A40). It was turnpiked in 1763-71 (Lewis, 1971, 43) and was driven through the churchyard in the 1840s (Ludlow 1998). Rhosmaen grew as ribbon development either side of the road with, by the end of the 19th century, a chapel and industry including a tannery. The former LNWR main West Wales railway line, which was opened as the 'Vale of Towy Line' in 1858 (Gabb, 1977, 76) established a railway station in the town, encouraging growth to the north towards Rhosmaen. A further station was established in Ffairfach at the junction with the Llandeilo-Llanelli line, which had been laid down in the 1840s (Morgan 1958). Expansion to the west is effectively limited by Dynevor Park (Area 195) but the 20th century has seen council development north of the park and the establishment, near its entrance, of both a fire station and a police station.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

The historic town is situated on the north bank of the River Tywi, occupying a river terrace which slopes downhill from west to east between 40 m and 80 m. It is dominated by the 16th century church tower which overlooks the bridge. Ffairfach lies on the south bank and the character area includes ribbon development either side of the A40(T) to the north. The town comprises an axial main street, Bridge/Rhosmaen Street, running northeast from the bridge, originally to bifurcate around the large

churchyard. Rhosmaen Street formed part of the Carmarthen-Llandovery turnpike and later the A40(T). The subrectangular churchyard, which was the primary nucleus, is now bisected by this street but is still a large, open green space. Bridge Street leads uphill from the graceful, single-span bridge and is characterised by attractive colourwashed earlier 19th century dwellings of 2-3 storeys, behind and to the west of which rises the wooded hill of Penlan Park (Area 195). The marketplace northwest of the church is now occupied by infill; Carmarthen Street, leading uphill west from the marketplace, is occupied by a number of good quality buildings including the square, stone-built provision market of 1838. Rhosmaen Street largely features 19th-20th century development. In 1800 it was occupied by 'straw-thatched houses of the poorest description' (Soulsby 1983, 162) but now features the town's main Coaching Inn, the Cawdor Arms, from c.1845 and built around a courtyard, and a number of good-quality civic buildings from later in the 19th century - banks, former Post Office etc. New Road was constructed between Rhosmaen Street and Carmarthen Street in the later 19th century to avoid the constricted roads around the churchyard. A feature of the townscape are a number of alleys and informal courtyards, not properly accessible to wheeled traffic but featuring 19th century buildings, often from early in the century and of good quality. A number of later 19th century terraces are concentrated on the northern fringe of the town around the railway station. Both Ffairfach and Rhosmaen are linear, ribbon developments of the later 19th-20th century with their own chapels. Twentieth century development has largely occurred west of the historic core and north of Dynevor Park (Area 195) and is characterised by council-built housing. Llandeilo is free from satellite development and there is no retail or business developments outside the town, despite the completion of the northern bypass in 1994 which took east-west traffic away from the town centre; north-south traffic still passes through. Tregyb House was demolished in 1974 and the park is now largely occupied by the town Secondary School and grounds. However, the house platform and terraces survive - the former is the site of the *Gorsedd* stone circle from the 1996 National Eisteddfod - while the park retains much of its character including many distinctive trees.

Recorded archaeology comprises features from the Medieval - Modern periods which have been largely discussed but includes Roman findspots and the two ECMs from the 10th-11th centuries.

There are a large number of listed buildings - c.75 in this landscape area - which are mainly town houses and civic buildings. Also included are the church which was largely rebuilt in 1848-51 to the designs of Sir George Gilbert Scott, and the spring (both Grade II listed), the road bridge (Grade II\* listed), the present rail bridge from 1898, the old provision market from 1838 and the Cawdor Arms (all Grade II listed), as well as several chapels.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Conservation priorities centre on the Conservation Area and individual listed buildings. Other than these it is important to maintain the nucleated coherence of the town by discouraging ribbon- and dispersed-development at the settlement fringes. A very small part of this area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995).

**Ground photograph: 68**

**Aerial photographs: 31**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 203 ALLT TREGYB

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 657214

AREA IN HECTARES: 913.10

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#### Historic Background

A large area occupying the south-east side of the Tywi Valley east of Llandeilo. It lay within Iscennen commote, specifically within Maenor Llys, of which Nant Breinant - which partly forms the northern edge of this area - was a named boundary in the 16th century (Rees 1953). Iscennen, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan within which it lay, remained nominally independent of Anglo-Norman rule until 1284 when it was acquired by John Giffard. In 1340 it became a member of the Duchy of Lancaster (Rees 1953, xv-xvi). The eastern half of the character area is marked as 'Brenaye Forest' on Rees' map of South Wales in the 14th century (Rees 1932), but the medium-sized irregular enclosures in this area contrast with the larger, regular enclosures to the north, south and further east - some of which are 19th century enclosure of former common - and are probably earlier, though possibly still Post-Medieval. Rees' map also shows a straightish, intermittent unclassified road running WSW-ENE across the spine of the area. The western end of the area belonged to the vill (later estate) of Tregyb (Area 202) and although there is little difference in the landscape here, it is more wooded and features the name Tregyb Warren. The later history of the area is overwhelmingly pastoral although a factory near Tregyb is marked on 19th century maps.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Allt Tregyb character area lies on north-facing undulating and hilly slopes of the Tywi Valley between 30m and 220m. The valley side has a heavily wooded appearance, but this is more apparent than real, for although there are considerable stands of ancient deciduous woodland, and recent more scrubby woods and small conifer plantations, the overall characteristic of the area is one of small irregular fields and widely dispersed farms. Improved pasture is common, but there are many fields of rougher- and rushy-ground, reflecting the pockets of poorer land on the north-facing slopes. Some fields have recently been invaded with scrubby woodland. Fields are usually divided by earth banks topped with hedges, but some stony banks and stone-faced banks lie at higher altitudes. Hedges are in a variety of states of management, but are usually either well-maintained and trimmed or overgrown with distinctive hedgerow trees. Farmhouses and cottages in the vernacular style of 19th century date are the chief types of dwellings. Larger farmsteads are present, but most are relatively small for Carmarthenshire and consist of a limited range of stone-built farm buildings, sometimes compacted into a single range. Some farms have large modern agricultural buildings associated with them. Stone-built, single storey 19th century cottages at Gurnos-Cwmdu suggest squatter settlement-encroachment onto common land that fringed part of this area.

Recorded archaeology is limited to a scheduled standing stone, a Bronze Age findspot and a possible enclosure (undated).

There are no distinctive buildings.

This is a fairly well defined area and contrasts with the less wooded, richer land and larger farms of areas that lie to the north, east and west (Areas 190, 197, 225, 226), and with the higher less strongly enclosed land to the south (Area 231).

#### Conservation priorities

Part of this area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). Decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should also be given to the maintenance of other boundary types and to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in

a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photographs: 69**

**Aerial photographs: 30**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 204 FELINDRE

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 699275

AREA IN HECTARES: 69.86

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#### Historic Background

A small area to the south-east of the River Tywi lying immediately to the west of Carreg-Sawdde Common (Area 205). It was once part of Perfedd commote of Cantref Bychan, which was, with the exception of Iscennen, invaded by the Anglo-Normans advancing from the east under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. However, Cantref Bychan was subject to episodes of Welsh rule until 1276 when it was granted - to be reunited with Iscennen - to the Gloucestershire knight John Giffard (Rees 1953, xv) and retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period. Carreg-Sawdde represents an area of remnant common within what may formerly have been an extensive tract of unenclosed grazing. However, by the 14th century Felindre was a demesne estate of the Lordship of Llandovery (Rees 1924, 100), presumably named from a pre-existing corn mill, and within which agriculture was practised; 15 bond men - the only bond tenants of the lordship - farmed 18 acres in 1317 (*ibid.*). Like the *maerdref* at Ferdre, Carreg Cennen (Area 198), Felindre had its own court and was administered by a reeve. In 1383 it was granted an annual fair by the successor to the Gifford Lords of Llandovery, Nicholas d'Audley (*ibid.*), which was still being held in 1601 (Sambrook and Page 1995, 22). However, the system of small, axial, regular rectangular fields which form a distinctive block to the west of the village may result from 18th century squatting on the edge of the common, rather than a fossilisation of Medieval strip fields; moreover the fields occupy a total of 172.60 acres. The system was in place - and Felindre was a nucleated settlement - by 1839 when the tithe map of Llangadog parish shows a landscape identical to the present.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Felindre is a small character area that lies on a terrace on the south side of the Tywi and west of the Sawdde at approximately 45 m OD, a few metres above the flood plains of the rivers. It consists of a small nucleation of dwellings at Felindre, and several dispersed small-holdings/farms. Felindre is a mixture of 19th- and 20th-century dwellings. Several stone-built small-holdings, in the vernacular tradition, are dispersed outside the nucleation and most have a small range of outbuildings associated with them. A distinctive but small enclosed strip field system is associated with the settlement. Earth banks with hedges comprise the boundaries to these fields. Hedges are generally well maintained and some have distinctive trees, but a few have gaps opening up in them. Wire fences support all hedges. There is no woodland in this area, and almost all ground is under improved pasture.

Recorded archaeology relates to the settlement and includes the present Post-Medieval watermill and the village with a pigsty and a smithy.

There are no distinctive buildings. Felindre itself has 19th century stone-built dwellings, in the vernacular style, intermixed with 20th century dwellings in a variety of styles and materials. The farmhouses of the several small-holdings dispersed outside the nucleation are stone-built, of 19th century date, in the vernacular tradition and generally of two storeys with slate roofs.

The strip field system and nucleated settlement make this a very distinctive character area. It stands in contrast to unenclosed common to the east (Area 205), the Tywi flood plain to the north (Area 196), and areas of dispersed farms and irregular fields to the south and west (Area 225).

**Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area as most of the historic landscape components are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photograph:** 70

**Aerial photographs:** 24, 58, 59

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 205 CARREG-SAWDDE COMMON

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 702279

AREA IN HECTARES: 78.59

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#### Historic Background

Carreg-Sawdde represents an area of remnant common within what may formerly have been a more extensive tract of unenclosed grazing. It lay within Perfedd commote of Cantref Bychan, which was, with the exception of Iscennen, invaded by the Anglo-Normans advancing from the east under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.); it was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. However, there were many episodes of Welsh rule, and the area retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period. The common appears to have become part of the *patria* of Llangadog when the area was acquired by the Bishops of St Davids in the later 13th century (Rees 1932), from which point the right of pasture appears to have belonged to the burgesses of Llangadog (Area 206). The common occupied more-or-less its present extent by at least 1839, when the tithe map of Llangadog parish recorded a landscape very similar to the present. There has been some limited subsequent encroachment particularly at the south-east end adjacent to Area 235 (Castell Meurig) and as 'islands' within the common, while some of the trackways depicted on early maps appear to have become disused.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Carreg-Sawdde Common lies on the flood plain of the Afon Sawdde at approximately 45m. The A4069 (turnpike) road crosses part of the south-east side of the common. A B-road from Llangadog to Felindre crosses the common towards its southern end, and the Afon Sawdde over a 20th century bridge (occupying the site of an earlier crossing). The common is open, rough grazing land apart from a small 'island' of tightly-packed buildings in the centre, and a modern sewage treatment works. The buildings are encroachments on to the common and comprise late 19th century two-storey houses through to late 20th century bungalows.

Recorded archaeology is limited to a findspot of uncertain date.

There are no distinctive buildings

This open common contrasts to the nucleated settlement and associated fields of Felindre (Area 204) to the west, with Llangadog urban character area (206) to the east, and with enclosed farmland and dispersed farms on other sides (Areas 208, 235).

#### Conservation priorities

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

Ground photograph: 71

Aerial photographs: 24, 58

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 206 LLANGADOG

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 698283

AREA IN HECTARES: 35.32

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#### Historic Background

A small area corresponding with the built-up area of Llangadog, a settlement with Medieval origins. It is the site of a possible pre-Conquest ecclesiastical community which probably occupied the site of the present church of St Cadog. The church may be referred to in the pre-conquest Book of Llandaff (Soulsby, 1983, 169). However, doubt has been cast on Cadog representing the original dedication, being a secular figure whose name has supplanted that of the original dedication to St David (Yates 1973, 58), suggesting a link with St Davids Cathedral that had become cemented by the later 13th century when the Bishops were in possession of the *patria* of Llangadog. Llangadog also lies just two miles north of Llys Brychan (Area 225), one of only three suggested Roman villa sites in Carmarthenshire (Jarrett 1962), and the importance which must have been attached to the site and the locality may have remained undiminished into the post-Roman period. A system of boundaries around the parish church, moreover, may perpetuate the line of a *largellan* (Sambrook and Page 1995, 5). The area became part of Perfedd commote of Cantref Bychan, which was, with the exception of Iscennen, invaded by the Anglo-Normans advancing from the east under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery but was subject to episodes of Welsh rule throughout the 12th- and 13th-century. A motte-and-bailey castle was established, probably as part of the initial Anglo-Norman campaign, at Castell Meurig (Area 235) some 1.5 km southeast of the church. It was captured 'by catapults and slings' by Prince Maelgwn ap Rhys in 1203 (Jones 1952, 82) after which it may have become disused; at any rate, it appears not have influenced any civil settlement, the origins of the town lying with the presumed small ecclesiastical community. Its development was encouraged by the Bishops of St Davids who in 1281 granted a market and annual fair, and in 1283 founded a college at the church for a precentor and 21 canons (Soulsby 1983, 169). The latter was however short-lived, being transferred to Abergwili in 1287, and doubt has been expressed as to whether the intention was ever carried out (Knight 1919, 12-13), though the remains of buildings to the north of the church seen in 1855 were said to belong to the college, and canons were recorded in 1289 (Lewis 1937, 237). 33 burgesses and 8 other tenants were recorded in 1326 (Soulsby 1983, 169). At its height Llangadog held a weekly market and seven annual fairs, held in the churchyard according to George Owen in 1601 (Sambrook and Page 1995, 22). However, it has very little subsequent recorded history and appears to have functioned as a small local centre, albeit with a coaching inn, not expanding beyond its Medieval limits. Recent developments include the construction in c.1839 of a terrace, Ashfield Row, on the A40(T)/former turnpike west of the Tywi, linked to the town by a bridge (Bont-ar-Towy), rebuilt in 1819, and by intermittent development including the railway station, opened by the Llanelly Railway and Dock Company in 1858 and later part of the LNWR West Wales line (Gabb, 1977, 76), and also the later 20th century creamery which is now the main economic resource of the community.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Llangadog character is essentially urban in character and consists of the historic core of the settlement, which lies on a terrace between the rivers Bran and Sawdde just upstream of their confluence with the Tywi, together with linear development to the south of Bont-ar-Towy bridge. Two limbs of the A4069, leading from the Black Mountain to Llandovery, meet in the town. The A40(T) runs east-west on the opposite side of the Tywi. Centred on the Medieval St Cadog's Church, Church Street and a small 'square', Llangadog is little more than a village in size. Burgage plots, however, are traceable either side of Church Street on the Llangadog tithe map of 1839. Imposing three-storey dwellings in the Georgian tradition, and the coaching inn on the square, now provide urban character. Dwellings on Church Street are mostly two storey, stone-built, 19th century terraced cottages. Later 19th-century 'villas' and chapels occupy the fringes of the historic core in dispersed linear development along the A4069 to the north, south and east. A small secondary settlement of 19th century date lies west of the town centred on a public house, the railway station, and Ashfield Row on the A40(T). Land from the



historic core to the railway station is now almost fully occupied by the large post-Second World War creamery and more recent light industrial units. 20th century housing is mostly confined to small estate development, and individual units to the east and southeast of the historic core. This modern development is in brick or concrete and is in contrast to the stone-built houses of the historic core and 19th century linear development.

Recorded archaeology is confined to the church and churchyard and a possible Bronze Age round barrow, while a battle-site may be recorded in a place-name.

There are 8 listed buildings within the town including the Medieval St Cadocs Church (Grade B listed) with a landmark tower. The rest are mainly Post-Medieval, Grade II listed and include the vicarage, coaching inn, Bont-ar-Towy and private houses. Other buildings include nonconformist chapels, a tollgate on the A40(T) and a former smithy.

Llangadog is a distinctive character area, and stands in sharp contrast with neighbouring enclosed farmland (Areas 207, 208, 225, 235), and with unenclosed common (Area 205) which lies to the east.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Conservation priorities centre on the Conservation Area and individual listed buildings. Other than these it is important to maintain the nucleated coherence of the town by discouraging ribbon- and dispersed-development at the settlement fringes

**Ground photographs: 72**

**Aerial photographs: 24, 58**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 207 CEFNGORNOETH

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 716299

AREA IN HECTARES: 308.50

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#### Historic Background

An area southeast of the Tywi, once part of Perfedd commote of Cantref Bychan, which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans advancing from the east under Richard Fitz Pons, who established *acapat* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. However, there were many episodes of Welsh rule and the area retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated into modern Carmarthenshire. Most of this character area formed part of the *patria* of Llangadog which was acquired by the Bishops of St Davids in the late 13th century (Rees 1932). A 'Tyddyn' farm name suggests Medieval settlement and formalised land-division, and the area is characterised by small irregular enclosures which may be at least late Medieval in origin. The present farm Wernfrena appears to represent the site of an early Post-Medieval house which has now been rebuilt (Jones 1987, 89).

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Cefngornoeth character area lies over a low hilly ridge on the south side of the Afon Tywi, between the valleys of the Tywi and the Bran. The ridge rises from approximately 45m on the Tywi valley floor to over 110 m on the low rounded hills. This is essentially a landscape of small irregular fields, small stands of deciduous woodland, some of which may be ancient, and dispersed farms. Farmland is almost totally under improved pasture. Field boundaries are earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are generally in good condition, with very few overgrown or derelict. Some possess distinctive hedgerow trees. Close to Cefngornoeth house a small area of parkland merges with the surrounding landscape. The stands of trees on the valley side of the Tywi lend a wooded aspect to this side of the character area. Farmsteads are mostly 19th century date and vernacular, with informal farm buildings that include some modern buildings.

Recorded archaeology is limited to a Bronze Age findspot.

There are few distinctive buildings. Farmsteads are mostly of 19th century date, stone-built and in the vernacular tradition; associated old farm buildings are similarly stone-built and generally have an informal arrangement with the farmhouse, while most farms have a range of modern agricultural buildings. There is the usual scatter of Post-Medieval cottages and dwellings. Wernfrena and Cefngornoeth are more substantial houses in a more polite tradition.

This character area is not easy to define as it possess many historic components that are also possessed by its neighbours. To the north, where it meets the Tywi valley there is a fairly distinct border between it and the rather less intensely enclosed land of the flood plain (Area 208). There is also good definition to the west against the urban unit of Llangadog (Area 206). To the south and east there is a zone of change, rather than a clear-cut border, between this area and Area 235.

#### Conservation priorities

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area as most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in a few of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

Ground photograph: 73

Aerial photographs:

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 208 YSTRAD TYWI: LLANGADOG - LLANDOVERY

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 723316

AREA IN HECTARES: 925.40

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#### Historic Background

A large, narrow area stretching from Llangadog in the southwest to Llandovery in the northeast, which lies in the fertile alluvial floodplain of the River Tywi. The valley was the major historic route corridor into West Wales and the Roman road from Carmarthen to Llandovery, which lies just within the northwest edge of this character area, followed the interface between the alluvium and the solid geology of the north side of the Tywi. A later turnpike more-or-less followed the course of this Roman road, as does the present A40(T) - see Areas 182 and 196. The River Tywi in this area is active and subject to course changes across the valley floor, and the wooded nature of the valley was commented upon by early writers including Leland in the 1530s (Smith 1906), who appear to be describing the floodplain. Therefore, the present pattern of regular fields is probably of later date, while. Enclosure may have been undertaken during the 18th century, but had definitely taken place by the time the tithe surveys were conducted in the second quarter of the 19th century. In addition, settlement on the floodplain has always been minimal. There are, however, a few farms and dwellings in the area, also occupying the interface or situated upon glacially derived 'islands' within the floodplain; one of these, Pentremeurig, has 16th century origins and was assessed for 7 hearths in 1670 (Jones 1987, 155). The disposition of these habitations may then reflect earlier settlement patterns. Peat deposits have been noted between the alluvium and the underlying geology elsewhere within the Tywi Valley (Page 1994, 4,9), where they were thought either to represent such 'islands' in the floodplain, or a drying of the floodplain (see also Area 196) and while no prehistoric sites have been recorded within the area it must be stressed that within the Tywi Valley, this period is among 'the least known' (Cadw/ICOMOS, 1998, 28). During the Medieval period the river formed one of the major boundaries of Carmarthenshire, separating Cantref Mawr on the north bank from Cantref Bychan on the south bank (Rees, 1932). As such, the landscape area has experienced a chequered history of tenure and was troubled by warfare until the end of the 13th century; Cantref Mawr, unlike Cantref Bychan which was subject to 12th century conquest and reconquest, remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 (Rees 1953, xv) and the Post-Medieval house at Ystrad may be the site of the Medieval *llys* of Gwestfa Ystradmynys within which this area partly lay. There does not appear to have ever been a bridge across the Tywi between Llangadog and Llandovery but there were at least two, possibly three historic fords. The turnpike, established in 1763-71 (Lewis 1971, 43) more-or-less followed the line of the Roman road and is now represented by the A40(T). The A4069 on dry ground between Llangadog and Llandovery on the south side of the valley also follows the line of a turnpike begun in 1779 (*ibid.*). The floodplain, meanwhile, is crossed by the former LNWR main West Wales railway line which was opened, as the 'Vale of Towy Line', by the Llanelli Railway and Dock Company in 1858 (Gabb, 1977, 76). Little industry has developed in this area although a woollen factory possibly operated at Pentremeurig.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This area comprises the flood plain of the Tywi together with the lower, gently sloping valley sides. Within this area the flood plain of the Tywi rises some 20 m, from 40 m OD at the west end to 60 m OD at the east end, over a distance of 7 km. The lower valley sides rise up to a maximum of 60 m to 70 m. Above these lower slopes valley sides rise steeply, particularly on the northern side towards Llandovery, to over 150 m. This part of the Tywi valley provides a natural route-corridor. The Romans utilised the route for the Llandovery-Carmarthen road, and in more recent times turnpike roads were constructed on both sides of the valley. The course of the turnpike on the northern side is now followed by the A40(T), that on the south side by the A4069. The railway that runs along the flood plain on a low embankment also uses this route corridor. Where areas of deposition and erosion are evident on the Tywi there is no strong field patterning, and scrubby, rushy ground prevails. These areas are, however, fairly restricted and most of the area is divided into reasonably regular, medium-sized fields. Field boundaries are hedges without banks and earth banks topped with hedges. The former are planted on the valley floor presumably to facilitate flood-water drainage. Some hedges are accompanied by

ditches. Most hedges are well maintained, though a significant number are becoming derelict. Wire fences supplement most hedges. Many hedges possess distinctive hedgerow trees, and these, together with isolated trees and small copses lend a parkland aspect to the area. This may be a planned effect, designed to merge with the parks on the north side of the valley associated with gentry houses. Settlements are confined to low terraces which lie slightly above the flood plain and to the valley sides. A wide range of economic and social classes are represented by the buildings of the area from the gentry house of Ystrad, with an area of parkland, through to small roadside cottages. However, the settlement pattern is dominated by farms dispersed along a river terrace to the south of Llanwrda, on the lower slopes of both sides of the river. Farmhouses are quite substantial and tend towards the 'polite' with extensive, large semi-formal outbuildings, mainly supplemented with modern agricultural buildings.

Recorded archaeology is confined to buildings and the ford sites.

There are many distinctive buildings but none are listed. They include the gentry house at Glan-Dulais, the 18th- and 19th-century Ystrad house and park, and Pentremeurig with 16th century origins. Farmhouses are generally quite substantial - more so than the simple two storey, three-bay structures common elsewhere - and generally of 18th- or 19th-century date, stone built and polite, rather than vernacular. 20th century brick-built farmhouses are also present. Farm buildings are also large and are often arranged in a semi-formal setting with the farmhouse. 19th century stone-built examples and 20th century brick outbuildings are represented, and most farms possess large assemblages of modern agricultural buildings

This is a fairly distinct character area, and contrasts with the character areas of enclosed farmland with smaller farmsteads that bound it to the north and south (Areas 201, 207, 210, 214, 228, 257), with the urban areas of Llangadog and Llandovery (Areas 206, 212), and with former parkland to the northeast (Area 209).

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph: 74**

**Aerial photographs: 27**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 209 ABERMARLAIS

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 687298

AREA IN HECTARES: 128.60

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#### Historic Background

A small area northwest of the Tywi floodplain corresponding to the former park and demesne of Abermarlais house. The area once lay within the Medieval Cwmwd Maenordeilo, held of the independent Welsh lordship of Cantref Mawr until the establishment of the county of Carmarthen in 1284. A high-status dwelling may have been established at Abermarlais as early as the 14th century (Rees 1932), when it was the residence of Sir Rhys ap Gruffydd who commanded the Welsh at Crécy (Jones 1987, 4). During the early 16th-century it was occupied by the great Tudor magnate Sir Rhys ap Thomas (*ibid.*) and upon his death it was inherited by his grandson, another Sir Rhys ap Gruffydd. He was executed by Henry VIII for treason and the estate, and the neighbouring 'lordship of Llansadwrn', fell to the crown (Sambrook and Page 1995, 21). Abermarlais was the subject of a laudatory poem by Lewis Glyn Cothi and was described by Leland in the 1530s as '*a well favorid stone place*' (Smith 1906), which may have been semi-fortified but having been *new mendid and augmentid* by Sir Rhys ap Thomas (Jones 1987, 4). Abermarlais was regarded as a manor, was recorded as the site of an annual fair by George Owen in 1601 (Sambrook and Page 1995, 22) and in 1670 was assessed for 21 hearths (Jones 1987, 4), all suggesting that the house may have been accompanied by some form of manorial settlement. It was later abandoned, and hut platforms and pillow mounds of probable Medieval date lie northwest of the house site. Alterations were made to the house during succeeding centuries when its surroundings were emparked. The Roman road from Carmarthen to Llandovery passed through the character area but appears to have become disused by the Medieval period and is not followed by any of the estate boundaries. During this period, and until the Roman road line was turnpiked in the 18th century (to become the present A40(T)), the routeway from Llandeilo to Llandovery ran along the higher ground through the centre of this character area (Ludlow 1999, 24). The old mansion was demolished in 1803 and replaced with a new house, itself demolished in the 1970s. Part of the estate is now a caravan park.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This relatively small character area is based on the former demesne and park of Abermarlais. It runs from the flood plain of the Tywi at approximately 40 m up the northern valley side to a maximum of just over 180 m. Abermarlais House is now demolished and the park and garden are decayed, but part of the estate boundary wall survives and also sufficient parkland character to warrant the separation of Abermarlais into its own character area. Although the area is partly divided into large enclosures by banks topped with hedges, the area has a open character, as many of the hedges are derelict and wire fences now provides the main divisor. Deciduous woodland surrounds the site of the former house, and at higher levels a 20th century conifer plantation has recently been clear-felled. In between these two woodland areas, improved pasture and rough grazing is the main land-use. The walled garden close to the former house survives; it is now the site of a touring caravan park. At least one lodge survives in a much modified condition.

Much of the recorded archaeology relates to the house and park and includes an ornamental garden, but hut platforms and pillow mounds of possible Medieval date have been recorded. In addition there is a Bronze Age standing stone and an unknown cropmark site, while a second similar site has been proposed as the site of a Roman fortlet, lying in association with the Roman road line.

Surviving buildings include a lodge and a bridge

It is not now easy to distinguish the former park of this area from the neighbouring areas of dispersed farms and irregular fields (Areas 201, 210, 208). There are sufficient differences, however, to justify to separation of this area.

**Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. However, consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland, and to the few upstanding elements of the former park and garden.

**Ground photograph: 75**

**Aerial photographs: 26**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 210 LLANSADWRN - LLANWRDA

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 701310

AREA IN HECTARES: 330.60

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#### Historic Background

An area lying on the northwest side of the Tywi Valley. During the historic period the area has always been divided by an administrative boundary; the western half lay within Maenor Llansadwrn of the commote (and later hundred) of Maenordeilo, the late Medieval parish of Llansadwrn, while the eastern half lay within Gwestfa Llanwrda of the commote of Malŷen, the late Medieval parish of Llanwrda and the later hundred of Caio (Rees 1932). Both commotes were held of the independent Welsh lordship of Cantref Mawr until the establishment of the county of Carmarthen in 1284. There is evidence of early settlement; an Iron Age hillfort lies within the area while the present churches of Llansadwrn and Llanwrda may both have possible pre-Conquest origins. The latter church lies close to the Roman road from Carmarthen to Llandovery, now represented by the A40(T), which forms the long southeast edge of this character area, while both have churchyards that were formerly circular (the former yard being very large). However, neither became a parish church until the late (or even Post-) Medieval period, prior to which they were both appendent to the large parish of Cynwyl Gaeo, itself probably a pre-Conquest unit, and in turn subordinate to Talley Abbey from c.1200 onwards (Ludlow 1998). There is no evidence for accompanying Medieval settlement; *amaerdy* place-name southeast of Llansadwrn village, derived from a reeve or *maer*, may be associated with the neighbouring, Medieval Abermarlais estate (Sambrook and Page 1995, 17) rather than a settlement around the church. Maenor Llansadwrn was regarded as possessing minor lordship status by the early 16th century when, along with the Abermarlais estate (Area 209) it was in the possession of the great Tudor magnate Sir Rhys ap Thomas (Sambrook and Page 1995, 21). His grandson and heir Sir Rhys ap Gruffydd was executed by Henry VIII for treason and 'the manor, lordship, hamlet and town of Llansadwrn' fell to the crown. The term town in this context presumably refers to a township or *ortref* rather than a built-up area, and there are no records of any liberties associated with borough foundations. Neuadd Fawr, a large 17th century house just outside Llanwrda, is likely to have been a single development but may be the site of the Medieval *llys* of Gwestfa Llanwrda. Both nucleations are in fact likely to have origins in the 18th century and the Ordnance Survey Old Series 1" maps of the early 19th-century show them with only scattered development. Llanwrda received impetus for growth when the Roman road line was turnpiked in 1763-71 (Lewis, 1971, 43), when it shifted away from the church towards the road. Both villages received Post Offices in the late 19th century, and Llanwrda in particular has been subject to 20th century development. Fields are mainly fairly large and regular which may suggest Post-Medieval enclosure.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Llansadwrn - Llanwrda character area lies on the northern side of the Tywi valley, and includes: the very northern edge of the flood plain at about 45m, rising hills up to a maximum of 140m and the lower part of the Dulais valley in which Llanwrda village is situated. Essentially this area consists of two loosely nucleated villages - Llansadwrn and Llanwrda - dispersed farms and improved pasture enclosed into small irregular fields. Field boundaries are earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are generally well managed, though some are becoming overgrown, and at higher levels some are derelict. There are distinctive hedgerow trees in some of the hedges. Most hedges are supplemented with wire fences. Small stands of deciduous woodland are mostly confined to steep slopes on minor valley sides. Llansadwrn is unusual, compared with other villages of the Tywi valley, in that it is situated on a rounded hill-crest rather than on a valley bottom. It consists of a loose girdle of houses around the Medieval church. The stone-built houses and cottages of the village seem mostly to be of 19th century date. The scattering of more recent housing, in a variety of styles, does not detract from the essentially 19th century character of the village. Llanwrda is a valley bottom village that has developed at the junction of two turnpike roads, the present A40(T) and the A482, with early- and mid-19th century housing in a variety of styles along the A482, with later 19th-century housing along the A40(T). The latter road has now been bypassed. Small modern housing estates have been established on the fringes of the village core. Dispersed farmhouses are mainly 19th century in date, and in the vernacular

tradition, with outbuildings of modest size, sometimes compacted into one range. Most farms have an assemblage of modern agricultural buildings. The A40(T) passes along the southern boundary of this area, along the Tywi valley route corridor but, apart from Llanwrda village, linear development has not occurred along this road.

There is little recorded archaeology but time-depth is provided by the Iron Age hillfort and the Roman road. There is also a *ffos* place-name (possible boundary ditch) and a possible holy well site.

There are few distinctive buildings. Neuadd Fawr, Llanwrda, is a Grade II listed house, probably 17th century in origin with a massive chimney breast and later alterations. Llansadwrn Church is a Grade B listed landmark church, but neither church has a tower. Both villages feature chapels, schools, public houses and Post Office buildings, while Llanwrda also features an almshouse and a bridge. Farmhouses are mainly 19th century in date, stone-built, two-storey, and generally in the vernacular tradition. Stone outbuildings associated with the farms are of modest size. There is the usual scatter of Post-Medieval cottage sites.

This is not an easy area to define as neighbouring character areas share many of its historic landscape components. To the south the Tywi valley character area (Area 208) forms a reasonably distinct boundary, but to the west (Area 209) and east (Area 257) there is a zone of change rather than a hard-edged border. Areas to the north have yet to be defined, but here the landscape here is generally characterised by a more dense distribution of small farms, very small fields and woodland.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph: 76**

**Aerial photographs: 25, 27**



## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 211 BLAENSAWDDE

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 783236

AREA IN HECTARES: 311.40

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#### Historic Background

A small area occupying the northern fringe of the Black Mountain. It once lay within Perfedd commote - specifically Maenor Llanddeusant - of Cantref Bychan, which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans advancing from the east under Richard Fitz Pons who established *acaput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery, but there were many episodes of Welsh rule and the area retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated into modern Carmarthenshire. The character area lies on the edge of unenclosed moorland and comprises several different 'landscapes' upon a north-facing slope, including a number of fertile pockets of land. A number of different regimes would be feasible; Blaensawdde Farm is a good example of a holding spread down the slope and containing just such a landscape variety, whose origins are at least early Post-Medieval. It lies centrally within the area and is 'an excellent example of the traditional Welsh gentry house', linked in popular culture with the legend of the fairy maiden of Llyn-y-fan Fach (Jones 1987, 11). It became the centre of an estate which, at its height in the early 19th century, comprised 15 farms in Llanddeusant parish including Gorsddu, and much of Area 211 (Beckley 1991, 39-40). An estate map from 1744 shows a pattern of enclosure identical to that of today (*ibid.*), suggesting that the landscape had been established when the present farmsteads were built in the 17th century. Two sheepfolds on the periphery of the area, probably from the 18th century, demonstrate the continuing importance of pastoralism within the economy.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This relatively small but nevertheless distinct character area consists of enclosed land in the upper Sawdde valley; bordered on three sides by open moorland of the Black Mountain. The valley floor lies at approximately 220m; the upper limit of enclosure is above 300m. The whole of the character area is enclosed into small- and medium-sized irregular fields. The boundary between enclosed land of this area and unenclosed moorland is very sharp - there does not appear to be any abandoned fields or dwellings on the moorland fringe as is common in other parts of upland Wales. Banks with hedges provide the main boundary type. Hedges at higher altitudes are in poor condition and many have gone or are derelict. At lower levels they tend either to be overgrown or very well maintained. Wire fences supplement the hedges. Many hedges have distinctive hedgerow trees. These trees together with stands of ancient deciduous woods on the lower valley sides and pockets of scrubby blackthorn and hawthorn on the fringes of the moorland, lend a wooded appearance to the landscape. Agricultural land-use is predominantly improved pasture, but there are considerable tracts of rough, rushy ground on north-facing slopes towards the western end of the area. The settlement pattern is of dispersed farms. Farmsteads on the south side of the valley are located high up on gentle north-facing slopes and consist of large, two-storey, stone-built farmhouses of 17th- to 19th-century date, constructed with a degree of architectural consideration. Stone-built buildings on these farms, including Blaensawdde and Gorsddu, are similarly substantial, and situated in a semi-arrangement with the house. These farms also possess a large range of modern agricultural buildings. Farmsteads on the north side of the river, including Cwmsawdde, tend to be located lower down in the valley and are generally more modest, consisting of 19th century two-storey houses in the vernacular tradition, with stone-built outbuildings compacted into a single range.

Recorded archaeology is limited to dwellings and cottages.

There is a high percentage of distinctive buildings for such a small area, some of them with early components. Blaensawdde is a 17th century house with a complex history of development from a conventional two-unit range into a building with a cruciform plan; some of the fine interior still remains, including a post-and-panel partition, while the farm buildings include a barn and byre range dated 1834. The origins of Gorsddu are early 17th-century, although it was altered in the early 19th

century, and it comprises a house and outbuildings in line under a single roof. Cwmsawdde is an early-19th century vernacular farmhouse with a barn, cowhouse and stable. In addition there are two sheepfolds.

To the south, east and north, the open moorland of the Black Mountain (Area 240) provides a sharp border to this area. To the west, along the Sawdde valley, a hard-edged border does not exist and this area fades into its neighbour (Area 233).

#### **Conservation priorities**

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area as most of the historic landscape components are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph: 77**

**Aerial photographs:**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 212 LLANDOVERY

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 767345

AREA IN HECTARES: 86.14

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#### Historic Background

A small area corresponding with the present built-up town of Llandovery. The Romans established a fort at Llanfair-ar-y-bryn (*Alabum*) in the north of the present town, probably in the AD 50s (James 1991, 54). It was connected by road to the forts at Carmarthen (*Moridunum*) and Brecon (?*Cicutio*), now followed by the A40(T), and to the mid Wales forts at Beulah and Castell Collen (James 1982, 7) now followed by the A483(T). This route network may have persisted into the post-Roman period, and Llandovery may have been the site of a pre-Conquest ecclesiastical community associated with the Medieval parish churches of St Mary, Llanfair-ar-y-bryn, and/or St Dingat, Llandingat (Sambrook and Page 1995, 4). Neither church lies in the centre of the town which suggests pre-Conquest origins. Llanfair church, moreover, lies within the Roman Fort, while the field boundaries formerly adjacent to Llandingat may have perpetuated the line of a large *llan* enclosure (*ibid.*). In the early 12th-century, Richard Fitz Pons, an Anglo-Norman lord, established a castle at Llandovery (Soulsby 1983, 162). It is likely that a small settlement soon developed at the foot of the castle mound, perhaps within the outer bailey. Burgesses are recorded in 1185 (Arber-Cooke 1975, Vol. 1, 82), and in 1201 the *Annales Cambriae* refer to a town. Its growth was encouraged under the Welsh princes during their episodic tenure - the priory cell founded by Fitz Pons at Llanfair was closed by Rhys ap Gruffydd in the same year when the brethren, who had been interfering with the townsfolk, were expelled. Throughout the 13th century the castle was frequently attacked, regularly changing hands between the English and Welsh. Consequently, it is likely that the town had little opportunity to develop until a period of relative stability was ushered in during the last two decades of the 13th century. Between 1299 and 1317 the number of burgages rose from an estimated 37 to 81 (Evans 1913, 158). By the end of the 14th century money from rentals had increased substantially, suggesting concomitant growth in population. At this time three annual fairs are recorded. Other documentary references indicate that Llandovery was functioning as a borough, though no charter had been granted (Evans 1913, 172). Richard III granted a charter in 1485 (Soulsby 1983, 163). By then the town seems to have been going through a period of stagnation or decline, for when John Leland visited in 1535 he described it as 'but one strete, and that poorly builded of thatchid houses' (Evans 1913, 56). In the early 17th-century Llandovery's most famous son, Vicar Prichard, built a house on the eastern fringe of the town. His fame seemed to have little impact on the general wealth of the inhabitants, and even his fine house soon began to fall into disrepair. 76 burgages were recorded in 1659 (Evans 1913, 80), divided into six wards, including Velindre Ward to the east side of the town containing 11 burgages. However, only 61 resident burgesses were recorded in 1661 (Evans 1913, 203). There seems to have been little improvement in the town throughout the 18th century, for when Malkin called in 1804 he described Llandovery town as, 'the worst in Wales. Its buildings are mean, irregular and unconnected; its streets filthy and disgusting'. In 1835 Llandovery was declared a 'rotten borough' which was run for the benefit of the Glanbân estate. There does, however, seem to have been a general improvement in the conditions of the town from the late 18th-century onwards, as evidenced by the many fine buildings from this period. The town received impetus when the present A40(T) was turnpiked in the late 18th-century, the college established in 1849, and the railway which came in 1858. The latter is still operational as part of the 'Heart of Wales' line. Later in the 19th century and throughout the 20th century the town has experienced slow but steady growth.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Llandovery is an urban character area. The heart of this area comprises Llandovery town which lies on a terrace at approximately 65 m between the Afon Tywi and Afon Bân, but also includes the parish church of Llandingat located some 300 m to the southwest, and the Medieval church of Llanfair-ar-y-bryn which is located on a hillock within the standing earthworks of the Roman fort, several hundred metres northeast of the town. Both these churches are linked to the town by 19th- and 20th-century development. The centre of the town consists of Kings Road, Market Square and High Street. Buildings

on these streets mostly date to the late 18th- and 19th-century and are stone-built, rendered, of three- or sometimes two-storeys and in the Georgian tradition, although a number of the commercial premises have been rebuilt in the 20th century. The masonry remains of the Medieval castle lie to the south of the town centre and are separated from it by a car park. Castle Street, which runs down towards the castle from the northeast, contains stone-built houses and cottages mainly of 18th- and 19th-century date. Mid- to late-19th-century residential development is concentrated along Broad Street and the eastern end of High Street, and takes the form of terraced stone-built, rendered houses and 'villas'. Late 19th-century housing in the form of terraced, stone-built housing, sometimes with brick detailing, is concentrated to the north of the historic core of the town around Stone Street, New Road and Queen Street. Llandovery College, constructed in a distinctive Tudor Gothic style lies to the north of the historic town core. 20th century residential development both pre- and post-World War 2 is relatively modest in extent and consists mostly of small housing estates, and linear development along the A40(T) to the north and south of the railway station, along the A40(T) to the east and between the town and Llanfair-ar-y-bryn. A modern industrial estate has been established on the southwest fringes of the area.

Recorded archaeology mainly relates to the Roman fort and to the Medieval town, with its Post-Medieval buildings. It includes the scheduled Roman fort site, the Roman road and a probable Roman cemetery, and the Medieval churches, priory site and castle. There is also a Quaker burial ground from the Post-Medieval period, and an unknown earthwork.

There are many distinctive buildings. St Mary's and St Dingat's churches are both landmark churches with Medieval towers; St Mary's is Grade I listed and largely unrestored, with an early 18th century roof (Ludlow 1998) and listed churchyard furniture; St Dingat's is Grade II\* listed with listed churchyard furniture. The remains of the Medieval masonry castle are scheduled and Grade II\* listed. There is a total of 65 listed buildings, including the 17th century Llanfair Grange and 'Vicar Prichard's House', the 19th century college building in neo-Gothic style by G E Gingell of Bristol, vicarages, public houses, dwellings, chapels, bank building, post office, market hall, town hall and bridges. The 19th century cattle market and railway station are unlisted.

This is a compact urban character area and contrasts with neighbouring rural areas (Areas 208, 213 and 214).

#### **Conservation priorities**

Conservation priorities centre on the Conservation Area and individual listed buildings. Other than these it is important to maintain the nucleated coherence of the town by discouraging ribbon- and dispersed-development at the settlement fringes

**Ground photograph: 78**

**Aerial photographs: 61**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 213 MAESLLYDAN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 779353

AREA IN HECTARES: 279.70

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#### Historic Background

A small area around Maesllydan Hall to the northeast of the town of Llandovery, mainly in the floodplain of the Afon Brân. The Roman road from the fort at Llandovery (*Alabum*) crossed the area from southwest to northeast, and led to the forts at Beulah and Castell Collen (James 1982, 7). Its course is more-or-less followed by the present A483(T). A cropmark possibly relating to *avicus* beyond the northeast gate of the fort, which was probably established in the AD 50s (James 1991, 54), has been observed in this area. During the historic period the area lay within Cwmwd Hirfryn of Cantref Bychan, which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established *acaput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.) and was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. It largely retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within modern Carmarthenshire. However, Area 213 lay within the liberty of the Medieval borough of Llandovery (Rees 1932), and appears to have operated an open-field system along Anglicised models. Subsequent development in the area was dominated by Maesllydan Hall which was established at an unknown date during the Post-Medieval period. It was recorded in 1803 as the home of the Lloyd-Harries family with an estate that eventually comprised 4000 acres in Carms., Cards. and Brecs. (Jones 1987, 127); the house burnt down in 1977 (*ibid.*). The disposition of the fields within the area suggests that the present pattern of large, fairly regular enclosures may have been a product of the 17th- or early 18th-century, and coeval with the establishment of the Hall, supplanting the open-field system. The area is crossed by the railway from Llandovery to Llanwrtyd Wells, which had been established by 1871 to form part of the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) Central Wales and Carmarthen Junction Line. It is still operational and forms part of the 'Heart of Wales' line.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Maesllydan character area lies across the floodplains and lower valley sides of the Afon Brân and Afon Gwydderig at a height of between 80 m and 90 m. It consists of improved pasture divided into medium-sized fairly regular fields, with a settlement pattern of several widely dispersed farms and other dwellings. Field boundaries are hedges without banks and earth banks topped with hedges. The former are planted on the valley floor presumably to facilitate flood-water drainage. Hedges are moderately well maintained, but some are becoming overgrown and others semi-derelict. Wire fences supplement hedges. Some distinctive hedgerow trees are present. There is very little woodland. Well defined ridge and furrow is located across the valley floor to the south of Llanfair-ar-y-bryn, and may well be present elsewhere. This ridge and furrow, historic map evidence of enclosed strip-fields, and the place-name Maesllydan, all suggest an open field system was located here. Farms are large and all have a substantial range of 19th century stone-built outbuildings, some placed in a semi-formal arrangement. Modern dispersed dwellings in a variety of styles and materials in the southern part of this area are a result of the proximity of Llandovery. There is possible topographic and earthwork evidence for emparking northeast of the site of the former Maesllydan Hall. The Afon Brân is an important route corridor, as demonstrated by the former Roman road and the current A483(T) which runs through this character area.

Recorded archaeology comprises the cropmark (*vicus?*), ridge-and-furrow earthworks, the below-ground remains of Maesllydan Hall, and a possible park earthwork.

There are now no distinctive buildings. Several of the farmhouses have been rebuilt and replaced with modern bungalows and houses; older surviving examples are stone-built with a degree of architectural consideration, rather than in the vernacular tradition. A Post-Medieval mill lies within the area.

This is a self-contained distinctive area, and contrasts with areas of smaller, more irregular fields to the north and southwest (Areas 214, 217 and 228), and with Llandovery urban area (Area 212) to the west. Character areas to the south have yet to be characterised.

**Conservation priorities**

Decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph: 79**

**Aerial photographs: 60**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 214 LLWYNHOWELL

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 758358

AREA IN HECTARES: 427.80

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#### Historic Background

A small area to the north of the town of Llandovery, either side of the River Tywi. Settlement in the area has considerable time-depth - at the north end of the area is an Iron Age hillfort, and the line of a Roman road leading northwards from the fort at Llandovery (*Alabum*) crosses the valley floor. Henllys, to the south of the fort, may be the site of an early Medieval administrative centre. By the historic period the Tywi formed the boundary between Cantref Bychan to the east and Cantref Mawr to the west. Cantref Bychan was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.) and was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery; the latter remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284. Both retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when they were united within modern Carmarthenshire but Area 214 lay within the Medieval borough of Llandovery (Rees 1932) and was subject to Anglo-Norman tenure, representing 'town lands'. The northern boundary of the borough was apparently present in physical form as the 'Ditch of Krenchy' (*ibid.*) which may now be represented by a stream, Nant Ogwrn. The name 'Dolauhirion' suggests the former presence of strip-fields, which may account for the linear field boundaries occurring throughout the area. However, unlike Area 213 there is no physical evidence for the practice of ridge-and-furrow agriculture. The present pattern of large, fairly regular enclosures may have been a product of the 17th- or early 18th-century, supplanting previous open-field systems. In the floodplain of the Tywi itself are larger, more regular enclosures which may be of later, 18th century date. The former enclosure may be associated with the gentry houses, particularly Llwynhowell and Henllys which have origins before the 16th century (Jones 1987, 94, 118-9), Manorafon whose estate is documented from 1749 (Judith Alfrey, pers. comm.) and Tonn, which was mentioned in 1759 but burnt down in 1916 (Jones 1987, 181). The Tywi is crossed at Dolauhirion via a bridge with Medieval origins and by a Medieval ford at Llwynhowell, while the bridge carrying the A40(T) into Llandovery has replaced a 19th century suspension bridge which itself succeeded a ferry. The southern part of the area is crossed by the railway from Llandovery to Llanwrtyd Wells, which had been established by 1871 as part of the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) Central Wales and Carmarthen Junction Line. It is still operational and forms part of the 'Heart of Wales' line.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Llwynhowell character area lies across the valley floor of the Tywi immediately upstream of Llandovery, and includes the gently-sloping west side and lower slopes of the eastern side of the valley. The narrow floodplain of the Tywi lies at approximately 70 m, and the western valley side rises up to over 120 m. This is essentially a landscape of small- to medium-sized irregular fields, large dispersed farms and scattered woodland. Improved pasture dominates the agricultural land-use; there is little rough ground. Field boundaries are composed of earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are generally well maintained at lower levels, but at higher altitudes there is a tendency for them to be overgrown and derelict. Wire fences supplement the hedges. Some hedges contain distinctive trees, and these together with small stands of deciduous woodland - mostly on steeper valley sides - lend a moderately wooded aspect to some parts of this area. There are areas of former emparking but these have not profoundly influenced the appearance of the landscape. Farms are distributed along the lower valley sides on both sides of the Tywi. Farms are generally substantial. Farmhouses are mostly 18th- or 19th-century in date, stone-built with slate roofs and tend towards the polite, with semi-formal, stone-built outbuildings, although most are also associated with modern agricultural buildings. In addition to the farms there are many dispersed dwellings across the area, but concentrated alongside roads close to Llandovery. These are mainly of two periods: late 19th century 'villas', and late 20th-century houses and bungalows in a mixture of styles and materials. This part of the upper Tywi valley is a route corridor, with a B road following the generalised line of a Roman road on the eastern side of the river.

Recorded archaeology is limited to the Roman road and Roman finds to the south, near the fort at Llanfair-ar-y-bryn, and to the site of Tonn Mansion.

There are a number of distinctive buildings. The Grade I listed Dolauhirion bridge is by William Edwards from 1773, built on the site of a Medieval bridge. Manorafon, with model farm buildings from c.1800 (Judith Alfrey, pers. comm.), represents an important early example of farm planning, and Henllys is a Grade II\* listed double-pile house associated with 6 Grade II listed outbuildings. There are also rebuilt gentry houses at Llwynhowell and Tonn, the latter - like Henllys - with an area of possible former emparking. Farms have generally been constructed with some architectural consideration, rather than in the vernacular tradition. There are some late 19th-century brick and stone-and-brick farmhouses present. Stone-built outbuildings are equally substantial and in some instances are in a semi-formal arrangement with the house

This is a very difficult area to define as, apart from its southern side against the urban area of Llandovery (Area 212), neighbouring areas contain similar historic landscape components (Areas 208, 213, 215 and 257). In these cases there is a zone of change, rather than a hard-edged border.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph: 80**

**Aerial photographs:**



## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 215 CILYCWWM

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 757401

AREA IN HECTARES: 847.10

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#### Historic Background

An area either side of the River Tywi, around the present village of Cilycwm. It once lay within Cwmwd Malláen of Cantref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284, and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. Early origins have been claimed for the nucleation around Cilycwm parish church (Sambrook and Page 1995, 17) but the church is omitted from the *Taxatio* of 1291 and not mentioned until 1347 (Ludlow 1998). The village green survived into the 19th century as an open parcel of land opposite the church (Sambrook and Page 1995, 23). Cilycwm became the centre of droving activity in the 18th century and doubtless benefited from the establishment of a small lead mine at Pen-y-rhiw-Rhaiadr to the north of the character area. It had developed into an important village by the early 19th century, but with 'untidy', mud-walled, reed-thatched houses, which were replaced through the century by the present stone structures including neat rows of terraced cottages. By the end of the century it had many civic amenities - a school, a chapel, a Post Office and a vicarage (Sambrook and Page 1995, 23). The present pattern of large, fairly regular enclosures within the area may have been a product of the 17th- or early 18th-century, and associated with the gentry houses, of which there are a number in the area, although none earlier than the 17th century. They are dominated by the Neuadd Fawr estate which, under the Davys family from the early 19th century onwards, absorbed many of the holdings in Area 215 (Judith Alfrey *pers. comm.*). Neuadd Fawr was first mentioned in 1603 (Jones 1987, 138) but became ruinous in the latter half of the 20th century. Abergwenlais was the home of the Price family from 1680 until the later 19th century when it was rebuilt for the Neuadd Fawr estate (Judith Alfrey *pers. comm.*). Cefntrenfa was the home of the Lewis Bowens from the late 17th-century (Jones 1987, 28), while Erryd is marked on Emmanuel Bowen's map of 1729. Twentieth century development is confined to housing at Cilycwm village and a small sewage farm to the south.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Cilycwm character area lies across part of the upper Tywi valley and across a wide tributary valley. The Tywi valley in this area widens out from its more constricted course downstream, before narrowing again upstream, to the north. The floor of the valley lies at about 100 m, with the lower valley sides within this area rising to a maximum of about 180 m. Essentially this area is characterised by dispersed farms, small irregular fields and woodland. The whole area is enclosed into fields. Fields on valley sides are small and irregular; those on the valley floor are larger and have a more regular shape. Improved pasture dominates, but, especially on the valley floor where the course of the river is sluggish, there are large pockets of rough, wet and rushy ground. A little arable is present. Boundaries are of earth banks topped with hedges. Apart from alongside roads and tracks, hedges are not in good condition; some have entirely gone, others are reduced to lines of straggling bushes, most are overgrown. Wire fences provide the main stockproof boundaries. Many hedges contain distinctive hedgerow trees, and these together with the many small stands of deciduous woodland lend a wooded appearance to parts of this character area. Parkland lies close to Glanrhosan House. The nucleated village of Cilycwm lies in the centre of the area. Cilycwm essentially consists of a single street of dwellings, with the Medieval church at its centre. Terraces of 18th- and 19th-century stone-built houses and cottages - the larger houses in the Georgian style, smaller houses and cottages in the vernacular tradition - are situated at the heart of the village. Small-scale late 20th-century housing lies on the fringes of the settlement. The settlement pattern of the area is however dominated by dispersed farms. Although the buildings on these farms date mostly to late 18th- and 19th-century, a wide range of social and economic classes is represented, from minor gentry houses complete with home farms, to small farmhouses in the vernacular tradition with a single small range of outbuildings. Most farmhouses, however, are two-storey and stone built. Although examples of the simple three-bay farmhouse in the vernacular tradition are present, those which are larger and exhibit polite architectural consideration constitute the majority. These larger farmhouses have a larger and wider range of 19th century stone-

built outbuildings associated with them than smaller examples, often arranged in a semi-formal pattern around a courtyard. Most farms have large modern agricultural buildings.

Recorded archaeology is mainly represented by the buildings but includes an unknown findspot, and the lead mines.

There are a large number of distinctive buildings, many of them gentry houses, of which c.35 are listed. The landmark Medieval parish church, with a tower, is Grade I listed. Neuadd Fawr, its coach house and stable are each Grade II listed, and accompanied by the home farm. Abergwenlais house, farm, mill and outbuildings, with late 18th century origins but rebuilt for the Neuadd Fawr estate in the late 19th century, are each Grade II listed. Cefntrenfa house, barn and outbuildings are 18th century and each is Grade II listed - large gardens with fruit trees, stable and dovecot were mentioned in 1812 (Jones 1987, 28). Erryd is mid 18th century and Grade II\* listed. The majority of the remainder of the listed buildings are in Cilycwm village and include the vicarage, mill, post office, school, chapels and dwellings.

Although this is a fairly distinct character area, both historically and geographically, some neighbouring areas contain similar historic landscape components - in these cases, to the east, south and southwest (Areas 214, 216, 227 and 257) there is a zone of change rather than a hard-edged border. To the north forestry on steep valley sides provides a clear boundary (Area 217). Character areas to the west have yet to be defined.

#### **Conservation priorities**

The decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is seriously eroding the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should also be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Cilycwm village has a proposed Conservation Area; development here should respect this proposal.

**Ground photograph: 215**

**Aerial photographs: 2**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 216 RHANDIRMWYN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 776421

AREA IN HECTARES: 804.90

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#### Historic Background

An area in the foothills of the Cambrian Mountains either side of the headwaters of the River Tywi, which formed the boundary between Cantref Bychan to the east and Cantref Mawr to the west. Cantref Bychan was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established *acaput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.) and was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. Cantref Mawr remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284. Both retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when they were united within modern Carmarthenshire. Much of the area east of the Tywi lay within the Manor of Nant-y-bai, which had been granted as a grange to the Cistercians of Strata Florida, probably by Gruffydd ap Rhys in c.1200. The nucleus may have lain at Bron-y-cwrt within Area 216 (Williams 1990, 58). It was an upland grange, probably operated by tenant farmers primarily concerned with the mountain pasturing of animals, although the present mill has origins as a Medieval corn mill indicating that arable was undertaken in pockets of good soil (Sambrook and Page 1995, 18). The name Rhandirmwyn contains a 'shareland' element (*rhandir*), suggesting that the tenants held their land by inheritance, with perpetual right to their holdings (Rees, 1924, 200). The manor continued after the Dissolution as the Ystrad-ffin estate. A survey of 1629 (Carmarthenshire Record Office, Lort Muniments 17/678) shows that it contained most of the surrounding farms and demonstrates that the present settlement pattern was more-or-less already in place; the present system of medium-sized irregular fields may also have been established. Pwll-priddog, which has Medieval origins, was held separately from both the manor and the grange by the Morgan family (Jones 1987, 168). The area is chiefly characterised by former lead mining which may have begun under the Cistercians (Williams 1990, 58), or even the Romans (James 1982, 34); it was certainly undertaken in this area by the late 13th century, the crown taking the 'eleventh foot' of the ore in taxation (Rees 1968). This would imply that a mining community, of unknown size, may have existed in the vicinity of Rhandirmwyn and Nant-y-bai. Rhandirmwyn may have been comparatively large by the 18th century - possibly exceptional by local standards - as the mines employed 400 workers in 1791 (Sambrook and Page 1995, 23), and the present nucleation features worker terracing, and the new church of St Barabas from the mid 19th-century. Lead mining ceased in the early 20th-century. The presence of coal is noted in the place-name 'Nant-y-glo' and a quarry operated in the southern part of the area. The later 19th- and 20th-century have mainly been characterised, however, by scattered development of cottages and dwellings. A sewage works has been erected to the south of Rhandirmwyn.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Rhandirmwyn character area lies in the upper Tywi valley where the sides open out to form a large bowl-shape. The valley floor lies at between 100 m and 120 m, and the valley sides within this area rise to over 180 m. This is a complex area as it consists of small irregular fields, dispersed farms, woodland and conifer plantation, lead mines and their associated communities, and 19th- and 20th-century cottages and houses. Improved pasture is the dominant land-use within the system of small, irregular fields, but large pockets of rough and rushy ground are present, particularly towards the valley floor. Boundaries consist of earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are in poor condition with less than 50% stockproof. Most are either overgrown or derelict. Wire fences supplement the hedges. Many of the hedges have distinctive trees, and these together with the numerous deciduous copses and small conifer plantations lend a wooded aspect to the landscape. The ancient settlement pattern in this area comprises dispersed farms. These are stone-built with slate roofs, and generally date to the 19th century. Most are two-storeys with three bays and tend to be in the vernacular tradition, though examples in a more polite Georgian style are present. Stone-built outbuildings are present at most farms, as are large agricultural buildings. Remains of the lead mining industry lie mainly outside this area, but Rhandirmwyn community which grew up to serve it is located here. It consists of dispersed stone-built dwellings and chapels of 19th century date. Individual houses and cottages are present, as are terraces of two-storey

and single storey houses. Stone-built worker cottages of 19th century date, and 20th century brick built worker houses are situated in isolated locations alongside roads away from the main community. Recent housing consists of individual dwellings.

Recorded archaeology chiefly comprises lead mining features and buildings, but includes a Bronze Age standing stone and round barrow, and two possible barrows, an Iron Age hillfort and possible Medieval well and chapel sites.

There are a number of distinctive buildings but few of them are listed. Nant-y-bai mill is Grade II listed, with an overshot, timber and cast-iron wheel and corn-drying kiln within. Dugoedydd and Pwll-priddog have both been rebuilt. The church, worker housing, post office and public house in Rhandirmwyn should be noted. There are several nonconformist chapels

This is a distinct area. It is well defined by conifer plantations to the northeast and west (Areas 217 to the west, that to the northeast has yet to be defined), and by high semi-enclosed land to the east and south (Area 223). To the north and to the southwest definition is less good; there is a zone of change rather than a distinct border between this area and Areas 215 and 218.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is seriously eroding the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be also be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland.

**Ground photograph: 82**

**Aerial photographs: 3**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 217 CWM-Y-RHAEADR**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 765435**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 246.40**

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#### **Historic Background**

A small area on the steep eastern flank of Mynydd Mallien, lying within the former Cwmwd Mallien of Cantref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284, and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. It also lies within the ecclesiastical parish of Cilycwm which may have later Medieval origins in the 14th century (Ludlow 1998). The area has little contemporary settlement, which reflects its historic usage; however, the name 'Dinas' may represent an Iron Age hillfort for which there appears to be no physical evidence. The area is depicted as open pasture on the earliest historic maps and is still largely unenclosed, and the presence of a sheepfold testifies to its predominantly pastoral use. Such farmsteads and enclosures as exist mainly relate to 18th- and early 19th-century encroachment into former open land. There is a small former lead mine on the eastern edge which may have early origins. Mining was being undertaken in this area by the late 13th-century, the crown taking the 'eleventh foot' of the ore in taxation (Rees 1968), but had largely ceased by the late 19th-century. Much of the area has been subject to later 20th century conifer plantation under the (then) Forestry Commission.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This character area lies on the steep valley sides of the Tywi and its tributaries. The height range of this area is between 140 m and over 300 m. Apart from a little deciduous woodland on lower slopes, some open moorland on steep slopes, and an old small farmstead - Cwm-y-Rhaeadr - with a few adjacent fields, this whole area is under 20th century conifer plantations. Most of these plantations were established on unenclosed moorland on the steep valley sides. The only exception to this is at and around Cwm-y-Rhaeadr where former fields were planted over.

There is little recorded archaeology, being confined to the possible Iron Age hillfort site, the lead mine and buildings.

None of the buildings are distinctive, comprising 19th century cottages and farms, a sheepfold and 20th century water towers.

This is a distinct area, and stands in contrast with the open moorland (Area 247) to the west and enclosed farmland to the south, north and east (Areas 215, 216 and 218).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

**Ground photograph: 83**

**Aerial photographs: 4**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 218 NANT-Y-FFIN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 728468

AREA IN HECTARES: 482.60

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#### Historic Background

A small area that unites three narrow, linear belts of land that follow the valley floors of the Upper Tywi, Doethie and Gwenffrwd, in the foothills of Mynydd Mallen and the Cambrian Mountains. The 'ffin' element is derived from the ancient boundary which, historically, divided this area between Cantref Bychan to the east and Cantref Mawr to the west. Cantref Bychan was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.) and was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. Cantref Mawr remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284. Both retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when they were united within modern Carmarthenshire. Evidence for human activity within the area has considerable time depth - a Neolithic chambered tomb lies at Gelli. The chapel of Ystrad-ffin is dedicated to Paulinus, the reputed teacher of St David (Jones 1994, 88) whose biographer described his community as comprising, by the 9th century, 'numerous buildings' (Sambrook and Page 1995, 4). This may not refer to the present chapel site, however, which was first mentioned in 1339 when it was confirmed upon the Cistercians of Strata Florida (Ludlow 1998). There is a *llys* place-name in the western part of the area, while much of the area east of the Tywi lay within the Manor of Nant-y-bai, which was granted, as a grange, to Strata Florida Abbey, probably by Gruffydd ap Rhys, in c.1200. The grange nucleus may have lain at Bron-y-cwrt (Area 216), or within this area where there is a substantial *bloc* of tithe-free land (Williams 1990, 58); the present farmstead of Ystrad-ffin may, moreover, have early origins. As an upland grange Nant-y-bai was probably operated by tenant farmers primarily concerned with the mountain pasturing of animals, although there are indications that arable was undertaken in pockets of good soil (Sambrook and Page 1995, 18), while it is likely that the pattern of enclosures on the fertile valley floor was in place by the late Medieval - early Post-Medieval period. The Manor of Nant-y-bai remained together after the Dissolution, as the Ystrad-ffin estate, which was centred on the farmstead of the same name (Carmarthenshire Record Office, Lort Muniments 17/678). The farm has associations with *Twm Sion Catti*, a picturesque and nomadic character of the 17th century who is said to have married a widow residing here; he later became Mayor of Brecon and Sheriff of the county. A manorial fish trap lies near the chapel. Lead mining was once undertaken in the area and may have begun under the Cistercians (Williams 1990, 58), or even the Romans (James 1982, 34). It was already being undertaken by the late 13th-century, the crown taking the 'eleventh foot' of the ore in taxation (Rees 1968), but had largely ceased by the late 19th-century. There has been little subsequent development.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This area consists of the narrow deeply incised valleys of the Tywi, Doethie and Gwenffrwd, and their tributaries. Only the valley floors and lower slopes are included - higher valley sides have been allocated to neighbouring areas. Valley floors lie between 120 m at the lowest point to over 200 m towards the sources of the rivers. Within this area valley sides rise to over 260 m, and continue to rise to over 450 m outside. Steep slopes are cloaked with dense deciduous woodland. The main historic components consist of dispersed farms and small irregular fields. Improved pasture dominates, though there are pockets of rougher ground. Boundaries are mainly of earth banks topped with hedges; some stony banks and collapsed dry-stone walls have also been noted. Hedges are generally not in good condition and many are overgrown or derelict. Apart from the large Ystrad-ffin farm which lies on the edge of the wide flood plain of Nant-y-Ffin, farms are relatively small and located on valley sides. Most farmhouses are of 19th century date, stone-built with slate roofs and of two storeys. Most are of three bays. There is a roughly equal proportion of those in the vernacular tradition and those in the polite Georgian style. Outbuildings are stone-built, and generally quite small and of a limited range. Some are compacted into a single range. Many farms have modern agricultural buildings. There is little modern housing development in the area.

Recorded archaeology in the area is rich and diverse. A Neolithic chambered tomb is associated with finds and an enclosure. There is a Bronze Age standing stone and a possible clearance cairn or round barrow and a possible Iron Age hillfort. Medieval sites comprise the chapel, a possible cross and a possible *llys* site. Further possible sites are represented by landforms.

There are some distinctive buildings. St Paulinus, Ystrad-ffin, was rebuilt in 1821 (Ludlow 1998) and is not listed. Ystrad-ffin Farmhouse is Grade II listed and said to be of 17th century or earlier origin, although externally the present structure is a plain building of 18th- or 19th-century appearance. Other buildings include two nonconformist chapels, mills, and 18th- and 19th-century dwellings and farms.

Characteristically, this is a very distinct area with clearly defined boundaries - this area is bounded by open moorland or forestry (Areas 217, 219, 220, 221, 247). Only to the south is there some difficulty of definition where this area merges with Area 216.

#### **Conservation priorities**

The decay evident in many of the hedgerows and other boundary types is seriously eroding the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be also be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photograph: 84**

**Aerial photographs: 5**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 219 CRAIG DDU

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 752471

AREA IN HECTARES: 695.70

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#### Historic Background

A small area in the foothills of the Cambrian Mountains, lying within the former Cwmwd Mallen of Cantref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the medieval period; it also lies within the ecclesiastical parish of Cilycwm. It may have formed part of Nant-y-bai grange/Ystrad-ffin Manor, an ownership from which the name *Allt Maesymeddygon* on the eastern flanks of the area may be derived. As an upland grange, Nant-y-bai was probably operated by tenant farmers primarily concerned with the mountain pasturing of animals, and appears to have been largely unenclosed during the historic period, as it is today, and is depicted as open pasture on the earliest historic maps. Physical evidence for former enclosure exists, however, and there are relict field systems from both the Bronze Age and the earlier Post-Medieval period, the latter in association with the longhut/longhouse characteristic of upland settlement in southwest Wales during this transitional period (Sambrook and Ramsey, 1999). The area has no recent settlement, but the dam for Llyn Brianne reservoir, constructed at the northern edge of the area during the 1960s, has had a profound effect on the landscape.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Craig Ddu character area consists of open moorland. It lies between the upper Tywi and upper Gwenffrwd valleys. Steep, craggy valley sides of these two rivers form the eastern and southern boundaries of this area. The valley sides rise from approximately 130 m to over 350 m. The remainder of the area comprises an undulating plateau between 350 m and 420 m. Apart from ancient deciduous woodland on some of the valley sides, and occasional wire fences, this area is entirely rough, open moorland with peat deposits in high hollows.

Recorded archaeology represents considerable time-depth, comprising a Bronze Age standing stone, a possible prehistoric field system, and a longhut/longhouse and field system from the earlier Post-Medieval period.

There are virtually no standing buildings and none are distinctive; however, the late 20th-century Llyn Brianne dam deserves note.

This area is well defined by farmland in the valley bottoms (Area 218) and by a conifer plantation to the north (yet to be assigned a number).

#### Conservation priorities

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

Ground photograph: 85

Aerial photographs: 5



## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 220 DINAS

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 780477

AREA IN HECTARES: 424.60

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#### Historic Background

A small area in the foothills of the Cambrian Mountains, partly in Carmarthenshire but mainly lying within the historic *gwlad* and modern county of Ceredigion, which was consolidated under Anglo-Norman rule in 1110 when it was granted to Gilbert de Clare. Throughout most of the 12th century, however, it was under native rule (Rees, n.d.). The commote of Penardd, of Cantref Uwch Aeron, within which the area lay, retained native tenurial customs throughout the Medieval period. Area 220, in fact, lay within the Manor of Llanddewi Brefi which was a possession of the Bishops of St Davids from at least the Conquest until the end of the Medieval period (Rees 1932). It was an upland manor, probably operated by tenant farmers primarily concerned with the mountain pasturing of animals, and appears to have been largely unenclosed during the historic period, as it is today. It is depicted much as at present on the earliest historic maps, and those enclosures that exist relate to 19th century encroachment into former open land. The area has no contemporary settlement, which largely reflects its historic usage; however the name 'Dinas' possibly represents an Iron Age hillfort for which there does not appear to be any physical evidence. A cave, 'Ystafell Twm Sion Catti', is reputed to have been the base of *Twm Sion Catti*, a picturesque and nomadic character of the 17th century.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Dinas character area consists of a small block of moorland and woodland in the upper Tywi valley ranging in height from 150 m to 400 m. The river Tywi runs through this area, separating two hillocks from the main area. These two hillocks are heavily cloaked in deciduous woodland and are part of an RSPB reserve. The main area rises steeply in a series of craggy and scree covered slopes from the Tywi. Apart from wire fences it is unenclosed, and consists of very rough grazing with peaty deposits.

Recorded archaeology is confined to the possible hillfort, the possible place-name evidence 'Cae'r mot', and the cave 'Ystafell Twm Sion Catti'.

There are no standing buildings.

Dinas is a well defined area and contrast with the farmland of the valleys (Area 218). It is bounded to the north by a conifer plantation and by Llyn Brianne (areas yet to be assigned numbers).

#### Conservation priorities

Woodland is managed as part of the RSPB reserve. Other than this there are no conservation priorities in this area.

Ground photograph: 86

Aerial photographs:

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 221 CRAIG Y BWCH

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 791468

AREA IN HECTARES: 731.60

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#### Historic Background

An area in the foothills of the Cambrian Mountains east of the headwaters of the River Tywi, formerly lying within Cwmwd Hirfryn of Cantref Bychan, which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. However, it retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period. Area 221 lay within the Manor of Nant-y-bai, which had been granted as a grange to the Cistercians of Strata Florida, probably by Gruffydd ap Rhys in c.1200. It was an upland grange, probably operated by tenant farmers primarily concerned with the mountain pasturing of animals (Sambrook and Page 1995, 18). The manor of Nant-y-bai remained together after the Dissolution as the Ystrad-ffin estate (Carmarthenshire Record Office, Lort Muniments 17/678). It appears to have been unenclosed during the historic period, as it is today, and is depicted as open pasture on the earliest historic maps. There is physical evidence for former use, however; Bronze Age round barrows provide time-depth and evidence for former human occupation of this upland area. There are also a number of former longhuts, characteristic of upland settlement in southwest Wales during the transitional, early Post-Medieval - modern period, and former cottages from the 18th- and early 19th-century (Sambrook and Ramsey, 1999). The area is also characterised by evidence for former lead mining which may have begun under the Cistercians (Williams 1990, 58). It was definitely being undertaken in this area by the late 13th-century, the crown taking the 'eleventh foot' of the ore in taxation (Rees 1968); mining ceased from the mid 19th-century. The presence of coal is noted in the place-name 'Nant-y-glo' and quarries are also present. The area has no recent settlement, but the weir and overflow for Llyn Brianne reservoir, constructed at the northern edge of the area during the 1960s, has had a profound effect on the landscape.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Craig y Bwch character area lies on the eastern side of the upper Tywi valley. From the valley floor at approximately 200 m, the valley sides rise steeply to over 400 m, and then continue to rise onto an undulating plateau at over 470 m. The area is unenclosed. Valley sides are craggy, and the plateau is wet and boggy. Bracken lies on the steep slopes. The plateau is dominated by rough grazing interspersed with pockets of improved land. Quarries and mines, with tramways leading diagonally down the valley side, provide one of the few distinctive man-made features of the landscape.

Recorded archaeology provides time-depth represented by Bronze Age round barrows, while there are longhuts, former cottages and dwellings, and lead mine features from the Post-Medieval period.

The only standing structure is the late 20th century Llyn Brianne weir which deserves note.

Craig y Bwch is a distinctive character area. It is bounded to the west and south by enclosed farmland of the floor of the Tywi valley (Areas 216 and 218), to the east and northeast by an extensive upland forestry plantation, and to the north by Llyn Brianne reservoir.

#### Conservation priorities

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

Ground photographs: 88

Aerial photographs: 5

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 222 CARN GOCH

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 690245

AREA IN HECTARES: 129.70

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#### Historic Background

A small area southeast of the Tywi dominated by Carn Goch, a craggy hill on which lie the substantial remains of Carmarthenshire's largest Iron Age hillfort. At 15 ha, and associated with a satellite fort, Carn Goch fort may have approached *oppidum* status and have been the centre of a large territory taking in most of the area south of the Tywi. There is evidence for earlier occupation of the site, possibly into the Neolithic, and the significance of the site may have persisted after its abandonment under Roman rule - the most plausible villa site in southwest Wales, Llys Brychan (Jarrett 1962), lies only 1.6 km to the northeast (Area 225). During the historic period the area lay within Cwmwd Perfedd, specifically Maenor Vabon, of Cantref Bychan, which was, with the exception of Iscennen, invaded by the Anglo-Normans advancing from the east under Richard Fitz Pons who established *acapat* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. However, there were many episodes of Welsh rule and the area retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated into modern Carmarthenshire. There is currently no evidence for the continued occupation of the hillfort(s) and the area appears to have been open common land during the Medieval period and into the Post-Medieval period; however it contains the remains of longhuts and associated enclosures, which are characteristic of early Post-Medieval settlement in upland southwest Wales (Sambrook and Ramsey 199). Such settlement may represent squatting, however, and there appears to have been little subsequent settlement; apart from some 18th- and early 19th-century encroachments along the northern fringe, the area is still largely unenclosed, as it is on historic maps.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Carn Goch is a rounded bracken-covered hill on the south side of the Tywi valley. From the floor of the Nant Geidrych valley on the north at approximately 100 m, craggy scree slopes rise to over 230m. Southern, western and northern flanks have less elevation, and are less precipitous and less craggy. Parts of the more gently-sloping northeastern slopes were formerly enclosed by earth banks and dry-stone walls, associated with the longhuts, but these have broken down. Recent land improvement has taken place in the area of old enclosures. The major defining historic landscape element of this character area are the remains of Carn Goch Iron Age fort and satellite fort. The remains are massive, and comprise rubble-built ramparts, several metres high and many hundreds of metres in length.

The recorded archaeology is dominated by the Iron Age hillfort and its satellite fort represented by ramparts, ditches and hut platforms. Earlier occupation is suggested by Bronze Age finds, a round barrow and a possible burnt mound, as well as a possible Neolithic site. There are also early Post-Medieval longhuts and field systems. Most of these sites are scheduled.

There are no standing buildings.

Carn Goch character area is very distinctive and stands in sharp contrast with the surrounding enclosed farmland (Areas 225 and 226).

#### Conservation priorities

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). There are, however, few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. Some consideration should be given to the restoration of old boundaries. The main thrust of any conservation work must involve the maintenance of the ramparts and interiors of the Iron Age forts.

Ground photographs: 89

Aerial photographs: 23

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 223 FFOREST

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 784402  
AREA IN HECTARES: 463.50

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#### Historic Background

An area in the foothills of the Cambrian Mountains east of the headwaters of the River Tywi, once part of Cantref Bychan which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery, but retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within the modern Carmarthenshire. The northern half of the area lay within the Manor of Nant-y-bai, which had been granted as a grange to the Cistercians of Strata Florida, probably by Gruffydd ap Rhys in c.1200, and remained together after the Dissolution as the Ystrad-ffin estate. A survey of 1629 (Carmarthenshire Record Office, Lort Muniments 17/678) shows that it contained most of the surrounding farms, demonstrating that the surrounding landscape was already settled. As an upland grange and manor, however, it was probably operated by tenant farmers primarily concerned with the mountain pasturing of animals. Area 223 is labelled 'Crugyblaid Forest' on Rees' map of 14th century South Wales (Rees 1932) and its boundary morphology suggests that it remained largely unenclosed until the early 19th-century. A sheepfold in the northern part of the area may be earlier and demonstrates that pasturing was undertaken. The area also contains the remains of a house platform, and enclosures which may be associated, which are characteristic of early Post-Medieval settlement in upland southwest Wales (Sambrook and Ramsey 1995), and may represent squatting. Time-depth is provided by a number of Bronze Age ritual sites. There has been no recent development but there are pockets of later 20th century conifer plantation.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Fforest character area occupies the crest of a 6 km long ridge which lies between the valleys of the Afon Tywi and Afon Brân. The ridge rarely achieves heights of over 300 m. Its northern, southern and western flanks fall away steeply to the valley floors. To the northeast the ridge rises to unenclosed upland. There are no settlements in the area. Earth banks divide the ridge into fields. At the highest levels and on steep slopes the fields are large; the banks are redundant and wire fences provide stock-proof boundaries. Essentially at these highest levels the area is open moorland. Steep slopes are cloaked with scrubby woodland and bracken. At lower, sheltered locations on the ridge crest, and on the less steep flanks, fields are small and defined by earth banks with hedges. Hedges are in poor condition; either derelict or overgrown. Wire fences again provide stock-proof boundaries. Bushes in some of the very overgrown hedges have developed into distinctive hedgerow trees. Land-use in these areas is a mixture of improved grazing and rough pasture. There are one or two small conifer plantations present.

Recorded archaeology provides time-depth and comprises two round barrows, one possible barrow, and a findspot all from the Bronze Age, at least one Iron Age hillfort, and a second suggested by a cropmark, a Post-Medieval house platform and possible cockpit, and an undated field system.

Built structures are represented only by a sheepfold and sheep-dip.

Fforest is a distinctive character area and contrasts with lower-lying, settled and enclosed land which surrounds it (Areas 216 and 227).

#### Conservation priorities

Many of the hedges have broken-down. On the highest ground this process should be left to continue enabling the land to return to semi-open moorland/pasture. Elsewhere decay evident in the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of this area; this problem needs to be addressed.

Ground photographs: 90

Aerial photographs: 1

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 224 DRYSLWYN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 554203

AREA IN HECTARES: 8.88

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#### Historic Background

A small area comprising the isolated hill on which stand the remains of Dryslwyn Castle and the deserted Medieval town, which together enclosed 1.7 ha. Most of this section, unless otherwise indicated, is taken from Rees and Caple, 1999, *Dinefwr Castle: Dryslwyn Castle*. Despite its obviously defensible nature, there is no evidence for any prehistoric occupation of the castle site, although Roman finds have apparently been recorded from the hilltop. Occupation appears to have begun during the Medieval period when the area lay within Cantref Mawr, which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284. A *llys* may have occupied the site under the Princes of Deheubarth during the 12th century and it has been suggested that, under Welsh tenure, Dryslwyn may have had *amaerdref* (Sambrook and Page 1995, 17), possibly at the nearby Cwm-agol in Area 191, to the east. The present remains of the round keep and inner ward date from the early 13th-century, and the middle ward to the mid 13th-century. Dryslwyn was the centre of Welsh rebellion against the reorganisation of Cantref Mawr under English rule, and was subject to an English siege in 1287, the successful conclusion of which brought the castle under the control of the English crown. The outer ward was subsequently added, the inner ward lodgings were partly rebuilt, and a borough was laid out on the surrounding hilltop, which was enclosed within masonry town walls. By the end of the 13th century the town comprised 43 burgages with a mill and annual fair, the burgesses holding their lands by royal charter (Soulsby 1983, 133). In 1360 there were 34 burgages within the castle defences and 14 on Bridge Street (*ibid.*). Bridge Street has probably been succeeded by the present road that runs around the western flank of the hill, leading to a bridge which had, by 1360 at least, succeeded a ford in Area 182. In 1403 Dryslwyn was captured by Owain Glyndwr and the town appears to have been completely destroyed; only the castle is marked on Saxton's map of Carmarthenshire of 1578 suggesting that the town never recovered. The castle soon also fell into disrepair but the remains appear never to have fully captured the imagination of the Romantic artists of the late 18th- and early 19th-centuries. The castle remains were acquired by the State (now under Cadw) in 1980, were subject to archaeological excavation and clearance, and are now open to the public.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This very small character consists only of Dryslwyn Hill. The hill rises steeply from the flood plain of the Tywi at 20 m to a height of over 60 m. A Post-Medieval mortared wall runs around the foot of the hill. Land-use is rough pasture. The major landscape components of this area comprise the masonry and earthwork remains of the Medieval castle and town. The masonry remains were until recently quite insubstantial, but excavation and conservation over the past two decades has uncovered much of the building plan of the castle, but most of the castle and town are still represented by earthworks. These are massive, particularly the defensive circuits, and together with the upstanding remains form a significant component of the historic landscape.

The recorded archaeology is dominated by the masonry remains of the castle and town wall, and associated earthworks, house platforms etc. of Medieval date. A Roman findspot has also been recorded.

There are no further buildings.

Dryslwyn character area is very distinctive both historically and geographically. It contrasts with surrounding, lower-lying settled and enclosed farmland (Areas 182, 191).

#### Conservation priorities

The remains of the castle and town have recently been partly excavated and conserved. There are, therefore, no other conservation priorities in this area.

Ground photographs: 91

Aerial photographs: 38

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 225 BETHLEHEM

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 690251

AREA IN HECTARES: 1737.00

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#### Historic Background

A very large character area on the southeast side of the Tywi valley between Llandeilo and Llangadog, including part of the lower Sawdde valley. During the historic period the area lay within Cwmwd Perfedd of Cantref Bychan, which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans advancing from the east under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. However, there were many episodes of Welsh rule and the area retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated into modern Carmarthenshire. The eastern section of this character area formed part of the *patria* of Llangadog which was acquired by the Bishops of St Davids by the late 13th-century (Rees 1932). The area may have been a focus for human settlement with status and/or ritual associations from an early date. A Neolithic chambered tomb and a Bronze Age standing stone lie centrally within the area. The large Iron Age hillfort of Carn Goch, Area 222, intrudes into, and dominates Area 225, and was probably the centre of a large territory taking in most of the area south of the Tywi. There is evidence for early occupation of this site, possibly into the Neolithic, and the significance it gave to the area may have persisted after its abandonment under Roman rule - the most plausible villa site in southwest Wales, Llys Brychan, lies within Area 225 only 1.6km to the northeast of the fort (Jarrett 1962). Its name suggests that Llys Brychan was (re)occupied during the Medieval period as an administrative centre or *llys*, with connections - putative or otherwise - with Brychan, a dominant figure in early Medieval tradition. It is still the site of a dwelling. By the post-Conquest period, however, the majority of this area west of the Sawdde was administered within Cwmwd Perfedd as Maenor Vabon, from a centre, Llys Hendy, now represented by the Post-Medieval house at Manoravon/Crymlyn Manor (Rees 1932) recorded since the 18th century (Jones 1987, 130). The continuing status of this area is demonstrated by the perceived importance of the neighbouring Llangadog (Area 206) during the Medieval period, with a chapel-of-ease to Llangadog parish at Capel Tydist, the site of a house since at least the early 19th-century (Jones 1987, 21), and a further possible chapel site. Gentry houses are numerous within the area, and many of them were acquired by the Dynevor estate including Mandinam, established by the 17th century and said to have been the residence of Jeremy Taylor following his chaplainship to the Earl of Carbery at Golden Grove (Jones 1987, 7), and Tygwyn which was the residence of the Vaughans of Derwydd in c.1650 with a demesne which comprised 214 acres in 1879 (Jones 1987, 190). Llwynymendy has origins within the 17th century at the latest (Jones 1987, 121) as do Pentre Parr and Beili-Dyffryn (Jones 1987, 7, 153), which later became part of the Dirlerton estate. Nevertheless the present pattern of enclosures, which was in place by the early 19th-century (Llandeilo Fawr and Llangadog tithe maps), may have been established by the Medieval period - they are very irregular with many stands of ancient deciduous woodland. The steep-sided valley of the Afon Sawdde is a natural line of communication and the A4069 was a major Post-Medieval droving route, turnpiked from 1779 (Lewis 1971, 43). Typical 19th century rural development is exemplified by Bethlehem which is a nucleation around Bethlehem chapel on the present Llandeilo-Llangadog road - also a turnpike - and shown as a cluster of cottages in 1839, to which a post office and school were added later in the 19th century (Sambrook and Page 1995, 40). A 20th century housing estate has been added but overall there has been little recent development.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Bethlehem is a very large character area. It runs along the south side of the Tywi valley from just southeast of Llandeilo upstream past Llangadog and across the Sawdde valley. It rises in a series of low, rounded hills from 30 m on the Tywi floodplain to over 130 m on the southeastern flanks of the area. Dissecting the landscape are numerous small, steep-sided valleys. Essentially this is a landscape of dispersed farms, small pasture fields and small woods. Boundaries to the fields consist almost entirely of earth banks topped with hedges, but a few stone-faced banks lie on higher ground. Hedges are generally in good condition and are well maintained; many have distinctive hedgerow trees. Land-use is

predominantly improved pasture, with very little rough and rushy land. Deciduous woodland is mostly confined to the steep valley sides, where it provides a distinctive landscape component. Close to the Tywi valley the landscape has a parkland character; this is emphasised close to Crymlyn Manor by single trees and small clumps which indicate old park planting. There are numerous small, and one medium-sized conifer plantations in the area, mostly on higher ground. There are no nucleated settlements, the loose cluster of houses, a school and post office at Bethlehem is the only aggregate settlement of note. Dispersed farms and other houses dominate the settlement pattern. Most buildings are of 19th- and 20th-century date and stone built. There is a range of farmhouse types, but the majority are two-storeys and three-bays and in the vernacular tradition or more polite 'Georgian' style of the early- to mid-19th century. Larger dwellings are present, and smaller houses and cottages. The range of old, stone-built, 19th century farm buildings also reflects prevailing social and economic class; most are substantial ranges, often semi-formally arranged around a yard, though single ranges of smaller buildings are present on the smaller farms. Nearly all farms have modern agricultural buildings. Superimposed onto the old-established pattern of dispersed farms is a scattering of a small number of later 19th- 20th-century dwellings, in a variety of styles and materials.

Recorded archaeology is rich and diverse, comprising one definite and one possible Neolithic chambered tomb/Bronze Age long barrow, a Bronze Age standing stone and a possible round barrow. Also there is a further Iron Age hillfort on the western slope of Carn Goch (Area 222), and another hillfort to the west. Llys Brychan was excavated in 1961 when it was concluded to be a probable Roman villa site (Jarrett 1961). From the Medieval period are a chapel site and possible chapel site, while from the early Post-Medieval period are possible pillow-mounds, a well and a rubbing stone, in addition to enclosures of unknown date.

There are many distinctive buildings, and high-quality farmhouses. Mandinam house is Grade II listed and mainly from the 18th- and 19th-century, with double-saddle roofs. The contemporary houses at Tygwyn, Llwynymendy, Pentre Parr with its lodge and park, and Beili-Dyffryn are unlisted. The present farmstead at Llyshendy was built for the Dynevor estate (Judith Alfrey *pers. comm.*). The chapel, school and post office at Bethlehem should be noted, in addition to mills, cottages and dwellings, bridges and a smithy site.

To the north this character area is well defined by the flood plain of the Tywi valley (Area 196) and by Felindre character area (Area 204). Where this area borders higher ground boundary definition is also good - to the south against Carn Goch (Area 222), Garn-wen (Area 226) and others (Areas 229, 230), but elsewhere (bounding Areas 203, 228 and 235) there is a zone of change rather than a hard-edged border.

#### **Conservation priorities**

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation and therefore there are few historic landscape conservation priorities. However, the decay evident in a few of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photographs: 92**

**Aerial photographs: 30**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 226 GARN-WEN

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 700240

AREA IN HECTARES: 218.60

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#### Historic Background

A small character area on the southeast side of the Tywi Valley between Llandeilo and Llangadog, dominated by the large Iron Age hillfort of Carn Goch (Area 222) which rises just beyond the northern edge of Area 226 and was probably the centre of a large territory taking in most of the area south of the Tywi. During the historic period the area lay within Cwmwd Perfedd - specifically Maenor Vabon - of Cantref Bychan, which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. However, there were many episodes of Welsh rule and the area retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated into modern Carmarthenshire. The medium-sized irregular enclosures in this area contrast with the larger, regular enclosures to the southeast - which are 19th century enclosure of former common - and are probably earlier, though possibly Post-Medieval. The area contains just three farmsteads, all of Post-Medieval date. There has been little recent development but there are pockets of later 20th century conifer plantation.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Garn-wen character area is relatively small but quite complex as it lies between lower-lying farmland and a high unenclosed ridge. It has an 'upland farm' character feel to it. It lies on northwest-facing slopes between 190 m and 200 m. All the land has been enclosed, but fields at higher elevations are now breaking down. Three farms, Gurnos, Garn-wen and Tan-y-lan, lie within the area. The fields, though tending towards the irregular, have a definite northwest-southeast trend to their axes, perhaps indicating a single major episode of enclosure. Field boundaries exhibit a variety of types; dry-stone walls, earth banks and stony banks. The latter two are topped with hedges, which are in various stages of decay; at higher levels they have virtually gone, at lower levels they tend to be overgrown with distinctive hedgerow trees. Dry-stone walls are mostly derelict. Wire fences provide stock-proof barriers. Most land is improved pasture, but a medium-sized conifer plantation has been established over some former fields. Farmhouses are stone-built, probably 19th century, and have a substantial range of 19th century stone-built farm buildings associated with them, as well as very extensive modern agricultural buildings.

Only one archaeological site - a palaeolithic findspot - has been recorded, but is important and provides great time-depth.

There are no distinctive buildings.

Garn-wen is a well defined character area. To the northwest lies either the unenclosed moorland of Carn Goch (Area 222) or lower-lying farmland (Area 225), while on other sides is a high ridge (Area 231) of unenclosed land, or conifer plantations (Area 230).

#### Conservation priorities

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). The decay evident in some of the hedgerows, walls and other boundary types is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Otherwise maintain as existing.

Ground photographs: 93

Aerial photographs: 21, 57



## CARMARTHENSHIRE: TYWI VALLEY

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 227 CYNGHORDY

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 783395

AREA IN HECTARES: 1322.00

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#### Historic Background

A large area situated between the Afon Brân and the headwaters of the River Tywi, once part of Hirfryn commote of Cantref Bychan which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery but retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within modern Carmarthenshire. Much of the area may have been unenclosed during the Medieval period - Rees' 1932 map of 14th century South Wales labels it 'Cefnlegelevarth Forest' (Rees 1932) - but the village of Cynghordy may derive its name from a monastic foundation (undated), and/or a chapel, 'Capel Cynfab', while the nearby place name Maes Mynach suggests the presence of land-holdings belonging to such a foundation (Sambrook and Page 1995, 18). The present pattern of fields suggests that the southern half of the area was enclosed during the late Medieval or early Post-Medieval period; the regular enclosures in the northern half may be later but the present landscape was in place by the early 19th-century. Cynghordy Hall may have 16th century origins (Jones 1987, 53) but Rees suggests that the Medieval manorial centre of the area lay at 'Abergevel' to the south (Rees 1932), and while he does mark a possible mill at Cynghordy, there is no evidence that the present village is an early settlement alongside a former church/monastery. It appears instead to have developed separately alongside the Roman Road between Llandovery (*Alabum*) and the mid Wales forts at Beulah and Castell Collen (James 1982, 7) - now represented by the A483(T) just east of Area 227 - which became an important droving route in the Post-Medieval period. The presence of a nonconformist chapel and inn may be due to this association. The area is crossed by the railway from Llandovery to Llanwrtyd Wells, which had been established by 1871 to form part of the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) Central Wales and Carmarthen Junction Line, is still operational and forms part of the 'Heart of Wales' line. However, despite having the 'essential' requirements of a chapel, post office and school, as well as a mill and industry represented by a brickworks, a new parish church (Llanfair ar-y-bryn) constructed in the late 19th-century, a vicarage, an inn and a railway station, nucleation did not occur at Cynghordy - perhaps they were so dispersed that there was no single focus around which a village could develop (Sambrook and Page 1995, 24) and indeed, the most significant development has been the construction of a 20th century council estate.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Cynghordy is a large character area which lies between 80m and 250m on southeast-facing slopes on the western side of the Brân valley north of Llandovery. It is essentially an area of small, irregular fields, dispersed farms and scattered woodland. Boundaries are formed from earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are in a variety of conditions; at higher elevations they are becoming derelict and/or overgrown, at lower levels, and alongside tracks and lanes, they are in better condition and generally well maintained. Most hedges are supplemented with wire fences. Many hedges contain distinctive trees. These trees together with the numerous small stands of deciduous woodland - mostly confined to steeper slopes - and many conifer plantations, lend a wooded appearance to much of the landscape. Farmland is given over to pasture, which is mainly improved, but there is rougher and rushy ground in wet hollows and at higher levels. The settlement pattern is of dispersed farms; Cynghordy is the only aggregate settlement and this consists of a loose cluster of 19th century houses, chapels, a school and a street of 20th century housing. Farmhouses are almost entirely late 18th- and 19th-century, stone-built, two-storeys and of three bays, though larger and smaller examples are present. Most are in the vernacular tradition, but there are examples in the more 'polite' Georgian style. Nineteenth century outbuildings to the farms tend to be of one or two ranges, though larger farms have a greater range of buildings in a semi-formal arrangement with the house. Most farms have a large range of modern agricultural buildings. Though the Brân valley is an important routeway linking Carmarthenshire to mid-Wales, most of the actual routes, from a Roman road to the modern road, pass up the eastern side of the valley. The exception to this is the mid-Wales railway which passes through this area, with a

station at Cynghordy, gaining in height from south to north. Its impressive stone-built viaduct which just lies within the north side of the area, is a major feature in the landscape.

Recorded archaeology is rich and diverse, comprising two definite and two possible Bronze Age round barrows, a possible Iron Age hillfort, a possible Medieval holy well and chapel and/or monastery site, and a number of separate findspots from the Neolithic, Bronze Age, Roman (possible) and Post-Medieval periods.

There are a few distinctive buildings. Parts of Cynghordy Hall, which is Grade II listed, date to the 18th century (Jones 1987, 53). The viaduct carrying the LNWR line is from c.1871 and Grade II listed. In addition there are the post office, railway station, brickworks, St Mary's Church and vicarage, school, chapels, and mills, none of which are listed.

Character areas to the east and north of Cynghordy have yet to be defined. To the west a high ridge (Area 223) provides a reasonably good boundary to this area, but to the south (against Areas 213 and 214), there is a zone of change rather than a hard-edged border.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photographs: 94**

**Aerial photographs: 64**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 228 CILGWYN - LLWYNWORMWOOD

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 754308

AREA IN HECTARES: 1288.00

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#### Historic Background

An area southeast of the River Tywi lying in the former Cantref Bychan which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established *acaput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery but retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within modern Carmarthenshire. The area was divided between two commotes, Hirfryn to the north and Perfedd, specifically Maenor Myddfai (and Myddfai parish), to the south. The latter may have been administered from Myddfai itself but Cilgwyn Mansion had been established by the 16th century (Jones 1987, 30), and the nearby mill is marked by Rees on his map of 14th century south Wales (Rees 1932). With 3820 acres in Myddfai parish in 1873, the occupants of Cilgwyn Mansion, the Gwynne-Holfords, were the chief family of the parish. A second gentry house nearby, Glasallt, is said to have been the home of the Owen family since 1508 (Jones 1987, 80). Llwynwormwood in the northern part of the area, now gone, was a later 18th century gentry house and home of the Williams family, also of Dolgarreg and the second family of Myddfai parish (Jones 1987, 122). A small emparked area also lies around Glansevin, at the southern end of the area, which had been the home of the Lloyd family since the 16th century and was assessed at 8 hearths in 1670 (Jones 1987, 78); it is now a hotel. The landscape within the area exhibits a varied pattern of enclosures; those to the south are irregular and may have been established by the early Post-Medieval period, while those to the north are more regular and probably later in date. The landscape around Cilgwyn and Llwynwormwood was extensively emparked in the 18th- and 19th-century with much tree-planting. Small-scale mining activity is represented by Allt Rhydys and Paradise Lode, small copper/lead shafts in the north of the area, and a lead/zinc shaft in the south of the area. There has been little recent development.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Cilgwyn-Llwynwormwood character area lies across a wide hilly ridge which trends southwest-northeast on the south side of the Tywi valley between Llandovery and Llangadog. The ridge rises from approximately 60 m on the valley floor to achieve heights of over 180 m. The area is heavily wooded. This consists of deciduous woodland on steep valley sides interspersed with and under-planted by 20th century conifer plantations. There are also substantial conifer plantations on the ridge crests. Although some of the deciduous woodland is probably ancient, especially that on the steeper slopes, much has the appearance of 18th- or 19th-century plantations, part of the estate landscape. There are several large estates or former estates in the area. The mansion of one of the largest, Cilgwyn, still exists, along with various associated relict garden features, but the other main house of the area, Llwynwormwood is now a ruin. Dolgarreg and Cwm-Rhuddan, two lesser major houses still stand. Outside the wooded areas, the main land-use is pasture. This has been divided into fields which are large and fairly regular on higher levels, smaller and more irregular at lower levels. Earth banks with hedges form the boundaries to the fields, but apart from alongside roads and tracks hedges are in very poor condition, especially so at higher elevation, and are either overgrown or derelict. Wire fences provide most of the stock-proof boundaries. Many hedges have distinctive trees, and there are individual trees and small clumps present across much of the area. Parkland is still present as at Cwm-Rhuddan, but virtually the whole area seems to have been subjected to landscaping by the estates in the 18th- and 19th-century. Outside the major houses, the settlement pattern is of dispersed farms and other dwellings. Farmhouses are substantial, stone-built, generally 19th century in date and have a wide range of stone outbuildings reflecting estate management. Most farms have modern agricultural buildings. Other dwellings are mostly 19th century cottages or houses, usually in the vernacular style, with a few 20th century buildings.

Recorded archaeology comprises a possible hillfort, three metal mines, estate and parkland features, and several unknown cropmark/earthwork/landform features.

There are many distinctive buildings of which the 18th century Cilgwyn house and one of the Llwynwormwood park lodges, from the 18th- or early 19th-century in picturesque 'estate' Gothic style, are Grade II listed. Glansevin, from the 18th- and 19th-century with Classical features, is Grade II listed.

Mansions, parkland and woodland distinguish this area and mark it out from the neighbouring areas of farms and small fields (Areas 208, 232, 234 and 235).

#### **Conservation priorities**

Part of this area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). The decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing.

**Ground photographs:** 95

**Aerial photographs:** 16, 17, 18, 27

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 229 RHIWIAU

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 742261

AREA IN HECTARES: 406.40

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#### Historic Background

A small character area on the northwestern flank of the Black Mountain. It once formed part of Cwmwd Perfedd of the former Cantref Bychan which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery but retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within modern Carmarthenshire. The area lay in the further division of Maenor Llanddeusant, which may have been coterminous with the ecclesiastical parish of Llanddeusant. There is at present no settlement which may reflect the general situation at least within the historic period, when the area probably comprised unenclosed pasture. The present pattern of large, rectangular enclosures was in place by 1841 (Llanddeusant tithe map) but was probably the result of a fairly recent process possibly undertaken by one of the larger local landowners. The presence of a possible sheepfold suggests that the former landscape was unenclosed and pastoral. Evidence for earlier settlement, and time-depth, is provided by two Bronze Age round barrows. Small-scale mining activity is represented by Rhiw, a small, Post-Medieval lead shaft in the north of the area. There has been little recent development.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Rhiwiau character area lies across a southwest-northeast ridge which achieves heights of over 350m. There are no settlements. The ridge has been divided into medium- to large-sized fairly regular enclosures by earth banks and hedges. On the ridge crest these enclosures are now mostly redundant; the hedges have gone, and apart from wire fences it is an open area. On the flanks of the ridge hedges consist of straggling lines of overgrown bushes with occasional distinctive trees. Again wire fences provide stock-proof boundaries. The whole area is improved pasture with a little rough grazing on the highest areas and some steep slopes, and scrubby deciduous woodland on the steepest slopes. Because of the dereliction of the old boundaries, the ridge crest of Rhiwiau has an open unenclosed appearance.

Recorded archaeology comprises to Bronze Age round barrows, two *llan* place-names, Rhiw Post-Medieval lead mine, and a possible sheepfold.

There are no standing buildings.

Although Rhiwiau is a distinctive character area its boundaries are not hard-edged. There is a merging of this area with the neighbouring areas of enclosed farmland (Area 223). Only to the west against a forestry plantation (Area 230) is there a distinct boundary.

#### Conservation priorities

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. Derelict boundaries should remain in their current condition, allowing the landscape to revert to its former open character. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland.

Ground photographs: 96

Aerial photographs: 16, 19

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 230 PEN-ARTHUR PLANTATION

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 717241

AREA IN HECTARES: 281.10

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#### Historic Background

A small character area on the northwestern flank of the Black Mountain in the valley of the Afon Sawdde. It was once part of Cwmwd Perfedd of Cantref Bychan which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery but retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within the modern Carmarthenshire. The area lay in the further division of Maenor Gwynfe, and within the ecclesiastical parish of Llangadog. The medium-sized irregular enclosures contrast with the larger, regular enclosures to the west - which are 19th century enclosure of former common - and are probably earlier, though possibly Post-Medieval. The area contains two farmsteads, Pen-Arthur and Pen-Arthur-isaf, a subdivision of a larger holding with an interesting name. In addition are two *Lletty* place-names; the steep-sided valley of the Afon Sawdde is a natural line of communication and the present A4069 was a major Post-Medieval droving route. A pound, and a possible fold, were established around the bridge over the Sawdde at Pont-ar-llechau, which became a place of some importance and occasional venue of the court leets of Myddfai (James n.d., 87). The road was turnpiked from 1779 (Lewis 1971, 43) encouraging further, commercial settlement at Pont-ar-llechau with the establishment of two public houses (both now closed), a tile quarry and a former woollen factory. A second woollen factory formerly lay at the west end of the area at Glandwr. There has been no recent development and the entire area is given over to later 20th century conifer plantation.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Pen-Arthur plantation lies over the eastern end of a ridge, which achieves heights of over 300 m, and covers the steep valley sides of the Afon Sawdde. Prior to afforestation several widely dispersed settlements were present and the whole of the area had been enclosed into medium- and large-sized enclosures. Earth and earth and stone banks of these enclosures survive under the plantation. Map evidence indicates that several dwellings survive in small clearings in the forestry - these were not examined in this study. The A4069/former turnpike runs down the Sawdde valley and so passes through this area. Apart from these early landscape elements, most of the historic components comprise tracks, drives and other features associated with the forestry.

Recorded archaeology provides the landscape with great time-depth comprising a possible Neolithic chambered tomb and an Iron Age hillfort, in addition to the Post-Medieval woollen factory sites and tile quarry.

There are no distinctive buildings but the former Three Horseshoes and Coopers Arms public houses at Pont-ar-llechau, adjacent to the former turnpike toll house, bridge, pound (and a sheepfold?), should be noted for historical value.

This area of forestry plantation is well defined by the neighbouring enclosed farmland (Areas 225, 226 and 233) and by semi-open high ground (Areas 229 and 231).

#### Conservation priorities

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995).

Ground photographs: 97

Aerial photographs:

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 231 TRICHRUG

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 679222

AREA IN HECTARES: 786.10

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#### Historic Background

A southwest - northeast ridge on the southeast side of the Tywi Valley. During the historic period the area lay within Cantref Bychan, divided between two commotes. The western half of the area lay within Iscennen commote, specifically within Maenor Llys. Iscennen remained nominally independent of Anglo-Norman rule until 1284 when it was acquired by John Giffard, and in 1340 it became a member of the Duchy of Lancaster (Rees 1953, xv-xvi). The remainder of Cantref Bychan, including Cwmwd Perfedd within which the remainder of this area lay, was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.), and was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. However, there were many episodes of Welsh rule and the area retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated into modern Carmarthenshire. The boundary between the two areas is still represented by a 'T'-junction on the trackway that follows the spine of the ridge in the western half, which is shown as a trackway on Rees' map of South Wales in the 14th century (Rees 1932). Rees' map also labels this area 'Brenaye Forest', and indeed it appears that the area was probably unenclosed land during the Medieval period and later. The pattern of large, regular enclosures with straight boundaries was in place by 1839 (Llangadog tithe map) but it had probably been recently established; its morphology suggests late enclosure of former moorland. Some subdivision had taken place by 1891 (Ordnance Survey 6" First Edition). The area is dominated by its surviving prehistoric archaeology which provides great time-depth. Sites include a group of Bronze Age round barrows and a possible Iron Age hillfort. The higher ground within the area is pitted with former quarries, presumably Post-Medieval. There has been little recent development.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Trichrug character area lies across a southwest to northeast ridge. On the flanks of the ridge this area runs down to about 200 m, the highest summit achieved is over 400 m. The crest of the ridge rises from just over 200 m in the southwest to the high point at the northeast end. The whole ridge has been enclosed by medium- and large-sized regular enclosures, but over much of the ridge crest, certainly at the highest point, these have broken down, but on the flanks they survive though in a much degraded form. Boundaries to the fields take a variety of forms, earth banks with hedges, stony banks sometimes with hedges, and dry-stone walls. On the ridge crest hedges are either gone or derelict, but elsewhere they are in better condition, but generally overgrown. Nearly all the dry-stone walls have collapsed. Wire fences provide stock-proof boundaries. At the highest point the ridge essentially consists of a small area of unenclosed moorland. Elsewhere rough pasture and improved grazing constitute the main land-use, though several medium-sized conifer plantations are also present. The remains of numerous small quarries along the ridge comprise important landscape elements. Bronze Age burial mounds are also prominent features of the landscape. There is little present settlement in this character area.

Recorded archaeology is rich and important, comprising a Neolithic or Bronze Age findspot, a group of Bronze Age round barrows and, on the edge of the area, a Bronze Age standing stone. There is also an Iron Age or Roman findspot, a possible Iron Age hillfort, Post-Medieval quarries and unknown enclosures.

There are few buildings and none are distinctive.

This is a very distinct area on account of its relative high altitude. Its boundaries, however, are not hard-edged, as the large enclosures of the ridge merge with the smaller fields of neighbouring richer farmland (Areas 200, 203, 226, 233 and 254). To the east there is a clear boundary where this area borders forestry (Area 230).

**Conservation priorities**

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). However, there are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. It would be desirable to allow the broken-down boundary walls and banks to remain in their current condition, so allowing the ridge to resume its former unenclosed character.

**Ground photographs:** 98

**Aerial photographs:** 21, 57



## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 232 MYDDFAI

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 774304

AREA IN HECTARES: 910.9

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#### Historic Background

An area around, and including, the present village of Myddfai. It formed the core of Maenor Myddfai, Cwmwd Perfedd, of the former Cantref Bychan which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery but reverted to Welsh rule until 1282, and retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within modern Carmarthenshire. The village nucleus is represented by the parish church of St Michael which appears to be the primary component, lying centrally in a circular churchyard. The dedication may be pre-Conquest and the area is the site of a lost ECM (Sambrook and Page 1995, 4), but the church is not mentioned until 1284, when the advowson fell to King Edward I to be subsequently granted to the Bishop of St Davids (Ludlow 1998). Talley Abbey also possessed land around the village. In 1282 Maenor Myddfai, which may have been administered from Myddfai itself, became the Manor of Myddfai under the Lord of Llandovery, John Giffard (James n.d., 87). This event may be represented by the establishment of the moated site just south of the present village, which in turn may suggest that settlement around the church had already taken place. The manor, and the Lordship of Llandovery, were later held by the Audleys, and in the Post-Medieval period by the Vaughans of Golden Grove and the Earls of Cawdor (James n.d., 87). Of greater influence on the landscape history, however, were the resident gentry families of Cwm Ydw, the Bowens, resident since the 18th century (Jones 1987, 50) and Gorllwyn, home of the Prices since the 17th century (Jones 1987, 86), and also the nearby Cilgwyn Mansion and Llwynwormwood (Area 228). At any rate, the landscape within Area 232 was undoubtedly settled by the 17th century and the present pattern of medium-large enclosures was in place by 1840 (Myddfai tithe map). Small-scale mineral extraction in the area is represented by a Post-Medieval lead shaft, and a quarry. The village of Myddfai became a centre of droving activity during the 18th century with at least two inns (Sambrook and Page 1995, 23), and was sufficiently important - as the head of the parish - by the late 19th-century, to feature two chapels, a school and a post office. The present terraced housing was also constructed during the late 19th-century, replacing most of the earlier buildings. There has been some limited 20th century development which includes a sewage works just southeast of the village.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This character area is centred on the village of Myddfai which lies in the open bowl-like valley of the Afon Brân. The valley floor lies at approximately 100 m to 130 m, the valley sides rise to over 200 m. Essentially this is an area of dispersed farms and small fields. The whole landscape is enclosed into small- and medium-sized fields that tend towards the regular rather than the irregular. Boundaries are universally of earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are in good condition, but with some dereliction, particularly at higher levels. Some hedges have distinctive hedgerow trees. Wire fences supplement most hedges. Farmland is almost entirely improved pasture. Small stands of deciduous woodland lie on some of the steeper valley sides, but these are few compared with the highly wooded appearance of neighbouring areas. The small nucleated village of Myddfai is centred on the Medieval church of St Michael. Several terraces of late 18th- and early 19th-century two-storey, stone-built (mostly rendered) cottages cluster around the church, with a little later 19th- and 20th-century residential development on the fringes of the village. Dispersed farms are the main settlement type of the area. Farmhouses are mostly 19th century in date, stone-built, two-storey, three-bays and generally in the vernacular tradition. Most farms have 19th century stone-built farm buildings as well as modern agricultural structures. The older buildings tend to be of one or two ranges, which are rarely arranged formally around a yard.

The recorded archaeology is from many periods and comprises a Bronze Age hoard, standing stone and ?round barrow, a lost ECM site from the early Medieval period, the church, a post-Conquest

moated site, and a lead mine and quarry from the Post-Medieval period. In addition are an unknown earthwork and cropmark site.

There are some distinctive buildings but few are listed. The landmark Medieval church, without a tower, is Grade B listed. A K6 telephone box in centre of the village is Grade II listed. There are a number of gentry houses including Llwynmeredydd, Cwm Ydw and Gorllwyn, rebuilt in the 18th- and 19th-century. The area also contains four chapels, a school, a public houses, post office and bridge.

Myddfai is not an easy character area to define as neighbouring areas (Areas 228, 233, 234) possess similar historic landscape components. However, it does have a more regular field pattern than its neighbours, is less wooded, and has a small nucleated village at its core.

#### **Conservation priorities**

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Ribbon- and dispersed-settlement on the fringes of Myddfai should be discouraged. Otherwise maintain as existing

**Ground photographs:** 99

**Aerial photographs:** 18, 62

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 233 LLANDDEUSANT - CAPEL-GWYNFE

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 761261

AREA IN HECTARES: 4778.00

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#### Historic Background

A very large character area on the northwest fringes of the Black Mountain/Mynydd Myddfai, lying within the former Cwmwd Perfedd of Cantref Bychan which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery but later reverted to Welsh rule. In 1282 the Lordship was acquired by John Giffard and thereafter remained under English rule (James n.d., 87) but retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within modern Carmarthenshire. The area has strong 'Celtic' traditions - hagiographies suggest that St Paulinus, the reputed teacher of St David established a monastic college in the general area, dedicated to two saints (Sambrook and Page 1995, 4); the present dedication of Llanddeusant parish church is to SS Simon & Jude but may reflect an earlier joint dedication (Ludlow 1998). Capel Gwynfe has historically been a chapel-of-ease to Llangadog parish, but a system of boundaries adjacent to the church may perpetuate the line of *allan* (Sambrook and Page 1995, 5). By the post-Conquest period Area 233 was divided between the Medieval Maenor Llanddeusant, coterminous with the ecclesiastical parish, and Maenor Gwynfe. The present pattern of small, irregular fields may well be early in date, and represent a system of small dispersed holdings that were well-established by the time of the tithe surveys of the early 19th-century. Indeed, the physical boundary between this area and the unenclosed moorland of Areas 239 and 240 to the south is well-defined as a masonry wall, suggesting a long period of stability without evidence for *ad hoc* encroachments. During the later Middle Ages the Lordship of Llandovery was held by the Audleys, and in the Post-Medieval period by the Vaughans of Golden Grove and the Earls of Cawdor (James n.d., 87). Both Coed Mawr and Llwynfron were recorded as dwellings of the Aubrey family in the 16th century (Jones 1987, 40, 121), Pant Hywel, Penrhiw and Penycrug were residences of the Lewis family (Jones 1987, 142) while the Lewis family of Gwynfe styled themselves 'Lords of Gwynfe' (Jones 1987, 89-90). Nevertheless, the effects of gentrification have been less extensive within this character area than is general within the region and there is little parkland or 'polite' architecture. The area includes a network of Post-Medieval drovers routes, the most important of which followed the Sawdde Valley down from the Black Mountain to Llangadog; the current A4069 partly follows a drovers road, the 'Bryn Road', tumpiked from 1779 (DAT & CPAT, 1997, 5). The present nucleations are all late; the development of Capel Gwynfe, for example, was concomitant on the establishment of the turnpike running past the church which was rebuilt in c.1800 and again in 1898 (Ludlow 1998). Llanddeusant Church never became a focus for settlement, which instead developed around routeways, particularly the crossroads at Twyn-llanan and at Cross Inn (the latter with an inn). However, in all cases settlement is slight, and dispersed.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This is an extremely large character area. It runs for some 17 km southwest to northeast along the northern side of the Black Mountain, and is up to 5 km wide, southeast to northwest. It consists of rolling hills and deeply incised narrow valleys, ranging in height from 120 m in the valley bottoms to over 300 m on the summits of the higher hills and along the fringes of the Black Mountain. The historic landscape comprises small irregular fields, dispersed small farms and scattered woodland. The whole area has been enclosed into a patchwork of small fields by earth banks and hedges. Over such an extensive area there are clear differences of hedge management, but generally hedges are in good condition and well maintained, with derelict and overgrown examples usually occurring only at higher altitudes and along the fringes of the Black Mountain. A striking characteristic of this area is the very sharp boundary between it and the unenclosed land of the Black Mountain. On the ground this boundary is marked for at least part of its course by a dry-stone wall/stony bank. Other stony banks rather than earth banks were also noted close to the boundary of the Black Mountain, especially at the northeastern end of the area. Land-use varies across the area, but is predominantly improved pasture with pockets of rough grazing and rushy ground. Most of the steep valley sides are cloaked with

deciduous woodland. This together with distinctive hedgerow trees in areas of overgrown hedges lends a wooded aspect to parts of the landscape. A couple of small conifer plantations are present. Apart from the A4069, the old turnpike road which runs south to north across the area linking the south side of the Black Mountain with the Tywi valley, transport links are confined to numerous local minor roads, lanes and tracks. Settlement in the area comprises predominantly dispersed farms and other dwellings. Farmhouses are mostly 19th century, stone-built, two-storey, three-bays in the vernacular tradition. Traditional outbuildings associated with the farms are also 19th century and stone-built, and tend to be relatively small, often limited to just one range. Most farms have a collection of modern agricultural buildings. Early 19th-century buildings, including an old inn, in the polite 'Georgian' tradition are dispersed close to New Inn on the A4069 old turnpike road. Capel Gwynfe and Twynllanan are the only aggregate settlements in the area. Both are essentially hamlets, comprising a loose cluster of 19th century houses focused on chapels, with late 20th-century residential development in a variety of materials and styles. Other 19th century chapels in the area stand in isolated locations, as does the Medieval parish church of Llanddeusant. Outside the two hamlets, other late 20th-century development is limited to occasional isolated houses or bungalows.

Recorded archaeology from such a large landscape area takes in a range of sites from all periods. However, all features relate primarily to agricultural land-use.

There are a few distinctive buildings, but the older houses have mostly been rebuilt, and none are listed. Llwynfron, however, is a small gentry farmhouse with 17th century origins, Bedw-hirion is a similar house of 1796 and Ty Brych is a small farmhouse of the early 19th-century, all subject to consideration for relisting (Judith Alfrey, pers. comm.). SS Simon & Jude, Llanddeusant is a Grade B listed landmark Medieval church with a turret, while the unlisted Capel Gwynfe is from 1898-9, with a tower (Ludlow 1998) and an earlier 19th century church hall (formerly the church building). The boundary wall between this area and Area 240 is distinctive but now derelict.

The boundary of this area is very well defined against the Black Mountain to the south (Areas 239, 240), and against a forestry plantation to the north (Area 230). Elsewhere to the north between this area and its neighbours (Areas 229, 231, 232 and 234) there tends to be a zone of change rather than a hard-edged border. Definition is a little better to the west against the more regular field systems of Area 200.

#### **Conservation priorities**

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges, and in other boundary types is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing

**Ground photographs:** 100

**Aerial photographs:** 19, 20, 21

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 234 CEFNTELYCH

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 799322

AREA IN HECTARES: 257.90

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#### Historic Background

A small area on the western fringes of the Brecon Beacons, formerly within Maenor Myddfai, Cwmwd Perfedd, of the former Cantref Bychan, which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery but reverted to Welsh rule until 1282 when it was acquired by John Giffard (James n.d., 87). It retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within modern Carmarthenshire. The lordship was later held by the Audleys, and in the Post-Medieval period by the Vaughans of Golden Grove and the Earls of Cawdor (James n.d., 87). Cefntelych ridge is now enclosed with large, fairly regular fields which were established by 1840 (Myddfai tithe map). They may be later Post-Medieval rather than earlier, and the ridge may have been unenclosed for much of the historic period. It is crossed by the Roman road following the upland route from Llandovery (*Alabum*) to Brecon (*Cicutio*), as a result of which the region (including neighbouring Area 240), exhibits a number of Roman military sites (James 1982, 9), such as a marching camp and a practice camp at Allt-y-hafod-fawr. There has been no subsequent development within the character area apart from one small informal holding.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This relatively small character area comprises a northwest to southeast ridge between 180 m and 270 m. Apart from a single small farm with a 19th century farmhouse in the vernacular tradition and a small range of outbuildings, there are no settlements in the area. A straight lane - the course of a Roman road - runs along the ridge. Essentially this is a landscape of medium- to large-sized fairly regular fields which are divided by earth banks topped with hedges. Apart from alongside roads and tracks, hedges are in poor condition and are either derelict or overgrown. There are few distinctive hedgerow trees, and this factor combined with the lack of woodland and the derelict hedges lends an open feel to the landscape. Land-use is almost entirely improved pasture.

Archaeology is dominated by the Roman road, practice camp and marching camp which survive as earthworks and provide time-depth to the landscape. There is also a possible inscribed stone

There are few buildings within the area and none are distinctive.

To the west, Area 232 shares many historic components with this area - here there is a zone of change rather than a hard-edged border. Elsewhere to the south and west the heavily wooded aspect and smaller fields of neighbouring areas (Areas 228 and 233) provide a reasonably clear boundary. A conifer plantation (Area 237) lies to the east.

#### Conservation priorities

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. Most of the historic landscape components are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed.

Ground photographs: 101

Aerial photographs: 62

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 235 MAES-GWASTAD

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 727290

AREA IN HECTARES: 500.30

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#### Historic Background

An area southeast of the River Tywi which once formed part of Perfedd commote of Cantref Bychan, which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans advancing from the east under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. However, there were many episodes of Welsh rule and the area retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated into modern Carmarthenshire. Most of this character area formed part of the *patria* of Llangadog which was acquired by the Bishops of St Davids in the later 13th century (Rees 1932). Medieval settlement and formalised land-division is suggested from place-name evidence in other areas that lay within the *patria* (eg. Area 207), and similarly the names within Area 235 suggest the presence of former open field strips, possibly belonging to the emerging borough of Llangadog (Area 206), and a quillet of such enclosed strips appears to lie at the north end of the area. The motte-and-bailey castle at Castell Meurig 1.5 km southeast of Llangadog appears to belong to the early, initial phase of Anglo-Norman campaign. It was captured 'by catapults and slings' by Prince Maelgwn ap Rhys in 1203 (Jones 1952, 82) after which it may have become disused; at any rate, it appears not to have influenced any subsequent settlement. The area's Post-Medieval history, during which the Lordship of Llandovery was held by the Vaughans of Golden Grove and later the Earls of Cawdor (James n.d., 87), was dominated by the gentry house at Glansevin which had been the home of the Lloyd family since the 16th century and was assessed at 8 hearths in 1670 (Jones 1987, 78). The dwelling itself, which is now a hotel, lies in Area 228 but the home farm and mill lie in this character area. Glansevin-issa, just to the north, is mentioned in 1634 when it was mortgaged for £100 to become part of the Dirleton estate in Area 201 (*ibid.*). The A4069 between Llangadog and Llandovery, which forms the northwestern edge of the character area, follows the line of a turnpike begun in 1779 (Lewis 1971, 43). Recent development, however, has been slight; a very small nucleation has developed around the 19th century non-conformist chapel at Sardis, off of the main route, whilst the northwest corner of the area, where it runs into Llangadog (Area 206), has seen some 20th century development.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Maes-gwastad character area occupies the wide valley floor of the Afon Bân to the east of Llangadog. It is relatively flat and lies between c. 60 m and 80 m above sea level. It is essentially a landscape of improved pasture fields and dispersed farms. Fields are medium- to large-sized and vary from the fairly regular to the irregular. Some are strip-shaped, indicating enclosure from an open field system. Boundaries are universally of earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are very well maintained. The area has an open appearance owing to the fact that there are few hedgerow trees and very little woodland. The A4069 is a former turnpike; other routes are local lanes and tracks. The settlement pattern is one of dispersed farms. Farmhouses are stone-built, generally 19th century, two-storey and three-bays, with examples in the vernacular tradition as well as the more polite 'Georgian' style. 19th century outbuildings associated with the farms are substantial, as are modern agricultural buildings.

The recorded archaeology is dominated by the scheduled earthworks of the large, well preserved motte-and-bailey castle at Castell Meurig. There are also Iron Age or Roman finds, the enclosed Medieval open fields, and two unknown earthworks.

There are some distinctive buildings, but none are listed, including Glansevin Bridge, home farm and mill, Glansevin-issa, a Sunday school, and further mills and bridges.

This is not an easy area to define, as the neighbouring character areas share similar traits. However, the generally more wooded character and smaller field size of bordering areas (Areas 225, 228 and 207) provide sufficient differences to draw a reasonably hard-edged boundary to this area.

**Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photographs:** 102

**Aerial photographs:** 16, 24

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 236 PENTREGRONW

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 790279

AREA IN HECTARES: 36.42

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#### Historic Background

A very small character area on the southwest slope of Mynydd Myddfai, lying within the former Maenor Myddfai, Cwmwd Perfedd, of Cantref Bychan, which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It later reverted to Welsh rule, but from 1282 onwards the Lordship of Llandovery remained in English hands, although it retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within modern Carmarthenshire. During the Post-Medieval period it was held by the Vaughans of Golden Grove and the Earls of Cawdor (James n.d., 87). This character area is a small area of enclosed land which forms a pocket projecting into the otherwise unenclosed moorland of Mynydd Myddfai, and comprises 28 small, irregular fields around the small homestead of Pentregronw, which is marked and labelled on early 19th-century maps. The form of the enclosures suggests late Medieval or Post-Medieval encroachment onto the unenclosed moorland.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This small character area lies on a very steep southwest-facing slope between 220 m and 340 m on the edge of Mynydd Myddfai. The area has been enclosed into fairly regular small fields by a combination of dry-stone walls, earth banks and stony banks. The banks were formerly topped with hedges, but these are now either derelict or overgrown. The dry-stone walls are in a decayed state. On lower, less steep slopes at the northwest end improved pasture is present, which has been made stock-proof with wire fences. Elsewhere boundaries have broken down and the land is reverting to moorland. A single, deserted farmstead, Pentregronw, lies on the lower slopes.

Recorded archaeology is confined to the small, stone-built farmstead, Pentregronw, which is of probable 19th century date, and a former adjacent cottage, neither of which are distinctive buildings.

This area is very well defined as it is bounded on three sides by unenclosed moorland of the Black Mountain (Area 240), and on the fourth side by old established farms and fields (Area 233).

#### Conservation priorities

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. It is perhaps desirable that the reversion of this area to open moorland/pasture is not halted by the restoration of the derelict boundaries

Ground photographs: 103

Aerial photographs:



## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 237 ALLT Y FERDRE

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 798335

AREA IN HECTARES: 339.00

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#### Historic Background

An area which is highly irregular in plan, comprising the wooded slopes which form the southern flank of the Afon Gwydderig. It once lay within Hirfryn commote of Cantref Bychan, which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established *acaput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.), though it later reverted to Welsh rule. From 1282 onwards the Lordship of Llandovery remained under English rule but retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within modern Carmarthenshire. During the Post-Medieval period it was held by the Vaughans of Golden Grove and the Earls of Cawdor (James n.d., 87). An Iron Age hillfort is present and may have conferred a sense of continuing importance to the area. The *Ferdre* place-name suggests that the area may have formed part of one of the former *maerdref* estates of Hirfryn commote. Such estates were normally held by bond tenants who were in the charge of a reeve, subject to their own legal court and responsible for the maintenance of the lord's mill, labour and the carriage of produce, holding their land by inheritance, with perpetual right to their holdings (Rees, 1924, 200). There is currently very little settlement in the area, which reflects the situation seen on historic maps. There is some enclosure, the smaller, irregular fields being earlier - Medieval lynchets have been recorded in the north of the area - and larger, regular fields which are later. Much of the area, however, is currently unenclosed, which possibly reflects historic usage, probably always having mainly comprised steep wooded valley sides and pasture that was unenclosed until the late 20th-century when it was planted with conifers. The Brecon-Llandovery section of the A40(T), which was turnpiked in the late 18th-century, partly forms the northern edge of the area.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

The Allt y Ferdre character area lies across rounded hills and steep, mainly north-facing slopes of the Afon Gwydderig valley between 110 m and 240 m. The area is entirely wooded. Some of this is old established deciduous woodland on the steep slopes, but conifer plantations have infilled the gaps between to produce an irregular block of forestry covering several square kilometres. Conifers were planted over former partly-enclosed land which consisted of both regular and irregular fields. Field boundaries survive beneath the forestry, but the main historic landscape components of this area now comprise the tracks and drives of the plantation.

Recorded archaeology provides time-depth but is confined to an Iron Age hillfort which survives as a scheduled earthwork, and a Medieval cultivation terrace.

There are very few buildings and none of them are distinctive.

Landscape character areas have yet to be defined to east and north. To the west and south lie the farms and fields of Areas 233 and 234.

#### Conservation priorities

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area, but some consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland.

Ground photographs: 104

Aerial photographs: 62

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 238 GLASFYNYDD FOREST - USK RESERVOIR**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 823279**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 834.00**

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#### **Historic Background**

A character area lying at the summit of Mynydd Myddfai, around the Usk Reservoir. The northern half of the area occupied the former Maenor Myddfai, Cwmwd Perfedd, of Cantref Bychan which retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within modern Carmarthenshire. During the Post-Medieval period was held by the Vaughans of Golden Grove and the Earls of Cawdor (James n.d., 87). The southern half of the area lay within the Lordship of Brycheiniog. The area is typical of upland southwest Wales in its high preservation of prehistoric archaeology, which provide great time-depth and is here represented by a Bronze Age funerary/ritual landscape including standing stones and round barrows. During the historic period much of the area was operated as a grange, Dôl Hywel, which had been granted to Talley Abbey by 1324 (Ludlow 1998). The grange chapel, dedicated to St David, was also a chapel-of-ease to Myddfai parish (ibid.), but its site appears to lie beneath the Usk Reservoir. It was an upland grange, probably operated by tenant farmers primarily concerned with the mountain pasturing of animals, and appears to have been largely unenclosed during the historic period, as it still is today. The earliest historic maps depict it as open moorland with few settlements. Some fields are shown on the lower valley sides, however, and physical evidence for former enclosure exists, including relict trackways and drainage systems from the early Post-Medieval period, found in association with the cottage and longhut settlements characteristic of the uplands of southwest Wales during the transitional and Post-Medieval periods (Sambrook and Ramsey, 1999). Some of this settlement may be associated with the tilestone quarries in neighbouring Area 240. The area has no recent settlement, but the Usk Reservoir, opened as a water supply for Swansea in 1955, has had a profound effect on the landscape, as has the extensive conifer plantation which occupies the rest of the area.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This character area comprises mostly 20th century elements. The land lies in the upper Usk valley at heights of between 300 m and 400 m. The whole area is now either beneath the waters of the Usk reservoir, or beneath dense conifer plantation. Prior to the construction of the reservoir and the planting of trees most of the area was open moorland - the Black Mountain/Mynydd Myddfai - although there was a little enclosed land and abandoned settlement on the lower valley sides and valley bottom.

Recorded archaeology is rich and diverse, comprising a Neolithic findspot, two Bronze Age standing stones and a stone pair, two Bronze Age round barrows, the Medieval grange and chapel site, and Post-Medieval settlement features including a longhut, cottages, a farmstead, a trackway and a drainage system.

All surviving buildings are derelict and are simple, (dry-)stone built cottages.

This area is very well defined as it is bordered by open moorland to the west and north (Area 240), and by enclosed land in Powys to the east and south.

#### **Conservation priorities**

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995).

**Ground photographs: 105**

**Aerial photographs: 63**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 239 BANC WERNWGAN - FOEL FRAITH QUARRIES

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 721187

AREA IN HECTARES: 1378.00

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#### Historic Background

An extremely large landscape area forming an east-west 'belt' on the northern flank of the Black Mountain. It once lay within Maenor Gwynfe, Cwmwd Perfedd, of Cantref Bychan which was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established *acaput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.). It was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery but later reverted to Welsh rule. From 1282 onwards the lordship remained under English rule but retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within modern Carmarthenshire. During the Post-Medieval period was held by the Vaughans of Golden Grove and the Earls of Cawdor (James n.d., 87). It is now unenclosed moorland and mountain. The boundary between this area and the enclosed Areas 233 and 255 to the north is long-established and defined by a masonry wall and/or bank, suggesting a long period of stability - since the 16th century in parts (Leighton 1997, 29) - with no evidence for *ad hoc* encroachments or later parliamentary enclosure. The main themes in the history of land-use within the area, dominated by former limestone quarrying and the continuous upland pasturing of sheep, are the removal of natural woodland - which reached altitudes of 800 m - from the Mesolithic period onwards; occupation and partial enclosure of the landscape in the prehistoric period with contemporary ritual activity; the informal occupation of the area, with longhuts, and its partial enclosure during the Post-Medieval period; and 19th- and 20th-century leisure activities including field sport (Leighton 1997). Limeworking, which had been undertaken since at least the Medieval period, intensified during the 18th- and early 19th-century and was joined by quarrying for silica sand. These activities received impetus when an existing mountain road and major Post-Medieval droving route was turnpiked from 1779. This was superseded by the present A4069 but still survives as a track, the 'Bryn Road' (DAT & CPAT, 1997, 5).

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This area consists of that part of the Black Mountain which has Carboniferous limestone geology and has been subjected to quarrying. It comprises north-facing slopes on the northern fringes of the mountain between 300 m and 600 m. The area is entirely unenclosed and given over to rough pasture and open moorland, with blanket peats on higher ground and in hollows. The remains of the limestone quarrying industry are ubiquitous and are the most obvious elements of the historic landscape. Quarries and spoil heaps are the clearest remains, but there are also numerous limekilns scattered across the landscape. Also connected with the quarrying are the A4069 road and the 'Bryn Road', originally constructed to serve the limestone industry.

Recorded archaeology is extensive and relates to the land-use outlined above, including Bronze Age hut platforms, summit cairns and field systems, early Post-Medieval longhuts and informal enclosures, limeworking features such as quarries, kilns and an extensive network of trackways, and 19th- and 20th-century sporting and survey features.

There are no standing buildings.

To the north this area is very well defined as it borders the stone-walled Area 199, and enclosed farmland (Areas 197, 233 and 255). On other sides it merges with the larger portion of the Black Mountain (Area 240).

**Conservation priorities**

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). General recommendations of good historic landscape conservation practice and specific recommendations for the conservation of individual sites were made in reports on the Meithrin Mynydd Project for the Brecon Beacons National Park.

**Ground photographs: 106**

**Aerial photographs: 53**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: BLACK MOUNTAIN AND MYNYDD MYDDFAI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA:

### 240 THE BLACK MOUNTAIN - Y MYNYDD DDU

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 820228

AREA IN HECTARES: 14720.00

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#### Historic Background

A character area which comprises the entire Black Mountain/Mynydd Myddfai/Mynydd Bachmassif. The majority of the area lay within Cwmwd Perfedd, of Cantref Bychan, which retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated within modern Carmarthenshire, while the easternmost section lay within the Lordship of Brycheiniog. It is now unenclosed moorland and mountain which generally exhibits a hard boundary with enclosed areas to the north, suggesting a long period of stability - since the 16th century in parts (Leighton 1997, 29). However, both *ad hoc* encroachment and parliamentary enclosure have occurred along its far western edge. Much of the area comprises mountain which has never been subject to intense human usage, but those areas of moorland which have been exploited exhibit five main themes of land-use. Dominated by the continuous upland pasturing of sheep, they include the removal of natural woodland, which reached altitudes of 800 m, from the Mesolithic period onwards; the occupation and partial enclosure of the landscape in the prehistoric period, and contemporary ritual activity; some informal occupation of the area, with longhuts, and its partial enclosure during the Post-Medieval period; and 19th- and 20th-century leisure activities including field sport (Leighton 1997). The northern part of the area exhibits a more complex history. Here, Mynydd Myddfai is crossed by the Roman road from Llandovery (*Alabum*) to Brecon (*Cicutio*), with the establishment of two successive, superimposed marching camps at Y Pigwn. The road was later abandoned in favour of the line of the present A40(T). A second marching camp site lies on the moorland plateau at Arosfa Garreg to the south. Much of Mynydd Myddfai once lay within Iâl Hywel grange, which had been granted to Talley Abbey by 1324 (Ludlow 1998). It was an upland grange, probably operated by tenant farmers primarily concerned with the mountain pasturing of animals, and appears to have been largely unenclosed during the historic period, as it is today. It was later exploited for tilestone and the line of quarries following the outcrop were mainly operational in the 18th- and 19th-century. Running from east-west alongside Arosfa Garreg is a drovers road from Llangadog to Trecastle, beside which is a large turbarry (peat-cutting) from the Post-Medieval period. Further south, the existing mountain road from Brynamman to Llangadog, which was a major Post-Medieval droving route, was turnpiked from 1779. It was superseded by the present A4069 but still survives as a track, the 'Bryn Road' (DAT & CPAT, 1997, 5). The eastern edge of the area is characterised by a number of pillow-mounds which may have early Post-Medieval origins, although rabbit farming was practised in neighbouring areas to the east until the end of the 19th century.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This extremely large character area comprises all of the Black Mountain/Mynydd Myddfai/Mynydd Bach which lies outside Area 239. The whole area is unenclosed moorland. It includes the high escarpment above Llyn y Fan Fach/Llyn y Fan Fawr known as Bannau Sir Gar/Fan Brycheiniog which peaks at over 800 m. However, generally this area lies between 250 m and 600 m. The remains of past human exploitation are slight but nevertheless distinctive. Bronze Age burial mounds which cap the summits of most hills are the most obvious ancient elements of the landscape, but there are numerous abandoned settlements scattered across the mountain, mostly in valleys and at lower levels. Most are probably Post-Medieval, but some may be earlier. They are sometimes associated with old field systems and sheepfolds. Industrial remains are also present: quarries and tramways. The A4069 road, and old turnpike, crosses the mountain from north to south and links the industrial Amman valley with limestone workings and the Tywi valley. Despite all these remains, the landscape is one of open uninhabited moorland with rough grazing at lower levels and blanket peats at higher elevations. An unusual characteristic of this area is its very well-defined boundary with enclosed farmland to the north. This seems to be old established boundary and is marked on the ground for much of its course by a broken-down dry-stone wall or a stony bank. To the west and east the boundary between the open moorland of this area and enclosed farmland is not as hard-edged - former encroachments have blurred the border.

Recorded archaeology is extensive and relates to the land-use outlined above, including Bronze Age hut platforms, stone circles, summit cairns and field systems, the Roman road and camps, early Post-Medieval longhuts and informal enclosures, contemporary turbaries, pillow-mounds, the tilestone quarries, and 19th- and 20th-century sporting and survey features.

There are no standing buildings.

This is a very distinctive area as it is bordered by enclosed farmland (Areas 211, 233 and 255) and forestry (Area 238). Only to the north where it merges with a zone of industrial workings on the mountain (Area 239) are its boundaries indistinct.

#### **Conservation priorities**

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). General recommendations of good historic landscape conservation practice and specific recommendations for the conservation of individual sites were made in reports on the Meithrin Mynydd Project for the Brecon Beacons National Park.

**Ground photographs:** 107

**Aerial photographs:** 18

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: DOLAUCOTHI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 241 DOLAUCOTHI - PUMPSAINT

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 663409

AREA IN HECTARES: 126.90

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#### Historic Background

A small character area centred on the village of Pumpsaint which is a linear settlement either side of the A482, at the confluence of the Afon Cothi with its tributary, the Afon Twrch. It once lay within Cwmwd Cao of Cantref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284, and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. The A482 follows the line of the Roman road between the forts at Llandovery (*Alabum*) and Llanio (*Bremia*), past the Roman gold mines of Area 243 that were operational by the 1st century AD and necessitated the construction of a fort on the level ground beneath the present village. The fort site, *Louentium*, has been partially excavated (Jones and Little, 1974), and featured a detached bath-house building. Roman activity may have influenced subsequent settlement patterns. It has been claimed (Jones 1994, 88) that some gold exploitation persisted into the post-Roman period affecting the status of the surrounding area, which came to be regarded as important enough to be mentioned in the marginalia of the Book of St Chad (Jones 1994, 88), while a Medieval chapel, 'Llanpumsaint', erected within the fort ramparts probably has pre-Conquest origins (Sambrook and Page 1994, 4). It was a chapel-of-ease to Cao parish mentioned in the will of Rhys Fychan in 1271 (*ibid.*), and was marked on Saxton's map of Carmarthenshire of 1578. However, there is no evidence that it was accompanied by any nucleation. The development of the present village was probably encouraged by the Post-Medieval development of the Roman road into an important droving road and, from the late 18th-century, a mail road, and by the Post-Medieval Dolaucothi estate within which the village partly lay. The present pattern of large, regular fields also suggests estate remodelling of the landscape. By the later 19th century Pumpsaint village contained a post office, public house, hall and stores. Dolaucothi House occupies the valley floor to the east of the village and was established by the Johnes family, a branch of the Jones family of Abermarlais, by 1679 when the house was already a building of some size, containing six hearths; in 1704 it was described as 'the capital messuage called 'Tyddyn Dole Cothi' (Jones 1987, 56). It was practically rebuilt in 1792-6 and by 1873 the estate comprised 3172 acres (*ibid.*). The house was requisitioned during the Second World War, the lead was stripped from the roofs and it was demolished in 1951 (Whittle 1999). The grounds were taken over by the National Trust in 1956. At the north end of the area is Brunant, a surviving gentry house with late 16th- or 17th-century origins (Jones 1987, 15).

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This is a relatively small but complex character area. It lies across the valley floor and lower valley sides of the Afon Cothi upstream of Pumpsaint village at between 120 m and 200 m. In essence it is a late 18th- and 19th-century estate landscape which is superimposed over earlier landscape elements. There are two focii: Dolaucothi House and Pumpsaint village. The late 18th- and early 19th-century house at Dolaucothi has been demolished, except for a northern wing which now serves as a farmhouse. A coach house also survives. Many elements of the park and gardens associated with the house also survive, including a walled garden, a ha-ha, drives and possible landscaping for walks along the river. The most distinctive element of the park, however, is the planting, with many fine specimen trees remaining. The whole of the floodplain of the Cothi retains a parkland appearance. At the northeastern end of the area the early 19th-century gentry house of Brunant and its setting continue the parkland aspect to the Cothi floodplain upstream of the former house of Dolaucothi. A Roman fort lies beneath Pumpsaint village, but little surface evidence for it survives. Houses and other buildings in the village date mainly to the mid 19th-century, and were constructed by the Dolaucothi estate with a distinctive signature - a 'pattern-book' style of coursed rubble walls, steeply pitched slate roofs, barge- and fascia-boards (red painted) and casement windows with diamond panes. A chapel in the village dates to 1875, and close to it is a terrace of late 19th-century two-storey 'villa' houses not in the estate style. 20th century development is limited to a corrugated iron - tin - village hall and a few houses. Outside the village and parkland the area is divided into small irregular fields of improved pasture by earth banks topped by hedges. Hedges are not in good condition apart from those alongside roads and tracks. Many

have long gaps and others are derelict. There are many distinctive hedgerow trees. Dispersed farms and other dwellings are generally in the Dolaucothi 1850s 'pattern book' style. Outbuildings to the farms are in the same style. Apart from the A482 road which runs through Pumpsaint village, transport links are local - minor roads, lanes and tracks.

Recorded archaeology provides great time-depth, with nearly all periods being represented. It comprises a Neolithic findspot, a Bronze Age standing stone, the Roman road, fort, baths and coin hoard, the Medieval chapel site, an unknown cropmark, parkland features associated with the Dolaucothi estate, and buildings.

There are many distinctive buildings, most of them constructed on behalf of the Dolaucothi estate. The house at Dolaucothi has gone but the site represents an early 19th-century parkland with remnants of possible lime avenue, two enclosed gardens extant c. 1770, totally remodelled c. 1790, and altered and improved in the early 19th-century. The walled garden is partially intact and the whole is entered as ref. number PGW (Dy) 1 (CAM) in the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales (Whittle 1999). The stable block, carthouse, lodge and home farm are Grade II listed. Brunant, which contains 16th- or 17th-century elements, is also Grade II listed. There are 14 other Grade II listed buildings within the character area including Salemchapel from 1875, the public house, village hall, post office, stores, war memorial, forge and K6 telephone kiosk.

Although this area has very distinct historic components, its boundaries are not well defined; it merges with neighbouring areas to the northeast, east and southwest (Areas 242, 246 and 253), but is better defined to the south against Dolaucothi Gold Mines (Area 243).

#### **Conservation priorities**

Pumpsaint village is a Conservation area; any development must respect this status. The old house site and gardens are owned by the National Trust, who have formulated their own management plans. Outside the village and park the main priorities concern the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges, as this is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photographs: 108**

**Aerial photographs: 14**



## CARMARTHENSHIRE: DOLAUCOTHI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 242 CWRT-Y-CADNO

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 689435

AREA IN HECTARES: 570.60

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#### Historic Background

A narrow area following the valley floor of the Afon Cothi and its tributaries the Nant Dâr, Nant-y-garth and Afon Frongoch. It once lay within Cwmwd Caeoof Cantref Mawr, which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. The southern flanks of the valley bear physical evidence of Roman gold mining in the form of leats and aqueducts that supplied the workings found in Area 243. Within this area the pattern of small irregular fields is unlike that in Area 241 where enclosure appears to have been a creation of the Dolaucothi estate, and may be Medieval or early Post-Medieval in date, like the ridge-and-furrow observed in similar fields in the neighbouring Area 248. The place-name Ty'n-y-coed suggests the former presence of a contemporary settlement. The Dolaucothi estate did, however, impact on the area in a number of ways. It contains four significant gentry houses, all associated with the estate to varying degrees, of which Abermangoed had been established by the late 17th-century when 'the capital messuage and lands of Tir Abermangoed' belonged to the Jones family (Jones 1987, 3), but reverted to the Dolaucothi estate by 1733 and bears the architectural signature of the estate. Llandre Griffith meanwhile, was in 1701 the home of a branch of the Johnes of Dolaucothi and was later held in joint ownership with Abermangoed (Jones 1987, 103). Pant-coy, which burnt down in 1839, was owned in 1840 by the Earl of Cawdor but became part of the Dolaucothi estate and was the home of John Harries (1785-1839) and Henry Harries (1816-1862), wizards, soothsayers and conjurers, well-known throughout south Wales. Cefingarros was another estate farm with the architectural signature, formerly renowned for the nearby sulphur springs. The Cothi valley road had long been an important drovers route, and a chapel was constructed alongside the road at Cwrt-y-cadno. A school had been added by the late 19th-century but despite these focii and the patronage of the estate, the settlement village never developed as a nucleation with dwellings. There has been little recent development but there are late 20th-century coniferous plantations on Allt Dinbeth and Alt Ty'n-y-coed.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Cwrt-y-cadno character area lies in the upper Cothi valley and includes the valley floor which lies between 150 m and 190 m, and the valley sides that have been enclosed into fields up to approximately 220 m. Essentially this is a landscape of dispersed farms, small irregular fields and scattered woodland. The small irregular fields are divided by earth banks topped by hedges. Apart from along roads, lanes and tracks the hedges are generally in poor condition and are either overgrown, lines of straggling bushes or derelict. Wire fences provide the main stock-proof boundaries. There are many distinctive hedgerow trees, and these together with the numerous deciduous woods (particularly prominent on steep valley sides) and the several small- and medium-sized conifer plantations lend a wooded aspect to many parts of this area. Farmland land-use is almost entirely improved pasture, with small pockets of rougher grazing and rushy ground. Transport links are local only - minor roads, lanes and tracks. The settlement pattern is one of dispersed farms and other dwellings. There is no aggregate settlement. Farmhouses and outbuildings of the Dolaucothi estate provide a distinctive architectural signature. These are 'pattern-book' buildings dating to the 1850s, and are built of coursed stone and have casement windows with diamond panes. Farmhouses are of two storeys and three bays, and the central bay normally contains the front door projecting forward of the facade with a separate gable. The farm buildings of these farms tend to have a semi-formal arrangement in relation to the house, i.e. around a courtyard. Earlier farmhouses in the area are generally of late 18th- or early 19th-century date, are of a similar style and size to the estate examples but in a vernacular tradition, and usually rendered. Farm buildings associated with these have a informal arrangement with the house. Central to the area is Cwrt-y-cadno chapel. There is virtually no modern residential development.

Recorded archaeology comprises Roman leats and aqueducts, a house platform and a possible Medieval/Post-Medieval settlement site, a possible cemetery of unknown date and an unknown cropmark.

There are a number of distinctive buildings, many of them bearing the signature of the Dolaucothi estate. Cefn Coed Mawr, Grade II listed, is mid-late 18th-century, remodelled in the later 19th century, with good vernacular features and group value with its farm outbuildings. The barn is also Grade II listed, as is the early 19th-century cowshed with an integral lofted stable. Cefngarros, from c.1845, is typical of several former Dolaucothi estate farmhouses in the area and Grade II listed. Brynteg is Grade II listed, built in 1843 and probably influenced by the architectural pattern-books; the barn range is also Grade II listed. Pant-coy is Grade II listed being a late 19th-century cottage formed from earlier farm building; the previous house burnt down in 1839. The outbuildings are also Grade II listed. Cwrt-y-cadno chapel, built in 1899, is of good quality, adjacent to a K6 telephone box. There are several fords and bridges, and mill sites.

This area is well defined to the south, north and east where it borders steep valley sides, forestry plantations or open moorland (Areas 245, 247, 249 and 250). Definition is less good to the southwest where it merges with Area 241.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Pumpsaint village is a Conservation area; any development must respect this status. The old house site and gardens are owned by the National Trust, who have formulated their own management plans. Outside the village and park the main priorities concern the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges, as this is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photographs:** 109

**Aerial photographs:** 7, 10

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: DOLAUCOTHI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 243 DOLAUCOTHI GOLD MINES

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 664402

AREA IN HECTARES: 44.84

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#### Historic Background

A very small character area encompassing the gold mines at Dolaucothi. Although there is evidence for earlier exploitation, the present mining complex was initiated under the Romans, and represents the most advanced mine-working yet discovered in Britain; their end product was bullion for the imperial mints and may have been one of the motives for the conquest of Britain. Most of this section is taken from Jones and Lewis, 1971, augmented with *Burnhampassim*. The mines were established during the initial wave of subjugation of southwest Wales, in 75-80 AD, and continued production until the end of the 4th century. A timber drainage wheel from one of the deep stopes has been C<sup>14</sup> dated to c.50 BC, while coins found in the vicinity run from the 1st century down to the reigns of Valentinian and Valens, 364-375 AD (James 182, 33). Mines such as these remained under military control and to this end a fort was established on level ground at Pumsaint immediately to the west (Area 241). The area exhibits a complex of adits, hushes, stopes and areas of fire-setting characteristic of early mining techniques, but not necessarily all are Roman. It has been claimed (Jones 1994, 88) that some gold extraction persisted into the post-Roman period, but that it may have exploited alluvial deposits. It was certainly being undertaken during the later Medieval period, possibly under the Premonstratensians of Talley Abbey (a possible spoil tip has long been interpreted as a motte). It continued into the Post-Medieval period, and fairly large quantities of 17th century pottery have been found low down in one of the main leats and dams (James 1982, 33). After a hiatus, mining resumed in c.1870 and lasted until 1910, under the direction of an Australian, a Mr Mitchell, who reopened many of the earlier workings. A second modern operation began in 1934 under 'Roman Deep Holdings Ltd' and continued until the outbreak of the Second World War, during which the drainage wheel was recovered. The site was acquired by the National Trust after the war.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This very small character area lies across hilly northwest-facing slopes which range from 120 m to over 200 m and which are heavily wooded, including semi-natural deciduous woods, deciduous plantations and conifer plantations. There is a little improved pasture on the periphery. The mines are now owned by the National Trust and run as a tourist and research centre. The Trust has re-established a selection of mining buildings for visitor use, re-erected head-gear over a shaft, laid out paths and walks, and constructed car parks. However, the old mining remains are the most obvious and massive components of the area. The most apparent mining feature is the main Roman open-cast. In is in this deep pit with craggy, wooded slopes that the majority of the mining buildings have been re-erected. Included in the main-open cast are other mining features, some of Roman date such as tanks to store water, and others of Post-Medieval date such as shafts, adits and secondary open-casts. Mining features outside the main open-cast litter the landscape: smaller open-cast workings (some of unknown date), Roman tanks and leats, washing tables, spoil heaps, trial workings, inclines, tramways, adits and shafts. There is hardly a single square metre of the character area that has not be affected by mining.

Recorded archaeology is mainly confined to the mining features already noted, in addition to which may be mentioned the possible motte, a pounding-stone long mythologised as 'Carreg Pumsaint', and a possible holy well.

There are few buildings within the area and none are distinctive.

The mining components of this landscape provide its distinct character. Some elements such as leats and tanks run off into Area 246 to the northeast, but on other sides there is a sharp contrast and boundary between this area and the neighbouring areas of villages, farms and fields (Areas 241, 244 and 253).

**Conservation priorities**

The National Trust are undertaking a long-term programme of restoration and conservation on the gold mines

**Ground photographs: 110**

**Aerial photographs: 11**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: DOLAUCOTHI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 244 CAEO

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 675393

AREA IN HECTARES: 213.70

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#### Historic Background

A small area surrounding the present nucleation of Caao, at the confluence of the Afon Annell and the Nant Frena. It once lay within Cwmwd Caao of Cantref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. The parish church of St Cynwyl, Cynwyl Gaao, now at the centre of the village, has undoubtedly pre-Conquest origins and lies near the Roman road that linked the forts at Llandovery (*Alabum*) and Llanio (*Bremia*), and the Roman gold mines of Area 243. The church may have been the most important ecclesiastical centre in northeast Carmarthenshire before being overtaken by Llandeilo Fawr in the 9th century (Sambrook and Page 1995, 4), and had a number of subordinate churches during the Medieval period. St Cynwyl's Church stands in close proximity to the Roman fort at Pumsaint (Area 241) and the gold mines at Dolaucothi (Area 243), the notional importance of which may have remained undiminished into Post-Roman times. A 6th century ECM is built into the wall of the church, while two more have been found within the parish (Area 253), one of them recording St Paulinus, the reputed teacher of St David who founded a community which, by the 9th century, had grown to include 'numerous buildings' (Sambrook and Page 1995, 4). Although this community did not necessarily lie within Caao parish, the area may represent his '*patria*'. The commote of Caao, moreover, appears to have formed the core of the patrimony of the Princes of Deheubarth; Gruffydd ap Rhys, son of Rhys ap Tewdwr, the King of Deheubarth slain by the Normans in 1093, was allowed to retain the commote by Henry I (Ab Ithel 1860). The church, and land at the southern end of the area, were granted to Talley Abbey c.1200 (Ludlow 1998), otherwise the Medieval Maenor Caao was presumably coterminous with the parish. It may have been administered from the village site, which became the main bond settlement of the commote (Jones 1971, 317) and which appears to be an early nucleation; indeed, the churchyard was recorded as the site of an annual fair by George Owen in 1601 (Sambrook and Page 1995, 22). It is possible that the radial morphology of some field boundaries east of the village indicate the extent of former infield lands farmed by the bond community, while the pattern of rectilinear enclosures found elsewhere may at least in part preserve a system of strip-fields. Enclosed strip fields are shown on hillsides to the east and southeast of the village on the tithe map, from 1840. Gwarnoethle, a dwelling to the northwest of the village, was recorded in a deed of 1638 as '*y gornoythe*' and became a part of the Dolaucothi estate (Jones 1987, 86). The village developed in the 18th century when it was the centre of local droving activity. The Roman road became an important droving road and, from the late 18th-century until superseded by the present A482 which bypasses the village to the south, a mail road (Sambrook and Page 1995, 23). Drovers paddocks survive as earthworks on the south side of the village, and there was formerly a smithy. An early chapel, originally from 1777, may have been encouraged by droving activity. By the end of the 19th century the village had developed into an important local centre with a post office, school, terraced housing and two public houses. There has been some recent development including a council estate.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

Caao character area lies in the upper valley of the Afon Annell at between 150m and 200m. The core of the area comprises the nucleated village of Caao, which is centred on the Medieval church of St Cynwyl. The village is small and apart from the church consists of a school, a terrace of 19th century two-storey, stone-built houses with a public house, late 19th-century houses, limited 20th century residential development including council houses, and on the fringes of the settlement a chapel of 1907. Outside the village the area is characterised by dispersed farms, fields and woodland. Fields are small and vary between the regular and irregular. The enclosed strip-field system shown on the tithe map has now evolved into a system of small regular fields. Boundaries are of earth banks topped with hedges. Hedges are generally in good condition and well maintained, though there is some dereliction on higher slopes. Wire fences supplement the hedges. There are some distinctive hedgerow trees, and deciduous woodland on steep valley sides. Farmland land-use is almost entirely improved pasture. Most of the

farmhouses date to the 19th century, with examples of the distinctive architectural signature of the Dolaucothi estate - 'pattern-book' farms of the 1850s, stone-built, with casement windows with diamond panes - but most farmhouses are two-storey, stone-built, three-bays in the vernacular tradition. Farm buildings associated with these farms are either 19th century and stone-built and of just one or two ranges set in an informal arrangement with the house, or modern agricultural buildings. Apart from the A482, a former turnpike, which runs down the southwestern boundary of this area, transport links are local roads, tracks and lanes.

Recorded archaeology comprises a Roman aqueduct leading to Area 243, the church and ECM, two 'Castell' place names and a corn drying kiln.

There are a number of distinctive buildings. The landmark Medieval church with a tower is Grade II\* listed. Its lychgate, and a railed tomb, are Grade II listed, as is Glanyrannell farmhouse, rebuilt in c.1845 by the Dolaucothi estate, and probably influenced by architectural pattern-books. Its barn range, cowshed and cooling house are individually Grade II listed. Castell, an early 19th-century house, is also Grade II listed as is Dyffryn (the vicarage), and the bridge over the Annell. The 19th century post office, school, terraced housing and public houses, and the 1950s council estate, should also be noted.

To the north this area is fairly well defined by the Dolaucothi Gold Mines (Area 243), semi-open high moorland (Area 246) and forestry (Area 245). To the west this area tends to merge with Area 253. Elsewhere character areas have yet to be defined.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations.

**Ground photographs: 111**

**Aerial photographs: 12, 13**

## CARMARTHENSHIRE: DOLAUCOTHI

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### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 245 CAEO FOREST

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GRID REFERENCE: SN 697409

AREA IN HECTARES: 618.70

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#### Historic Background

An area of planted coniferous forest occupying the western flank of Mynydd Mallen. It once formed part of Cwmwd Cao of Cantref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. It is an upland area, now unenclosed except for the valley of the Afon Annell along which lie a series of small, rectilinear fields of unknown date and an aqueduct which supplied the Roman gold mines in Area 243 (Burnham 1993). Recent fieldwork undertaken by *Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology*, however, suggests a density of land-use and population during the Post-Medieval period exemplified by a number of abandoned early dwellings/farmsteads and some evidence for enclosure. In addition, evidence for Bronze Age occupation exists in the form of ritual features (round barrows). The area has no recent settlement but now lies entirely beneath later 20th century coniferous plantation.

#### Description and essential historic landscape components

This is a large area of 20th century forestry, lying between 200 m and 400 m. Prior to afforestation most of the area consisted of open moorland, but at lower levels, particularly in the upper Annell valley, the plantation was established over former fields and settlements. Here field boundary banks survive beneath the trees, and there is also here some ancient deciduous woodland intermixed with the plantation. The main components of this landscape are, however, the plantation and associated roads and drives.

Recorded archaeology comprises two Bronze Age round barrows, a Roman aqueduct, Post-Medieval, rectangular buildings/farmsteads and folds.

There are no standing buildings.

This area has hard-edged boundaries to the northwest where it runs against semi-open land (Area 246) and to the southwest against the fields and farms of Cao (Area 244). To the north and northeast the forestry borders a large tract of open moorland (Area 247). On other sides the character areas have yet to be defined.

#### Conservation priorities

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

Ground photographs: 112

Aerial photographs: 13

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: DOLAUCOTHI**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 246 BANC LLWYNCEILIOG**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 682416**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 306.30**

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#### **Historic Background**

An area of planted coniferous forest occupying the western flank of Mynydd Mallen. It once lay within Cwmwd Cao of Cantref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. It is an upland area, now enclosed with large, regular fields which are late in origin, having been established since the tithe survey of 1840. There is now no settlement, which may reflect the predominant situation during the historic period, but an abandoned farmstead has been recorded. There is evidence for prehistoric occupation in the form of Bronze Age ritual features (round barrows) and the area is crossed by Roman aqueducts leading to Area 243.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This area comprises the high south-east valley side of the upper Cothi valley. It lies between 180 m and 330 m. The area has been enclosed into large, fairly regular fields by earth banks and hedges, but these are now mostly redundant - the hedges either gone or marked by straggling lines of bushes and small trees - and wire fences provide stock-proof barriers. Much of the land is improved grazing, but there is rougher ground on some steep slopes and at higher levels, particularly at the northeastern end of the area where larger former fields merge into unenclosed moorland. There are stands of ancient deciduous woodland on very steep slopes, and a couple of small conifer plantations are also present. Rough tracks and paths are the only transport links. There are no settlements. The earthworks of Roman aqueducts which traverse the valley side are distinct elements of the landscape. Overall the appearance of this area is of improved pasture divided by wire fences, with woodland on steep slopes.

Recorded archaeology comprises two Bronze Age round barrows, a Roman reservoir and aqueducts, and an abandoned farmstead.

There are no standing buildings.

Banc Llwynceiliog is a distinct character area. It provides a buffer between farms and fields on the valley floor (Areas 241 and 242), and higher open moorland (Area 247) and upland forestry (Area 245). To the southwest lies the distinctive area of Dolaucothi Gold Mines (Area 243).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. It is probably desirable to allow the degraded old boundaries to remain in their current state so allowing the area to return to open moorland/pasture. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland.

**Ground photographs: 113**

**Aerial photographs: 10, 12, 13**



## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: DOLAUCOTH**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 247 MYNYDD MALLÁEN**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 726433**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 2424.00**

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#### **Historic Background**

An area representing the unenclosed moorland of the Mynydd Mallen plateau, lying above 300 m. It was formerly divided between the Caeo and Mallen commotes of Cantref Mawr, which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. As an upland area, land-use was primarily concerned with the mountain pasturing of animals, and it appears to have been largely unenclosed during the historic period, as it still is today. It is depicted as open pasture on the earliest historic maps and is recorded as being partly common land during the Medieval period. Physical evidence for prehistoric use of the landscape exists in the form of landmark ritual sites, represented by Bronze Age round barrows and a possible standing stone, which were intended to be prominent visual features within the landscape. A late Medieval - early Post-Medieval rabbit warren occupied the southern flank of the plateau, and evidence for limited Post-Medieval enclosure exists in association with the longhuts characteristic of informal upland settlement in southwest Wales during this period (Sambrook and Ramsey, 1999). There are several small former lead and copper mines on the edges of the area, which may have early origins. Mining was already being undertaken in this area by the late 13th-century, the crown taking the 'eleventh foot' of the ore in taxation (Rees 1968), but had largely ceased by the mid 19th-century. The area has no recent settlement.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

Mynydd Mallen is a high, undulating and isolated plateau which achieves heights of over 450 m. To the west and north, its very steep and often craggy sides fall away into the valleys of the Tywi and Cothi. To the south the edge of the plateau is more broken, but the slopes here are still steep. Essentially Mynydd Mallen is open moorland - rough grazing, bracken and blanket peats - with a little improved pasture on the southern edge. On some steep slopes fringing the plateau there is a little scrubby woodland, and a small conifer plantation is included in the area. There are some old earth boundaries on the fringes of the plateau, but occasional wire fences provide stock-proof boundaries.

Recorded archaeology is relatively rich and comprises Bronze Age round barrows and a possible standing stone, Medieval - Post-Medieval rabbit warrens, longhuts and field system, trackways, lead and copper mines, and unknown earthworks.

There are no standing buildings.

This is a very well-defined area. It is either bordered by farms and fields in valley bottoms (Areas 242 and 218), high, semi-enclosed valley sides (Areas 246 and 250), or forestry (Areas 217 and 245).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

**Ground photographs: 114**

**Aerial photographs: 4, 6**

## **CARMARTHENSHIRE: DOLAUCOTHI**

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### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 248 DYFFRYN FANAGOED**

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**GRID REFERENCE: SN 688454**

**AREA IN HECTARES: 127.20**

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#### **Historic Background**

An area occupying the upland valley floor of the Afon Fanagoed, a tributary of the Afon Cothi, where it emerges from the Cambrian Mountains. It once lay within Cwmwd Cao, specifically Maenor rhwng Twrch a Choethi, of Cantref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. The area lies in a high valley but is a relatively fertile pocket of land which has probably always been subject to fairly intensive land-use. It is occupied by a system of small, rectangular fields, some of which exhibit physical evidence of ridge-and-furrow which here may have been a response to waterlogged soil conditions and not necessarily of Medieval date; the boundaries were in place by 1840 (Cynwyl Gaeo tithe map). There are now a number of small farmsteads.

#### **Description and essential historic landscape components**

This area lies in a high valley - the upper valley of the Afon Fanagoed - between 200 m and 250 m. It is a landscape of dispersed farms and fields. Fields are small and irregular, and are bounded by earth banks topped by hedges. Apart from alongside lanes and tracks, hedges are in poor condition; either derelict or reduced to straggling lines of overgrown bushes and small trees. Farmland land-use mostly comprises improved pasture, but there is peaty and rushy ground across much of the valley floor, and bracken on steep slopes. There are a few small stands of scrubby deciduous woodland. Transport links are local lanes and tracks. The few farmsteads are located on the lower valley sides, or at the foot of the valley sides. Farmhouses are late 18th- or 19th-century in date, stone-built, two-storey and three-bay, and in the vernacular tradition. Stone outbuildings are of a similar date and relatively modest in size, usually consisting of one or two ranges. Farms have small modern agricultural buildings associated with them. There is no recent residential development.

Recorded archaeology is confined to the ridge-and-furrow, and a mill site.

Buildings are not particularly distinctive and none are listed.

This is a very well defined area as it is bounded either by high, semi-open moorland (Area 251) or forestry plantations (Area 249).

#### **Conservation priorities**

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. However, the decay evident in many of the boundary hedges is seriously eroding the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed.

**Ground photographs: 115**

**Aerial photographs: 9**

# HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 249 ALLT-Y-HEBOG

GRID REFERENCE: SN 678436  
AREA IN HECTARES: 272.70

## Historic Background

A small area of modern coniferous forest in the foothills of the Cambrian Mountains. It once lay within the former Cwmwd Caec, specifically Maenor rhwng Twrch a Chothi, of Cantref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. It is an upland area, but has probably always been subject to fairly intensive land-use and is enclosed with two distinct field patterns. To the west, an east-facing hillside, Troed-y-rhiw, and the valley of the Nant y garth exhibit a pattern of small, rectangular enclosures, some of which are long and narrow suggesting the enclosure of former strip-fields, perhaps a manorial infield. To the east, the hills Allt Bryn-tŷ and Allt-yr-hebog are enclosed with very large, regular rectangular fields which are late in origin, having been established since the tithe survey of 1840 (Cynwyl Gaeo parish). There are a number of abandoned early dwellings/farmsteads, including the interestingly-named Erw-hen and Erw-newydd. The area has no recent settlement and now lies entirely beneath late 20th-century coniferous plantation.

## Description and essential historic landscape components

This character area comprises woodland on steep slopes of the Upper Cothi valley. It lies between approximately 180 m and 340 m. The woodland consists of ancient deciduous woods interspersed with which are large conifer plantations. Most of the plantations seem to have been established in what was once open land, though small areas had been enclosed into small fields. A small surviving pocket of dispersed trees, small clumps of trees, and rough grazing on steep craggy slopes, give an impression of the appearance of much of the landscape prior to afforestation. It is possible that this pre-afforestation landscape was established by the Dolaucothi estate. The main components of the historic landscape now comprise plantations and their associated tracks and drives.

Recorded archaeology is limited to abandoned farms and cottages, and a Roman coin hoard. There are few buildings and none of them are distinctive.

This area is well-defined to the south and west by farms and fields in the valley bottom (Areas 242 and 248). Elsewhere character areas have yet to be defined.

## Conservation priorities

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. However, some consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaved woodland.

Ground photographs: 116  
Aerial photographs: 8

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA:  
250 ALLT Y BERTH

GRID REFERENCE: SN 706454  
AREA IN HECTARES: 125.4

Historic Background

A narrow area covering the northern side of the Cothi valley. It once lay within Cwmwd Caeoof Cantref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 (Rees n.d.) and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. The steep slopes lie beneath deciduous woodland which has probably existed throughout the historic period. Such enclosures that exist are continuations of boundaries from Area 251, which are all late, being 19th century in origin (Cynwyl Gaeo title map, 1840). There is now no settlement, and none is recorded in the past.

Description and essential historic landscape components

This small but nevertheless distinct character area lies on very steep and craggy southeast-facing slopes in the upper Cothi valley. Apart from a few small pockets of open moorland, the whole area is wooded. Nearly all of this woodland is semi-natural deciduous, with a few small conifer plantations.

There is no recorded archaeology in this area, and no buildings.

This is a very distinct character area. It is bounded either by semi-open high land (Area 251) or farms and fields of the valley bottom (Area 242).

Conservation priorities

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. However, some consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaved woodland.

Ground photographs: 117  
Aerial photographs: 117

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA:  
251 CEFN BRANDDU

GRID REFERENCE: SN 706463  
AREA IN HECTARES: 315.10

Historic Background

A narrow area covering the northern side of the Colthi valley. It once lay within Cwmwd Caecoff Canrref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 (Rees n.d.) and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. It is an area of high moorland pasture. The western section was enclosed at a late date, during the 19th century (Cynwy] Gaeo tith map, 1840) when it was divided into large fields with straight boundaries. The eastern third is still unenclosed and the entire area was probably open, common grazing during most of the historic period. A Post-Medieval cottage site represents the only recorded evidence of human occupation, and may be a product of squatting. There is now no settlement.

Description and essential historic landscape components

Cefn Branddu is a high rounded ridge which peaks at over 400 m. It has been enclosed into large fields by earth banks, but these are now redundant and wire fences provide stock-proof boundaries. Land-use is mixed, but mostly comprises improved pasture, with rougher grazing and bracken on steep slopes and on the highest points. There are individual trees and small stands of semi-natural deciduous woodland on the steep, northwest-facing slopes. There are no settlements, and the only transport links are rough tracks and paths.

The only archaeological site recorded in this area is the one cottage site.

There are no buildings.

This is a well-defined area. It is bounded by woodland on steep slopes to the east and south (Area 250), and by farms and fields to the west (Area 248). On other sides landscape character areas have yet to be defined.

Conservation priorities

There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. It is probably desirable to allow the degraded old boundaries to remain in their current state, so allowing the area to return to open moorland/pasture. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaved woodland.

Ground photographs: 118  
Aerial photographs:

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA:  
252 BRYN ARAU DUON

GRID REFERENCE: SN 741484  
AREA IN HECTARES: 698.10

Historic Background

An area of planted forest in the foothills of the Cambrian Mountains, that once lay within Cwmwd Mallen of Cantref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period (Rees n.d.). It is an upland area, which is now almost entirely unenclosed, and such boundaries as do exist are later 19th century. This appears to represent a continuation of its historic land-use, the only recorded settlement being a Post-Medieval longhouse site. However, Rees' map of 14th century south Wales (Rees 1932) shows a trackway running across the area from northwest to southeast. The area, moreover, represents a relic Bronze Age ritual landscape, importance and time-depth being provided by such ritual and funerary features as standing stones and barrows, which were intended to be prominent visual features within the landscape. There is also a small former barium lead mine on the southern edge. Mining was already being undertaken in this area by the late 13th century, the crown taking the 'eleventh foot' of the ore in taxation (Rees 1968), but had largely ceased by the mid 19th-century. The area has no recent settlement and now lies entirely beneath late 20th-century coniferous forest planted by the (then) Forestry Commission.

Description and essential historic landscape components

This area consists entirely of a conifer plantation. It lies on rounded hills and steep-sided valleys between 250 m and 420 m. Prior to afforestation the area was unenclosed moorland. The main landscape components are the plantation and its associated roads and drives.

There is a relatively high density of recorded archaeology. Bronze Age ritual and landscape features comprise two standing stones, a stone row and a possible stone circle, a group of three round barrows and a single round barrow, and two ring barrows. Post-Medieval sites comprise a longhouse and a barium lead mine.

There are no standing buildings.

This is a distinct area as it bordered by open moorland (including Area 219), or fields and farms in farms in valley bottoms (Area 218).

Conservation priorities

There are no historic landscape conservation priorities in this area.

Ground photographs: 119  
Aerial photographs:

# HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 253 DYFFRYN COTHI

GRID REFERENCE: SN 644382  
AREA IN HECTARES: 1329.00

## Historic Background

A large landscape area mainly comprising the upper Afon Cothi floodplain. It once lay within Cwmwd Caew, specifically Maenor Llansawel, of Cantref Mawr which remained an independent Welsh lordship until 1284 and largely retained native systems of tenure throughout the Medieval period. The area appears to have good evidence for an early Medieval history and significance. The A482 follows the line of the Roman road that linked the forts at Llandoverey (*Alabum*) and Llanio (*Bremia*), which was later an important droving road and, from the late 18th-century, a mail road. There is an early Medieval cemetery site and a 6th century ECM at Maesllanwrthwl. Another ECM near Crugbar commemorates Paulinus, the reputed teacher of St David who founded a community which, by the 9th century, had grown to include 'numerous buildings' (Sambrook and Page 1995, 4). Although this community did not necessarily lie within Caew parish, the area may represent his *parva*. The comote of Caew appears to have formed the core patrimony of the Princes of Deheubarth; Gruffydd ap Rhys, son of Rhys ap Tewdwr, the King of Deheubarth slain by the Normans in 1093, was allowed to retain the comote by Henry I (Ab Ithel 1860), and *allys* place name lies within this area. The northern half, moreover, is probably the location - as the place-names Bryn-Telych and Cefn-Telych - of the 'Tir Telych' mentioned in the marginalia of the Book of St Chad, which was possibly an important holding with place-name evidence for land-use and ownership (Jones 1994, 88). The importance which must have been attached to the Roman gold mines in Area 243 appears to have continued into the post-Roman period (Sambrook and Page 1995, 4). The ecclesiastical significance of the area did not diminish in the post-Conquest period; land at 'Trallwng Elgan', with a chapel, was granted to Talley Abbey as a grange, but its precise location has yet to be firmly established. It may have occupied the site of the later Edwinstowr Mansion (Jack 1981, 125; Rees 1932), or the later Glanyrannell Mansion (Richards 1974, 114), where a further chapel with probable pre-Conquest origins, Capel Tello, was located (Rees 1932). Edwinstowr was acquired by the Williams family in the 16th century (Jones 1987, 61) and by the 18th century the estate included the southern part of this character area. The impact of the estate upon the landscape was profound involving tree-planting on an extensive scale, in particular the planting of oak and elm during the 18th- and 19th-century which included an oak avenue leading to the mansion house (Lewis, 1833). Glanyrannell, which had been established by 1609 (Jones 1987, 79), occupied much of the northern half of the area under the Price Jones family. It was rebuilt at the end of the 19th century; an earlier house stood at Bell-ficar from which the front door was re-used. The house site is now a hotel. Samuel Lewis, in 1833, noted that the area was 'for the greater part enclosed and in a state of good cultivation' (*ibid.*). Nevertheless, it is clear that much of the present enclosure occurred between 1838 and 1887 (Ordnance Survey 1:2500 First Edition). The title maps for Llansawel and Talley parishes, of 1838, show boundaries defining much larger fields than at present, more like blocks of open land. Doubtless they were largely subdivided into the present fields under the impetus of estate management. Crugbar was mentioned in a will of 1271 (Sambrook and Page 1995, 3) but there is no evidence of any early settlement. It is a good example of a new rural settlement of the 19th century in which a post office was built next to a nonconformist chapel (originally from 1688), around which a village subsequently developed. 20th century development includes a council estate.

## Description and essential historic landscape components

This character area lies across the valley floor and lower valley side of the Afon Cothi and its tributaries - Afon Marials, Afon Twrch and Afon Annell - between Edwinstowr and Pumsaint. The valley floors comprise floodplains up to 1km wide and lie at between 90 m and 120 m, the valley sides included in this area run up to about 150m. It is a complex area, but essentially consists of dispersed farms and fields. Fields tend to be relatively large and regular on the valley floor and smaller and irregular on the valley sides. Both types are enclosed by earth banks topped with hedges. Most hedges are maintained by cutting, but many have wide gaps and are starting to become derelict. At higher elevations such as on Allt Ynyssau hedges are reduced to straggling lines of bushes. Wire fences provide the main stock-proof

boundaries. Farmland is almost entirely improved pasture, apart from a little rough ground on the Martlais floodplain. Other than a couple of small conifer plantation on high ground, woodland is limited to small rather scrubby deciduous stands; these are mostly located on the steeper valley sides. The dominant settlement type is the dispersed farm. Farmhouse come in a variety of types, but 19th century, stone-built, two-storey, three-bay structures in the vernacular tradition area the most common. Other types include substantial late 19th-century 'villa'-style houses, and early- to mid 19th-century houses in the 'polite' Georgian style. Stone-built farm outbuildings tend to be relatively substantial, often of two or more ranges, and occasionally arranged semi-formally around a yard. The only aggregate settlement is Crugbar which consists of a loose cluster of buildings including a 19th century chapel, a short terrace of two-storey 19th century houses, a school, other 19th century houses, and small-scale 20th century housing. Other residential and commercial development across the area is limited to a few dispersed 19th- and 20th-century properties apart from Glanyranneil and Edwinstford. Glanyranneil is a 20th century house, now a hotel, which sits in extensive parkland on the valley floor of the Annel. Edwinstford is much more substantial. The house which dates to 1635 with later, mostly 19th century, additions is now ruinous. The fine collection of associated stone buildings survives, some converted to other uses. Walled gardens, in dilapidated condition, and a fine bridge all remain. Parkland is now much degraded and mainly represented by semi-enclosed pasture and isolated trees on the Cothi valley floor, and woodland on steep valley sides.

There is a wealth of recorded archaeology which provides great time-depth. It comprises two (and one possible) Bronze Age standing stones, a possible round barrow, iron age/Roman finds, and the Roman road and a cremation. Medieval sites are a *llys* place name, a possible motte or spoil tip, two holy wells, two chapel sites, a cemetery and an ECM.

There are many distinctive buildings, mainly associated with the Edwinstford and Glanyranneil estates. The earliest section of the Grade II\* listed Edwinstford house, built c. 1635, has a square plan with a vast central chimney. The dairy, home farm, coach house, dovecote, walled garden, sundial and house 'Ty Pegg' are independently Grade II listed. The 18th century bridge is Grade II\* listed and the entire park is entered as ref. number PGW (Dy) (CAM) in the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales (White, 1999). The 18th century Glanyranneil Farm, its barn range, cowshed and cooling house are all independently Grade II listed. Crugbar chapel, from 1785, and railings are both Grade II listed, as are four terraces within the village, from 1867. Belli-ficer, Felin-newydd mill from c. 1810, and the milestone at Maesllanwrthwl, are also Grade II listed. There are several other unlisted major dwellings, bridges, tollhouses, a mill, a council estate, post office, a school and school site, and a former smithy.

This is not an easy area to define. Although character areas have only been defined and described to the northeast (Areas 241, 243 and 244), on all sides there is a zone of change rather than a hard-edged border between this area and its neighbours.

### Conservation priorities

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Mechanisms for the preservation of surviving garden/park/house features at Edwinstford need to be explored. Otherwise maintain as existing.

Ground photographs: 120  
Aerial photographs: 12, 15



## HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 254 CILMAENLLWYD

GRID REFERENCE: SN 668200  
AREA IN HECTARES: 258.30

### Historic Background

A small character area within the foothills of the Black Mountain, once forming part of Maenor Llys which occupied the eastern part of Iscennen commote. Iscennen, unlike the rest of Cantref Bychan within which it lay, remained nominally independent of Anglo-Norman rule until 1284 when it was acquired by John Giffard, and in 1340 it became a member of the Duchy of Lancaster (Rees 1953, xv-xvi). Part of Area 254 may, like neighbouring Area 197, have formed part of the estate of the Maerdref of Carreg Cennen (see Area 198); a settlement is marked (as 'Penhill') at Penhill Farm on Rees' map of 14th century south Wales (Rees 1932). However, the bulk of the area, around the large, central farm of Cilmaenllwyd, appears to have belonged to the Premonstratensians of Talley Abbey (Rees 1932). The holding had fallen to the Lloyds, a recusant family, by the 17th century, when horse races were held nearby (Jones 1987, 34); it was later let to tenants. In the western part of the area are a group of narrow fields which may represent former open fields; the remainder of the enclosures, however, are large and fairly regular, and may be Post-Medieval in origin. There has been little recent development.

### Description and essential historic landscape components

This character area lies on fairly gentle south- and southwest-facing slopes between 180 m and 240 m. It comprises dispersed farms and other dwellings situated in medium-sized irregular and regular fields. The fields are defined by earth, and stone and earth banks, topped with hedges. Apart from alongside roads and tracks hedges are not generally in good condition, and are either derelict or have many gaps. Wire fences provide stock-proof boundaries. There are very few hedgerow trees, and this, coupled with just a few small deciduous woods, lends an open appearance to much of the landscape. Most of the farmland is improved pasture, though there are isolated pockets of rough grazing and rushy ground. Transport links are purely local - lanes and tracks. Farmhouses are stone-built, three-storey, and three-bayed, 19th century and generally in the vernacular tradition. Smaller stone-built 19th century cottages in the vernacular tradition are also present. 19th century farm outbuildings are of stone, and generally of one or two ranges. Most farms have modern agricultural buildings.

Recorded archaeology is limited to the Medieval settlement at Penhill, a mill site and dwellings.

There are no listed buildings.

Cilmaenllwyd is not an easy character area to define as many of the neighbouring areas share similar landscape components. Thus there tends to be a zone of change between this area and its neighbours (Areas 197, 198, 200 and 231).

### Conservation priorities

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). There are few historic landscape conservation priorities in this character area. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing.

Ground photographs: 121  
Aerial photographs: 54

# HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA:

255 BLAEN CENNEN

GRID REFERENCE: SN 686191  
AREA IN HECTARES: 209.50

## Historic Background

A narrow area on the lower northern slope of the Black Mountain. Evidence of early settlement occurs in the limestone area around Llygfan Llŵchwr, at the western end of this character area. Giving great time-depth to the landscape, a possible neolithic chambered tomb has been recorded adjacent to a prehistoric findspot, Bronze Age burnt mounds and an Iron Age/Romano-British settlement. During the historic period the area lay within Cantref Bychan, divided between two commotes. The western half lay within Iscennen commote, which remained nominally independent of Anglo-Norman rule until 1284 when it was acquired by John Giffard, and in 1340 it became a member of the Duchy of Lancaster (Rees 1953, xv-xvi). The remainder of Cantref Bychan, including Cwmwd Perfedd within which the eastern half of the area lay, was invaded by the Anglo-Normans under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandovery in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.) and was acquired soon after by the Clifford lords of Brecon as the Lordship of Llandovery. However, there were many episodes of Welsh rule and the area retained native tenurial customs until the end of the Medieval period when it was incorporated into modern Carmarthenshire. The pattern of regular rectangular enclosures with straight boundaries suggests that the area comprised unenclosed pasture until the Post-Medieval period. Part of the area is recorded as formal common land, but fields around Blaencennen Farm are more irregular and it appears to be an earlier holding, while the physical boundary between this area and the unenclosed moorland of Area 239 to the south is well-defined as a masonry wall dating from the 16th century in places (Leighon 1997, 29). Early Post-Medieval hut platforms and pillow mounds have been recorded at Llygad Llŵchwr, in association with a small limestone quarry and kiln site. Nevertheless, pastoralism was the mainstay of the economy and Cwmllŵyd sheepfold, at the eastern end of the area, which has recently been restored (Murphy 1998), served several farms which gave their names to the enclosures into which it was subdivided. There is a further sheepfold and a dip. The landscape had assumed its present form by c.1840 (Llandeilo Fawr and Llangadog tithe maps) and there has been little subsequent change or development.

## Description and essential historic landscape components

The relatively small character area lies on north-facing slopes between the Cennen valley and the Black Mountain at heights of 220 m to 320 m. The whole of the area is enclosed. Fields are a mixture of fairly small regular and irregular enclosures which are interspersed with larger regular enclosures. There is a variety of boundary types. A dry-stone wall lies along the boundary with the Black Mountain, and other similar walls lie at these higher elevations close to the Black Mountain. Most walls are broken-down. Earth banks and/or stony banks are the other boundary types. These were formerly topped with hedges, but nearly all the hedges have now gone or are reduced to straggling lines of bushes. Wire fences provide stock-proof boundaries. There are very few trees. Land-use is a mixture of rough grazing, rushy, wet ground and improved pasture. Transport links are local and consist of lanes and tracks. The settlement pattern is of dispersed farms. Farmhouses are 19th century, two-storey, three-bayed and stone-built in the vernacular tradition. Outbuildings are of a similar date, stone built and generally of quite modest proportions. Often they comprise a single range. Most farms have modern agricultural buildings.

Recorded archaeology is relatively rich and diverse for a small area, comprising a Neolithic chambered tomb, two Bronze Age burnt mounds and a possible round barrow, a prehistoric findspot, an Iron Age/Romano-British open settlement, a possible Medieval holy well, and early Post-Medieval hut platforms, pillow mounds, quarry and limekilns.

There are some distinctive buildings but none are listed.

To the south this area is very well-defined at its border with the Black Mountain (Areas 199 and 239). Elsewhere definition is less good, and there tends to be a zone of change rather than a hard-edged boundary between this area and its neighbours (Areas 197, 198, 200 and 233)

#### **Conservation priorities**

This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). The decay evident in many of the hedgerows and other boundary types is eroding the historic character of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing

#### **Ground photographs: 122**

**Aerial photographs: 52, 53, 56**

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA:  
256 CARRREG CENNEN CASTLE

GRID REFERENCE: SN 668190  
AREA IN HECTARES: 16.58

Historic Background

A very small character area comprising the rocky hill, and castle, of Carreg Cennen, in the foothills of the Black Mountain. The cave beneath the castle was occupied during the prehistoric period, but the history of the area is primarily Medieval. Much of this section has been taken from Lewis 1990, *Carreg Cennen Castle*. Carreg Cennen was, during the historic period, the administrative centre and *llys* of Iscennen commote, giving its name to Maenor Llys within which it lay; *itsmaerdref* lay in Area 198 now represented by the farm-names Ferdre Fawr and Fach (Rees 1924, 200). The *llys* had been established by at least the 13th century and appears to have been fortified prior to the construction of the present castle later in that century, possibly under the Prince of Deheubarth Rhys ap Gruffydd who built castles at Dinefwr (Area 195) and Cardigan in the late 12th century. Along with Cantref Bychan, Carreg Cennen fell to his son Rhys Gryg but was separated from the rest of Iscennen in 1233 when Rhys Meichyll succeeded. It was briefly captured by the English in 1248, was the scene of several changes of hands in the 1250s and finally, in 1277, surrendered to the English. The castle, along with Iscennen, was acquired by John Giffard in 1283, and in 1340 it became a member of the Duchy of Lancaster (Rees 1953, xv-xvi). The castle was rebuilt as a substantial masonry construction, the present Inner Ward being constructed in the late 13th century and the Outer Ward being added in the early 14th century. The castle was captured and damaged during the Glyndwr rebellion, but was finally destroyed during the Wars of the Roses in 1461. The later history of the castle is obscure until the late 18th century when its striking site came to the notice of Romantic painters and poets. It was acquired by the State in 1932 on whose behalf it is now managed by Cadw.

Description and essential historic landscape components

This very small character area consists of the Medieval castle of Carreg Cennen and the hill on which it is located. Carreg Cennen hill is composed of Carboniferous limestone and rises from the Cennen valley at approximately 150 m to a summit of over 260 m. The northern, eastern and western flanks of the hill are steep-sided, the southern and southwestern sides are vertical cliffs. The lower less precipitous but nevertheless craggy southern slopes are cloaked with deciduous woodland. The remainder of the hill is improved pasture. This has been divided into small irregular fields by earth, and earth and stony banks, both of which are topped with hedges. Carreg Cennen Castle is, however, the major historic element of this landscape. Substantial elements of this masonry castle on the summit survive, including most of the main curtain wall and associated towers. The outer ward is less well preserved. Included in the remains is a covered passageway which leads down the cliff-face to a cave. In the Outer Ward lie the remains of a stone-built limetkiln.

Recorded archaeology is dominated by the substantial remains of the Medieval masonry castle with its twin-tower gatehouse, but there is also the prehistoric use of the cave, a Bronze Age findspot, a Roman coin hoard, and Post-Medieval limetkilns.

There are no other buildings.

This is a well-defined area. The hill and the castle are distinctive elements of a landscape otherwise composed of farms and fields (Areas 197, 198 and 254).

**Conservation priorities**  
This area lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Historic landscape conservation priorities must respect policies in the National Park Plan (1993) and the National Park Local Plan (1995). Carreg Cennen Castle is under the management of Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, and therefore its protection and future management is assured.

Ground photographs: 123  
Aerial photographs: 52, 55

# HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA: 257 LLANWRDA PARISH

GRID REFERENCE: SN 727352  
AREA IN HECTARES: 2058.00

## Historic Background

An area lying on the north-west side of the Tywi Valley. During the historic period it lay within the commote of Mallen, the late Medieval parish of Llanwrda and the later hundred of Caer (Rees 1932). The commote was held of the independent Welsh lordship of Cantref Mawr until the establishment of the county of Carmarthen in 1284, and in this area was subdivided into Gwestfa Llanwrda, probably administered from a *llys* at Neuadd Llanwrda (Area 210), and Gwestfa Ystrad Mynys, probably administered from a *llys* at Ystrad (Area 208). There is evidence for settlement from an early period, a possible Iron Age hillfort lies within the area while the Roman road from Carmarthen to Llandoverly, turnpiked in 1763-71 (Lewis, 1971, 43) and now represented by the A40(T), partly forms its south-eastern edge. The road was probably the route taken by the Anglo-Normans advancing from the east under Richard Fitz Pons who established a *caput* at Llandoverly in 1110-16 (Rees n.d.) and subdued Cantref Bychan to the south. This initial campaign may be the context for the establishment of the motte at Glan-Mynys, on the edge of the Tywi floodplain; it may, however, be an independent Welsh foundation lying as it does in association with the possible *llys* at Ystrad. There may be a Medieval settlement site at Cwmddw in the west of the area, and a possible moated site lies just beyond the northern edge. The present system of medium-large irregular fields suggests enclosure by the earlier Post-Medieval period, by which time the present pattern of farms had probably developed. The landscape is more-or-less unchanged from that depicted on the Llanwrda tithe map of 1837. There are no villages within the area but there is an interesting late development at Siloh where an early 19th century chapel and public house, on the driving route from Caer to Llandoverly which crosses the northern part of the area, became the focus for a small nucleation. There has been little recent development.

## Description and essential historic landscape components

This very large character area lies on the northern side of the Tywi valley and includes much of the parish of Llanwrda. From the floodplain of the Tywi at approximately 60m the land rises steeply to over 130 m. To the north of this the area is characterised by rolling hills and small, steep-sided valleys lying between 100 m and 230 m. It is essentially a landscape of widely dispersed farms, small irregular fields and scattered woodland. Boundaries to the fields consist of earth banks topped with hedges. Over such a wide area there are differences in the management of hedgerows, but most are in good condition, though there is a tendency for them to become derelict at higher levels, and overgrown at lower levels. Many of the hedges have distinctive hedgerow trees, and these together with the numerous small stands of deciduous woodland (particularly distinctive on the steep valley sides) and medium-sized conifer plantations lend a wooded aspect to the landscape. Farmland land-use is almost entirely improved pasture, with very little rough grazing and rushy ground. There is no aggregate settlement; the settlement pattern is dominated by dispersed farms. Farmsteads are generally 19th century, stone-built, two-store and three-bay. Clearly over such a large area there is variation in type, but most are in the vernacular tradition, with fewer examples in the more polite 'Georgian' style. Older farm buildings are stone-built. There is a considerable variation in size and layout of these buildings, but mostly they are limited to one or two ranges, but with some larger more complex examples arranged formally around a yard. Most farms have modern agricultural buildings. There is virtually no modern residential development. Apart from a B road which cuts across the northern part of this area and which replaces the route of a Roman road from Llandoverly to Pumsaint a little way to the north, all transport links in this area are local and consist of lanes, tracks and paths.

Recorded archaeology comprises a possible Iron Age hillfort, a Medieval settlement site, motte and possible chapel site, and a possible signal station of unknown date.

There are few distinctive buildings including Siloh and Tabor chapels, a former public house, dwellings, bridges and former mills.

To the north and west character areas have yet to be described, but here land rises into a series of low unenclosed and semi-enclosed hills. On other sides neighbouring character areas (Areas 208, 214 and 215) have similar landscape components to this area; here there is a zone of change rather than a hard-edged boundary.

#### **Conservation priorities**

Most of the historic landscape components in this character area are in a reasonable state of preservation. However, the decay evident in some of the boundary hedges is beginning to erode the historic character of parts of this area; this problem needs to be addressed. Consideration should be given to the management of the ancient broadleaf woodland. Historic farm buildings form an important component in this landscape. Although most are in use and in a good state of repair, some consideration may have to be given as to how they can be best used/reused and maintained for future generations. Otherwise maintain as existing

**Ground photographs: 124**

**Aerial photographs: 27**