

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS IN THE TYWI VALLEY



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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PARKS AND GARDENS IN THE TYWI VALLEY

Gan / By

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SUMMARY

This report, commissioned by the Tywi Afon Yr Oesoedd Landscape Partnership, constitutes an initial assessment of the parks and gardens within the Tywi valley in the area between Dryslwyn and Llangadog, an area particularly rich with designed landscapes. Analysis of historic maps has allowed the extent of individual historic parklands to be mapped and recorded. Further analysis and comparison with modern sources has indicated the extent of parkland survival. General conservation concerns relating to parks and gardens have been raised and further specific conservation issues identified in relation to individual areas. In relation to these issues potential conservation actions have been proposed.

INTRODUCTION

The Tywi Valley Registered Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest 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 principal significance of the valley is as a setting for a unique group of planned parks and gardens, and its historic, artistic associations with the Picturesque.

This tradition continued through the 19th and into the 20th 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.

OBJECTIVES

This report constitutes an initial assessment of the parks and gardens within the Tywi valley. It has been commissioned by the Tywi Afon Yr Oesoedd Landscape Partnership in order to raise conservation issues relating to parklands and gardens and to identify potential opportunities for conservation actions. The Tywi Afon Yr Oesoedd project area lies between the river bridges at Dryslwyn in the west and Llangadog to the northeast. Although this area is the focus of the project, these issues will also concern parklands in the wider landscape.

The original objectives of this assessment were set out in the project brief;

- 1) Identify all areas of historic parkland still in evidence in the 19th century.
- 2) Produce brief descriptions of historic parkland
- 3) Identify extent of surviving elements of identified historic parkland
- 4) Produce brief descriptions of surviving elements
- 5) Identify conservation issues
- 6) Identify potential conservation actions
 - e.g. areas of new planting
 - re-construction/conservation of park boundaries

These objectives seek to develop the management recommendations set out within the Landscape Strategy (See Appendix B).

Following on from this assessment it will be necessary to identify specific details for particular historic parklands, e.g. exact locations of proposed planting, tree species etc. prior to conservation works being undertaken.

METHODOLOGY

The report is based on a desktop assessment of available information from various sources including:

Historic Mapping

The Ordnance Survey 1st and 2nd edition maps of the 1880s and 1900s are the most useful historic maps which clearly depict historic parkland. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey maps accurately record individual field trees or planting schemes and the 2nd edition demonstrates the extent of parkland by shading out relevant areas. This mapping base is what has been mostly extensively mined for information on historic parkland dating from the late 19th early 20th century.

In addition to the Ordnance Survey maps Carmarthenshire Records Office archives were investigated to access estate mapping and further information has been recorded from the late 18th century maps of Golden Grove and Abermarlais.

Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales

A key source of information for the most outstanding parklands within the Tywi valley is the Register of Parks and Gardens. There are three registered parklands within the boundary of this project area; Golden Grove, Grade II*; Aberglasney, Grade II* and Dinefwr, Grade I. The extensive and detailed descriptions for these parklands have been included within this report (see Appendix C).

Other sources

Other sources of information which have also been consulted include the Regional Historic Environment Records (HER), and information and descriptions collected from visits to farms as part of the Tir Gofal agri-environment scheme. The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales database of parks and gardens has also been consulted for the project area.

Fieldwork

Some fieldwork was undertaken in the company of the Cadw Parks and Gardens Inspector, to visit some of the lesser known parks and gardens within the Tywi valley and to discuss conservation issues. This was limited in the area which could be covered in the time available and undoubtedly further fieldwork is required to gather information on the form and survival of further areas of parkland.

Recording

The information gathered from the desktop assessment has then been used to digitise the extent of historic parkland and to produce brief descriptions where none existed from other sources. The extent of surviving parkland has been mapped following the assessment of current map sources and aerial photography and a brief statement made of the survival of the parkland into the 21st century. Areas have consequently been recommended where there are opportunities for positive management actions to be implemented.

The following table indexes the information which has been mapped geographically in digital format (MapInfo tables).

List of GIS tables	Information
TywiP&G_Historic parkland.TAB	Extent of parkland mapped from historic maps
TywiP&G_Surviving parkland.TAB	Extent of parkland mapped from aerial photographs, modern maps and fieldwork
TywiP&G_conservationproposals.TAB	Areas of opportunity for conservation
TywiP&G_registeredparks.TAB	Areas of registered parks and gardens

HISTORIC PARKLAND IN THE TYWI VALLEY

What is parkland?

This assessment is principally about the country house parks defined as enclosed land traditionally managed for grazing animals, a complex landscape where subtle ornamentation of the natural environment is used to achieve pleasing views and vistas. This artificial enhancement of the landscape depends not only on woods, plantations, groves of trees or individual, mature trees but also on water bodies such as lakes, ponds or canals which may be created or augmented. Buildings or structures may be introduced which may be partly functional and partly 'eye-catchers'.

The historic estates on which they were founded often have their own characteristic building styles, using specific building materials, techniques or finishes for buildings, boundaries, gates or fences. Parkland buildings are likely to incorporate estate design into their construction and may display 'signature' features.

Much of the parkland we see today is the product of several phases of parkland design or it may represent a gradual evolution. Latterly, in the 20th century much of the parkland of the Tywi valley has degenerated with the loss of planting schemes or parkland features through lack of maintenance.

Although the strict definition of parkland is land which has been 'emparked' or enclosed within a definite boundary, in reality its definition can be somewhat blurred. It can be helpful to envisage different levels of parkland; the first being essentially the area which provides the setting to the main house or group of buildings, beyond this is the area of land which has been designed, where the landscape will have been subject to artificial enhancement. Outside this is the surrounding landscape which is integral to the setting of the designed landscape, this is referred to within the parks and gardens register as the 'essential setting'. It may incorporate a 'borrowed landscape' - a view of a landmark which may not even form part of the country house domain.

More often the land beyond the park does fall within the estate ownership and therefore the management of it has been directly influenced by the landowners. In these instances the boundaries between the parkland and beyond can become very blurred with shelter belts of trees and coverts creating a sense of parkland beyond the 'designed' landscape. Indeed estates often influenced the wider landscape by requiring their tenant farmers to plant trees for the valuable commodity, timber.

The creation of parkland may not necessarily sweep away all traces of previous landscape features, often it contains evidence of the pre-parkland landscape. Traces of agricultural field boundaries may be marked by mature trees which have been selectively retained when the field boundaries were removed to open up the landscape. Other archaeological features often survive well in the

parkland landscapes as they are usually not subjected to the same intensive agricultural pressures as elsewhere.

History and development of parkland in the Tywi Valley (Figures 1 & 2)

The Tywi valley has become recognised for a unique group of parks and gardens which have contributed to the sense of Carmarthenshire being the 'Garden of Wales'. The creation and development of these parks and gardens has already been discussed in various informative articles (Briggs 1997, 88-105; Whittle 2000, 87-102; Murphy 2000, 23-24).

Little is known of medieval parks in the Tywi valley other than it is documented that the great medieval castle of Dinefwr had a park grazed by white cattle and fallow deer. Abermarlais may have been a manorial centre in the medieval period, which was then subsequently developed as an extensive parkland. An early reference in 1532 describes the house as moated and set in a park which was 'paled, and in compass ij miles and a half and well wodded' (Whittle 2000, 89), a fact which is illustrated on Speed's county map of 1610.

Prior to the early 18th century gardens and parks were characterised by formality and regularity with geometric designs employed both in enclosed courtyards and beyond; features which can be recognised at Aberglasney and can also be seen from paintings of the period at Dinefwr.

This regimented imposition of formality on the landscape continued until the early 18th century when dramatic changes took place in the design of gardens or parks; the beauty of nature was something to be admired both from the house, and a suitable scenic environment in which the house should be set (Whittle 1992, 39). The aim was to achieve an idealised landscape of carefully composed views from the house or from walks, rides or parkland buildings. This was the great age of the landscape park where boundaries were swept away or became invisible allowing uninterrupted views across extensive vistas.

This radical shift in ideas sometimes required wholesale redevelopment, instead of houses being built in sheltered low lying locations they would be sited to take advantage of scenic views and to be conspicuously centred within the parkland. This shift in ideas is demonstrated at Golden Grove –the earlier 16th century house which was located lower in the valley bottom being supplanted by a mansion further up the valley sides, a site which offered commanding views across the Tywi (Whittle 2000, 89).

The later 18th century saw the development of these ideas into the 'Picturesque' movement where wildness and more intricate landscapes were valued. The irregularity of nature was cherished and a respect was fostered for historic ruins and architectural heritage. The ruinous form of Dinefwr castle made for a perfect picturesque landmark set high on a bluff above the park.

From the end of the 18th century and into the 19th new wealth started to accumulate in south Wales, bringing with it a desire to be innovative, introduce new styles, exotic species and the latest technology into garden design. New gardens were created and extensive glasshouses and conservatories constructed. This influence is evident in a number of gardens in the Tywi valley; Glanbrydan Park saw a number of exotic species introduced into the parkland, benefiting from the landowner's shipping business which allowed access to unusual species from south America. The enormous walled garden and extensive hothouses of Danyralt Park would have allowed exotic fruits to be raised for the house and the fashion for collecting conifers is represented by the pinetum at Golden Grove which was established by Lord Cawdor.

An Assessment of Historic Parks and Gardens in the Tywi Valley

The following is a list of all the identified historic parklands within the Tywi Afon yr Oesoedd project area with their Regional Historic Environment Record - Primary Record Number (see Figure 1 and Appendix A for full descriptions and management recommendations).

List of Parklands identified from historic mapping	PRN
Aberglasney	56705
Abermarlais Park	56706
Beili Dyffryn	56707
Berllan Dywyll	56708
Bryn Hafod	56709
Bryn Teilo	56710
Cefn-Gornoeth	56711
Cwrt Henry	25589
Danyrallt Park; Dirleton	25594
Dan-yr-allt	56712
Plas Dinefwr Park	25543
Glan-Brydan Park	49730
Glan-Sefin	56713
Golden Grove Park	25603
Gurrey Manor	56718
Hafod-Neddyn	56714
Allt y Gaer	56715
Llwyn-Dewi	56716
Llwyn-Helyg	56717
Manoravon/Crymlyn Manor	25583
Pant-Glas	56718
Pentre	56720
Rhosmaen House	56719
Tregib	56722

DEVELOPING AN UNDERSTANDING OF SURVIVING PARKLAND Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)

Historic Landscape Characterisation is a process that is currently being undertaken on the Registered Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales, whereby the particular characteristics, which make each landscape distinctive, are identified and defined. These characteristics are the tangible evidence of the activities and habits of the people who inhabited and shaped that landscape over time. It aims to identify the principal historic components and to understand the great time depth of human activity which underpins much of what we consider to be important and gives an area its local distinctiveness. It has 'set out to establish the historic depth within the modern landscape by identifying its principal historic components' (Murphy & Ludlow 2000, 8).

By identifying essential historic landscape components knowledge is developed of the landscape, this enables a framework within which change can be managed without detriment to its historic character. These essential landscape components include field boundary patterns, settlement patterns, industry, the impact of estates and parklands on the landscape, and so on.

One of the essential components, and an immediately recognisable theme to the historic landscape of the Tywi valley is the impact of the great gentry estates, parkland and gardens from the 17th to 19th centuries. Indeed, even beyond the formal parklands connected with the gentry houses there is a 'parkland character' to the wider landscape in the Tywi valley, generated by the great number of mature trees which populate the hedgerows and fields. This may be due, at least in part, to the great estates requiring their tenants to carry out tree planting in order to provide saleable timber. This is a distinctive landscape characteristic which, in order to be maintained, needs to be addressed through sensitive management.

HLC Areas Within The Tywi Afon Yr Oesoedd Project Area (Figure 3)

182	40214	YSTRAD TYWI: CARMARTHEN - LLANDEILO
190	40222	LLANFIHANGEL ABERBYTHYCH
191	40223	NANTGAREDIG - DERWEN FAWR
192	40224	LLANGATHEN
193	40225	GOLDEN GROVE/GELLI AUR
194	40226	ALLT PANT MAWR
195	40227	DINEFWR PARK
196	40228	YSTRAD TYWI: LLANDEILO - LLANGADOG
201	40233	CWM-IFOR - MANORDEILO
202	40234	LLANDEILO
203	40235	ALLT TREGYB
204	40236	FELINDRE
205	40237	CARREG-SAWDDE COMMON
207	40239	CEFNGORNOETH
208	40240	YSTRAD TYWI: LLANGADOG - LLANDOVERY
209	40241	ABERMARLAIS
210	40242	LLANSADWRN - LLANWRDA
225	40257	BETHELEM
228	40260	CILGWYN - LLWYNWORMWOOD
235	40289	MAES-GWASTAD

For further details including historic background, full descriptions and essential historic landscape components for all the Historic Landscape Character Areas see http://www.cambria.org.uk/HLC/HLC_Towy/Towyvalleymap.htm

Maintaining the Historic Landscape Character

Historic landscape characterisation is all about managing change; to manage landscape effectively it must be understood, what is important needs to be recognised and acknowledged and consideration given to how it should continue to be into the future. What is significant needs to be identified, conserved and enhanced in order to retain regional historic diversity of landscapes. Positive management is an important role in this - damaging trends need to be curbed but positive actions will ensure long term survival.

CONSERVATION ISSUES IN RELATION TO PARKLAND

Damaging trends and threats to the landscape character of the Tywi valley have already been acknowledged in the Landscape Strategy (see Appendix B) where the decline and in some areas dereliction, of the parklands of the Tywi valley has been identified as a key area of concern. There are a number of threats which relate specifically to parkland character.

- Erosion of parkland due to loss of trees through damage or lack of maintenance – as trees are lost through old age, windthrow or disease and are not replaced
- Damage to mature parkland trees through the application of fertilisers or pesticides to surrounding parkland
- Development pressures; agricultural – extension of farmsteads, trackways, or other development pressures - buildings, telecommunications masts etc.
- Agricultural pressures - change of management regimes may involve the conversion of permanent pasture to arable or intensive cultivation (which may be an increasing threat in response to climate change), subdivision of large parkland enclosures into smaller divisions.
- Parkland features such as boundary walls, railings and gates may suffer lack of maintenance or damage
- Water features such as ponds, lakes may suffer lack of maintenance or damage
- Climate change – changing weather patterns and overall temperatures may impact on vegetation and established species may suffer or die out
- Unsympathetic restocking or planting of trees - poorly located and inappropriate species introduced
- Intrusive development beyond the park boundary

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSERVATION ACTIONS – GENERAL OBJECTIVES

In response to some of the threats identified some opportunities for conservation actions have been identified with the aim of conserving and enhancing parkland landscapes of the Tywi valley in order to retain their distinctive character.

Following this initial appraisal of parks and gardens within the Tywi valley a number of issues have been raised. Firstly there is the issue of those practical works which, if carried out, would go some way to addressing the objectives which have been set out above:

Tree planting

Perhaps the single most important conservation action for retaining parkland character within the Tywi valley is tree planting. Replacing trees which are reaching their maturity and also replanting trees where former trees have been lost. Parkland tree planting should be carried out in harmony with the design of the historic parkland. Inappropriate planting could be very damaging to the historic character of parkland and it is essential that the nature of the parkland is understood in order for such work to benefit. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey maps are an invaluable reference guide in giving accurate locations of mature trees in the latter part of the 19th century. The species profile is also an essential element of the character of the park which should be maintained in any restoration programme.

Park boundary restoration

Boundaries associated with historic parkland are an essential component and may be of considerable antiquity. These may be walls, ditches and banks, fences, railings and ornamental gates. There is likely to be a signature style to any parkland boundary which is unique. Repair or restoration works to these boundaries are essential to maintaining parkland character and need to be carried out using sympathetic materials and techniques.

Potential conservation opportunities

Parkland	Potential opportunities for conservation work
Aberglasney	Replanting specimen parkland trees in part of essential setting.
Abermarlais	Tree planting / park boundary restoration
Abermarlais	Park wall; extent unrecorded
Beili Dyffryn	Tree planting
Bryn Hafod	Tree planting
Cefn-Gornoeth	Tree planting
Cwrt Henry	Re-establishment of parkland tree planting.
Dan-yr-allt Park	Parkland tree planting.
Dan-yr-allt	Parkland tree planting
Glan-Brydan	Tree planting, restoration of gates, re-establishment of boating lake.
Glan-Sefin	Parkland tree planting
Golden Grove	Careful management of existing conifer plantations, parkland tree planting, park boundary restoration
Allt y Gaer	Re-establishment of orchard
Gurrey Manor	Tree planting
Manoravon/Crymlyn Manor	Scattered tree planting, re-establishment of copses.
Pant-Glas	Parkland tree planting
Rhosmaen	Scattered tree planting
Pentre	Parkland tree planting

See individual gazetteer entries for detailed statements on parks; including a description, summary of surviving elements and opportunities for conservation.

In addition to practical conservation works there are a number of areas which could benefit from further analysis and understanding.

Further Survey

This assessment has allowed a rapid appraisal of the survival of parkland in the Tywi valley and identified opportunities for conservation work which would help to

ensure the continuation and survival of the parkland character that is so prevalent in this core area. Most of the parklands in the Tywi valley are poorly understood and little documented. The exceptions are Dinefwr Park and Aberglasney where a programme of research and survey has provided a wealth of knowledge and understanding in their development.

More detailed analysis of individual parklands; their documented histories and surveys of their surviving elements would undoubtedly increase our knowledge and understanding of their creation and development. This, in turn, would help to guide any proposed restoration work. There are many opportunities for community groups to become involved in this work, comprising documentary analysis and field survey, following access agreement with landowners.

Orchards

Orchards were once widespread and a fundamental part of the subsistence economy of every dwelling. Historic maps indicate that every cottage, farmstead or mansion house had an orchard nearby; it is only the scale which changes. The vast majority of these orchards have been lost. They have proven to be particularly vulnerable to development, either within small settlements or villages where housing density has increased leading to infill, or through the expansion of farmsteads leading to agricultural buildings overflowing into the surrounding enclosures. Unfortunately detailed assessment of this diminished resource has been beyond the scope of this report. However, this subject would benefit from further study and opportunities sought to address this shortfall in knowledge.

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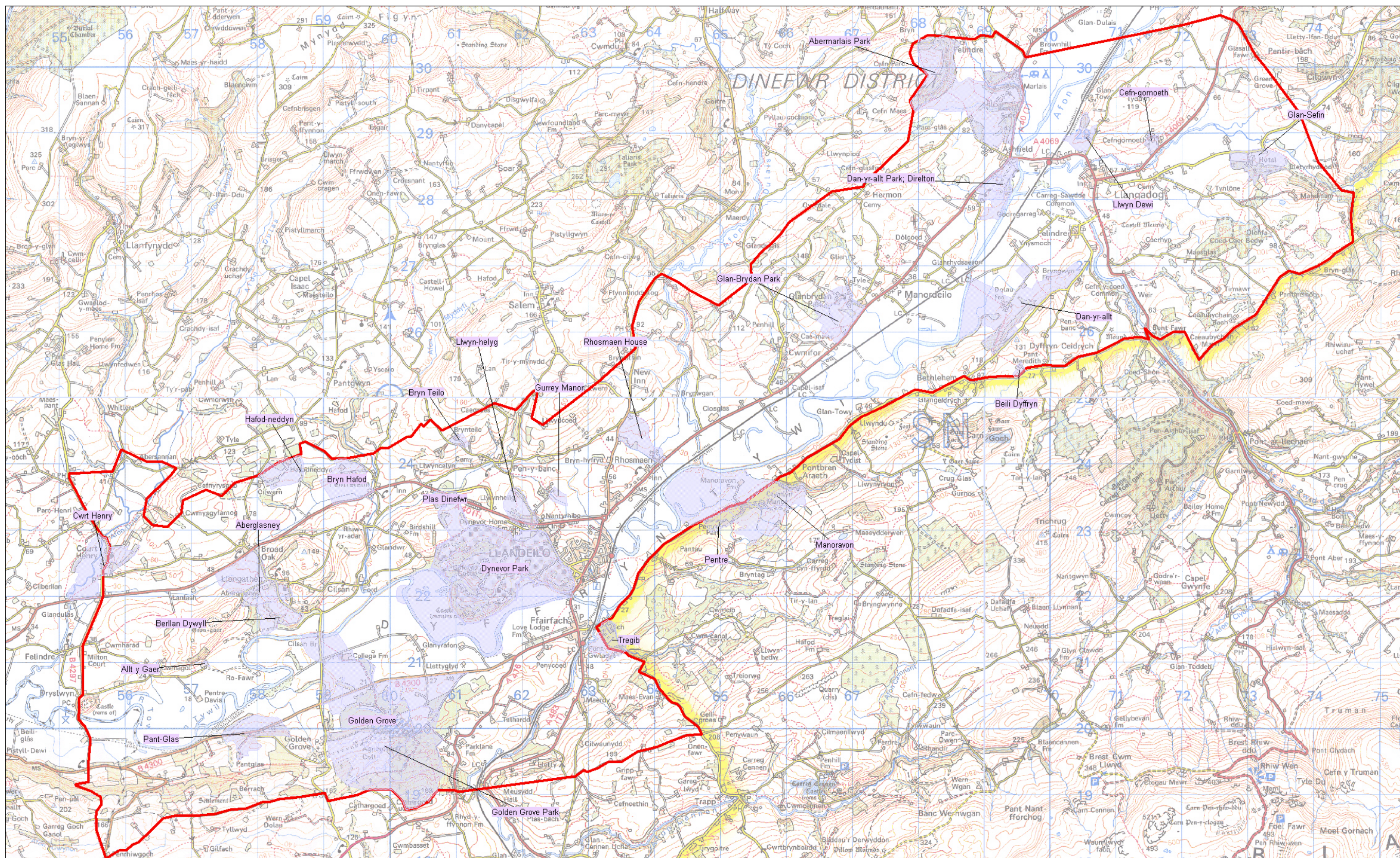


Figure 1: Tywi Afon yr Oesoedd project area, showing extent of historic parkland recorded on 1st & 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps
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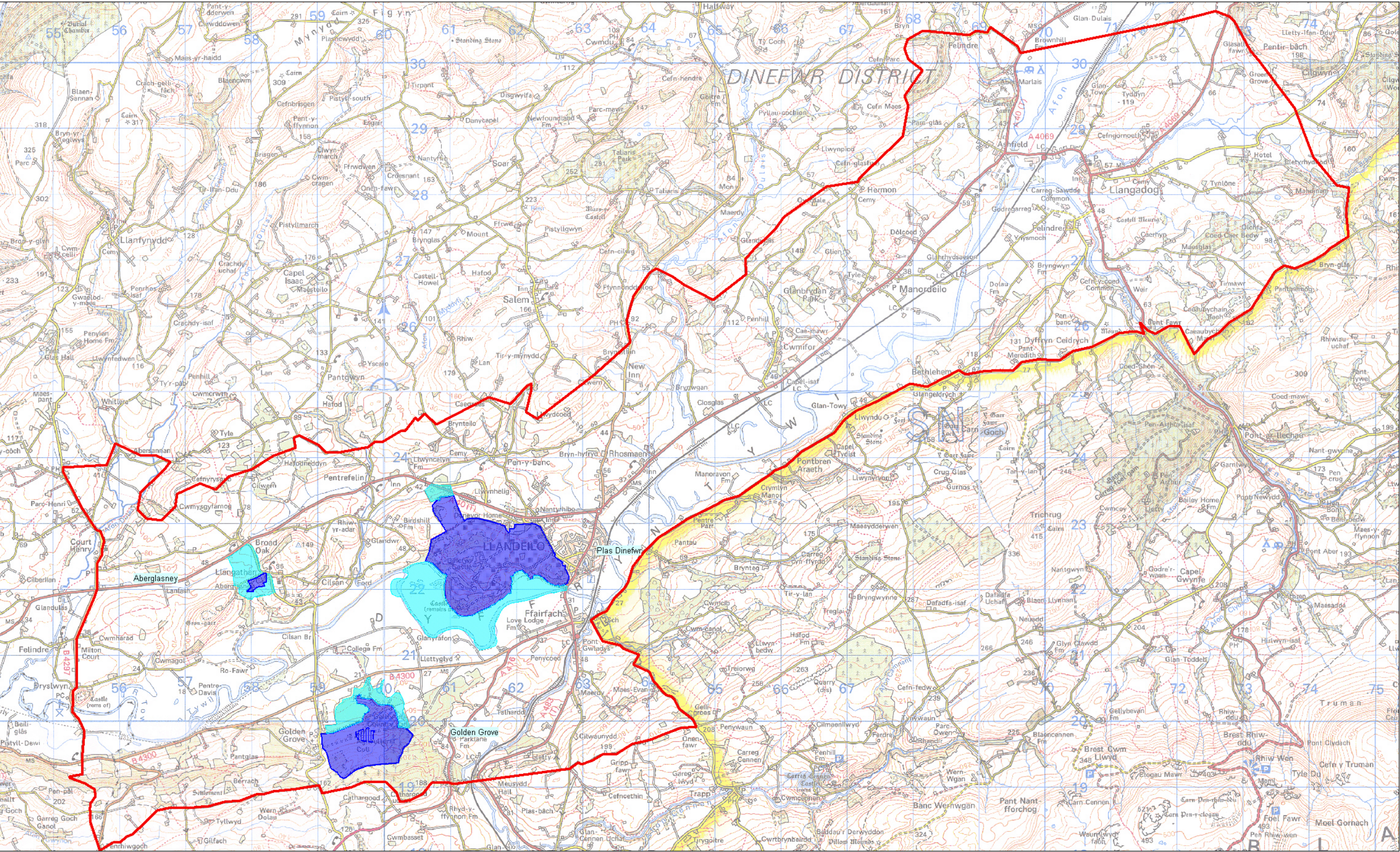


Figure 2: Tywi Afon yr Oesoedd project area, showing areas of registered parkland (dark blue) and essential setting (light blue)
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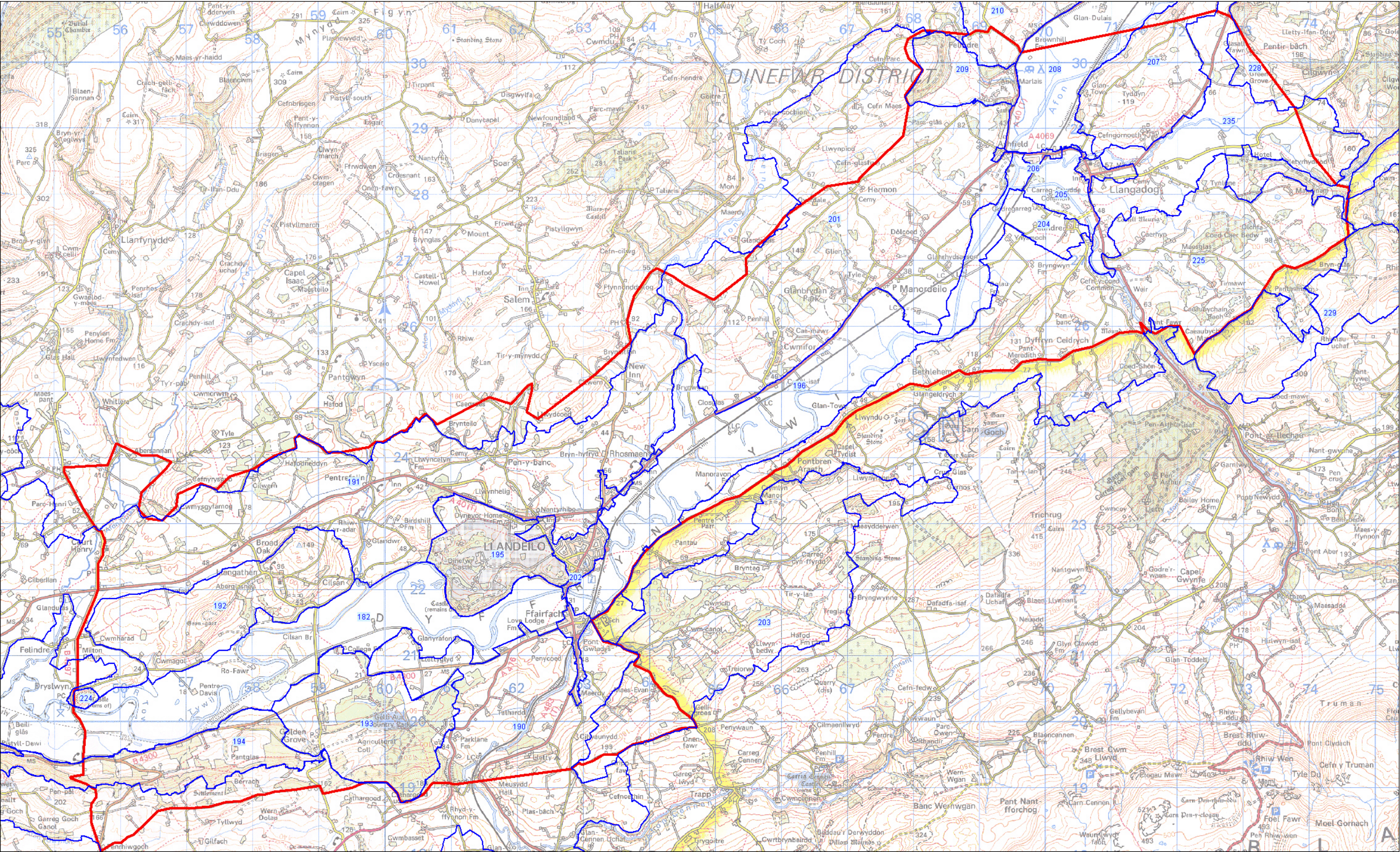


Figure 3: Tywi Afon yr Oesoedd project area, showing Historic Landscape Character Areas
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Gazetteer of Historic Parks and Gardens

Aberglasney, Llangathen PRN 56705

A Grade II* registered parkland including; Pleasure grounds, formal gardens, woodland garden and associated features surrounding the house.

The survival of the structure and some trees of formal gardens and an informal woodland garden of a long established country mansion. The most important feature is an arcaded court with raised walk around it, probably dating to the early seventeenth century. There are also two walled gardens, a pond, a gatehouse, a yew tunnel walk, and remains of woodland walks. Most information about the site's history has come from archaeological excavation, which has revealed a major phase of building work on the gardens in the early seventeenth century. Following the formation of a restoration trust to save the house and garden, Aberglasney has undergone a major programme of rebuilding and restoration work in the late 1990s (Cadw/ICOMOS UK 2002, 2-7). Please see Appendix C for full description.

Beyond the several discreet gardens surrounding the house and wooded pleasure grounds to the southwest of the house, which are now all accessible to the public, there are a number of areas of parkland. The entrance drive to the northwest of the house is shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map as a tree lined carriage drive flanked on either side by open fields scattered with individual specimen trees.

To the south of the registered parkland of Aberglasney is further parkland which is associated with Berllan Dywyll.

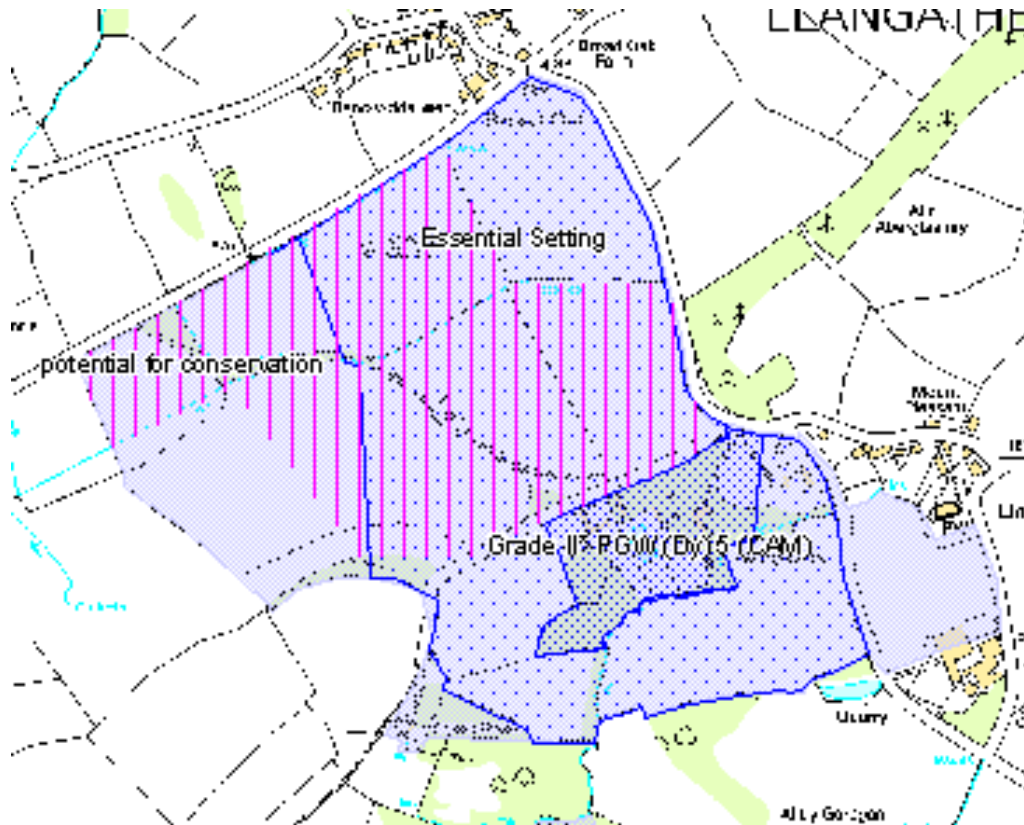
Surviving parkland elements

As described in the register entry for Aberglasney, the gardens have been undergoing restoration and replanting, and an extensive programme of research and excavation has been carried out on the structures and planting schemes within the gardens (Blockley & Halfpenny 2002).

The parkland areas which lie beyond the immediate house environs have deteriorated from the planting schemes of the late 19th century. The tree lined carriage drive which approached the house from the northwest is still traceable with the stone gateposts set back from the A40. The number of specimen trees which dotted the fields to either side has drastically diminished.

Opportunities

The gardens themselves have been re-established by a restoration trust. The parkland to the north and northwest of the house, either side of the carriage drive shows a marked deterioration in the number of specimen trees present in the 1880s. Fifteen isolated trees are shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey where now there are only two. Replanting specimen trees in this area would help to restore the parkland character which lay beyond the gardens associated with Aberglasney. As part of this area lies within the Essential Setting of the Registered Park, proposals should be discussed with Cadw.



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Abermarlais Park, Llansadwrn PRN 56706

The property was recorded in the ownership of Ednyfed Fychan in 1216 and also the residence of Sir Rhys ap Thomas, Chamberlain of South Wales in the 16th century (Lloyd 1986, 57). Abermarlais was clearly a property of great significance in the earlier post medieval period. It is one of only two pales shown on Speede's 1610 map of Carmarthenshire. An estate map of 1761 shows the 'park' encompassing the northern and eastern flanks of the hill to the west of the house (named on current Ordnance Survey maps as 'Allt y parc') with blocks of woodland, both conifer and deciduous, annotated to indicate which parcels were planted between 1796 and 1801. In addition to showing the extent and planting of the park, the estate map of 1761 shows a bowling green, ornamental plantations and other possible garden features to the west of Abermarlais mansion. This mansion was demolished around 1803 and a new mansion constructed in a different location.

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887 shows the main dwelling itself is surrounded by trees, gardens and walks. Parkland fields with scattered trees and driveways extend to the east and west with woodland flanking a tributary flowing east into the Tywi, and beyond further fields with scattered trees and wooded coverts.

To the north of the mansion house woodland with walks extend alongside the river Marlais, with further woodland, a walled garden and orchard beyond.

Surviving parkland elements

Walks survive within woodlands to the side of the Marlais (Liz Whittle *pers comm.*) and the walled garden survives as part of a caravan site.

At least some of the 'Park' to the west of the house was enclosed by a park wall, noted for the use of good quality stone for coping (PRN 34665). Where it survives at its full height the wall is around 1.8m high suggesting that its original purpose was to enclose a deer park. This wall can be seen on the western most edge of the park but its course has not been fully recorded. It currently terminates abruptly in the northwest corner of the park to be continued by a bank and ditch. It is unknown whether the bank represents wall tumble or if the original construction was a timber pale or fence.

The eastern flank of the hill (Allt y parc) is now partially used as a commercial conifer plantation and was restocked in 2001.



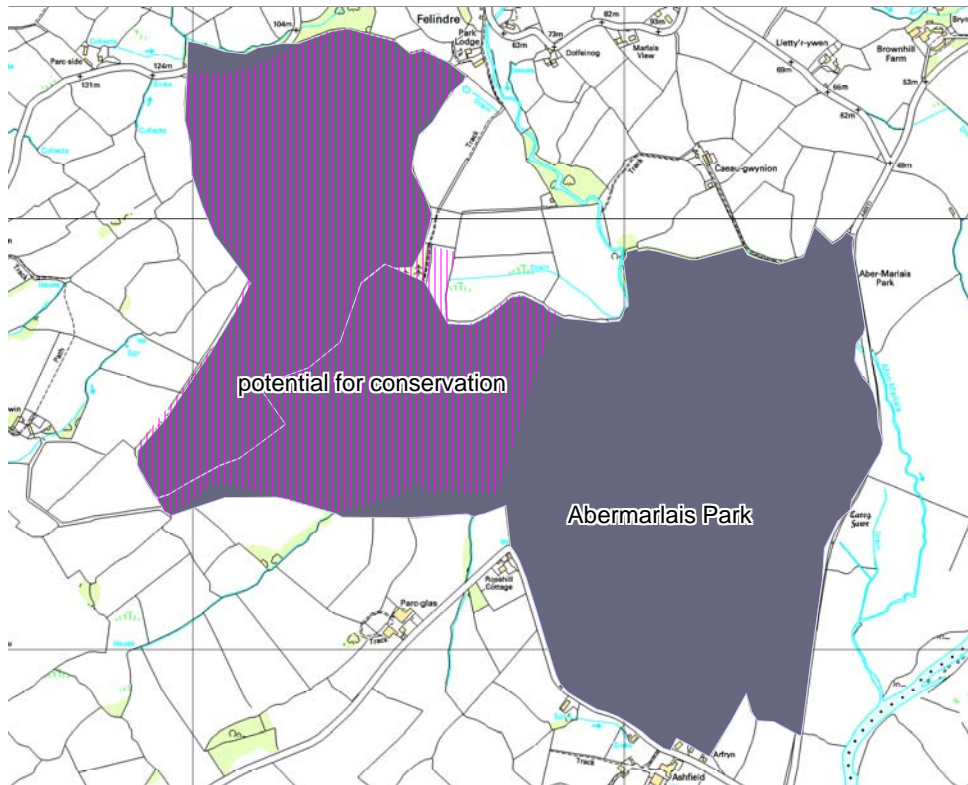
Part of Abermarlais park wall and the continuation of the park boundary as a bank and ditch

Opportunities

The field below Allt y parc, where once a drive to Abermarlais house entered the park by 'Park Lodge' and wound its way in a sinuous course eastwards to Abermarlais mansion, was once planted with specimen parkland trees, generously scattered across the lower slopes. The quantity of trees in this area is now much depleted in comparison and the parkland character has been much diminished. The parkland character of this area could be restored by replanting trees which have been lost.

There is also the potential both for the investigation of the park boundary to discover its extent and survival, and also its repair or restoration.

An Assessment of Historic Parks and Gardens in the Tywi Valley



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Beili Dyffryn, Llangadog PRN 56707

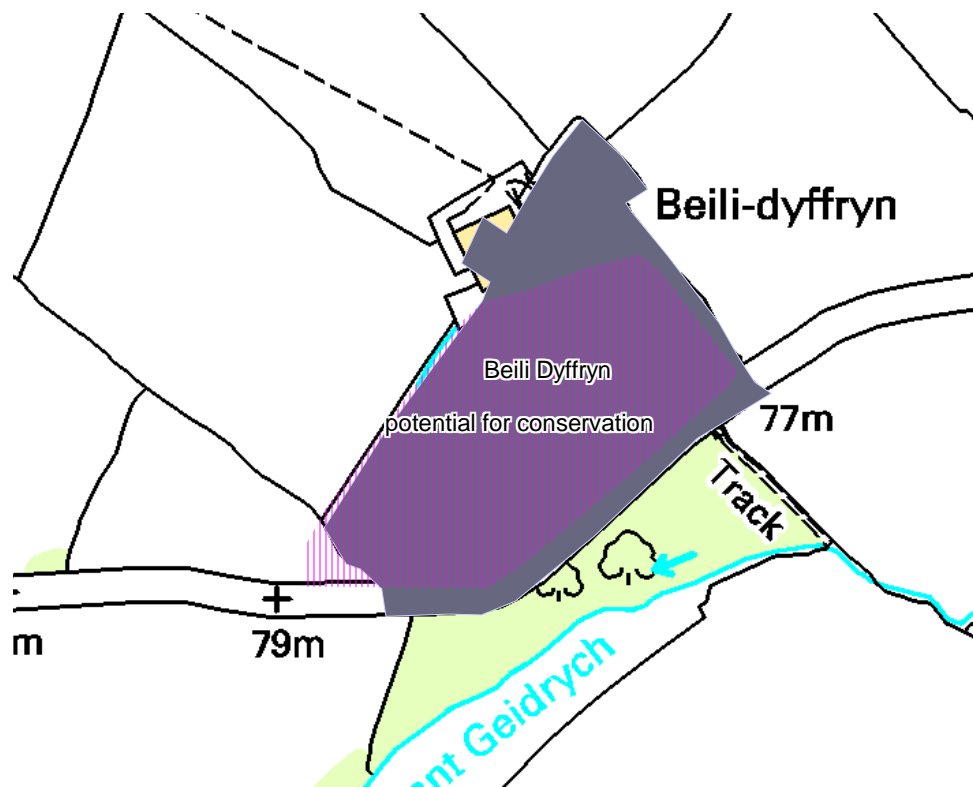
This major dwelling was home to the Jones family and latterly became part of the Dirleton estate. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map indicates a number of scattered parkland trees, deciduous except for a single conifer which stood in the field to the south of the house.

Surviving parkland elements

Recent aerial photographs show that all of the field trees have been lost and that a large building, probably agricultural, has been built to the south of the house.

Opportunities

The parkland associated with the house of Beili Dyffryn has largely been lost. Opportunities to replant trees would help to reinstate parkland character, however the setting of the house has been compromised by the erection of a large agricultural building adjacent to the house.



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Berllan Dywyll, Llangathen PRN 56708

The site of the former mansion of Berllan Dywyll lies in the field on the opposite side of the road to the current farmstead of that name, and was replaced by the present house in the 18th century.

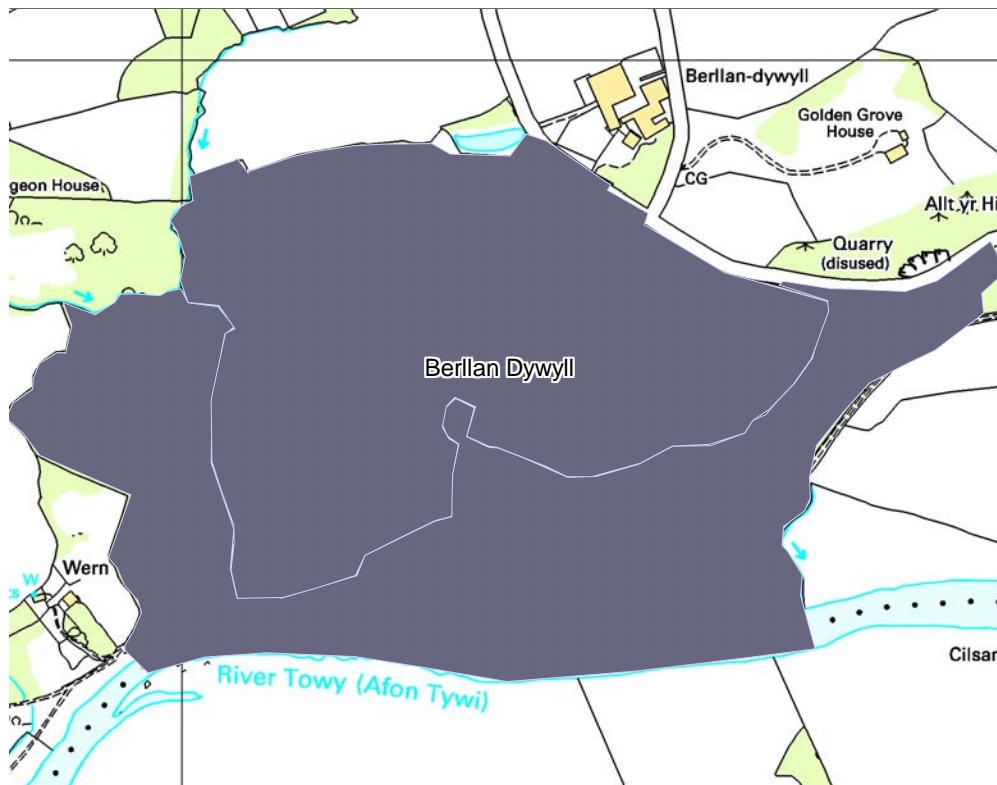
The land which lay to the west of the house may be considered relic parkland; the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map shows the field to the west of the road framed by sinuous belts of deciduous woodland extending down to the river (Allt y Caregan and Berllan Dywyll Wood), with the occasional copse interspersed.

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey indicates further dispersed tree planting to the southwest of Allt y Caregan, which contributes to the parkland nature of the area.

Surviving parkland elements

The remains of a high brick wall – probably a garden wall lies at an angle along the north side of the present road.

Belts of woodland still survive on the slopes to the west and south below the site of the former mansion.



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Bryn Hafod, Llangathen PRN 56709

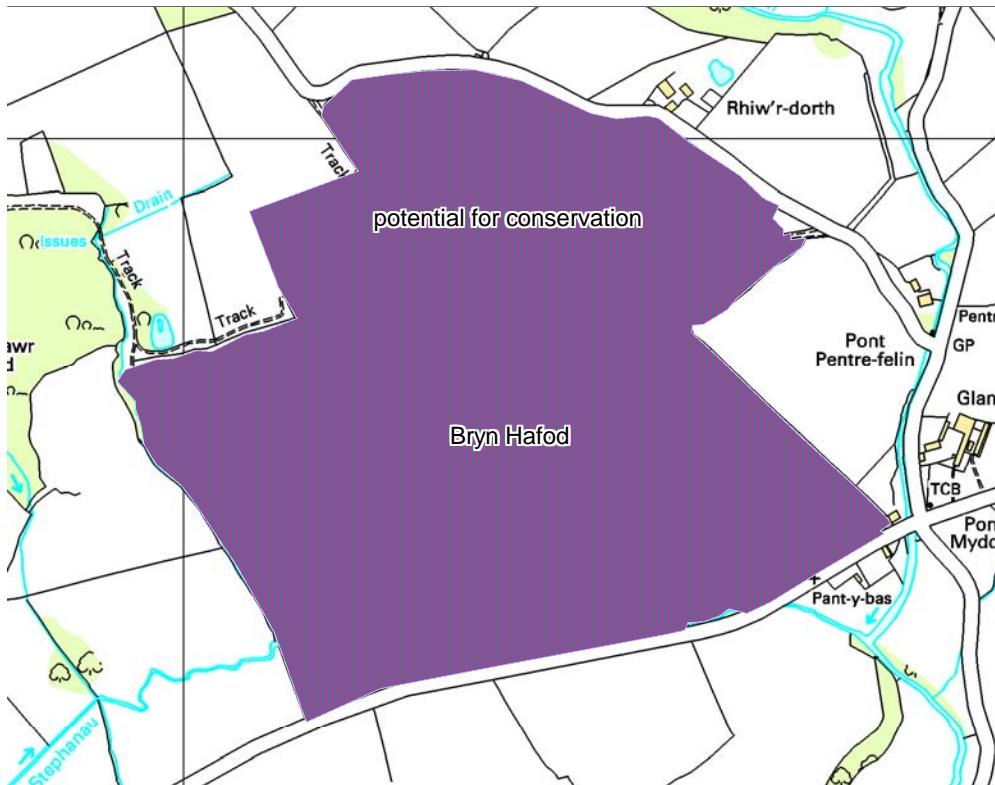
Recorded by Francis Jones as having 5 hearths in 1670, this major dwelling lies on southeast facing slopes of the Tywi valley. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map indicates a large orchard to the south of the house and to the south and east a thin scatter of dispersed parkland trees. This area is bounded to the south and west by streams, to the north by a road, and to the east by a small block of woodland and a footpath. Parkland elements are rather sparse, and possibly represents a relic parkland.

Surviving parkland elements

Whilst the field layout survives today intact the number of field trees have declined, where half a dozen trees are recorded on the 1st edition map there is now only a single tree surviving. The orchard also appears to have been largely cleared.

Opportunities

Recent aerial photographs suggest that much of the former parkland around Bryn Hafod has been agriculturally improved however there may be opportunities to reintroduce field trees to the landscape and thereby restore some of the dwindling parkland character.



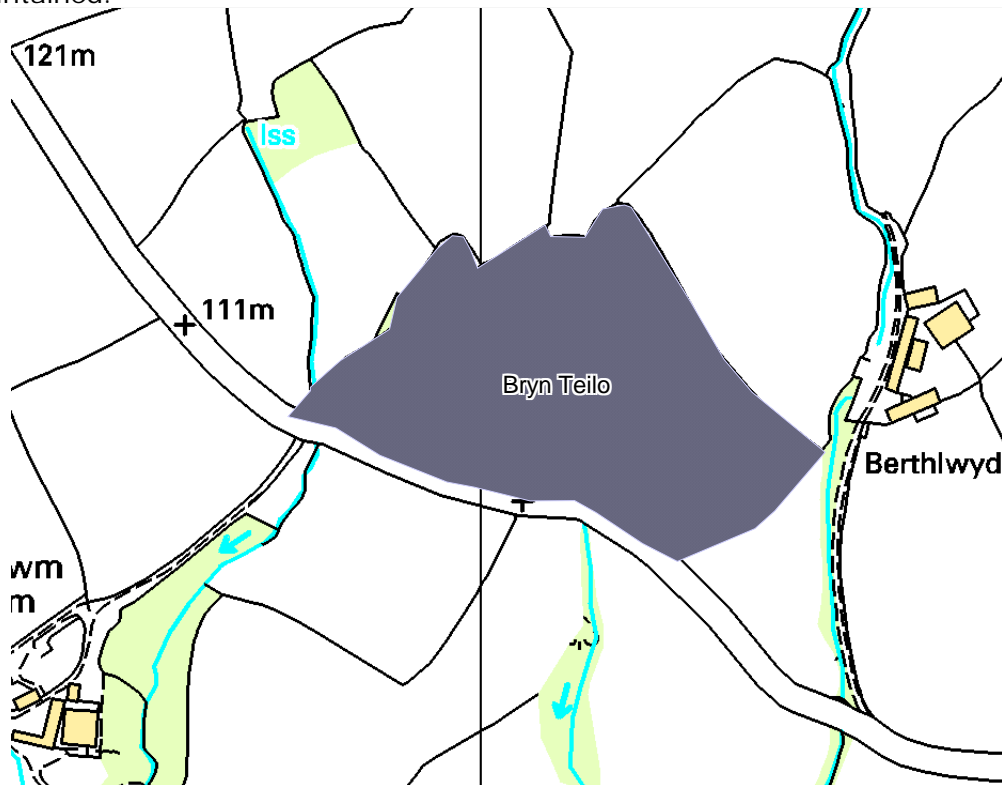
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Bryn Teilo, Manordeilo and Salem PRN 56710

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map shows a tree lined carriage drive approaching the house from the southeast across fields. A circular copse of conifers to the east and a couple triangular copses of conifers to the south. Conifers framed the house to the south, with mixed planting to the northeast. The 2nd edition Ordnance Survey shows this maintained with further landscaping to the south of the house including a terrace, sun dial and pinery. There is also alleged to be an ice-house in the grounds (Beaman & Roaf 1990, 529).

Surviving parkland elements

Current mapping indicates that the circular copse to the east of the house has disappeared, however in other respects the carriage drive and gardens appear maintained.



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Cefn-Gornoeth, Llangadog PRN 56711

On the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map the carriage drive which leads up to Cefn-gornoeth from the road to the south hugs a tree-lined field boundary before sweeping across the open parkland populated with scattered deciduous and conifer trees.

The boundary for the historic parkland is somewhat blurred, as the house lies within a fairly wooded landscape where field trees of considerable age and stature give the area a sense of 'parkland' without necessarily having been deliberately planted to achieve this effect.

Surviving parkland elements

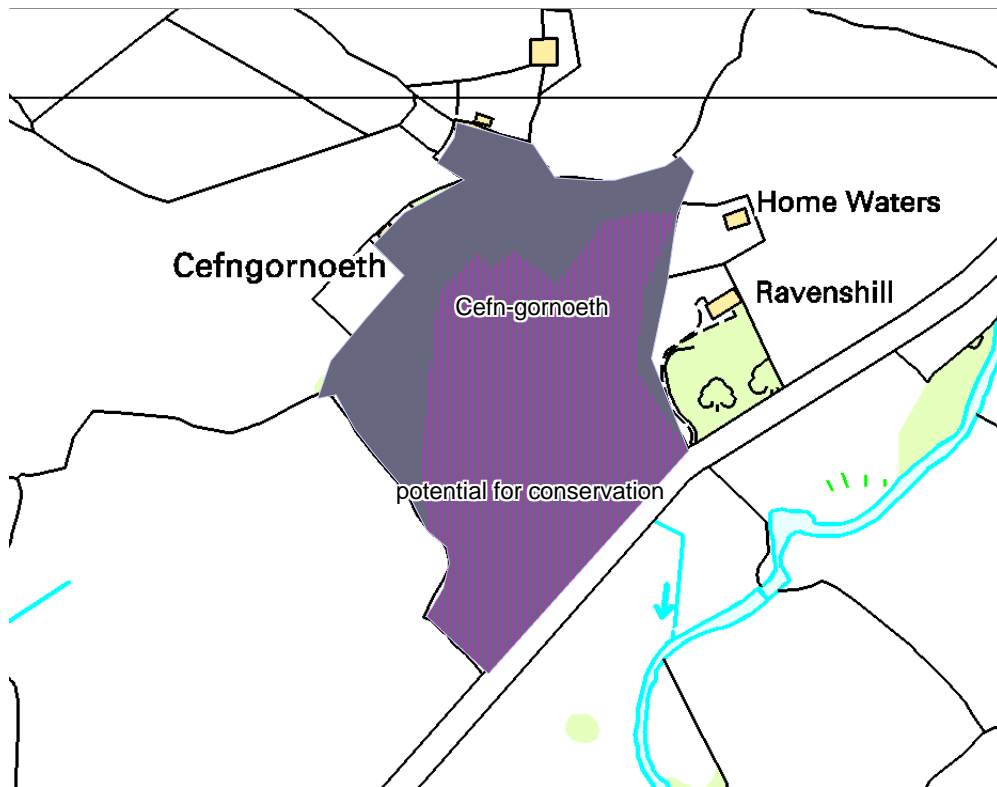
The approach to the house skirting a field of parkland trees is still recognisable today, however a number of parkland trees have been lost since the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map was published. A large Wellingtonia survives in the southern corner of the field.



Parkland to front of Cefn-gornoeth

Opportunities

There are opportunities to enhance the parkland by the replacement of specimen trees.



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Cwrt Henry, Llanegwad PRN 25589

Historic maps show that Cwrt Henry has associated with it a large expanse of parkland. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey maps show that to the southeast of the house is a predominantly deciduous mix of loose woodland planting interwoven with walks and a sinuous carriage drive arriving at the house from the south. The parkland extends beyond the river Dulais and up the valley slopes to the west. Characterised by scattered deciduous trees with belts of woodland, predominantly conifer but with some mixed deciduous plantations at the furthest reaches of the park.

To the north of the dwelling lie the farm buildings, as well as a walled/formal garden and orchard and to the south lies a lodge, shrouded in scattered trees.

A significant feature of the parkland to the east of the house is the church reached by a winding path from the house.



The church stands to the east of Cwrt Henry

Surviving parkland elements

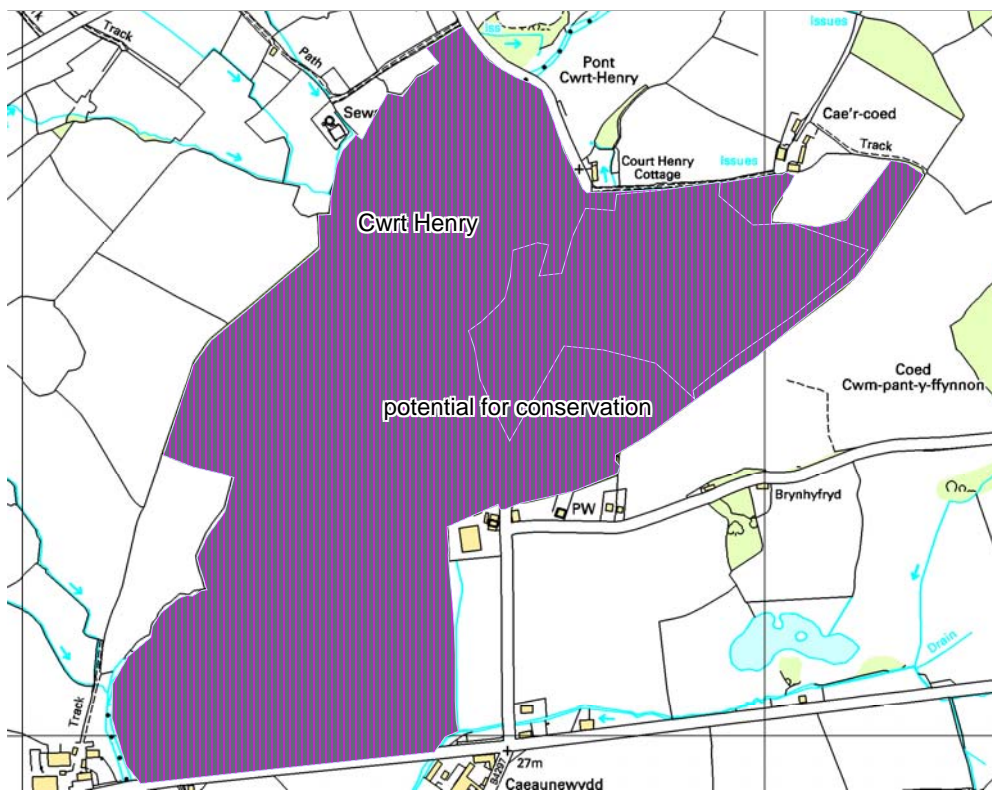
The parkland has survived reasonably well around the house and to the east where the church is centred. However the areas to the west, beyond the river Dulais have reverted to prime agricultural land and are now largely treeless although the shelter belts and plantations still survive.



The valley bottom where the number of parkland trees has dwindled

Opportunities

There are numerous opportunities both for ensuring the long term survival of the parkland which still survives, namely that to the east of the house, and also for the re-establishment of parkland, particularly to the south and west of the house.



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Danyrallt Park; Dirleton, Manordeilo and Salem PRN 25594

Major alterations took place to the mansion in the late 19th century when the 1st edition Ordnance Survey records the house facing east, overlooking the Tywi. To the rear or west of the house was a large walled garden, planted with fruit trees and laid out with paths. A large glass house occupied the north wall. A further glass house or conservatory within a smaller walled garden occupied a riverside location to the south of the house. Parterres and terraces occupied the space between the house and the river. Around the nucleus of the house and walled garden are a number of wooded parcels, variously planted with deciduous and coniferous species and interwoven with paths. A circular copse, with two concentric enclosures occupied high ground to the west of the house. Two carriage drives, one from the west and one from the north, converge within a parkland of scattered tree planting, screened from the turnpike roads by dense conifer plantations.

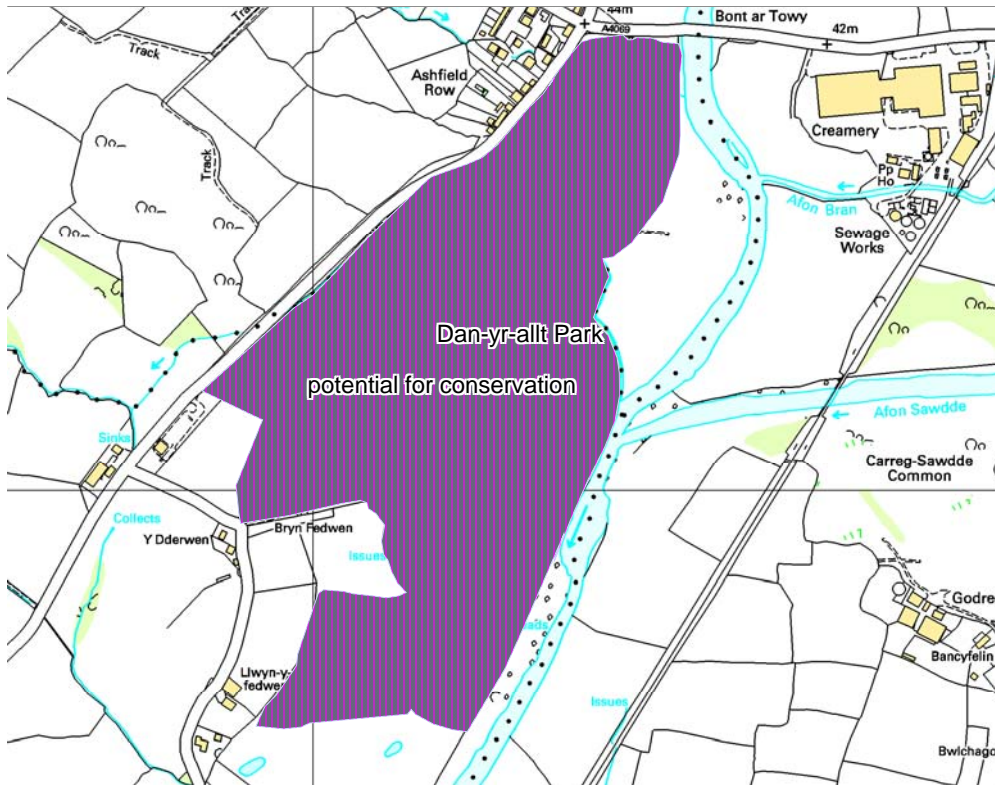
Surviving parkland elements

The walled garden survives in a derelict condition, with fragments of the heated glasshouse identifiable. The wall survives to an enormous height, reaching its full height in places, with gothic doorways through. The house was razed to the ground in World War II due to a fire, to the east of the site the terraces down to the river bank are intact with grand steps surviving to the river path. A small, though tall, section of walled garden also survives above the river bank. This whole area is dense and overgrown and dominated by laurel. The parkland through which the house is approached from the west still has some planting to retain its character although many parkland trees have been lost. Other features known to survive are a fine stone bridge which is crossed when entering the park from the west and some cast iron park railings.

Opportunities

The replacement of lost trees would ensure that the parkland character is maintained of the wider park. In particular the northern area of parkland adjacent to the Tywi bridge may be enhanced by replanting. Opportunities should be considered for repair of parkland features such as the railings. This complex and extensive parkland evidently has many surviving features which would benefit from further survey and recording.

An Assessment of Historic Parks and Gardens in the Tywi Valley



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Dan yr allt, Llangadog PRN 56712

The mansion house was demolished in 1839-40 leaving only the farmstead itself, however in 1748 it was recorded with The Court, The Bowling Green, The Cherry Orchard, The Orchard, Little Orchard Meadow, and Old Hop-Ground (Jones 1987, 54).

An extensive orchard is recorded on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map to the north of the farm. A lodge to the south marks the entrance to the park and the driveway winds between sinuous bands of woodland up to the north where the house, and latterly the farmstead, lies. Two relic lakes with islands lay within woodland to the northeast and south of the dwelling. Scattered deciduous trees were particularly generously planted to the east of the buildings, but also to the west, with fewer specimen trees to be found with increasing distance from the core of the estate.

On the higher ground to the northeast unenclosed clumps of conifers are shown and, to the southeast of the house, a mixed clump of deciduous planting.

The origins of the estate may lie in the 15th century. Recollections of the estate, including farm buildings, woodlands and the planting of specimen trees were taken from an old servant in 1835-36 and are included with Francis Jones' account of Danyrallt in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, (1972, 104-5).

Surviving parkland elements

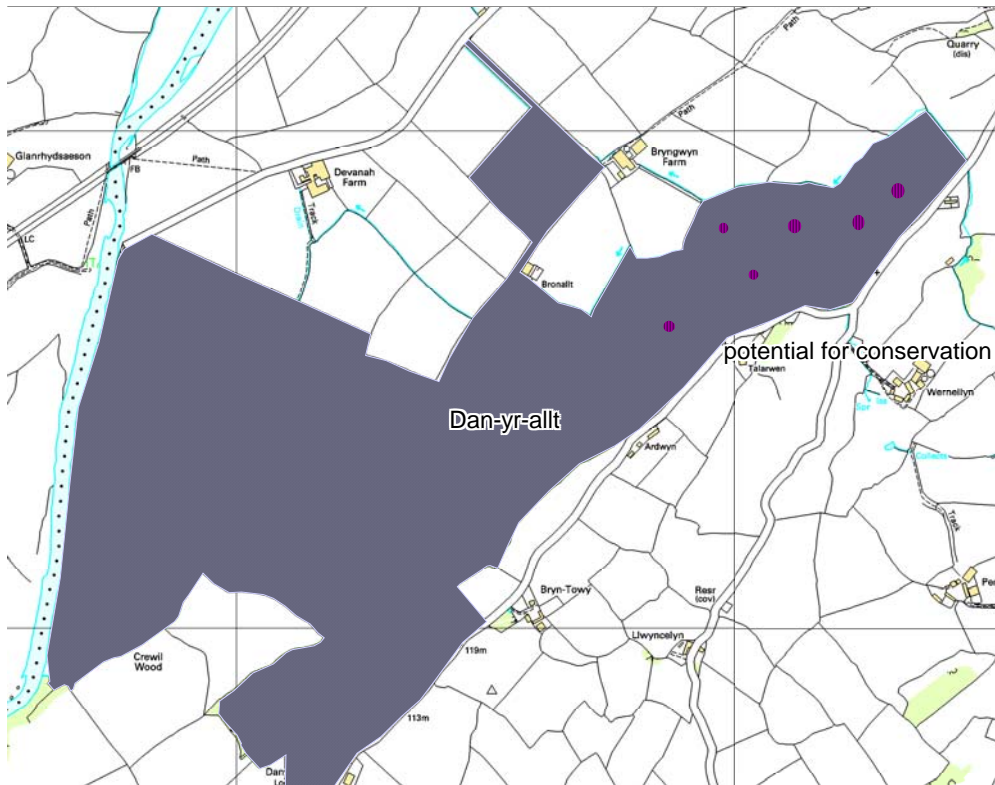
The parkland shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey mapping has been reduced to the skeletal elements of the woodland belts which divide the parkland and the clumps of Scots pine which occupy the grassy knolls on the higher valley sides. Very few scattered trees survive.

The orchard enclosure remains an intact boundary however no trees survive within it.

Opportunities

The Scots pine copses which punctuate the valley side are a highly visible and significant landscape feature, however these may be lost in time if replacement trees are not planted. Further parkland tree planting could also be undertaken on the lower lying land to maintain parkland character. There are also opportunities for further survey and recording of the estate's creation and development.

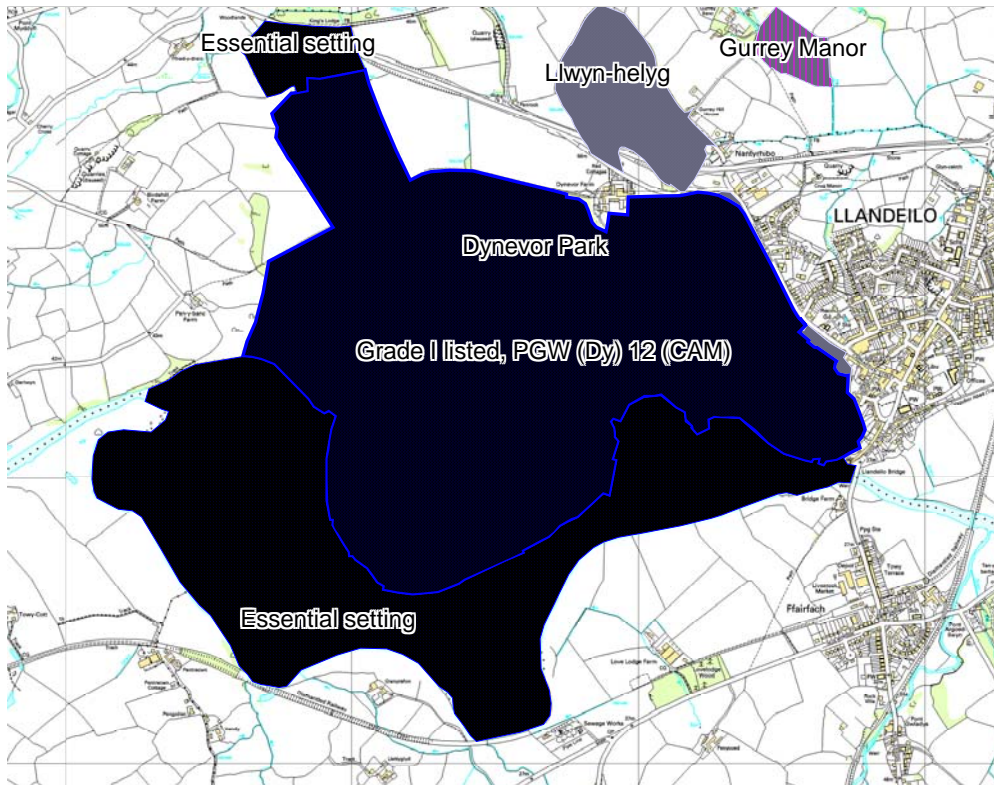
An Assessment of Historic Parks and Gardens in the Tywi Valley



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Plas Dinefwr Park, Llandeilo PRN 25543

Plas Dinefwr is a Grade I registered parkland. An outstandingly beautiful and picturesque eighteenth-century landscaped park, incorporating the remains of a medieval castle. The site also includes a small lake, two walled gardens and fine sweeping drives. Lancelot (Capability) Brown is known to have visited the site and to have admired it, (Cadw/ICOMOS UK 2002, 68-73). The parkland is now owned by the National Trust and is undergoing restoration. See full description from Register of Parks and Gardens in Appendix C.



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Glan-Brydan Park, Manordeilo and Salem PRN 49730

Glan-Brydan Park holding comprises fine gardens and parkland associated with the large country house of that name, which has been in existence since at least the first half of the 18th century. The landscape around the country house has been contrived at various stages in the past to provide vistas to be enjoyed from the house and a pleasing backdrop for it, pleasure grounds were also developed for the enjoyment of the owners at the turn of the 19th / 20 century. A recent site visit to the park has provided the following descriptions.

The landscaping of the late 19th century shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey mapping indicates that at this stage, the gardens seem to be quite simple and there is a clear delineation between 'the gardens' (the walled garden (PRN 49726), woodland walks and lawn) and 'the park' (the more open surroundings, with a number of specimen trees planted throughout the estate). This had entailed some substantial landscaping - a road was removed (PRN 49711) though parts of it survive to this day as an earthwork or a footpath, and a new, curving driveway established (PRN 49709) which ran up the west side of the park and across a fine stone bridge (PRN 49708), through a wooded area and into a carriage sweep on the south side of the house.

By the early 1900s the emphasis within the grounds was clearly shifting away from this more traditional picturesque layout, and towards the creation of pleasure grounds with more exotic species of tree planting. A boating lake (PRN 49721) and boat house (PRN 49722) are the most obvious additions, and the wooded garden area around the house was extended south to encompass these. A further avenue (PRN 49710) was also created approaching the house from the southwest. More paths and walkways were put in place throughout this larger area, and a small grotto and well (PRN 49713) next to the stream are typical of the kind of garden features which would be expected to be encountered in this kind of 'designed wilderness'. Further features – a geometric rose garden (PRN 49723), a dance hall (PRN 49729) and two pergolas (PRNs 49724 and 49725), are testimony to the continued development of the pleasure grounds during the early 20th century. The estate was sold in 1936.

Surviving parkland elements

From what remains today, it is remarkably easy to visualise the grounds as they were designed. All of the main features are still visible, though some are densely overgrown. The parkland south of the house is particularly noteworthy since it contains a large number of very mature specimen trees with a mixture of species from all over the world. The open aspect and character of the park has been successfully retained through its use only for grazing.

In addition, much of the parkland is still surrounded by iron railings and a fine set of entrance gates are situated at the end of the east driveway; features which contribute strongly to its character. The railings are in various states of repair – some are in good condition, others have been pushed over by cattle and whilst the entrance gates are still largely intact they are beginning to deteriorate.

The landscaping which took place for the Glan-Brydan Park estate has had a huge impact on what we see today. However, traces of much earlier land-use are also present – the Tywi valley has long been an important route way, and aerial photography has revealed glimpses of the Roman road, which ran through the valley, and passed through Glan-Brydan Park.

Opportunities

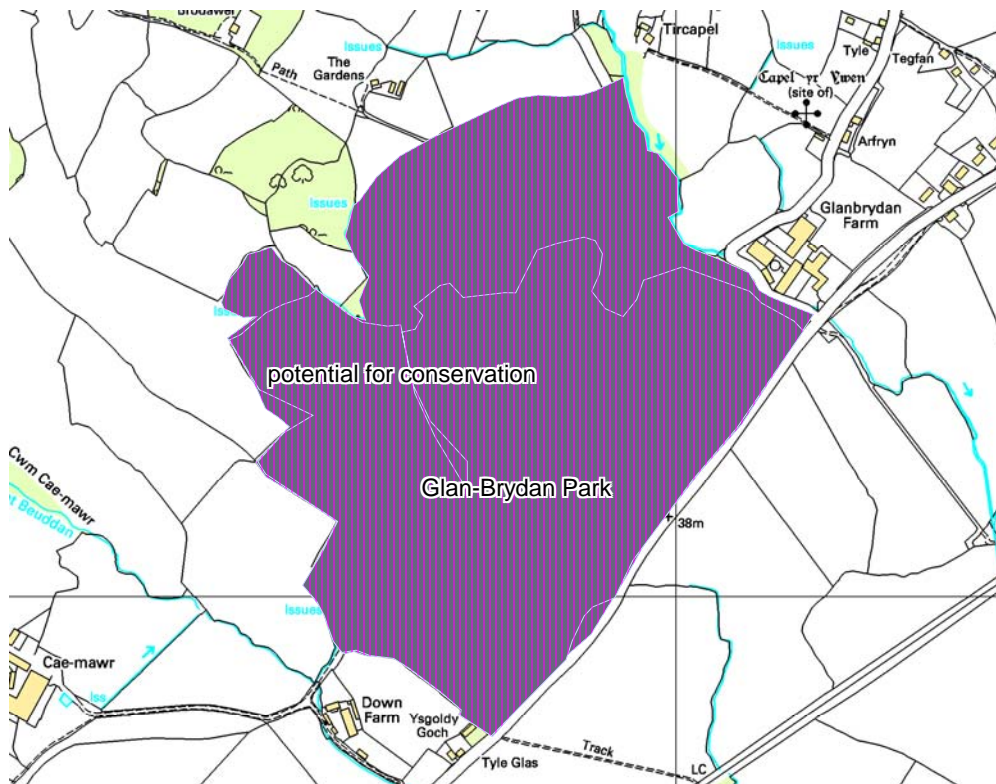
Much of the specimen tree planting, including the introduction of a number of exotics, derives from the late 19th early 20th century when the Richardson family

owned the estate. This use of exotic species of trees and the use of evergreens such as laurel and rhododendron are a characteristic of Victorian parkland. The curving driveway to the west is lined on both sides by one sweet chestnut tree to every three limes and is one of the most attractive features of the park landscape. Historic map evidence demonstrates that a number of parkland trees have been lost – and a number of trees which lined the east driveway have also gone. Whilst trees continue to be lost in bad weather (one lime has recently come down) there is a constant erosion of the parkland character.

In order to retain this important parkland at Glan-Brydan trees should be planted to replace those parkland trees which have been lost. It is essential, whenever parkland restoration is carried out that an appropriate plan is followed so that the original visual effects are maintained.

As much of the parkland planting was carried out towards the end of the 19th century, early 20th century it is recommended that the 25 inch 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map is the most appropriate and accurate map to be used as the baseline for any restoration of the parkland. The positions of parkland trees should follow as closely as possible the planting scheme represented on it (Ordnance Survey, 1906. 25 inch. Carmarthenshire sheets 34.06 & 34.06).

Tree species should be based on the evidence of species represented in the parkland – no one species should dominate the parkland unless there is good evidence for this.



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Glan-Sefin PRN 56713

The mansion of Glansefin is shown on historic maps with a large circular carriage drive to the front around which lie mixed woodland borders. To the south of the house a walled garden is depicted with a grid pattern of paths and beyond a large orchard.

To the south, upslope, are Kennel and Tannerdy woods with some walks through them. To the west beyond the wooded driveway to the service buildings are open fields with scattered trees. To the east is a large open field with a couple of scattered trees, which might loosely be termed parkland.

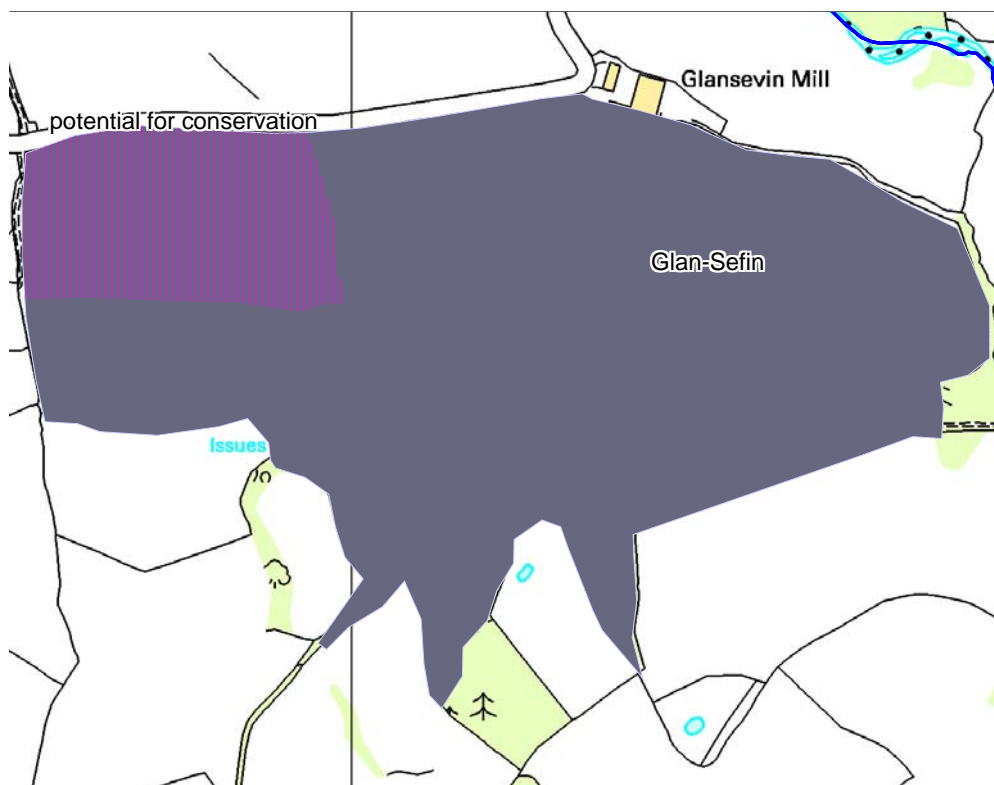
Surviving parkland elements

The lawned area to the front of the house accommodates an oak which is said to be 900 years old and the woodland borders surrounding it include laurel and a large Magnolia to the east of the house. The walled garden is now lawned and only a few fragments of the wall survive. The orchard beyond has become wooded.

The field to the west of the house retains a number of the oaks shown on the 1st edition although the number has reduced by half.

Opportunities

Further trees could be reintroduced in the parkland area to the west of the house to retain the presence of field parkland trees for the setting of the house.



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Golden Grove PRN 25603

A grade II* register parkland. Golden Grove was for a long time one of the most important estates in west Wales. Its park and gardens contain many ancient trees. It retains good quality formal terraces and an outstanding arboretum associated with the Victorian house. The walled garden is of great interest in being associated with an earlier house and it contains a lake and canal which were probably in existence in the mid seventeenth century. (Cadw/ICOMOS UK 2002, 2-7). Please see Appendix C for full description.

Surviving parkland elements

Much of the parkland has been eroded and large swathes of the parkland to the south of the mansion have been planted with conifers and are currently subject to felling. Some of the conifers have been planted hard up against the south edge of the western carriage drive, which lined with lime trees thought to pre-date 1860. As a consequence the lime trees have been crowded and there is a sense of dense deep plantation to the south, at odds with the original planting scheme which gave the avenue open space to either side.

The park boundary consists of a substantial stone wall which at one time formed a complete circuit. This, unfortunately, has tumbled down in many places.

The parkland around Golden Grove farm (Gelli Aur) which was populated with trees in the later 19th century has eroded substantially with many trees lost. The extensive orchards have given way to large agricultural sheds.

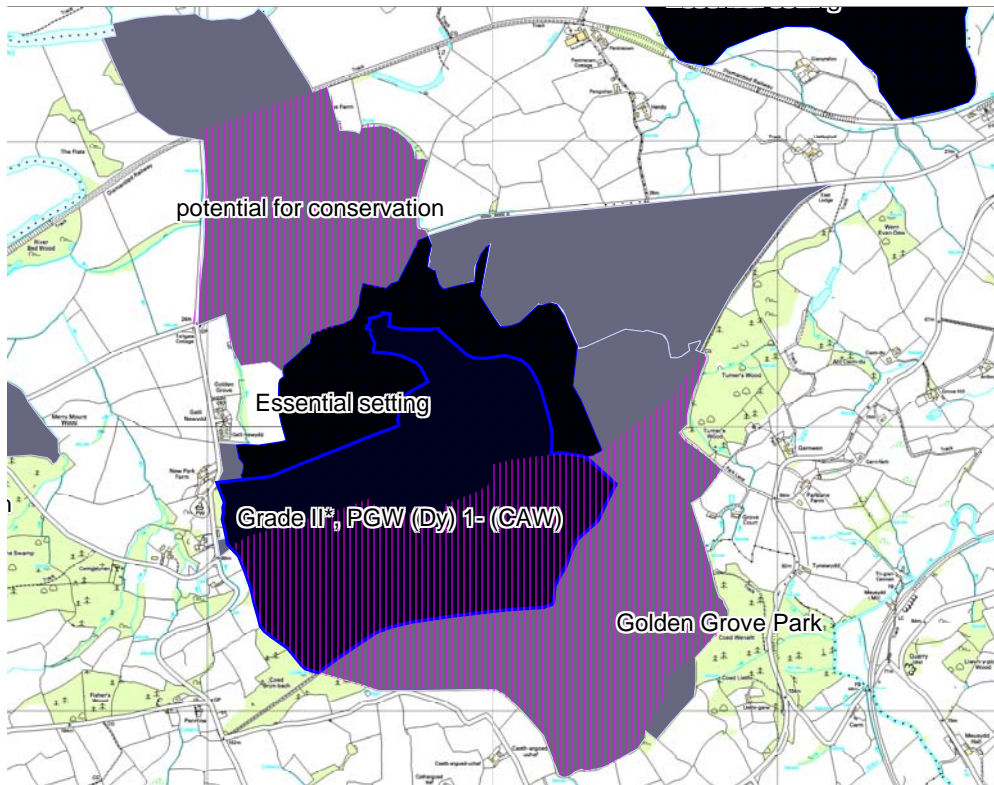
Opportunities

There are a number of opportunities for parkland restoration. The commercial plantations could be managed in order to lessen the visual impact on parkland features, ie. the plantation which imposes onto the western avenue could be opened up to allow a greater sense of space and to lessen any damaging impact on the trees which form the avenue. Likewise a buffer zone beside the park boundary wall would lessen any damaging impact from plantation trees rocking or falling against the wall.

Restoration and repair of the substantial boundary park wall.

Re-establishment of parkland planting around Golden Grove farm would enhance the parkland character of this area.

An Assessment of Historic Parks and Gardens in the Tywi Valley



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Gurrey Manor PRN 56718

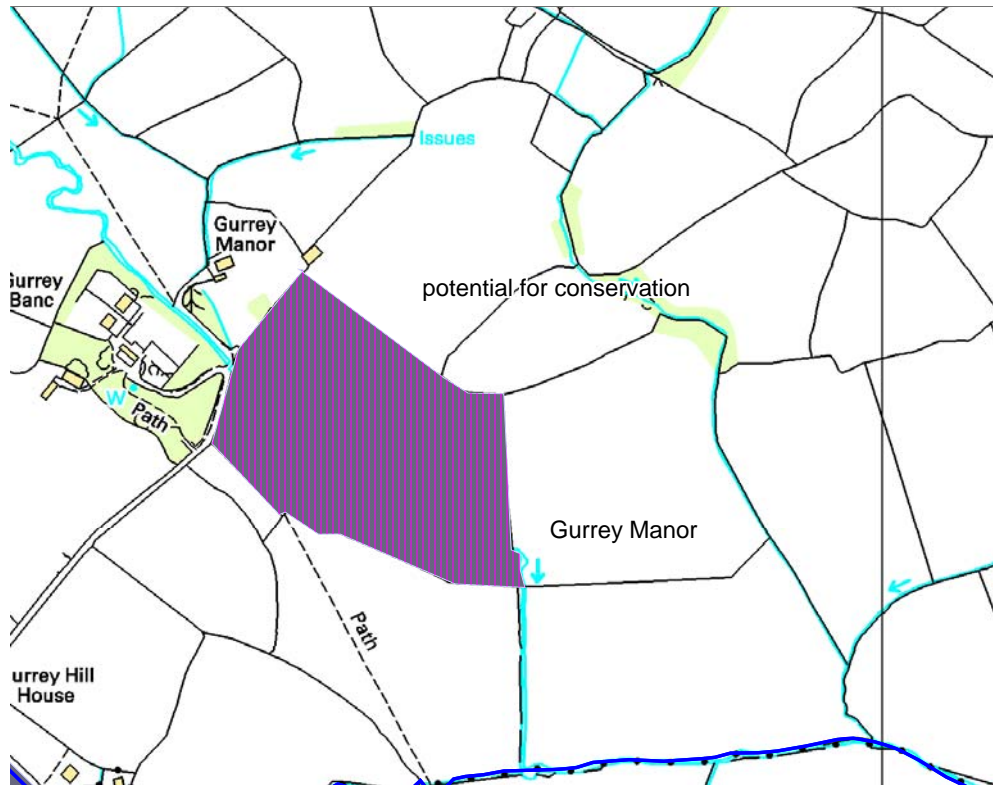
The 2nd edition Ordnance Survey shows extensive orchards surrounding Gurrey Manor and a small area of parkland is represented to the southeast of the farmstead, defined by a handful of dispersed field trees, largely deciduous, on either side of the Nant Gurrey Fach valley.

Surviving elements

Little if anything seems to survive from the once extensive orchards around the farmstead and small number of field trees survive.

Opportunities

Restoration of the parkland could be carried out by replanting some specimen trees.



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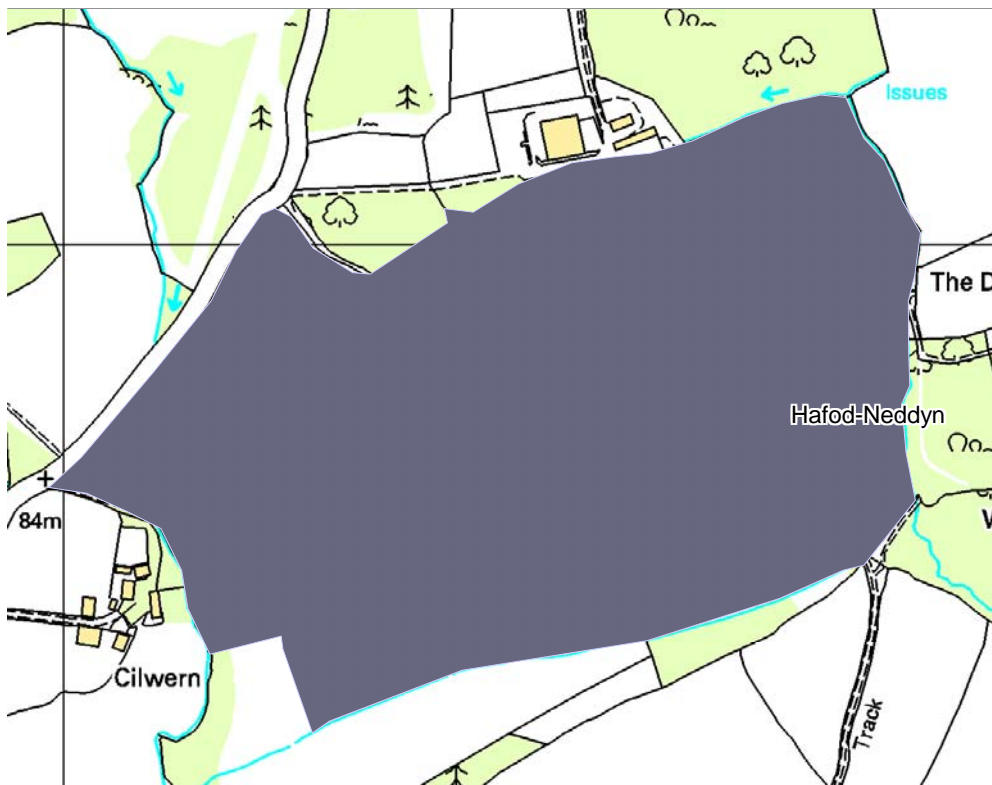
Hafod-Neddyn PRN 56714

Land surrounding Hafod Neddyn contains features that are characteristic of a planned parkland landscape with views. A circular lawn dotted with specimen trees and ha-ha lie in front of the house and scattered trees lie in fields along the main approaches and also in the main view from the house. To the east lies a wooded valley named 'The Dingle'. Areas of surrounding woodland have also apparently been designed for pheasant shooting. The full extent of this parkland is not clear from historical mapping sources. Three possible carriage drives approach the house from the south and west. The 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map depicts a large orchard to the southwest of the house and farm. An ice house which been converted to a wishing well is also said to lie within the grounds (RCAHMMW)

Surviving parkland elements

The gardens to the front of the house appear to survive, although the orchard has reverted to woodland.

Some of the dispersed field trees survive although reduced in number.



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Allt y Gaer PRN 56715

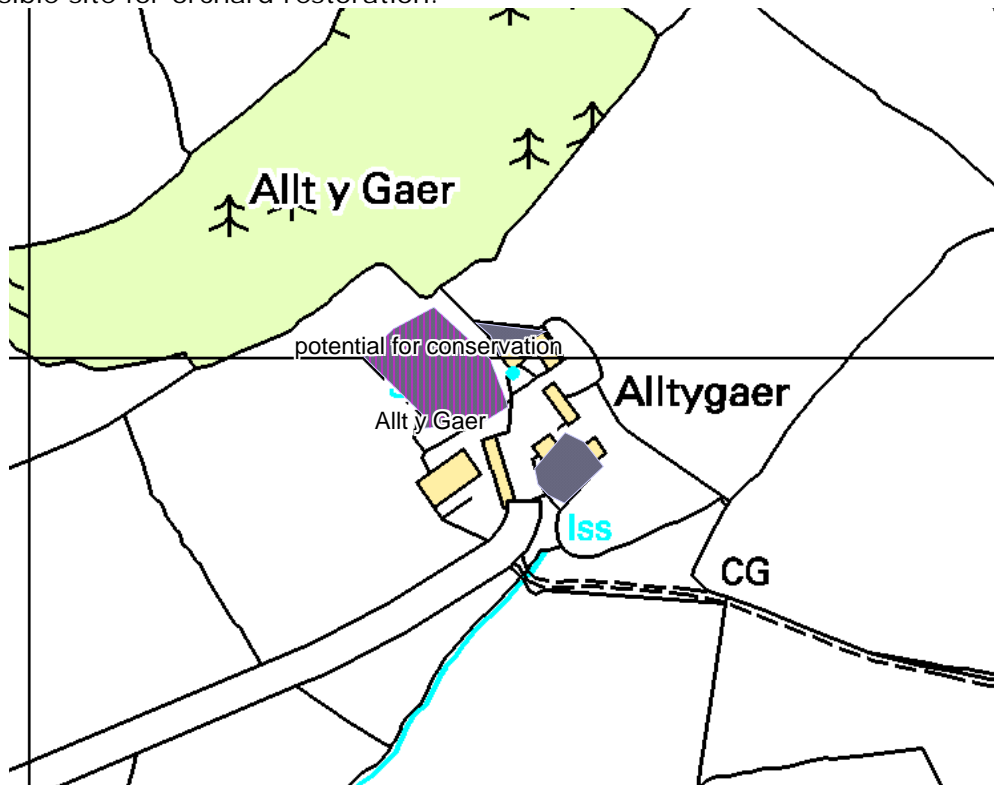
Recorded by the RCAHMW as a series of three terraces rising above the farmhouse of Allt y Gaer. Historic map evidence shows that three parcels of orchards lay around the farmstead.

Surviving parkland elements

Only the largest of the three orchards, that to the north of the farmstead, remains undeveloped. No orchard trees appear to survive.

Opportunities

Possible site for orchard restoration.



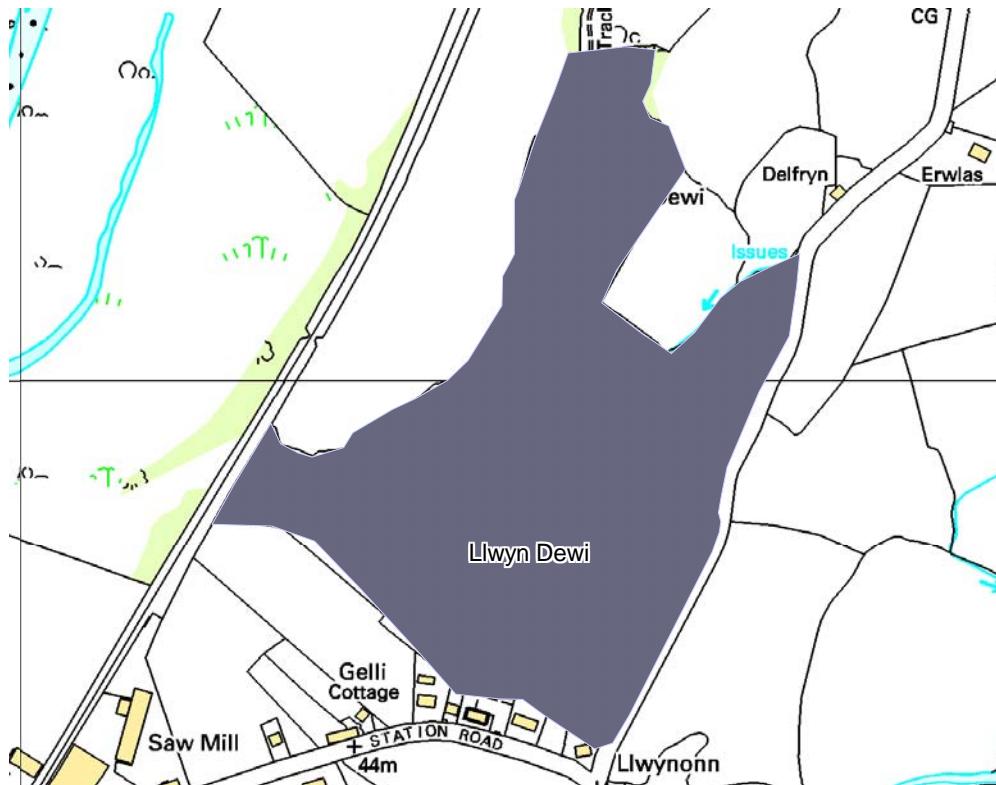
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Llwyn-Dewi PRN 56716

Sale particulars from 1881 mention the farm having richly planted gardens and pleasure grounds, and a 'park-like feeding pasture'. Scattered trees lie to the southwest of the house, and small bits of woodland to the north. In front of the house the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map depicts lawns with paths laid out. Pine trees were planted to the front and rear of the house.

Surviving parkland elements

Some of the scattered trees survive to the southwest of the house and two of these are lime. The pine trees around the house are also intact.



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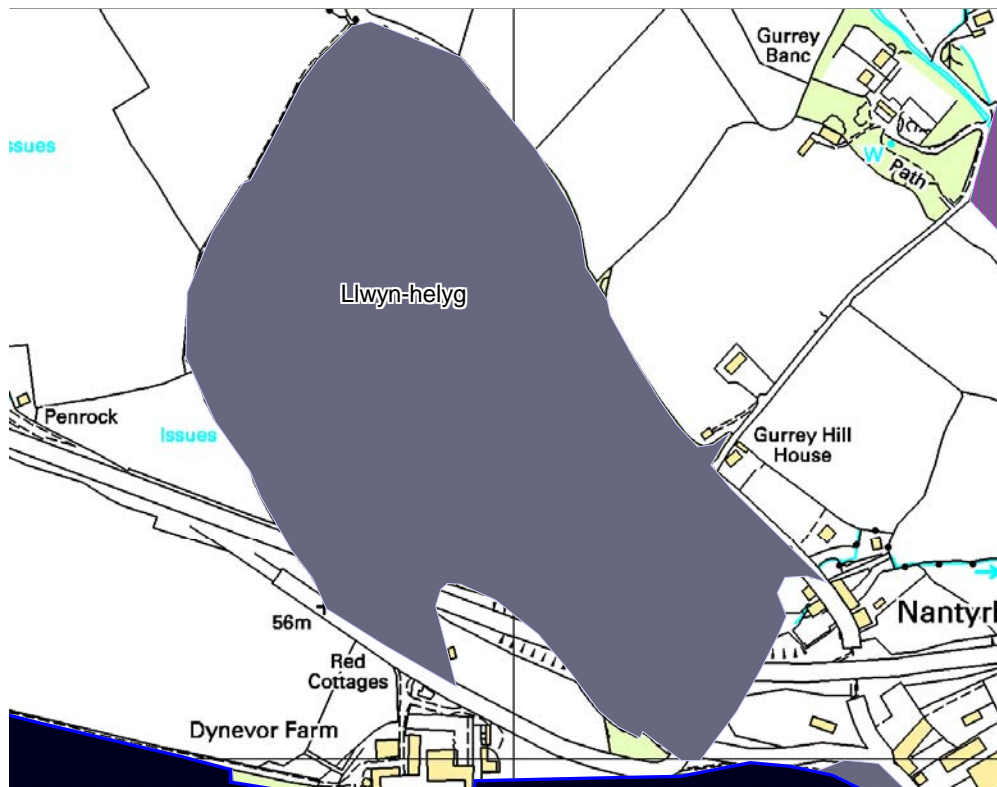
Llwyn-Helyg PRN 56717

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey maps illustrate a major dwelling surrounded by trees, lawns, formal gardens and paths. A walled garden with glasshouses, gridded paths and orchards lay to the west of the house.

The curving driveway arrives at the house from the south, with a lodge at the entrance. On either side of the driveway are parkland fields with scattered trees and a possible circular copse to the southeast. At the southeastern extent of the parkland a relic field boundary appears to have been removed leaving behind a row of mature field trees. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map depicts the convergence of a number of streams which appears to have been exploited to create a pond, the watercourses and pool shrouded in mixed woodland.

Surviving parkland elements

The pond appears to have become marshy ground when the 2nd edition maps were published and modern maps give no indication of this feature. The garden features around the house appear to survive and a number of parkland trees still stand.



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Manoravon/Crymlyn Manor, Dyffryn Cennen PRN 25583

The 1907 map marks out an area of parkland that lies to the northeast of the major dwelling of Manoravon (now known as Crymlyn Manor). Clearly shown on the 1st edition OS map as a large parkland area included scattered trees and circular copses on high points, bordered by tree lined streams.

To the east of the courtyard block behind the house is a rectangular walled garden, with a sun dial to the south. A waterfall is also picked out on the stream to the south of the house.

To the south of the house lie more fields with scattered trees, copses and tree lined streams, bordered by woods on the hill top.

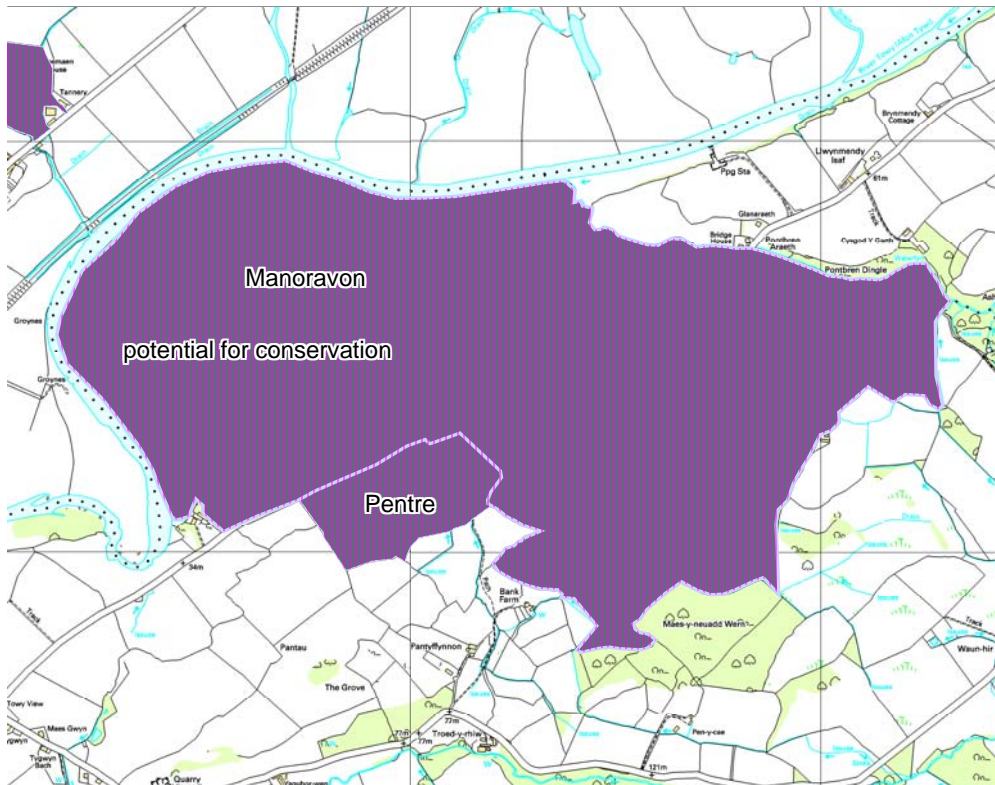
A planned courtyard home farmstead lies on the floodplain below in large open fields planted with geometrically shaped copses of deciduous and conifer trees.

Surviving parkland elements

Although a number of scattered trees survive on the valley slopes to the northeast of Manoravon, neither of the groves of trees which occupied the hill spurs and local high points endure. The field trees which occupied the lower slopes above the road also appear to have fared worse than those on higher ground. This is also the case on the west side of the road, between the home farm and the house; the number of scattered trees across this swathe of landscape has drastically diminished. A number of the geometric copses on the flood plain seem to survive.

Opportunities

Manoravon still clearly retains much of its parkland character however there is a danger that this aspect of the landscape will be lost unless tree planting continues in order to replace those trees lost. The planting of scattered trees would safeguard this impressive landscape. In addition the replanting of the copses on the high points above the house would restore visual landmarks to the Tywi valley.



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Pant-Glas, Llanfihangel Aberbythych PRN 56718

The following description is drawn from a Tir Gofal farm visit in 2003.

The appearance of Pantglas Farm has been heavily influenced by its status as an estate farm. The 1837 Llanfihangel Aberbythych parish tithe map identifies Pantglas as belonging to the Earl of Cawdor, and a tenant farm of the Golden Grove estate. At its peak, this comprised over 50,000 acres spread throughout southwest Wales. The influence of the estate is visible in the finely built estate farm buildings at Pantglas, and within the landscape of the farm itself. The farmstead of Pantglas is first shown on a 1790 map of Pantglas in the Cawdor Estate Map Book, although its depiction is stylised and it may not be an accurate representation.

Carbury Mount lies a short distance to the east of the farmstead, and occupies a naturally prominent position within the landscape. Its east and south sides appear to have been landscaped to enhance its appearance as a circular mound, and it may have its origins as a Victorian prospect mound. Prospect mounds were generally placed within parkland as viewing points, whilst also serving as a visual focus within the park layout. Carbury Mount offers fine views across the Tywi Valley to the north, west and east towards the Tudor Gothic mansion of Golden Grove itself, the centre of the estate.

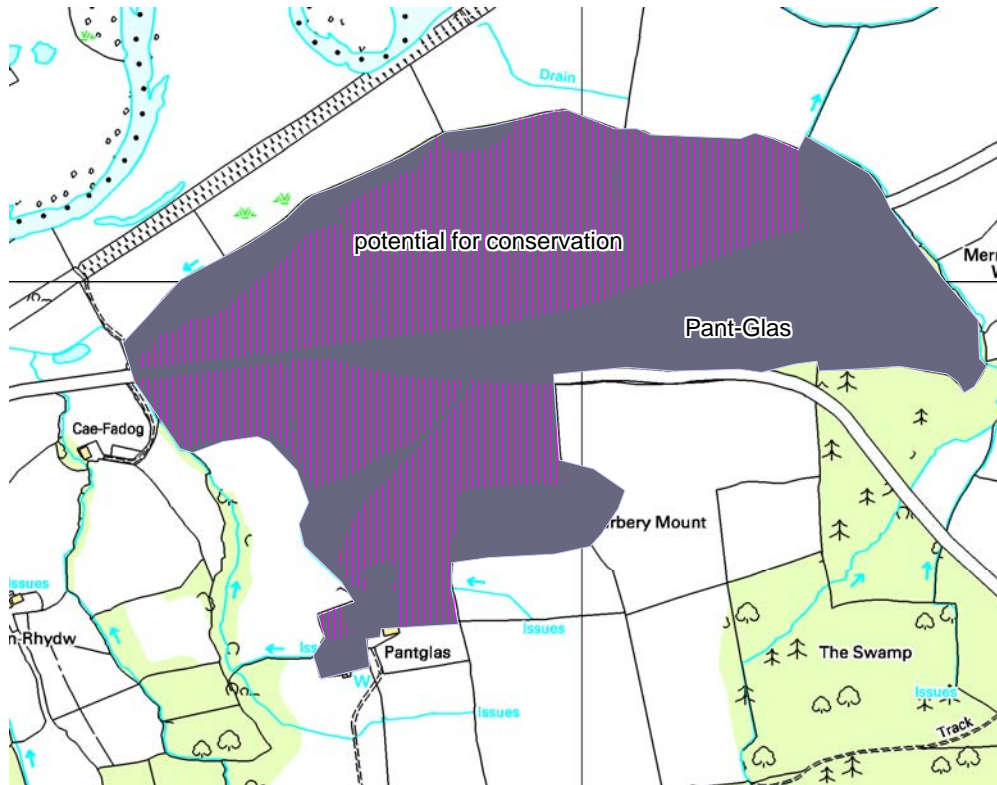
In the centre of the farm, on either side of the roads which bisect the farmstead, are remnants of parkland tree planting. This planting may have been designed before the nineteenth century as part of a parkland landscape on the approach to the Golden Grove village and estate, which lies approximately 1.5 kilometres to the east. This characteristic arrangement of parkland trees is first shown on a 1790 Cawdor Estate Map of Pantglas Farm.

Surviving parkland elements

Few of the trees remain today, and of the surviving examples, several are thinning and old. This erosion of historic landscape character is a particular concern.

Opportunities

These fields offer the potential for recreating the parkland environment. The layout of trees shown on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map provides a useful reference to ensure that any new planting is in keeping with existing historic landscape character.



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Pentre, Dyffryn Cennen, PRN 56720

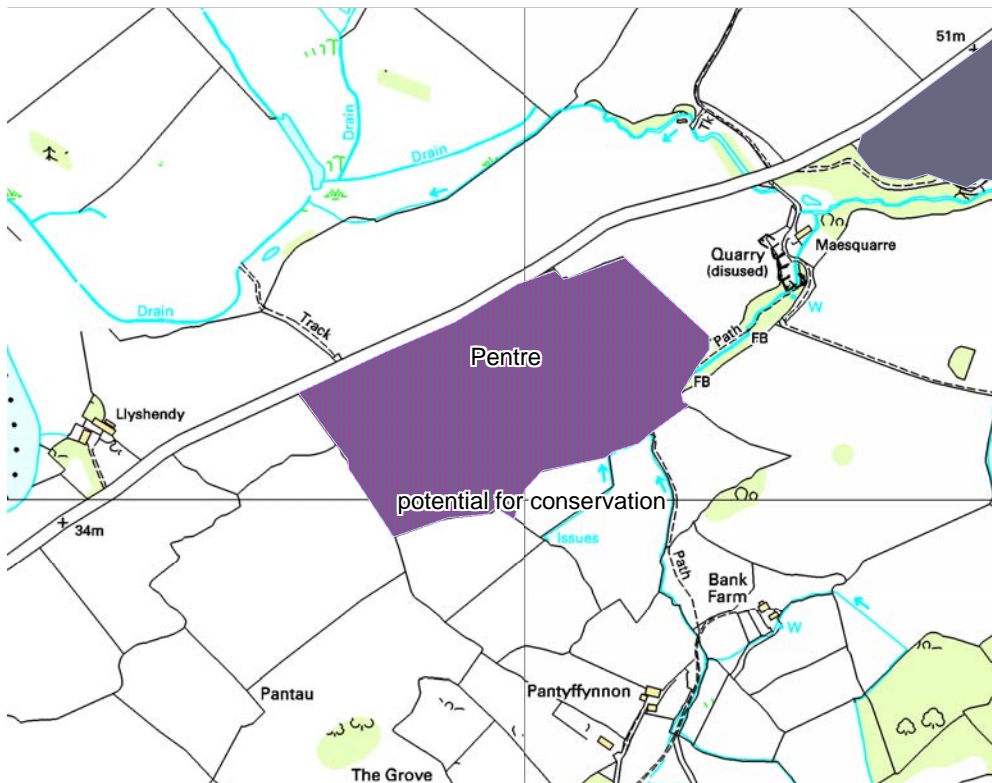
A small area of parkland contiguous with Manoravon park, associated with Pentre. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map depicts a lodge and carriage drive approaching the house from the west and sweeping past the house in an arc. Parcels of orchard and pine plantations frame the house to west and east. Lining the carriage drive and dotting the field below the house are a number of parkland trees.

Surviving parkland elements

Only one significant parkland tree appears to survive on recent documents.

Opportunities

The reinstatement of parkland trees would restore the eroded parkland character of this area.



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Rhosmaen House, Manordeilo and Salem, PRN 56719

Rhosmaen House was home to the Griffith family around 1720, however the current house was built in the second half of the 19th century.

Although Rhosmaen house lies on the lower valley slopes the parkland associated with it appears to lie to the northwest, up on the higher ground and bounded by a sinuous road which appears to have been a main approach to the house. The fields to the west of this road are illustrated on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map with scattered deciduous field trees with irregular plantations bordering the Nant Harri to the south.

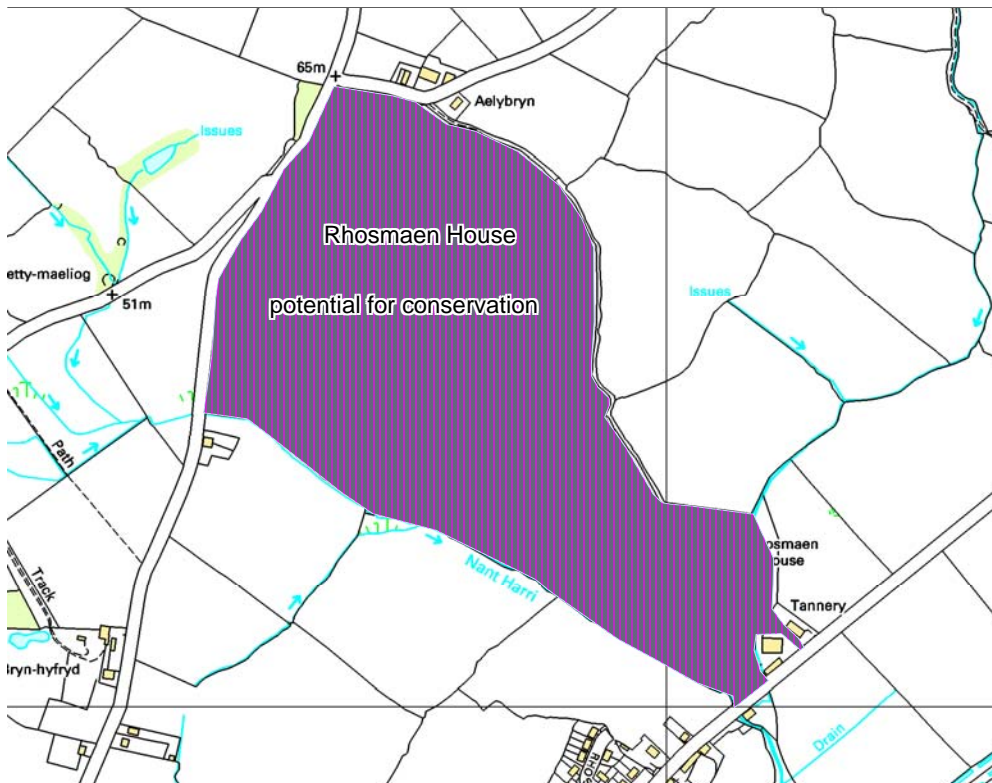
The gardens associated with Rhosmaen House incorporate pines planted close to the house and a large orchard shown on the 1891 gives way to an open field bordered by dense belts of woodland 1907. A lodge placed on the Llandeilo to Llandovery turnpike marks the entrance to a carriage drive which is cloaked in belts of trees, deciduous to the west and coniferous to the east.

Surviving parkland elements

The plantations and enclosed woodland parcels appear to have survived, however the field trees which lay dispersed across the parkland to the northwest have suffered and their number greatly reduced.

Opportunities

Planting of individual trees within the upper fields to the northwest would help to restore parkland character.



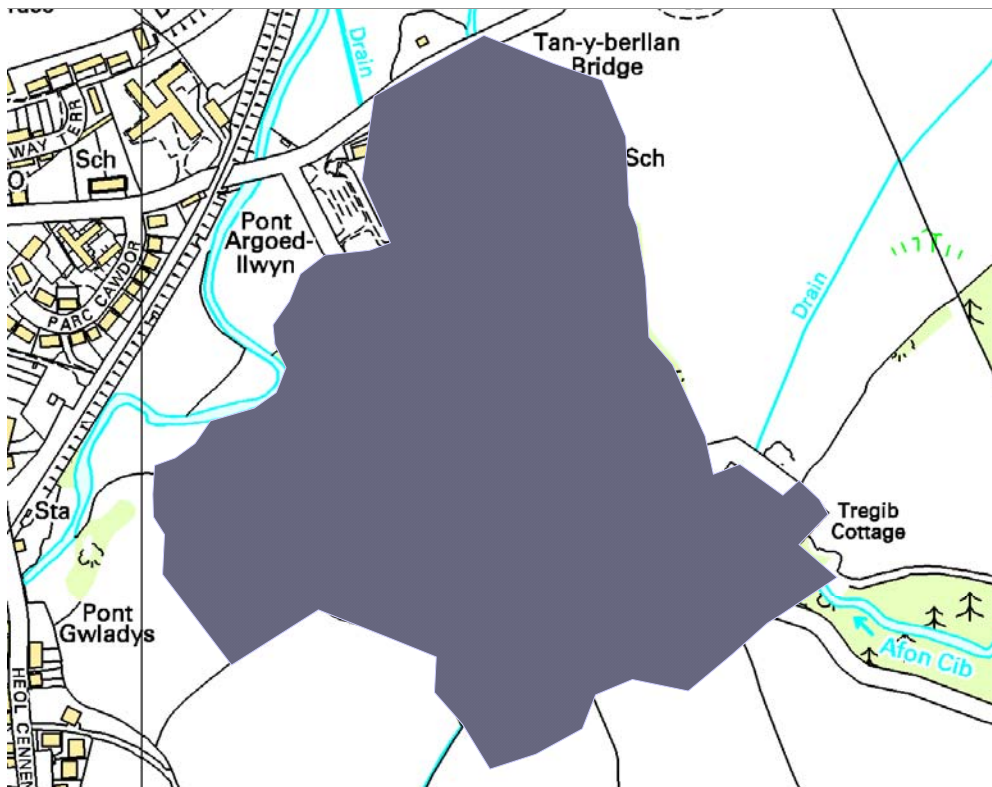
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Tregib, Dyffryn Cennen, PRN 56722

The mansion is thought to date to the 16th century although it probably replaced an earlier house. Following vandalism the mansion house was demolished in the 1970s. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map shows that the house was approached from the northwest flanked by belts of deciduous and conifer trees. Ornamental planting framed the house to the northwest, but in other respects the parkland seems characterised by swathes of deciduous and conifer plantations designed to act as a screen at the outer edges of the park. Formal gardens are depicted to the southeast of the house including a kitchen garden with glasshouse. The 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map identifies to the southwest of the mansion house a large rectangular fish pond surrounded by trees and to the northwest of the house are terraces.

Surviving parkland elements

The parkland to the northwest of the mansion house is now the site of a large school. However, the large blocks of tree planting including the shelter belts survive.



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Appendix B: Extracts from Landscape Strategy

2.4 Parklands

2.4.1 Description

The Tywi valley is well known in Wales for its planned and parkland landscapes, not only for their visual qualities but particularly in the case of Dinefwr Park for its biodiversity, and this site is to be designated as a National Nature Reserve. Both Dinefwr Park and Gelli Aur fall within the project area and are already open to the public. Other privately owned parklands in the area are less well known and less studied. Lowland Wood Pasture and Parkland is recognised in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan as a priority habitat (UK Biodiversity Action Plan) and also in the Carmarthenshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan also includes a habitat action plan for these landscapes.

Earth Sciences

The parklands are often situated on the lower valley slopes in positions that offer good views over the valley. Typically they are on the deeper more fertile soils and are relatively well drained compared to the flood plain itself.

History and archaeology

Amongst numerous planned landscapes and historic parklands in the Tywi valley there are two major parklands that are included in the register of landscapes parks and gardens of Special Historic Interest; Gelli Aur and Dinefwr Park.

Gelli Aur includes the remains of tree planting, garden terraces and pleasure grounds of the 19th century, including an arboretum, a walled garden, a lake and a canal all surrounded by a mortared wall. The estate includes the village of Llanfihangel Aberbythych that is built in a distinct Victorian Tudor Gothic style. 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. As well as the estate park and gardens features the area include a possible deer park and rabbit warren.

Dinefwr Park lies on hilly ground on the northern side of the Tywi valley, immediately to the east of Llandeilo town. 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 current house dates to the mid 17th-century. Fine stone-built service buildings arranged around a courtyard, 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. The southeastern corner of the park - Penlan Park - has been municipalised and laid out with tarmac paths. The field boundaries that surround the park are earth banks topped with hedges. Underlying archaeology include a possible Bronze Age ring ditch, Iron Age hill fort, and two overlapping Roman forts.

Although the full extent of parkland features surviving within the valley is not known elements of planned landscapes and parkland are known to survive at Abermarlais, Dan yr allt, Glan-Brydan, Glantowy, Manoravon, Pentre cwm, Aberglasney and Court Henry.

Landscape Habitats

Lowland Wood Pasture and Parkland is a UK Priority BAP habitat and includes landscape features of biodiversity importance such as veteran trees that support rare species of invertebrates, lichen and fungi. In addition such trees may support various species of bats, all of which are UK BAP priority species.

Culture

Many of the farmsteads along the valley developed into substantial and wealthy holdings and in post-mediaeval times there was a tendency for large estates of multiple holdings to develop in the ownership of the local gentry. The management of these holdings within these wealthy and well-run estates has produced a distinctive landscape of parkland and large fields.

A number of these parklands have been developed as tourist attractions and contribute to Carmarthenshire being recognised as the 'Garden of Wales'.

Visual and Sensory

These include a diverse mosaic of landscape features - open grazed parkland, woodland and mature trees. Given the scale of these designed landscapes, their cultural and historic associations and the features associated with them; there is a certain grandeur, which is unique to these open parklands. The surrounding enclosed agricultural areas provide a contrast with this being, more a working landscape. Both contribute to the variety of landscape one experiences in the Tywi valley.

2.4.2 Current condition, Trends and Threats

Much of the former parkland of Gelli Aur has now decayed and taken on a character similar to the surrounding landscape. Plas Dinefwr, Aberglasney and Middleton are all well managed as tourist centres. Gelli Aur is in poor condition. 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. Woodland management of these areas is now opening up some of the large broadleaved trees.

The parkland landscapes have suffered from periods of neglect in the past, so while they remain visually attractive some of the woodlands have been neglected and the age structure of the veteran tree population is dominated by very old trees with few younger ones.

The trend is one of general decay of historic parkland elements. However while there has been relatively little management of these landscapes over the last 50 years, in the last 5 years or so there has been more activity in some areas such as Dinefwr Park and more recently at Gelli Aur. Those parklands not open to the public are generally in decline.

The future threats to the parkland areas are that management and development may not be sympathetic to the survival of the planned landscape and parkland features. There is also a lack of forward planning for the replacement of the landscape features such as mature trees and groups of trees as well as failure to adequately conserve the historic parklands, and their associated features.

2.4.3 Key Landscape Elements

- The open un-enclosed nature
- Linkages between the different habitats in parkland, creating areas that are potentially rich in biodiversity.

- Sense of grandeur, partly as a result of their cultural and historic associations. (Although this will depend on the particular parkland, its surviving features and its history.)
- The mature and veteran trees.

Encourage the:

- Conservation of landscape features that support biodiversity such as the structures that provide habitats for bats.
- Maintaining of the mosaic of habitats provided in these parklands, and the connectivity between the different elements
- Conservation of mature and veteran trees, woodland areas, semi- improved grasslands and wetlands.
- Planting of younger trees to ensure the parkland is maintained for the future

Resist the:

- Breakdown in the connectivity between the different landscape features, thus reducing their value for biodiversity

2.4.4 Management Recommendations

History and Archaeology

- Develop understanding of surviving parkland through detailed condition survey - use to develop specific management plans/strategies

Landscape Habitats

- Take remedial action to conserve veteran parkland trees.
- Plant new parkland trees that will replace these veterans in the future.
- Conserve other structures that provide habitats for bats

Culture

- Develop understanding of surviving parkland through detailed condition survey - use to develop specific management plans/strategies

Visual and Sensory

- Survey these areas to establish their individual needs
- Conserve the different elements associated with these parkland landscapes, within an overall landscape plan for each area, so as to conserve the character each of these areas. It may also be necessary to initiate the creation of new landscape features such as the planting of replacement trees or woodland areas, and the position of these should again reflect the overall character of the area.

3.0 Implementation of Management Recommendations

3.5 Parkland

3.5.1 Summary of Management Recommendations

- Conserve and enhance parkland landscapes through management and replanting of parkland trees where appropriate.
- Develop understanding of surviving parkland through detailed condition survey - use to develop specific management plans/strategies
 - Take remedial action to conserve veteran parkland trees.
- Plant new parkland trees that will replace these veterans in the future.
- Conserve the different elements associated with these parkland landscapes, within an overall landscape plan for each area, so as to conserve the character each of these areas. It may also be necessary to initiate the creation of new

landscape features such as the planting of replacement trees or woodland areas, and the position of these should again reflect the overall character of the area.

3.5.2 Links with Programmes

Landscape Investigation

- Detailed research into parklands within the Tywi valley.
- Advise on appropriate areas for replanting

Discovering the Tywi Valley

- Raise awareness of the historic parklands

Landscape & Biodiversity Action

- Raise awareness of biodiversity associated with parklands/veteran trees
- Parkland/veteran tree management course
- Land manager network

Appendix C: Register Entries for Parks and Gardens

ABERGLASNEY

Ref number PGW (Dy) 5 (CAM)

OS map 159

Grid ref SN 5815 2213

Former county Dyfed

Unitary authority Carmarthenshire

Community council Llangathen

Designations Listed buildings: Aberglasney (grade II*); north-east courtyard range plus former stables and cartshed (grade II); south-east courtyard range plus former bakehouse and cowsheds (grade II); former small coach house and bailiff's house (grade II); gatehouse (grade II); former domestic outbuildings to NW of walled garden (grade II); arcaded terrace walks enclosing walled garden (grade II*)

Tree Preservation Orders covering most of the mature trees within the curtilage.
Conservation Area.

Site evaluation Grade II*

Primary reasons for grading The survival of the structure and some trees of formal gardens and an informal woodland garden of a long established country mansion. The most important feature is an arcaded court with raised walk around it, probably dating to the early seventeenth century. There are also two walled gardens, a pond, a gatehouse, a yew tunnel walk, and remains of woodland walks. Most information about the site's history has come from archaeological excavation, which has revealed a major phase of building work on the gardens in the early seventeenth century. Aberglasney has undergone a major programme of rebuilding and restoration work in the late 1990s.

Type of site Pleasure grounds, formal gardens, woodland garden and associated features surrounding the house.

Main phases of construction Arcaded court and terrace walk, probably early seventeenth century; gatehouse, sixteenth or seventeenth century; other features extant 1840, although possibly earlier.

Site description

Aberglasney is situated to the west of the small village of Llangathen, some 5.5 km (3.5 miles) west of Llandeilo. It nestles in the lee of Grongar hill, which is to the west, at about 40 m above AOD. This once fine house may have medieval origins but externally it appears as a three-storey, eighteenth- to early nineteenth-century block. Until the late twentieth century the remnants of the once fine portico lay at the foot of the north front of the house. This was a large Ionic structure, possibly dating from 1846 and designed by Edward Haycock, the architect from Shrewsbury. It was returned to the site and rebuilt in the centre of the north front as part of the restoration of the late 1990s.

The site has an ancient and mixed history. Jones notes that it was a well known residence from about 1350 onwards, the first recorded occupants being the Thomas family, who were apparently descended from Elystan Glodrudd, who came to the county by the marriage of Sir Gruffydd ab Elidyr to a daughter of Rhys Gryg, a prince of Dynevor. By the Tudor period, the family had assumed the name Thomas and Sir William Thomas became the first High Sheriff of the new shire of Carmarthen in 1541 - 42; both his son and grandson also became High Sheriffs. In about 1600 the estate was sold to the Bishop of St Davids, Anthony Rudd. He pulled down the old mansion on the site and had built an imposing residence that was assessed as having thirty hearths (and a private chapel) in 1670.

In 1710, the property was sold to a lawyer from Kidwelly, Robert Dyer. His son John became a parson and, more famously, a poet, the author of Grongar Hill (1726). The Dyer family was greatly

impoverished by the end of the eighteenth century and sold Aberglasney in 1803 to Thomas Phillips, who had made a fortune in India. He renovated and improved the property, although retaining many parts of Bishop Rudd's fabric. His nephew inherited the property and it remained in the family until the death of his grand-daughter, Mrs Mayhew, in 1939. Since that time, there have been a number of owners. The last, Mrs Margaret Perry, intended to renovate the property, but these plans were never fulfilled. During her tenure the pillars from the portico were removed.

To the west of the house and garden is a group of outbuildings that were for various domestic and utilitarian uses.

The stables and cart shed form a substantial building at right-angles to the lodge, to which it is linked by an arch of dressed stone possibly of medieval origin. The style of this building is nineteenth-century. However, there are breaks in the front that might suggest that it is not all of one build. The roof, which is hipped, has recently received attention and is slate-covered; at the south end there are dove boxes. There were originally two openings for the carts, but one is now blocked. There is a lean-to at the rear of the building, without a roof in the mid-1990s.

The lodge is attached to the stables and cart shed by a dressed stone arch. It is now whitewashed but is apparently of rubble construction with a hipped roof that extends some distance beyond the east gable end. Also on this east gable is a porch or veranda with a slate roof and metal supporting columns. Above the veranda roof is a curious circular window.

The bakehouse and cowshed range is a long, single storey, rubble stone building with a hipped slate roof, probably nineteenth-century. There is a chimney stack for the bakehouse at one end of the building and it is attached to the coach house at the other.

The former bailiff's house and small coach house are probably mid-nineteenth-century in date. They have slate roofs and modern brick chimney stacks. The semi-circular arched carriage entries have been blocked, but are still visible in the break in the masonry. The bailiff's house has mostly modern windows; however, on the lane side there is a late medieval freestone window with four-centre head and leaded glazing. This is said to have been removed from the Bishop's Palace at Nantgaredig, although Abergwili may have been meant. Inside the bailiff's house is said to be a plaster ornamented fireplace removed from Aberglasney House.

The building to the north-west of the arcaded court can be reached by an arched opening at the west end of the court's north wall. The ground level within the walled garden is considerably higher than the floor level of these buildings and there are steps between the two. Probably built in the early nineteenth century as three cottages, the building stands to two storeys and is rubble-built with a tall hipped roof. At some stage in the recent past, the slates have been removed and plastic roofing felt secured. On the north-east side, the door and window openings are mostly pointed, whilst on the south-west side the openings are camber or square-headed. There is a blocked opening in the north-west end. The building is now used as a cafeteria and exhibition area.

The house and grounds occupy an area of gently south-west facing land on the northern side of the Towy Valley. In 1840 the tithe map showed that the Aberglasney estate consisted of some 133 acres, the house and gardens occupying about 12 acres. The arcaded court, three walled gardens, gatehouse and pond were extant at that time. The configuration of these features had changed little in 1887; the two eastern walled gardens had been amalgamated and a northern dividing wall had been erected to create the western walled garden. Both these gardens had internal perimeter paths and were divided by two intersecting paths. There was also a complex series of intersecting paths in the arcaded court west of the house. The path leading southwards to the Pigeon House appears to have been abandoned between 1840 and 1887. The formal pond to the west of the house, below the arcaded court, appears on both maps in very much the same format, although more regular in shape on the First Edition Ordnance Survey of 1887.

The Tithe Survey of 1840 and early editions of the Ordnance Survey maps indicate that there were two principal entrances to the property. First, there was a short drive from the minor road to the village of Llangathen, to the north-east of the garden, originally entering the grounds through a pair of fine iron gates hung on stone gate piers. The gates disappeared in the early 1990s. They were flanked by large and impressive piers, that stood to about 2.5m, which in turn were flanked by two arched pedestrian entrances. The stone for this entrance had been carefully dressed; each pier stands on a small plinth and the stone has been recessed at the joint of each course. As part of the restoration programme of the late 1990s these piers and arched entrances have been restored and their tops rebuilt. From this entrance the drive curved gently towards the house. Now, only a short stretch remains before the modern visitor facilities of the entrance gatehouse, drive and car park intervene. Immediately to the east of the house there was a short spur to give access to the side and south of the house.

The other carriage drive was across the fields, running in a north-westerly direction to join the (now) A40 a little to the east of the drive to Lan Lash (Lanlash). Again, on entering the property, this

time through a more simple entrance, the drive curved gently towards the house and in 1840 opened up into a yard between the northern end of the cloistered walk and the gatehouse. By 1886/87 this second drive has become tree-lined. The route of this drive crosses a small stream and although evidence for one has yet to be found, it is probable that this stream would have to have been bridged. This drive has now gone, although the gateway exists within the curtilage wall. From the A40, two stone gateposts set back from the road and the beginnings of a very infrequently used track are all that remain.

Over the years the actual configuration of the drives within the grounds appears to have altered. In 1840 the drives may not have formed an integral unit. The tithe map indicates a wall extending southwards from the gatehouse, towards the house, on the line of the yew tunnel; it may be that there was a further gate or arch to link the two drives.

By 1887 there had been the addition of a turning circle that linked in to the original drives to the north-east of the house and it is tempting to suggest that this was constructed in about 1846, when the impressive portico is believed to have been erected.

The gardens at Aberglasney form a series of five compartments, with each area being separated from the next by built features or walls. The arcaded court to the west of the house forms the core of the gardens. To its north, and north of the house, is an area of cobbled court, lawn and informal planting. To its west is the pond garden, with woodland beyond. To its south are the two walled gardens and an area of informal woodland.

The only substantial water feature is the formal rectangular pond, sometimes referred to as the stew pond, to the west of the house and arcaded court. In 1887, the pond was about 61m x 23m. There may have also been a small cascade on the south-eastern side to remove excess drainage water from the sloping garden; in the mid 1990s there was a small, somewhat crude, cascade here. The pond edges were then somewhat silted but some masonry blocks were visible, suggesting that it was stone-lined. As part of the late 1990s restoration programme the pond was dredged, its sides rebuilt and seven inflow channels constructed around its upper sides. It has grass slopes on its east, west and south sides, with a weeping ash at the north-west end and a cypress at the south end. Along the north side a raised terrace, with a flight of wide steps up to it, has been built against the north wall of the garden, with a sloping bed below it. In the north-east corner a raised cafe terrace has been built.

To the north of the pond is a substantial rubble-built stone wall, with scalloped top, that separates the garden associated with the pond area and the more utilitarian buildings, stables and coach house to the north. Standing for the most part to about 3m high, it contains several blocked entrances. It is not clear whether these entrances were original or whether they were later constructed to allow access to the range of glasshouses (shown in 1887) from the stable courtyard. At the west end of the wall are the footings of a small glasshouse, all that remains of those in existence in 1887. The style of masonry is visually different from, and cruder than, all the other stonework examined at Aberglasney; there is far less use of the flat slabs that are incorporated into the walls of the walled gardens and the arcaded court.

To the north of the arcaded court is an isolated gatehouse. The building is two-storey, of rubble stone construction with ramped corner buttresses to the south-east. A cobbled road passes under a low, rounded arched and tunnel-vaulted passage in the centre. The cobbling under the arch is uneven and grooved, suggesting long years of use. Archaeological excavation in 1999-2000 in the area to the east of the gatehouse and between it and the arcaded court has revealed that the gatehouse stood on the north side of a court that was either entirely cobbled or criss-crossed by cobbled paths. Several layers of cobbling indicate different phases and the area is also crossed by a number of drains. The cobbling runs right up to the foot of the north wall of the arcaded court, with a shallow drain along the base of the wall. Half way along there are two steps up the slope next to the wall. A single yew tree towards the west end of the cobbled court is all that remains of planting in this area.

Continuing southwards from the roadway under the gatehouse is a road of patterned cobbling, flanked by shallow drains and cobbling. This runs beneath the north side of the arcaded court and a short distance beyond, within the court. This section is at a higher level and more carefully constructed, using narrower stones and laying them more parallel to each other. Beyond, to the south, excavation has revealed that this cobbled road probably continued to the other side of the court but at some stage was robbed out, as this part is now gone. To the east of the gatehouse a low wall runs eastwards from it and then turns to run southwards to the arcaded court. The west side of the yew tunnel is planted on top of this wall. Next to the wall east of the gatehouse are the footings of some small buildings and a stone-covered drain. The cobbling on this side stops at the drain.

It would now appear that the gatehouse is probably of sixteenth- or seventeenth-century date and that it stood on the north side of an enclosed, partly or entirely cobbled court, with buildings along its north side, east of the gatehouse. The cobbled road led towards the house, and within the arcaded court to a garden building in its south-east corner (see below). It has been suggested by Thomas Lloyd and others that the gatehouse may have been the result of the rebuilding programme undertaken by Bishop Rudd

when he acquired the property in about 1600. There is now some consensus that the building incorporates a genuine medieval arch, which may have come from one or more sources. It may have originated from the Bishop's Palace at Abergwili, the suggested source for the window incorporated in the bailiff's house adjacent to the road. It is possible that, during the reassembly of the arch at Aberglasney, the configuration was changed; this hypothesis is based on the joints at the back of the arch being open. If the arch had been assembled so that the joints fitted as intended, the top angle of the arch would have been more acute and therefore conform more to the Early English or Perpendicular styles. However, it is felt that the entire building is not of medieval origin. The construction and design are not convincingly medieval. The first-floor arrangement, where access could only be made by ladder or stone steps in front of one of the main arches, is curious, as is the lowness of the archway.

The arcaded court to the west of the house is the dominant and most interesting feature of the garden. It lies on ground sloping gently away from the house towards the pond, to which there is access from the west range of the court, through two arched doorways. On the north, there are two arched entrances through to the cobbled court and on the south there is a doorway into the upper walled garden.

The court, the structure of which has been restored in 1998-99, is enclosed on all but the house side by high walls fronted by round-arched arcading of 21 arches. The south range is about 30m long, the west range about 45m and the north range about 30m. The masonry along the length of the west range stands to an average height of about 4m, although the slope of the court means that the height of the eastern end of the south and north ranges is only about 3m. Above the tunnel vaults behind the arches is a raised walk about 3m wide, flanked by low parapets with flat stone coping, now restored. The outer parapets on the west and north sides are scalloped at intervals. Access to the walk is via a modern ramp up the east end of the north side. Beneath this, the remnants of steps up the inner side of the wall are visible. The surface of the walk is now gravelled and there is an old yew tree growing in the south-west corner. At the east end of the south range are the remains of a flight of steps leading down to the footings of a building in the corner of the court.

The vaulting of the arcaded court varies from range to range. In the west range there is a continuous, tunnel-vaulted walk beneath the raised walk. This would appear to be the most sophisticated and well built range. The north and south sides are more clumsily built, the arches lower and heavier. The north side is not at right-angles to the west range and there is a curious, squashed doorway into the court at its west end. The irregularities of the north and south sides are compounded by the blocking of three of the arches. In the north-west corner there is a small, dog-leg passage giving access through to the pond area. In the centre of its north wall is a niche that was probably designed to hold a light, as the passage is rather dark. Small holes at regular intervals along the back wall of the west arcaded walk may have been for a similar purpose - to hold supports for lights. In the south-east corner archaeological excavation has revealed an area of decorative cobbling and the footings of a small garden building or pavilion of some kind.

The interior of the arcaded court has been comprehensively excavated and a number of its historic components are visible at present. At the upper end, close to the house, are traces of a terrace and three flights of steps down from it to the former cobbled path leading to the pavilion. Below this is an area of 'corduroy' beds (shallow, parallel ridges of soil) which probably indicate a flowerbed. Most of the remainder of the interior revealed little of its layout from excavation, although the remains of the nineteenth-century fountain were found in the centre. At the foot of the slope a low, robbed out revetment wall was found, with three flights of steps leading down to a cobbled path, which remains, running parallel with and next to the west range. The central steps are the widest and are not aligned on the central opening in the west range. They were probably aligned with the earlier house, now gone, and the central opening was inserted at a later date than the original construction of the range, possibly in the nineteenth century.

The dating and development of this arcaded court and its raised walk have long been problematic. It is only now, following comprehensive archaeological excavation, that they are becoming clearer. It would appear (Blockley, pers. comm.) that the west range was built soon after 1600 by Bishop Rudd. The court was enclosed on the north and south sides by walls (the outer walls of the present court) only. The terrace and steps were built next to the house, the cobbled path installed and the interior laid out with at least one bed, probably more. The foot of the slope was retained with a wall and the steps and cobbled path were contemporary. At the same time, or slightly later, the pavilion was built. Soon afterwards, still in the early seventeenth century, a second phase of building, probably by Rudd's son, took place. This consisted of the building of the arcading on the north and south sides and the creation of the raised walk on top, reached by steps. Cosmetic changes only appear to have been made to the court in the eighteenth century.

The function of the court has been the subject of debate in recent years, with some suggestions for utilitarian use (Howes, 1992; Briggs, 1999). However, the archaeological evidence points reasonably

clearly to an ornamental layout and function. Confusion perhaps arises because of the rather ponderous, almost crude, nature of the north and south ranges, which could be explained by the provincialism of their builders. The first documentary evidence for the raised walk comes from Joseph Gulston's notes (1783) in which he records that Aberglasney was 'An old house with a large Hall. In the centre is a Staircase which carry's you to a chapel of which nothing now is remaining but the Pulpit which is old and curious. There is a terras round a court built on Stone Arches'. In the late nineteenth century the description in the *Gardeners' Chronicle* (1892) records flower borders at the sides of the raised walk at that time. The Cambrians' Llandeilo-Fawr field trip, which was reported in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* (1893) states: 'Aberglasney House - This old mansion, now the property of Mr F Lloyd-Philipps, was built by Bishop Rudd. The poet Dyer also lived here. Close to the house is a gateway standing by itself in the garden, and some curious cloisters having a semi-ecclesiastical appearance, but without any architectural details which would serve to fix their date'. The tithe map (1840) for Aberglasney is interesting in that a further, south-westerly extension to the court is recorded.

During the nineteenth century the Phillips family undertook major work on the gardens, including the arcaded court, which was extensively repaired. The central arched opening in the west range was probably made at this time. The interior was laid out informally, with winding paths. A pair of Irish yews, which were only removed in the late 1990s, stood flanking the path opposite the central opening. A fountain was added in the centre of the court in the late nineteenth century. Excavations in the mid 1990s revealed the base of this fountain. It does not appear on the 1887 survey but was there by 1892, when an article in the *Gardeners' Chronicle* records its existence: 'In the quadrangle, a large stone-bordered pool of water has been formed, with a fountain, aquatic plants and gold fish in the centre'. It was later abandoned, filled in and used as a raised flowerbed. After this there appears to have been little change. The garden, and with it the arcaded court, fell into disuse and dereliction after the 1970s.

To the north of the house development of the gardens in the late 1990s has radically altered the appearance of the garden. The drives and turning circle have gone and been replaced with a level lawn, flanked on the north side by a few conifers and on the east side by a bank planted with a single conifer, a holly and some rhododendrons. A low stone-built boundary wall about 0.75m high, used to form the boundary of the garden with the single track local road that leads towards the outbuildings and Pigeon House. Until the early 1990s this was in good condition. As part of the restoration programme it has now been demolished and replaced by an iron fence.

Some of the early plantings shown in the Allen photographs (1871) survive and have matured. There have also been some more recent plantings commissioned by Mr Miller and these also are thriving. The earlier plantings include: Coast Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*), Cowtailed pine (*Cephalotaxus fortunei*), Western Red Cedar (*Thuja plicata*), Sitka Spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), Fern-leaved Beech (*Fagus sylvatica* "Asplenifolia"), Large-leaved/Cut-leaved Lime (*Tilia platyphyllos* "Laciniata"), the oaks *Quercus robur* "Fennessii" and *Quercus robur* f. *pendula*, Purple Beech (*Fagus sylvatica* "Purpurea") and the variegated sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus* "Variegatus").

To the north-west of the house is an unusual yew tunnel, orientated north-south. This feature was created by the branches from the yews on one side (the west side) being trained over the path so that they rooted where they touched the earth on the other side of the path. The branches could have been either pegged or planted to encourage rooting. The yews were planted on the footings of the east wall of the former cobbled, gatehouse court.

There has been much speculation as to the age of these trees, with estimates as old as 1,000 years. However, recent dendrochronological work indicates that they are at most 250 years old. The most probable date for the tunnel is the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the gardens were undergoing radical transformation, including much planting. A copy of a watercolour in the National Monuments Record, Aberystwyth, clearly shows a neatly clipped yew tunnel with a path along its length; this painting is believed to date to about 1820. Also in the archives is one of a series of photographs taken by C S Allen in 1871, again the arch is clearly shown as being well maintained.

The area occupied by the walled gardens is extensive, when compared with the rest of the garden area, and the specimen trees recorded within the gardens in 1887 suggest that their function was far from solely utilitarian.

Today the walls of the two walled gardens, which lie to the south and south-west of the arcaded court, stand to an average height of about 2.5 m and the enclosures are linked to the rest of the garden by steps through arched entrances. In the north-east corner of the uppermost, eastern garden is a substantial arch leading through to the outbuildings to the south of the house.

The configuration of the walled gardens changed between the Tithe survey of 1840 and the First Edition Ordnance Survey of 1887. In the 1840 survey there are four, not two, walled enclosures. First is a garden enclosed on three sides immediately to the south of the house; as the land slopes, this is the upper garden. Below that, to the west, is a completely enclosed garden, the northern wall of which is the south

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range of the arcaded court and a western extension of the terrace walk. There has, in some places, been a certain amount of collapse, including within the area of the extension. This collapse has revealed that there was a clean return to the wall, suggesting either that the parapet extension was arched or that it was a figment of the surveyor's imagination. To the west of that again, there is a further garden that is enclosed on three sides, being open at the northern, pond end. Below (to the west of) the pond is a further enclosed area, now gone.

By 1887 the uppermost (most easterly) garden has been lost and the area is occupied by outbuildings, kennels and an aviary. The next westerly garden remains similar to its appearance on the earlier survey, with the exception that the west end of the northern boundary, which was shown in 1840 as the terrace walk extension, is now shown as a single wall. The next garden to the west, which was shown as enclosed on three sides, now has a wall to the north. The three enclosed areas have been amalgamated to form two completely enclosed walled gardens. They are laid out internally with perimeter and cross paths. The enclosed area to the west of the pond is much as shown on the earlier survey, with the addition of a perimeter path and glasshouse. A substantial range of glass is also shown against the boundary wall to the north of the pond.

As part of the general restoration scheme of the late 1990s, the two walled garden areas, by this time disused and much overgrown, were reconstructed as ornamental gardens. The upper garden, designed by Penelope Hobhouse, was laid out with a central oval surrounded by gravel paths and herbaceous borders. The lower garden, designed by Hal Moggridge, was given a formal, rectilinear layout of box-edged vegetable and herb beds and bordering gravel paths.

The ground to the east of the upper garden is considerably higher than the ground level within it and the wall on this side is chiefly a revetment wall, with a parapet walk along the top. Behind, is a disused aviary, thought to date from 1882 - 85 and to have been built for ornamental pheasants. The building consists of a run of iron-framed cages (now without netting) backed by low yellow brick and slate-roofed housing. The building is derelict, with the roof caved in in places, the walls in poor condition and the hooped iron frames rusty. Behind this is a small area of informal ornamental woodland, with winding paths through it.

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**CADW/ICOMOS REGISTER OF PARKS & GARDENS
OF SPECIAL HISTORIC INTEREST IN WALES**

REGISTER ENTRY

PLAS DINEFWR

Ref number PGW (Dy) 12 (CAM)

OS map 159

Grid ref SN 6144 2253

Former county Dyfed

Unitary authority Carmarthenshire

Community council Llandeilo

Designations Listed Buildings: Old Dynevor castle Grade I; Plas Dinefwr Grade II*; Inner courtyard ranges Grade II*; Outer courtyard ranges Grade II*; Low stone wall and gates to ha-ha Grade II; Fountain in small formal garden Grade II; Dairy cottage Grade II; Dovecote Grade II; Icehouse Grade II; St Tyfi's church Grade II

SSSIs, Conservation Area, Guardianship Ancient Monument; Dynevor Castle (Cm 29)

Site evaluation Grade I

Primary reasons for grading An outstandingly beautiful and picturesque eighteenth-century landscaped park, incorporating the remains of a medieval castle. The site also includes a small lake, two walled gardens and fine sweeping drives. Lancelot (Capability) Brown is known to have visited the site and to have admired it.

Type of site Landscaped park; small formal garden; walled garden; walled kitchen garden and utilitarian structures including icehouse, dovecote and service quarters.

Main phases of construction c. 1660; c. 1757-1779; 1856-1858.

Site description

The mansion of Dinefwr is set in rolling parkland just to the north-west of the small market town of Llandeilo. The Towy river runs to the south of the town and forms the southern boundary to the park. On its south side the ground drops steeply to the flood plain of the river. Within the park, the Castle (Old Dynevor Castle), stands on a prominent crag with a precipitous drop to the west to the river below.

Twenty-two different representations of the place name have been recorded and the exact meaning has been lost in history; Dinefwr could relate to a defended settlement, fort or defensive hill but there are a number of alternative interpretations.

Within the parkland are two buildings that have been known as 'castle'; the old castle and the later mansion. Throughout this text the old castle will be referred to as the castle and the mansion as Newton, which was its title until 1782.

According to legend, the castle was first established by Rhodri Mawr, King of Wales in 877. It was certainly a Llys, that is a court, of the Lords of Dinefwr, who governed Dehuebarth, an ancient kingdom that roughly corresponds to the present area of Dyfed. Dinefwr is referred to as the royal capital and as such is associated with many great and important folk including Hywel Dda and Rhys ap Tewdwr.

The stone castle, possibly erected in c. 1151, may have been built by two brothers, sons of the Lord Rhys, one of the most powerful men of his time. From then until the conquest of Edward I in his first Welsh

war, the castle became the focus of political power struggles. Following the conquest, Dinefwr became part of colonised Wales, the castle becoming a royal castle in the custody of the constable, answerable to the King's justice in Wales.

The earliest reference to the place-name 'Newton' appears in 1297, although in a slightly different form - Newtown or Y Drenewydd. This new town, or more correctly, new borough, as charters had been granted by Edward I, was situated on the flattish plateau half a mile from the castle; this is the eventual site of Newton house. By 1360, Newton contained forty-six burgages and was constituted a free borough. The Rhys family also had their home there.

The castle continued to be a focal point of the area, changing hands as powerful men rose to prominence or fell from favour. Throughout the late thirteenth century and into the fourteenth century, repairs and alterations to the castle are recorded. Historians are undecided as to the role of the castle throughout the Glyndwr rebellion, some state firmly that it resisted the forces of Owain Glyndwr, whilst others suggest that there is no evidence to support such a statement. However, by the time that Leland visited Dinefwr in 1523, the castle was ruinous.

The new borough fared better. In 1440, Gruffydd ap Nicholas acquired a sixty year lease of the lordship and, in 1454, there is a reference to his house called Newton. Gruffydd ap Nicholas was the grandfather of Sir Rhys ap Thomas. Sir Rhys ap Thomas and Henry Tudor were both descended from the Lord Rhys and the ancient Welsh line. In 1482 Henry Tudor landed at Milford Haven and took his troops towards the English Midlands. Rhys ap Thomas raised an army in South-west Wales and joined Henry at Welshpool. Shortly after Henry's victory over Richard III at Bosworth, Rhys ap Thomas was knighted, appointed Chamberlain of the Principality of South Wales and granted Dinefwr castle. Sir Rhys was to be pre-deceased by his son and succeeded by his grandson, Rhys ap Griffith, in 1525.

Political intrigue ensured that charges of high treason were brought against Rhys ap Griffith and at the age of twenty-three he was executed on Tower Hill on 21 December 1531. The family were discredited and the estates passed to the crown. The survey of Newton made in 1532 still survives in the Public Record Office. It describes steps up to a large hall, with chambers off, a stone tower and a chapel plus kitchen, larderhouse, buttery and wine cellar together with other service buildings including two decayed barns.

In 1615, James I sold the lands to Richard Budd, who left the property in his will to his nephew William Wase, with the direction that it be sold to Henry Rice (Rhys) of Newton for £344; this was achieved in 1635 and the lands remained in the possession of the Rice (Rhys) family for the next 350 years.

Sources suggest that the house described in 1532 made way for a successor that was built sometime between 1595 and 1603. However, recent excavations undertaken by the National Trust in the area of the Victorian garden to the west of the mansion, revealed walls, passages and so on, that correspond with the description and the layout of the rooms of the 1532 survey. So the earlier house was evidently not totally demolished. Donald Moore (*Carmarthen Antiquary*, 1994) suggests that the irregular window pattern at the rear of the house, shown in one of the four oil paintings c. 1670 may relate to the incorporation of the late sixteenth century structure. However, during recent refurbishment work, no evidence was found to support this thesis, although the date of the arrow slit windows revealed within the thick cellar walls, remains a mystery.

The four oil paintings of c. 1670 are extremely interesting in that they show the house surrounded by parterres, terraces, paths and geometric plantings of shrubs and trees. There is an inconsistency in detail between the views and this has prompted the suggestion that they were painted to flatter, rather than to record the actuality of the surroundings. Archaeological excavation adjacent to the present ha-ha, prior to the installation of a header tank for the fountain, failed to uncover any evidence for these gardens. However, trees, shrubs and post and rail fencing can leave surprisingly little ground disturbance and these paintings should not be dismissed because of a lack of positive archaeological evidence.

Two of the pictures indicate that the function of the castle has changed from one of protection to one of pleasure. The castle is shown as having a conical roof above the great round tower. This tower also forms the focal point of one of the Buck brothers views of 1740. A later description (1823) suggests that an adjacent tower was also roofed: 'an apartment in one of the angle-towers used to be kept in order for the reception of visitors, until a few years ago (when) it was destroyed by an accidental fire'.

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The conical roof is certainly shown in an engraving by M Williams made in 1773. Perhaps of more interest, the formal gardens of the 1670s have gone, there is a sweeping curved drive, planted with trees on either side, to an unadorned forecourt. The area between Newton and the castle is also shown planted with trees. The house has also been altered, turrets topped with cupolas, or 'pepperpots' appear at the four corners and there are small crenellations along the parapets linking the turrets.

The changes to the house are believed to have been made by Griffith Rice about 1720 and his son, George, who landscaped the grounds to the east and south along naturalistic principles between 1750 and 1780. Estate accounts for 1757-58 refer to work under way in the park; approximately 300 trees were being removed and their roots grubbed up, hedges were flattened and ditches levelled.

Although minor changes were effected to the mansion, the next significant change came after George Rice Trevor inherited the estate in 1852. Richard Kyrke Penson an architect, surveyor and water colour artist, submitted plans for the re-modelling of Dinefwr in the Venetian Gothic style. These plans, with modifications, were accepted and work began in 1856. Helen Palmer in 'Mr Bundy's Book', (*Carmarthenshire Antiquary*, 1994) outlines the problems and daily management of such an enormous task. By 1859 the mansion had been completed and a description and illustration appeared in the *London Illustrated News*.

Since then there have been further changes both to the house and ownership of Dinefwr. The billiard room was completed in 1896 and offices in 1910. In 1934, the four turrets had to be removed for safety and the crenellations, copied from an earlier phase of the house, added. The National Trust became owners of Dinefwr in 1989, excluding the Home Farm and courtyards. The tapering corner turret roofs were restored on 27 July 1994. Also restored was the family name, on 26 December 1916, Lord Dynevor obtained Royal Licence for himself and issue to use the name Rhys in lieu of Rice.

The present mansion represents the 1857 re-modelling of the house dated c. 1660. Designed by Penson in the Venetian Gothic style, five types of stone are used; the description from the *London Illustrated News* on 15 January 1859, is both informative and enthusiastic. 'The whole of the wall surface of the exterior has been cased with native stone, the dressings and decorations of the windows, the new-machicolated parapets, balconies to windows arcades etc. being executed at considerable cost and labour in stone from the Forest of Dean, relieved in parts with Old Red Sandstone of the district, which is of a hard and imperishable nature. The offices have also been considerably enlarged and much of the interior has undergone renovation. In consequence of some settlements in the original erection in the garden front, which in the opinion of the architect required some support, buttresses of dressed stonework were constructed, the stability of the fabric being thus increased, and the projection attained tending to improve the otherwise un-broken lines of front. The space between the buttresses is filled below by an arcade which gives protection to the garden entrance and by a conservatory above, terminating in an open stone parapet, flanked with octagonal pinnacles. The conservatory is open to the principle staircase. On the opposite side, in the centre of which is the grand entrance, a very handsome porte cochere is constructed, with an arcaded front, the whole surmounted by an open stone parapet, having panels in the centre of each face for the arms of the family. The angle turrets which form so important a feature in the composition, have been enlarged and carried up with steep roofs, and finished with iron ornamental ridges of considerable altitude, retaining the same form and place as the angle turrets, with vanes and cresting appropriately painted and gilt'.

The house sits on a raised terrace surrounded by a ha-ha on three sides; to the south are offices and two ranges of courtyard buildings. This quadrangle of buildings dates from several different periods that reflect the general development of the house. The north range appears to be the oldest and it is suggested that it was probably converted from part of the early, pre restoration, manor. Additions were made in 1720 and further additions and alterations were made contemporary with the 1857 re-fit.

The north range has four hipped dormers in a steep tiled roof. There is a chimney stack to the front of the eaves with the base of the chimney at the ridge. There are simple nineteenth century sash windows under the eaves, with large timber cross windows to the ground floor. There are two doors with herringbone boarding.

The south range is blank with one hipped dormer and cemented arched entry. There is a steep, modern tiled roof with four hipped dormers to the south side. There is one, mid-roof chimney stack. There are two glazed lunettes and a tall doorway to the stables which retain some of their original fittings.

The outer courtyard comprises the former stables and coach house, that form three sides of the courtyard; the fourth side, to the east, is completed by a screen wall. The courtyard is in the mid-Georgian style and was commissioned by George Rice. The coach house, to the west has a pedimented centre, which stands slightly proud; there are triple arches. The south range contains the Coachman's cottage and Mr Bundy's cottage (although it is tempting to suggest that this should really be called Mr Bundy's cottage).

The Dairy Cottage is an eccentric little building to the west of the Inner Courtyard. It is set at a slight angle to the rest of the structures and has a picturesque, somewhat gothic face towards the main path to the south; whilst towards the park, to the north, it appears more as a Swiss chalet. The north face was probably rendered, but this has recently been removed.

The large landscaped park occupies some 970 acres of rolling ground to the west of the small market town of Llandeilo. The parkland area is approximately oval in shape with the height varying from c. 30 m. AOD to c. 60 m. AOD. To the south of the park is the steep bluff above the Towy flood plain on which the medieval castle stands as a conspicuous feature in the landscape. To the west, north and east, substantial walls de-limit the area of the park, although there is a lodge and drive to the north and housing has masked and destroyed some of this boundary to the east. These walls were completed by c. 1774.

The landscape of the parkland is by no means uniform. To the west of the house is the more picturesque landscape, with the tree covered, horse-shoe-shaped outcrops that make up the Rookery and the castle mound contrasting with areas of interspersed grassland. To the east the land has been moulded into gently rolling open land with the occasional clump of trees or individual specimens.

The main entrance is from the east of the park, off the A40 road to Carmarthen. The entrance is flanked by stone piers, to the south of which is one of the lodges associated with the estate. Set in its own walled garden enclosure, this somewhat rusticated, stone built lodge is very typical of lodges of this period. To the east side of the steeply pitched, red-tiled roof is a large stone chimney, rising adjacent to an attic gable. To the north, the larger squared bay window supports the smaller first floor bay. Both bay windows have moulded stone mullions. From the lodge the main drive winds gently above the river terrace until it finally sweeps to the forecourt of the house, which is to the east of the property. This drive probably dates from c. 1770. Today, this final sweep is broken by entrances to the National Trust car park. There was also a drive from the north side of the park, approaching via the King's Lodge. This drive crossed the farmland, with its more commercial plantings, and entered the park via a gated entrance at SN 6100 2510. There is also a sunken road which runs north - south across the park from the Home Farm; at SN 6185 2465 it joins a track that leads east towards the mansion. From many vantage points within the park there are splendid views of the medieval castle and from the castle itself the park can be seen to great advantage.

The south drive begins immediately to the north of Llandeilo bridge, passing in front of the South Lodge. Built into the hillside, this small red-brick lodge, is less grand than the East Lodge, although there is an impressive wooden porch over the main door to the east. It traverses the escarpment above the river, with intermittent revetment walls either side. A branch to the south leads to St Tyfi's church. At the top of this drive, where it joins the east drive, is a wooden gate. The location of St Tyfi's church, at the wooded south edge of the park, is both beautiful and peaceful; within the sloping burial ground to the south, are ancient yews. This small medieval church is built on, or near, the possible site of a Roman temple and to the west of the church Roman coins have been found. Unfortunately the church was almost entirely rebuilt in the later nineteenth century, possibly to the designs of R K Penson. Some medieval masonry may remain within, but none is evident from the outside.

The rolling landscape of the park is broken by areas of woodland, clumps of trees and individual specimens. There are fine oak and beech trees, some conifers to the south and some more recent plantings in the centre of the park. Associated with the sunken road are limes, oaks and sycamores. The clumps of beeches associated with Pen Lan-fach, have for many years been a landmark in the countryside, being particularly noticeable from the southern and eastern approaches, but they can also be seen from many miles around, including from Taliaris mansion. The landscaping and natural topography within the park have afforded complimentary views from within, so that, from the house there are wonderful of and towards the old castle and from the castle the house itself can be seen to best advantage. The plantings today frame these views and this may have been the original intention.

In the western half of the park is a small lake. Shown as a reasonably extensive sheet of water in 1838, by 1884 it has been allowed to silt a little, although the Ordnance Survey still records the former, eastern extension as a boundary. In the late nineteenth century, the lake occupied just over 1.6 acres, with a boat house on the western margin. The water held by the lake was used to rotate a turbine in the pumping house, the flow being controlled via sluices in the dam. The National Trust have recently restored the dam, but have still to produce power.

To the south of the house and standing isolated, is an octagonal stone dovecote, that is now roofless; but the walls remain to c. 4 m.. It is probably of eighteenth-century date and retains internal brick and slate nesting boxes. Next to the dovecote is a small, almost rectangular, pond that appears to be stone lined in parts. It is now somewhat silted but the drains at either end can be seen. On the tithe map of 1838, this pond is shown as one of three, it possibly being the central, smaller one of the group; a small stream links these ponds with the lake to the west. By 1884, four ponds are shown, the additional one to the south-west. It is tempting to suggest that the rate of the flow of water was once much greater and that this pond could have been used as a water-cress bed.

To the north of the house, built against a north-facing slope, is a well preserved and recently restored icehouse. It is partly subterranean and partly exposed; the earth has been mounded up around it rather than the structure having been sunk. The square entrance passage, which faces east, is of stone, as is the outer face of the structure. Within is a domed brick vault and the whole is topped with a conical, stone clad, roof.

The exotic conifers within the parkland are very obviously deliberate plantings, probably dating from the mid-nineteenth century (most were not introduced into cultivation before then). The beech is not native to this part of Wales, and therefore the original trees that form part of the characteristic clumps of this landscape must have been deliberately planted. Since then there has, of course, been natural regeneration. The limes associated with the southern stretch of the hollow way, are probably the remnants of the lime avenue. Most of the oaks within the park are *Quercus robur*, the English or pedunculate oak, formerly uncommon in Wales; these fine trees are also the result of deliberate plantings. As most of the trees are very much of an age (with the exception of some oaks and limes) new plantings have now been made to ensure that the parkland retains its landscape quality.

This landscape has been developed over many centuries. The present park includes the deer park, currently grazed by the famous white cattle and which may have had a medieval precursor, and the Inner and Outer Cow Parks, which are to the east. The main developments were in c. 1660 when the present deer park to the west was established and between c. 1750 and c. 1780, when the eastern area was landscaped to more naturalistic principles. Also, during the late seventeenth century an axial avenue was laid out along the main drive, which at that time ran straight from the east front to the boundary.

The park and the estate have always been part of the life of the town and walking on the many paths of the estate was a popular pastime. In addition to the folk from Llandeilo, the landscaped park also attracted the great and good of the day. As well as Lancelot Brown, William Gilpin, Benjamin H Malkin, James Baker, Sir Richard Colt Hoare, Samuel Lewis, George Lipscombe and many others admired this landscape. In its heyday it was universally recognised as a fine and picturesque scene, being included along with Stowe, Blenheim Park, the Great Park at Windsor and many other scenes of natural landscapes and picturesque, sometimes ruinous, castles on the 952 piece dinner service, known as the Frog Service, commissioned by Catherine the Great of Russia in 1773.

There have been a variety of claims concerning the involvement of Capability Brown with the design for the landscaped park. However, contemporary sources suggest that Brown's influence was extremely limited. It is true that he did visit Dinefwr in 1775 and that bills were submitted and paid. It is also known that his plans for the gates, deer park railings, walled gardens etc were never executed. There are, however, two features that are still generally attributed to his visit, these are a 'new' path up to the castle and the beech clumps at Pen Lan-fawr and elsewhere, even these attributions must be seen as tenuous.

The Buck print of 1740, depicting the south view of the castle, shows that the wood of castle wood was well established at that time, including a prominent planting to the east. The stylised perspective view by Williams (1773) again shows mature plantings, but in a less naturalised, formal fashion. The view by Paul Sandy from his *XII Views of Wales* (1777) and reproduced in the *Journal of Garden History* (1991), shows rolling naturalistic parkland with mature plantings. James Bretherton in his aquatint of 1780 - 85,

shows again mature plantings, only this time somewhat congested. There is however, one raised gnoll topped with mature trees.

Sir Richard Colt Hoare both drew and described Dinefwr nearly twenty years after the visit of Brown. He remarks on the fine oaks, that as they had been 'preserved with a parent's eye from the axe' and must, therefore, have been reasonably ancient; but no mention of beech. Brown may have suggested some re-planting of the walk to the castle but the actual walk itself is shown on one of the c. 1660 paintings. As to the beech clumps, these may have resulted from his suggestions, but such plantings on prominent knolls were not a revolutionary suggestion.

There is a small formal garden immediately to the west of the house. Probably constructed in 1856-58, this, together with the garden area to the north and east of the house, is separated from the park by a substantial stone ha-ha and low parapet wall. The garden is rectangular and symmetrically laid out with formal paths and beds. The Irish yews (*Taxus baccata* 'Fastigiata'), photographed for the *Gardeners' Chronicle* in 1909, remain. They are planted in regular patterns, two at the base of steps, two mirroring these at the other side of the garden and so on. In the centre is a stone fountain that is probably contemporary with the ha-ha. This elaborate structure is set within a small square stone fishpond. The style suggests the Romanesque or Venetian; it is polygonal in shape and the centre basin is supported by ornamental piers. Like the facade of the house, it is made of several different types of stone.

On the south side of the garden, on a slightly raised terrace and built against the wall that separates the garden from the service courtyards, is a small open-fronted pavilion. This section of the dividing wall is of dressed stone. The pavilion is supported on four stone piers, two abutting the wall. The piers are made of stones that are alternately rounded and square rusticated, all the stone-work within is also dressed. The pavilion is at the moment roofless and this exposure has allowed the erosion some of the plaster-work on the supporting beams. It appears that the beams which used to support the roof were cleverly fashioned. Wooden beams were used to link the supporting piers, these beams were then covered with slates and the slates were then covered with plaster or stucco, this was then painted to complement the stone-work. Wild clematis is now scrambling along part of this structure.

The ha-ha wall which encloses and retains this garden and the house is well built and is probably contemporary with the re-fitting of the house. To the west the wall, which bows out in the centre towards the park, stands to nearly 2 metres. The base of the wall is buttressed and the wall is capped with chamfered blocks. To the east are stone gate piers that hold ironwork gates.

To the south-west of the courtyards are the walled enclosures that used to be a kitchen garden and flower garden, probably prior to the kitchen garden being developed elsewhere. These delightful gardens, now privately owned, are reached by a small passage-way from the courtyards. This path passes some interesting cold-frames that are stone-built. The stone for the construction was apparently re-used; some of the masonry is moulded, the quoins at one end are far too superior to be meant for this purpose and one corner is conveniently rounded.

The two garden areas are divided by a stone and brick wall (brick on the south-east face), in which are five arched entrances and two un-arched entrances. Again, moulded stone has been incorporated into one of the arches. It is tempting to suggest, therefore, that when the alterations were made during the re-facing of the house in 1855-56, the opportunity was taken to re-model this garden and the excess stone from the house was used for the purpose. The upper, northern garden has been used for horticultural and recreational purposes for some time; to the west are low hedges of box, planted in a somewhat geometric pattern. By the arched entrance to the east are a mature Chinese Gooseberry (*Actinidia chinensis*) and wisteria. In the north-western corner is another, somewhat rustic, summerhouse or pavilion, although far less grand than that in the formal garden and on the western boundary is a log cabin. The centre of the garden is now down to lawn, but the perimeter path remains.

The southern garden is still partly in use for vegetables but to the south of it are some un-common trees such as a rather fine weeping ash (*Fraxinus excelsior forma pendula*) and two or three interesting acers.

The Dairy Cottage garden is another delightful little garden that is separated from the former flower garden by a stone wall in which there is an arched entrance. Within this garden and adjacent to the wall is a very venerable yew. The central path towards the park is still evident as a depression in the lawn and to

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the north-east of this path is a Dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) which was planted 1954, only a few years after its introduction into cultivation in Britain.

The large, walled, rectangular kitchen garden is situated c. 400 m. to the north-east of the mansion, on the eastern edge of the park and is adjacent to the buildings of Dinefwr Home Farm. In 1907, the garden area of just over four and a half acres is shown divided into three sections that decrease in area from west to east. The most westerly section is nearly 2 acres and contained both buildings and areas of glass. Against the west wall is the Gardener's Cottage. This is separated from a range of storehouses, potting sheds and workshops by a high stone wall with arched doorway. To the east of the utility range are the remains of two, rather long cold-frames. To the east of the cold frames were four further areas of glass, and to the east again was a further, very lengthy glasshouse. All these original glass areas are now ruinous and the wooden frames above the brick sills are buckling and glassless.

This westerly area of the garden is separated from the central area, which occupies about an acre and a quarter, by a massive stone wall, standing, for the most part, to over 4 m. This wall is breached in the centre by the main east-west path or drive, where there once was a gate. At either side are square brick gate piers that stand slightly higher than the wall. The remaining iron hinges indicated that this was once gated. To the south of this gate the wall has tumbled, but there are the remains of one, possibly two, further entrances, again with brick gate piers.

The central area is, and possibly always was, separated from the smaller eastern area by a box hedge. Today, this hedge is very unkempt, but the girths of the plants suggest that they are original. Also remaining within this area and along the drive and adjacent to the brick lined south-facing wall are various fruit trees, some appearing to be reasonably ancient. The enclosing walls stand, for the most part, to three metres and are of stone except for the internal, south-facing, stretch. To the west, almost centrally, is the gated entrance. The square stone gate piers stand to just over two metres and have chamfered cap stones. What appear to be the original decorative iron gates still hang and are functional.

In the southern external corner are the protruding keystones for the semi-circular wall that used to enclose part of the Home Farm garden. When this wall was removed is not known, but it appears on the survey of 1905.

The Gardener's Cottage is a very curious structure, the pitch of the roof is extremely steep, with attic gables just above the eaves. It is built of red brick, with a decorative course on the east front between ground and first floor levels. The south end is entirely clad in corrugated iron.

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GOLDEN GROVE

Ref number	PGW (Dy) 10 (CAM)
OS Map	159
Grid ref	SN 5966 1984
Former county	Dyfed
Unitary authority	Carmarthenshire
Community council	Llanfihangel Aberbythych
Designations	Listed buildings: house and stable block Grade II
Site evaluation	Grade II*

Primary reasons for grading Golden Grove was for a long time one of the most important estates in west Wales. Its park and gardens contain many ancient trees. It retains good quality formal terraces and an outstanding arboretum associated with the Victorian house. The walled garden is of great interest in being associated with an earlier house and it contains a lake and canal which were probably in existence in the mid seventeenth century.

Type of site Formal terraces, gardens and pleasure grounds surrounding the present mansion; arboretum, pinetum, deer park and parkland. Walled garden on site of previous mansions incorporating lake and canal extant c. 1790.

Main phases of construction Lake and canal extant mid - late eighteenth century; gardens and arboretum associated with new mansion c. 1832. Some later re-modelling c. 1860 and later.

Site description

Little is known of the first Golden Grove mansion, which probably stood on or near the site of the second. It was apparently built sometime around 1560 - 65 by John Vaughan; his grandson was knighted in 1628 and created Earl of Carbery. It 1670 it was assessed as having 30 hearths, a large residence by any standards. Dineley's folio number 223 in the *Progress of the Duke of Beaufort* (1684), is entitled 'Golden Grove and Dinevour Castle ruines', but all that can be seen is a large house amongst the trees. The entry in Lord Ashburnham's journal for 5 July 1687 recounted: 'We saw Lord Carbury's fine seate called Golden Grove; it is in a bottom near this river (Towy), very well wooded and seems to be a fine wholesom place'. In 1717 the mansion is said to be 'in a very large Park which is delicately wooded'. Sadly, this Elizabethan house was largely destroyed by fire in 1729.

The first mansion apparently remained in ruins until 1754, when a new residence was begun nearby and some surviving items were incorporated into the new house, such as the floors. John Vaughan of Shenfield, a distant cousin of the original builder, who had inherited the estate in 1751, initiated the work and his son Richard, then living at Llandybie, supervised and directed it. At the end of December 1754 the house was 'almost habitable' and the lawns and gardens laid out. John Vaughan was never to live at Gelli Aur, preferring life in London, so the house was occupied by Richard.

After Richard inherited the estate in 1765, he made further changes to the house, including decorative plasterwork, carried out by the Polletti family of Carmarthen. A painting of the house from c. 1770, now in Carmarthen Museum, shows a large two storey house, each floor with a range of seven windows and seven dormer windows in the roof. Flanking the entrance doorway are two large pillars. To the north-east is a large wing of the same height. In a perspective view that appeared in the *Cambrian Magazine* in 1773 there is a further series of buildings to the south, including one that has tentatively been interpreted as a dovecote, is topped with what appears to be a cockerel weather vane.

Also in the perspective view is a small formal lawn to the south that does not appear on the eighteenth-century painting, although it does appear on the estate plans of 1790. An 'Old Orchard' of some 5 acres, the 'Kitchen Gar.' of 1.3 acres and a small formal sloping area in three divisions that together formed an area of c. 1.3 acres are also shown as are the lake, pond and canal, with further ponds to the south.

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In 1804 Lord Cawdor of Stackpole Court inherited the Golden Grove estate from his friend John Vaughan. The Revd Thomas Beynon of Llandeilo, wrote several letters to Lord Cawdor to advise him of various aspects of the estate. Three letters from the Cawdor Collection held at the Dyfed Archives tell much about the events of the house and garden but not the name of the gardener. In March of 1804, Thomas Beynon reports that there is little money to pay the staff however they all appear to be going about their business as usual: 'The Gardener particularly: I have desired to take care of the Garden as usual and have allowed him three men & a woman to enable him to pay due attention to the Hot-Houses, to prune & nail the Fruit Trees, and to put in the usual succession of Crops in the Kitchen Garden. Should any change in public affairs enable your Lordship to pass part of the Summer at G Grove, more hands of course will be required to keep the Alleys, Walks & Grap plots in order; but, at present, I think the above numbers sufficient....I directed the Gardener, sometime ago, to send up to your Lordship some Pines that were then near ripe, which he tells me he did, together with some Sea Kale. There are four more Pine Apples coming on very fast, two of them will be fit to cut in about three days, and the rest soon after. They will be sent to Portsmouth successively as they become ripe'. The Revd Beynon then details the Demesne lands held by Mr Vaughan which totalled 777 acres.

Lord Cawdor had obviously required that work be undertaken to the lake and ponds and in his letter of 30 May 1804, Thomas Beynon was able to report that this work had now been done and that the problems with the flow of water had been resolved. In all his letters he refers to Mr Haines, who would appear to have been the steward or estate manager. In June, Mr Beynon acquainted Lord Cawdor with the events surrounding the theft of three 'Pine Apples' and how the culprit was eventually captured; in this letter he also refers to the Pinery, but gives no clue as to its exact location. He also refers to one of the glasshouses as the 'Westmead Hothouse', which might imply that it was formerly at Westmead in Pendine.

When John Frederick Campbell inherited the estate from his father in c. 1820 he commissioned the architect Wyattville to design a new mansion further up the hill. The second mansion was apparently demolished in 1826, although the site continued to be used as the walled kitchen garden, being modified several times until the present day.

On a more elevated position and about a kilometre from the sites of the first mansions, the new house appears to be much grander than it actually is. The plans drawn by Wyattville for the Earl of Cawdor in 1829 show a reasonably small mansion to the east of the complex and an extensive range of offices, utility rooms, storage areas and stables to the west. Early maps and photographs suggest that the house was constructed without significant alterations to these plans. The south facing, front, facade is dominated by an impressive carriage porch, with two small towers at the front corners linked by a castellated parapet. Behind this are the two stepped gable ends and in the centre of the mansion is an impressive square tower with four gables and steeply pitched roofs and with a clock on the south face. A photograph of c.1845 -50 shows that the carriage turning circle to the front of the house was constructed, as per the 1829 drawings, but this had disappeared by the time of the Allen photographs of 1871.

The southern entrance to the stables block is dominated by the huge dressed stone, rather perpendicular, entrance arch. In the centre, rising from the moulded stone parapet is a many sided finial. The original iron gates still hang on the southern end of the arch. Within the courtyard, the stables, brew house and utility rooms have been converted into classrooms, but there have been no substantial structural alterations. The only alteration evident from the south side is a small stretch of walling linking the stable block to the mansion.

The buildings are used as a satellite for Carmarthen College of Technology and Art, (Wildlife Illustration), whilst part of the grounds is designated as a country park.

The parklands and garden are set on the north facing bluff of the Towy valley some 3km west of Llandeilo. The land occupied by the park rises from some 50m AOD to 150m AOD. The original southern boundary is now masked by a commercial forestry plantation, which has also done much to destroy the woodland paths; for the purposes of this survey, the southern boundary is delimited by a forestry track and the course of an un-named stream. The western edge of the park is still, just, shown by what was once a substantial boundary wall that is now much tumbled, although still traceable. The north limit is given by the ha-ha that was associated with the second house (although it may be earlier) and the road to Carmarthen the B4300. To the east, the original boundary has been obscured by commercial plantings; for this survey the boundary is marked by a small stream and field boundaries.

Of the three drives from the east extant in c. 1840 two are still in use, whilst the third remains only as a difficult track. The main drive from the east was, and still is, off the B4300 about 1.5km from the mansion. Today this entrance is marked by one of the lodges that was probably built c. 1860. This is a simple, small, stone building, similar in design to other contemporary estate cottages. The drive follows a reasonably straight south-westerly course, crossing the small valley and stream by a single span, stone bridge before reaching the mansion. This bridge, built c. 1830, is probably the work of Morgan Morgan,

the east Carmarthenshire bridge builder, and there is a reference in the Stackpole papers requiring that the bridge at Stackpole be built to a similar design.

The second drive that links in with the eastern approach is also off the B4300, to the west of the main drive, taking a route adjacent to the walled garden. Again, this entrance is marked by a lodge, similar to that at the main entrance, dating to c. 1860. The drive winds gently past the walled garden and a second lodge, now known as 'Eagle Lodge' before it crosses the grazed parkland and joins the main drive to the west of the bridge.

The third carriage drive that used to link with the main drive is actually from the south-west. At the top of the slope to the south of the mansion is a stony track leading to the east; this was the beginning of the drive. The drive followed the contours for much of its length, eventually linking in with the main drive to the east of the small valley and bridge. This route is still traceable, but above the bridge it is now much impeded by commercial planting.

There has been no alteration to the course of the drive from the west since it was constructed c. 1830. The route is almost straight, following the contours from SN 5905 1955 to the mansion. The lodge at the entrance is smaller than the other two and brick built. The main east drive runs past the mansion and stable block and continues westwards as the west drive. This passes through the gate that is part of the arboretum boundary and is also the boundary between the College and the Country Park. From here the drive straightens until the exit approximately a kilometre from the gate. To the south of the drive is commercial forestry and to the north, rough grass that used to be part of the parkland. The drive is lined by a avenue of lime trees, thought to have been planted before 1860. On the north side there is also a line of immature limes, which was planted in 1986 by The Federation of Women's Institutes (Dyfed / Carmarthenshire Branches).

1871 photographs of the area of rough grass show open parkland with the occasional mature tree providing shade for the cattle. Today, this area is occupied by Country Park amenities. From this area there is a view through the trees to Paxton's Tower.

To the north of this area and the mansion is a small deer park bounded on the north by a stone wall that stands to a maximum height of 2.5m, although it is tumbled in places. To the west and east there is modern deer wire, whilst to the south the boundary mostly comprises the wall to the northern terrace. In the centre of the deer park, which occupies about 10 acres, are the remains of an iron rail fence, although no such boundary is shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (1887). This map does show that there was a path across the deer park, heading north-east from the new section of north terrace. To the east of the deer park is more typical, grazed open parkland that originally covered an area of some 63 acres.

In the woodland to the west of the walled garden are the stone rubble remains of a circular icehouse. The roof has now gone but the walls still stand to c. 0.75m. The structure within descends below the present ground level, but to what depth could not be ascertained because of rubble, water and ice.

The plants within the park and garden fall into three phases, those planted prior to the building of the new mansion, those planted to complement it and recent, mostly commercial plantings. Throughout the gardens and parkland area are ancient oaks, *Quercus robur*, pre-dating the present mansion and were certainly growing in 1717 when the parkland was described as 'delicately wooded'. In the 1780s improvements made for John Vaughan included the planting of many trees including Weymouth pine, silver fir, larch, lime, spruce, Spanish chestnut and cedar of Lebanon.

The schedule of apportionments that accompanies the tithe survey of c. 1840 notes that there were some 420 acres of park and 183 acres within the demesne lands. It is known that the gardener by 1830 was a Mr Hill and it is believed that he was responsible for much of the layout and planting at Gelli Aur.

The north-facing hillside to the south of the arboretum is now mainly covered in twentieth-century commercial planting. However, some extremely mature oaks, including Holm oaks (*Quercus ilex*) still flourish amongst the rows of conifers. Also within the commercial plantation, to the west, is the double domed, brick built reservoir that formerly supplied the house with drinking water. In the centre of the commercial plantation, towards the pinetum, is a small steep sided valley that has been cut by a small stream draining from the hillside. On the northern perimeter of this valley and somewhat masked by the new plantings, is a walk or track, bordered in places by the ubiquitous *Rhododendron ponticum*. This still has something of the feel of a 'Ladies Walk' being not too steep a climb and, at the turn of the century, it would have been both beautiful and dramatic, with views across the valley towards Dinefwr Castle.

The gardens and arboretum lie to the north and south of the nineteenth-century house and were developed to complement it. To the north is a formal terraced garden; to the south are further grassed terraces, the arboretum, pinetum and a fernery.

The grass terraces were probably made between 1848 and 1850. A lithograph of c. 1848 shows the slope above the house, but as yet, no formal grassed terraces to the south of the drive and opposite it. Although rather unclear, they appear to be on the photograph of c. 1850. They certainly existed by 1871 and there are several delightful Allen photographs of five gardeners scything and brushing the grass. The terraces follow the curve of the drive and the slope of the ground so that they merge into the hillslope at the east and west ends. The length of the terraces decreases from the longest lower terrace, adjacent to the drive, which measures some 220m to the upper terrace which is only c. 150m. The lower terrace is c. 11m wide, gently sloping upwards to the steeper rise to the next terrace. The rise of c. 1m is steeply sloping. The next terrace is slightly less wide and separated from the next terrace, which is approximately the same width, by an identical rise. The grassed area of the upper terrace is c. 3.7m wide before it meets the gravel path. There is a further grass border between the path and the shrubs, but as these plants have matured they have masked some of it.

Also extant by 1871 was the wide gravel path and cut stone steps that lead up the terraces from opposite the main door. At the top the path meets the circular walk through the arboretum. At this junction is a semi-circular stone seat, which has smaller sets of steps of either side of it.

The terraces have been left as cut grass, with mature examples of rhododendron, mostly hardy hybrids to the west and east. To the west, where the terraces begin to merge with the hillslope and the arboretum, there are further plantings including a magnificent mature sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) and Irish yews (*Taxus baccata* cv. *'Fastigiata'*).

The area of the arboretum, some 10.5 acres, is up-slope, to the south of the mansion and the terraces. It is protected from deer by a substantial perimeter wall set in a ditch to form a ha-ha. From the base of the ditch this wall stands to a maximum height of 1 - 1.5m. The external perimeter ditch can still be seen clearly on the south and east sides, at its deepest, on the east side, this ditch is nearly 1.5m below the present ground level. Where the wall and ditch meet the drive, the ditch is less deep and the wall more prominent.

The arboretum is not contemporary with the construction of the house in c. 1830, neither is it shown on the 1854 plan that is in the Cawdor archives. The arboretum and perimeter wall would seem to date from the mid nineteenth century phase of construction and re-development that also saw the re-modelling of the walled garden and the extension of the terraces to the north of the house, c. 1860. However, there may have been some planting prior to the enclosure of the arboretum. The late Alan Mitchell (1975) gives planting dates in the 1860s. The Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) was planted in 1863, the Western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) planted in 1866, the two *Thujopsis dolabrata* in 1868 and the Grand fir (*Abies grandis*) in 1869.

In a north-eastern corner of the arboretum is a small fernery, which consists of a narrow passage entrance, lined with water-sculptured limestone blocks, that opens on to a circular area. In the centre is a rustic summerhouse. The structure is six-sided, with a stout pole at each angle supporting a slate roof. Inside, in the centre, is part of a recently cut tree trunk. The hexagon shape is emphasised by raised longitudinal patterns of stripped twig from the supporting poles to an internal hexagon, this hexagon being made up of twig triangles. Between the raised twig strips are pine boards on to which plates of different barks have been affixed. This structure was originally much more elaborate and decorated, with sides of unstripped pine and further fancy-work.

In addition to the arboretum, there was also a pinetum on the east side on a small valley to the south-east of the mansion. This area was not enclosed and has recently become so overgrown that it is difficult to negotiate. However, there are still some fine specimen trees including an, Chile Pine or Monkey Puzzle tree (*Araucaria araucana*).

Evidence from early surveys suggests that the long terraces to the north of the mansion were built in two phases. The tithe map indicates that the original terrace only extended behind the house and the utility block; no structure is shown behind the stable block. This interpretation is also shown on the 1854 plan in the Cawdor Archives. However, by the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (1887), the terrace has been lengthened and now extends behind the stable block. There is an Allen photograph (1871) that shows part of this new terrace, unplanted at that time. The old terrace is to the east whilst the newer terracing is to the west.

The house platform and terrace are retained by substantial dressed limestone wall that stands to a maximum height of 3m. It is topped with carved, pitched stones and there is a moulded course above the buttressed lower section. The wall and the terrace, which date from c. 1830, originally formed a rectangular shape with two projecting viewing areas at either end. These viewing areas give splendid, panoramic views: from the eastern end there is a view towards Llandeilo, Dinefwr Castle and beyond; from the west end there are views down the Towy valley towards Grongar Hill. Also in the west viewing bay there is a sundial that has lost its gnomon.

The planting scheme for the terrace has apparently changed little over the years. On the northern side, running parallel to the retaining wall is a neatly clipped box hedge that delimits a narrow border. Within this border is a series of trained (wired) Irish yews that are clipped both at the sides and on the top, so that the views from the mansion are retained. Interspersed with the yews are a variety of roses. This border is separated from the central garden area by a gravel path. In the middle of the central planting area is circular pond some 4 m in diameter, retained by a well cut, moulded, raised stone rim. In the centre is a simple jet fountain, that still appears to work, although lacking water pressure. To either side of the circular fountain are paths, a small grassed area and circular beds, in the centre of which are urns on pedestals. During the recent dry weather (1995) parch marks revealed the course of earlier paths and configuration of flower-beds now disappeared. This area is known as 'Lady Cawdor's Garden' as a flight of external steps used to link her room with this garden.

The extension to the original terrace was added between 1854 and 1887. Again, it is retained by a stone wall, but not of such fine quality workmanship. It is linked to the older terrace by a small gate and flight of steps. There is a central linear gravel path, to either side of which is a grassed area and shrubs. To the north, the shrubs are retained in a border edged with flat stone slabs. Behind this border there has been the addition of a fast growing conifer hedge, which now masks the views.

In addition to the bark house in the arboretum there is a further summerhouse or bark house to the west of the stable block and just to the east of the access gate through the protective arboretum wall. This is hexagonal, with a stout pole at each corner; three of the sides are clad, two are partially clad whilst the sixth side is left open for an entrance. All the cladding is unplanned timber. Inside, there used to be a semi-circular seat against the sides that are clad, but this has recently been replaced with a modern, free-standing garden seat.

The walled, 'old' garden now occupies approximately 8.5 acres at the base of the northern slope of the Towy valley, at some 50m AOD. This area of the park has a long history of occupation. It is not known if there was a garden associated with the first mansion, which was destroyed in 1729, although the lake and canal may have been extant during the mid seventeenth century. During his enforced stay at Golden Grove from 1645 onwards, the minister, Dr Jeremy Taylor, is reported as taking his exercise on the lake and canal; he used the canal to reach his 'Meditation Corner'. Apparently, he also used to walk through the oak wood adjacent to the house and this walk still bears his name. Whilst it is difficult to be certain, it is quite probable that the canal referred to is the same as that which appears on the 1790 plan. The lake is in the east corner of the walled garden and the canal runs east - west, bisecting the garden.

That there was a garden, associated glasshouses and outbuildings contemporary with the second mansion, which was built in c. 1754 and deserted in c. 1826, is certain. The 1773 'Perspective view' shows a building that has tentatively been interpreted as a dovecote in the area of the garden wall in the forecourt of the Gardeners Cottage.

By 1840 an area of some 4 acres to the north of the canal had been enclosed and paths are shown around the perimeter and dissecting an irregularly shaped garden. Outside the garden enclosure, on the northern edge is a further small square enclosure, with what appear to be buildings at each internal angle; the function of these buildings can only be guessed at. The lake with its island and the canal are also clearly shown, although a small pond to the south, that appears on the 1790 plan, is not recorded. The configuration of the walled garden is little changed on the 1854 plan, except for the addition of the name 'Garden'.

By 1887 there had been some dramatic changes. The area of the garden had been almost doubled by the enclosure of land beyond the canal to the south. The configuration of the northern boundary has also changed; the boundary wall in the northern corner being re-aligned to enclose more land. The small square garden has vanished, probably under the newly constructed Gardener's Cottage, stables and glasshouses. Three areas of glass are now shown in the centre of the northern garden area. The lake and canal appear much as they did on previous surveys but with the addition of a small second pond clearly shown to the west of the lake.

The Gardener's Cottage is an L-shaped structure at the western end of the walled garden. The longer section of the building runs north - south. The house is of local stone with the smaller extension having a higher roof level than the main block. The gable ends of this extension are decorated with finials. The kitchen door, in the north wall of the extension, opens onto an area paved with large worn slabs, that might have been re-used from an earlier building.

The stable block is to the west of the cottage and consists of a tack room and five open bays. The stonework is of finer quality than that of the house, being dressed and coursed. The whole is slate roofed, which is now partly covered by wild clematis. At the western end of the stable block is a modern concrete block extension.

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Opposite the stables, across the yard to the north is a building referred to by the owners as the Bothy. This building is on two levels, the lower floor, which is reached by a short drive, is lower than the present ground level.

Within the yard enclosed by the house, stable block and Bothy are several areas of glass, most of which are shown on the 1887 survey and all appear by 1905. The condition of these structures varies. Against the south-facing north wall there is a large lean-to house, which is mostly still there, but it is in need of repair. The free-standing structure to the south has been repaired by the owners, as has the melon pit. To the west of these structures are the bases for pits of cold frames and the foundations of further structures are evident to the south of the Bothy.

Within the garden are two further large glasshouses, now somewhat overgrown, although the chimney stack from the boiler still remains.

The entire 8.3 acres is now enclosed by wall, however, there does appear to be variation in construction, suggesting several phases. The section of wall that forms the back wall to the lean-to glasshouse in the courtyard adjacent to the house is most interesting; it must be viewed from the north side. The wall here is thicker for most of its height, at c. 2.5m there is a slight hip indicating that the additional 0.5m was added at a later date. Within this section of the wall are three blocked entrances. The arches have been constructed of the local red sandstone and there is little variation between the size of the keystone and imposts. The top of some of these stones appear to have been rebated, suggesting that these stones were left exposed whilst the rest of the wall was rendered; no trace of this rendering exists today. The outside two arches are set 0.25m higher than the central arch. These features have tentatively been interpreted as a door and two windows. No date has yet been advanced for these openings. It is extremely tempting to suggest that they belong to the second mansion, except that all the openings shown on the 1773 view are square; so the possibilities remain that they either relate to the first mansion or that they were in some way associated with the redevelopment of the garden.

From this north-west section, the course of the wall is slightly south-east, kinking almost immediately after the entrance arch, to a course almost due east. The entrance arch is extremely well-built. The drive approaches at something of an angle and the dressed stones to either side have been cut to accommodate this. The arch itself is extremely shallow with predominant keystone, bearing the date 1854, the whole stands to just over 2.5m.

The south face of this north wall is lined with bricks, the north side stone. Within this north wall are two further, contemporary, entrances. One for pedestrians, the other possibly for vehicles. The whole wall stands to a maximum height of 3m. The wall to the south-east is stone, standing to a maximum height of 2.5m, it is tumbled in places, although there have been attempts at repair. The walls to the south and west are of similar construction.

The configuration of the lake has changed little over the centuries. In all the plans studied, the area of the lake has remained reasonably constant at c. 0.8 acres and the central island is also shown. Between the lake, which is now rather silted and overgrown, and the small pond to the west at the head of the canal, is a sluice. The sluice and surrounding stonework is of good quality and similar in style to the entrance arch; this would give the present sluice a date of c. 1860. However, in the stream bed at either side of the channel that leads from the sluice are somewhat worn sandstone flags which may pre-date the sluice. Clearing work has recently started on the lake (March/April 1996) during the course of which a brick perimeter path was partially uncovered.

The canal remains today as a somewhat overgrown stream and ditch. There have been modifications at its head. In the early plans (1790), the small pond is clearly shown as part of the canal; this remains the case until the 1887 survey. On this survey, and later ones, a small bridge is shown between the pond and the canal. This flat stone bridge c. 2.25m wide, is of similar construction to the sluice and was also probably part of the re-modelling c. 1860.

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Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith
This report has been checked and approved by Louise Austin

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Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau
sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn

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