

# CARMARTHENSHIRE

## LANDMAP HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

### TECHNICAL REPORT

Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological  
Trust  
For: Countryside Council for Wales



## DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2009/78  
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Hydref 2009  
October 2009

## CARMARTHENSHIRE LANDMAP HISTORIC LANDSCAPE TECHNICAL REPORT

Gan / By

K Murphy

*Paratowyd yr adroddiad yma at ddefnydd y cwsmer yn unig. Ni dderbynnir cyfrifoldeb gan Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf am ei ddefnyddio gan unrhyw berson na phersonau eraill a fydd yn ei ddarllen neu ddibynnu ar y gwybodaeth y mae'n ei gynnwys*

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# **CARMARTHENSHIRE LANDMAP HISTORIC LANDSCAPE TECHNICAL REPORT**

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## **SUMMARY**

*The historic landscape of Carmarthenshire is rich and varied, and consists of fields and farms, high moorland in the east and north of the county, industrial settlements in the southeast and a diverse coastline. Three hundred and forty-eight historic landscape character areas are identified in this study. The majority of these, 203, are classified as agricultural, and represent a landscape dominated by dispersed farms and irregular fields. Non-agricultural land comprising woodland (mostly forestry) and moorland is by far the next biggest category, most of which lies on high ground on the eastern and northern sides of the county. Other categories make up only a small proportion of Carmarthenshire's historic landscape. Nevertheless, these categories provide a significant contribution to the county's landscape, particularly in the southeast. Evaluation demonstrates the high value of the historic landscape, with 288 of the 348 historic landscape areas classified as outstanding or high, and just 33 as low. These high values not only indicate the quality of the Carmarthenshire historic landscape, but also its good survival rate, its integrity and its condition.*

## **CRYNODEB**

*Mae tirwedd hanesyddol Sir Gaerfyrddin yn gyfoethog ac yn amrywiol, ac mae'n cynnwys caeau a ffermydd, gweundir uchel yn nwyrain a gogledd y sir, aneddiadau diwydiannol yn y de-ddwyrain ac arfordir amrywiol. Nodir tri chant pedwar deg wyth o ardaloedd tirwedd hanesyddol yn yr astudiaeth hon. Ystyrir y rhan fwyaf o'r rhain, 203, yn amaethyddol ac maent yn cynrychioli tirwedd sy'n llawn ffermydd gwasgaredig a chaeau afreolaidd. Tir anamaethyddol yw'r categori mwyaf nesaf o bell ffordd, sy'n cynnwys coetiroedd (coedwigaeth gan fwyaf) a gweundir, y mae'r rhan fwyaf ohono wedi'i leoli ar dir uchel ar ochrau dwyreiniol a gogleddol y sir. Mae categorïau eraill yn cynnwys cyfran fach o dirwedd hanesyddol Sir Gaerfyrddin. Fodd bynnag, mae'r categorïau hyn yn gyfraniad arwyddocaol at dirwedd y sir, yn enwedig yn y de-ddwyrain. Mae gwerthuso'n dangos gwerth uchel y dirwedd hanesyddol, gyda 288 o'r 348 o ardaloedd tirwedd hanesyddol wedi'u hystyried yn rhagorol neu uchel, a dim ond 33 yn isel. Nid yn unig mae'r gwerthoedd uchel hyn yn dangos ansawdd tirwedd hanesyddol Sir Gaerfyrddin, ond hefyd ei chyfradd oroesi dda, ei chywirdeb a'i chyflwr.*

## **INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY**

The methodological approach for this study was that outlined in CCW's Historic Landscape Guidance document dated June 2003. A few qualifying comments are required here in support of the data produced by Dyfed Archaeological Trust for the Carmarthenshire Historic Landscape study and evaluation.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust (DAT) has undertaken Cadw grant-aided Historic Landscape Characterisation projects of the landscapes listed in the *Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales* (Cadw 1999, 2001). Some of these landscapes are wholly or partly in Carmarthenshire, namely: Tywi Valley, Black Mountain and Mynydd Myfddfai, Taf and Tywi Estuary, Dolaucothi, Drefach and Felindre, Lower Teifi Valley, and Preseli (Murphy and Ludlow 2000, Murphy and Ludlow 2001, Murphy and Ludlow 2004).

As a large part of the county was characterised during this Cadw-funded work, it was decided that the character areas generated would be used to inform this Landmap study. The only exception to this is those areas defined for Drefach and Felindre, which have not been incorporated into this study.

The areas defined for the characterisation work described above were defined at Level 4 according to Landmap methodology. In order to maintain a consistent approach, character areas across the rest of the county were also defined at Level 4, although supporting data and descriptions are at Level 3.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust undertook the Carmarthenshire historic landscape study in the early 2000s. The evaluation of the areas then defined and described was completed in 2009. This short report summarises the results of the initial study and of the evaluation.

## **THE CARMARTHENSHIRE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE**

It would be inappropriate to provide a detailed account of the development and character of the historic landscape in this short technical report. However, a few of the major themes are identified; most of these require further research.

The historic landscape of Carmarthenshire is dominated by fields and dispersed farms. There is great variety within this agricultural landscape. In the southern part of the county the strip-like nature of many of the present day fields is evidence that the landscape has evolved out of medieval open field systems. Indeed, at Laugharne open field systems are still in use. Away from the southern coastal fringe the origin of the field systems is largely unknown, although documentary- and cartographic-sources show most of it to be ancient. Enclosure by Act of Parliament in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is evidenced at several locations across the county, most extensively at Mynydd Mawr at Crosshands, resulting in a pattern of distinctive regularly shaped fields.

Nucleated settlements such as hamlets and small villages are not a prominent feature of the rural landscape, but where they occur they are an important component.

Large estates have left a strong imprint on parts of the county. Dinefwr and Gelli Aur (Golden Grove), for example, in the Tywi valley controlled vast tracts of land at their height in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As well as their obvious legacy of gardens, parklands and mansions, they created large estate farms, planted woodland, and reordered the landscape to accommodate developing farming practices.

Hedges on banks are ubiquitous across the agricultural landscape, and are by far the most common historic landscape component in the county. Bank materials vary according to the local environment, but earth dominates. In lowland areas banks are generally topped with well-maintained hedges. In the Tywi Valley in particular trees in hedges or as standards in fields provide a parkland aspect to the landscape. Towards the uplands hedges tend to be less well maintained, and are normally supplemented with wire fences. It is in the upland fringes that more variety in boundary type is encountered with rubble banks and dry-stone walls occurring alongside earth banks.

Stone with north Wales slate as a roofing material are the traditional building materials across the county. The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a period of great rebuilding across rural west Wales, with the vast majority of houses and older agricultural outbuildings dating to between 1840 and 1890. Regional patterns are present, such as the use of the distinctive Teifi Valley slate as a building material in the northeast of the county, and polychrome brick for detailing in the industrial areas around Ammanford. Generally, though, local, rough-coursed stone, often cement rendered, is the norm. In towns greater ranges of both materials and dates are evident.

Upland dominates the eastern and northern extremes of the county, and provides an outstanding contribution to the historic landscape. However, large tracts of upland are under coniferous plantations, mostly planted in 1950s, 60s and 70s. These are generally of low landscape value.

Apart from in the southeast of the county industry is not a major contributor to the historic landscape. Here the legacy of old extractive industries and metal processing is a dominant feature of both the rural landscape (in particular in restoration following open cast coal operations) and the non-rural landscape. The

settlement pattern here is very much a product of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century industrialisation.

Apart from the southeast of the county and Carmarthen, urban areas are not dominant features of Carmarthenshire's historic landscape. Small historic towns are, however, a feature of the county, with places such as Laugharne, Kidwelly and Newcastle Emlyn providing outstanding contributions to the historic landscape.

## RESULTS

### General

Three hundred and forty-eight historic landscape areas have been identified, mapped and described for Carmarthenshire. There is a huge size range in these areas, from less than 70 ha in some of the complex settlements in the southeast of the county, to over 20,000 ha in the largest agricultural areas. The types of landscapes also vary enormously from open moorland to small urban areas. These are summarised below, and their distribution is shown on Map 1.

### Level Two Classification

The 348 areas are divided into the following groups according to Landmap level two classification:

Agricultural	203	bright green
Non-agricultural	80	dark green
Settlement	41	red
Other built environment	13	purple
Industrial	11	black

The colours noted above relate to Map 2. What is striking about the map is the dominance of agriculture. Not only are most areas assigned to agriculture, but these areas are amongst the largest in the county. Non-agricultural landscapes, mainly forestry and open moorland, are more common along the eastern and northern fringes of the county, generally at higher altitudes (Map 4). Note on Map 2 the very small areas of other landscape types, with these mostly confined to the southeast of the county.

### Level Three Classification

At this level the 348 areas are divided as follows:

Irregular Fieldscapes	119	pale green
Regular Fieldscapes	67	mid green
Other Fieldscapes	17	bright green
Marginal Land	28	brown
Woodland	35	dark green
Water & Wetland	7	blue
Nucleated Settlement	39	red
Non-nucleated Settlement	2	dark purple
Military	3	black
Extractive	11	yellow
Reclaimed Land	10	dark blue
Designed	4	pink
Communications	2	orange
Recreational	4	purple

The colours noted above relate to Map 3.

It is interesting to note how the woodland and marginal land landscape areas relate to the higher ground in the east and north of the county. Unsurprisingly it is agricultural fieldscapes that dominate Carmarthenshire. Of note, however, is the very complex and fragmented landscape in the southeast of the county. This is predominantly due to industry superimposed over an agricultural landscape, creating a patchwork of small settlements, pockets of relict industry and reclaimed open cast workings, but also the result of the a very varied landscape along the coastal fringe.



## Evaluation

Evaluation of the 348 areas produced the following results:

Outstanding	122	red
High	166	orange
Moderate	27	yellow
Low	33	pale yellow

The colours noted above relate to Map 5. The vast majority of the Carmarthenshire historic landscape has been evaluated as outstanding or high. When combined, these two upper evaluation categories account for 288 of the 348 (83%) historic landscape areas. In area terms this is greater than 83% of the county as most of the largest areas have been valued as outstanding or high (the area in hectares of these landscape values has not been quantified). These high values are very much a reflection of the integrity, survival and condition of most of the Carmarthenshire historic landscape.

The differences between an outstanding and high value landscape are often marginal and may hinge on the presence or absence of nationally important monuments or buildings. However, the difference between a high and a moderate value landscape is generally quite marked.

Higher value landscapes are distributed evenly across the county. Lower value landscapes (moderate and low) are more common in the uplands, where they are generally associated with large coniferous plantations, and in the southeast of the county where they reflect recent industry and settlement.

Of interest is the relationship of Registered Historic Landscapes and landscape values, shown on Map 6. Generally there is concordance between outstanding value landscapes and registered landscapes. However, some blocks of outstanding value landscapes lie outside registered areas, for instance: parts of the Black Mountain/Mynydd Betws, the Cothi Valley/Mynydd Llanllwni, and parts of southeast of the county.

## REFERENCES

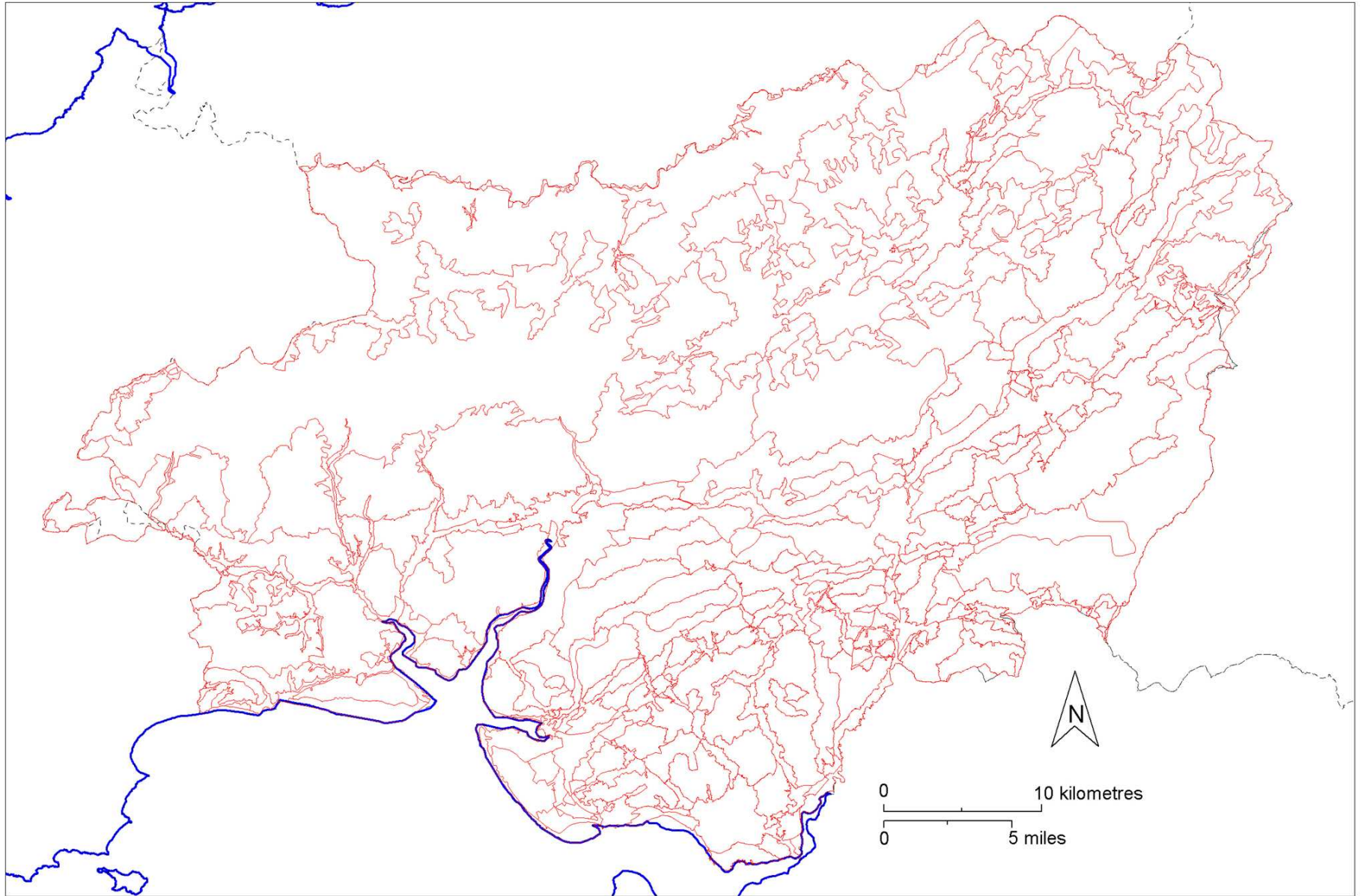
Cadw 1999, *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales*. Cardiff.

Cadw 2001, *Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest in Wales*. Cardiff.

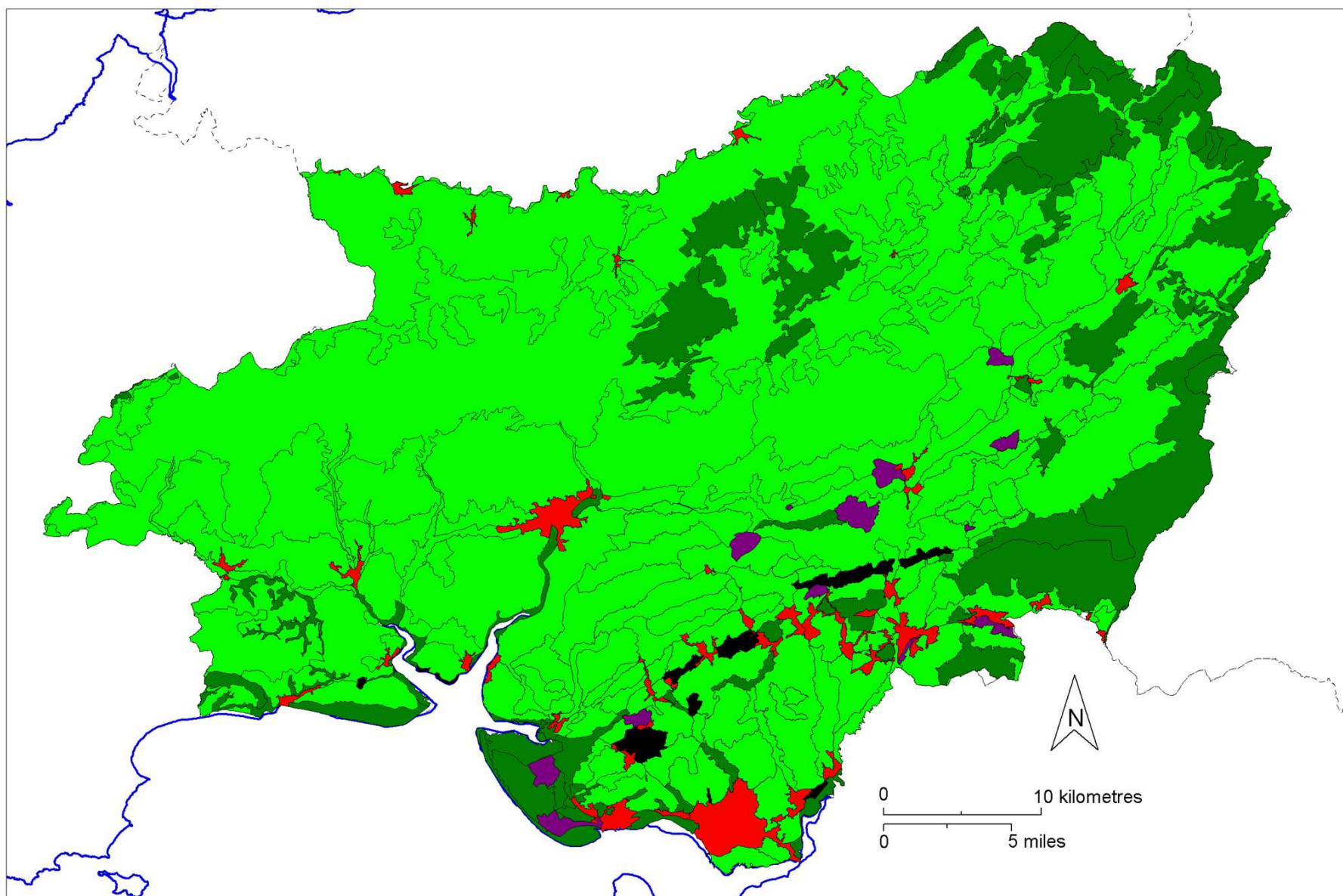
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Murphy K and Ludlow N 2004, *Historic Landscape Characterisation of the Lower Teifi Valley and Drefach Felindre*, DAT unpublished report.

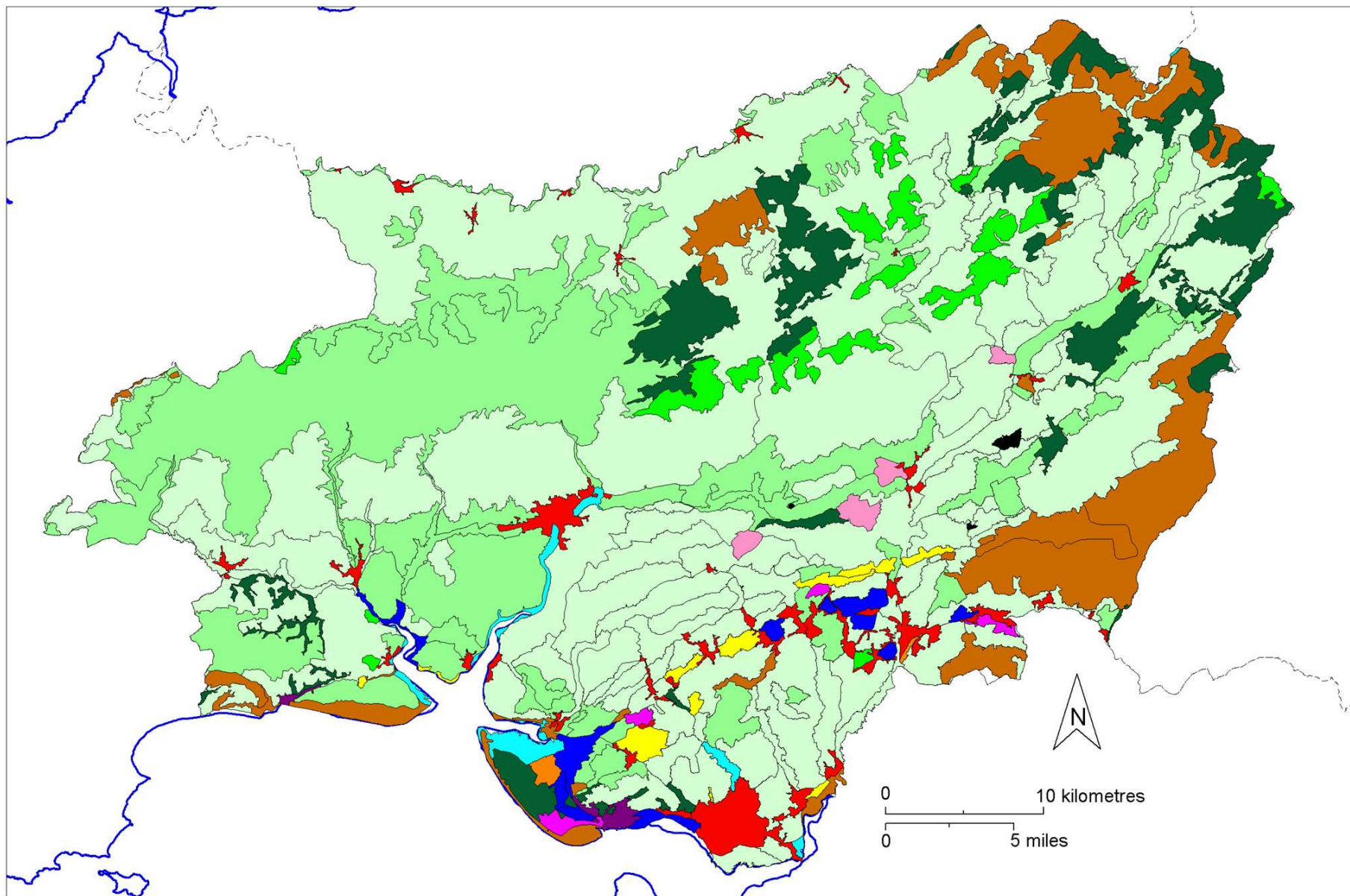


**Map 1.** Carmarthenshire showing all 348 Landmap historic landscape areas.

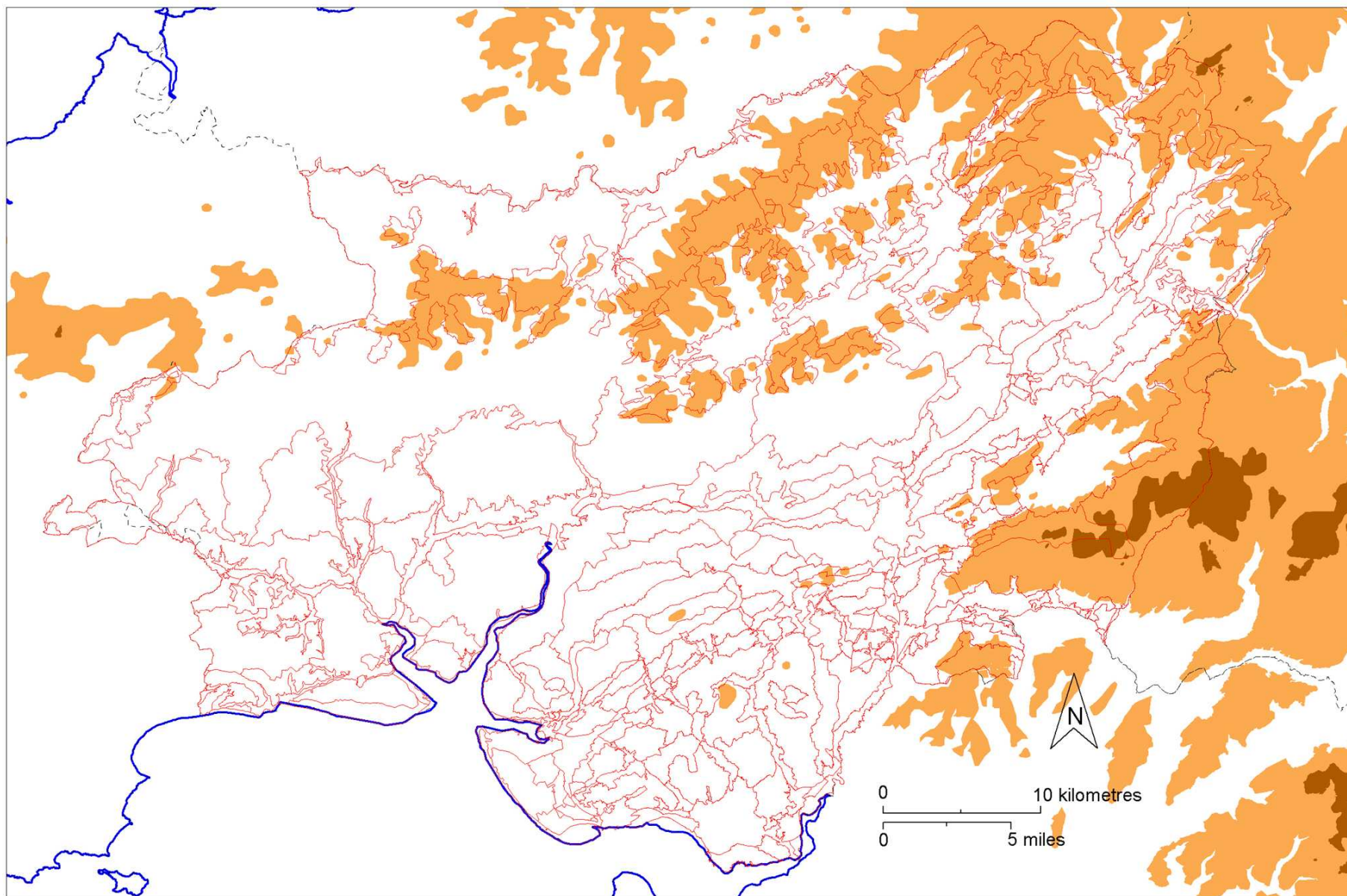


**Map 2.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing all areas at level two classification. Agricultural = bright green. Non agricultural = dark green. Settlement = red. Other built environment = purple. Industrial = black.



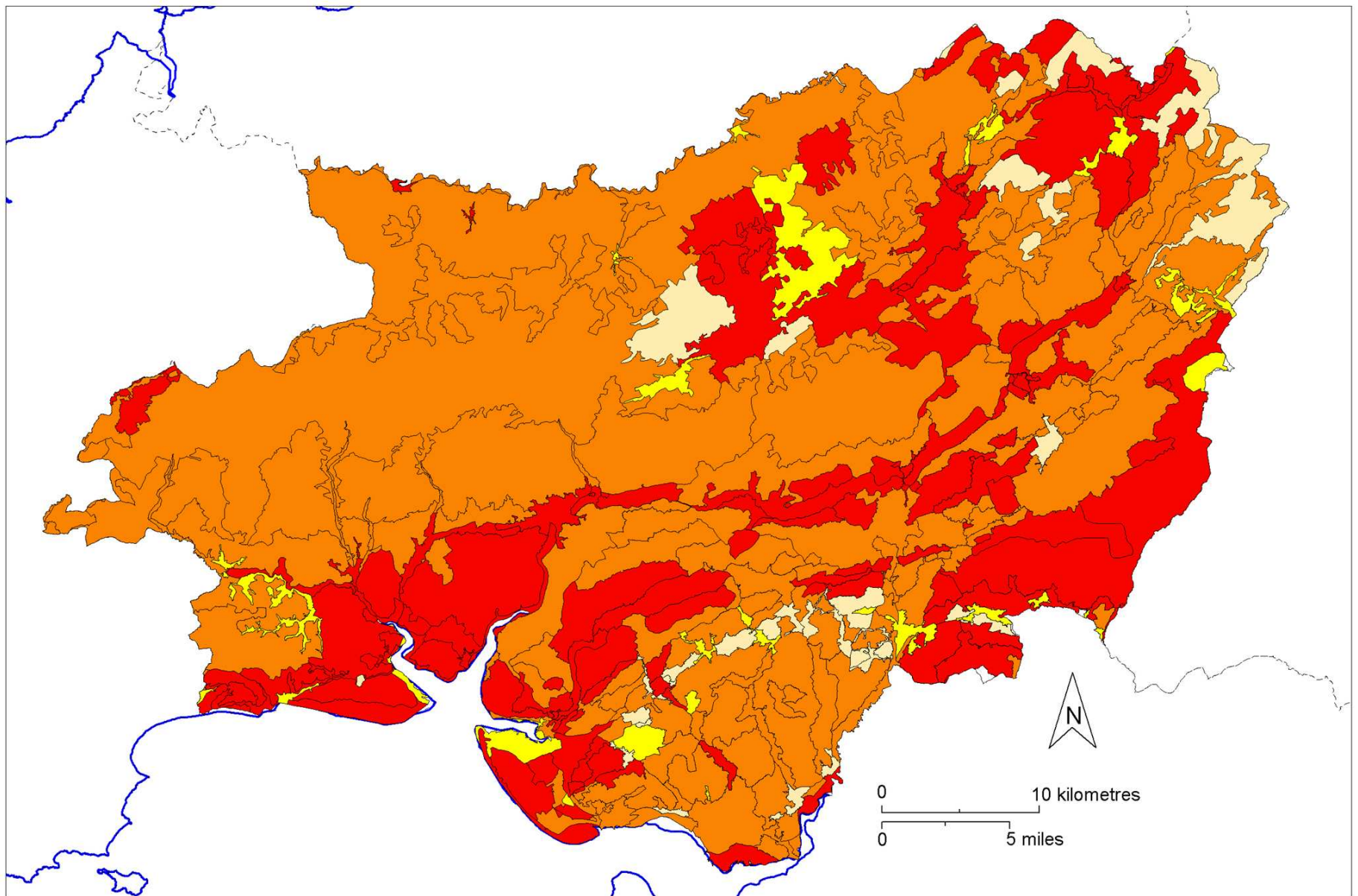


**Map 3.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing all areas at level three classification. Irregular Fields = pale green. Regular Fields = mid green. Other Fields = bright green. Marginal Land = brown. Woodland = dark green. Water & Wetland = blue. Nucleated Settlement = red. Non-nucleated Settlement = dark purple. Military = black. Extractive = yellow. Reclaimed Land = dark blue. Designed = pink. Communications = orange. Recreational = purple.

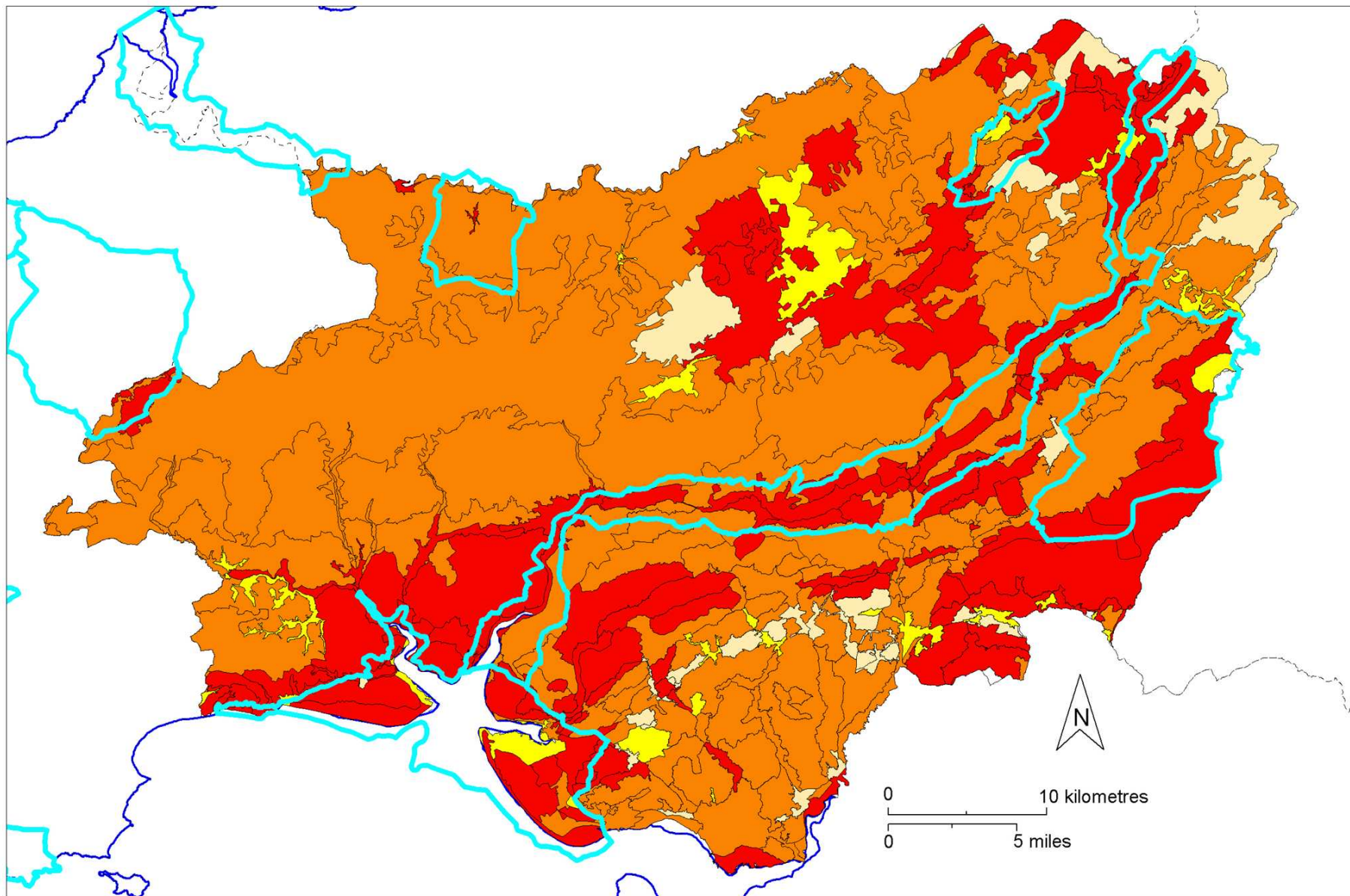


**Map 4.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing all areas in relation to relief. Land over 250m and 500m is shown shaded.





**Map 5.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing evaluation of all areas. Outstanding = red. High = orange. Moderate = yellow. Low = pale yellow



**Map 6.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing evaluation of all areas in relation to Registered Historic Landscapes, shown in blue outline.





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TECHNICAL REPORT**

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Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by K Murphy

Swydd / Position: Trust Director

Llofnod / Signature ..... Dyddiad / Date

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

ar ran Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf.  
on behalf of Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: Project Manager

Llofnod / Signature ..... Dyddiad / Date

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

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any  
comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report

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Apart from the southeast of the county and Carmarthen, urban areas are not dominant features of Carmarthenshire's historic landscape. Small historic towns are, however, a feature of the county, with places such as Laugharne, Kidwelly and Newcastle Emlyn providing outstanding contributions to the historic landscape.

## RESULTS

### General

Three hundred and forty-eight historic landscape areas have been identified, mapped and described for Carmarthenshire. There is a huge size range in these areas, from less than 70 ha in some of the complex settlements in the southeast of the county, to over 20,000 ha in the largest agricultural areas. The types of landscapes also vary enormously from open moorland to small urban areas. These are summarised below, and their distribution is shown on Map 1.

### Level Two Classification

The 348 areas are divided into the following groups according to Landmap level two classification:

Agricultural	203	bright green
Non-agricultural	80	dark green
Settlement	41	red
Other built environment	13	purple
Industrial	11	black

The colours noted above relate to Map 2. What is striking about the map is the dominance of agriculture. Not only are most areas assigned to agriculture, but these areas are amongst the largest in the county. Non-agricultural landscapes, mainly forestry and open moorland, are more common along the eastern and northern fringes of the county, generally at higher altitudes (Map 4). Note on Map 2 the very small areas of other landscape types, with these mostly confined to the southeast of the county.

### Level Three Classification

At this level the 348 areas are divided as follows:

Irregular Fieldscapes	119	pale green
Regular Fieldscapes	67	mid green
Other Fieldscapes	17	bright green
Marginal Land	28	brown
Woodland	35	dark green
Water & Wetland	7	blue
Nucleated Settlement	39	red
Non-nucleated Settlement	2	dark purple
Military	3	black
Extractive	11	yellow
Reclaimed Land	10	dark blue
Designed	4	pink
Communications	2	orange
Recreational	4	purple

The colours noted above relate to Map 3.

It is interesting to note how the woodland and marginal land landscape areas relate to the higher ground in the east and north of the county. Unsurprisingly it is agricultural fieldscapes that dominate Carmarthenshire. Of note, however, is the very complex and fragmented landscape in the southeast of the county. This is predominantly due to industry superimposed over an agricultural landscape, creating a patchwork of small settlements, pockets of relict industry and reclaimed open cast workings, but also the result of the a very varied landscape along the coastal fringe.

## Evaluation

Evaluation of the 348 areas produced the following results:

Outstanding	122	red
High	166	orange
Moderate	27	yellow
Low	33	pale yellow

The colours noted above relate to Map 5. The vast majority of the Carmarthenshire historic landscape has been evaluated as outstanding or high. When combined, these two upper evaluation categories account for 288 of the 348 (83%) historic landscape areas. In area terms this is greater than 83% of the county as most of the largest areas have been valued as outstanding or high (the area in hectares of these landscape values has not been quantified). These high values are very much a reflection of the integrity, survival and condition of most of the Carmarthenshire historic landscape.

The differences between an outstanding and high value landscape are often marginal and may hinge on the presence or absence of nationally important monuments or buildings. However, the difference between a high and a moderate value landscape is generally quite marked.

Higher value landscapes are distributed evenly across the county. Lower value landscapes (moderate and low) are more common in the uplands, where they are generally associated with large coniferous plantations, and in the southeast of the county where they reflect recent industry and settlement.

Of interest is the relationship of Registered Historic Landscapes and landscape values, shown on Map 6. Generally there is concordance between outstanding value landscapes and registered landscapes. However, some blocks of outstanding value landscapes lie outside registered areas, for instance: parts of the Black Mountain/Mynydd Betws, the Cothi Valley/Mynydd Llanllwni, and parts of southeast of the county.

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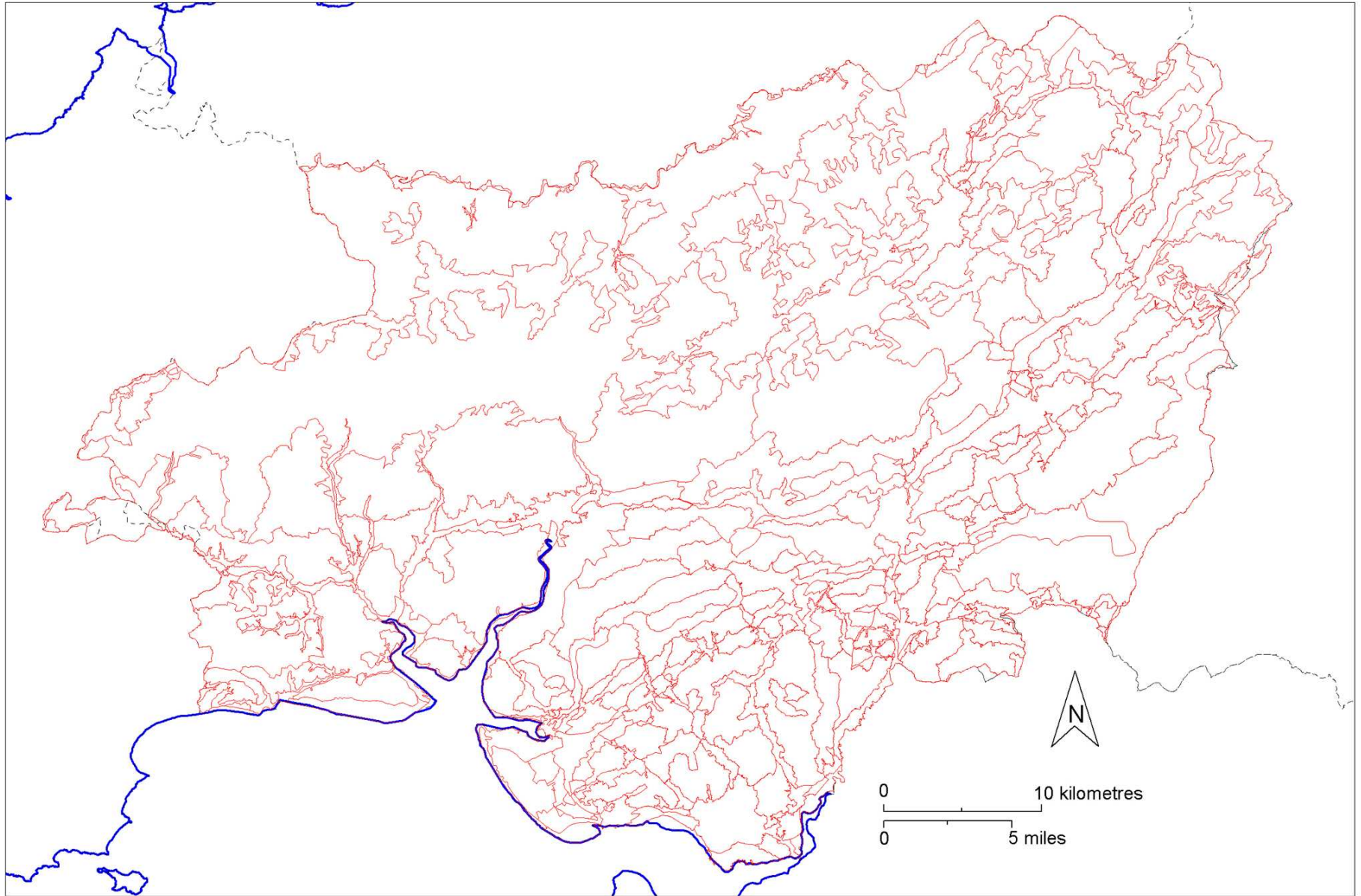
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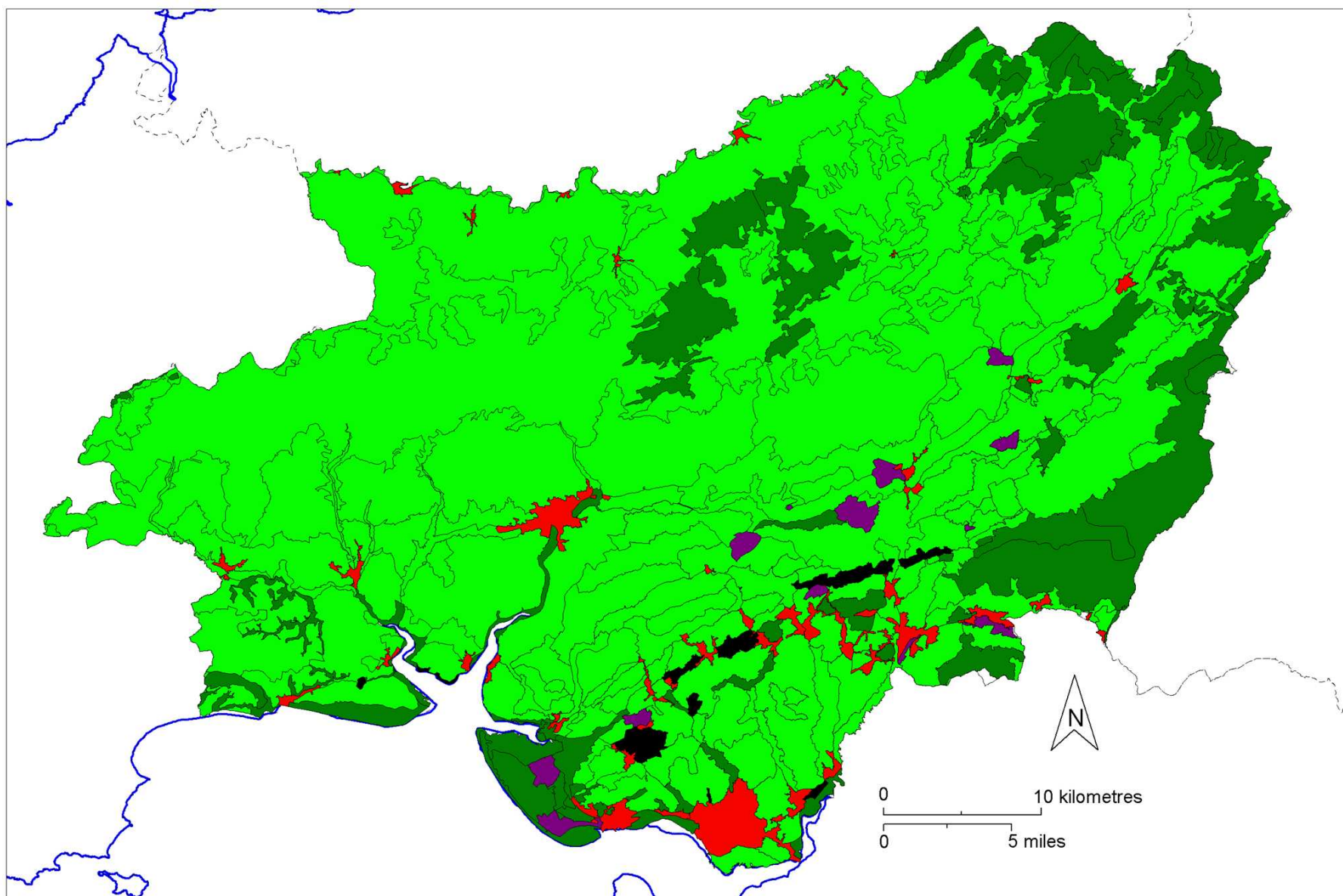
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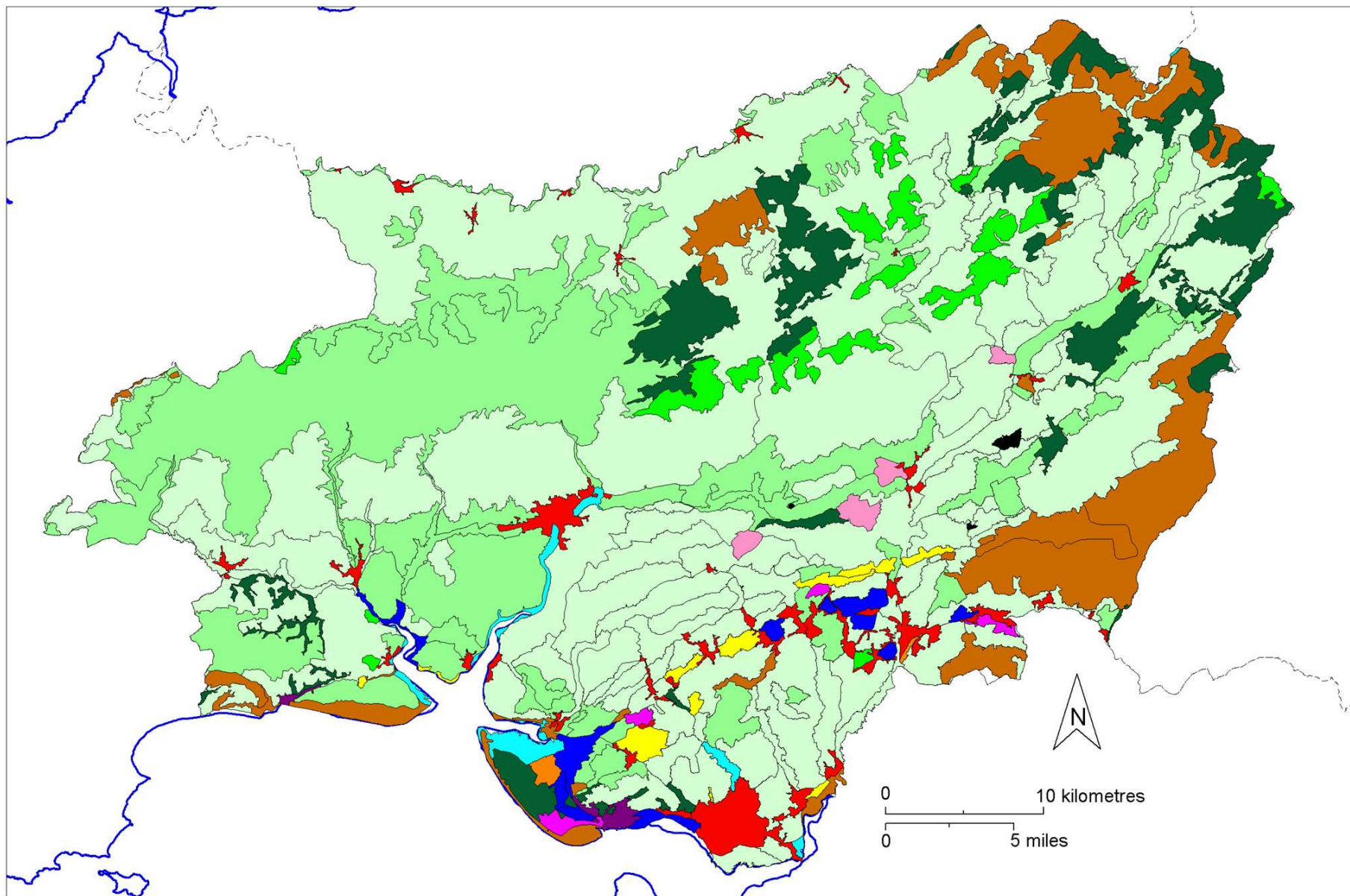


**Map 1.** Carmarthenshire showing all 348 Landmap historic landscape areas.

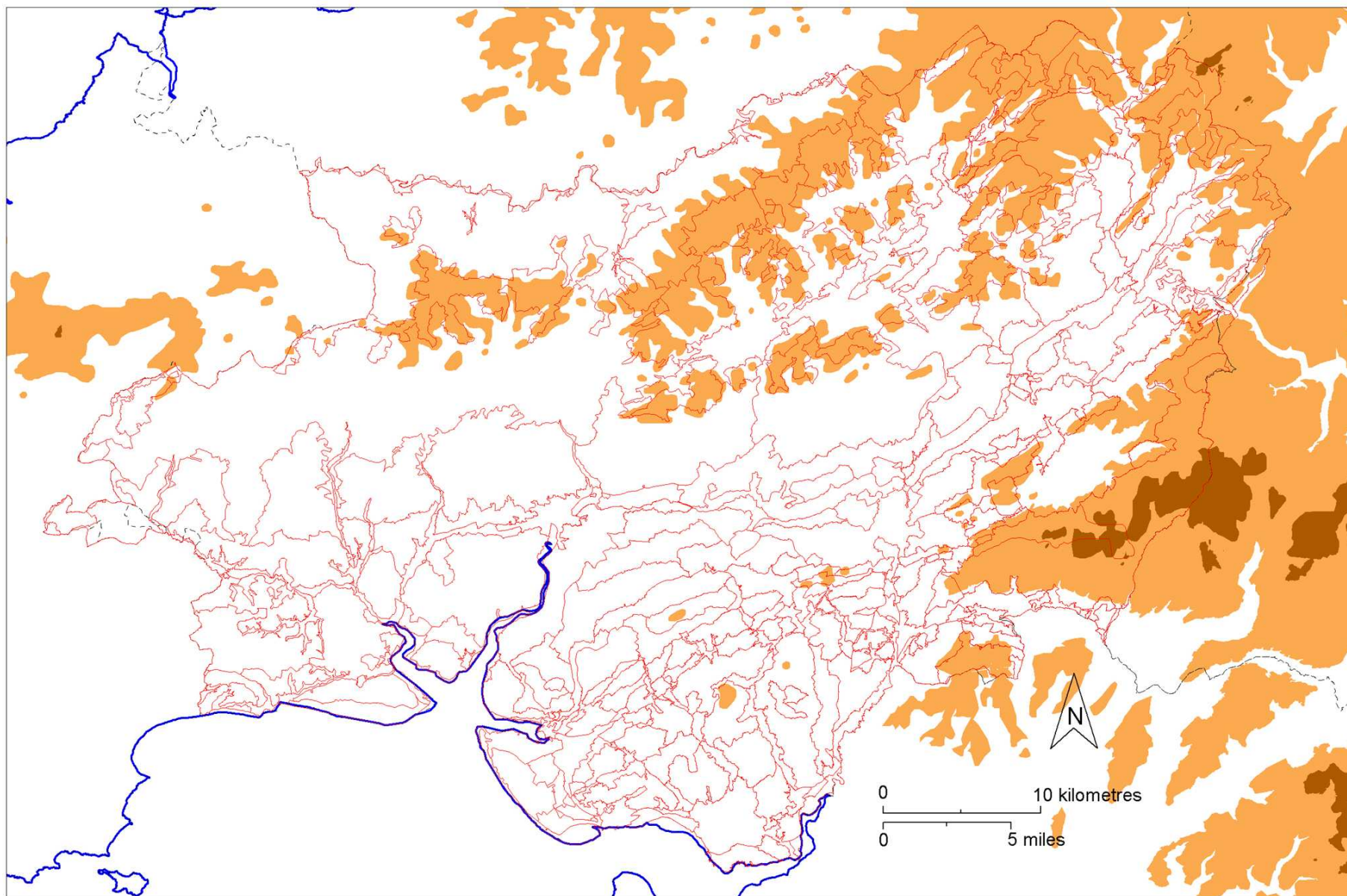


**Map 2.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing all areas at level two classification. Agricultural = bright green. Non agricultural = dark green. Settlement = red. Other built environment = purple. Industrial = black.



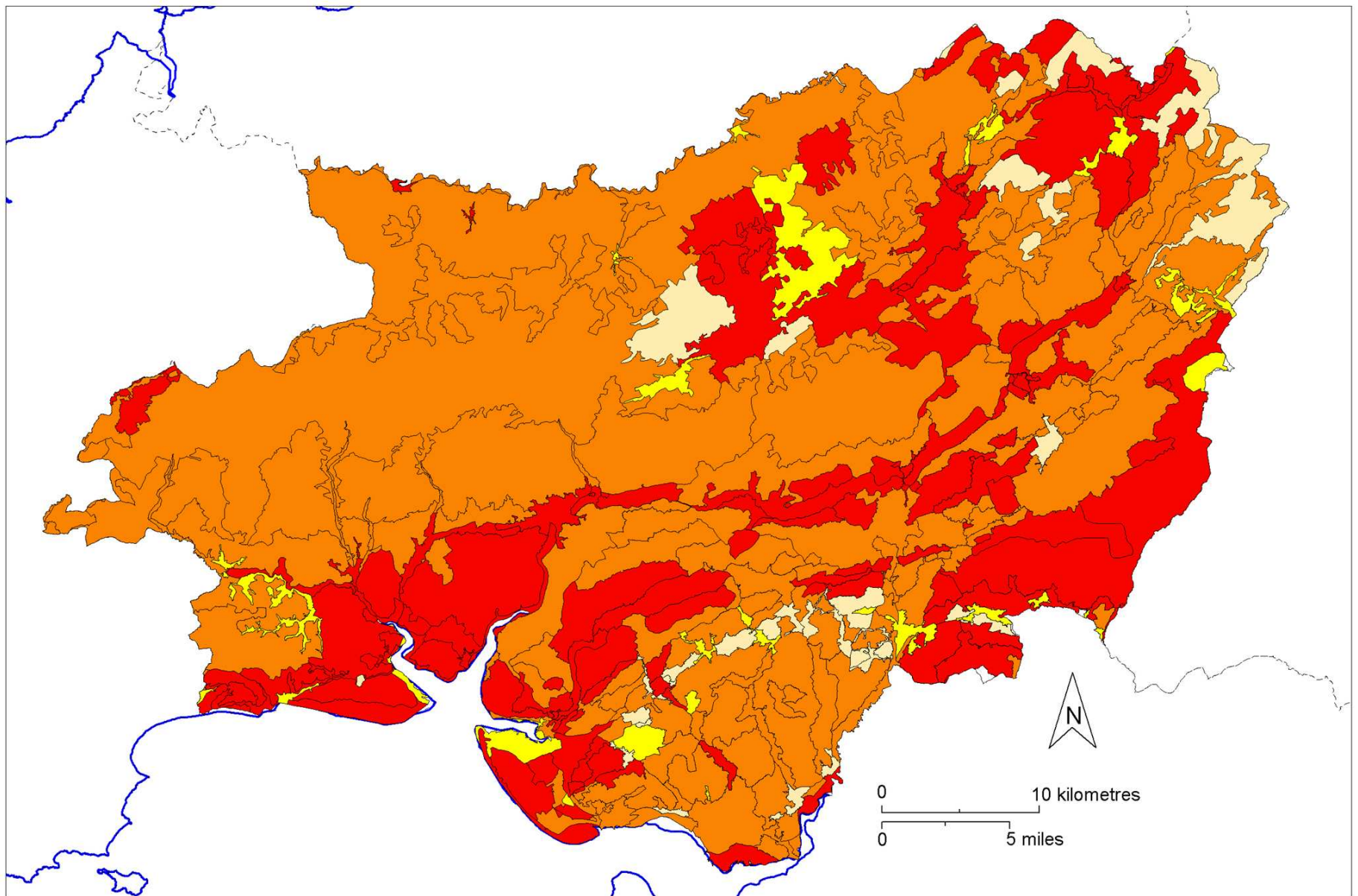


**Map 3.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing all areas at level three classification. Irregular Fields = pale green. Regular Fields = mid green. Other Fields = bright green. Marginal Land = brown. Woodland = dark green. Water & Wetland = blue. Nucleated Settlement = red. Non-nucleated Settlement = dark purple. Military = black. Extractive = yellow. Reclaimed Land = dark blue. Designed = pink. Communications = orange. Recreational = purple.

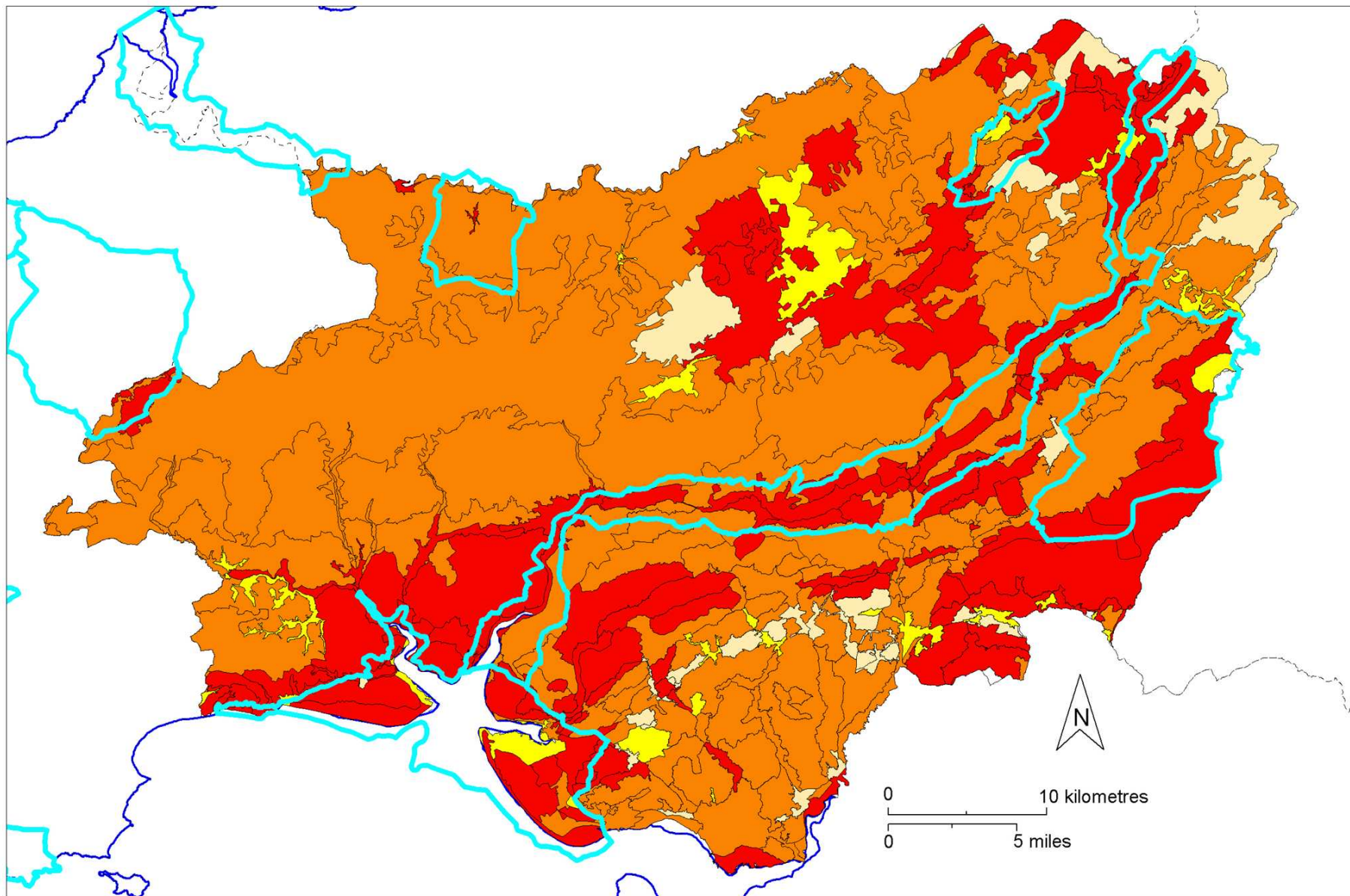


**Map 4.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing all areas in relation to relief. Land over 250m and 500m is shown shaded.





**Map 5.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing evaluation of all areas. Outstanding = red. High = orange. Moderate = yellow. Low = pale yellow



**Map 6.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing evaluation of all areas in relation to Registered Historic Landscapes, shown in blue outline.



**CARMARTHENSHIRE  
LANDMAP HISTORIC LANDSCAPE  
TECHNICAL REPORT**

**RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NUMBER 2009/78**

**October 2009  
Hydref 2009**

Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by K Murphy

Swydd / Position: Trust Director

Llofnod / Signature ..... Dyddiad / Date

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith  
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ar ran Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf.  
on behalf of Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: Project Manager

Llofnod / Signature ..... Dyddiad / Date

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# CARMARTHENSHIRE

## LANDMAP HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

### TECHNICAL REPORT

Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological  
Trust  
For: Countryside Council for Wales



## DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2009/78  
RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 98412

Hydref 2009  
October 2009

## CARMARTHENSHIRE LANDMAP HISTORIC LANDSCAPE TECHNICAL REPORT

Gan / By

K Murphy

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# **CARMARTHENSHIRE LANDMAP HISTORIC LANDSCAPE TECHNICAL REPORT**

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## **SUMMARY**

*The historic landscape of Carmarthenshire is rich and varied, and consists of fields and farms, high moorland in the east and north of the county, industrial settlements in the southeast and a diverse coastline. Three hundred and forty-eight historic landscape character areas are identified in this study. The majority of these, 203, are classified as agricultural, and represent a landscape dominated by dispersed farms and irregular fields. Non-agricultural land comprising woodland (mostly forestry) and moorland is by far the next biggest category, most of which lies on high ground on the eastern and northern sides of the county. Other categories make up only a small proportion of Carmarthenshire's historic landscape. Nevertheless, these categories provide a significant contribution to the county's landscape, particularly in the southeast. Evaluation demonstrates the high value of the historic landscape, with 288 of the 348 historic landscape areas classified as outstanding or high, and just 33 as low. These high values not only indicate the quality of the Carmarthenshire historic landscape, but also its good survival rate, its integrity and its condition.*

## **CRYNODEB**

*Mae tirwedd hanesyddol Sir Gaerfyrddin yn gyfoethog ac yn amrywiol, ac mae'n cynnwys caeau a ffermydd, gweundir uchel yn nwyrain a gogledd y sir, aneddiadau diwydiannol yn y de-ddwyrain ac arfordir amrywiol. Nodir tri chant pedwar deg wyth o ardaloedd tirwedd hanesyddol yn yr astudiaeth hon. Ystyrir y rhan fwyaf o'r rhain, 203, yn amaethyddol ac maent yn cynrychioli tirwedd sy'n llawn ffermydd gwasgaredig a chaeau afreolaidd. Tir anamaethyddol yw'r categori mwyaf nesaf o bell ffordd, sy'n cynnwys coetiroedd (coedwigaeth gan fwyaf) a gweundir, y mae'r rhan fwyaf ohono wedi'i leoli ar dir uchel ar ochrau dwyreiniol a gogleddol y sir. Mae categorïau eraill yn cynnwys cyfran fach o dirwedd hanesyddol Sir Gaerfyrddin. Fodd bynnag, mae'r categorïau hyn yn gyfraniad arwyddocaol at dirwedd y sir, yn enwedig yn y de-ddwyrain. Mae gwerthuso'n dangos gwerth uchel y dirwedd hanesyddol, gyda 288 o'r 348 o ardaloedd tirwedd hanesyddol wedi'u hystyried yn rhagorol neu uchel, a dim ond 33 yn isel. Nid yn unig mae'r gwerthoedd uchel hyn yn dangos ansawdd tirwedd hanesyddol Sir Gaerfyrddin, ond hefyd ei chyfradd oroesi dda, ei chywirdeb a'i chyflwr.*



## **INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY**

The methodological approach for this study was that outlined in CCW's Historic Landscape Guidance document dated June 2003. A few qualifying comments are required here in support of the data produced by Dyfed Archaeological Trust for the Carmarthenshire Historic Landscape study and evaluation.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust (DAT) has undertaken Cadw grant-aided Historic Landscape Characterisation projects of the landscapes listed in the *Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales* (Cadw 1999, 2001). Some of these landscapes are wholly or partly in Carmarthenshire, namely: Tywi Valley, Black Mountain and Mynydd Myfddfai, Taf and Tywi Estuary, Dolaucothi, Drefach and Felindre, Lower Teifi Valley, and Preseli (Murphy and Ludlow 2000, Murphy and Ludlow 2001, Murphy and Ludlow 2004).

As a large part of the county was characterised during this Cadw-funded work, it was decided that the character areas generated would be used to inform this Landmap study. The only exception to this is those areas defined for Drefach and Felindre, which have not been incorporated into this study.

The areas defined for the characterisation work described above were defined at Level 4 according to Landmap methodology. In order to maintain a consistent approach, character areas across the rest of the county were also defined at Level 4, although supporting data and descriptions are at Level 3.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust undertook the Carmarthenshire historic landscape study in the early 2000s. The evaluation of the areas then defined and described was completed in 2009. This short report summarises the results of the initial study and of the evaluation.

## **THE CARMARTHENSHIRE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE**

It would be inappropriate to provide a detailed account of the development and character of the historic landscape in this short technical report. However, a few of the major themes are identified; most of these require further research.

The historic landscape of Carmarthenshire is dominated by fields and dispersed farms. There is great variety within this agricultural landscape. In the southern part of the county the strip-like nature of many of the present day fields is evidence that the landscape has evolved out of medieval open field systems. Indeed, at Laugharne open field systems are still in use. Away from the southern coastal fringe the origin of the field systems is largely unknown, although documentary- and cartographic-sources show most of it to be ancient. Enclosure by Act of Parliament in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is evidenced at several locations across the county, most extensively at Mynydd Mawr at Crosshands, resulting in a pattern of distinctive regularly shaped fields.

Nucleated settlements such as hamlets and small villages are not a prominent feature of the rural landscape, but where they occur they are an important component.

Large estates have left a strong imprint on parts of the county. Dinefwr and Gelli Aur (Golden Grove), for example, in the Tywi valley controlled vast tracts of land at their height in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As well as their obvious legacy of gardens, parklands and mansions, they created large estate farms, planted woodland, and reordered the landscape to accommodate developing farming practices.

Hedges on banks are ubiquitous across the agricultural landscape, and are by far the most common historic landscape component in the county. Bank materials vary according to the local environment, but earth dominates. In lowland areas banks are generally topped with well-maintained hedges. In the Tywi Valley in particular trees in hedges or as standards in fields provide a parkland aspect to the landscape. Towards the uplands hedges tend to be less well maintained, and are normally supplemented with wire fences. It is in the upland fringes that more variety in boundary type is encountered with rubble banks and dry-stone walls occurring alongside earth banks.

Stone with north Wales slate as a roofing material are the traditional building materials across the county. The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a period of great rebuilding across rural west Wales, with the vast majority of houses and older agricultural outbuildings dating to between 1840 and 1890. Regional patterns are present, such as the use of the distinctive Teifi Valley slate as a building material in the northeast of the county, and polychrome brick for detailing in the industrial areas around Ammanford. Generally, though, local, rough-coursed stone, often cement rendered, is the norm. In towns greater ranges of both materials and dates are evident.

Upland dominates the eastern and northern extremes of the county, and provides an outstanding contribution to the historic landscape. However, large tracts of upland are under coniferous plantations, mostly planted in 1950s, 60s and 70s. These are generally of low landscape value.

Apart from in the southeast of the county industry is not a major contributor to the historic landscape. Here the legacy of old extractive industries and metal processing is a dominant feature of both the rural landscape (in particular in restoration following open cast coal operations) and the non-rural landscape. The

settlement pattern here is very much a product of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century industrialisation.

Apart from the southeast of the county and Carmarthen, urban areas are not dominant features of Carmarthenshire's historic landscape. Small historic towns are, however, a feature of the county, with places such as Laugharne, Kidwelly and Newcastle Emlyn providing outstanding contributions to the historic landscape.

## RESULTS

### General

Three hundred and forty-eight historic landscape areas have been identified, mapped and described for Carmarthenshire. There is a huge size range in these areas, from less than 70 ha in some of the complex settlements in the southeast of the county, to over 20,000 ha in the largest agricultural areas. The types of landscapes also vary enormously from open moorland to small urban areas. These are summarised below, and their distribution is shown on Map 1.

### Level Two Classification

The 348 areas are divided into the following groups according to Landmap level two classification:

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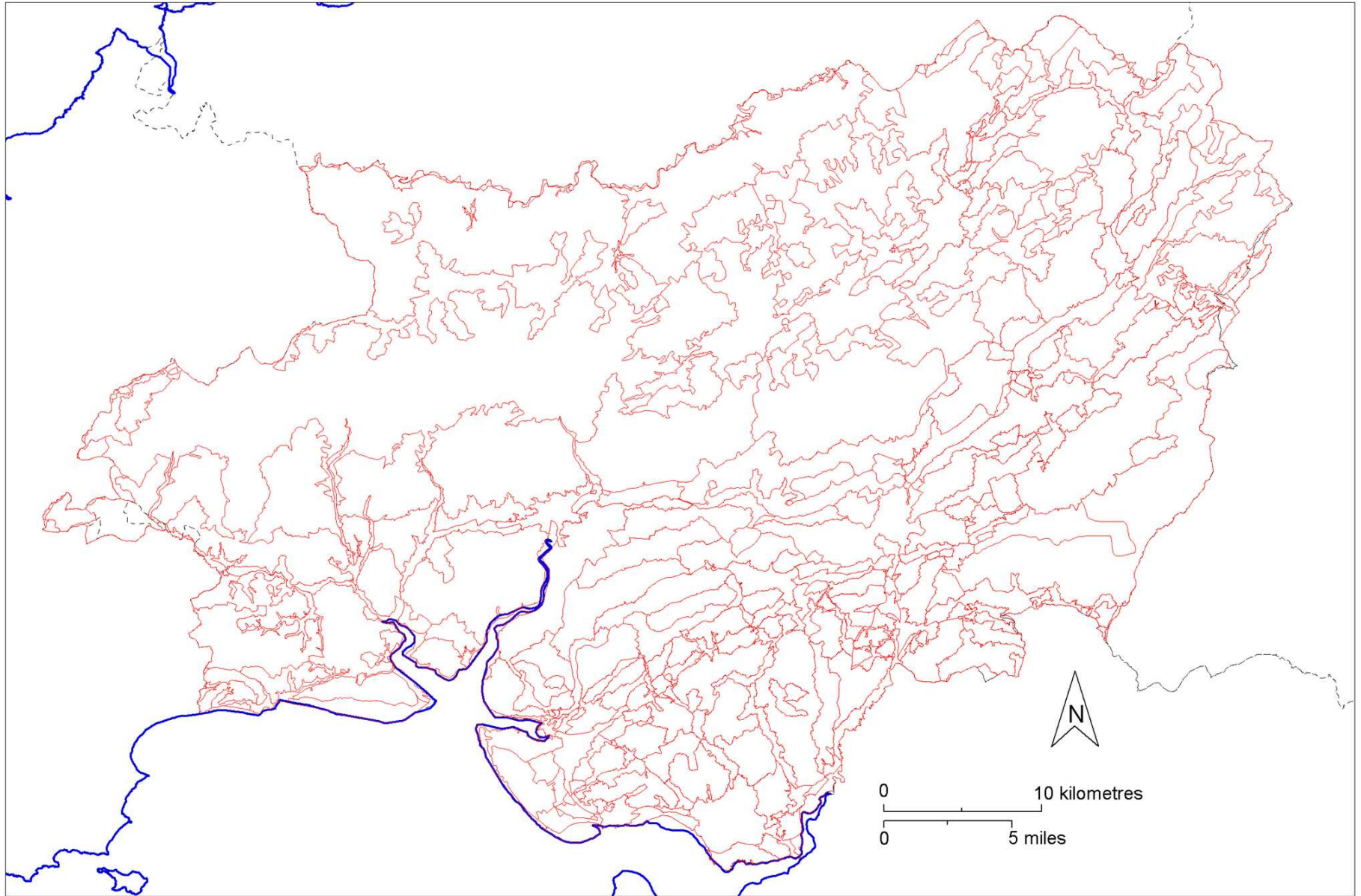
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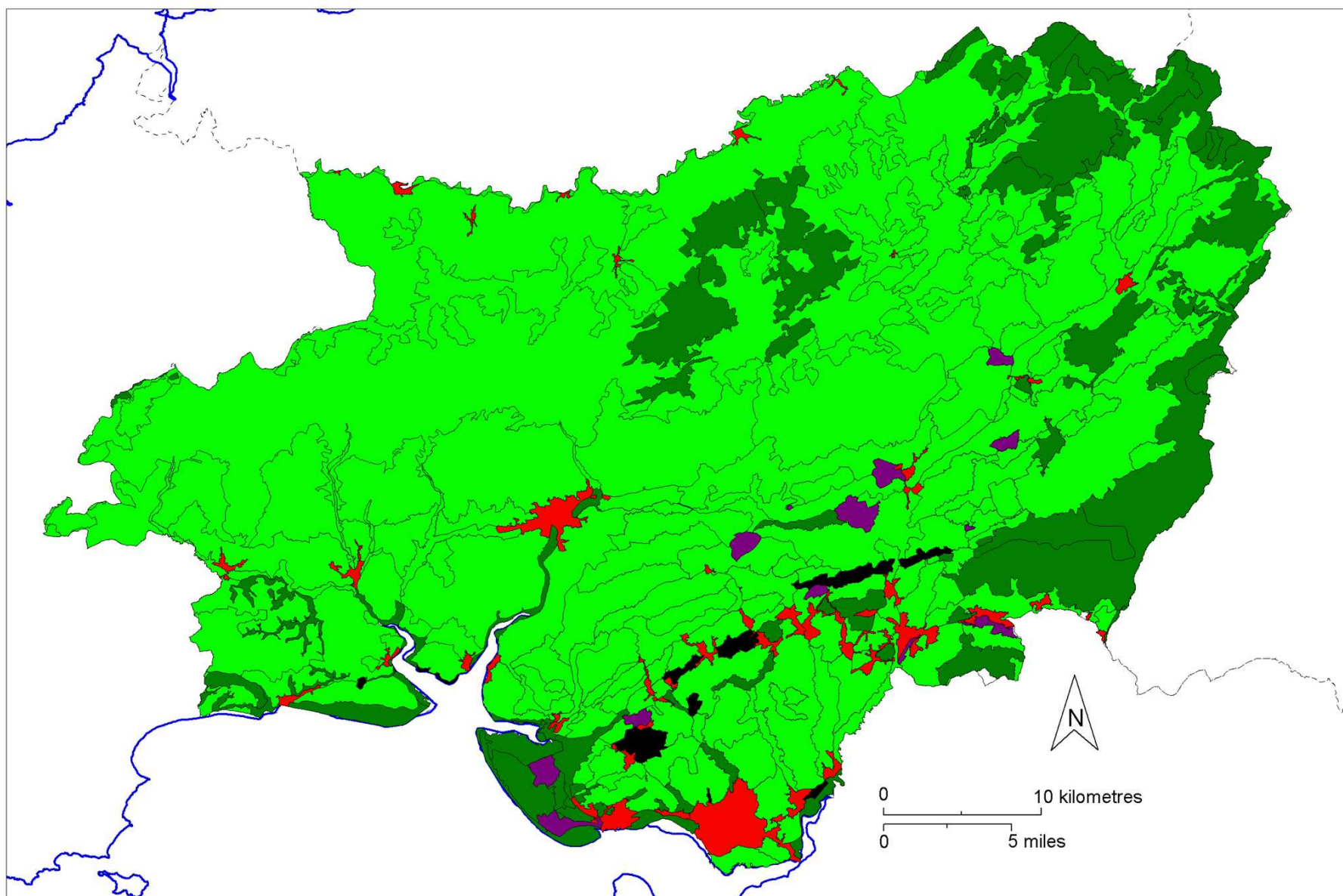
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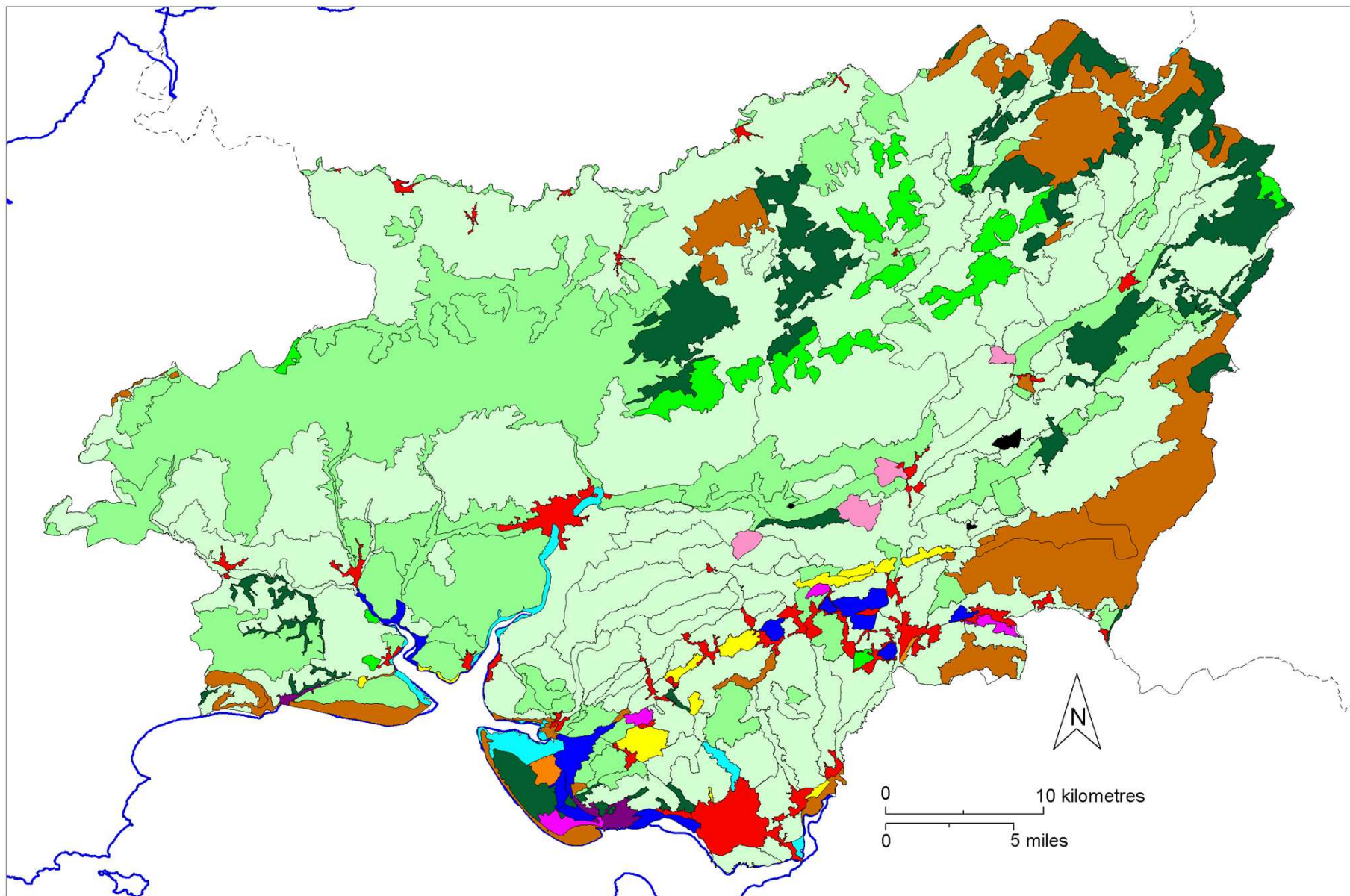


**Map 1.** Carmarthenshire showing all 348 Landmap historic landscape areas.



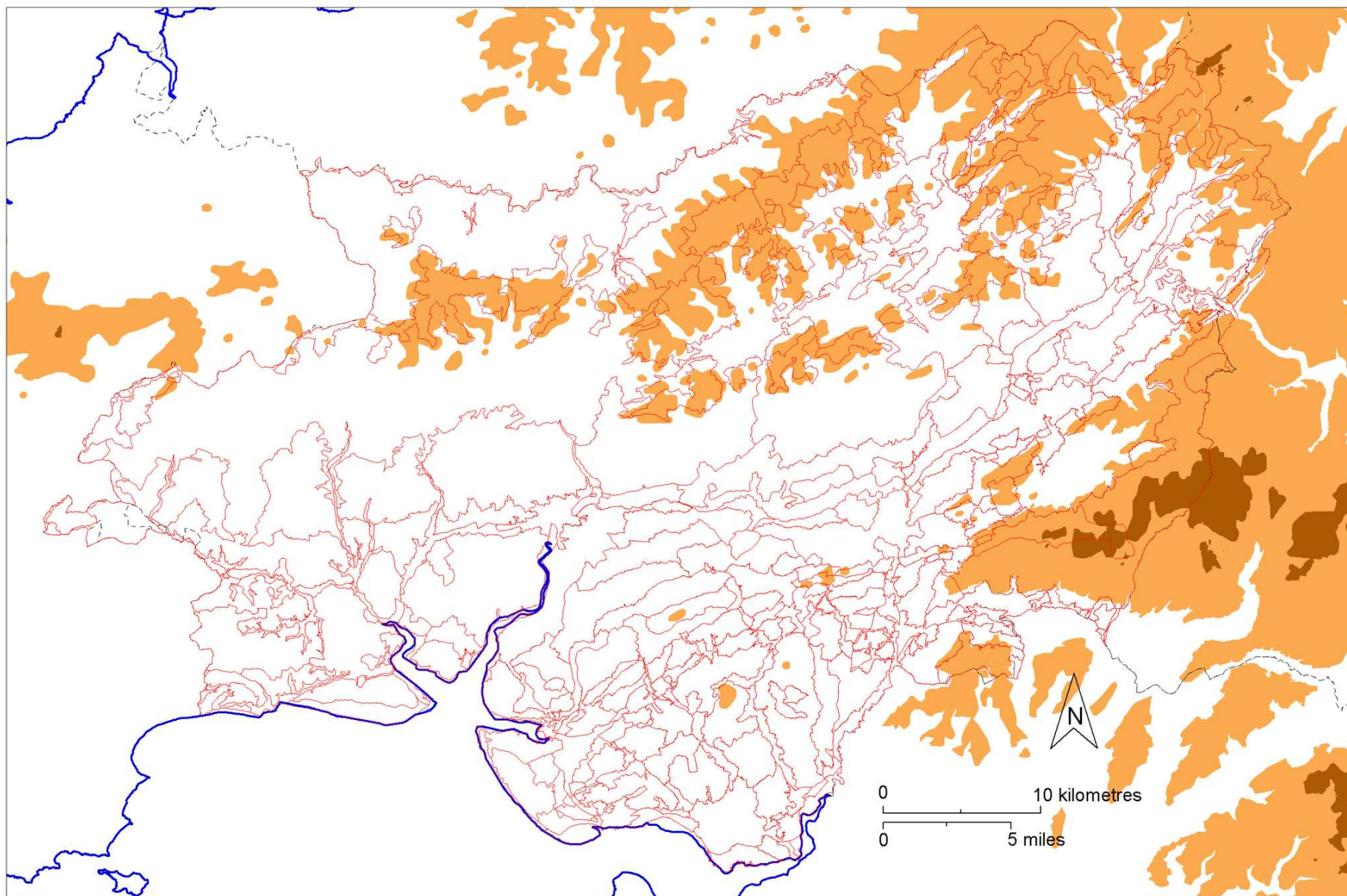


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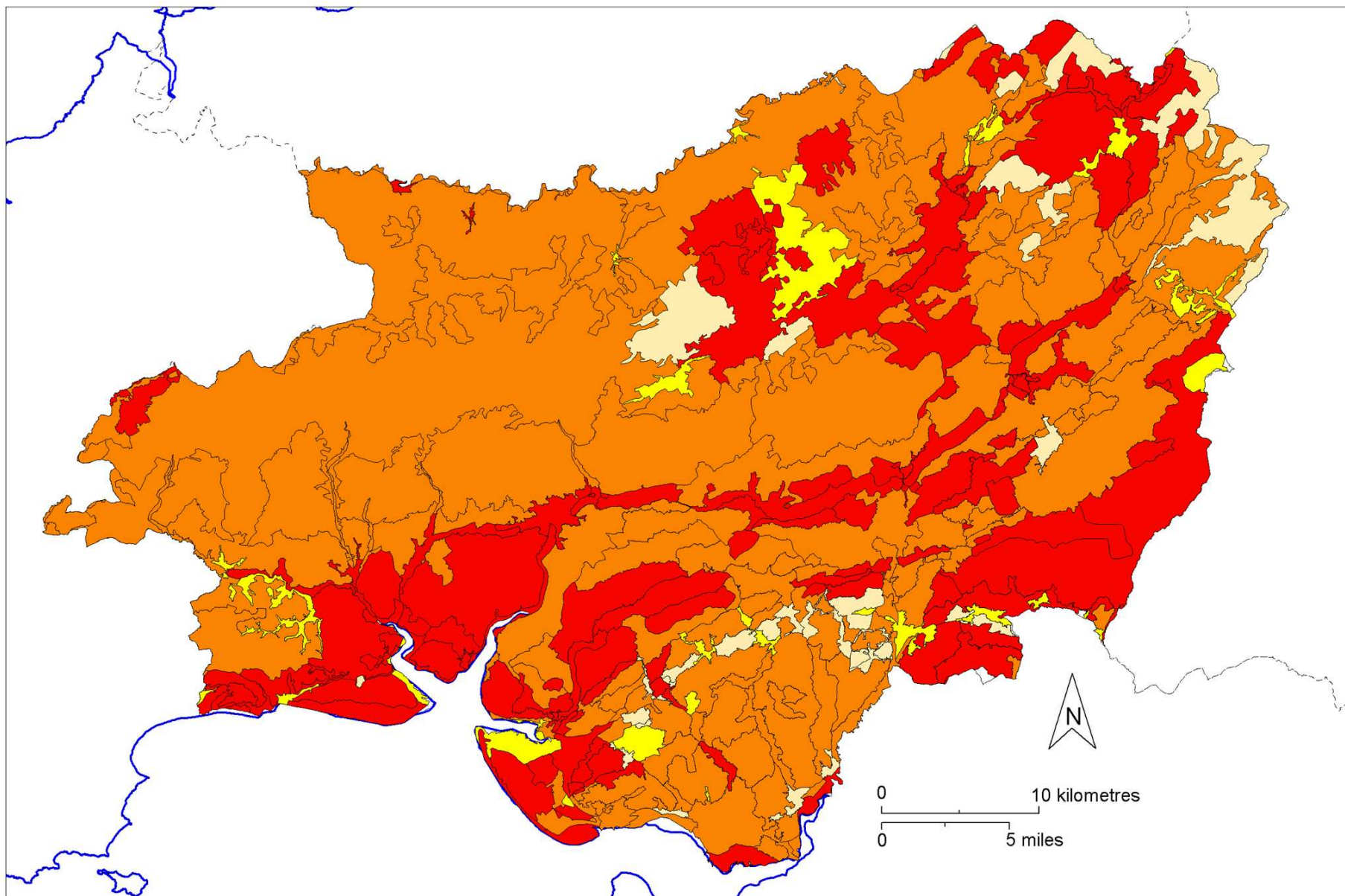


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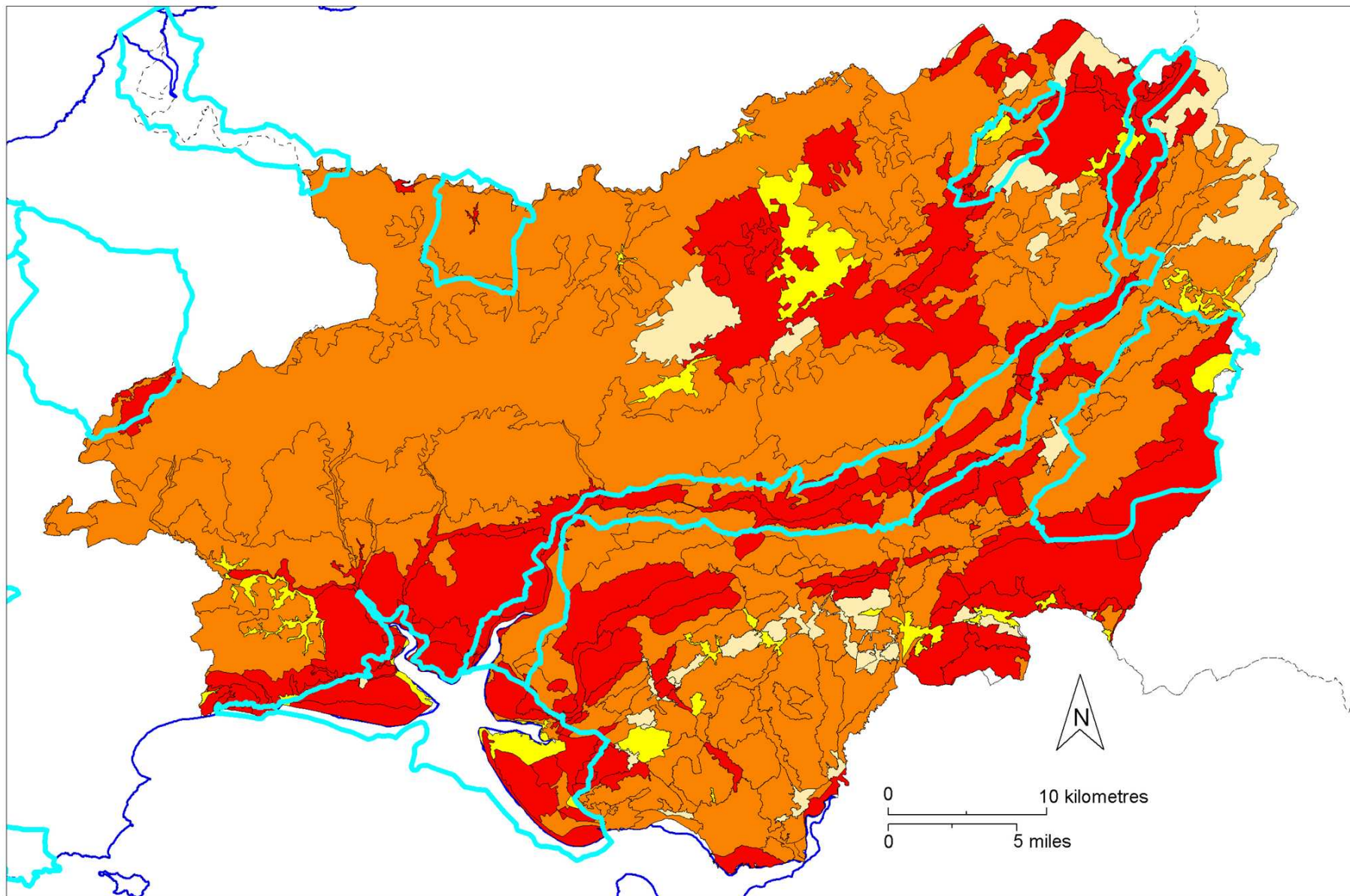


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**Map 6.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing evaluation of all areas in relation to Registered Historic Landscapes, shown in blue outline.





**CARMARTHENSHIRE  
LANDMAP HISTORIC LANDSCAPE  
TECHNICAL REPORT**

**RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NUMBER 2009/78**

**October 2009  
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Llofnod / Signature ..... Dyddiad / Date

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# CARMARTHENSHIRE

## LANDMAP HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

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## **SUMMARY**

*The historic landscape of Carmarthenshire is rich and varied, and consists of fields and farms, high moorland in the east and north of the county, industrial settlements in the southeast and a diverse coastline. Three hundred and forty-eight historic landscape character areas are identified in this study. The majority of these, 203, are classified as agricultural, and represent a landscape dominated by dispersed farms and irregular fields. Non-agricultural land comprising woodland (mostly forestry) and moorland is by far the next biggest category, most of which lies on high ground on the eastern and northern sides of the county. Other categories make up only a small proportion of Carmarthenshire's historic landscape. Nevertheless, these categories provide a significant contribution to the county's landscape, particularly in the southeast. Evaluation demonstrates the high value of the historic landscape, with 288 of the 348 historic landscape areas classified as outstanding or high, and just 33 as low. These high values not only indicate the quality of the Carmarthenshire historic landscape, but also its good survival rate, its integrity and its condition.*

## **CRYNODEB**

*Mae tirwedd hanesyddol Sir Gaerfyrddin yn gyfoethog ac yn amrywiol, ac mae'n cynnwys caeau a ffermydd, gweundir uchel yn nwyrain a gogledd y sir, aneddiadau diwydiannol yn y de-ddwyrain ac arfordir amrywiol. Nodir tri chant pedwar deg wyth o ardaloedd tirwedd hanesyddol yn yr astudiaeth hon. Ystyrir y rhan fwyaf o'r rhain, 203, yn amaethyddol ac maent yn cynrychioli tirwedd sy'n llawn ffermydd gwasgaredig a chaeau afreolaidd. Tir anamaethyddol yw'r categori mwyaf nesaf o bell ffordd, sy'n cynnwys coetiroedd (coedwigaeth gan fwyaf) a gweundir, y mae'r rhan fwyaf ohono wedi'i leoli ar dir uchel ar ochrau dwyreiniol a gogleddol y sir. Mae categorïau eraill yn cynnwys cyfran fach o dirwedd hanesyddol Sir Gaerfyrddin. Fodd bynnag, mae'r categorïau hyn yn gyfraniad arwyddocaol at dirwedd y sir, yn enwedig yn y de-ddwyrain. Mae gwerthuso'n dangos gwerth uchel y dirwedd hanesyddol, gyda 288 o'r 348 o ardaloedd tirwedd hanesyddol wedi'u hystyried yn rhagorol neu uchel, a dim ond 33 yn isel. Nid yn unig mae'r gwerthoedd uchel hyn yn dangos ansawdd tirwedd hanesyddol Sir Gaerfyrddin, ond hefyd ei chyfradd oroesi dda, ei chywirdeb a'i chyflwr.*

## **INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY**

The methodological approach for this study was that outlined in CCW's Historic Landscape Guidance document dated June 2003. A few qualifying comments are required here in support of the data produced by Dyfed Archaeological Trust for the Carmarthenshire Historic Landscape study and evaluation.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust (DAT) has undertaken Cadw grant-aided Historic Landscape Characterisation projects of the landscapes listed in the *Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales* (Cadw 1999, 2001). Some of these landscapes are wholly or partly in Carmarthenshire, namely: Tywi Valley, Black Mountain and Mynydd Myfddfai, Taf and Tywi Estuary, Dolaucothi, Drefach and Felindre, Lower Teifi Valley, and Preseli (Murphy and Ludlow 2000, Murphy and Ludlow 2001, Murphy and Ludlow 2004).

As a large part of the county was characterised during this Cadw-funded work, it was decided that the character areas generated would be used to inform this Landmap study. The only exception to this is those areas defined for Drefach and Felindre, which have not been incorporated into this study.

The areas defined for the characterisation work described above were defined at Level 4 according to Landmap methodology. In order to maintain a consistent approach, character areas across the rest of the county were also defined at Level 4, although supporting data and descriptions are at Level 3.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust undertook the Carmarthenshire historic landscape study in the early 2000s. The evaluation of the areas then defined and described was completed in 2009. This short report summarises the results of the initial study and of the evaluation.

## **THE CARMARTHENSHIRE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE**

It would be inappropriate to provide a detailed account of the development and character of the historic landscape in this short technical report. However, a few of the major themes are identified; most of these require further research.

The historic landscape of Carmarthenshire is dominated by fields and dispersed farms. There is great variety within this agricultural landscape. In the southern part of the county the strip-like nature of many of the present day fields is evidence that the landscape has evolved out of medieval open field systems. Indeed, at Laugharne open field systems are still in use. Away from the southern coastal fringe the origin of the field systems is largely unknown, although documentary- and cartographic-sources show most of it to be ancient. Enclosure by Act of Parliament in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is evidenced at several locations across the county, most extensively at Mynydd Mawr at Crosshands, resulting in a pattern of distinctive regularly shaped fields.

Nucleated settlements such as hamlets and small villages are not a prominent feature of the rural landscape, but where they occur they are an important component.

Large estates have left a strong imprint on parts of the county. Dinefwr and Gelli Aur (Golden Grove), for example, in the Tywi valley controlled vast tracts of land at their height in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As well as their obvious legacy of gardens, parklands and mansions, they created large estate farms, planted woodland, and reordered the landscape to accommodate developing farming practices.

Hedges on banks are ubiquitous across the agricultural landscape, and are by far the most common historic landscape component in the county. Bank materials vary according to the local environment, but earth dominates. In lowland areas banks are generally topped with well-maintained hedges. In the Tywi Valley in particular trees in hedges or as standards in fields provide a parkland aspect to the landscape. Towards the uplands hedges tend to be less well maintained, and are normally supplemented with wire fences. It is in the upland fringes that more variety in boundary type is encountered with rubble banks and dry-stone walls occurring alongside earth banks.

Stone with north Wales slate as a roofing material are the traditional building materials across the county. The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a period of great rebuilding across rural west Wales, with the vast majority of houses and older agricultural outbuildings dating to between 1840 and 1890. Regional patterns are present, such as the use of the distinctive Teifi Valley slate as a building material in the northeast of the county, and polychrome brick for detailing in the industrial areas around Ammanford. Generally, though, local, rough-coursed stone, often cement rendered, is the norm. In towns greater ranges of both materials and dates are evident.

Upland dominates the eastern and northern extremes of the county, and provides an outstanding contribution to the historic landscape. However, large tracts of upland are under coniferous plantations, mostly planted in 1950s, 60s and 70s. These are generally of low landscape value.

Apart from in the southeast of the county industry is not a major contributor to the historic landscape. Here the legacy of old extractive industries and metal processing is a dominant feature of both the rural landscape (in particular in restoration following open cast coal operations) and the non-rural landscape. The

settlement pattern here is very much a product of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century industrialisation.

Apart from the southeast of the county and Carmarthen, urban areas are not dominant features of Carmarthenshire's historic landscape. Small historic towns are, however, a feature of the county, with places such as Laugharne, Kidwelly and Newcastle Emlyn providing outstanding contributions to the historic landscape.

## RESULTS

### General

Three hundred and forty-eight historic landscape areas have been identified, mapped and described for Carmarthenshire. There is a huge size range in these areas, from less than 70 ha in some of the complex settlements in the southeast of the county, to over 20,000 ha in the largest agricultural areas. The types of landscapes also vary enormously from open moorland to small urban areas. These are summarised below, and their distribution is shown on Map 1.

### Level Two Classification

The 348 areas are divided into the following groups according to Landmap level two classification:

Agricultural	203	bright green
Non-agricultural	80	dark green
Settlement	41	red
Other built environment	13	purple
Industrial	11	black

The colours noted above relate to Map 2. What is striking about the map is the dominance of agriculture. Not only are most areas assigned to agriculture, but these areas are amongst the largest in the county. Non-agricultural landscapes, mainly forestry and open moorland, are more common along the eastern and northern fringes of the county, generally at higher altitudes (Map 4). Note on Map 2 the very small areas of other landscape types, with these mostly confined to the southeast of the county.

### Level Three Classification

At this level the 348 areas are divided as follows:

Irregular Fieldscapes	119	pale green
Regular Fieldscapes	67	mid green
Other Fieldscapes	17	bright green
Marginal Land	28	brown
Woodland	35	dark green
Water & Wetland	7	blue
Nucleated Settlement	39	red
Non-nucleated Settlement	2	dark purple
Military	3	black
Extractive	11	yellow
Reclaimed Land	10	dark blue
Designed	4	pink
Communications	2	orange
Recreational	4	purple

The colours noted above relate to Map 3.

It is interesting to note how the woodland and marginal land landscape areas relate to the higher ground in the east and north of the county. Unsurprisingly it is agricultural fieldscapes that dominate Carmarthenshire. Of note, however, is the very complex and fragmented landscape in the southeast of the county. This is predominantly due to industry superimposed over an agricultural landscape, creating a patchwork of small settlements, pockets of relict industry and reclaimed open cast workings, but also the result of the a very varied landscape along the coastal fringe.



## Evaluation

Evaluation of the 348 areas produced the following results:

Outstanding	122	red
High	166	orange
Moderate	27	yellow
Low	33	pale yellow

The colours noted above relate to Map 5. The vast majority of the Carmarthenshire historic landscape has been evaluated as outstanding or high. When combined, these two upper evaluation categories account for 288 of the 348 (83%) historic landscape areas. In area terms this is greater than 83% of the county as most of the largest areas have been valued as outstanding or high (the area in hectares of these landscape values has not been quantified). These high values are very much a reflection of the integrity, survival and condition of most of the Carmarthenshire historic landscape.

The differences between an outstanding and high value landscape are often marginal and may hinge on the presence or absence of nationally important monuments or buildings. However, the difference between a high and a moderate value landscape is generally quite marked.

Higher value landscapes are distributed evenly across the county. Lower value landscapes (moderate and low) are more common in the uplands, where they are generally associated with large coniferous plantations, and in the southeast of the county where they reflect recent industry and settlement.

Of interest is the relationship of Registered Historic Landscapes and landscape values, shown on Map 6. Generally there is concordance between outstanding value landscapes and registered landscapes. However, some blocks of outstanding value landscapes lie outside registered areas, for instance: parts of the Black Mountain/Mynydd Betws, the Cothi Valley/Mynydd Llanllwni, and parts of southeast of the county.

## REFERENCES

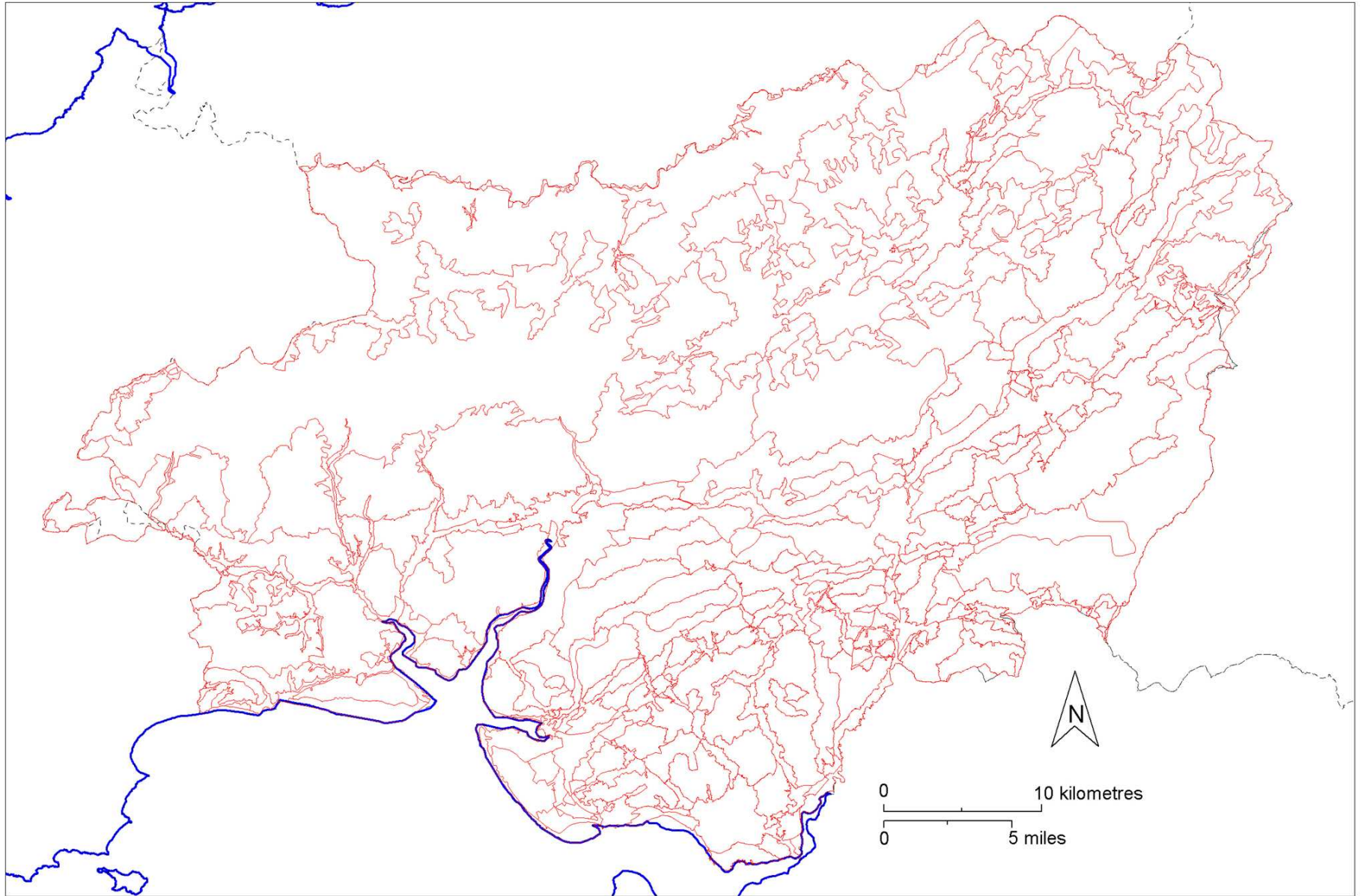
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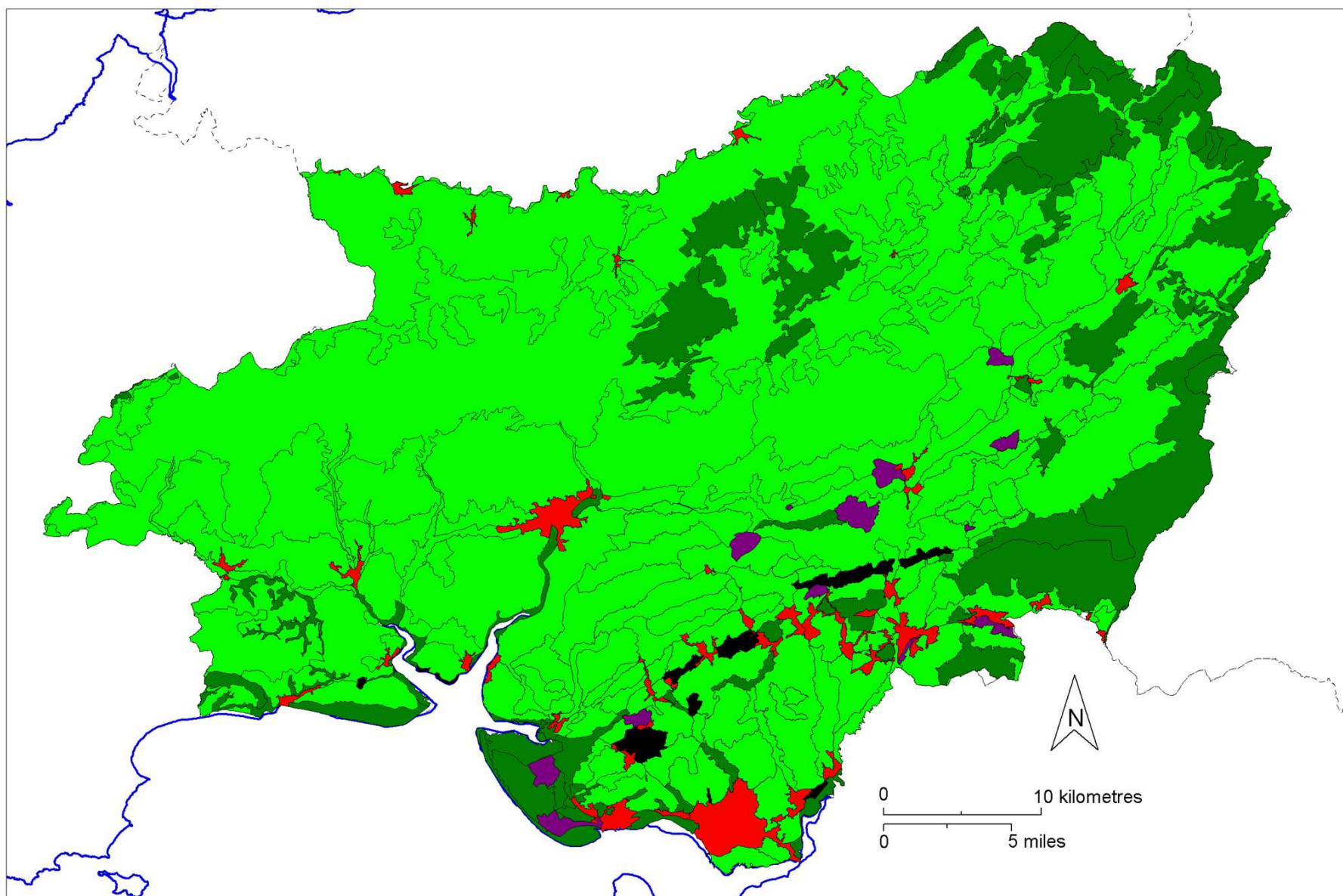
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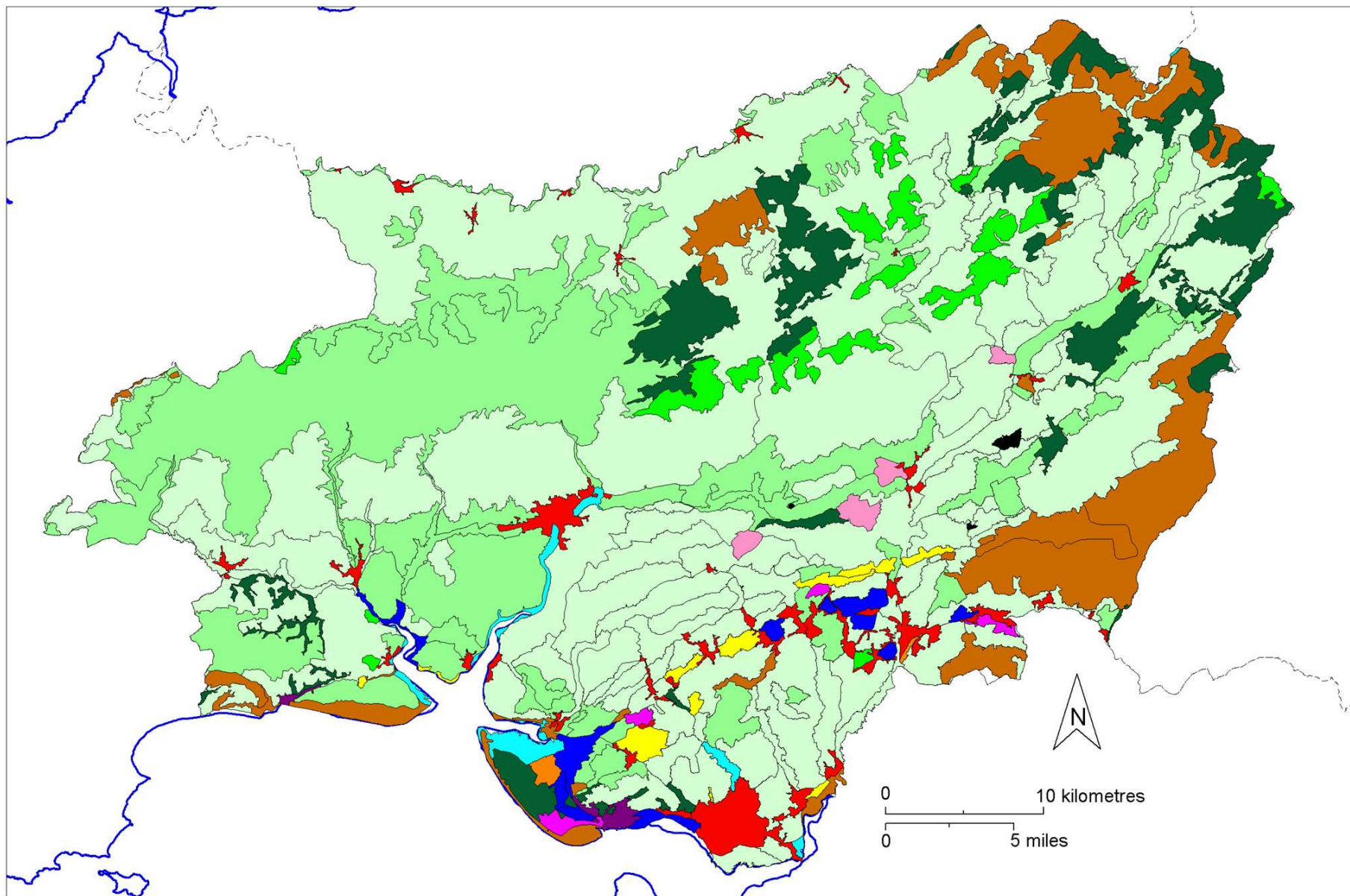


**Map 1.** Carmarthenshire showing all 348 Landmap historic landscape areas.



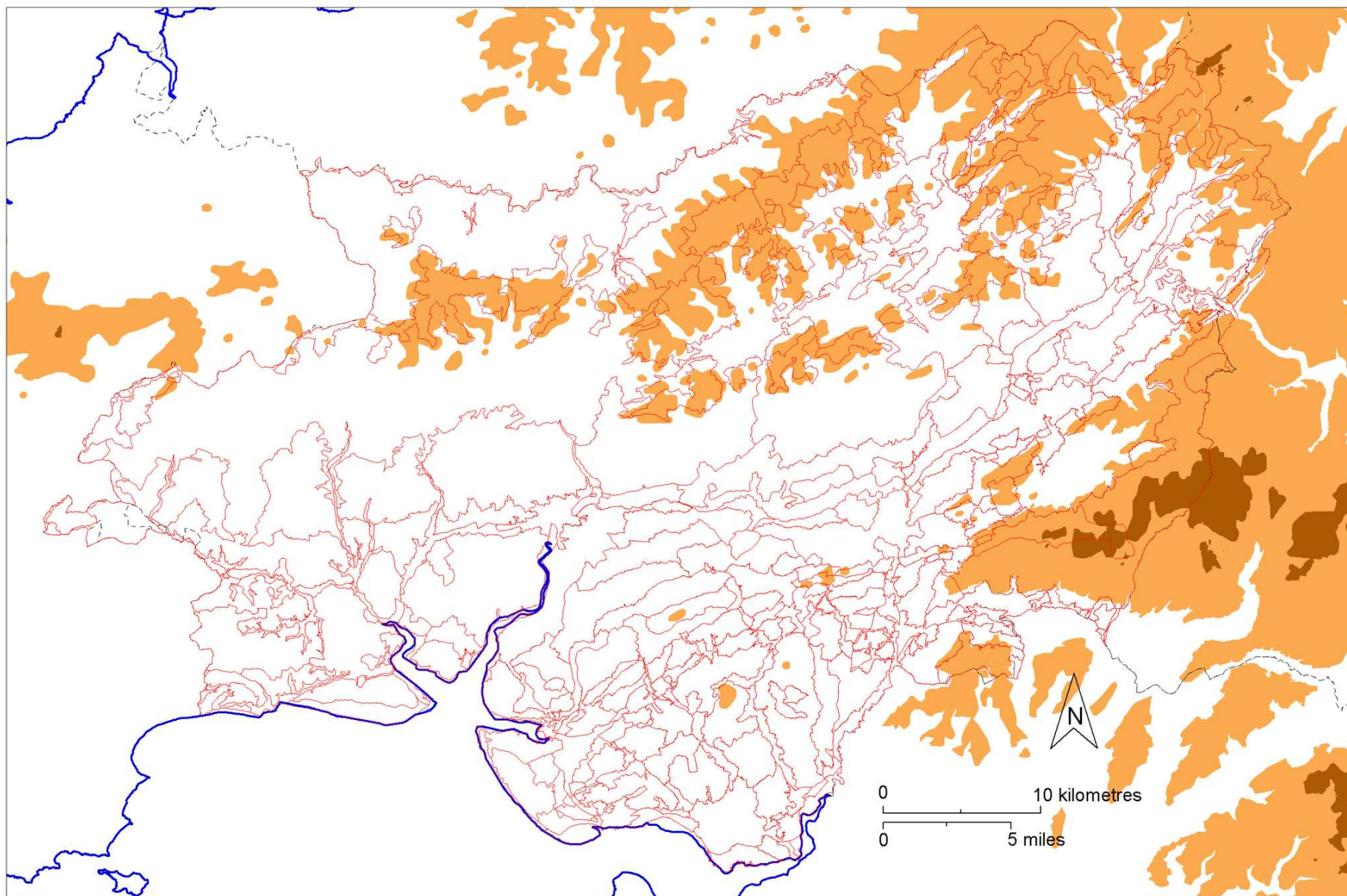
**Map 2.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing all areas at level two classification. Agricultural = bright green. Non agricultural = dark green. Settlement = red. Other built environment = purple. Industrial = black.



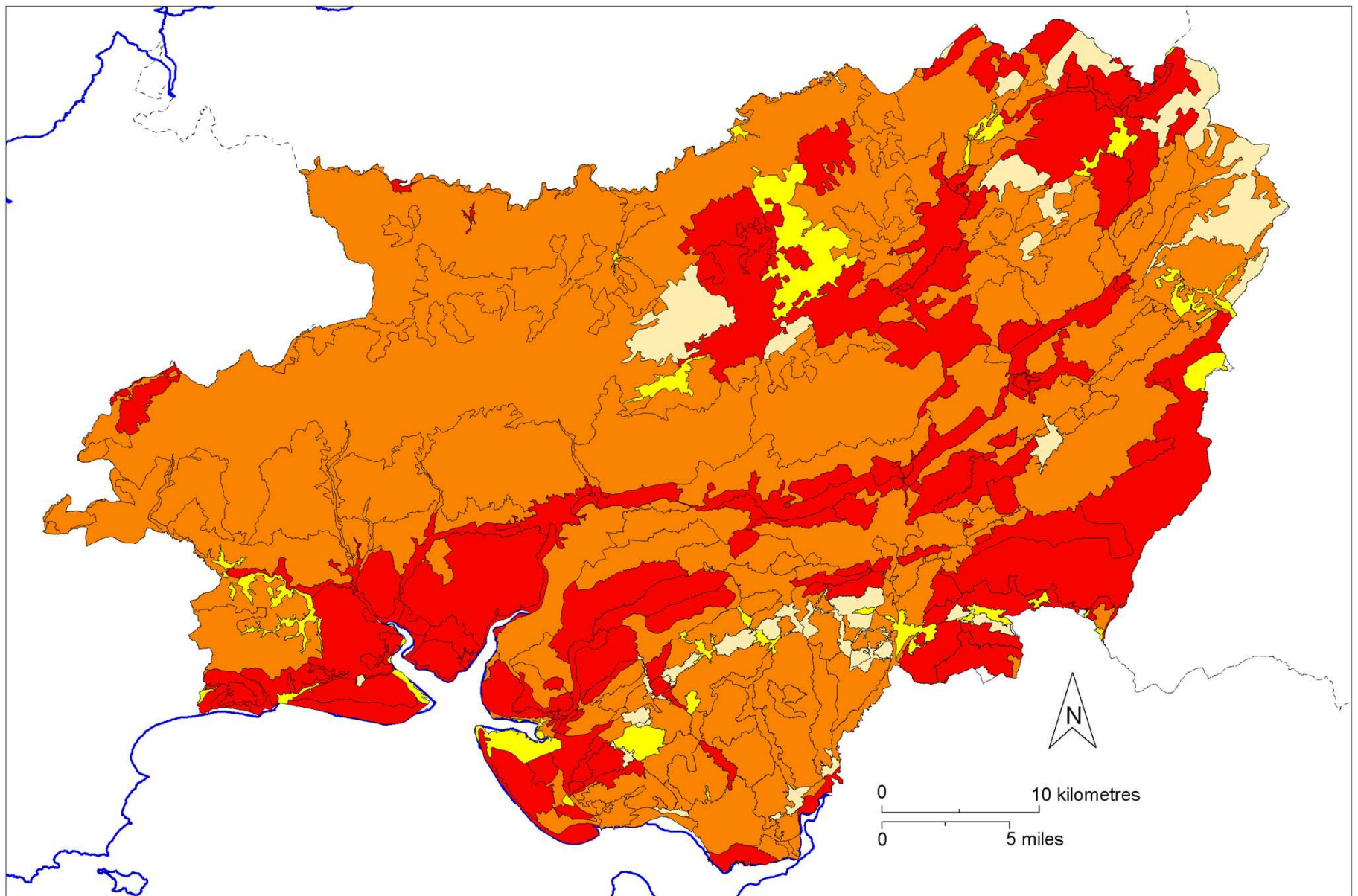


**Map 3.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing all areas at level three classification. Irregular Fieldsapes = pale green. Regular Fieldsapes = mid green. Other Fieldsapes = bright green. Marginal Land = brown. Woodland = dark green. Water & Wetland = blue. Nucleated Settlement = red. Non-nucleated Settlement= dark purple. Military = black. Extractive= yellow. Reclaimed Land = dark blue. Designed = pink. Communications = orange. Recreational = purple.



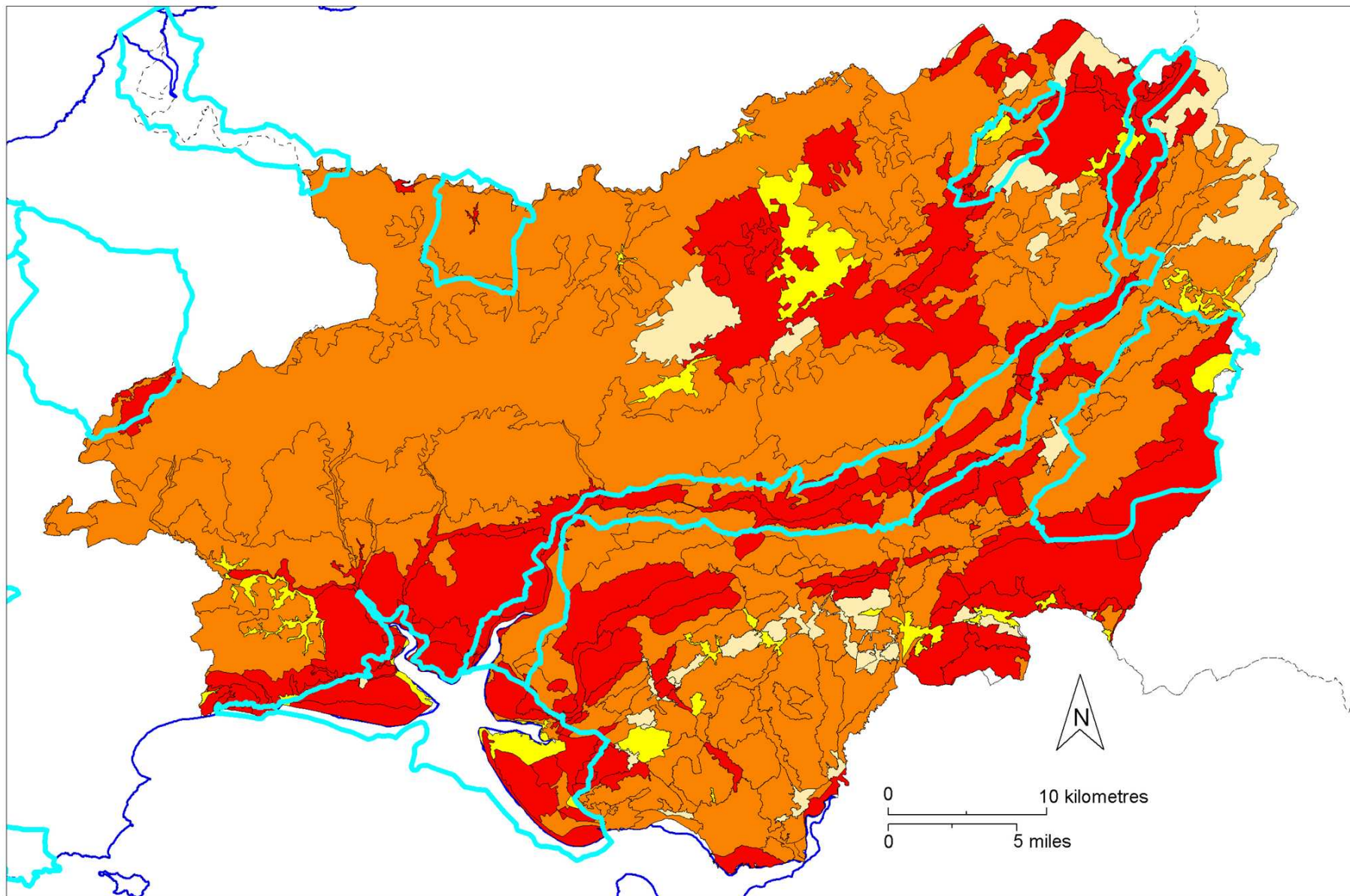


**Map 4.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing all areas in relation to relief. Land over 250m and 500m is shown shaded.



**Map 5.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing evaluation of all areas. Outstanding = red. High = orange. Moderate = yellow. Low = pale yellow





**Map 6.** Carmarthenshire Landmap historic landscape showing evaluation of all areas in relation to Registered Historic Landscapes, shown in blue outline.



**CARMARTHENSHIRE  
LANDMAP HISTORIC LANDSCAPE  
TECHNICAL REPORT**

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Hydref 2009**

Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by K Murphy

Swydd / Position: Trust Director

Llofnod / Signature ..... Dyddiad / Date

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith  
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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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