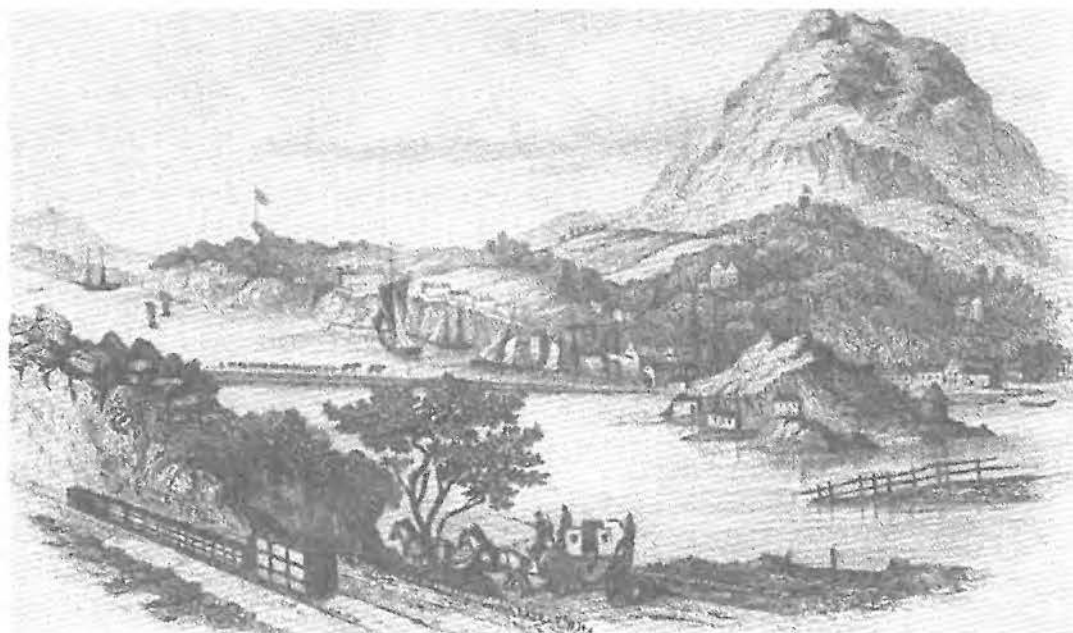


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# Historic landscape characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

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*Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd*  
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

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*Front cover:*

**Porthmadog and the Festiniog Railway, probably c. 1840**

looking south-west towards Moel y Gest (fore-shortened view).

*showing the Festiniog Railway (character area 3) in the foreground below Minffordd (character area 27), with the Cob in the middle distance and the expanding town of Porthmadog and its harbour (character areas 9 and 10) beyond.*

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## **FIGURES**

Map showing extent of study area and character areas

Maps of character areas face the text

Photographs of character areas follow the descriptive text of each area

## **APPENDIX I**

Extracts from the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales

Blaenau Ffestiniog HLW (Gw) 3

Aberglaslyn HLW (Gw) 7

# **Part A**

## **General information**



## 1 Preface

- 1.1 Natural forces and human activity acting together over the last six thousand years have contrived to produce a landscape of great beauty and variety in Wales, a national asset that is essential both to our national identity and to our individual "sense of place" and well-being. The diversity and imprint of human activity on the landscape is everywhere to be seen, from the enigmatic stone monuments of the prehistoric period and the magnificent castles and abbeys of the medieval period to quite commonplace and typical features like field boundaries that can often be of great age. But the landscape is more than just attractive scenery or a record of the past; it also provides a place for us to live, work and sustain ourselves, through farming, forestry, tourism and so on, processes that all shape, and will continue to shape, the landscape.
- 1.2 Recognising and raising awareness of the importance and wealth of the historic fabric of the landscape has been the central theme and message of the, non-statutory, Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales, the first part of which, covering thirty-six "outstanding" landscapes, was published in January 1998. This is being compiled as a joint initiative between Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), working in collaboration with the four Welsh Archaeological Trusts, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales and the Welsh unitary authorities.
- 1.3 The Historic Landscapes Register provides a first step national overview of the historic content of the Welsh landscape. The next step, so essential to the process of informing the way in which aspects of the historic landscape may be managed, is to make available more detailed information about the character of this landscape at a more local level. This is achieved through a process known as historic landscape characterisation which has been developed in Wales jointly by Cadw, CCW and the Welsh Archaeological Trusts. This involves the identification of geographically definable and mappable areas of historic character, as determined by the range and distribution of surviving archaeological and historic features and the main types of historic land use patterns or historic "themes" that have shaped the area. The key historic characteristics of the area are then identified along with recommendations for their positive management.
- 1.4 This report is one in a series of landscape characterisation exercises being undertaken by the Welsh Archaeological Trusts with grant aid from Cadw. These studies will initially concentrate on those areas identified on the Historic Landscapes Register, although it is accepted that the whole of the Welsh landscape can be said to be, in one way or another, historic. Information is being prepared in a form which is compatible with CCW's landscape assessment and decision-making methodology, known as *LANDMAP*. It will be made available to a wide range of organisations and will feed into various initiatives to protect and manage the Welsh countryside, most notably the Tir Gofal agri-environment scheme. It is also seen as making a particularly important contribution to raising awareness and heightening a feeling of local distinctiveness.
- 1.5 The Historic Landscapes Register and these characterisation exercises fully acknowledge the dynamic and evolving nature of the landscape. They promote the view that protecting the legacy of the past in the landscape is not to be achieved by preventing change or fossilising the landscape but rather by informing the process of change, creating tomorrow's landscapes without necessarily sacrificing the best of yesterday's.

## 1 Rhagair

- 1.1 Mae'r grymoedd naturiol a'r gweithgaredd dynol a fu'n gweithredu ar y cyd dros y chwe mil o flynyddoedd diwethaf wedi cyfrannu at y broses o gynhyrchu tirwedd o harddwch ac amrywiaeth hynod yng Ngymru, ased cenedlaethol sy'n hanfodol i ni o ran ein hunaniaeth genedlaethol a hefyd o ran ein lles a'n 'hymdeimlad o berthyn i le' unigol. Gellir gweld ymhobman yr amrywiaeth a'r olion a adawyd ar y tirwedd gan weithgaredd dynol, o henebion cerrig enigmatig y cyfnod cynhanesyddol a chestyll ac abatai gwych y cyfnod canoloesol, i'r nodweddion eithaf cyffredin a nodweddiadol fel ffiniau caeau a all yn aml fod yn hen iawn. Ond nid dim ond golygyfeydd deniadol neu gofnod o'r gorffennol yn unig yw'r tirwedd; mae hefyd yn darparu lle i ni fyw, gweithio a chynnal ein hunain ynddo, drwy gyfrwng amaeth, coedwigaeth, twristiaeth ac ati, oll yn brosesau sy'n llunio, ac a fydd yn parhau i lunio'r tirwedd.
- 1.2 Bu cydnabod a chodi ymwybyddiaeth o bwysigrwydd a chyfoeth ffabrig hanesyddol y tirwedd yn thema ac yn neges ganolog y gofrestr anstatudol, *Cofrestr O Dirweddau O Ddiddordeb Hanesyddol Eithriadol Yng Nghymru*, y cyhoeddwyd y rhan gyntaf ohoni, sy'n cwmpasu trideg chwech o dirweddau 'eithriadol' ym mis Ionawr 1998. Caiff y Gofrestr ei llunio fel menter ar y cyd rhwng Cadw, Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru a'r Cyngor Rhyngwladol ar Henebion a Safleoedd (ICOMOS) sy'n gweithio mewn cydweithrediad a phedair Ymddiriedolaeth Archeolegol Cymru, y Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru ac awdurdodau unedol Cymru.
- 1.3 *Y Gofrestr o Dirweddau o Ddiddordeb Hanesyddol* yw'r cam cyntaf, trosolwg cenedlaethol o gynnwys hanesyddol tirwedd Cymru. Y cam nesaf, mor hanfodol i'r broses o lywio'r modd y gellir rheoli agweddau ar y tirwedd cenedlaethol, yw trefnu bod gwybodaeth fwy manwl ar gael ynglyn a chymeriad y tirwedd hwn ar lefel fwy lleol. Cyflawnir hyn drwy broses a elwir yn nodweddiad tirweddau hanesyddol a ddatblygwyd yng Nghymru ar y cyd a Cadw, Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru ac Ymddiriedolaethau Archeolegol Cymru. Golyga hyn nodi ardaloedd o gymeriad hanesyddol y gellir eu diffinio a'u mapio'n ddacaryddol, yn ol yr hyn a benderfynir gan ystod a dosbarthiad y nodweddion archeolegol a hanesyddol sy'n goroesi a'r prif fathau o batrymau defnydd tir hanesyddol neu 'thema' hanesyddol sydd wedi llunio'r ardal. Nodir nodweddion hanesyddol allweddol yr ardal felly ynghyd ag argymhellion ar gyfer eu rheoli'n gadarnhaol.
- 1.4 Mae'r adroddiad hwn yn un o gyfres o ymarferion nodweddiad tirweddau hanesyddol yr ymgwymerir ag ef gan Ymddiriedolaethau Archeolegol Cymru gyda chymorth grant gan Cadw. Bydd yr astudiaethau hyn yn canolbwyntio yn y lle cyntaf ar yr ardaloedd hynny a nodwyd yn y *Gofrestr O Ddiddordeb Hanesyddol*, er y caiff ei dderbyn bod modd disgrifio tirwedd Cymru gyfan, mewn un ffordd neu'r llall, fel un hanesyddol. Mae gwybodaeth yn cael ei pharatoi ar ffurf sy'n cydweddu a methodoleg asesu tirweddau a gwneud penderfyniadau Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru, sef *LANDMAP*. Bydd ar gael i ystod eang o sefydliadau a chaiff ei fwydo i fentrau amrywiol er mwyn diogelu a rheoli cefn gwlad Cymru, yn bennaf y cynllun agri-amgylcheddol sef, *Tir Gofal*. Caiff ei weld hefyd yn gwneud cyfraniad arbennig o bwysig i'r broses o godi ymwybyddiaeth a dwysau'r ymdeimlad o arbenigrwydd lleol.
- 1.5 Cydnabyddia'r *Gofrestr O Dirweddau O Ddiddordeb Hanesyddol* a'r ymarferion nodweddiad hyn yn llawn natur ddeinamig y tirwedd sy'n parhau i esblygu. Hyrwyddant y farn mai nid trwy rwystro newid neu ffosileiddio'r tirwedd y mae diogelu treftadaeth y gorffennol yn y tirwedd, ond yn hytrach drwy lywio'r broses o newid, gan greu tirweddau'r dyfodol heb o anghenraid aberthu tirweddau gorau'r gorffennol.

## 2 Background and acknowledgements

### 2.1 The study area

- 2.1.1 The area which forms the focus of this work includes two areas which have been identified on the *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales* by Cadw, CCW and ICOMOS (Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, 1995), Blaenau Ffestiniog (HLW(Gw)3) and Aberglaslyn (HLW(Gw)7). It also encompasses a stretch of the Vale of Ffestiniog which links these two areas together.
- 2.1.2 The study area is situated in the modern county of Gwynedd, and straddles the historic counties of Caernarfonshire and Meirionnydd. It stretches from the tops of the mountains surrounding the town of Blaenau Ffestiniog in the north-east (Manod and Moelwyn) to Traeth Mawr and the town of Porthmadog in the south-west: it is centered on the Vale of Ffestiniog and includes, as well as the valley bottom, the heavily-wooded valley sides and some of the open mountain tops above them. There are a variety of different terrains and habitats, and of different historic landscape types.
- 2.1.3 The major settlements in the study area are the towns of Porthmadog, Tremadog, Minffordd, Penrhyndeudraeth, Maentwrog, Ffestiniog and Blaenau Ffestiniog, with smaller settlements at Rhyd, Llanfrothen, Croesor and Tanygrisiau. The north-east part of the area is dominated by the massive remains of slate-quarrying surrounding Blaenau Ffestiniog, while the south-western part of the area comprises the reclaimed land of Traeth Mawr and the nineteenth-century towns of Porthmadog and Tremadog. Most of the area in between is rural, characterised by low-lying river floodplain, woodland (unusual for north-west Wales), varied field patterns, as well as limited tracts of high mountain wilderness.

### 2.2 Acknowledgements

- 2.2.1 The authors are grateful to several people for their contributions to this project. Colleagues within and outside the Trust offered helpful advice throughout, especially those involved in the informal 'characterisation working party' comprising the WATs, Cadw and CCW. Judith Alfrey provided useful information on buildings, and Kate Geary and Nina Steele provided the SMR data in a number of formats. Marianne Longley prepared the figures and Nina Steele the maps. The work was carried out, and the report compiled, by Dafydd Gwyn, Margaret Mason and David Thompson.

### 2.3 Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this report.

CCW	Countryside Council for Wales
DRO	Dolgellau Record Office
GAT	Gwynedd Archaeological Trust
GIS	Geographic Information System
HLC	historic landscape characterisation
JMHRs	<i>Journal of the Merioneth Historical Record Society</i>
NLW	National Library of Wales
PRO	Public Record Office
SMR	Sites and Monuments Record
TCHS	<i>Transactions of the Caernarvonshire Historical Society</i>
THSC	<i>Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion</i>
UDP	Unitary Development Plan
UWB	University of Wales, Bangor
WATs	Welsh Archaeological Trusts

### 3 Evolving historic characterisation methodology

- 3.1 Historical landscape characteristics are the tangible evidence of the activities and habits of the people who occupied, developed, used and shaped the land to serve human needs in the past; they reflect the beliefs, attitudes, traditions and values of these people. They include the physical remains of all aspects of human activities and exploitation in the past (above and below ground, known and potential), and our understanding, interpretation and even perception of those remains. They may reflect a variety of activities occurring at one time, or evolving functions in different periods of time.
- 3.2 The Countryside Commission (in its document *Views from the Past*, 1996) states that as managers we should be concerned with the historic character of the present landscape, and not with the study of the past for its own sake. It places the idea of 'historic landscape character' at the centre of this concept.
- 3.3 Characterisation is defined as *the process of identifying and defining the particular characteristics which make each area distinctive*, and is rapidly emerging as a sound basis for describing, understanding and managing the environment. It is the great depth of human activity which underpins much of that which we feel is important about locality and landscape, and helps give an area its local distinctiveness. Historic landscape characterisation sets out to establish the historic depth within the modern landscape by identifying its principal historic components.
- 3.4 The term 'historic character' is generally preferred to 'historic landscape', as it is now accepted that all landscape is historic in that it reflects, to a greater or lesser degree, the processes which have occurred in history and which have formed its present appearance.
- 3.5 At present there is no standard, accepted methodology for establishing the historical character of landscape, but recent work in Wales has suggested that a practical approach based on considering the evidence as a series of themes may provide an answer. At a landscape level, what is significant in historical terms might include field boundary patterns (whether they are irregular or regular, their size, date *etc.*); settlement patterns (whether scattered or nucleated, date of origin *etc.*); the relict remains of earlier periods which are to be found in upland or marginal landscapes; the effect of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century estates on the landscape; the impact of industry, military installations and so on.
- 3.6 The dominant historic themes or patterns in a locality help define local historic character. The combination of these characteristics give an area its local distinctiveness, and it is the definition of areas of local distinctiveness which leads to character areas.
- 3.7 The process of characterisation can be briefly summarised as -
- |  |   |                    |
|--|---|--------------------|
| (one or several) components                | → | dominant patterns  |
| (one or more) dominant patterns            | → | coherent character |
| coherent character (with definable limits) | → | character area     |
| (several) character areas                  | → | local landscape    |
- 3.8 Characterisation is a practical tool intended to aid management in its broadest forms. It is essential, therefore, that the process identifies key historic landscape characteristics which are features and/or patterns that can actually be managed, and that the success of this management can be measured for monitoring purposes.
- 3.9 The reports emerging from characterisation work contain a number of elements. The first part of the report contains general information concerning the background to the project, the methodology employed, a glossary of terms and general management issues. The second part contains information relating to the specific area under study, including (a) a general historical introduction to the area divided thematically; (b) a description of each character area split into three parts (an historical background, key historic landscape characteristics and conservation and management priorities – accompanied by a map of the area and an illustration); and a select bibliography.



## 4 GIS-related *proformae*

- 4.1 This section contains instructions on filling in the GIS-linked recording forms created as part of the project. The form consists mainly of 'tick boxes' compatible with a table to be created (for example) in Mapinfo, and has now been standardised across Wales. This information is intended to be linked to GIS tables used by *LANDMAP*, and the form contains a number of fields which can be cross-referenced to any subsequent *LANDMAP* exercises.
- 4.2 The form is loosely divided into three parts – the first identifies the study area by name, number, project and location, and contains general information; the second is a list of historic landscape 'themes' which is intended to act both as a check-list and to ensure systematic recording (which can be transferred to a database) of all character areas to a certain level (the current list of themes is included in section 6 below); and the third relates to management issues.

### **PROJECT NO**

This simply records the individual project number each Trust assigns to the particular project (e.g. G1657).

### **AREA**

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

### **HLCA NO.**

This is simply a consecutive number (beginning at 1) assigned to areas within the project. In this case, PRNs have also been allocated to the areas and these are displayed at the top of the character area descriptions in this report.

### **HLCA NAME**

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

### **LOCATION**

A six figure central grid reference should be sufficient.

### **SUMMARY OF CHARACTER**

This should be succinct, preferably fewer than *c.* twenty words (e.g. for Caernarfon - *Roman fort, castle, walled medieval town, slate quay, sequence of housing stock*). This is intended as *aide-memoire* for writing the report.

### **GENERAL HISTORIC INTEREST**

This is simply a summary of the information contained below in the individual themes to sum up the principal historical interest in the area.

### **THEMES**

Boxes within each theme should be ticked where that element exists as a significant factor at landscape scale within an area. The ticked boxes will form the basis of the free-text description in the report: this description should refer to as many of the ticked boxes as is thought appropriate, and supply supporting information. An up-to-date list of themes is included below.

### **PRINCIPAL CURRENT LAND USES**

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

### **RECORDED BY / DATE**

Name of compiler and date, following standard practice.

#### ***KEY HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS***

This should be a simple list of the principal components within the area (for example - parkland, gentry houses, substantial farmsteads, limestone walls) which make it distinctive.

#### ***CONSERVATION PRIORITIES & MANAGEMENT***

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

## 5 Current themes in historic landscape characterisation

### SUBSISTENCE

#### AGRICULTURE (Field pattern)

- Unenclosed/open
- Evolved/irregular
- Regular (small)
- Regular (medium)
- Regular (large)
- Large enclosures
- Med. strips
- R+F
- Estate owned and improved
- Varied
- C20th post-war
- Other
- Not present/Unknown

#### AGRICULTURE (Field boundary)

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

#### FORESTRY

- Ancient woodland
- Other broadleaf woodland
- Plantation
- C20Forestry
- Scrub/unmanaged
- Coppice
- Charcoal burning
- Other
- Not present/Unknown

+ supporting information (date, historical associations, archaeological data *etc.*)

## ARCHAEOLOGY

### RELICT

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

### INDUSTRIAL

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

### BURIED

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

### MILITARY

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

+ supporting information (date, historical associations, archaeological data *etc.*)



## **BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

### **SETTLEMENT PATTERN**

Loosely dispersed scatter  
Dense scatter  
Clustered  
Ribbon  
Nucleated – planned  
Nucleated – organic  
Business/commercial  
Other  
Not present/Unknown  
Specify date (if relevant)

### **BUILDING TYPE**

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

### **PRINCIPAL BUILDING MATERIAL**

Stone – random  
Stone – coursed  
Clay/earth  
Wood  
Brick  
Concrete  
Other

### **PRINCIPAL ROOFING MATERIAL**

Slate  
Tile  
Thatch  
Stone tile  
Concrete tile  
Metal  
Other

### **ORNAMENTAL / LEISURE**

Deer park  
Parkland/garden  
Garden/park (C20)  
Tourism  
Sports facilities  
Hunting estate  
Other leisure

### **ECCLESIASTICAL**

Cemetery (medieval)  
Cemetery (modern)  
Church (medieval)  
Church (post medieval)  
Monastic  
Chapel (nonconformist)  
Other

+ supporting information (date, historical associations, archaeological data *etc.*)

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### COASTAL/MARITIME

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

### COMMUNICATION

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

### RESOURCES

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

+ supporting information (date, historical associations, archaeological data *etc.*)

## OTHER

### HISTORIC ASSOCIATIONS

Place-name  
Artistic  
Folklore/legend  
Events  
Literary  
Persons  
Other  
Not present/Unknown

+ supporting information (date, historical associations, archaeological data *etc.*)

## **6 Managing historic character**

### **6.1 Rural land-use change**

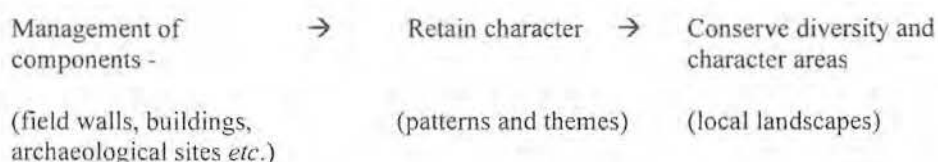
- 6.1.1 There have been many pressures on the rural environment and the countryside over the last 50 years as a result of changes in land use and shifting priorities for agriculture (the principal rural land use). Agricultural intensification and the maximisation of productivity were the priorities up until the mid-1980s, and as a consequence the character of rural landscapes changed dramatically during this period as hedgerows and trees were removed to create more efficient farming systems. Reclamation of the hills and marginal land led to the removal of significant upstanding archaeological sites and palimpsest landscapes.
- 6.1.2 Currently, due to agricultural over-production and a general greater awareness of and concern for the quality and protection of the rural environment, the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy provides a number of incentives to farmers and landowners to manage their land in an environmentally sensitive manner. The all-Wales Tir Gofal scheme includes provision for the conservation of certain habitats and the protection and enhancement of stone walls and boundaries, as well as sites and features of archaeological and historic landscape interest.
- 6.1.3 However, of the estimated 27,000 farms in Wales, only c. 600 farms per year are currently entering into such agreements, which leaves the vast majority outside any formal management scheme, and so many important archaeological sites and landscape features continue to be lost. The challenge therefore is to identify historic landscape priorities for conservation, protection, enhancement or even restoration both within the scheme and without it.
- 6.1.4 Three of the principal advantages of an approach using character areas are that (a) it is able to identify and map both local distinctiveness and national importance; (b) by identifying physical features which can be managed it can feed directly into land management and development planning strategies; and (c) it sets the management of individual features within their local landscape context, allowing emphasis to be placed on those features which best define local landscape character. It can assist in management plans by setting priorities for management and enhancement, highlighting intrinsic values, and encouraging links to multi-purpose management.
- 6.1.5 Characterisation is about management: if we are going to manage effectively, we must know what is there, what is important and what we want to do with it. Character areas can tell us what is distinctive (*i.e.* important both locally and nationally) about a particular area, and therefore what needs to be managed in order to retain that area's distinctiveness (character).

### **6.2 General considerations**

- 6.2.1 Positive management should be aimed at halting and, if necessary, reversing any trends that can be shown to be causing unacceptable damage to the historic landscape resource. If at the same time management can actually enhance the historic landscape, then that is even better. It is essential that such management is continuous, and contains provisions for monitoring and review.
- 6.2.2 One of the basic tenets underpinning management is that we should be aiming to continue (rather than halt) the evolution of the landscape: to do this we must first identify what is important and significant in historic landscape terms. It is the overall historic character of the present landscape (as evidenced in important and significant groupings and patterns) which we should aim to retain, but in order to do this we must concentrate management actions at the level of individual components. We must identify, conserve and enhance the local and regional historic diversity of our landscapes.
- 6.2.3 Agri-environment and other rural initiatives offer the opportunity to integrate the needs of the historic environment with modern land-use requirements to produce a workable, effective management system. More importantly, they should result in a working, viable landscape,

which should provide ways and means for the various human activities in an area to be integrated with each other and with conservation, at the same time providing opportunities for study, research, education, interpretation and quiet enjoyment.

- 6.2.4 This means that sites and features of historic landscape interest are positively managed for their own sake, rather than just left unimproved. It is important that the management of such features is integral to the management of the farm, or the scheme or park or whatever, as a whole, rather than an isolated, unrelated activity.
- 6.2.5 By working at the most basic level, management can be used to retain the general historic character of the area -



- 6.2.6 A management plan should specify conservation objectives for a site/area and how they will be monitored; it should identify points at which some response will be made if monitoring shows that a feature is changing; it should establish what activities/processes will be the subject of monitoring; it should establish what management of on-going activities is required; and identify the types of development or activities which might adversely affect the site.
- 6.2.7 Not all the sites and features which comprise the historic environment require the same detailed level of management: some sites can be adequately managed by the application of simple, general strategies, while more complex sites merit more detailed, site-specific, problem-led responses.

### 6.3 Mechanisms - general

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

- providing information to a number of wider initiatives, including contributing to our academic understanding of landscape, stimulating further research, raising public perception of the landscape, and the preparation of policy statements by public bodies.

## 6.4 Mechanisms - specific

- 6.4.1 *Tir Gofal* is open to applications from farmers throughout Wales. Within the scheme, payments will be made to farmers for observing 'codes of good environmental practice', one of which is care and enhancement of the historic environment. As the scheme is a 'whole farm' scheme, it allows archaeological management strategies sensitive to the character of the landscape as a whole to be integrated with farming practices. Characterisation is useful for monitoring purposes, as it sets out the wider historic environment framework within which individual farm plans will sit. It can also help prioritise management within a broader landscape context.
- 6.4.2 *Unitary Development Plans* address 'land use' issues and the UDPs for Snowdonia National Park and Gwynedd are currently being compiled, both of which take into account previous *LANDMAP* initiatives which have recently been completed.
- 6.4.3 *Countryside strategies* are the responsibility of local authorities (together with others), which have a general duty under section 1 of the Countryside Act, 1981, to have regard to the desirability of conserving the natural beauty and amenity of the countryside in the exercise of their functions relating to land. Countryside strategies principally address management of the countryside in areas outside settlement limits, but they are also a mechanism, at least in part, for implementing development plan policies. In Wales, such strategies are supported by CCW.

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

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

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

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

The point of sustainability is that it promotes change which meets the needs of the future whilst retaining the integrity of the historic environment. In order to do so decisions have to be made about the relative importance of different elements. Traditionally, evaluation has been based on individual sites, with particular examples being selected out for special protection (known as



scheduling). However, it is the sum total of historical and archaeological features, not individual sites, which gives landscape much its grain and it is often the more ordinary features that create 'local distinctiveness'. In order to ensure that decisions about the future of the historic environment are made on a secure basis, sound information needs to be gathered. Historic landscape characterisation work of the kind being carried out by the Trusts provides historic environment audits, from which decisions of this kind can be made.

- 6.4.5 **Biodiversity Action Plans** Snowdonia National Park has recently prepared a Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP): this will to a large extent be informed by the *LANDMAP* exercise recently carried out, which means that historic environment information is available. In addition, the Trust is communicating with the person responsible for the LBAP.

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

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

- 6.4.6 **Access** is a key issue in the countryside, if we are to enjoy the landscape and all its inherent interests and in turn engender understanding and respect for the countryside and the way it works. In addition to the rights of way network, the Countryside Rights of Way Act has been passed by Parliament. As many of the best-preserved and most fragile palimpsest archaeological sites and landscapes lie within areas to which there will shortly be greater public access, this has potential implications for archaeological management.

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

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

- 6.4.7 **Tourism** The Wales Tourist Board (WTB) has the strategic responsibility for encouraging people to visit Wales and for the provision of tourist facilities. In recent years tourism has become one of the most important growth sectors of the economy. Unitary authorities all have a tourism strategy of some description, and historic characterisation has a part to play in sustainable 'green tourism' in that it can help identify local distinctiveness which can be used both to attract visitors (by way of advertising), create atmosphere and to inform quality initiatives such as local walks, guides and other recreational activities. It can also direct visitors to areas with a robust historic environment, and away from those which are particularly fragile.
- 6.4.8 **Management agreements** In addition, local authorities have the ability (under section 39 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981) to enter into management agreements with landowners. This is an area which could be explored further from the historic environment perspective, as such agreements could cover not only individual monuments but also historic landscape characteristics (such as boundary types).
- 6.4.9 **Other local authority programmes** Local authorities have programmes for economic development, highways maintenance, environmental education and coastal protection. These would all benefit from the information which is being compiled through the characterisation projects, and, in the other direction, the safeguarding of the historic environment would benefit from those drawing up these programmes having direct access to historic landscape

characterisation data. In fact, information at this broad level would probably be more useful than detailed, site-specific SMR data.

- 6.4.10 **Forestry Commission** Information from characterisation projects will be invaluable in contributing to national and regional indicative forestry strategies, indicating where new proposals for planting are likely to be acceptable (or unacceptable) from an historic environment perspective. On a day to day basis, it can provide information at a landscape level which can inform proposals for new planting. It will be particularly useful when considering proposals under any of the challenge schemes.
- 6.4.11 **Environment Agency** is responsible for producing Local Environment Action Plans (LEAPs) and Catchment Management Plans (CMPs). The historic environment does not have a high profile in either of these, and both could therefore benefit from information which characterisation can provide.
- 6.4.12 **Other bodies** Historic landscape characterisation information can be used to educate and inform a wide range of organisations and individuals including statutory agencies, voluntary bodies (RSPB, Woodland Trust, North Wales Wildlife Trust, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, National Trust) town councils, community councils, farming unions and others. It is our experience that often it is easier to explain the importance of, and inherent interest of, the historic environment by using historic characterisation, than by the more traditional means of individual archaeological sites and excavations.

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



## 7 Glossary of keywords and expressions

### 7.1 Definitions

#### *Character*

the overall impression created by an area of landscape which is susceptible to being described

#### *Characterisation*

the process of identifying and defining the particular characteristics which makes different areas of landscape distinctive

#### *Character area*

is where component elements form dominant patterns to allow the definition of an area which can be clearly described: historic character areas are either

a) areas which embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or theme, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction: or

b) areas which show organisation of space either during one particular period or through time. This may be visible in the arrangement of fields or siting of settlements; or a pattern of land-use which represents traditional practices unique to a community; or in the sheer density of remains relating to either a single theme/period or succession of periods/themes; or the grouping together of buildings *etc* which are distinctive in style, design or method of construction; or a transportation system reflecting an important innovation in engineering.

#### *Coherent character*

where the components and patterns across an area of landscape are consistent, coherent character can be defined which can lead to character areas

#### *Component*

the most basic building blocks of the historic landscape, including walls, farms, cottages, archaeological monuments *etc.*, which, when combined, form dominant patterns

#### *Dominant patterns*

patterns formed by components such as field walls which are visually dominant in an area: the spread of a single dominant pattern, or the coincidence of two or more, leads to coherent character

#### *Element*

another word for component (preferred)

#### *Evaluation*

The process of attaching value (non-monetary) to a particular area of landscape, usually by reference to an agreed set of criteria in the context of the assessment

#### *Feature*

another word for component (preferred)

#### *Historic landscape*

the physical remains in the current landscape of the evidence for past human exploitation of the environment over time

#### *Relict*

historic landscape components which are no longer in use are described as relict for management purposes

## 7.2 Process of characterisation

This can be briefly summarised as -

(several) components → dominant patterns

(one or more) dominant patterns → coherent character

coherent character (with definable limits) → character area

(several) character areas → local landscape

## 7.3 Levels at work

<i>level</i>	<i>action</i>
landscape	strategic policies, overviews (national)
character areas	management policies - LANDMAP, UDPs, countryside strategies (regional)
(coherent character	stage of characterisation (general management guidelines))
patterns/groupings	characterisation is undertaken at this level (local)
components	define what's important/typical & manage landscape components (site specific)

## 7.4 Useful descriptive terms

### *presence*

conspicuous, evident, missing

### *scale*

open, exposed, enclosed, secluded, confined, intimate, small scale, medium scale, large scale

### *diversity*

uniform, simple, diverse, complex

### *unity*

unified, ordered, interrupted, fragmented, chaotic, rambling, structured, organic

### *balance*

harmonious, balanced, discordant, chaotic

### *enclosure*

confined, enclosed, open, exposed

### *texture*

smooth, textured, rough, very rough

### *colour*

monochrome, muted, colourful, garish

### *movement*

remote, vacant, peaceful, active

*form*

straight, angular, curved, sinuous

*stimulus*

boring, bland, interesting, invigorating

*other*

palimpsest, aesthetic value, visual amenity, educational potential, sense of place, distinctive character, common character, historically complex, domesticated character, essentially wild

## **Part B**

### **Information specific to the Vale of Ffestiniog**

## 8 Historical processes and background

### 8.1 Agriculture

- 8.1.1 The area lies within the former medieval commote of Ardudwy Uwch Artro, and contains little in the way of known prehistoric archaeology (see below) or medieval settlement. The present day agricultural landscape has therefore evolved in a very different way from parts of Gwynedd (where previous characterisation exercises have been undertaken). Much of the area is unsuitable for agriculture (being in large part land recently-reclaimed from the sea, or steep, heavily wooded slopes, industrial landscape or wild mountain tops), and agricultural land is restricted to the valley bottom, some of the hill slopes and an extent on the edge of the area around Llan Ffestiniog.
- 8.1.2 There are slight signs of pre-modern field patterns in Cwm Bowydd, below Blaenau Ffestiniog, and at the bottom end of Cwm Teigl (where there are recorded hut group settlements, and there are a number of sub-medieval houses in the area (such as Gelli, Dduallt, Dol y Moch, and Bryn Mawr), but on the whole the field patterns show the signs of having been created by small estates in the post-medieval period, when second rank landowners like the Oakeley family and local squireens like Tan y Manod and Dduallt, as well as the johnny-come-latelies of Madocks and the Williams-Ellis family, owned most of the land in the area.
- 8.1.3 The influence of powerful landowning families remains very evident in the landscape. The only established noble family to own much land within the study area were the Wynnes of Bodfean and of Glynllifon, ennobled as the Lords Newborough from 1787, when their influence in the county was waning. Gentry estates whose centres lay outside the study area included most notably Wynne of Peniarth, while lesser, but resident, gentry included the Annwyl family of Parc, the Williams family of Brondanw, Madocks of Tremadoc, the Oakeley family of Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog, as well as the industrialists and professional men who set themselves up as landowners and developers in the nineteenth century, notably Samuel Holland and David Williams of Castell Deudraeth.
- 8.1.4 Industrialists like Sam Holland and the Turners/Cassons did not try to set themselves up as landed gents within the area (Holland set himself up at Caerdeon near Barmouth, Turners established themselves near Caernarfon, Cassons went to London), whereas landowners like Oakeley, Newborough and Wynne of Peniarth rented out their quarries for the most part, unlike Penrhyn and Dinorwic.
- 8.1.5 On the whole the scattered farms are large, stone-built concentrations of buildings, mostly dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The houses are generally impressive buildings, and while earlier associated buildings (barns and cowsheds) are also stone-built, there is also considerable use of corrugated iron (often painted grey). There are several big former-Oakeley model farms near Maentwrog, on the banks of the Dwyryd, one of which (Plas Tan y Bwlch home farm) has a huge octagonal horse-whim shed.
- 8.1.6 The photograph of area 2 contains a typical example of the 'upland' farms. Most field boundaries are stone walls (usually made of small, flat slabs laid horizontally, often with slate wire-carriers on their tops), and the fields are large and irregular in shape. There are also numerous examples of well-built stone field barns strategically placed in the outer fields (for example at Cae Glas, near Croesor, which is listed).
- 8.1.7 There are none of the dual-economy landscapes evident in Caernarfonshire, despite extensive industrialisation around Blaenau Ffestiniog: although arguably the early settlement of Penrhyndeudraeth is comparable (a mixture of boating, fishing and farming), there are no apparent signs of this in the modern landscape. Also, partly as a result of this, there are few abandoned and derelict farms: most appear to be relatively large and prosperous.
- 8.1.8 One of the largest expanses of farmed land is the whole of the Morfa between Porthmadog and Garreg (see also below). Here, layout of fields is dictated by the need for drainage, and as well as ditches, earth banks and some stone walls exist.

- 8.1.9 One of the most important aspects of the local economy in the early post-medieval period was to do with the growing and felling of timber, and this aspect is covered in a separate section.

## 8.2 Woodland

- 8.2.1 Although Ffestiniog is traditionally associated with the quarrying of slate, and grew to be one of the most productive slate areas of the world, quarrying came comparatively late to the parish, probably from about 1760 onwards. In the eighteenth century the felling of timber formed a more important part of the local economy, and though documentary sources typically have far more to do with the sale and transport of timber than with the management of the woodlands themselves, enough evidence has survived to give some indication of the scope of the trade and the sources exploited.

- 8.2.2 Timber – hardwoods, especially oak – was being exported from the heavily-wooded slopes not only of Ffestiniog and Maentwrog but also of the neighbouring parishes of Llanfrothen and Llandecwyn. Though the trade may have begun earlier, the first record dates from 1739, and concerns the Pengwern estate, when it was specified that timber to the value of £400 was to be felled.<sup>1</sup> There is a specific reference to timber-felling at Coed Cymerau in the *Journeys* of Sir Richard Colt Hoare in 1801, when he describes making his way from Tan y Bwlch to Cwmorthin through Cymerau (nearer to Ffestiniog):

*I continued my rough and Alpine track through some oak groves, in some of which the axe has lately been introduced; £900 of timber was cut last year and a considerable fall has been made in the present. It is a lamentable sight for a lover of picturesque scenery; in a few years little wood will be left in Merionethshire. During the few years [since 1797, when he first visited the area] I have been frequenting this county the havock has been great; several of my favourite groves which I have so often admired have already fallen, and I hear of more where speedy doom is impending. But the evil does not only arise from felling the wood but from not properly fencing them out when cut by which the young shoots and prospects of a future copse are totally annihilated. The woodland track, intermixed with small pastures, distant mountains etc. affords many pleasing points of view.<sup>2</sup>*

- 8.2.3 By the end of the eighteenth century, the Vale of Ffestiniog had suffered much deforestation. Already by 1763 it was reported of Merioneth that ‘this county has been much drained of her timber’,<sup>3</sup> and in 1788 it was reported that the stocks of oak in Caernarvonshire, Denbighshire, Merioneth and Flintshire had decreased by two-thirds.<sup>4</sup> An indication of the scale of the trade is the advertisements carried by local newspapers, which record sales of timber worth up to £900 a time. By the nineteenth century as many as 6,400 trees a year were offered for sale. Further pointers to the importance of the timber trade are the individuals who were clearly acting as timber merchants. Sometimes they are acknowledged as such; Owen David of Maentwrog is identified as a timber merchant in 1785,<sup>5</sup> and another had been married at Llanfrothen in 1749. Others carried on other trades. In 1749 the Ffestiniog blacksmith, for instance, bought £500 worth of timber at Llandecwyn, far more than he would need for his own use, and far more than he could have sold locally, even if he had had the means to transport it up the valley.
- 8.2.4 With the revival of shipbuilding in the northern part of Cardigan Bay in the late eighteenth century, local timber came to be needed in ever-greater quantities. This remained the case until the 1820s, when Porthmadog shipwrights began to use Mawddach timber instead, and later still supplies of Baltic and Canadian pine became available. Local mines and quarries were still small

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<sup>1</sup> UCNW Maenan 419; demise of Pengwern and estate, including Cymerau Isaf and Cymerau Uchaf, to John Garnons of Rhiwgoch, Merionethshire, gent., Edward Jones of Caernarvon, mercer, and David Prichard of Caernarvon, gent., who are instructed to sell ‘so much of the said Woods, underwoods & Timber as will raise the sum of four hundred pounds,’ dated 24 August 1739.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Richard Colt Hoare, *The Journeys of Sir Richard Colt Hoare through Wales and England 1793-1810*, ed. M.W. Thompson (Alan Sutton, 1983), p. 174.

<sup>3</sup> R. Fisher, *Heart of Oak, the British Bulwark* (1763), p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> *Third Report of Commissioners appointed to enquire into state of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues* (1788), p. 72.

<sup>5</sup> DRO Z/QS/M1785.



affairs, but burnt some timber in the smithies and some used timber as props. Some timber was probably burnt as firewood. Bark also formed an export, some doubtless going to local tanneries, but there was also considerable trade with tanneries in Ireland.<sup>6</sup>

- 8.2.5 By 1807 the Merioneth Quarter Sessions records confirm that local landowners were encouraging new plantations,<sup>7</sup> and sales of timber are recorded in the *North Wales Gazette* over the following years.<sup>8</sup> By 1816 a quay specifically dedicated to the export of timber is recorded at Cemlyn on the Dwyryd tidal estuary, a little way below Coed Cymerau.<sup>9</sup>
- 8.2.6 Little has survived in the way of estate documents or maps for Cymerau Isaf (one of the most important blocks of woodland in the valley) although one of these, dated 1802, shows plans for a proposed road from Lord Newborough's quarries at Blaenau Ffestiniog. It uses what was already an archaic convention, in which buildings and other features are shown as if in bird's eye view rather than in plan, and shows a small farm-house at Cymerau Isaf, but provides no information on the woodlands other than showing a wooded area immediately adjacent.<sup>10</sup> A map of 1813 shows the cottage to the south of Cymerau Isaf, r'Allt, without identifying it as such, but gives no details of Cymerau Isaf itself. The third, an 'ocular survey' of 1827 for what may be either a road or a railway, is equally uninformative.
- 8.2.7 Dr Michael Lewis has recently raised an intriguing possibility as a result of his researches into the history of the Ffestiniog area. At the foot of the hill on which Cymerau is situated is Rhyd y Sarn, now a private house. It is first attested on a Newborough estate map of 1802, which identifies it as 'The Great Factory', a designation which suggests a woollen mill.<sup>11</sup> Certainly, by 1841, it did function as such,<sup>12</sup> but the importance that the Newborough estate seems to have attached to building a road to Rhyd y Sarn (rather than to navigable water), implicit in the 1802 map, strongly suggests that it was connected with the slate trade, probably as a mill for sawing slabs. This would make it the oldest mechanical slate saw-mill in Wales, and hence the world, making use of the falls of the Afon Teigl, and perhaps the Goedol as well, to drive a water-wheel.
- 8.2.8 Dr Lewis suggests that the mill may have had an earlier history as a timber mill. Richard Morris, who owned the land on which the mill was built, witnessed the marriage of William Solomon, a partner in Diffwys slate quarry in the upper part of the parish, in 1779. Whilst Morris was overseer of the poor at the time, it is more likely that there was a business connection between the two men, and the possibility is that the mill was already in existence sawing slate slabs from Diffwys quarry. This possibility receives some slight confirmation from the existence of sawn gravestones in the area from 1775, though these could have been cut with a hand-operated saw. However, the thirty-five stones recorded could not have kept the mill in business, and the mill may have had a dual purpose, sawing timber with a vertical saw, and sawing slate with a reciprocating saw.
- 8.2.9 In 1761 one John Williams is found selling timber to a copper mine on the Migneint moors, and a John Williams is found selling deal for rebuilding a house locally in 1798, possibly another of the local timber merchants.<sup>13</sup>
- 8.2.10 G J Williams's *Hanes Plwyf Ffestiniog* includes amongst sons of the parish one John Williams y Factory who bought the Plas Tan y Bwlch library when it was sold.<sup>14</sup> There is no record of the sale of the library (which itself makes it likely that it took place earlier rather than later), but it is likely to have been between 1770, when the last Griffith died, and 1789, when the daughter of

<sup>6</sup> M.J.T. Lewis, *Sails on the Dwyryd* (Plas Tan y Bwlch, 1989) pp. 21-2 gives detailed references to the timber trade.

<sup>7</sup> DRO Z/QS/H18070

<sup>8</sup> E.g., 14 April 1808 p. 2 col. e, 16 March 1809 p. 3 col. a, 20 April 1809 p. 3 col. a, 2 August 1810 p. 3 col. b, 23 April 1812 p. 3 col. a, 6 August 1812 p. 3 col. b, 7 April 1814 p. 3 col. a, 12 May 1814 p. 2 col. d.

<sup>9</sup> DRO Z/DV/4/95.

<sup>10</sup> CRO XD2A 394.

<sup>11</sup> XD2A 394.

<sup>12</sup> Ffestiniog census, 1841.

<sup>13</sup> Notes passed to author from Dr Michael Lewis.

<sup>14</sup> G.J. Williams *Hanes Plwyf Ffestiniog* (Wrexham, 1881), p. 232

the house married William Oakeley. 'Factory', or Welsh *ffatri*, tends to mean a woollen mill, but there was no woollen mill in the area until the 1870s. It is therefore possible that John Williams was connected with Rhyd y Sarn in the 1770s or 1780s, and that it was already functioning as a timber mill. This would make it very early indeed for a mechanical, water-driven mill – it would be the first in Wales. But Rhyd y Sarn was in all probability the earliest slate-slab mill in Wales, and there is no inherent objection, in terms of available technology, to it having also been a pioneer of timber-sawing.

- 8.2.11 As against this theory, the Ffestiniog historian Steffan ab Owain believes that the John Williams referred to by G J Williams is a later individual, and that the 'Factory' by which he is identified was the fulling mill in Tan y Grisiau, elsewhere in the parish of Ffestiniog, which he built in the 1840s.<sup>15</sup>

### 8.3 Settlement

#### *Non-nucleated settlements*

- 8.3.1 In the medieval period, the area lay within the commote of Ardudwy Uwch Artro and comprised parts of the parishes of Llanfrothen, Penrhyndeudraeth, Llandecwyn, Maentwrog and Ffestiniog. According to the Merioneth Lay Subsidy Roll (1292-93) the parish of Penrhyndeudraeth was by far the most affluent of these (and indeed was, along with Llanegryn, the richest parish in the then-new Merioneth), followed by Llanfrothen (rated at less than half the value of Penrhyndeudraeth at 30-40 shillings per 1000 acres), Maentwrog (20-30 shillings), Llandecwyn (10-20 shillings) and then Ffestiniog which was the poorest parish in the whole of Merioneth (at less than 10 shillings). When one sees the different landscapes in these areas, this comes as no surprise. There are no population figures in the Roll for this area. There is no surviving evidence, beyond modern place-names, of the precise location and extent of these settlements.
- 8.3.2 A feature of the landscape of the study area, however, is the survival of substantial sub-medieval dwellings, formerly the centres of small estates, within comparatively isolated locations largely untouched by industrialisation. These include Ddualt (SH 6731 4182), the house associated with the small Ddualt estate, Dol y Moch (SH 6840 4191), between Maentwrog and Rhyd y Sarn, Parc (SH 6266 4397), the home of the Annwyl family, Pengwern Old Hall (SH 6991 4302) and Plas Bondanw. The prominent dwelling Plas Penrhyn (SH 5905 3790) was home for a while to Samuel Holland, where he was visited by his cousin Elizabeth Gaskell, and was later the last home of Bertrand Russell. Amongst his visitors there were Shastri (Nehru's successor) and A J Ayer. Plas Tan y Bwlch (SH 6555 4064), although no part of the present dwelling is earlier than the eighteenth century, also stands in a line of descent from the earlier demesne, possibly on or near the site of the present Oakeley Arms Hotel (SH 6604 4095). The present house is a rebuild in the early nineteenth century by William Oakeley of a house left incomplete by Robert Griffith at the time of his death in 1750.<sup>16</sup>
- 8.3.3 There is also considerable place-name and archaeological evidence for pre-Industrial dispersed settlement within the upland parts of the area. The prevalence of *hafod* place-names, especially in the area between Maentwrog and Croesor, suggests that the farms which bear them were originally the upland stock-stations of lowland settlements, and several classic 'long huts' have been found even as high up as around the Blaen y Cwm dam and by Llyn Stwlan.
- 8.3.4 Over much of the study area, the settlement pattern is one of dispersed farmsteads (see above). These are for the most part substantial, stone-built 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings in continued use by farming families: there are very few cottages or non-farm dwellings outside of the nucleated settlements. In some areas, particularly on the reclaimed Glaslyn estuary, 20<sup>th</sup> buildings have replaced the original farmhouses and extensive use has been made of modern farm structures, leaving only dilapidated nineteenth century byres and barns. There are several good examples of such farms in the lower part of Cwm Teigl (area 2).

<sup>15</sup> Steffan ab Owain, article forthcoming in *Rhamant Bro*, and personal communication.

<sup>16</sup> Gwyndaf Hughes, Merfyn Williams, *House on a Hill/Y Plas: Hanes Plas Tan y Bwlch a'i Bobl* (Penrhyndeudraeth, 1989), pp. 7-12.



### *Nucleated settlements*

- 8.3.5 As has already been mentioned, the 'settlements' (however they were defined and whatever they looked like) of the medieval period known from documentation were Llanfrothen, Penrhyndeudraeth and Maentwrog. Not surprisingly, for such a remote area, these would all have been accessible from the sea in the medieval period and still exist as nucleated settlements, of very different sizes and characters, today.
- 8.3.6 Llanfrothen is one of a number of very small nucleations in the area. Llanfrothen and Penmorfa churches (SH 6223 4117 and SH 5412 4028) are similarly situated on what would have been the edge of the estuary of the Afon Glaslyn, before the Traeth was reclaimed. Llanfrothen has no buildings of particular note. Garreg (SH 6137 4172) may also owe its origin to its position as a landing-point before the building of the cob. It contains a more interesting range of buildings, many of which are listed (see area 19). It is possible that the tiny village of Prenteg (SH 5857 4145) may also be connected with a pre-modern transport route, as it not only lies on the edge of the pre-1813 estuary but at the foot of a road that leads to Clennenau, Bryncir and Garn Dolbenmaen.
- 8.3.7 Penrhyndeudraeth (area 32), described in 1862 as 'a dismal village of a few houses scattered among heaps of muck and cockleshells' owes its origins to the fishing population which also came to be involved in the pre-railway slate-boating business. There was clearly an established community here in the early nineteenth century, and the nickname it acquired in this period, 'Cockletown', is still current. The solicitor David Williams (Dewi Heli, 1799-1869, Liberal MP for Merionethshire) acquired the site of the village in 1841 and began seriously to drain the marshes, and to build roads and houses, in 1855.<sup>17</sup> The introduction of passenger services on the railway in 1865 turned it increasingly into a Ffestiniog dormitory village.
- 8.3.8 Maentwrog's origin is probably due to the fact that it lies at the highest navigable point on the Dwyryd, and the point where the river is crossed by a several routes, including probably the Roman road which comes down from Tomen y Mur at the place known as Felinrhyd (see reference in area 8). For this reason, from the early-eighteenth century if not earlier, the immediate area became the entrepôt for the valley, with the export of timber, attested from 1739, but particularly after the development of the slate industry from the 1760s onwards.<sup>18</sup> The village itself is visible from the Oakeley family's Plas Tan y Bwlch home and was developed by them in the nineteenth century on the back of profits from the slate industry. The church (SH 6641 4055) and the vicarage (SH 6647 4067) date from around 1800,<sup>19</sup> and the village itself seems to have been constructed in its present form in the early and mid-nineteenth century. As with Plas Tan y Bwlch itself and its immediate environs, it is emphatically an exercise in creating a visually attractive settlement that reflected well on its owners, and its buildings preserve many decorative features and details. Its several chapels are all built in locations which makes them invisible from the Plas.
- 8.3.9 Tremadoc is an outstanding example of a planned urban community, created by William Alexander Madocks on land recovered from the Traeth Mawr by the first embankment, of 1800. As new build of the early nineteenth century, it established a pattern of regency-style architecture within the area that lasted well into the late nineteenth century. Amongst its claims to fame are the first classical façade Welsh chapel, based on Inigo Jones's design for the Convent Garden chapel in London, and the first Gothic revival church in Wales. The chapel remains in use, but the church is currently undergoing conversion to an arts centre. The buildings which form part of Madocks's original scheme survive, though in a number of cases the stonework has been obscured by pebble-dashing, and a late twentieth-century garage has been tacked on to the street front of the buildings on Dublin Road at SH 5611 4017. Madocks's own home, Tan yr Allt, later home to Shelley and to several generations of local quarry-owners, is a

<sup>17</sup> D.G. Lloyd Hughes, 'David Williams of Castell Deudraeth, 1799-1869' in *TCHS* 29 (1968), p. 45, pp. 48-50, quoting UWB Bangor ms 1236 and NLW Papurau Bob Owen, essay by Evan Dafydd, *Penrhyndeudraeth fel yr 'oedd ac fel y mae*, c. 1880-85.

<sup>18</sup> Lewis pp. 17-22

<sup>19</sup> Gwyndaf Hughes, Merfyn Williams, *House on a Hill/Y Plas: Hanes Plas Tan y Bwlch a'i Bobl* (Penrhyndeudraeth, 1989), pp. 13-26.

regency adaptation of an existing building, and recently functioned as the Steiner-Waldorf school. An active local regeneration group, Cyfeillion Cadw Tremadoc, has been instrumental in preserving the village's architectural character.

- 8.3.10 There are two nucleated urban settlements within the study area, Blaenau Ffestiniog (SH 6980 4592) and Porthmadog (Portmadog) (SH 5686 3869). Both are entirely creations of the nineteenth century, the one quarrying, the other shipping, slate. Porthmadog is built largely on land reclaimed by Madocks's cob of 1808-1813.
- 8.3.11 Blaenau Ffestiniog (area 1) was at one time the largest town in the former county of Merioneth, reaching a population of 11,435 in 1901.<sup>20</sup> It is a horseshoe-shaped settlement built on a natural shelf near the break of slope at the head of the valley – the *blaenau* of the parish of Ffestiniog. The settlement itself extends from Tan y Gisiau on the west, through Glan y Pwll and Rhiwbryddir, to the centre of the town and thereafter through Manod and Congl y Wal.
- 8.3.12 There is no evidence of pre-industrial settlement within the area of the present town, though the substantial farmhouses of Gelli and Cwm Bowydd survive just to the south of the town. Settlement for the quarrymen and their families is evident from the 1820s, but it was not until the expansion in the boom years of the 1860s that these began to coalesce into a recognisable town, and even now the different parts of Blaenau retain special loyalties and identities. Development seems to have been carried out by the quarry tenants, many of whom became established local figures, with the encouragement of the landowners. The process was assisted by the establishment of building societies and, in the 1870s, the influx of professional house-builders, who conferred on Blaenau its distinctive and substantial three- or four-storey houses. Though there are a number of more traditional vernacular dwellings such as are common in the slate-quarrying areas of Arfon, in Blaenau these are comparatively few – some are to be found at SH 6976 4627 and others at Tan y Gisiau may represent the earlier houses put up under lease from Samuel Holland. In 1825 the manager of Lord Quarry on Glynllifon land built an uncertain number of *cottages ornées*, consisting a four dwellings around a central chimney, such as were to be found elsewhere on the estate. One of these survives at SH 7027 4605.<sup>21</sup>
- 8.3.13 The period 1820 to the mid-1860s is dominated by ribbon developments, either individual dwellings or short rows. This pattern survives very clearly at Tan y Gisiau, where Holland's earlier houses were built alongside the railway, opened in 1836, so that goods could be unloaded for the residents from the slow-moving horse-trains. When locomotives were introduced in 1863, trains would only stop in the station, with the result that the area round the goods-yard (SH 6840 4495) and the road became the focus of building.<sup>22</sup> Longer rows of terraces are evident in the ribbon development of Rhiwbryddir and Llwyn y Gell and Manod to Congl y Wal.
- 8.3.14 Thereafter development is generally grid-pattern, especially marked on Glynllifon land but evident elsewhere, until the creation of social housing in the 1960s. In the 1860s Glynllifon began leasing out parcels of land in central Blaenau for building, and over the following years a grid-pattern of streets emerged.<sup>23</sup> Professional builders moved in, building substantial houses, often on slopes, which facilitated the construction of cellars, in which less well-off families could be crammed.<sup>24</sup> The estate initiated a similar development between Church Street and the Ffestiniog Railway in 1874, which was from the start designed by engineers and architects with a comprehensive drainage system in mind,<sup>25</sup> and two years later the estate began to lay out a more middle-class development south of the church and the market hall.
- 8.3.15 Barracks within the quarries appear from the mid-nineteenth century onwards nevertheless were no different from the vernacular or 'industrial vernacular' dwellings which formed the growing town lower down, and in many cases, by no means all, clearly housed complete families in

<sup>20</sup> Jones, 1994.

<sup>21</sup> Caernarfon Record Office XD2/12699, p. 52. These are known in Welsh as '*r unicorn*', 'the one chimney', which by a process of misunderstanding has given the name 'Runcorn Street' to the lane on which the surviving example stands.

<sup>22</sup> D.O. Hughes, *Canrif o Hanes: sef Hanes yr Achos Methodistiaidd yn Nhanygrisiau, 1809-1909* (Blaenau Ffestiniog, 1909), p. 24.

<sup>23</sup> CRO XD2/11051-?

<sup>24</sup> Jones 1988.

<sup>25</sup> CRO XD2/11044.

separate units.<sup>26</sup> At Maenofferen, dwellings were put up to house specialist miners from Anglesey driving the levels in the new workings.<sup>27</sup> Places such as these, even if they were initially built on open hill-slopes, were soon surrounded by heaps of slate rubble and the omnipresent quarry railways.

- 8.3.16 Much of the social infrastructure of the nineteenth century survives. The British School at Dolgarregddu, dating from 1846, now the Masonic Hall (SH 7011 4595) is the oldest of the surviving purpose-built school buildings. However, a number of the town's many substantial and ornate chapels have been demolished or converted, and the future of all but a handful of the remainder must be in doubt. A feature of the town, particularly of the middle-class development initiated by the Glynllifon estate south of the church and the market hall in 1878, is the way in which an Independent chapel and a Calvinistic Methodist chapel were built fronting onto the ornamental square and 'Recreation Park' in this development, just as Anglican churches did in earlier planned townscapes. Nonconformist propriety is also evidence in the ornamental 'Cocoa Rooms' on Church Street (now the British Legion – SH 6987 4597) erected in 1878-9,<sup>28</sup> and in the absence of public houses in Tan y Grisiau, owing to Samuel Holland's teetotal principles.
- 8.3.17 The Oakeley hospital at Llwyn y Gell (SH 6964 4636), opened in 1848 is an excellent example of an industrial hospital of the mid-nineteenth century, probably based on the hospital erected by Colonel Pennant for the Penrhyn quarrymen between 1841 and 1843. It now a private dwelling.
- 8.3.18 The substantial Market Hall of 1864 (SH 6979 4594), which includes reading rooms and an Assembly room, is currently undergoing a renaissance as a community centre.<sup>29</sup> Department stores and specialist shops, any of which began to make their appearance in the 1860s, for the most part survive, but a considerable number closed in the 1990s.
- 8.3.19 The town of Porthmadog (area 10) came into being as a consequence of the draining of the Traeth Mawr by William Alexander Madocks and the unintended creation of a harbour by the newly-channeled Afon Glaslyn where it passed through the sluice gates. The first public wharves were built in 1825, and thereafter a series of wharves was built by individual quarry companies along the shore almost as far as Borth y Gest. The opening of the Festiniog Railway from the quarries to the sea in 1836 largely brought about the end of the previous system of carting down to the quays along the Dwyryd whence the slates were boated to Ynys Cyngar for transfer to sea-going vessels.
- 8.3.20 Though the earliest trackway across the newly-reclaimed land wound its way to the east of the present High Street, by 1841 at least this had been straightened out, and the mineral railway to Tremadoc, along which Madock Street was later to be built, was also in existence. These two transport axes bequeathed the town its distinctive diamond pattern street plan. Dwellings are evident on maps from as early as the 1830s, and developed over the next decades in part due to the management of the Tremadoc estate by the solicitor David Williams. A considerable number of structures survive from Porthmadog's days as a port. The development of harbour facilities is reflected in a surviving sail-loft, and in a surviving fragment of the Glaslyn foundry incorporated into Tesco's supermarket. The Glaslyn foundry buildings were demolished in the 1960s to make way for the Inland Revenue office. Griffith Williams's school of navigation survives amongst the substantial warehouses at Grisiau Mawr, situated in the loft of Cornhill Pencei, above Casson's bank. Visible evidence of the area's cultural contacts with the wider world is to be found in the names of Porthmadog pubs such as the *Australia* and *The Ship on Launch* (where the launchings of new ships were posted).
- 8.3.21 Unusually for a port town, Porthmadog has never had much in the way of housing for dock-workers, nor did it ever acquire the underworld of brothels and seedy taverns which were to be found in sea-ports worldwide. In part, this is because of the fact that Porthmadog vessels were crewed and captained by local men, and they had much of the share of the trade. Architecturally it is dominated by substantial nineteenth-century dwellings erected for the local middle classes – not only the captains but also the shipping agents, administrators, lawyers, quarry officials. These preserve many distinctive features. The overall conception is regency, even when the

<sup>26</sup> Census details, parish of Ffestiniog.

<sup>27</sup> Ffestiniog census, 1871.

<sup>28</sup> Jones 1988.

<sup>29</sup> ab Owain, 1995.



buildings are much later in date, and a very common feature is the pattern of ornamental drip mouldings. Since the end of the slate trade, Porthmadog has become an attractive option for the comparatively wealthy yachting fraternity, apparent in the construction of the unattractive maisonettes on the quays in the 1960s.

- 8.3.22 A distinctive and unusual (unique?) settlement is the village of Portmeirion (area 7), which perpetuates the tradition of whimsy inaugurated by Madocks, and to some extent sustained by David Williams. Portmeirion is situated on Bron Eryri, part of Williams's purchase in 1843, and in the 1850s he converted the house into a castellated mansion which he renamed Castell Deudraeth.<sup>30</sup> A map of 1836 shows a foundry and a quay on the site of the present hotel.<sup>31</sup>
- 8.3.23 The village of Portmeirion and its associated gardens were established in the 1920s by the architect Clough Williams Ellis. Often described as 'Italianate', Williams-Ellis's own description of it as 'a home for fallen buildings' is perhaps more apposite, a heterogeneous collection of buildings removed from various locations all over Europe and re-erected. There are in addition a number of pre-Clough Williams-Ellis buildings which have been 'cloughed-up'. The formal village garden is based around the Piazza, and is largely a creation of the period post-1925, though some trees may survive from earlier.

#### *Building types and material*

- 8.3.24 Although most of the housing stock reflects the growth of the slate industry between 1800 and 1900, there is nevertheless a considerable amount of pre-Industrial building stock in the area.
- 8.3.25 The area contains some significant sub-medieval houses. For example, Cae Glas, near Croesor, was originally a stone-built 16<sup>th</sup> century storeyed end chimney house, originally with cross-passage plan and with survivals of the late medieval open hall tradition, prototypical of the developed Snowdonia end chimney type. It has later service wing to the rear. Wern is a 16<sup>th</sup> century gentry house. Hafodty, on the Brondanw estate, is of rubble construction with massive quoins and a pronounced boulder plinth. It has earlier 17<sup>th</sup> century origins, possibly of a longhouse type, with later re-modellings. Parc, ancient seat of the Anwyls, is discussed in detail elsewhere (area 22), but is an almost-unique (except for the 17<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse of Plas Newydd, near Penrhynedeudraeth - also built for the Anwyls) unit-planned complex of which the main house is externally dated to 1671. Plas Brondanw (area 6) is a fine 17<sup>th</sup> century gentry house, restored and partly redesigned by Clough Williams-Ellis in the 1950s. Other stone-built 17<sup>th</sup> century farmhouses include Ty Obry and Old Ynysfor.
- 8.3.26 There are also several small, late 18<sup>th</sup> century cottages, either single or in small terraces, situated at the edges of some settlements such as Garreg and on the Plas Brondanw estate.
- 8.3.27 Other listed buildings include several bridges, mostly 19<sup>th</sup> century, a late 18<sup>th</sup> limekiln near the Afon Maesgwm, an 18<sup>th</sup> century fulling mill at Moelwyn, and other agricultural buildings such as the former stable ranges at Plas Newydd and Wern, a cart shed at Ty Mawr, and the agricultural ranges at Ty Obry and Old Ynysfor. Particularly, the area contains many stone-built barns, some of which are listed. There are two near Cae Glas, one of which is 17<sup>th</sup> century and incorporates or re-uses two pairs of full crucks (possibly from a pre-decessor to Cae Glas), and another at Parc.
- 8.3.28 The types of industrial housing vary considerably. Blaenau Ffestiniog's housing stock is not particularly homogenous but much more industrial, for all their use of local stone, than the rural vernacular dwellings which characterise Caernarvonshire slate-quarrying areas. Unlike other slate-quarrying areas, such as around Cilgwyn/Nantlle, there is no evidence for mixed economy settlement: here, the industrial housing emerges as terraced housing. Though the professional house-builders who moved in in the 1860s and '70s are said to have been Cardiganshire men, there is no obvious Cardiganshire influence. A distinctive feature is the pattern of double-fronted house with three pointed dormers, a design which can be seen elsewhere within the study area along the Ffestiniog Railway corridor.

<sup>30</sup> Lloyd Hughes, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.

<sup>31</sup> Lewis 62

- 8.3.29 In general, Porthmadog's attractive terraces and its *tai capteiniaid* ('sea-captains' houses') are constructed in a fairly standard Georgian vernacular style, typical of 19<sup>th</sup> century Welsh towns, even those constructed in the middle or late 19<sup>th</sup> century, suggesting that the builders were local men who took their cue from Madocks-era structures such as Ynys y Towyn and those in Tremadoc itself.
- 8.3.30 Despite the area's comparative accessibility by the mid-nineteenth century, it is clear that considerable use continued to be made of local building materials. The grey Ordovician slate of Ffestiniog is practically universal as a roofing material, and has been extensively used for sills, steps and architectural detailing, as well, in some cases, as weather protection by being attached to battens on walls. There is some use of specially shaped roofing slates in more prestigious commercial buildings. The former toll house at the north-western end of the Cob (SH 5711 3848) is unusual in that it is not only slate-clad on the walls but is one of the very few buildings left which preserves the patented interlocking slate ridge-tiles devised by the Moses Kellow, manager of Parc and Croesor Quarries. Slate-slab fences are not common, although there are some excellent examples around Croesor.
- 8.3.31 Whilst there is some variety in the stones for walling, it is clear that much of this was sourced locally. Many of the older buildings in and around Porthmadog make use of the Lingula flag quarried at Porthmadog harbour and at Tu hwnt i'r Bwlch. The same material is used at in the larger and more prestigious dwellings – Castell Deudraeth (SH 5930 3771), and Plas Brondanw (SH 6164 4228) for example. The Regency-inspired Cwmorthin Quarry reading room at Tan y Grisiau (SH 6848 4502) may also be built of this material. Plas Tan y Bwlch and buildings on the estate, including the village of Maentwrog, the Oakeley Arms Hotel and the larger farm-houses, are constructed of a similar stone quarried at Gelli Grin. This could produce very long blocks, such as can be seen in Maentwrog church and which form the uprights in some of the distinctive field-barns, especially around Ffestiniog.<sup>32</sup>
- 8.3.32 The Minffordd quarry (area 31), though it now only produces crushed stone, was originally worked as a sett quarry, and it is quite possible that some of the squared granite blocks used in many of the nineteenth century came from here rather than from Penmaenmawr or Trefor. The quarry at Blaenau Ffestiniog latterly worked by the Groby Granite Company (SH 6948 4529) may also have supplied Blaenau Ffestiniog with building stone in the nineteenth century, though official sources suggest that it only worked from 1901 to the 1930s.<sup>33</sup> Another quarry was at Moel Ystradau (SH 6827 4391), worked in the twentieth century by Brookes' of Halifax.

#### 8.4 Parks and gardens

- 8.4.1 The study-area is particularly rich in gardens: – Tan yr Allt (area 4), Plas Tan y Bwlch (area 5), Plas Brondanw (area 6), Portmeirion (area 7), Wern (area 8) and Parc (area 22) all appear in the Cadw Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales Part 1: Parks and Gardens. Plas Brondanw is registered Grade I and three of the other five are Grade II\*, indicating that gardens in the area are not only numerous but of exceptional quality.
- 8.4.2 The oldest of the six gardens is Parc, which is neglected but has massive terraces probably of the seventeenth century. Tan-yr-Allt and Tan-y-Bwlch are basically nineteenth century gardens, although Tan-yr-Allt was laid out by William Madocks right at the beginning of the century in the 'Romantic' style and Tan-y-Bwlch has more of the 'Picturesque' characters typical of the other end of the century, though elements date back to the eighteenth century. Wern is a garden of the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, incorporating elements designed by Thomas Manson, and Portmeirion and Plas Brondanw are both twentieth - century gardens designed by Clough Williams-Ellis. The former was laid out to provide a suitably romantic setting for the fantasy village, incorporating elements of the nineteenth - century garden of Aber-lâ (now the Portmeirion Hotel), and the latter was Williams-Ellis's own garden, made to please himself. The six gardens thus cover a wide time spectrum as well as being of unusually high quality.

<sup>32</sup> Gwyndaf Hughes, Merfyn Williams, *House on a Hill/Y Plas: Hanes Plas Tan y Bwlch a'i Bobl* (Penrhyndeudraeth, 1989), pp. 16.

<sup>33</sup> J.I.C. Boyd, *The Festiniog Railway* vol. 2 (Oakwood, 1977), p. 485.

## 8.5 Industrial

- 8.5.1 The chief industry of the study area was the quarrying of slate, centered on Blaenau Ffestiniog (area 13), the third most productive slate-producing area in Wales (after Penrhyn and Dinorwic), though there were also significant quarries in Cwm Croesor (area 12) and smaller workings around Tremadoc and Portreuddyn. The fact that the Ordovician veins lie at an angle of approximately 30° to the horizontal has had a profound effect on the industrial landscape, obliging quarrymen and managers to exploit the rock in underground chambers, at least until the advent of substantial earthmoving equipment in the 1970s, which led to a reversion to open-air workings. This means that in terms of the quarries' industrial archaeology, instead of the open terraced slopes of Penrhyn and Dinorwic, or the pits with the huge bastions for chain inclines which are evident in Nantlle, they can appear as piles of waste slate in which mill buildings nestle, and in which the open extraction areas are sometimes comparatively small.
- 8.5.2 From 1970 onwards the remaining quarries either closed down or adapted to new methods and to opencasting, with the single exception of Maenofferen (SH 714- 466- C), latterly owned by Greaves Welsh Slate of Llechwedd Quarry. This is now out of use, but preserves its network of tramways and inclines as well as a large mill with a water-wheel pit.
- 8.5.3 Other quarries survive as relict landscapes, though with little in the way of machinery. The massive Oakeley Quarry tip (see photograph for area 13) dominates the town of Blaenau Ffestiniog, and with its inclines, drumhouses and zig-zag steps forms a potent visible reminder of the town's origins in the slate industry.<sup>34</sup>
- 8.5.4 A number of semi-independent slate mill sites also survive, including Ffatri Rhyd y Sarn (SH 6909 4230), which has at various times been a woolen mill, a timber saw-mill and one of the very earliest slate-slab mills.
- 8.5.5 There was some quarrying for stone – Penrhyndeudraeth, still in active production (area 31), and several others long closed, including the Groby granite quarry near Blaenau Ffestiniog (SH 6949 4526) and Moel Ystradau (SH 6819 4384). Typically these survive as a single level or a galleried face, with the stone or concrete bases of crushing plant.
- 8.5.6 There are a number of lead and copper mines within the study area. The Pen yr Allt or Catherine and Jane Consols copper mine (SH 633 411) above Penrhyndeudraeth survives as a varied mid-nineteenth century industrial landscape including wheel-pits and dwellings, and a rotative engine-house of 1859-1860, largely demolished in 1965.<sup>35</sup> Less survives of Pant y Wrach (SH 617 402), operational in the 1820s, but quite possibly much earlier, as a riparian site until the completion of the cob in 1813.<sup>36</sup> It is likely that the cluster of copper mines around Nanmor and Pont Aberglaslyn, though largely outside the present study area, were able to prosper until the early nineteenth century because of their easy access to estuarine craft. The extensive Bwlch y Plwm lead mine (area 33) is attested in Llwyd's *Parochialia* of 1577, but may be much earlier. The area known as 'Gwaith Romans' above the mine area includes a smelting hearth and a large lump of metallic lead, discovered in 1850. At the lower end of the workings, on what would have been the shoreline until 1813, are traces of modern workings, which went on until 1921.<sup>37</sup>
- 8.5.7 Ironstone was worked at Penysyflog at SH 5620 3960. This may never have developed beyond surface trenching, and no surface features are now visible.<sup>38</sup> Zinc was worked at Moelwyn Mine into the twentieth century (SH 676- 437-).
- 8.5.8 The study area preserves a number of important textile sites. The woolen mill at Pant yr Ynn, near Blaenau Ffestiniog (SH 7088 4538), was originally built in 1845-6 by George and William Casson, William Turner and Hugh Jones in lease from the Tan y Manod estate as a slate mill for Diffwys quarry<sup>39</sup> and was converted into a woollen mill in 1873.<sup>40</sup> This was latterly worked in

<sup>34</sup> D.Rh. Gwyn, *Gwynedd Slate Quarries* (report for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, 1996, *passim*).

<sup>35</sup> D. Bick, *Old Copper Mines* pp. 15-6, D.Rh. Gwyn, *Metalliferous Mines* Appendix 2, part 2, p. 89-90.

<sup>36</sup> Gwyn, *Metalliferous Mines* Appendix 2, part 2, p. 101.

<sup>37</sup> Gwyn, *Metalliferous Mines* Appendix 2, part 2, p. 87.

<sup>38</sup> Gwyn, *Metalliferous Mines* Appendix 2, part 2, p. 102.

<sup>39</sup> CRO X/BJC X647, DRO DCH 3 77



conjunction with *pandy* Moelwyn (SH 6905 4547), erected c. 1864 by John Williams of Garn Dolbenmaen, the only *pandy* in Gwynedd to preserve its fulling stocks.<sup>41</sup> The article on Merioneth fulling mills in *JMHR* 1984 lists *Pandy Pengwern* (SH 7050 4292), *Pandy Bach* (SH 6852 4020) and *Pandy Gwylan* (SH 6897 3882).

- 8.5.9 The largest single surviving textile mill, however, is Madocks's woollen factory at Tremadoc (area 20). Its history has been very little researched, but it appears to contain some at least of the original structure of c. 1805-7.<sup>42</sup>
- 8.5.10 Power generation is another important theme in the area, and there are several power stations including Dolwen (SH 6940 4387), Cwm Croesor (SH 6484 4594) and its syenite dam (SH 6543 4664), Llyn Stwlan (SH 6600 4442) and Llyn Ystradau power station (SH 6792 4441) (area 17) as well as Pant yr Afon (SH 6971 4687), and Maenofferen booster station (SH 7139 4660) and hydro-station (SH 7090 4691).
- 8.5.11 Finally, there is some evidence in the landscape for one other industry in the area, the building of the area's wooden ships, which went on until the launch of the *Gestiana* in 1913. The Cadw-grant-aided Coastal project of 1986 identified the sites of shipwrighting yards and slipways at Borth y Gest (SH 566- 376-), Porthmadog (SH 5705 3838), Penrhyndeudraeth (SH 5954 3740) and Ty Gwyn y Gamlas (SH 6000 3575). These small-scale enterprises have left little in the way of archaeological evidence and they constitute a fast-diminishing resource throughout the British Isles. A sail loft also survives at Porthmadog.

## 8.6 Sea-defences and water-control systems

- 8.6.1 The flood plains below Maentwrog were embanked and drained between 1791 and 1795 (area 29), for which William Oakeley was awarded with a gold medal by the Society of Arts.<sup>43</sup>
- 8.6.2 The Cob over the Traeth Mawr (lower end of area 3) is a substantial embankment built between 1808 and 1813, which altered the coastline of the north-eastern crook of Cardigan Bay considerably (see area 14). Not only does the Cob itself remain in use, carrying the Ffestiniog Railway as well as the main road and now also a cycle-path, but the quarries at each end survive, as do the barracks on the Merionethshire shore, Madocks's offices at the Porthmadog end and the powder magazine at Ynys Cyngar (SH 5543 3660). The sluice-gates installed under the Britannia bridge at Porthmadog (SH 5707 3848) in 1838 were the work of Jesse Hartley, the great Liverpool dock engineer.
- 8.6.3 The lower Cob, recently widened, when work on the railway made it impossible for horse-drawn road vehicles to continue using the upper Cob.

## 8.9 Communications

- 8.9.1 The construction of the Cob, though undertaken primarily as a means of enclosing the bay vested in Madocks by the enclosure act, also had important implications for the development of transport. The Cob itself became a roadway connecting Caernarvonshire and Merioneth, at least for those brave enough to try it, and figured in Madocks's grand plans for a road from London to a packet port for Ireland at Porth Dinllaen, reflected in the names 'Dublin Street' and 'London Road' at Tremadoc. However, its effect was to bring into being a transport system, which, whilst initially of regional importance, was eventually to have a significant effect world-wide.
- 8.9.2 By creating a deep-water channel at the new mouth of the Glaslyn, the building of the Cob brought about the harbour of Porthmadog, which now survives as an excellent example of an industrial harbour from the western seaboard of Britain (area 9). By displacing Ynys Cyngar as the place where sea-going ships were loaded with slate, and by providing a ready-made alignment across the Traeth Mawr, it made possible the construction between 1832 and 1836 of

<sup>40</sup> Geraint Jenkins, *The Welsh Woollen Industry* (Cardiff, 1969), p. 207 suggests 1813, which is far too early. The Cadw listings err in ascribing a late eighteenth or early nineteenth century origin for the site.

<sup>41</sup> *Y Rhedegydd*, 5 September 1911, p. 3, col. a-b. This has been erroneously dated to the eighteenth century in the Cadw listings.

<sup>42</sup> Geraint Jenkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 238-40.

<sup>43</sup> Lewis 17

the Festiniog Railway, now active as a visitor attraction (area 3). The Festiniog in the period 1863 to 1872 not only demonstrated how the civil engineering of the unimproved horse tramway could be taken forward into the age of steam – and thereby provided a cheap and effective method of transport for the British empire, the USA and beyond – but also proved the practicality of articulated locomotives and rolling stock such as are now standard world-wide. Much of its Victorian infrastructure survived not only the period of closure from 1946 to 1955, but also the over-enthusiastic modernisation of the railway in the 1960s and 1970s by its present management.

- 8.9.3 The feeder quarry railways in some cases form impressive landscape features. The incline from the Ffestiniog Railway to Wrysgan Quarry (SH 6781 4549 to SH 6806 4496) and the inclines to the Blaenau quarries themselves (*e.g.* SH 6937 4672 to SH 6941 4644) are particularly noteworthy.
- 8.9.4 Other narrow gauge railways made their way to the port – a line to Tremadoc originally built in 1841 to carry ironstone was more than once rebuilt and ultimately extended to the far recesses of Cwm Pennant. The trace survives a horse-worked line built in the 1860s to connect the harbour with the slate quarries beyond Croesor. This includes the rake of inclines at Parc (area 22), where the upper drumhouse was converted into a banqueting house for Lady Aberconway by Clough Williams-Ellis (SH 6362 4411). The buttressed embankments and slab bridges along its course between here and its terminus at Blaen y Cwm illustrate the persistence of early railway civil engineering in the context of the 1860s. The various inclines connecting it to the quarries are also spectacular features, including the scheduled ‘Jacob’s ladder’ to Rhosydd Quarry (SH 6541 4610 to SH 6577 4635) (area 12).
- 8.9.5 The lower section of this line was adapted for locomotive operation in the 1920s, and may become the lower terminus of the revived Welsh Highland Railway. In landscape terms these are less significant than the Festiniog, though a recent proposal to develop the existing short length of heritage railway at Gelert’s Siding (SH 5710 3922) into a major museum complex may have significant implications.
- 8.9.6 At Porthmadog a nineteenth-century dock landscape survives largely intact; this includes the original public quays of 1824, and the extensive slate quays established from the 1830s to the 1860s (SH 569- 383-). It is in many respects typical of the slate-exporting havens of the nineteenth century – largely innocent of buildings and cranes, and making use of labour-intensive hand-loading methods. Maisonettes which won a Cic Trust Award were constructed on Holland’s wharf (SH 5709 3844) and on the opposite wharf (SH 5701 3828) in the 1960s, and at much the same time the unusual slate storage sheds on the Greaves wharf were demolished, all apart from one range which now forms the Porthmadog Maritime Museum (SH 5697 3845).
- 8.9.7 The smaller slate-exporting quays on the Dwyryd survive in varying states of preservation. The most impressive is Tyddyn Isa at SH 6292 3945, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, with its rows of steps to down to the mooring points and its pyramid-roofed powder magazines at each end.
- 8.9.8 Small quays or docking-places for the export of slate or for landing of consumer perishables are evident at a great many locations, such as at Ty Gwyn y Gamlas (SH 5992 3550), at Portmeirion (SH 5893 3696) and at Ynys Cyngar (SH 5543 3654), as well as at several locations on the tidal Traeth Bach.
- 8.9.9 The study area also, unusually for North-west Wales, contains two canals; one is the very short Cemlyn canal which connects the Dwyryd to the former Diffwys quarry quay at Maentwrog (area 29), the other the ‘cyt’ from Porthmadog to Tremadoc (area 14). This is believed to have functioned as a transport artery, and even to have dispatched a steam-boat to New York sometime in the 1830s. There is certainly a building which may have been a warehouse on the site of its Tremadoc basin (now filled in), and it passed the ironstone mine at Pen Syflog. However, it is more likely that it was intended as a drain, even if it occasionally carried vessels.
- 8.9.10 Locations traditionally considered to be the sites of smaller quays and landing places are evident at locations now well inland, such as at the Brondanw Arms, Garreg (area 19).



## 9 Historic character areas

9.1 The study area has been divided into thirty three separate historic character areas as follows:

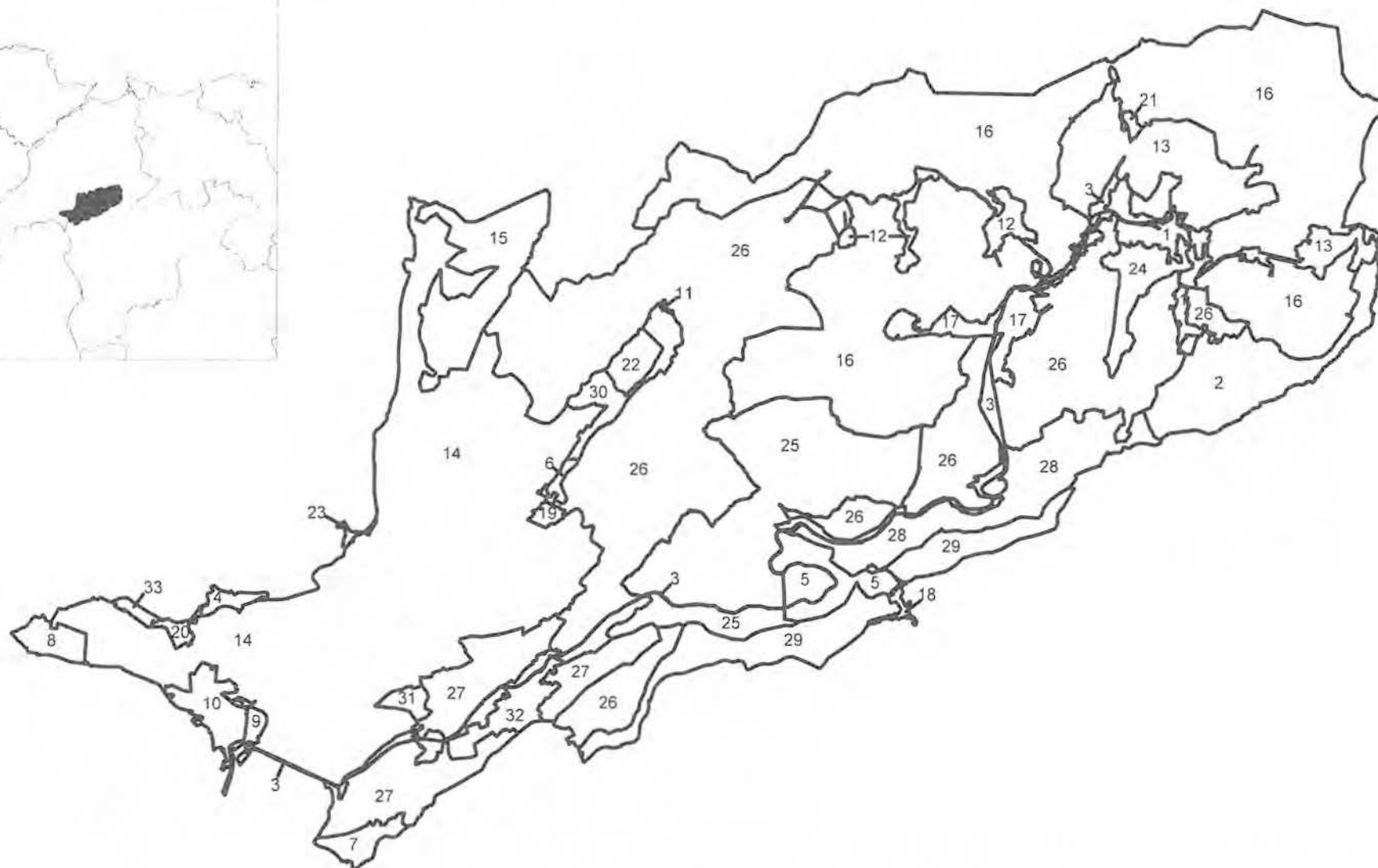
- 01 Blaenau Ffestiniog
- 02 Cwm Teigl
- 03 Ffestiniog Railway
- 04 Tan yr Allt
- 05 Plas Tan y Bwlch
- 06 Plas Brondanw
- 07 Portmeirion
- 08 Wern
- 09 Porthmadog harbour
- 10 Porthmadog
- 11 Croesor
- 12 Cwm Croesor & Rhosydd slate quarries and incline system
- 13 Blaenau Ffestiniog slate quarries
- 14 Glaslyn estuary – reclaimed land
- 15 Woodland around Hafod Garegog
- 16 Upper slopes of the Moelwyn range
- 17 Llyn Stwlan/Llyn Ystradau industrial area
- 18 Maentwrog
- 19 Garreg
- 20 Tremadoc
- 21 Plas Weunydd
- 22 Parc
- 23 Prenteg
- 24 Cwm Bowydd-Gelli
- 25 Coed Llyn y Garnedd
- 26 Intermediate slopes of the Moelwyn range
- 27 Penrhyn-Garth
- 28 Lower wooded slopes, Moelwyn range
- 29 Dwyryd valley floor
- 30 Brondanw slopes
- 31 Minffordd quarry
- 32 Penrhyndeudraeth
- 33 Llidiart Yspytty

9.2 An overall location map showing the position of these areas in relation to each other is included at the beginning of this section.

9.3 Each area description has been divided into three sections following the model of earlier reports – historic background, key historic landscape characteristics and a management section.

9.4 A map showing the extent and detail of each area is located facing the description. The area is outlined with a solid, black line. Each area has a single map with the exception of area 03, Ffestiniog Railway, which extends across two due its sinuous nature.

9.5 Colour plates which give an impression of the overall texture and character of each area are also included following the description: some of these are aerial photographs, but sometimes a ground level view has been more appropriate.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Location of character areas (for key see next page)

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## Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
01 - Blaenau Ffestiniog

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## 01 Blaenau Ffestiniog (PRN 18201)

### *Historic background*

A horseshoe-shaped settlement built on a natural shelf near the break of slope at the head of a valley, surrounded by slate-rubble tips; the largest town in the former county of Merioneth. A number of sub-medieval farmhouses survive near the break of slope, together with dwellings associated with nineteenth century smallholdings carved out of the farms.

The town arose from a number of separate settlements on different estates, principally those of the Oakeley family of Maentwrog and Lord Newborough of Glynllifon, though other land was owned by local squireens and yeoman farmers. Slate was worked from c. 1760 at Diphwys (Casson), but the industry developed with the arrival of English capital from 1800 onwards. The individual settlements which coalesced to form the present town came into being in the 1820s and 1830s. The population explosion of the late 1860s to early 1870s led to the construction of the planned rows and squares which characterise the central part of the town, as well as of many of the substantial chapels and other social infrastructure. House-building continued into the 1890s, but thereafter few dwellings were constructed until the provision of social housing after the second world war. The twentieth century saw relentless economic decline as the slate industry contracted, partly alleviated by the opening of the pumped storage scheme in 1963, Trawsfynydd nuclear power station in 1963, the opening of part of Llechwedd Quarry as a tourist attraction in 1962 and the completed re-opening of the Ffestiniog Railway as a visitor attraction in 1982.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *Nineteenth-century urban slate quarry community*

Blaenau exemplifies a variety of industrial housing types and street patterns. The one surviving *ty uncorn* of the several built on Glynllifon land in 1826, at SH 7032 4603, is typical of Newborough estate architecture. Short rows of *crog-lofftydd* survive in some locations, such as at Llwyn y Gell (SH 6983 4627), but the community is dominated by two-up-two-down houses which predominate from the late 1830s. At Tan y Grisiau the earlier examples (early 1840s to late 1860s) are free-standing, built alongside, and facing, the railway, the main thoroughfare for all purposes in the early days. From the 1850s onwards they tend to be constructed in short rows along the newly-built road through the village to Rhiwbryfdir. Similar ribbon developments of two-storey rows are evident between Congl y Wal and Tabernacl (SH 7051 4434 to SH 7065 4553), Church Street and around Rhiwbryfdir (SH 6958 4635).

The centre of Blaenau is dominated by planned developments, mainly confined to the area of the former Newborough estate, in which rows of two- or three-storey dwellings are laid out in succession, between Church Street and the railway (SH 6992 4596 C), or around a pattern of squares, with chapels in prominent locations (SH 6984 4581), evidently for a wealthier clientèle. Abortive planned development is evident at Oakeley Square (SH 6928 4571). The houses are characterised by different styles, suggesting that quite a number of local builders were involved. Many are constructed with a distinctive pointed dormer roof. The use of render on the reveals of doors and windows, but nowhere else, is a common motif. There are many substantial villa-dwellings for quarry managers, often with wrought-iron verandahs and other ornamentation.

Several large chapels survive, some converted to other uses, some closed and a few in use as places of worship. Many have been demolished. Blaenau's surviving social infrastructure is also on a grand scale. The Market Hall (SH 6979 4593) has been preserved but many of the substantial late 19<sup>th</sup>-century shops on Church Street have closed and fallen into disrepair. The Oakeley Quarry Hospital of 1848 (SH 6964 4633) and the Heroes' Memorial Hospital of 1925 (SH 7021 4546), designed by Clough Williams-Ellis, are impressive landscape features, as are the schools.

The use of locally-quarried Ordovician (grey) slate is practically universal. Building material is in many cases local field-stone, with some use of larger blocks, possibly from Gelli Grin near Maentwrog (see also area 29) or from Porthmadog harbour. The use of setts is common for ornamentation, such as on the chapels or as coping-stones, and it is possible that these came either from the setts quarry at Tan y Manod or Brookes's quarry at Llyn Ystradau.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

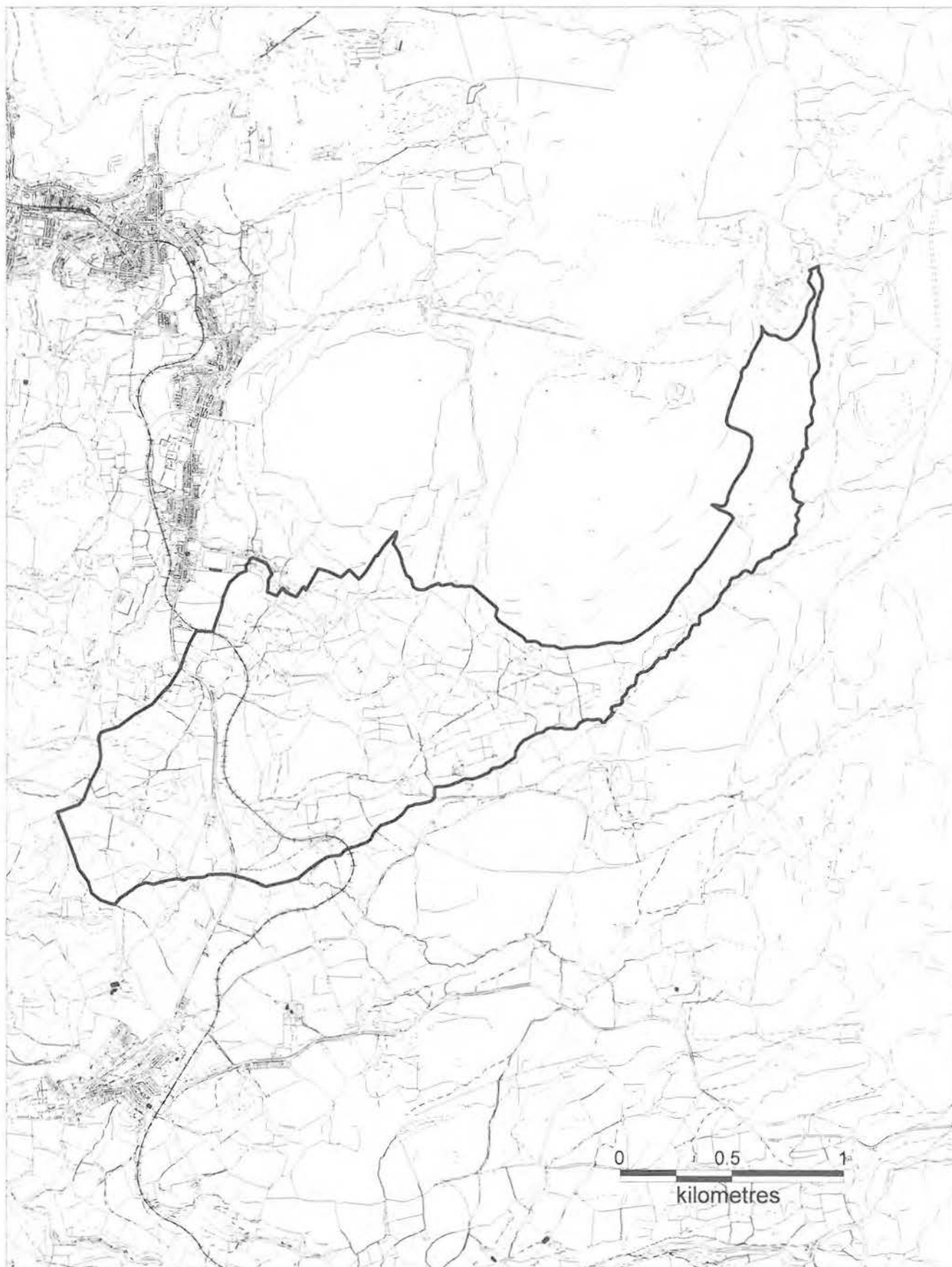
There are very few listed buildings in the town, and these are restricted to Craigbach 3, the former vicarage, the Masonic Hall, the former Diffwys railway station and Tain Unicorn (see above). Active liaison with the (very active) local community and with elected representatives is suggested to promote awareness of the historic dimension of the town, and encouragement should be given to appropriate local heritage initiatives. Blaenau Ffestiniog lies outside the Snowdonia National Park, having been deliberately excluded when the area was delineated in the 1950s.



HLCA Number 01 Blaenau Ffestiniog

View of some of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century terraced housing stock in Maen Offeren, central Blaenau Ffestiniog, with the railway in the foreground and Moelwyn Mawr with Llyn Stwlan dam in the background.





### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
02 - Cwm Teigl

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### *Historic background*

An area bounded to the south-east by the Afon Teigl, which includes the enclosures on the lower slopes of Manod Mawr down to the better agricultural land around Pengwern, this is one of only three or four areas within the study whose dominant characteristic is agricultural (see also 24, 26 and 27). It lies to the south and south-east of Blaenau Ffestiniog and defines the outer edge of the study.

The Meirioneth Lay Subsidy Roll shows that Ffestniog parish was the poorest in Meirioneth in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century (its miserably low taxable capacity was 6 shillings per thousand acres, compared with £7 for Penrhyndeudraeth, the richest parish), and it was also 'the most backward area in the whole parish, the least inhabited and the poorest'. So it is not surprising that there was probably no developed medieval agriculture, and few remains in the landscape which date from this period. There are slight remains of probable-prehistoric settlement here, but no obvious contemporary field patterns.

It is an area owned in the early nineteenth century partly by the Tan y Manod estate, a fact which shows in the consistent design and appearance of some of the farm buildings. A number of the farms were subsequently taken over by quarrymen or, more often, at that stage stewards and managers. However, it still retains an atmosphere of farming, rather than the mixed-economy settlement of slate-quarrying areas in Caernarfonshire.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *Early 19<sup>th</sup>- century field systems, stone farmsteads, copses*

The fields are, in the main, large irregular pasture enclosures which are defined by large and often impressive stone walls (although there are post and wire fences in some areas). The farmsteads are widely scattered at the end of single tracks (there are few roads), but are nevertheless substantial stone-built structures (usually double-fronted and two-storeyed) surrounded by farmsteads which contain a range of stone outbuildings, usually in a loose courtyard arrangement. They are almost all 19<sup>th</sup> century in date, with many 20<sup>th</sup> century additions (which often includes the usual roof) of grey-painted corrugated iron. While there are clumps and hedgerows of trees within the area, there are no substantial woodlands as there are further west.

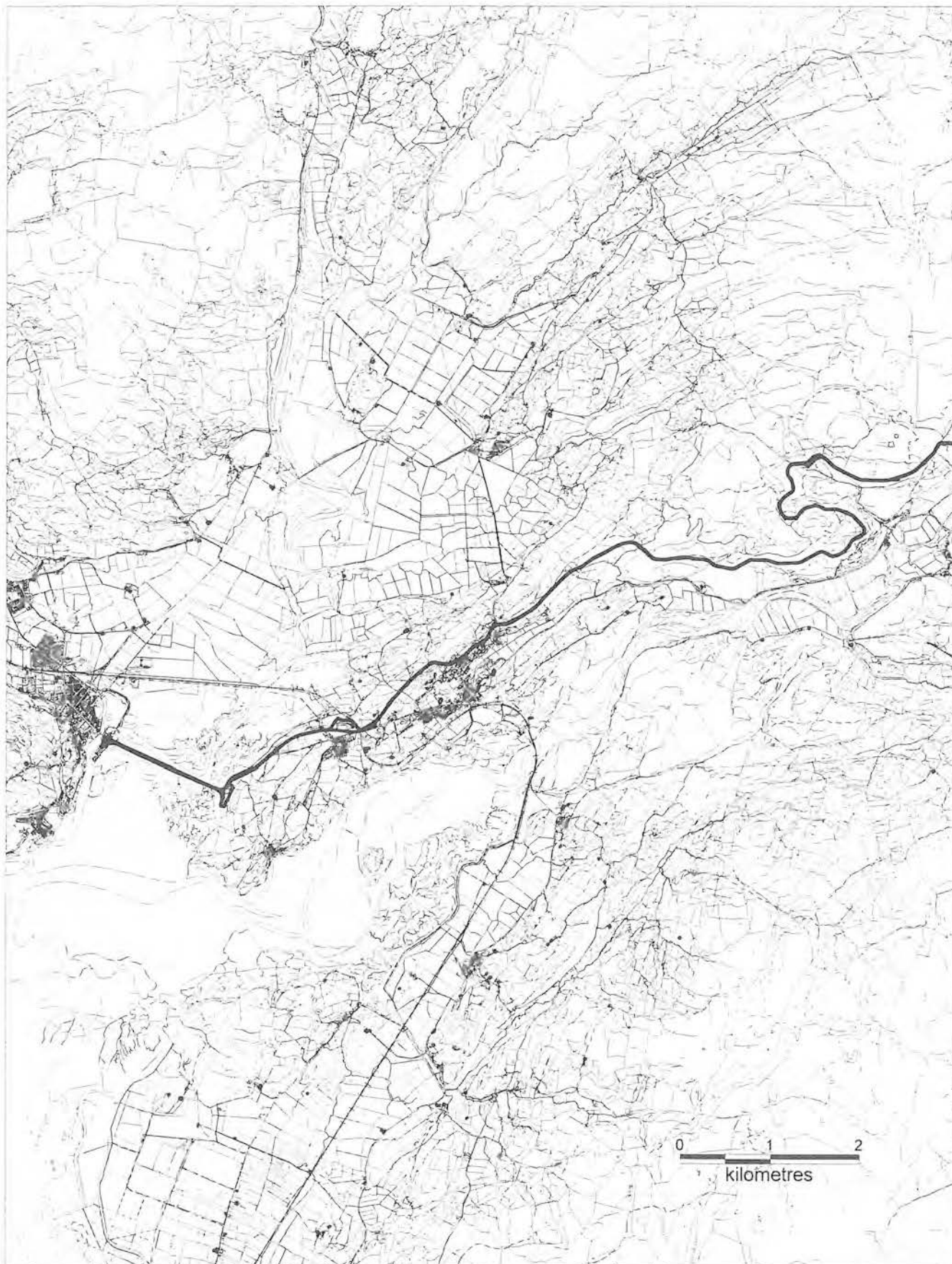
### *Conservation priorities and management*

Preservation of the open, agricultural character of the area is a priority: this would include the character of the distinctive farmsteads, as well as the field walls and field patterns. The area lies half within, and half outside, the Snowdonia National Park (with no obvious change of character either side of the line).



## 02 Cwm Teigl

View of the landscape in the upper part of Cwm Teigl, showing a largely agricultural landscape with large, irregular fields defined by stone walls and lines of trees, with the stone-built scattered farmsteads closely clustered and often protected by windbreaks.

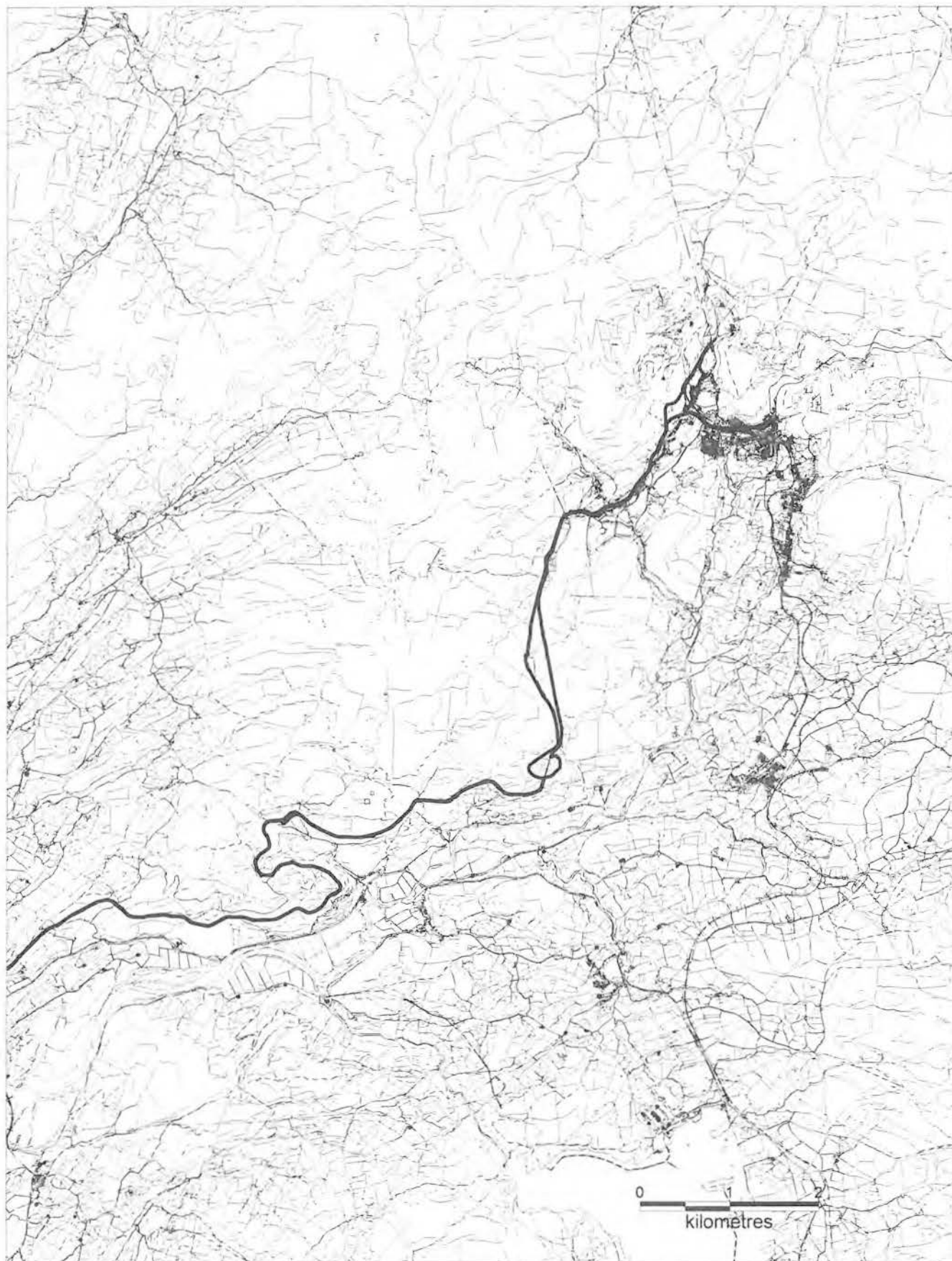


### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
03 - Ffestiniog Railway (west)

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### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
03 - Ffestiniog Railway (east)

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## 03 Ffestiniog Railway (PRN 18203)

### *Historic background*

A 2' gauge horse- and gravity-worked railway opened in 1836 to transport slate from Blaenau Ffestiniog to the sea at Porthmadog, which between 1863 and 1872 led the way in adopting locomotive traction, passenger services, and articulated locomotives and rolling stock. Its fortunes declined with those of the slate industry, and closure came in 1946. It was revived when an enthusiast group gained control of the company in 1954, and was thereafter rebuilt in stages until Blaenau was reached in 1982. This involved construction of a new length of railway between Dduallt and Tan y Grisiau, as the old course was flooded by the construction of the pumped storage scheme.

The Festiniog railway, in the period 1863 to 1872, not only demonstrated how the civil engineering of the unimproved horse tramway could be taken forward into the age of steam – and thereby provided a cheap and effective method of transport for the British empire, the USA and beyond – but also proved the practicality of articulated locomotives and rolling stock such as are now standard world-wide. Much of its Victorian infrastructure survived not only the period of closure from 1946 to 1955, but also the over-enthusiastic modernisation of the railway in the 1960s and 1970s by its present management. The railway now supports a Heritage Group which dedicates itself to the preservation or reconstruction of traditional civil engineering features of the railway, such as semaphore signalling, as well as rolling stock.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *19<sup>th</sup>-century narrow gauge railway and infrastructure*

The civil engineering of the railway reflects its birth as a 'hybrid' railway, between the primitive purely industrial railway and the modern public railway. The sinuous course is typical of an early 19<sup>th</sup>-century Welsh tramroad, and the use of large stone-built embankments is paralleled in other contemporary railways. The construction of the spiral route at Dduallt derives from the practice of railways such as the Darjeeling-Himalayan railway in India, now a World Heritage Site, itself directly inspired by Ffestiniog practice. The section of line between SH 6789 4220 and SH 6824 4496 is entirely new build of the late twentieth century.

Late 19<sup>th</sup>-century station buildings and other infrastructure survive at Porthmadog (SH 5712 3840 - the station is shown on the photograph), Minffordd (SH 6004 3856), Penrhyndeudraeth (SH 6129 3951) and Tan y Bwlch (SH 6499 4156). Elsewhere, original structures have been replaced by modern ones. The extensive nineteenth century locomotive works at Boston Lodge, at the eastern end of the Cob, remain in use and are listed almost in their entirety.

The railway's impact on the development of the historic landscape of the Glaslyn-Ffestiniog axis has been profound. The Tan y Grisiau to Rhiwbryfdir section (SH 6824 4496 – 6902 4550) is a rare surviving example of an early industrial community built around a railway.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

Many historical features were demolished by the railway between the 1960s and 80s in response to the pressure of running a major visitor attraction with 19<sup>th</sup>-century technology and partly volunteer. However, this seems no longer to be the case. The most effective conservation tool would be constructive liaison with FR management and with FR Heritage Group to preserve the remaining 19<sup>th</sup>-century historical character of the railway. Most of the line lies within Snowdonia National Park.





### 03 Ffestiniog Railway

The station at the Porthmadog terminus of the Ffestiniog Railway now run as a commercial enterprise and one of the main tourist attractions in the area.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
04 - Tan yr Allt

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## 04 Tan-yr-Allt (PRN 18204)

### *Historic background*

An eighteenth-century farmhouse transformed by William Alexander Madocks into the first Regency house in north-west Wales. The site was chosen chiefly for the view and in order to accommodate the larger house the hillside behind was cut back, leaving an exposed rock face. Stables and outbuildings are a short distance to the west.

Madocks, who bought the property in 1798, was a philanthropist and the focus of a circle of 'Romantic' philosophers and literary figures. He was responsible for building the Cob at Porthmadog and draining the Traeth Mawr as well as building the model town of Tremadog. Madocks' circle of friends included Sheridan, Thomas Love Peacock and Shelley, the last of whom rented Tan-yr-Allt from 1812 to 1816 and wrote *Queen Mab* while living there. Peacock based his satire *Headlong Hall* on Tan-yr-Allt and Madocks and his friends.

After Madocks the house belonged to the Greaves family, owners of slate quarries at Blaenau Ffestiniog, and until recently it was a Steiner school.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *Early 19th-century wooded park, ornamental garden and residence*

The ancient woodland on the hillside above the house (now a SSSI) would have been one of the attractions of the site as far as Madocks was concerned. He added trees to both woods and garden; being especially fond of beech he created pockets of chalky clay to help them thrive. He also experimented with moving large, mature trees. Many of his trees survive, by now superb specimens.

The garden, on a steeply sloping site, is informal in character, blending into a small area of parkland to the south. It consists mainly of lawns and areas planted with specimen trees; near the house there are rhododendrons and other shrubs, and there is a small formal pool at the foot of the sloping lawn in front of the house. The garden also contains a memorial to Shelley.

The long east drive has surviving informal plantings, including many good trees, and the small stream which crosses has artificial pools and waterfalls which create attractive sights and sounds. There is a lodge at the end of this drive, also built by Madocks.

The kitchen garden, laid out by Madocks, was important to him. The walls survive in good condition and there is a large (empty) water tank in the north-west corner, more recently used for swimming. Soil was brought up from the Cob during its construction to improve the garden's naturally thin soil.

The garden was neglected after Madocks' time but brought back into use and productiveness by the Steiner school. Some plantings survive from before the period of neglect and show that ornamental plants and fruit were grown as well as vegetables, a tradition that has been continued. The path layout appears to be original and the bases of cold frames survive; it seems that there was never a large area of glass.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

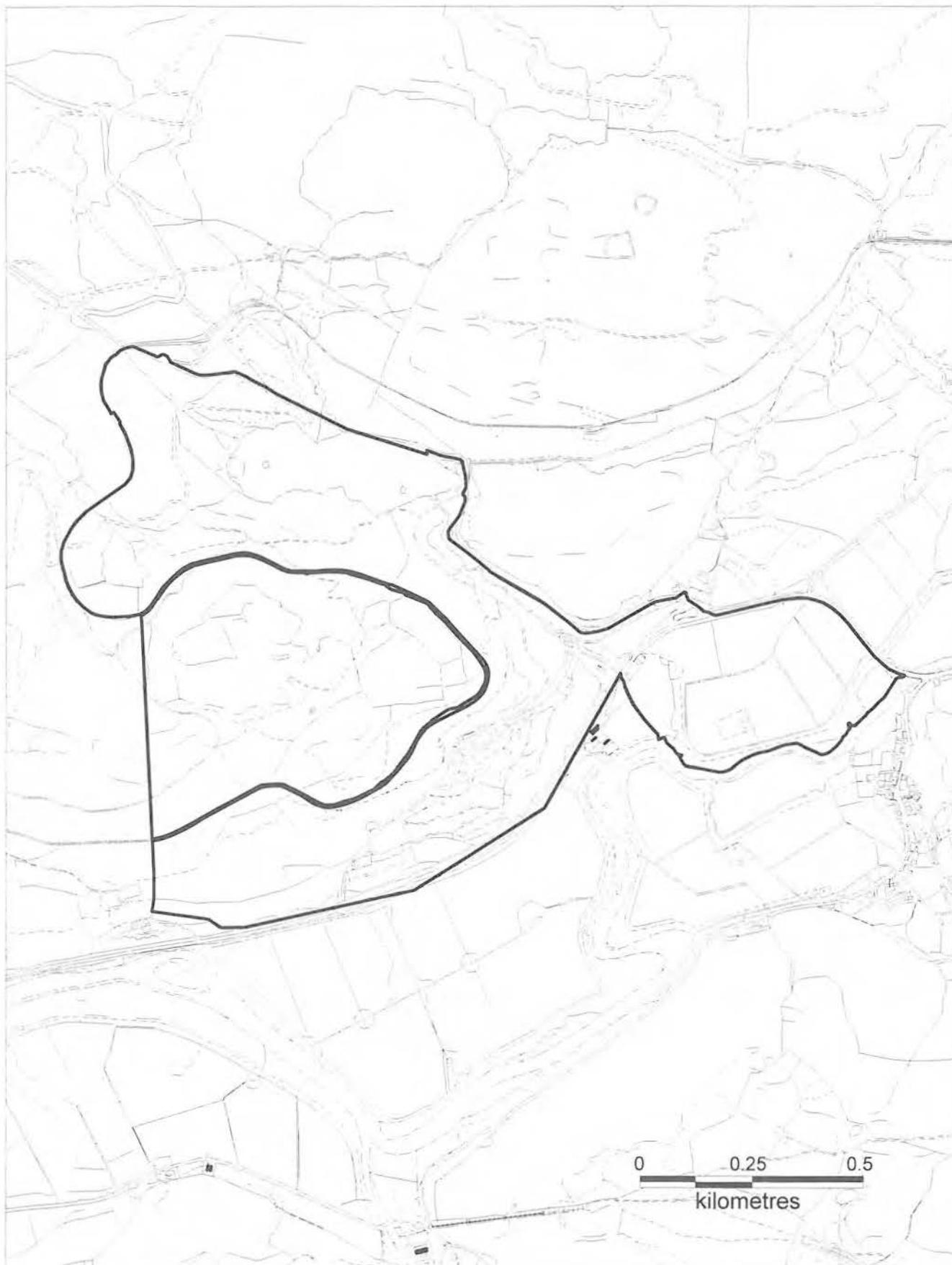
Tan-yr-Allt is included in the Cadw Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales Part 1: Parks and Gardens as PGW(Gd) 18 (GWY), where it is listed grade II (p 296). The house is also a listed building, grade II\*. Most of the garden is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Liaison with the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust and Countryside Council for Wales is recommended for future management. After 1985 the house functioned as the Snowdonia Steiner School/Ysgol Steiner Eryri, but this has recently closed.

The area lies outside the Snowdonia National Park.



04 Tan yr Allt

View of Madocks's house built in 1800 at the foot of the Tremadoc cliffs, surrounded by the contemporary trees in his Romantic garden



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
05 - Plas Tan y Bwlch

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*Historic background*

The first house on the site was probably built by Robert Griffith in about 1748, as successor to a house on another, but nearby, site, possibly where the Oakeley Arms is now located. The new site was undoubtedly chosen for its fine view over Maentwrog and the Vale of Ffestiniog. The present house incorporates some parts of the eighteenth-century house but was rebuilt, much larger, in the late nineteenth century.

The estate was earlier referred to as Bwlch Coed Dyffryn. It was owned from 1789 by the Oakeley family, whose property formed the largest estate within the study area, and who also owned the slate quarries on Rhiwbryfdir farm at Blaenau Ffestiniog. The present house was built by William Edward Oakeley, out of the proceeds from the quarries, and despite the restricted site had extensive outbuildings including a separate servants' block and a salt-water swimming pool, the water for which was brought up on the train from Porthmadog. Elsewhere on the estate are lodges, a dower house, farm buildings, sawmill, smithy, game larder and a laundry cottage.

The first William Oakeley, who came into possession of Tan y Bwlch by marrying the heiress, Margaret Griffith, spent a great deal of money on improving the estate and also drained the Vale of Ffestiniog and built embankments along the Afon Dwyryd (for which he received a gold medal from the Society of Arts in 1797). His heirs continued to improve the estate until the money ran out early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and continued to live there until 1962, when the house and grounds were sold to a businessman who proposed to develop it as a country club and holiday village, but only 9 of the planned 40 chalets were built before it was sold again, in 1968, to the Snowdonia National Park. It is now run as a study centre.

*Key historic landscape characteristics**18<sup>th</sup>-century gardens and residence*

There is a very extensive designed landscape, parts at least of which may date from the early eighteenth century, incorporating large areas of originally natural woodland. West, south and south-east of the house is extensive parkland or semi-parkland with many specimen trees and copses, including a small folly or eye-catcher on an artificial mound and a boathouse on the river. To the north and north-east lie a deer park, woodland and an artificial lake; although originally natural, the woodland has had many exotic trees added, and is also traversed by the Ffestiniog railway (there was a private station for the house). The small valley and stream running down from the lake to cross the east drive have received many artificial improvements. There is further woodland on the south side of the Vale of Ffestiniog, and the deer park has relatively recently been planted over with conifers.

The parkland near the Oakeley Arms may date from early in the eighteenth century, if the earlier house was here. The later parkland is similar in style, and improvements to the area above the house and the north-east and (former) north approaches began to be made late in the eighteenth century, in the 'Romantic' style then in vogue. Nineteenth-century developments in this area carried on the theme, conforming strongly to a later nineteenth-century notion of the 'Picturesque'.

The main feature of the garden is the long terrace on the south-east side of the house, which extends well beyond the house to the north-east. Below this are steeply sloping lawns which were at one time laid out with extensive bedding schemes but now have two modern informal ponds; groups of shrubs and specimen trees blend into more wooded areas at the edges. The kitchen garden, now a car park, is at the extreme south-west of the garden.

The buildings on the estate preserve their 19<sup>th</sup>-century character. The Plas itself has been little altered by its conversion to a study centre, though a cast-iron verandah on the ground floor has been enclosed to turn it into a bar. The gate lodges, the drives and their appurtenances – gates and fences – preserve their 19<sup>th</sup>-century character.



The stone for the buildings and embanked roads appears to have come from Oakeley's own quarry at Gelli Grin, on the opposite side of the Dwyrdd (see also the Oakeley estate buildings in area 29).

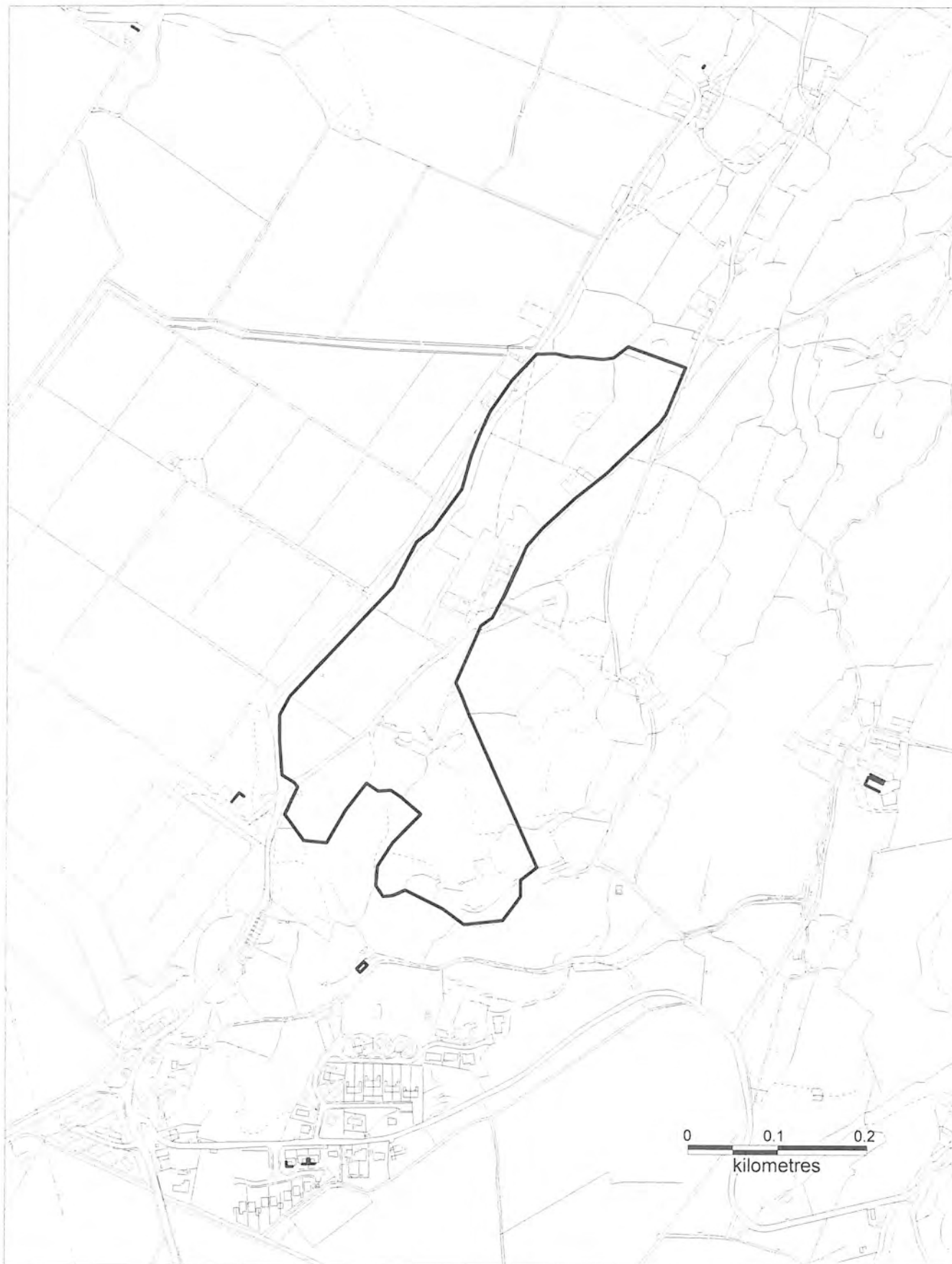
### *Conservation priorities and management*

Plas Tan y Bwlch is included in the Cadw Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales Part 1: Parks and Gardens as PGW(Gd) 31 (GWY), where it is listed grade II\* (p 274). The house and stables are also listed buildings. For future conservation of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century character of the gardens and grounds, liaison with Plas Tan y Bwlch, which is currently running the site and is applying for Heritage Lottery Funds for garden restoration, and the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust is recommended. The area lies within the Snowdonia National Park.



#### 05 Plas Tan y Bwlch

Aerial view of the site, showing the 19<sup>th</sup> century house in its prominent position with the extensive parkland or semi-parkland with many specimen trees and copses surrounding and the long terrace on the south-east (front) side of the house. Below this are steeply sloping lawns which were at one time laid out with extensive bedding schemes but now have two modern informal ponds; groups of shrubs and specimen trees blend into more wooded areas at the edges. The kitchen garden, now a car park, is at the extreme south-west of the garden (to the left).



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
06 - Plas Brondanw

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### *Historic background*

A dwelling, probably of the seventeenth century, with many later additions, originally two stories high, now three stories, to which a tower was added in 1937, and the whole rebuilt in character after a fire in 1951. The *plas* is the family home of the Williamses, forbears of the Williams-Ellis family, and came to the possession of the Ellises, along with the additional surname, in 1807. By the early twentieth century, it had been divided up into separate lodgings, and was only restored to use as a family home by Clough Williams-Ellis. He set out the present gardens and continued to make minor alterations to the house until the late 1960s.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

*sub-medieval dwelling and 20<sup>th</sup>-century gardens.*

The small park belonging to Plas Brondanw, on the north-west-facing slopes on the edge of the reclaimed Traeth Mawr, may perhaps be contemporary with the original house. The core area, mostly to the south-west and west of the house, was made into a garden by Clough Williams-Ellis from 1908 onwards. The style is strongly architectural, with tall hedges, statuary, formal ponds and straight axes focused on distant views, famously that of Cnicht, to the north-east.

An area to the south of the house, including a former quarry, was developed in a less formal style. The quarry itself was made into a water feature, and above it, at a viewpoint looking down into it, is a memorial to the fire of 1951. On top of the hill is a look-out tower which was a wedding present to the Williams-Ellises in 1915 from Clough's brother officers in the Welsh Guards. The planting in this area is mainly of deciduous trees, with some shrubs.

The garden and this wooded area contain many typical Williams-Ellis features, particularly in a theatrical style, mostly painted in the distinctive light blue used throughout the Williams-Ellis (Portmeirion) estate. There are also buildings, both within the garden (an orangery) and associated with it (a gatehouse to the south-west), and beyond it (war memorial and other buildings in Garreg), which take the distinctive Williams-Ellis style out into the wider estate.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

Plas Brondanw is included in the Cadw Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales Part 1: Parks and Gardens as PGW(Gd) 30 (GWY), where it is listed grade I (p 262). The house, cottages, coach house and most of the architectural structures within the garden area are Listed Buildings. Liaison with the Brondanw Estate and the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust is recommended for future management. This area also lies within the Snowdonia National Park.



06 Plas Brondanw

Ground view looking towards Plas Brondanw, with the house to the right and the core area of the garden, created from 1908 onwards with its strongly architectural style, with tall hedges, statuary, formal ponds and straight axes focused on distant views, famously that of Cnicht, to the left.





### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
07 - Portmeirion

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### *Historic background*

Clough Williams-Ellis had long been nursing the idea of creating a village which would consist of good buildings but not in any consistent style, in order to prove that modern buildings need not be ugly and a hotch-potch of styles could work – in other words, that a village did not need a core of old buildings all in similar style to be attractive. In 1925 he spotted, from the sea, the perfect site, and was lucky to be able to acquire it. At that time there was a house, Aber-lâ, on the shore, with a basically 19<sup>th</sup>-century garden, of which much, on the Gwyllt peninsula, was semi-wild, and on higher ground above it Castell Deudraeth, a battlemented 19<sup>th</sup>-century house and its grounds.

Over the next forty-five years, excluding the period of the second world war, Williams-Ellis converted the existing buildings (Aber-lâ is now the Portmeirion Hotel) and added many others in various styles. A 'Home for Fallen Buildings' was maintained, where various architectural fragments were kept until he could find a use for them. The village is often referred to as 'Italianate', but this is a superficial and incorrect assessment; in fact there is an eclectic mixture of styles, according to Williams-Ellis's original plan.

From the start the village had to contribute to its own upkeep and so it has always been open to visitors, from the time the original house was converted to a hotel. The stream of visitors has included many notables – Noel Coward, for instance, wrote *Blithe Spirit* while staying there – and more recently the village provided the setting for the cult TV series *The Prisoner*.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *Gardens, hotel, architectural whims, associations*

The village occupies a small valley to the north and north-west of the hotel, which is right on the shore, and in this area are mainly public gardens planted exuberantly with a wide range of plants and shrubs; the favourable climate allows many half-hardy varieties to thrive. There are also specimen trees which pre-date the village. The Piazza, in the middle of the village, on the site of the kitchen gardens of Aber-lâ, has a large, shallow, formal pool with formal gardens around it, and west of this is a pond of completely different character which dates from around 1850 and was part of the ornamental garden of Aber-lâ. On the steep slopes behind the village and leading down to the sea, natural vegetation mixes with planted elements in varying degrees.

The much more extensive Gwyllt gardens, to the west, have always been semi-wild, but contained an important collection of rhododendrons amassed, and bred, by the previous owners of Aber-lâ in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Many of these rhododendrons survive, as do older plantings, and Williams-Ellis also planted parts of this area, for example the Ghost Garden in the extreme west. He added a few buildings as well, and there are also more recent ones including a gazebo in the style of a classical temple designed by his daughter Susan Williams-Ellis in 1983. By the ponds, also recently created, are a modern pagoda and summerhouse.

Development of this part of the garden continues, partly because the conditions allow interesting and exotic species to be grown and partly in order to provide more of interest for Portmeirion's many visitors. There is a pet cemetery, originally relating to Aber-lâ but still in use, a children's playground, and miles of paths, mostly pre-dating the building of Portmeirion.

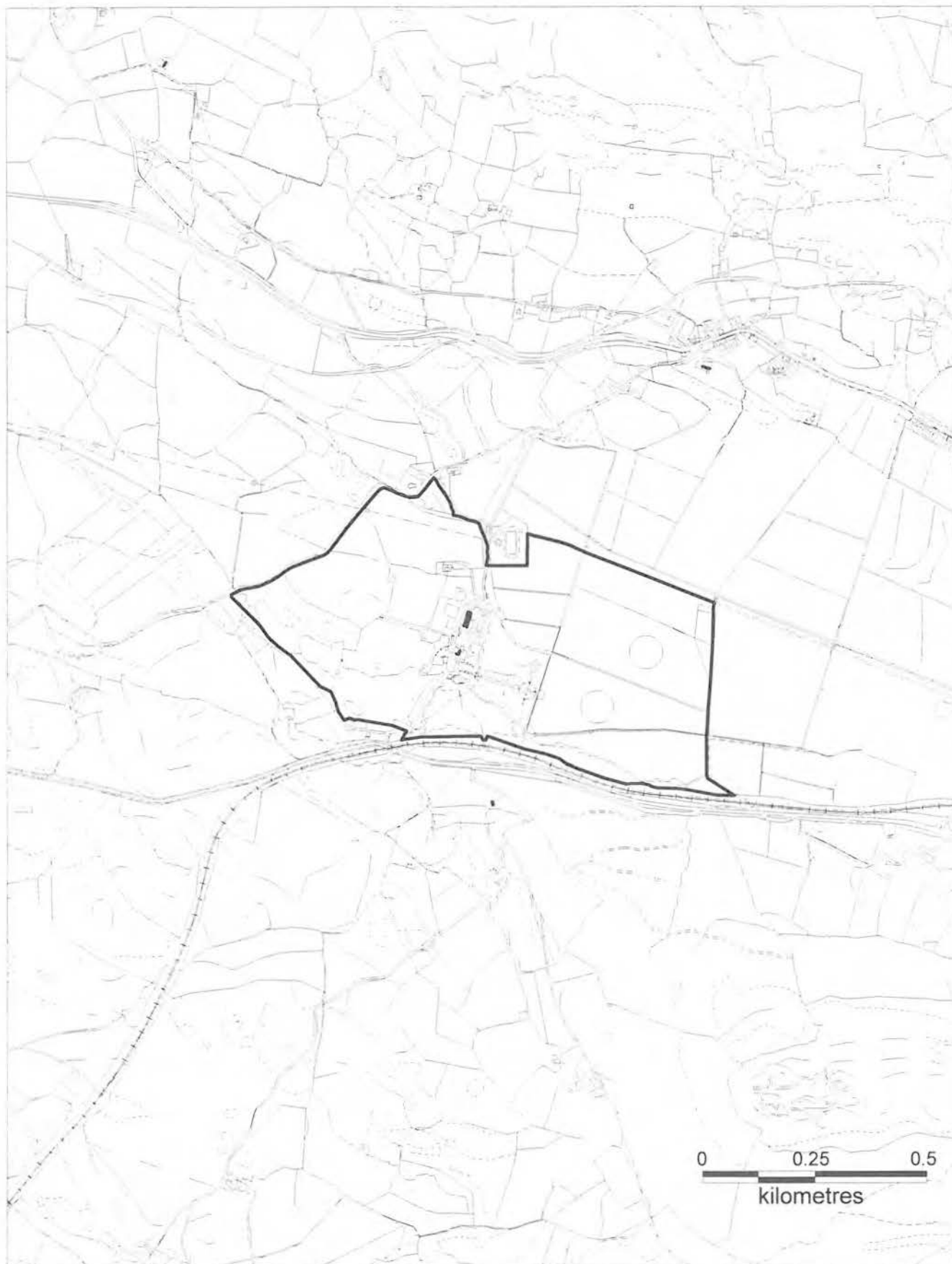
### *Conservation priorities and management*

Portmeirion is included in the Cadw Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales Part 1: Parks and Gardens as PGW(Gd) 29 (GWY), where it is listed grade II\* (p 286). In addition, all of the buildings and structures in the village are listed buildings (the listings contain very detailed individual descriptions). Liaison with Portmeirion authorities (its committee of management includes a number of landscape and historical professionals, including Merfyn Williams) as well as the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust is recommended for future management. The area lies outside Snowdonia National Park.



#### 07 Portmeirion

An aerial view of the village of Portmeirion in its wider landscape setting on the peninsula. The village is right on the shore, and in this area are mainly public gardens planted exuberantly with a wide range of plants and shrubs. The Piazza, in the middle of the village, has a large shallow, formal pool with formal gardens around it. and west of this is a pond of completely different character which dates from around 1850. On the steep slopes behind the village and leading down to the sea, natural vegetation mixes with planted elements in varying degrees. The much more extensive Gwylt gardens lie to the top of the photograph.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
08 - Wern

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## 08 Wern (PRN 18208)

### *Historic background*

There has been a house at Wern since at least the late medieval period, and the neighbouring Penmorfa parish church is likely to be an early foundation. The house belonged to the Wynns in the seventeenth century but was abandoned by them in the second half of the eighteenth century, and sold in 1800. There followed a long period during which the house was empty or rented out, until it was bought by Richard Methuen Greaves in 1886. In 1892 he had it enlarged and rebuilt by John Douglas.

The terraces to the south of the house were built at two different times; the upper, in about 1895, by John Douglas and the lower, in 1902, by Thomas Mawson, who also designed the long walk and garden pavilion.

The house is now used as an old people's home but the estate belongs to the Williams-Ellis family, to whom it was left by Greaves, who was childless.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *post-medieval house, gardens, garden designer association*

The house is surrounded by a modest park, of which the part to the west, on rising ground, may date back to the eighteenth century or earlier (see photograph). This part contains a wooded hill – the woods probably originally planted in the eighteenth century – with a derelict 'look-out tower' or folly. There is also a lake. The eastern part of the park is low-lying and marshy but has two circular copses, probably planted in the nineteenth century, which are sited so as to break up the continuous line of the horizon.

To the south-east of the house are the pleasure grounds, which are about half wilderness and shrubbery and half lawns with formal features. The wilderness is to the south and provides a screen for the road and railway; there are paths through it which are now overgrown, and a former drive, the entrance to which has recently been reopened.

Between the wilderness and the south lawn is a tiny stream, which forms a water garden where it approaches the drive on the east. The lawns are extensive and informal, ending at a ha-ha on the west.

Crossing the full width of the garden is a formal walk with rose pergola and yew hedges, terminating in a round garden with a formal layout which contains a small garden pavilion. This was designed by Thomas Mawson; the plan is dated 1901 and the design for the pavilion 1903. North of this is an apsidal lily pool also designed by Mawson.

On the north lawn, close to the formal walk, are some specimen trees including a very large tulip tree. North of the north lawn are a shrubbery and overgrown rockery.

A square kitchen garden to the north of the house shown on the 1839 tithe map may have occupied the site of the original garden belonging to the sixteenth or seventeenth-century house. When the house was enlarged in 1892 part of this garden was taken up; what remained was turned over to glasshouses and a new kitchen garden was laid out to the north-west. Both are now derelict and overgrown.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

Wern is included in the Cadw Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales Part 1: Parks and Gardens as PGW(Gd) 19 (GWY), where it is listed grade II (p 308). Liaison with the owners (the property is currently an old peoples' home) as well as the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust is recommended for future management. This area lies outside the Snowdonia National Park.

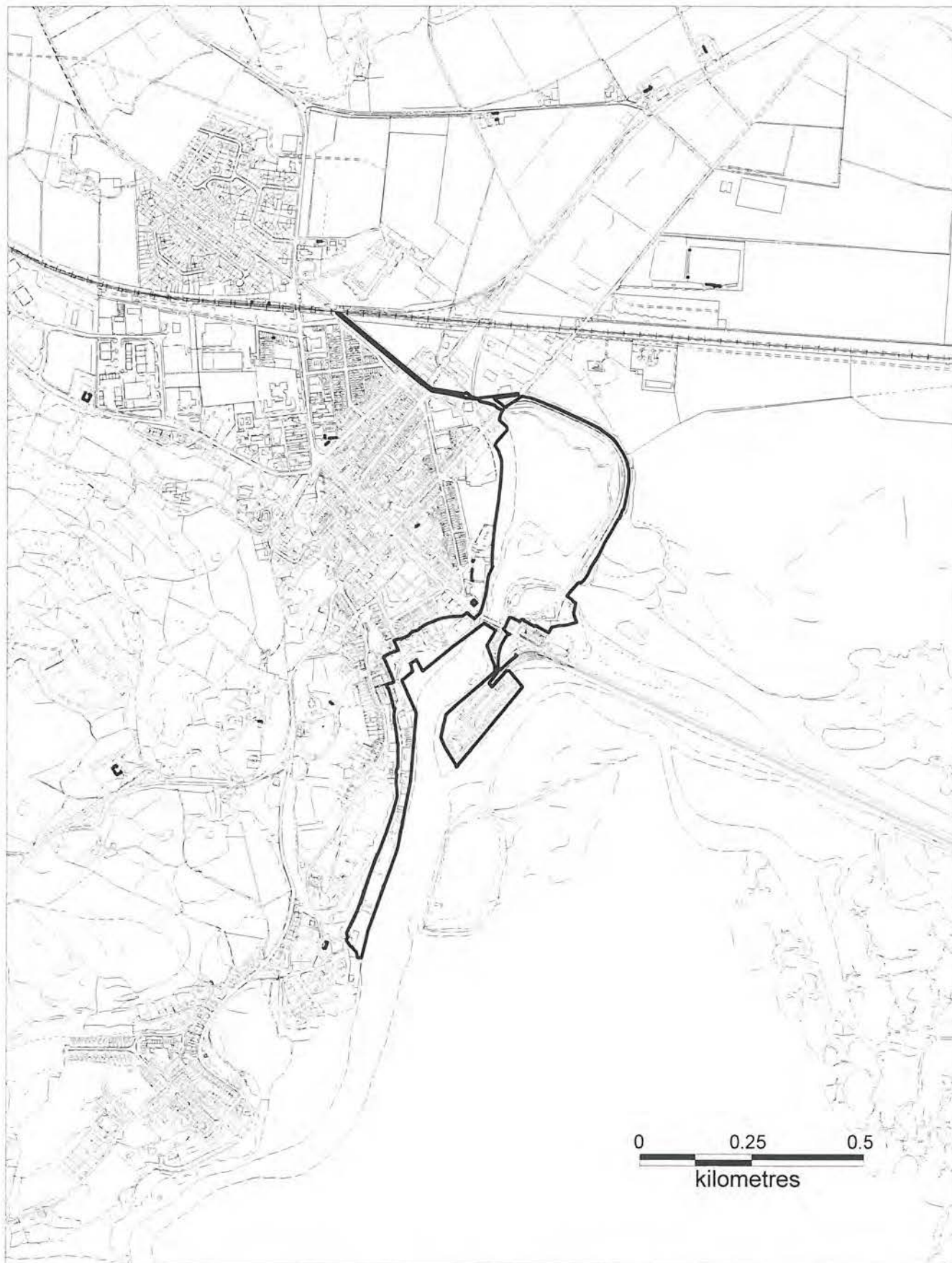




08 Wern

Ground view looking towards the house which is surrounded by a modest park, of which the part to the west, on rising ground, may date back to the eighteenth century or earlier. This part contains a wooded hill – the woods probably originally planted in the eighteenth century. The eastern part of the park (in the foreground) is low-lying and marshy but has two circular copses, probably planted in the nineteenth century; one of which is on the right of this view.





## Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
09 - Porthmadog harbour

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## 09 Porthmadog harbour (PRN 18209)

### *Historic background*

A deep-water harbour created as an unintended consequence of the building of the Cob in 1808-1813, which channelled the waters of the Glaslyn between Ynys y Towyn and the Green. The public quay (SH 5688 3838) dates from 1824, when the area came to be used for the transhipment of slate from river boats to ocean-going vessels instead of the exposed Ynys Cyngar to the east. Other harbours were constructed at Ynys y Tywyn and towards Borth y Gest until the 1870s, rail-served after the construction of the Ffestiniog Railway in 1836. A plan to develop Llyn Bach (SH 5720 3873 C - the area immediately upstream of the Britannia sluice bridge at SH 5707 3847), into a harbour in 1851 did not materialise.

As well as a major slate harbour, Porthmadog was also the site of a number of small shipyards which turned out the distinctive two-masted 'Western Ocean Yachts', and remained a stronghold of sail until the early twentieth century. The harbour saw little use from 1940 onwards, and since the 1960s has been used almost exclusively by pleasure vessels. Maisonettes were constructed on a number of the wharves in the late 1960s.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *19<sup>th</sup>-century mineral harbour and ship-wrighting.*

The harbour is made up of a series of stone-built quays making use of large blocks probably quarried in the immediate vicinity. A number of buildings associated with the harbour's heyday survive, such as the sail loft, the seamen's mission and the substantial houses, offices and warehouses at Pen Ceî (Cornhill), most of which are now listed and described in detail in the listed building entries. A number of developments have added to the harbour landscape – the maisonettes near the station at SH 5706 3829 and 5708 3845 won a Civic Trust Award in the 1960s, and the Inland Revenue office on Ynys y Tywyn (SH 5722 3844). Some structures survive from the nineteenth century, such as the one remaining shed, which now houses the maritime museum, and Bron Guallt, built in 1895, the Oakeley Quarry shipping agent's house and office (also listed).

Lewis's Island (SH 5704 3791 C) is unusual in being formed entirely from ballast deposited by visiting ships; as such it forms a unique geological site, made up of stones from all parts of the world.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

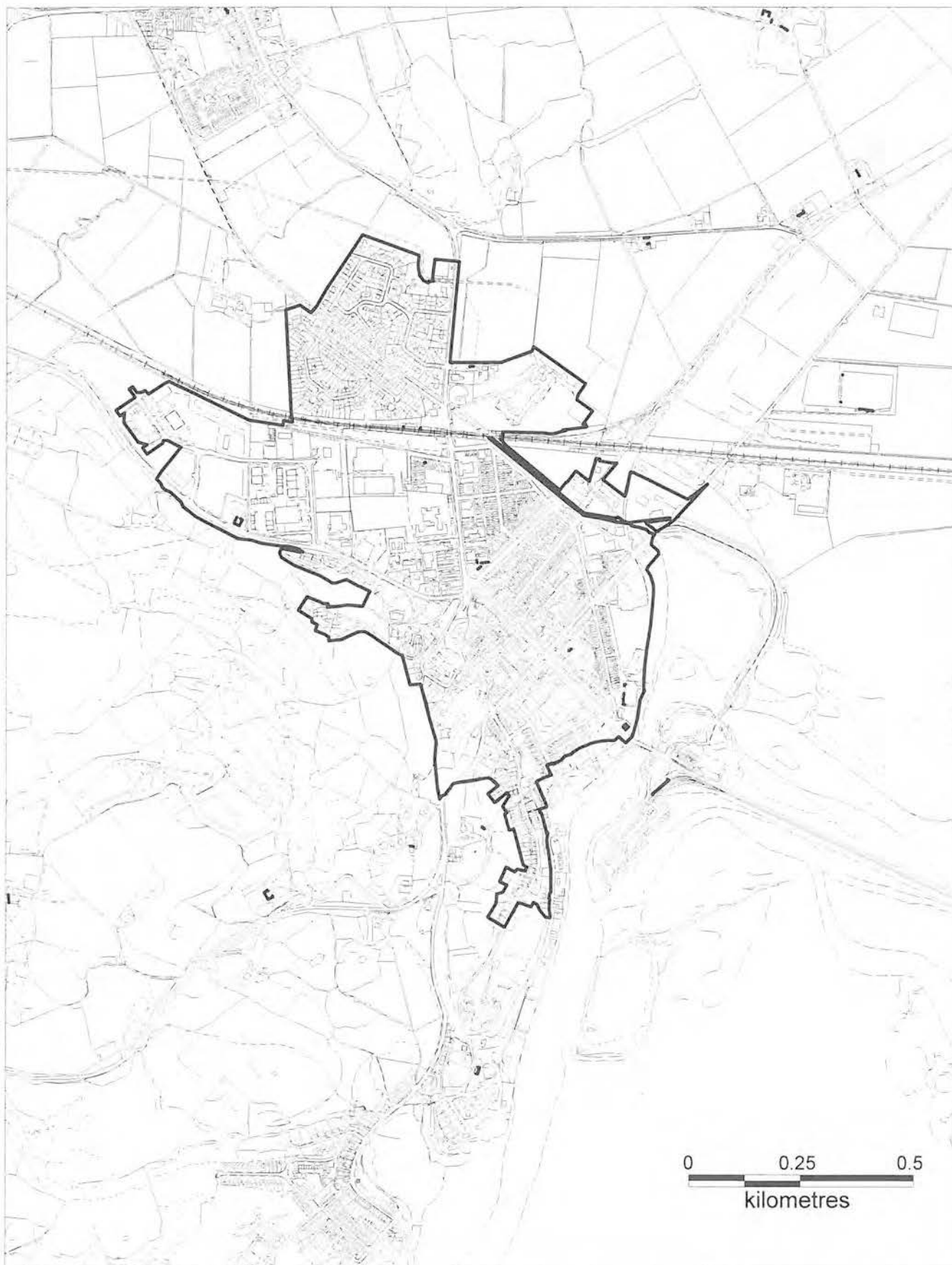
Preservation of the overall character of the historic harbour landscape is required, along with the individual buildings, most of which are listed (the slate, Greaves' and New wharves, the old harbour house (Greaves wharf house), the cottages on the wharf and several warehouses for example). Encouragement could be given to appropriate local heritage initiatives, in particular a proposed museum initiative to include the existing maritime museum in the harbour and the Welsh Highland Railway. Community involvement would bring added benefit. The area lies outside the Snowdonia National Park.



09 Porthmadog harbour

View of the main part of the harbour with the public quay (opened in 1824) in the background and the warehouses at Pen Cei, along with some of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century terraced housing.





### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
10 - Porthmadog

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## 10 Porthmadog (PRN 18210)

### *Historic background*

The town of Porthmadog came into being as a consequence of the draining of the Traeth Mawr by William Alexander Madocks and the unintended creation of a harbour by the newly-channelled Afon Glaslyn where it passed through the sluice gates. It is a town built partly on made-up land, partly on higher ground.

A settlement of sorts was established by Madocks to house the navvies building the Cob in the period 1808 to 1813. The first public wharves were built in 1825, and thereafter a series of wharves was built by individual quarry companies along the shore almost as far as Borth y Gest. The opening of the Festiniog Railway from the quarries to the sea in 1836 largely brought about the end of the previous system of carting down to the quays along the Dwyryd, whence the slates were boated to Ynys Cyngar for transfer to sea-going vessels.

Though the earliest trackway across the newly-reclaimed land wound its way to the east of the present High Street, by 1841 at least this had been straightened out and was to be developed into the main commercial street of the town (see photograph), with a range of shop fronts and public houses and post office, but still retaining the open green. At the same time, the mineral railway to Tremadoc, along which Madock Street was later to be built, was also in existence. These two transport axes bequeathed the town its distinctive diamond pattern street plan. Dwellings are evident on maps from as early as the 1830s, and developed over the next decades in part due to the management of the Tremadoc estate by the solicitor David Williams. He founded the seamen's mission on the quay (SH 5689 3829) in 1852 (now a yacht club).

Unusually for a port town, Porthmadog has never had much in the way of housing for dock-workers, nor did it ever acquire the underworld of brothels and seedy taverns which were to be found in sea-ports worldwide. In part, this is because of the fact that Porthmadog vessels were crewed and captained by local men, and they had much of the share of the trade. Architecturally it is dominated by substantial nineteenth-century dwellings erected for the local middle classes – not only the captains but also the shipping agents, administrators, lawyers, quarry officials. These preserve many distinctive features. The overall conception is Regency, even when the buildings are much later in date, and a very common feature is the pattern of ornamental drip mouldings. Since the end of the slate trade, Porthmadog has become an attractive option for the comparatively wealthy yachting fraternity, apparent in the construction of the unattractive maisonettes on the quays in the 1960s.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *19<sup>th</sup>-century port town*

As a newly-built port town of the nineteenth century, Porthmadog never developed the seedy underworld of brothels and bars, and is characterised by broad, well laid-out streets, substantial houses and large chapels. High Street (SH 5705 3849 – SH 5671 3885) is dominated by substantial commercial premises, nearly all of 19<sup>th</sup>-century build, Garth Road (SH 5675 3856 – SH 5684 3814) by the distinctive double-fronted captain's houses, often with a distinctive pattern of drip-moulding over the doors and windows. Madock Street (SH 5705 3849 – 5693 3901) and the streets which run between it and High Street, make up the bulk of the smaller housing, nearly all two-up-two-down housing. However, little remains of the industrial area which once flourished to the north and east of the town, and which included foundries, timber saw mills, slate-works, soda-pop plant, a gasworks and a flour mill. The High Street continues to be the commercial heart of the town, with recent developments particularly at the eastern end near the Cob, and there is an interesting contrast in social terms between the small, squat terraced houses on the 'level' leading off the High Street, and the altogether grander 3/4 storeyed houses on the hill overlooking the town and out to Glaslyn.

A considerable number of structures survive from Porthmadog's days as a port. The development of harbour facilities is reflected in a surviving sail-loft, and in a surviving fragment



of the Glaslyn foundry incorporated into the Co-op supermarket. The Glaslyn foundry buildings were demolished in the 1960s to make way for the Inland Revenue office, an unattractive exercise in office block standard. Griffith Williams's school of navigation survives at SH 5685 3844, amongst the substantial warehouses at Grisiau Mawr, situated in the loft of Cornhill Pencei, above Casson's bank. Visible evidence of the area's cultural contacts with the wider world is to be found in the names of Porthmadog pubs such as the *Australia* and *The Ship Launch* (where the launchings of new ships were posted).

### *Conservation priorities and management*

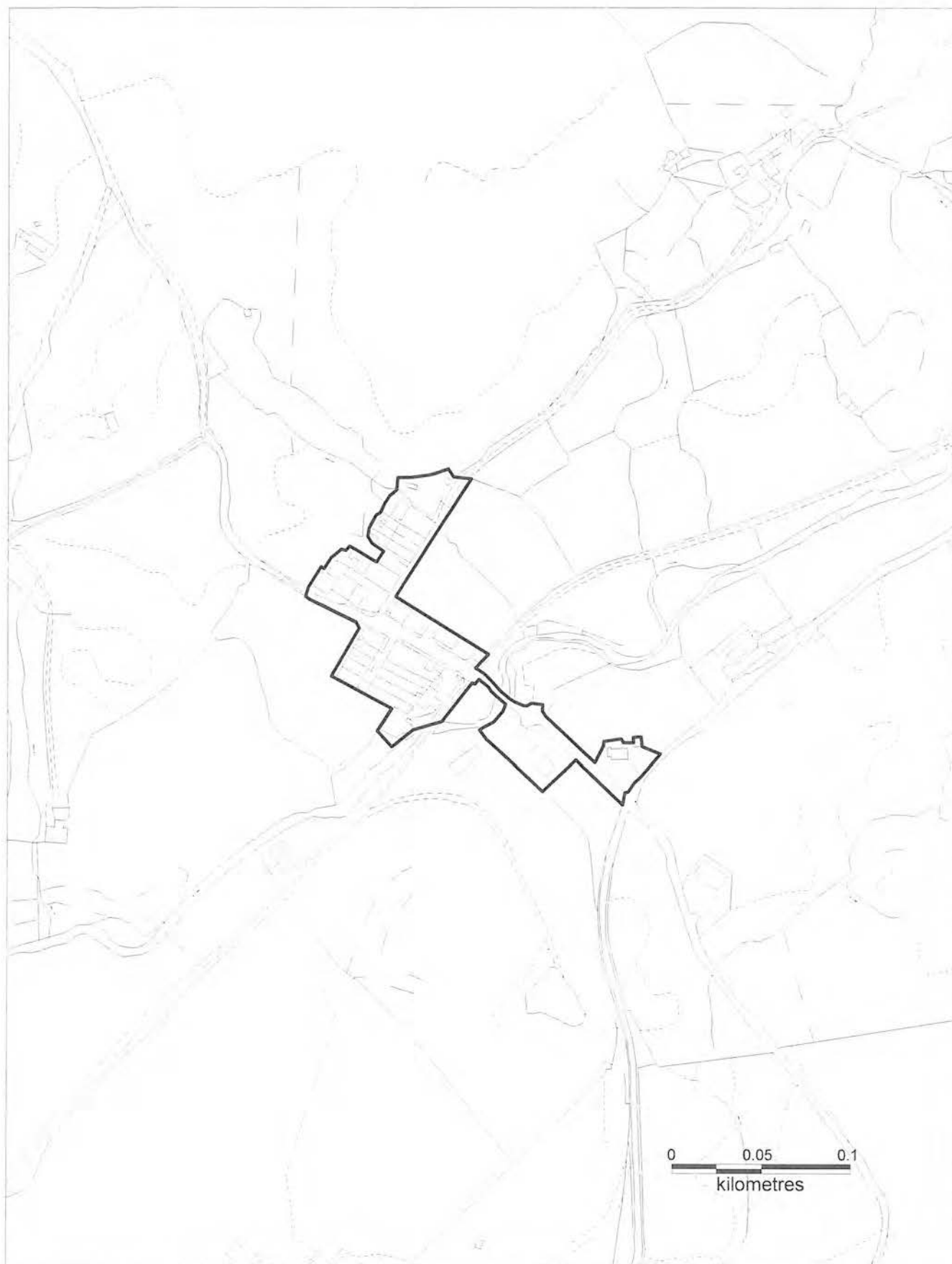
There are many listed buildings in the town, including the cornmill, Glaslyn Foundry, Garth Lodge, Morfa Lodge, Brecon House and Greenways, Plas Ynys Tywyn, Salem Chapel, Eglwys Bresbyteriad Cymru y Garth, no.s 1, 3, 5 and 7 High Street and most of Cornhill (houses and warehouses) and Britannia Place. Preservation of the distinctive local architectural idiom should be a priority, along with conservation of the Victorian character of the town and of individual shop-fronts. The building of large new buildings on the main streets in particular should be resisted, and instead adaptive re-use of 19<sup>th</sup>-century architecture, for instance the chapels, should be encouraged.

The area lies outside the Snowdonia National Park.



#### 10 Porthmadog

A view of some of the shops (and a pub) along the north side of the High Street, which was laid out in the 1830s. Some shops retain original facades, while others have been modernised.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
11 - Croesor

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## 11 Croesor (PRN 18211)

### *Historic background*

The small village of Croesor is a 19<sup>th</sup>-century quarry village situated on the course of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century turnpike from Tan y Bwlch to Nanmor. It developed mainly to house quarrymen who worked in the Rhosydd and Croesor quarries. The Croesor quarry first opened about 1856. After a troubled start, Moses Kellow, the quarry's last manager, took it in hand in 1895; it was then efficiently worked as a consolidated holding with the Parc Quarry until its closure in 1930. Moses Kellow was considered a fearless innovator. It was he who devised much of the machinery used in the quarry. He was also responsible for installing electricity there and in his home, when the large-scale 350kw hydro-electric plant was opened in 1904.

Between 1865 and 1930, 2,000 tons of slate were produced each year. Slate was prepared for several purposes – billiard table tops were made in the Parc Quarry, together with chimney slabs, gravestones, flooring slabs, lintels and ornamental products. The final product was initially carted to the Ffestiniog Railway at Penrhyndeudraeth, but after 1864 it was taken down to Croesor Tramway, part of which may still be walked, using the incline. Another spectacular incline may be seen at the top of Cwm Croesor – the Rhosydd incline. This was used to carry goods up and down from the Quarry. Men also travelled on the incline although the managers strictly forbade it.

The village was developed by Hugh Beaver Roberts, owner of the Croesor estate, as part of the plan to develop the area's mineral resources. It is likely that much of the village dates from the mid-1860s, when the tramway was laid along the valley, though there are some later 19<sup>th</sup>-century houses.

Bob Owen Croesor (1885-1962), a well-known native of Llanfrothen, was in turn a farm worker and shepherd, a clerk at the Parc and Croesor Quarry under Moses Kellow, a worker at the Rural Council Offices and a lecturer with the Workers' Education Association. He took great interest in genealogy in Wales, collecting rare books and copying parish records, and became an expert on the history of the Quakers. At his home, Ael y Bryn, next door to the chapel, he collected an enormous library of books, papers and manuscripts, and Americans visited him for help in tracing their ancestry. He was awarded an MA by the University of Wales, and an OBE, for his contribution to his country's culture.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *19<sup>th</sup>-century slate quarry village, tramway*

Croesor is a small settlement of a number of houses, a chapel and a school. The use of large coursed stones from quarries within the immediate vicinity is a feature of the village. The buildings are substantial, with many of the houses being two-storey, short terraces set parallel to the steep hill-slope and all looking out to the south-east. With their large windows, they could certainly not be described as cottages but as large terraced houses. There are a few 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings in the village, and a few outlyers between the core and the main road down to Garreg, which passes over a well-constructed part-stone, part-slate bridge. The course of the old Croesor tramway, which was responsible for the growth of the settlement, with a superb slate fence along one side for much of its course, runs through the bottom of the settlement next to the river, and can, in large part, be walked.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

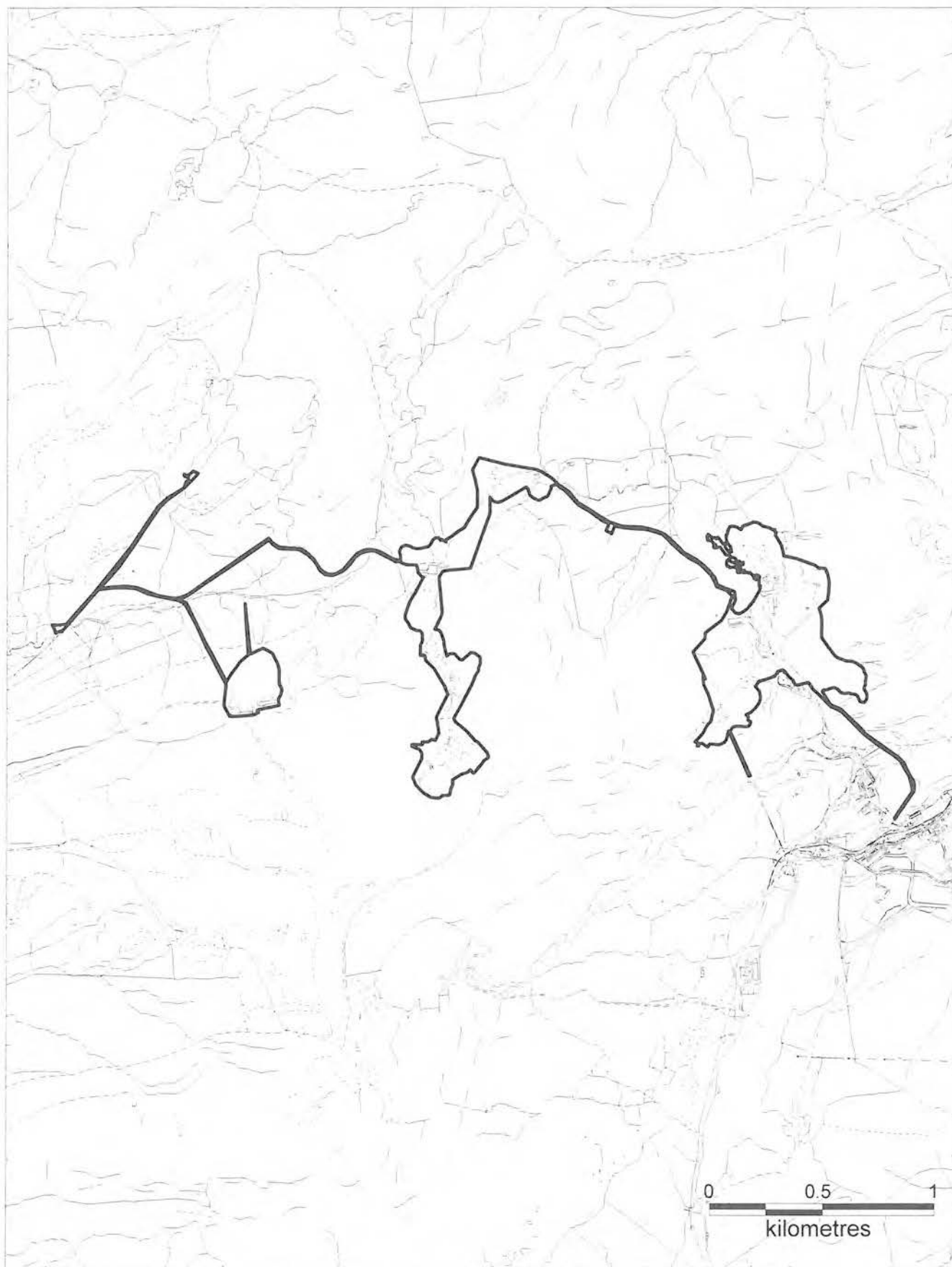
The local community is very well aware of its heritage, though no formal group is in existence. A new car park has recently been built as the starting point for a walk either up Cnicht or to the Rhosydd quarry, and there is an information board here. Despite some recent additions, the essence of the settlement remains unspoiled. The area lies within the Snowdonia National Park.



11 Croesor

View of part of the village, showing the chapel and Bob Owen's house (Ael-y-Bryn) next door, and the characteristic style of substantial stone-built houses.





### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
12 - Cwm Croesor - Rhosydd slate quarries and  
incline system

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## 12 Cwm Croesor & Rhosydd slate quarries and incline system

### *Historic background*

A mountain pass between Croesor and the vale of Ffestiniog which has been very extensively exploited for slate, largely in underground workings though some open pits were also opened. The main sites are Croesor Quarry, Rhosydd Quarry, Wrysgan Quarry and Cwmorthin Quarry. Detailed histories and archaeological studies have been published of Rhosydd and Cwmorthin. Operations continued intermittently from the 1820s to the 1990s; all are currently inactive.

The history of the quarry and its principal features have been described in detail by Lewis and Denton (1974). In addition, the slate quarrying landscapes of Blaenau Ffestiniog have been studied in considerable detail by GAT, funded by Cadw, and detailed descriptions of individual quarries (and their history) are to be found in the reports listed in section 10.3 of the bibliography.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *19<sup>th</sup>- century slate quarries and incline system*

A range of slate quarries which preserve the characteristic elements of working in the Ordovician rock of Merioneth. Rhosydd in particular as an industrial landscape preserves all the elements of slate exploitation, beginning with outcrop working, pit working and underground galleries. The comparative remoteness of the sites has left many landscape elements comparatively undisturbed, including water-catchment systems such as the syenite dam (SH 6541 4663) which powered the Blaen y Cwm power station, now in reuse. The quarry transport systems largely survive, and include not only the unusual 'Jacob's ladder' incline (SH 6577 4643 – 6537 4608) serving Rhosydd (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) but also the earlier mule tracks, cart-road systems and contour railways. The Wrysgan quarry incline and its tunnel above Tan y Grisau (SH 6781 4549) are spectacular landscape features.

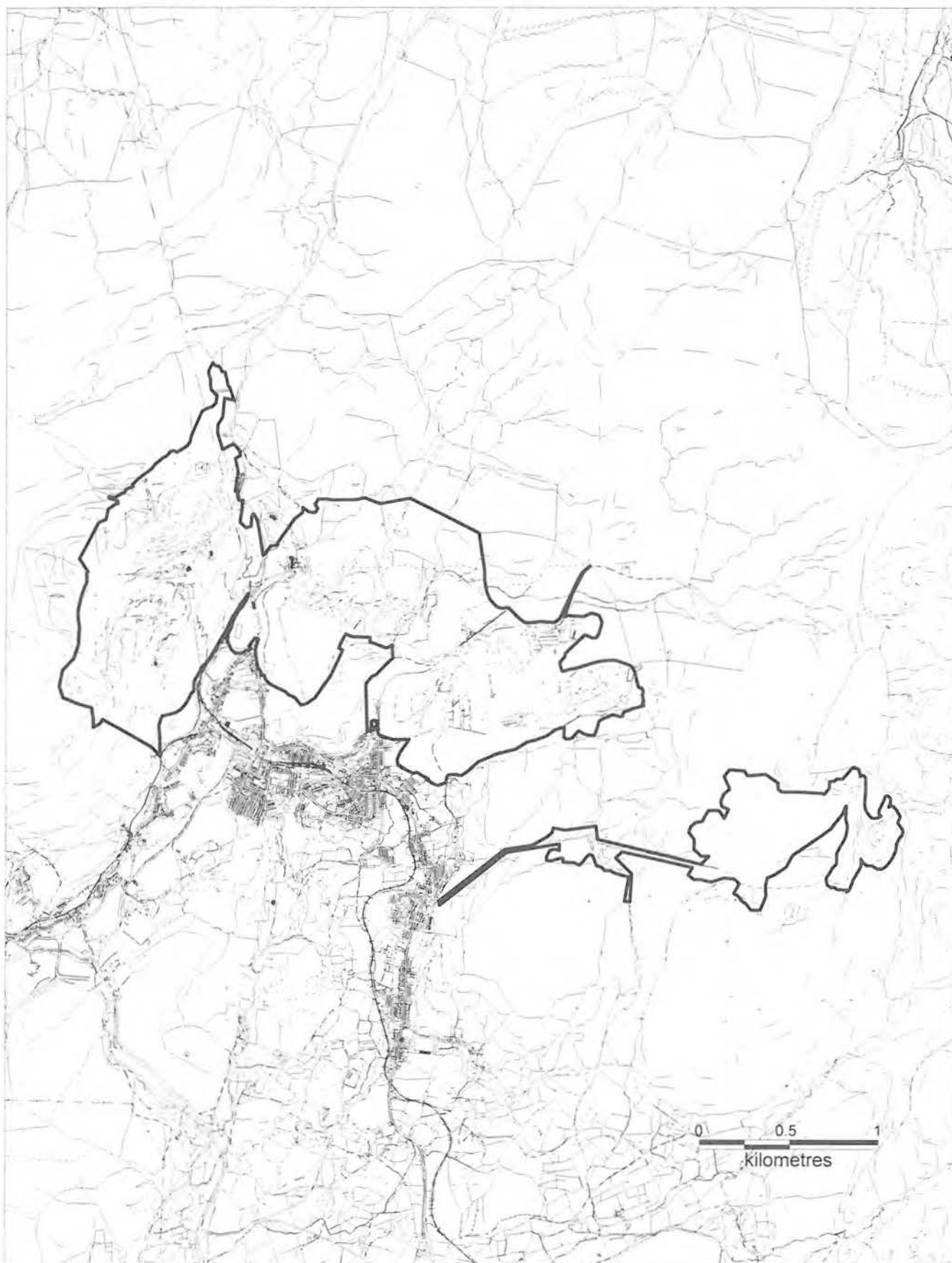
### *Conservation priorities and management*

The slate quarrying landscapes of Gwynedd have been studied in considerable detail by GAT, funded by Cadw (see section 10.3 of the bibliography), and most of the features considered to be of national important importance (such as the Rhosydd incline) have since been scheduled. These reports contain detailed conservation and management recommendations. Liason with the Industrial Archaeology courses held regularly at Plas Tan y Bwlch would continue to be useful as would ongoing discussions with Fforwm Tan y Bwlch and First Hydro (re. the power station). The area has been subject to a planning application for re-starting quarrying, but this was rejected and looks unlikely to be raised again. The area is particularly popular with walkers, and some form of information could be provided to inform the public and thus discourage damage. This area lies partly within and partly without the Snowdonia National Park.



12 Cwm Croesor & Rhosydd slate quarries and incline system

This aerial view of the central part of Rhosydd quarry shows its remote and precarious location at the top of Cwm Croesor.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
13 - Blaenau Ffestiniog slate quarries

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## 13 Blaenau Ffestiniog slate quarries (PRN 18213)

### *Historic background*

Slate quarries, owned variously by the Oakeley, Newborough and Gelli estates, the first of which was opened at Diffwys c. 1760, but which were only intensively capitalised with the arrival of William Turner at Diffwys in 1800, of Samuel Holland in 1821 and with the re-opening of Chwarel Lord in 1823. The industry continued to expand to the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and has largely contracted ever since. The former Oakeley Quarry, now worked as the Ffestiniog Slate Quarry, remains in active production. Some extraction continues at Llechwedd (Greaves Welsh Slate) and at Graig Ddu. The former underground workings at Llechwedd have been opened as a visitor attraction since 1962.

The slate quarrying landscapes of Blaenau Ffestiniog have been studied in considerable detail by GAT, funded by Cadw, and detailed descriptions of individual quarries (and their history) are to be found in the reports listed in section 10.3 of the bibliography.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *19<sup>th</sup>-century industrial sites*

The whole area around the northern edge of Blaenau Ffestiniog is an extensive industrial landscape. The two main quarries, which have seen little active production since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Diffwys and Votty and Bowydd, survive as relict landscapes in their own rights. They preserve a number of features identified in studies grant-aided by Cadw (see above) and those carried out by Plas Tan y Bwlch. Maenofferen Quarry is an unusual survivor in that it has only recently passed out of use (and may be revived) but has never been modernised, and continued to use its uphaulage incline, railway system and traditional slate mill. It is believed that all the equipment survives, though its condition is likely to have deteriorated. Many of the features on this site have been listed and a number scheduled.

The former Oakeley site, now trading as the Ffestiniog Slate Quarry under the management of Alfred McAlpine Slate Products, preserves many features dating to the 1850s and earlier. These are mostly concentrated on the southern part of the site, away from present workings. Llechwedd Quarry has recently demolished a range of nineteenth century structures, though others have been preserved as part of the Quarry Tours complex.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

The slate quarrying landscapes of Gwynedd have been studied in considerable detail by GAT, funded by Cadw (see section 10.3 of the bibliography), and most of the features considered to be of national important importance (such as the Rhosydd incline) have since been scheduled. These reports contain detailed conservation and management recommendations. Liason with the Industrial Archaeology courses held regularly at Plas Tan y Bwlch would continue to be useful as would ongoing discussions with Fforwm Tan y Bwlch, local authorities and quarry managers. Some areas may be subject to planning application for re-starting quarrying in the future. There should be an assumption in favour of the preservation of remaining 19<sup>th</sup>-century quarry structures. Projects to process slate waste should be monitored. The area lies outside the Snowdonia National Park.





13 Blaenau Ffestiniog slate quarries

The massive slate quarry tips really dominate the town, none more so than that belonging to the Oakeley quarry with its prominent incline.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
14 - Glaslyn Estuary - reclaimed land

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## 14 Glaslyn estuary – reclaimed land (PRN 18214)

### *Historic background*

Land assigned to William Alexander Madocks as part of the enclosure act of 1803, and drained by him as part of the process of building the various embankments. It is not clear what areas were drained by the earlier and smaller embankments, but the whole area was drained by the creation of the Cob, finally completed in 1813. Farms were created on the drained areas, and the area has been crossed by various industrial and public railways since 1842. Currently both the Pwllheli branch of Regional Railways and one arm of the revived Welsh Highland Railway operate within the area.

The story of the building of the Cob, and the reclamation of the traeth is described in considerable detail by E Beazley in her book 'Madocks & the wonder of Wales'.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *19<sup>th</sup>-century reclaimed land*

A flat area, though there are some outcrops which would have been islands pre-1813, and which may have supplied rock for the embankments as well as producing in one case ironstone and other minerals. The lanes across the reclaimed areas tend to be long and straight. Farmhouses are largely modern and concrete-built, though the farm-buildings themselves are often of 19<sup>th</sup>-century build, with walls of rounded local stone. Fields are regular in shape (due to the need for drainage ditches), but boundaries are a surprising mixture of stone walls, earth banks and post-and-wire fences.

Both standard- and narrow-gauge railways run through the area, and it is proposed that the Welsh Highland Railway from Caernarfon be extended to join on to existing Welsh Highland Railway along the 1920s trackbed in a number of years' time. A substantial extension to the existing railway museum at SH 5734 3960 is also proposed.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

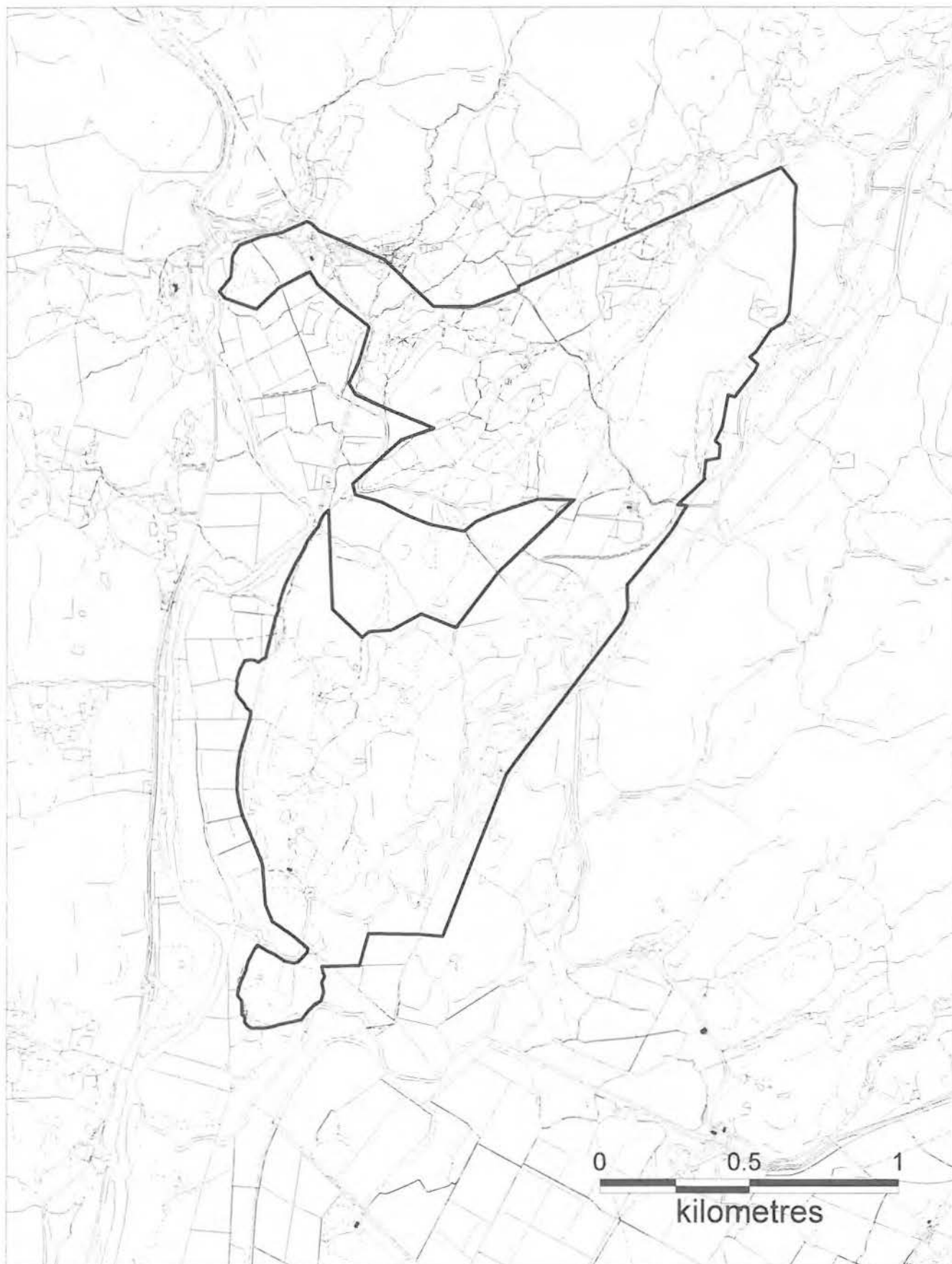
A priority must be the preservation of the open character of the area, to include preservation of surviving traditional farm buildings and field boundaries. Liaison with the Welsh Highland Railway over implications of proposed development might be beneficial. Most of this area lies outside the Snowdonia National Park.



14 Glaslyn estuary – reclaimed land

This aerial view shows part of the vast extent of reclaimed land formed by the building of the Cob in the foreground, with Porthmadog to the left, the Boston Works of the Festiniog Railway at the other end. In the centre right is the Minffordd quarry, with area 27 at the right edge of the photograph.





### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
15 - Woodland around Hafod Garegog

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*Historic background*

This small area at the top of the area of reclaimed Traeth and at the former mouth of the Afon Glaslyn, contains a number of small, but significant sub-medieval buildings and is characterised by ancient oak woodland growing on small rocky knolls.

Hafod Garregog was owned from the fifteenth century to the eighteenth century by Rhys Goch Eryri and his descendants. John Wyn Hughes, the last of the family to hold Hafod Garregog, married an illegitimate under-age child, as a result of which the marriage was declared void and the estate went to cousins, the Priestley family, of Leeds. Hafod Garregog appears in the Land tax assessment, from 1771 to 1775, and a Mr. Hughes is indicated as resident in these years; thereafter the owning family is shown as receiving the parish tithes.

The area has an interesting woodland history and character. Information on the sale of timber is scanty. In the 1760s Drws y Coed mine paid £2 13/- for an axle for the stamp mill, implying that it was known as a source of timber, but as is often the case with comparatively small estates and freeholds, the documentary evidence does not survive. Immediately adjacent to Hafod Garregog is Tafarn Telyrni, or Talyrni, near to which, according to tradition, sailors used to land until the building of the cob. It is therefore an obvious location for goods to be loaded, and timber might also have been used to build small vessels.

*Key historic landscape characteristics**Sub-medieval houses, cottage, woods, paths, islands*

The present house of Hafod Garegog is two-storeyed and rubble-built with a central block of c. 1600 with 18<sup>th</sup> century additions. The site altogether includes the house, a water mill, a cottage and a barn, all of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and some late farm buildings. Nearby is a trackway known as Llwybr Rhys Goch, which leads to an old bridge. Other buildings in the vicinity include Talyrni (see above), also 17<sup>th</sup> century, and two cottages, Cefn Coch and Pen y Bont.

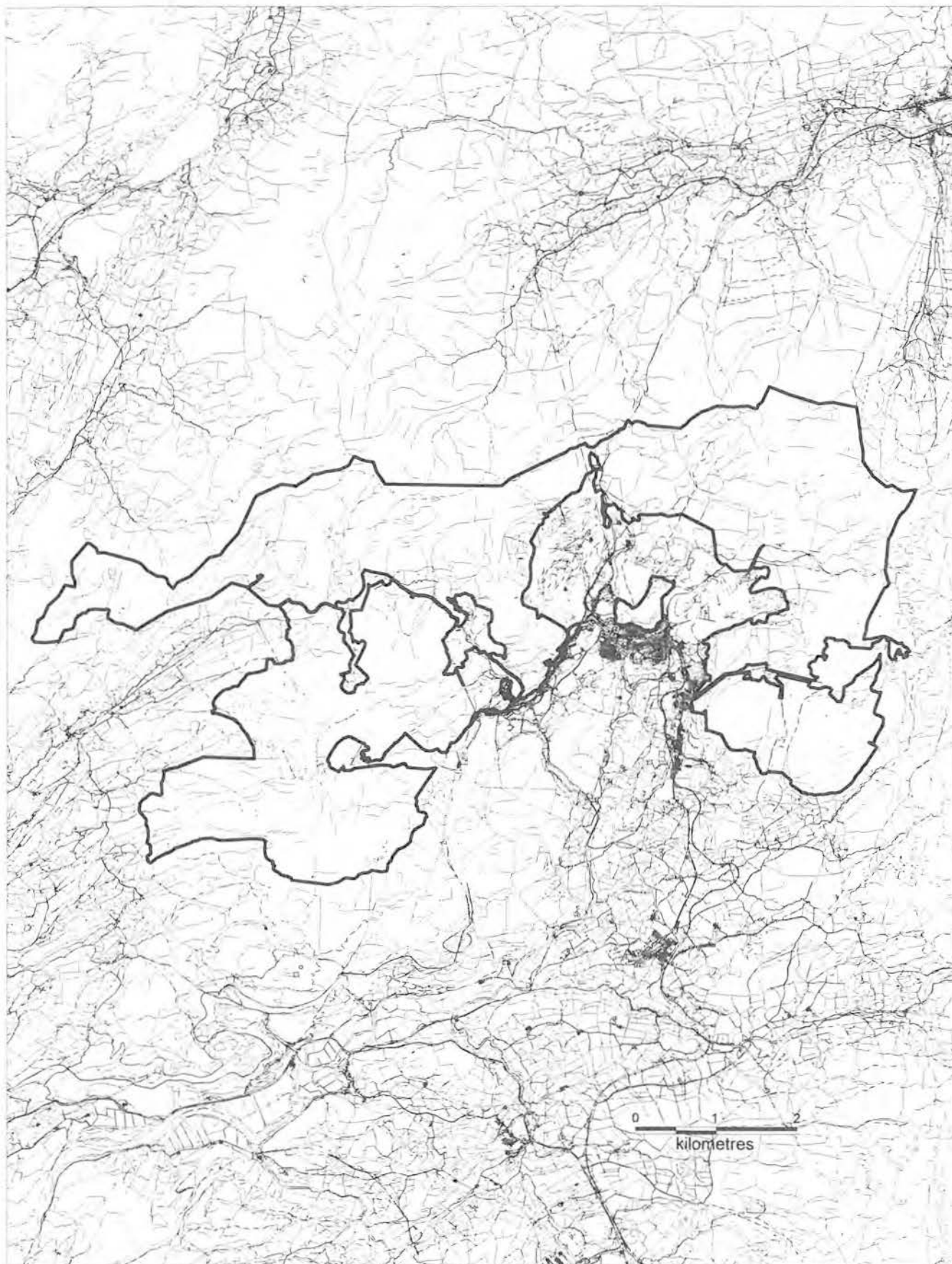
The woodland occupies low rocky hills and ridges bordering the once estuarine flats of the Afon Glaslyn. It has a canopy mainly of sessile oak with birch as sub-dominant, rowan and a few beech. The understorey is generally sparse and mainly of holly and hazel. Hollows within the area interrupt the woodland canopy, with pockets of acidic wetland, the largest of these forming the substantial oligotrophic lake, Hafod y Llyn. There are historical reasons for supposing this to be an area long under continuous woodland cover; most western oakwoods of this type occur on steeper ground. Regeneration is rather weak.

*Conservation priorities and management*

Much of the area has recently been surveyed by GAT (with an ecologist), at the request of the Forestry Commission. The full report is GAT unpublished report 441 which is lodged in the SMR. Many of the buildings (including Hafod Garegog) are listed. Preservation of the woodland (in part an SSSI) is another priority, and so there is scope for co-operation between several bodies and agencies (Cadw, CCW and Forestry Commission). Most of this area lies outside the Snowdonia National Park.



15 Woodland around Hafod Garegog  
The important oak woodland at the bottom of Aberglaslyn is shown in the centre of this view.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
16 - Upper slopes of the Moelwyn range

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## 16 Upper slopes of the Moelwyn range (PRN 18216)

### *Historic background*

This is a large, remote and inhospitable upland area, which includes several high peaks, notably Manod Mawr, Manod Bach and Moelwyn Mawr. There are the remains of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century slate quarries (for example Fron-boeth quarry on the south-western slopes of Moelwyn Mawr - see photograph) and associated infrastructure (such as engine houses, inclines and tracks) around the base of all of the mountains, as well as some large enclosure walls, but beyond these there are virtually no indications of permanent settlement or attempts at subsistence.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *Unenclosed mountain, traces of quarrying*

The area is chiefly characterised by having almost no significant features of historic occupation or exploitation, beyond traces of quarrying and some enclosure walls.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

Some of the area lies within, and some outside, Snowdonia National Park. Preservation of the open, bleak, untamed character of the area must be the priority. The slate quarrying remains can probably be largely left to benign neglect. Significant features have already been identified and scheduled (see above - recommendations for areas 12 and 13).



16 Upper slopes of the Moelwyn range  
View across to Moelwyn Mawr, showing the bleak mountain top and the intricate network of slate quarry workings and inclines around its base.





### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
17 - Llyn Stwlan-Llyn Ystradau industrial area

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*Historic background*

An area which was developed initially particularly in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century for slate and later on for zinc and setts (see caption for photograph). The Ffestiniog pumped storage scheme which dominates this character area was the first such in Britain: work began in 1957 and was completed in 1963. The upper reservoir was formed by enlarging Llyn Stwlan by a concrete dam, and the lower (1033ft below) was created by damming the Afon Ystradau near the satellite village of Tan-y-Grisiau. Two vertical shafts inside Moelwyn link the two to allow the system to work. The power station, on the west side of the reservoir, is of steel-framed construction faced with local stone, and was probably the largest stone building to be constructed in Wales since the times of Edward I. Care was taken with landscaping: the spoil from the upper dam was placed in the reservoir, and the face of the lower dam is covered by rocks from the excavation.

*Key historic landscape characteristics**19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>-century industrial landscape*

The area has been quarried for slate (principally at Moelwyn (SH 661442), with outlying quarries at Bwlch Stwlan (SH 656442) and Chwarel Twm Ffeltiwr (SH 671446), and a quarry for setts at Brookes' Quarry (SH681439). The sites of these quarries are evident, but none has bequeathed a significant landscape impact (again, see photograph), though the rake of inclines from the slate quarry to the Ffestiniog Railway is an impressive feature.

The pumped storage scheme, however, has had a significant landscape impact, involving a substantial dam at Llyn Ystradau and a very high dam, Llyn Stwlan (SH 6661 4440), visible from miles away (ironically, particularly from the A470 when travelling north past Trawsfynydd power station) despite everything. The power station on the lower lake has been described as 'an exercise in 1960s brutalism'. From the air, the artificial lakes are also dominant landscape features. A heavily-engineered road leads from here to the upper dam.

*Conservation priorities and management*

It is understood that the pumped storage scheme will function for the foreseeable future. Attempts to ameliorate the landscape impact of the dams have already been made, and the power station is not widely visible. Interestingly, like Trawsfynydd, this area lies within the Snowdonia National Park (and post-dates its designation).



17 Llyn Stwlan/Llyn Ystradau industrial area

View of (the lower) Llyn Ystradau reservoir, with the dam on the left and the power station (opened in 1957) on the right-hand shore. Llyn Stwlan is away up to the right out of view, although some of the inclines associated with it and other workings are just visible in the snow above the power station.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
18 - Maentwrog

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## 18 Maentwrog (PRN 18218)

### *Historic background*

Maentwrog's origin is probably due to the fact that it lies at the highest navigable point on the Dwyryd, and the point where the river is crossed by a several routes, including probably the Roman road which comes down from Tomen y Mur at the place known as Felinrhyd (see below). For this reason, from the early 18<sup>th</sup>-century if not earlier, the immediate area became the entrepôt for the valley, with the export of timber, attested from 1739, but particularly after the development of the slate industry from the 1760s onwards.<sup>44</sup> The present village is largely a creation of the Oakeley family, and bears many of the classic features of a gentry-sponsored estate village. The village itself is visible from the Oakeley family's Plas Tan y Bwlch home and was developed by them in the nineteenth century on the back of profits from the slate industry. The church (SH 6641 4055) and the vicarage (SH 6647 4067) date from around 1800,<sup>45</sup> and the village itself seems to have been constructed in its present form in the early and mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

As with Plas Tan y Bwlch itself and its immediate environs, it is emphatically an exercise in creating a visually attractive settlement that reflected well on its owners, and its buildings preserve many decorative features and details. Its several chapels are all built in locations which make them invisible from the Plas. The older part of the village largely comprises a terraced row of houses, shops and a public house along one side of the road only (the other side being formed by a steep hill slope, with some buildings above the level of the road). The buildings are in the same style, massive grand structures in local stone with large windows and Georgian doors. The small housing estate to the south, built up the hill slope, is more modern.

Interestingly, the Meirioneth lay subsidy rolls of 1293-4 records that Maentwrog had a *hosteler* (William Speder) which was unique in the county: similar people, for example in Nefyn, were referred to 'y gwestwr' and this implies that Maentwrog had a 'hostelry' rather than a lowly tavern (and already perhaps had a foot in the tourist trade!).

Maentwrog is also mentioned in the fourth branch of the Mabinogi, Math fab Mathonwy. After crossing Traeth Mawr when fleeing south from the army of Math, Pryderi is killed in single combat by Gwydion at Felinrhyd (remembered in a place-name c. a mile to the west), and he is subsequently buried at Maentwrog. Another legend concerns Twrog casting a huge boulder off the cliff above which still exists as a standing stone next to the church tower.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *19<sup>th</sup>-century estate village*

A village directly sponsored by the Oakeley family and designed in such a way as not only to be visible from the Plas terraces but also to reflect credit on the estate. One of the village's few nonconformist chapel lies a little way to the north of the village, others to the east; none is directly visible from the plas. Buildings vary in date from the regency to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, but there is much deliberately picturesque vernacular architecture, making particular use of the large slabs from the quarry at Gelli Grin (see also area 29).

The area includes the trace of the short Cemlyn canal, built as the entrepôt for Diffwys quarry slates and used as such until 1868.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

Preservation of the distinctive character (architectural style and appearance) of the settlement is a priority. Any new buildings should be discouraged from using inappropriate building materials. The area lies within the Snowdonia National Park.

<sup>44</sup> Lewis pp. 17-22

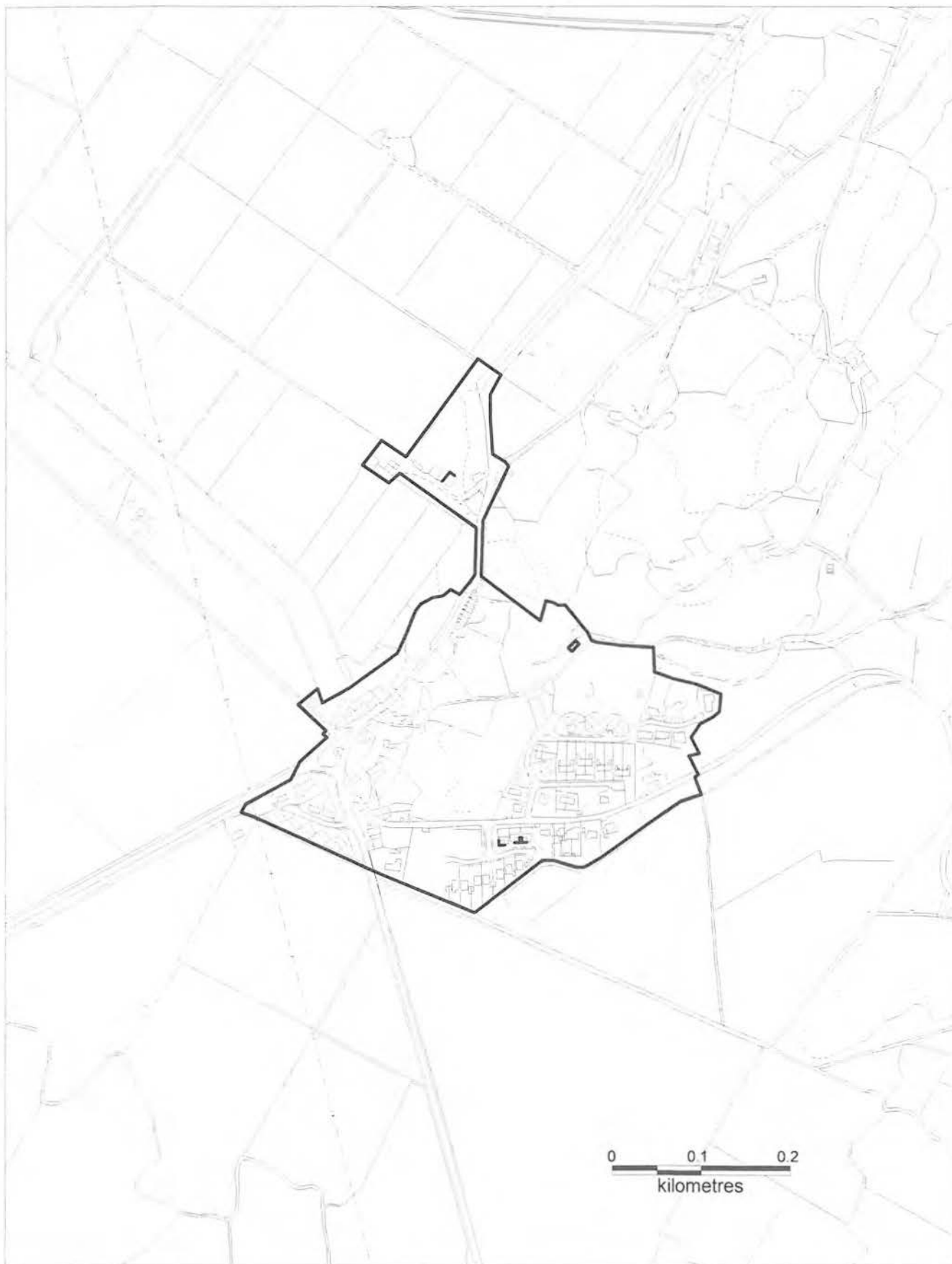
<sup>45</sup> Gwyndaf Hughes, Merfyn Williams, *House on a Hill/Y Plas: Hanes Plas Tan y Bwlch a'i Bobl* (Penrhyndeudraeth, 1989), pp. 13-26.





18 Maentwrog

View looking across the Dwyrdd which shows the settlement hugging the steep cliffs.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
19 - Garreg

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## 19 Garreg (PRN 18219)

### *Historic background*

A small settlement which may in-part have owed its existence to its role as a landing place from the sea before the construction of the Cob. The village developed largely as a series of terraced houses in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Garreg Terrace and the very substantial public house (Brondanw Arms), built of rubble construction with a continuous slate roof, dates to the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations by Clough Williams-Ellis; while Cyffin Terrace is a very distinctive long late 19<sup>th</sup> terrace with later additions (see photograph). All of these are listed buildings. The village now tends to function as a dormitory for Porthmadog, Penrhynedeudraeth and beyond.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

*19<sup>th</sup>-century estate village, work of C Williams-Ellis*

A village still partly owned by the Brondanw estate, whose distinctive pale blue paintwork is to be seen in many locations. Clough Williams-Ellis war memorial is a prominent feature, designed in 1922 on a site which he had previously earmarked for the village hall (SH 6123 4171). Other traces of Williams-Ellis whimsy survive in the immediate vicinity such as the stone 'beehive' by the side of the road. Many of these are listed. Modern housing has tended to be built 'around the corner' to the south-east of the older terraces, on the hillslope which rises above the floodplain.

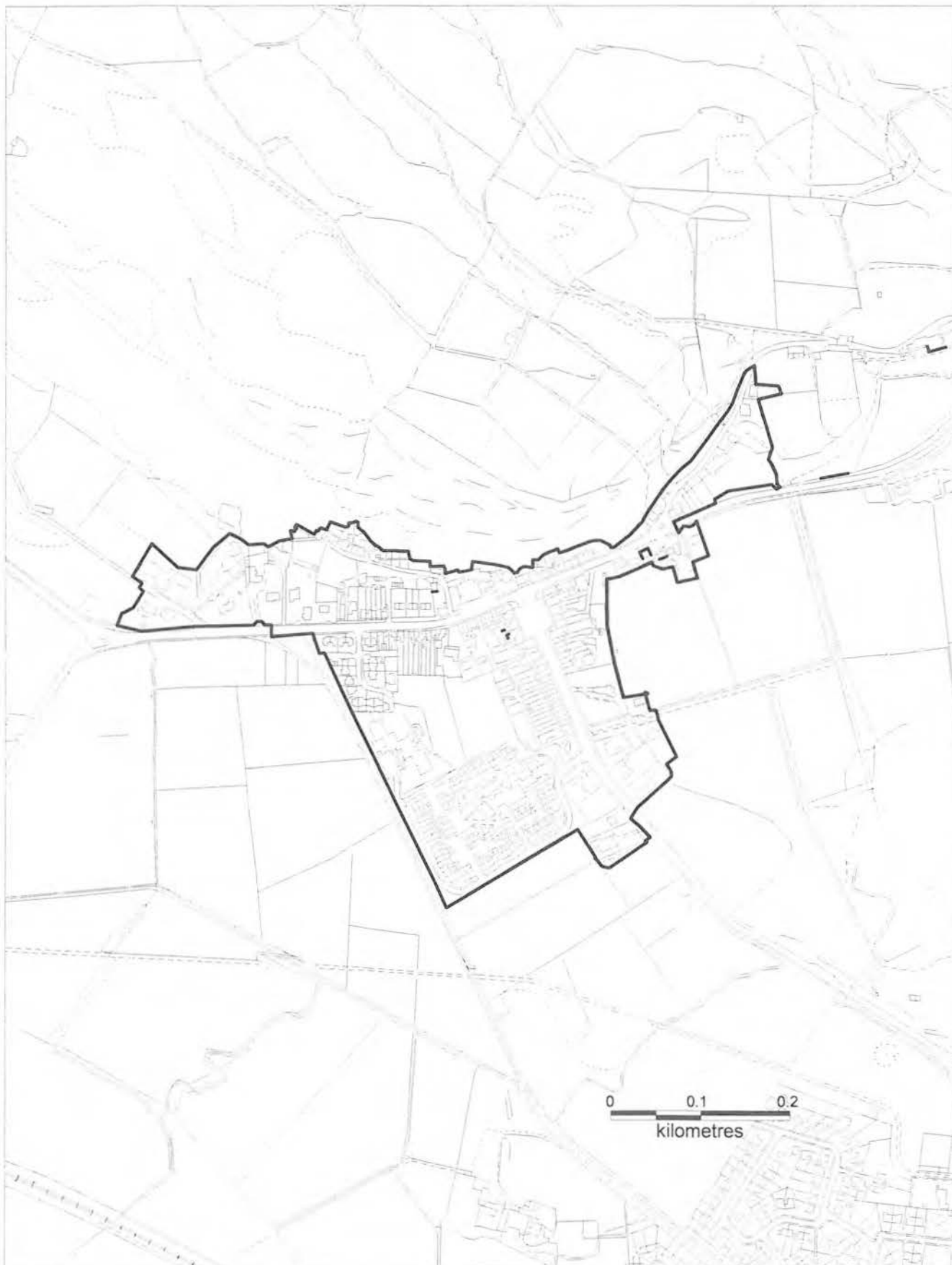
### *Conservation priorities and management*

As already stated, much of the village (terraced housing and other structures) is listed, and much is owned by the Brodanw Estate. Preservation of this essential 'estate-linked' character of the settlement (including the distinctive colour of much of the paintwork and the Williams-Ellis whimsy) is essential. Encouragement should be given to the use of the distinctive vernacular building material. Co-operation with the Estate would be beneficial. This settlement lies partly within and partly outside the Snowdonia National Park.



19 Garreg

View of Cyffin Terrace, on the road out towards Croesor, a row of seven late 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages, all of which are listed.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
20 - Tremadoc

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## 20 Tremadoc (PRN 18220)

### *Historic background*

Tremadoc is an outstanding example of a planned urban community, created by William Alexander Madocks on land recovered from the Traeth Mawr by the first embankment, of 1800. Designed as a composite whole, with three main streets leading to and from a central square (see photograph), it established a pattern of Regency-style architecture within the area that lasted well into the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century. Amongst its claims to fame are the first Welsh chapel with a classical facade, based on Inigo Jones's design for the Covent Garden chapel in London, and the first Gothic revival church in Wales.

A settlement, known initially as Pentre Gwaelod, was in existence here by 1805, and the central Market Square was built between 1806 and 1808. Capel Peniel was opened in 1811. Other dwellings were added along Dublin Street in the later 19<sup>th</sup>-century and houses were constructed on the site of the 'bason' (the canal wharf) in the 1980s.

Madocks's own home, Tan-yr-Allt, later home to Shelley and to several generations of local quarry-owners, is a regency adaptation of an existing building and lies just outside the town (area 4). T E Lawrence, the famous author and soldier, was born in a house in the town which has since been turned into a Christian Mountain Centre. An active local regeneration group, Cyfeillion Cadw Tremadoc, has been instrumental in preserving the village's architectural character.

For further information, there is a detailed account of the planning, layout, building and early history of Tremadoc in E Beazley's book, 'Madocks and the wonder of Wales'.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *Early 19<sup>th</sup>-century estate village*

As well as the large square and the early nineteenth century buildings which surround it, there are a number of later 19<sup>th</sup>-century buildings in the immediate vicinity. The church of 1812 is believed to be the oldest Gothic revival church in Wales (and stands nearly opposite the earliest classical chapel building in Wales).

The chapel remains in use, but the church is currently undergoing conversion to an arts centre. All the houses are occupied, there is a shop and two lively pubs in addition to the hotel. The buildings which form part of Madocks' original scheme survive, though in a number of cases the stonework has been obscured by pebble-dashing, and a late twentieth-century garage has been tacked on to the street front of the buildings on Dublin Road at SH 5611 4017.

The village contains a number of prominent industrial features. The largest is the very substantial textile mill constructed c. 1807 at SH 5639 4032 immediately to the east of the square, with its surviving workers' cottages. This is currently empty.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

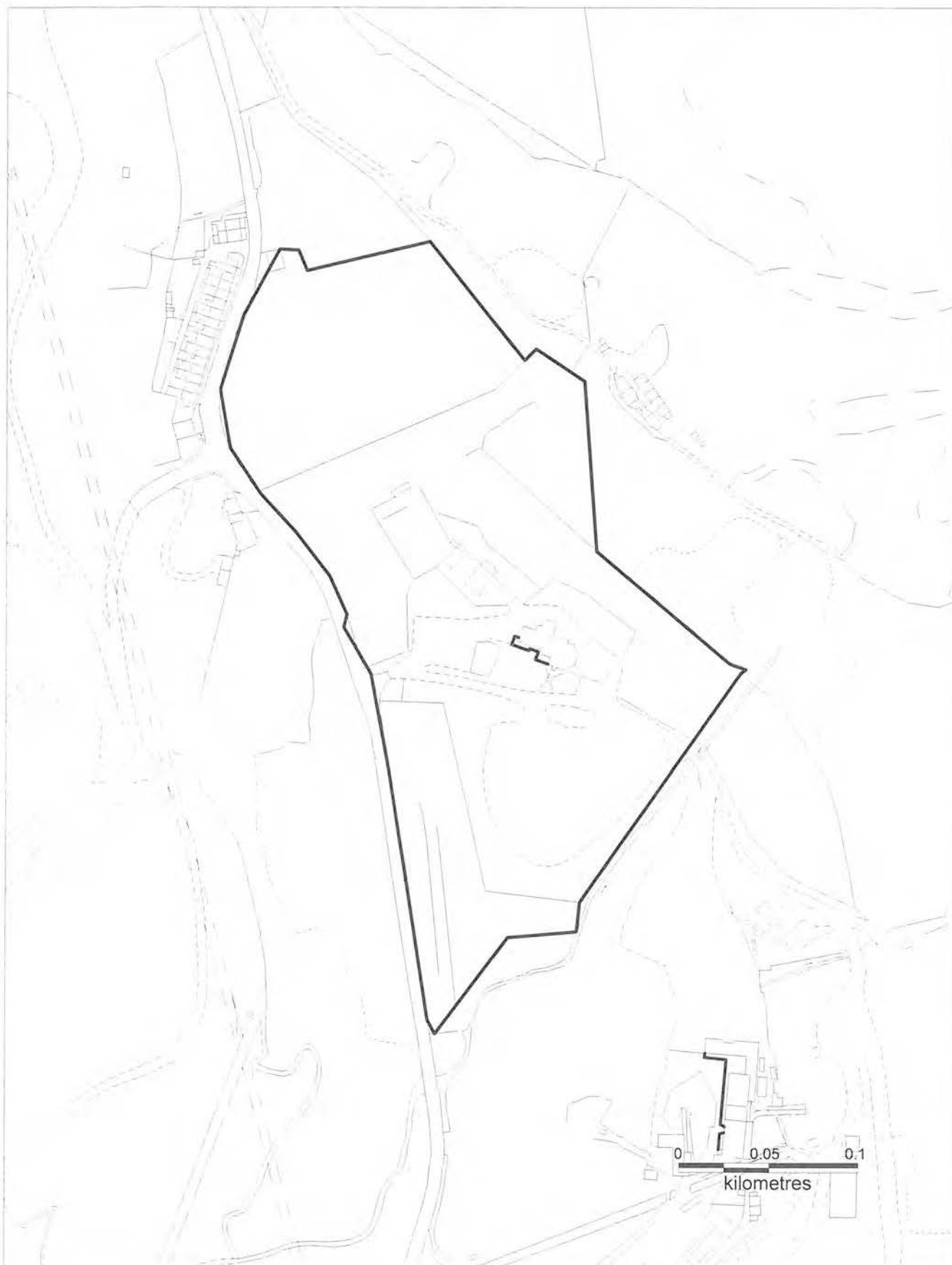
Virtually all of the buildings in Tremadoc are listed, and the whole is a Conservation Area. Preservation of the, largely-unspoiled, overall character of the buildings and the lay-out of settlement is the priority. Liason with Cyfeillion Cadw Tremadoc will be necessary and helpful, and the adaptive re-use of the industrial features (such as the mill) should be encouraged.

This area lies outside the Snowdonia National Park.



## 20 Tremadoc

View of the northern end of the piazza-like square, the focal point of the planned town. London Street is behind and Dublin Street heads off to the left-hand side (leaving no doubt as to the town's intended position in the wider transport landscape intended by Madocks). Top left is the Madocks Arms hotel, while the Town Hall, intended to be the principal building in the town is to its right.



## Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
21 - Plas Weunydd

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## 21 Plas Weunydd (PRN 18221)

### *Historic background*

An industrialist's house and garden, constructed in 1870 for the Greaves family, tenants of Llechwedd slate quarry, on the site of Ty Crwn, an earlier agricultural dwelling. The site lies on the very edge of the slate tips, appropriately, and is well-hidden.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *19<sup>th</sup>-century industrialist's house and garden.*

A substantial late 19<sup>th</sup>-century industrialist's house and 'Alpine' garden, making extensive use of pine trees. The house itself (SH 6983 4729) has been extensively altered to become a restaurant and exhibition centre for the Quarry Tours business and for Llechwedd Quarry. Most of the garden has become a car- and coach-park.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

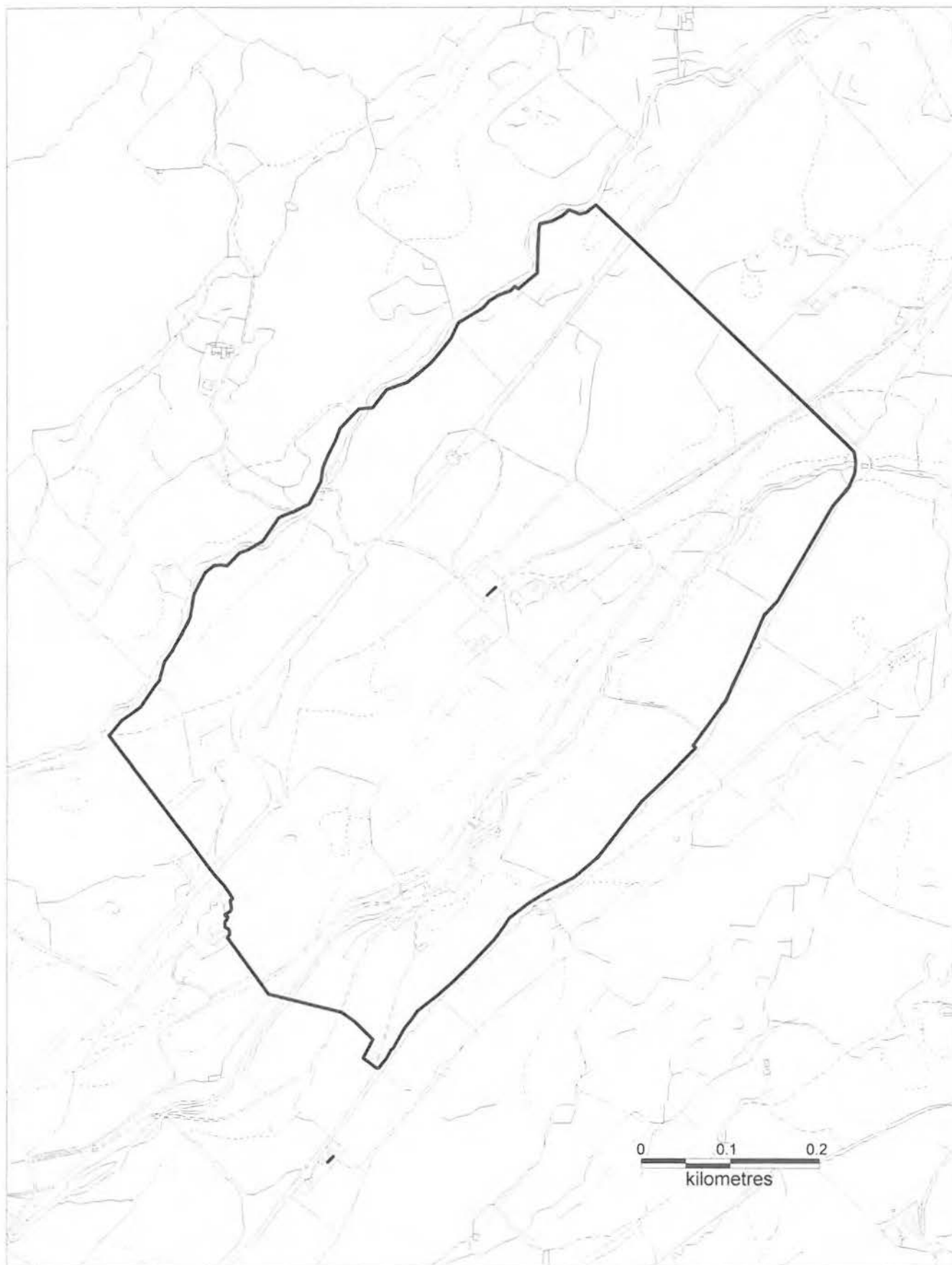
Encouragement could be given to further dialogue between Llechwedd authorities and the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust to ensure the continued existence of what remains of an Alpine character of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century industrialist's garden within an industrial context. The area lies outside the Snowdonia National Park.



## 21 Plas Weunydd

View of the house in its present setting, with the grounds largely landscaped into a car park to serve the present function of the building as the Llechwedd Slate Caverns Visitor Centre and car park. A few specimen trees survive around the edges of the tarmac, and rhododendron has escaped into the surrounding area.





### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
22 - Parc

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*Historic background*

This extremely interesting site has a group of four successive houses, with two large barns and associated buildings. The first house, probably dating from the middle of the sixteenth century, has been demolished, but the small enclosed garden opposite its site, which may be contemporary, survives. The second and third houses may have been roughly contemporary, of the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century; one is now derelict but the other has been restored. The fourth house, dated 1671, but probably built earlier, faces the other three and is in good condition. There is also a sixteenth-century gatehouse. The houses were built by the Anwyl family and the estate remained in the family until it was sold in the eighteenth century. It was eventually acquired by Clough Williams-Ellis, who turned a drumhouse on a quarry incline in the park into a summer house and reversed the staircase in the derelict third house, so that it leads into a part which still exists, but made few other alterations.

In addition to the Anwyl family, particularly the cultured and well-educated William Lewis Anwyl, there are associations with Moses Kellow, the electrical engineer (see also Croesor, area 11).

*Key historic landscape characteristics**post-medieval unit houses; early gardens*

The houses, which have distinctive tall stone chimneys, are grouped round a courtyard at the top of a steep valley side, with two large barns and other outbuildings nearby and a third barn, Beudy Newydd, dated 1666, on the south-western edge of the park. The gatehouse is a short distance to the north-east. The main group of buildings is near the centre of the park, which is roughly rectangular and mostly occupies a ridge between two streams (see photograph). It contains the remains of three probably medieval long huts, and it has been suggested that the mound on the viewpoint to the south-west of the houses is a round barrow, though it is more likely to be a deliberately constructed garden feature.

Apart from the small garden, steeply terraced out over the top of the slope, which probably belonged to the earliest house, the garden areas are now neglected. However, they remain extremely interesting, as there are three terraces retained by massively-built stone walls to the south of the old drive and further earthen terraces to the north of it. These appear very likely to be contemporary with the later houses and may be an attempt by William Lewis Anwyl to create something similar to the Italian renaissance gardens he knew of through his contacts and reading. There is also the site of a small, square kitchen garden, later in date, immediately to the south-west of the houses.

A *cywydd* (panegyric) on the death of William Lewis Anwyl in 1642, by the bard Huw Machno, mentions his 'new house of immense construction' (probably the fourth house) and also gardens, orchards, parks and 'fair towers'. Even allowing for poetic licence, it is clear that a designed landscape of note, albeit on a small scale, existed at the time.

The area also includes part of the course of the non-statutory Croesor tramway. As well as a high stone revetted embankment which carried a level railway, it includes the upper Park (sic) incline and the top part of the lower Park incline, a rake of two counterbalanced planes which took the tramway down to the level of the Glaslyn estuary. The upper drumhouse, though constructed c. 1863 as a standard 'through' drumhouse, was rebuilt by Clough Williams Ellis as a banqueting house for Lady Aberconway on the lines of the Marchogion drumhouse on the Penrhyn Quarry Railway of 1798-1801.

The area further includes the unusually complete remains of Parc slab quarry (SH 626- 436-), managed by Moses Kellow. Pre-dating this quarry (it is overlain by the tramway and tips) but possibly utilised by it is a well-made, hard-surfaced track which climbs at an even gradient from the old coastline, up the Maesgwm valley, to the north eastern edge of the park, where it disappears.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

Parc is included in the Cadw Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales Part 1: Parks and Gardens as PGW(Gd) 35 (GWY), where it is listed grade II\* (p 230). The house and some of the associated buildings and structures are also Listed Buildings. Liaison with the tenant (Richard Haslam), the Plas Brondanw estate as well as the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust is recommended for future management. This area lies within the Snowdonia National Park.



22 Parc

View showing the prominent position of the remaining parts of the house on the ridge above the river, with the main, neglected garden remains on the hill slope below.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
23 - Prenteg

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## 23     Prenteg     (PRN 18223)

### *Historic background*

A small, mainly 19<sup>th</sup>-century village which may owe its existence to its position at the foot of a road from Cwmystradllyn, and which may represent an early landing-point on Traeth Mawr. There have been several additions to the housing stock in the latter 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *19<sup>th</sup>-century village*

A small village situated on the edge of the former Glaslyn estuary. It includes a chapel and a pub, the Glaslyn Hotel, on the former Traeth, and houses disposed around the road to Cwmystradllyn. The dwellings are mostly of 19<sup>th</sup>-century construction, with some later additions, but little of note.

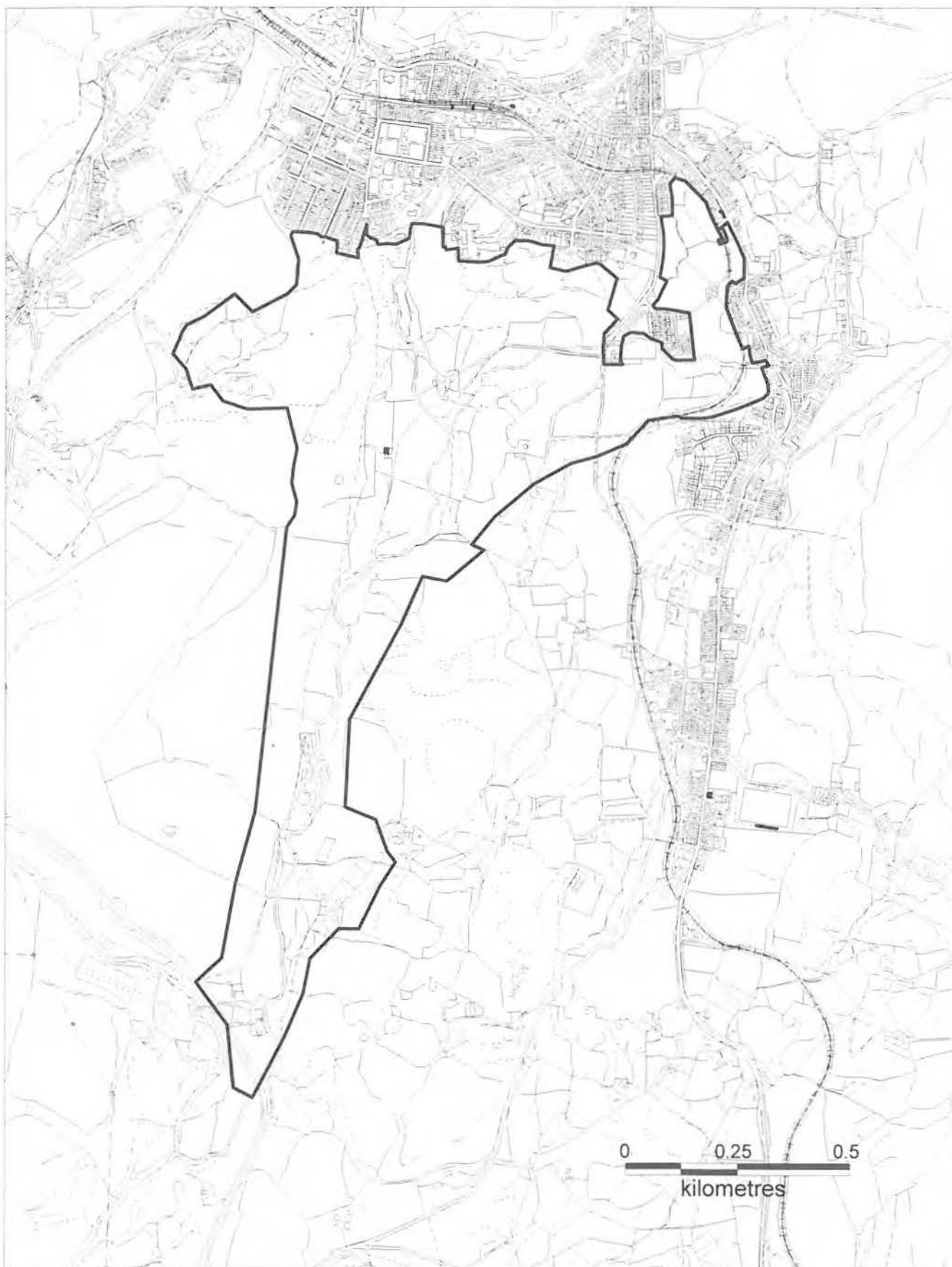
### *Conservation priorities and management*

Preservation of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century character of the settlement should be a priority. This area lies partly within and partly outside the Snowdonia National Park.



23 Prenteg

View showing some of the houses in this small, mainly 19<sup>th</sup> century settlement.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
24 - Cwm Bowydd-Gelli

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## 24 Cwm Bowydd-Gelli (PRN 18224)

### *Historic background*

Formerly part of Cwm Bowydd and Maenofferen farms, this area lies immediately to the south of the town of Blaenau Ffestiniog. Cwm Bowydd farm formed part of the Newborough estate, and Gelli farmhouse part of the Peniarth estate, from which it was purchased in 1800 by William Turner, a slate quarry manager from the Lake District.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *Improved pasture, unenclosed hillslopes, woodland*

The slopes below the *blaenau* were too steep for building on, and so the southern limits to the town of Blaenau Ffestiniog as it expanded in the 1860s-80s were naturally defined. The area remains largely undeveloped today, although some housing development has spread downhill.

The main historic interest of the area are two sub-medieval farmhouses, Cwm Bowydd, built in the late seventeenth century and extended in the nineteenth (SH 6995 4528), and Gelli (SH 7054 4549), which are set within an area of improved pasture through which the Afon Bowydd flows. The area is situated within a natural bowl below the town of Blaenau Ffestiniog, and contains evidence of prehistoric settlement. Some of the steeper slopes contain unmanaged woodland.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

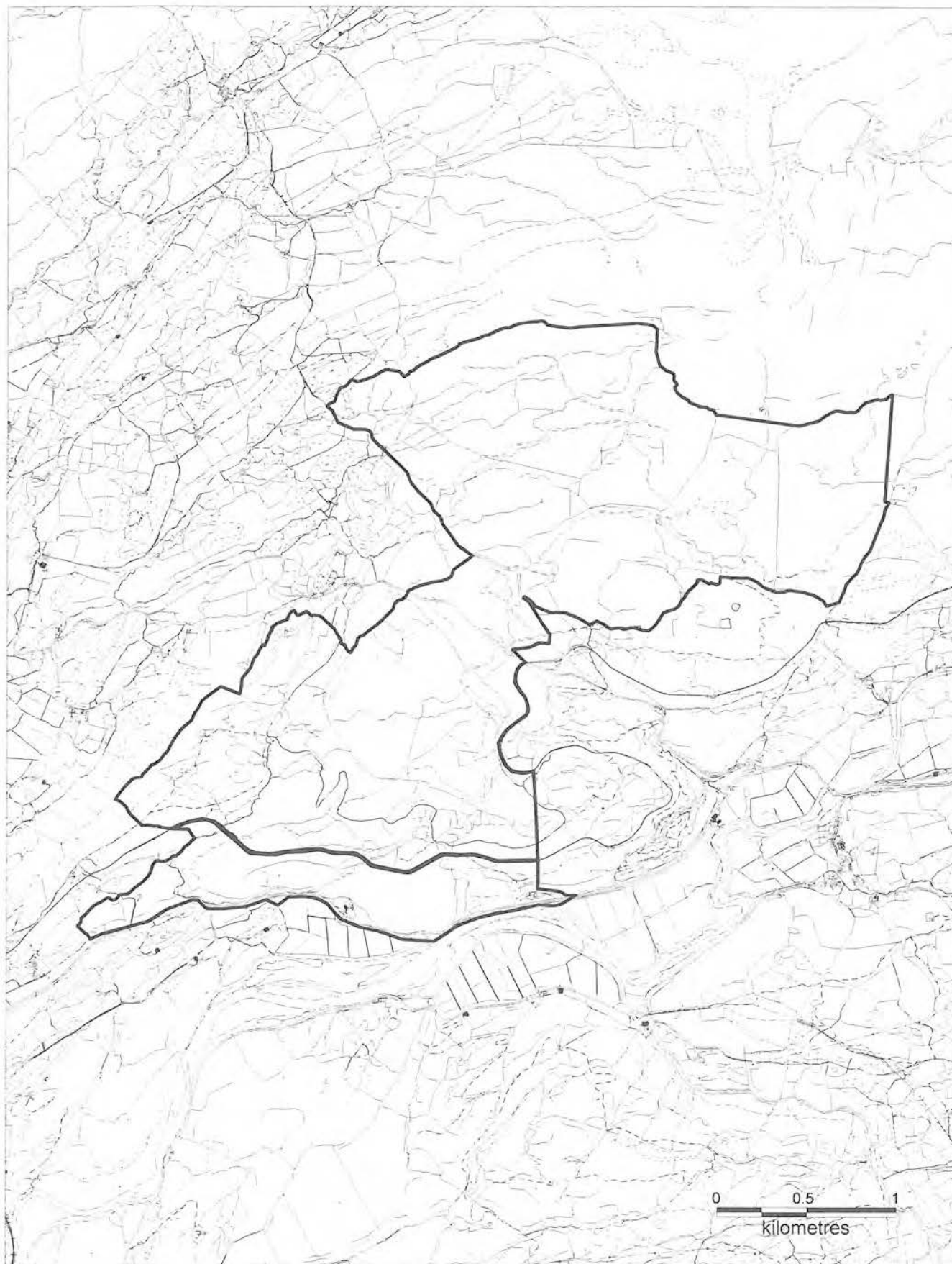
Cwm Bowydd farmhouse is a listed building (grade II). Preservation of the open and undeveloped character of this edge-of-urban area, especially the woodland, should be a priority.



24 Cwm Bowydd-Gelli

View of the rural area immediately below Blaenau Ffestiniog town, showing the partly untamed woodland with the agricultural enclosures beyond





## Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
25 - Coed Llyn y Garnedd

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### *Historic background*

An area of largely 20<sup>th</sup> century forestry, incorporating some earlier ancient and semi-natural woodland and overlying in part earlier field enclosures and some relict archaeology (hut circle and long hut settlement).

No historical research has been carried out on this particular woodland, but some general facts can be gleaned. In the eighteenth century the felling of timber formed an important part of the local economy around Ffestiniog, and though documentary sources typically have far more to do with the sale and transport of timber than with the management of the woodlands themselves, enough evidence has survived to give some indication of the scope of the trade and the sources exploited.

Timber – hardwoods, especially oak – was being exported from the heavily-wooded slopes of Ffestiniog and Maentwrog. Though the trade may have begun earlier, the first record dates from 1739, and concerns the Pengwern estate (see area 28), when it was specified that timber to the value of £400 was to be felled. Sir Richard Colt Hoare, in 1801, describes making his way from Tan y Bwlch to Cwmorthin through Cymerau (see paragraph 8.2.2) for description.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the Vale of Ffestiniog had suffered much deforestation. Already by 1763 it was reported of Merioneth that ‘this county has been much drained of her timber’. By the nineteenth century as many as 6,400 trees a year were offered for sale. Further pointers to the importance of the timber trade are the individuals who were clearly acting as timber merchants. With the revival of shipbuilding in the northern part of Cardigan Bay in the late eighteenth century, local timber came to be needed in ever-greater quantities. This remained the case until the 1820s, when Porthmadog shipwrights began to use Mawddach timber instead.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *Woodland, forestry, underlying relict archaeology*

The area covered by forestry or woodland in the area between Moelwyn Mawr and the Dwyryd is massive and diverse. The higher, upland areas (the northern part of this area) are mainly 20<sup>th</sup> century conifer, while the true ancient and semi-natural woodland (some of it SSSI) lies lower down and nearer to the Dwyryd. Much of this was part of the plas Tan y Bwlch estate, and thus also has many specimen and exotic trees as well.

Within the older woodland, there are some scattered relict remains of hut circles, long huts and more recent cottages, along with stone-built field walls which could be relatively ancient. There is a strong possibility of much medieval archaeology surviving under the afforestation, especially in view of the frequency of *hafod* place-names. These include Hafod y Mynydd at SH 6362 4092; Hafod Boeth at SH 6390 4130; Hafotty at SH 61312 4325 and Hafod Uchaf at SH 6390 4335. There is scope for further survey, along the lines of that carried out by GAT in other woods within this area such as Hafod Garegog (area 15) and Cymerau Isaf (part of area 28).

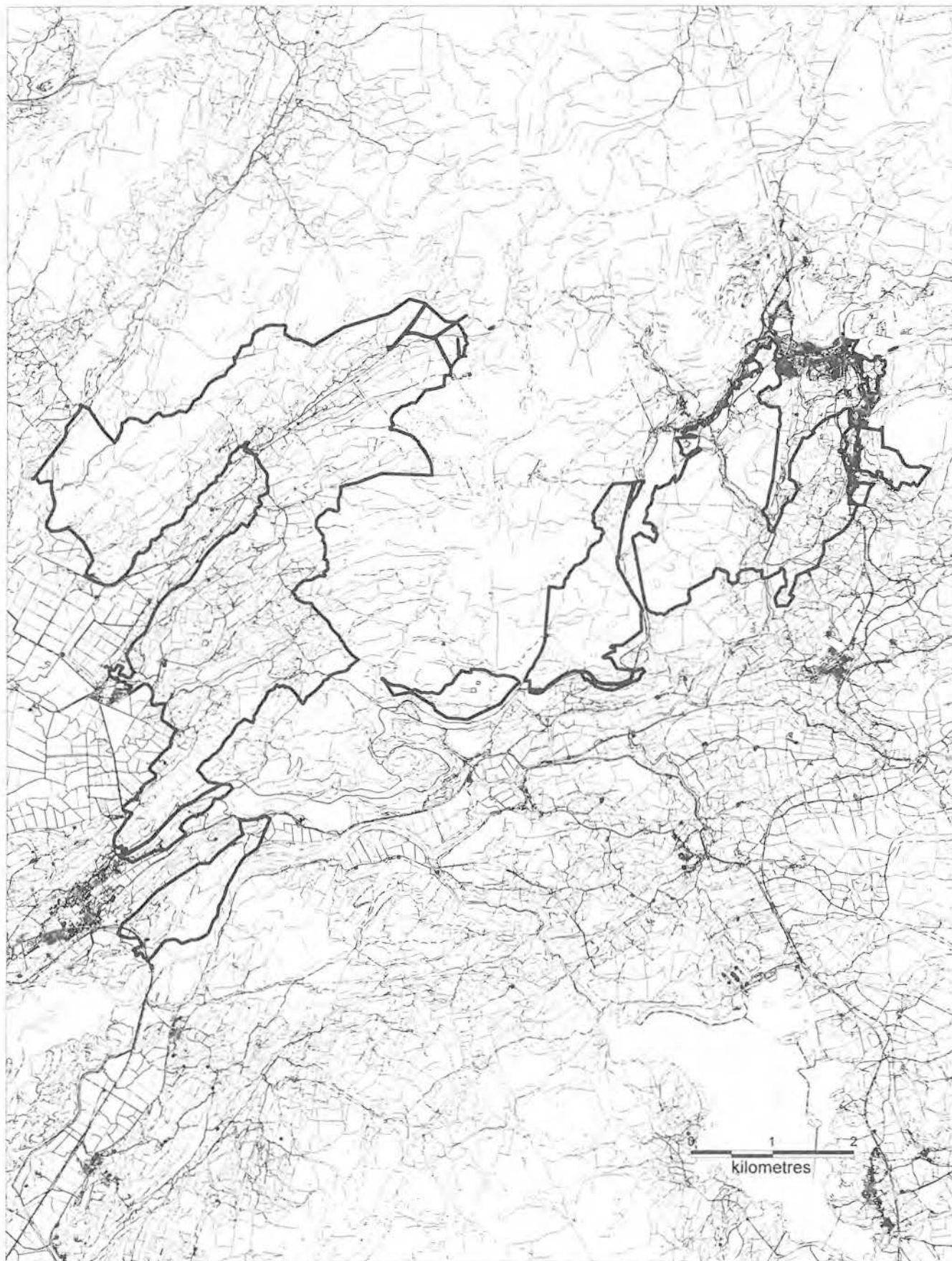
### *Conservation priorities and management*

Preservation of the ancient and semi-natural woodland (some of which is SSSI, and some is owned by the National Trust with whom close co-operation should be maintained). Liaison with the forestry Commission would also be beneficial, especially for their long-term forest design plans. Preservation of the underlying relict archaeology (from prehistoric through to 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> cottages and field boundaries) is also a priority.



25 Coed Llyn y Garnedd

View showing one of the several entrances into this large block of, principally modern, forestry.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
26 - Intermediate slopes of the Moelywn range

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### *Historic background*

The partly enclosed intermediate slopes of Moelwyn mountain comprise a massive and disparate area. It has been exploited from the medieval period to the 20<sup>th</sup> century for (limited) agriculture, timber as well as lead and other minerals, and also partly wooded.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *Intermediate hillslopes, agriculture, industry, afforestation*

This area is characterised by some pockets of woodland, some 20<sup>th</sup>-century afforestation and open ground, on some of which bracken grows profusely. The farming is poor, low-grade pasture grazed by sheep, and the farmhouses are usually squat, low stone-built structures, often settled in natural dips in the ground for protection. Stone walls are not well-tended on the whole, and the general atmosphere is one of survival rather than prosperity.

It has been extensively exploited for lead and other minerals since the medieval period if not earlier, and there are significant remains at Pant y Wrach (SH617402), Bwlch y Plwm ('Mountain pass of the lead' - SH627415) and at Catherine and Jane Consols (SH633411), as well as at other locations. Much of the afforestation is comparatively recent, and much of it is commercially managed. An area centered on SH640420 is owned and managed by the National Trust.

The area includes one small nucleated settlement, at Rhyd, where the present buildings are of 19<sup>th</sup>-century construction.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

Liaison with a range of bodies and organisations including the National Trust, Forest Enterprise Welsh Mines Preservation Trust and the Snowdonia National Park will need to be carried out to ensure the conservation of this vast, varied and largely-unexplored area.





26 Intermediate slopes of the Moelwyn range

General view which shows the bleak nature of the area, with its rugged slopes, irregular fields, small scattered farmsteads and areas of wood and scrub growth. The open pasture is mainly grazed by sheep.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
27 - Penrhyn-Garth

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### *Historic background*

This was a promontory until the draining of the Traeth Mawr in 1813, which was well-situated for trade (open to the sea with sites for harbours on either side), and largely given over to agriculture. At the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Penrhyndeudraeth parish (of which this was a part), was by far the richest parish in Meirioneth (with a taxable value of over £7 per thousand acres, it was worth more than twice as much as its nearest 'rival'). It was only one of two parishes which had no high (and mostly useless) moorland, and was a source of supply of lime which was used for repairs at Harlech Castle just down the coast in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century.

The presence of the fort at Aber Ia (a site formerly associated with the Welsh princes) and its strategic importance at the mouth of two major estuaries may provide clues as to the economic and strategic importance of this area at this period.

Much of the land here was owned in the mid-nineteenth century by David Williams, who constructed the neo-baronial Castell Deudraeth (SH 5923 3770) here as his own residence (recently re-opened as an hotel after lying abandoned for many years) and developed the farms. The prominent house Plas yn Penrhyn (SH 5901 3779) at the top of Penrhyn itself was the home of Samuel Holland and later of Bertrand Russell.

Giraldus Cambrensis stayed at Castell Deudraeth on his journey in 1188, in between crossing Traeth Bach and Traeth Mawr.

### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

#### *19<sup>th</sup>-century agricultural landscape*

This peninsula today is an area of largely 19<sup>th</sup>-century dwellings and farms. The end of the peninsula facing the sea has large, well-laid out field walls and a pattern which clearly says '18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century estate improvement', while further back towards the town of Penrhyndeudraeth the fields are smaller and more irregular, and set in small hollows and on top of ridges, and the farms appear to be mainly pre-19<sup>th</sup> century, or at least not estate-improved and are somewhat run-down. Interestingly, these smaller fields are mainly grazed by cattle. There are areas of woodland, both towards the peninsula's end and down below Penrhyndeudraeth.

Castell Deudraeth itself has recently been renovated and reopened as an hotel-restaurant. There is some ribbon development along the roads and buildings associated with the railway which crosses the area. There is in addition some overspill modern suburban dwellings from Penrhyndeudraeth. The area today gives little impression of its former existence as an important promontory.

### *Conservation priorities and management*

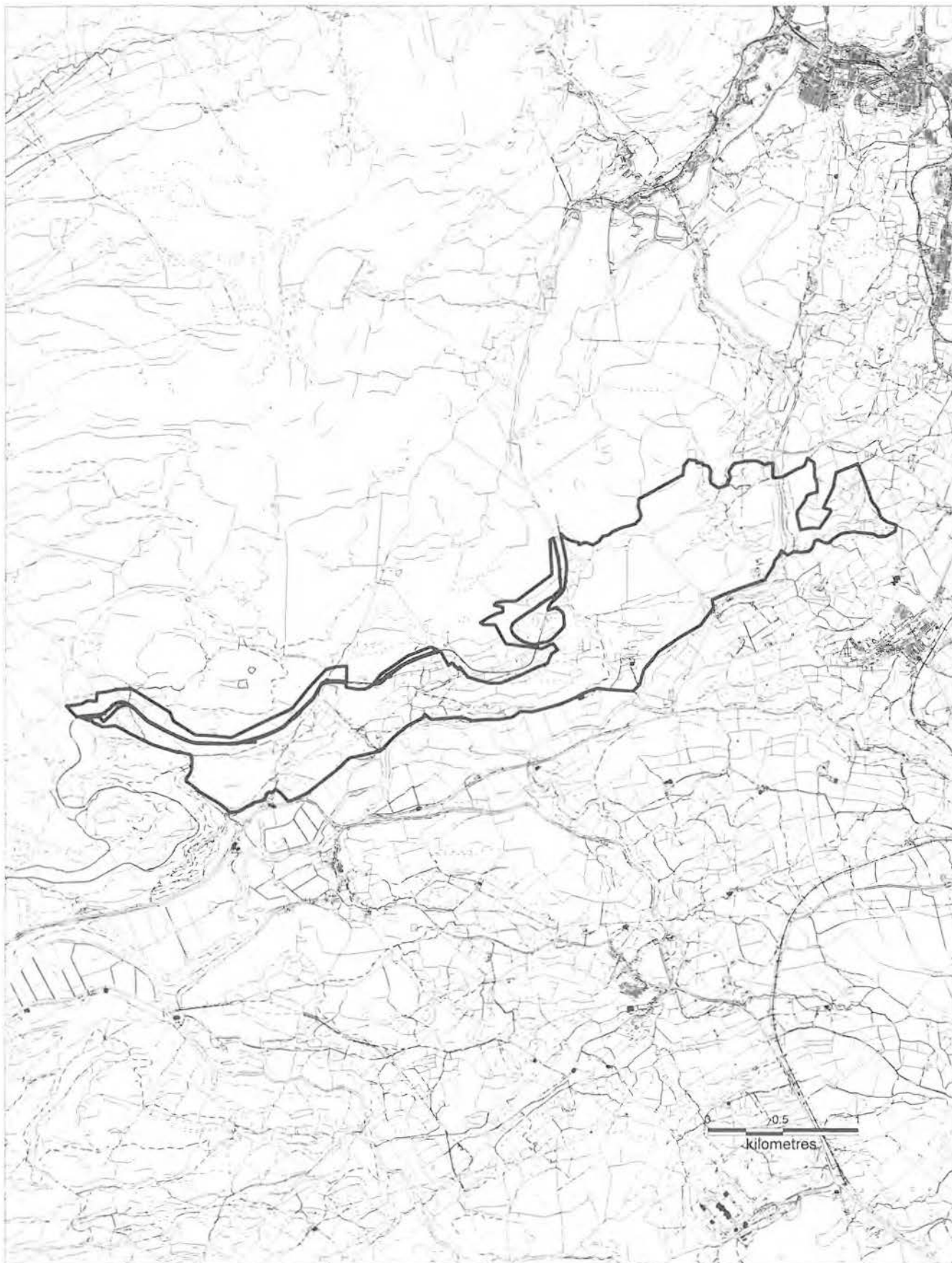
Castell Deudraeth is a listed building. The pattern whereby the small (pre-19<sup>th</sup> century) farmhouses still sit amidst their own fields in and amongst the later settlement should be preserved. The 'improved', open character of the end of the peninsula, similarly should be preserved. Further spilling out of 21<sup>st</sup> century buildings should be resisted.



27 Penrhyn-Garth

View of the lower part of the area showing the irregular fields, field banks and scattered collection of farmhouses, mainly 19<sup>th</sup> century.





### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
28 - Lower wooded slopes, Moelwyn range

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*Historic background*

The lower slopes of Moelwyn Bach, reaching down to the Dwyryd. These areas formed part of the Oakeley and Ddualt estates in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, and have been commercially exploited for timber since at least the eighteenth century (see introduction, section 8.2). The Trust has recently carried out work on behalf of the Forestry Commission on Cymerau Isaf, a block of woodland in the east end of this character area, which is an SSSI and Local Nature Reserve owned by the Woodland Trust. This unpublished report is in the SMR (report number 426) and is quoted extensively here as it encapsulates much of the history and character of this area.

Little has survived in the way of estate documents or maps for Cymerau Isaf (one of the most important blocks of woodland at the eastern end of the valley) although one of these, dated 1802, shows plans for a proposed road from Lord Newborough's quarries at Blaenau Ffestiniog. It uses what was already an archaic convention, in which buildings and other features are shown as if in bird's eye view rather than in plan, and shows a small farm-house at Cymerau Isaf, but provides no information on the woodlands other than showing a wooded area immediately adjacent.<sup>46</sup> A map of 1813 shows the cottage to the south of Cymerau Isaf, r' Allt, without identifying it as such, but gives no details of Cymerau Isaf itself. The third, an 'ocular survey' of 1827 for what may be either a road or a railway, is equally uninformative.

Such documents which do survive are otherwise those which record Pengwern's transactions with other estates. The earliest reference to Cymerau Isaf comes in 1739, when it was owned by the Pengwern estate. Pengwern itself, an imposing house of late sixteenth century date, stands barely 500m to the north-east of the Cymerau Isaf farmhouse. It was built and inhabited by a family of local consequence, who adopted the surname Lewis in the eighteenth century, Anne Lewis of Pengwern married Owen Wynne of Llwyn, Denbighshire, and the property remained in their hands until the death of the Rev. Dr Maurice Wynne in 1835. It ceased to be a family home c.1800 and was divided up into tenements. Pengwern and Cymerau Isaf remained in the possession of a collateral descendant until 1919, when all the lands were sold. Part of the estate, including Cymerau Isaf, seems to have been bought by the Newborough family, and was sold by them again in 1937.

An adjacent holding, Cymerau Uchaf is recorded in 1739, and again on the 1818 2" ordnance survey, though the 1" ordnance survey of 1839-1841 records the farm simply as 'Cymerau', as does the tithe award schedule of 1843. The farm is named as Cymerau Isaf on the first edition 6" ordnance survey.

However, despite the comparative paucity of information relating specifically to Cymerau Isaf and to general agricultural management within the holding, more general information survives relating to the woodlands both of Cymerau and the areas immediately adjacent.

*Key historic landscape characteristics**Wooded slopes*

The steep valley sides are almost entirely covered in broadleaved sessile oak woodland, much of which is SSSI and some of the most important ancient and semi-natural woodland in north Wales. The area includes the important sub-medieval dwelling known as Ddualt (a sided building), around which the Ddualt estate was based. The steep slopes appear to preclude the existence of earlier relict remains within the woodland, which is the chief characteristic of the area, although there may be scope for further work.

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<sup>46</sup> CRO XD2A 394.

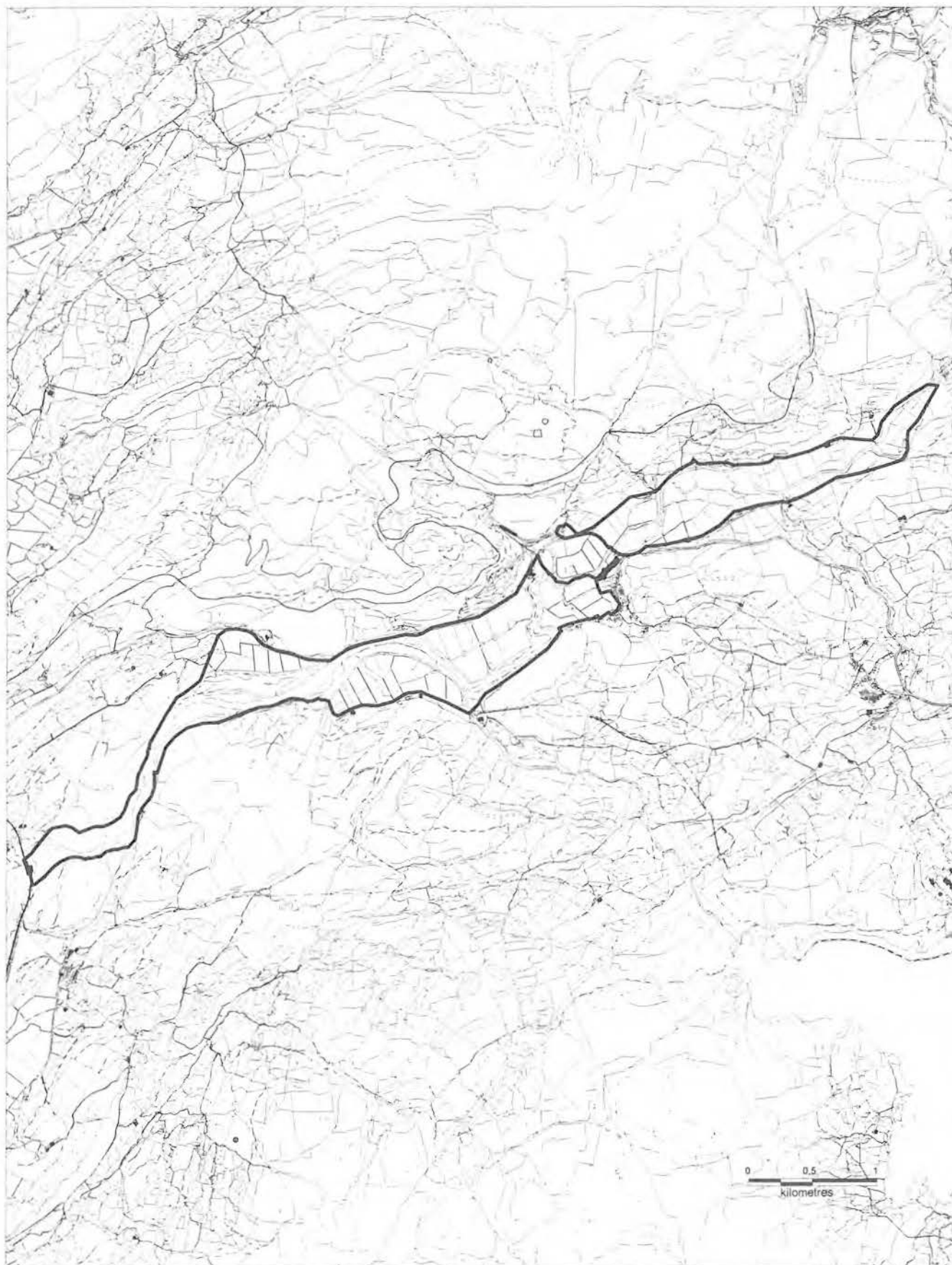
### *Conservation priorities and management*

Preservation of the characteristic ancient and semi-natural woodland is the main priority here, and co-operation with agencies (such as CCW) and owners (such as the National Trust and Woodland Trust) is essential for this to happen.



28 Lower wooded slopes, Moelwyn range

View looking north across the Dwyrdd to the steep, heavily-wooded slopes which drop down to the floodplain. A number of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century farmsteads are strategically placed at the base of the slope.



## Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
29 - Dwyryd valley floor

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*Historic background*

This character area takes in the floor of the Dwyrhyd valley, including both the tidal lower section (as far as Maentwrog) and the non-tidal upper section as far as Rhyd y Sarn, where the valley sides close in (area 28 to the north). The valley itself was drained by William Oakeley (Plas Tan y Bwlch which has extensive views up and down the valley), for which he received a gold medal of the Society of Arts in 1797.

The valley floor is flat apart from the series of flood banks which criss-cross the area following the meandering course of the river, and where it is crossed by three bridges, Pont Dol-y-moch (right up the valley below Rhyd y Sarn (itself the site of an earlier ford), a scheduled ancient monument), the modern construction which carries the A487 lower down and the 1860s railway bridge (part of the Cambrian Coast railway) near the mouth. Another prominent feature of the lower stretch of the river is the (scheduled) slate quay, Cei Newydd, linked with the earlier phases of the quarries at Blaenau Ffestiniog (which has been well-documented by Lewis in his book 'Sails on the Dwyrhyd').

The area is also mentioned in the fourth branch of the Mabinogi, Math fab Mathonwy. After crossing Traeth Mawr when fleeing south from the army of Math, Pryderi (leader of the army from the south) is killed in single combat by Gwydion at Felinrhyd where he crossed the river apparently following the Roman road. There are several Felinrhyd placenames (a wood, a farm and a bridge) along the southern bank of the river. This may imply that the Roman crossing of the river (and possibly a landing stage or harbour allowing coastal shipping to access Tomen y Mur) was in this area: this would make sense topographically as the short valley (Ceunant Llenyrch) which strikes up from this point is the only real access to the top land on which the fort stands.

*Key historic landscape characteristics**Valley floor, meadowlands*

A flat valley floor, extensively drained, with a number of important dwellings at or near the break of slope. These include the Oakeley Arms Hotel, an early 19<sup>th</sup>-century public house which may represent the original site of Plas Tan y Bwlch and Plas Dol y Moch further east (both listed). The Oakeley Arms preserves the distinctive arrangement of three parallel projecting bays built into a central rectangular unit, also to be found in Richard Pennant's Ogwen Bank. There is some use of trees as boundaries and as wind-breaks, particularly on the upper part around Plas Dol y Moch. There are a number of quays on the tidal part of the river below Maentwrog, such as at Laundry Cottage at SH 6442 4007, as well as several once-riparian features which are now some way distant from the course of the river.

On the main road below the main house are a number of buildings associated with the Plas Tan y Bwlch estate, centred on the home farm which comprises several buildings including a substantial horse whim. These buildings erected by the Oakeley estate, which mostly make use of the distinctive Gelli Grin slabs, were a deliberate planned estate landscape of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

*Conservation priorities and management*

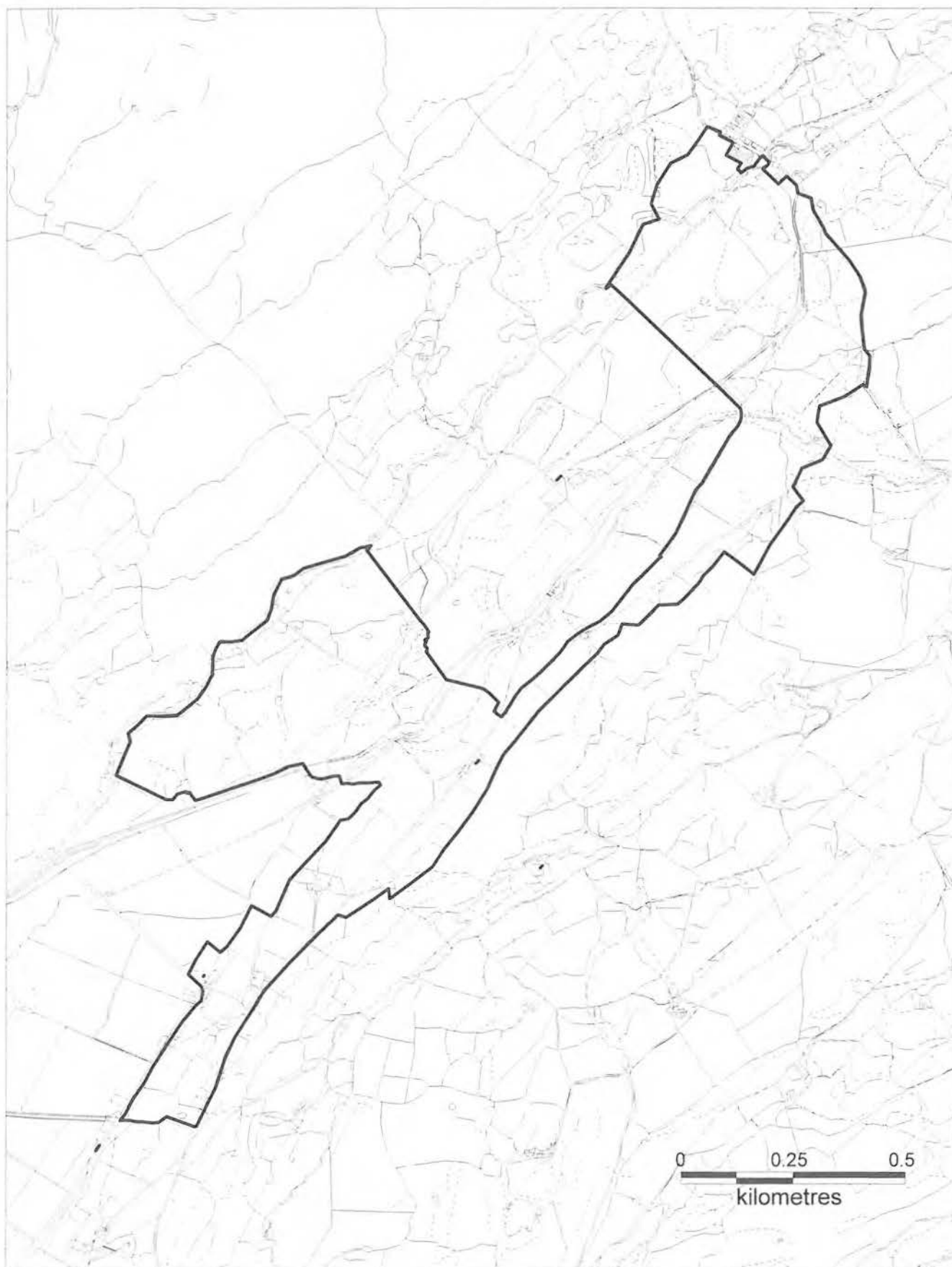
Many of the major buildings, including those belonging to the planned estate layout, are listed and should be protected, as should the two scheduled ancient monuments. The actual river and its embankments are managed on a regular basis by the Environment Agency and these too should be allowed to retain their character.





29 Dwyrdd valley floor

View looking north-east showing the river floodplain surrounded by wooded hill slopes. One of the embankments is visible in the centre, with Maentwrog just visible to the right.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
30 - Brondanw slopes

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### 30 Brondanw slopes (PRN 18230)

#### *Historic background*

This is a small area on the north-facing slopes of the peninsula. It was an area historically dominated by the houses at Plas Brondanw and at Parc, in which there is a lot of (probably) ancient woodland and some small-scale 19<sup>th</sup>-century quarrying for slate. There are underlying field patterns which are difficult to make sense of, but may be early. The relative concentration of several, important sub-medieval houses in the Llanfrothen area may indicate the growing economic importance of this area in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries (it would then have been on the coast), further evidence of which may be contained in the landscape.

#### *Key historic landscape characteristics*

*woodlands, field patterns, industrial remains*

This is a relatively 'low-key' area characterised by small fields, broad-leaved woodland and evidence for small-scale slate quarrying, evident in the form of extremely dilapidated structures and the traces of inclines.

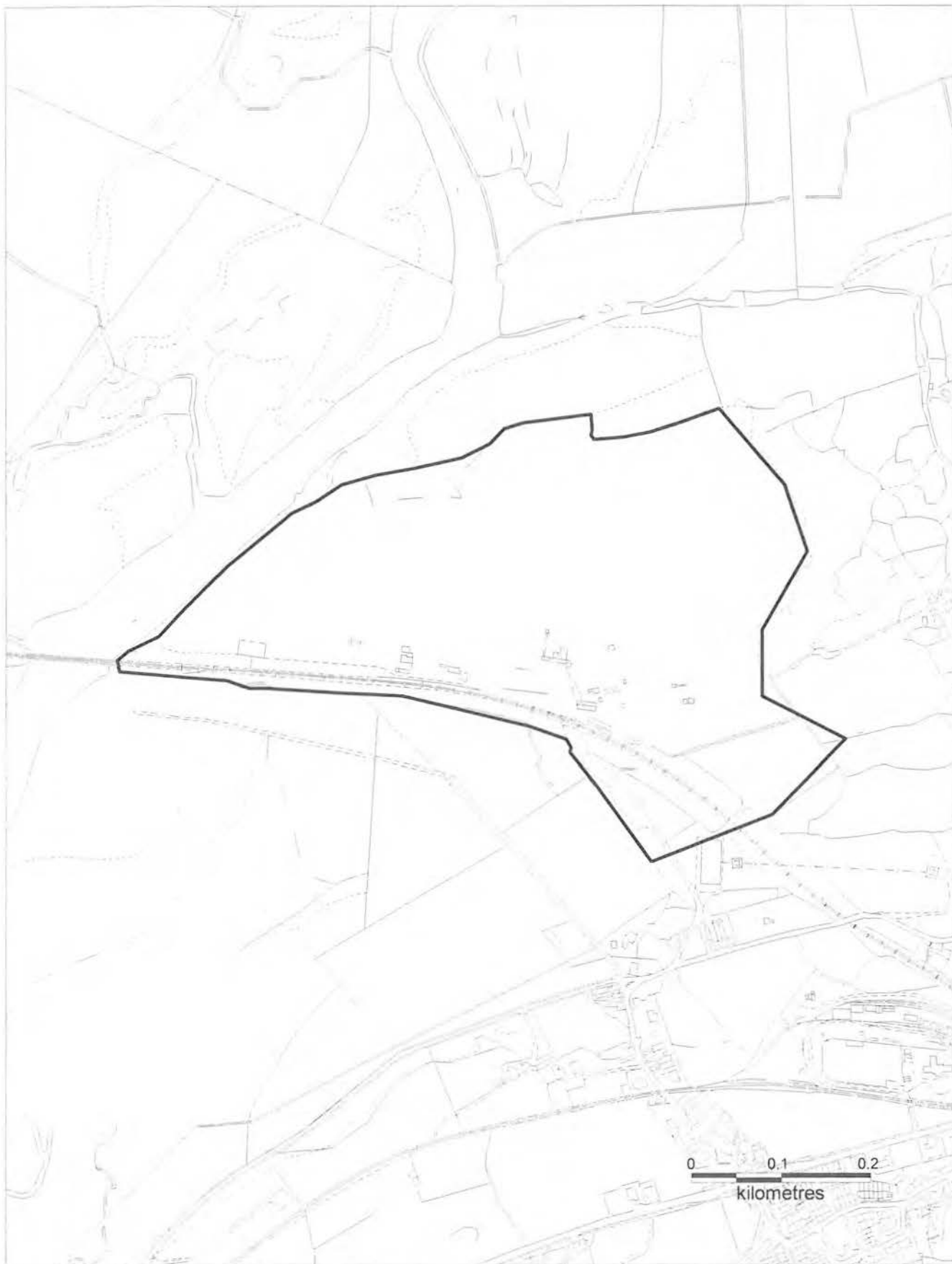
#### *Conservation priorities and management*

Preservation of the woodland character of the area and of the field pattern, through liaison with the Brondanw estate, is the priority for conservation, although survey of the area to record the extent and detail of actual remains would be a useful first step.



30 Brondanw slopes

View showing the characteristic scrubby woodland and small fields of the slopes around Llanfrothen.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
31 - Minffordd quarry

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### **31 Minffordd quarry (PRN 18231)**

#### ***Historic background***

This is a granite quarry opened for setts in the 1870s, following the opening of the Aberystwyth and Welch Coast line, and which is now operated on a significant scale as an aggregate producer by Tarmac Quarry Products (North West) Ltd.

#### ***Key historic landscape characteristics***

##### *Quarry, industrial archaeology*

The quarry has continued to expand and has significantly altered the skyline of Garth, especially as seen from the Cob, in recent years. Its corrugated iron crusher plant is a prominent feature but, although it has never had an archaeological survey, it has expanded its workings and there is not thought to be much of significant industrial archaeological interest on the site.

#### ***Conservation priorities and management***

Liaison with quarry management in terms of future recording as an industrial landscape may be interesting.



31 Minffordd quarry

View across an arm of the reclaimed Traeth to the working Minffordd quarry, altering the skyline of Garth, with its iron crusher plant a prominent feature.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

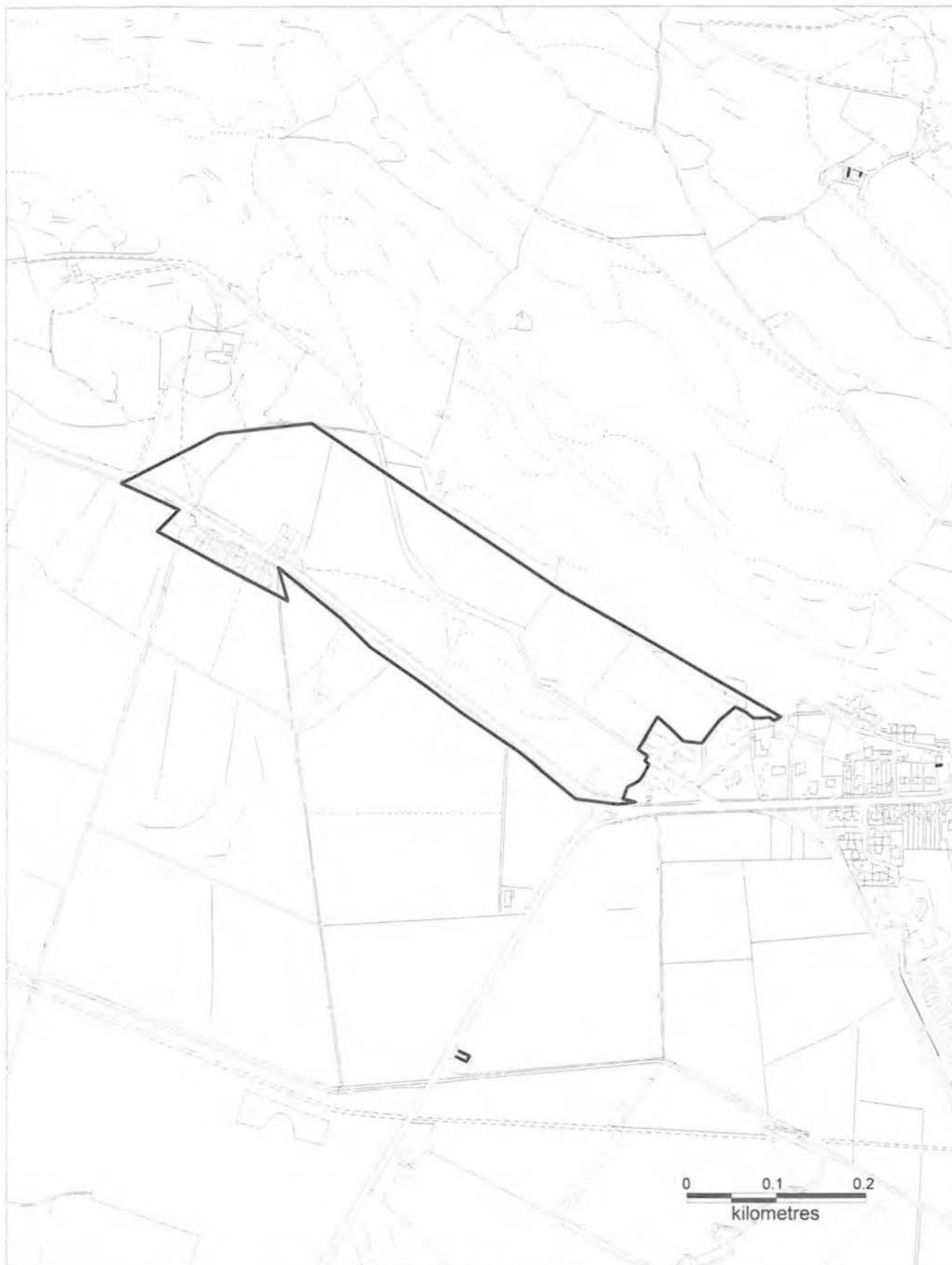
Historic Landscape Character Area  
32 - Penryhndeudraeth

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32 Penrhyndeudraeth

General view of the settlement from the slopes to the north, showing the mainly 19<sup>th</sup>-century building stock.



### Historic Landscape Characterisation - Vale of Ffestiniog

Historic Landscape Character Area  
33 - Llidiart Ysphyty

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*Historic background*

This is a 'linking' transport corridor lying between the sheer cliffs above Tremadoc and the drained marshes of Traeth Mawr, and the settlements of Tremadoc and Penmorfa. The land was part of Madocks' Tremadoc estate at the end of the eighteenth century, and at the same time that he drained the Traeth and built the town of Tremadoc, he also developed the area's mineral and transport facilities. In 1807 a new road was built to connect Tremadoc (the name Dublin Street speaks volumes) with Cricieth and Pwllheli, which Madocks hoped would become part of a trunk road between London and Porth Dinllaen, and in 1810 the Caernarvonshire Turnpike Trust took over the old route from Llidiart Yspyty to Caernarfon. These two roads joined at Llidiart Yspyty, and in 1845 the Caernarfon road was rebuilt on its present alignment.

Around the same time, the mining of ironstone was developed here. The first mine may have been worked from 1754, and was certainly being exploited by 1770: the Porthmadog harbour dues confirm that 3,301 tons of ironstone was shipped out between March 1839 and December 1840, the great majority of which must have been mined at Llidiart Yspyty. 'Smelting furnaces' were built, probably in 1845, near the principal adit. In 1848-1850 between 10,000 and 15,000 tons were shipped, suggesting that the underground workings were very extensive, although it is interesting that no tips of any size survive in the immediate vicinity of the mine (it is possible that waste was carted away by road for other uses). The mine closed down in 1851.

The railway serving the mine was constructed in 1840-1841, although the track arrangements were changed more than once in the course of its history. It was re-aligned in 1848, and completely re-built in 1855-7 when it was extended to give access to Gorseddau slate quarry; the mine site thereafter continued to have an industrial function as a 'station' and a slate yard for the Gorseddau tramway. However, by the 1860s Gorseddau quarry had also closed, and the railway through Llidiart Yspyty was adapted in 1872-5 in an attempt to tap the supposed mineral wealth of Cwm Pennant. However, it was hardly used and was dismantled before the end of the nineteenth century.

*Key historic landscape characteristics**Ironstone mine, railway and road routes*

Remains of the principal mine adit can be seen, still partially open, as well as the site of the kilns built in 1845 to the south-west. Several presumed other blocked adits are also visible, as are areas of industrial activity. Parts of the line of the 1848 railway, the 1855 Gorseddau tramway and the Turnpike Trust road are clearly visible. The main road from Caernarfon to Tremadog is still in use as such.

*Conservation priorities and management*

Preservation of the remains relating to mining and transport activities which characterise this area is the priority.



### 33 Llidiart Yspytty

View of the area from the north-west, showing parts of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century railway routes embanked.

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## 10.5 Archive sources

These are appended as a separate data-base on the following pages.

## ***APPENDIX I***

Extracts from the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales

Blaenau Ffestiniog HLW (Gw) 3

Aberglaslyn HLW (Gw) 7

## BLAENAU FFESTINIOG



Hawffran y Gornot: C. B. H. / Crown Copyright: RCAHMW

## Disgrifiad o'r tirwedd

Mae Blaenau Ffestiniog mewn basn naturiol uchel o dir, oddeutu 225m uwchben SO, rhwng Mynyddoedd Manod a Moelwyn ar gyrion deheuol Eryri. Tu cefn i'r dref cyfyd y llechweddau serth ar bob ochr ac eithrio tua'r de, gyda Manod Mawr tua'r dwyrain a'i gopa 661m uwchben SO a Moelwyn Mawr tua'r gorllewin 720m uwchben SO. Serch hynny, prin fod gerwinder eu topograffi creigiog yn hawlio'r sylw i gyd ochr yn ochr â'r tirwedd diwydiannol o waith dyn sydd yr un mor ysgithrog ac yn amgylchu'r dref a llenwi'r llednentydd cudd uwchben y basn.

Mewn gwirionedd mae'r dref yn rhan ganolog ac annatod o rwydwaith enfawr o chwareli a chloddfeydd llechi, tomennydd rwbel ac adeiladwaith cysylltiol gyda'r cyfan wedi'i gysylltu â chwyfundrefn siudant o nodelau a

## Landscape description

Blaenau Ffestiniog town is set in an elevated natural bowl, about 225m above OD, between the Manod and Moelwyn Mountains on the southern fringes of Snowdonia. The mountain slopes rise steeply above the town on all but the south side, with Manod Mawr to the east reaching 661m above OD and Moelwyn Mawr to the west reaching 720m above OD. Their rugged and rocky topography however, struggles to maintain visual domination over an equally rugged and entirely man-made industrial landscape that surrounds the town and fills the hidden tributary valleys above the basin.

The town is in fact a central and integral part of a vast network of slate quarry and mine workings, waste tips and associated buildings, all linked by a transport system of inclines and railways. The whole landscape developed in about a hundred

rheilffyrdd. Datblygodd yr holl dirwedd mewn rhyw gan mlynedd ac adfeiliedig yn bennaf yw'r safleoedd cloddio yno, eto i gyd mae'r aneddiad a'r gymuned yn parhau. Yn y fro ceir y cyfuniad pennaf o chwareli a chloddfeydd llechi yng Nghymru a thoreth arwyddocaol o ddeunydd archeolegol diwydiannol pwysig.

Yn sgil y chwareli'n unig tyfodd Blaenau Ffestiniog ar gefndir o'r ychydig ffermydd anghysbell. Mae'n cynnwys rhai o'r cloddfeydd mwyaf o ran maint a mwyaf effeithiol yn y diwydiant llechi tua diwedd y 19edd ganrif, gan gynhyrchu oddeutu traean y cynnyrch Cymreig. Yn wahanol i'r ardaloedd ymhellach i'r gogledd, yr oedd bron yr holl gloddfeydd dan y ddaear yn wyneb trwch y gorchudd uwchben y llechfaen. Ar ddechrau'r 19edd ganrif, yr oedd Ffestiniog yn 'bentref bach tlawd', er y disgrifiwyd y 'chwareli llechi helaeth' eisioes mewn bodolaeth fel rhai a oedd mewn 'llecyn rhamantus'. Yr oedd defaid cyn bwysied â llechi i'r arloeswyr ar ddechrau'r ganrif.

Diffwys oedd y chwarel gyntaf yn yr ardal pan gafodd ei sefydlu ym 1765, gan gael prydles ym 1799, a'i phrynu wedyn gan William Turner a'r Cassons. Cyfalaf Seisnig yn bennaf a oedd yn gyfrifol am ddatblygu'r diwydiant, a helaethodd gyda chymorth contractau rhyfel a galw cynyddol am lechi toi yn sgil y Chwyldro Diwydiannol, gydag enwau megis Hollands, Cassons, Greaves a William Turner yn chwarae prif ran yn y diwydiant. Erbyn 1873, disgrifiwyd Blaenau Ffestiniog fel 'Dinas y Llechi' gyda phopeth tu mewn a thu allan i'r tai'n ôl pob golwg wedi'i wneud o lechi.

Mae ardal y llechi'n ymestyn y tu hwnt i'r prif fasn a ddisgrifir yma. Ceir nifer o ddyffrynnoedd cudd, megis Cwmorthin a Chwm Teigl, yn bwydo llechi i lawr i'r dref, a gwelir olion llechi arbennig ac unigol ynddynt i gyd. Prif nodwedd arall y fro yw'r gyfundrefn gludiant y symudwyd y llechi allan arni. Cludwyd llechi o gloddfeydd cynnar diwedd y 18fed a dechrau'r 19edd ganrifoedd ar anifeiliaid pwn a chan ddynion ac wedyn, ar droliau i'r ceiau llechi ar lan Afon Dwyrdd, tan yr agorwyd Rheilffordd Ffestiniog ym 1836. Mae gan bob un o'r dyffrynnoedd cyffiniol eu cyfundrefnau cludo eu hunain, megis tramffordd Cwmorthin 1850, a helaethwyd yn ddiweddarach hyd at chwarel Conglog, tramffordd Rhiwbach 1863, ac incleinau chwarel gwych Moelwyn a Graig Ddu a'u haml-oleddfau, a Wrysgan a dwelwyd yn rhannol.

Mae llechfaen Ffestiniog yn ymestyn oddeutu 20km i'r dwyrain-gorllewin a 7km i'r gogledd-de, gyda Blaenau Ffestiniog yn y canol. Cloddiwyd am y pileri llechfaen o bum gwely neu haen, pob un gyda'i nodweddion ei hun, gyda'r Old Vein y bwysicaf ohonynt hwyrach. Cyfnod o ddatblygiad araf ond graddol oedd y tri degawd gyntaf yn y 19edd ganrif. Ymhén blynyddoedd lawer wedyn y rhoed trefn ar gloddio am lechi yn Ffestiniog o gynharu â'r ardaloedd cyfagos yn Sir Gaernarfon, yn bennaf gan nad oedd perchennog tir sylweddol yno; yn wir yr oedd y rhelyw o'r tir yn eiddo'r Goron. Er y caniarwyd prydles, yr oedd y perchnogion tir yn amharod i fuddsoddi cyfalaf er mwyn datblygu'r diwydiant. Ysgogodd llwyddiant mentrau Sir Gaernarfon y datblygiad yn yr ardal hon, ond yn nyddiau cynnar y datblygiad yr oedd prinder gweithwyr a ffyrdd yn rhwystro.

Canolbwyntiwyd ar wella technegau cloddio am lechfaen gan fod goledf y gwelyau llechfaen yn eu gorfodi i gloddio dan y ddaear. Gyda rhagor o fecaneiddio sefydlwyd gweithfeydd canolog i'w gwasanaethu gan reilffyrdd yn gynnar yn y 1850au,

years and its extractive sites are largely derelict, but the settlement and community continue. The area contains the foremost combination of slate quarries and mines in Wales, and a vast and significant amount of important industrial archaeological material.

Blaenau Ffestiniog grew from a few isolated farmsteads solely as the result of slate quarrying. It includes some of the largest and most efficient workings in the slate industry in the late 19th century, producing about a third of the Welsh output. Unlike the areas further north, almost all of the workings were underground owing to the overlying thickness of overburden. At the beginning of the 19th century, Ffestiniog was a 'small, poor village', although the already extant 'great slate quarries' were described as being in 'a romantic spot'. Sheep were as important as slate to the pioneers at the beginning of the century.

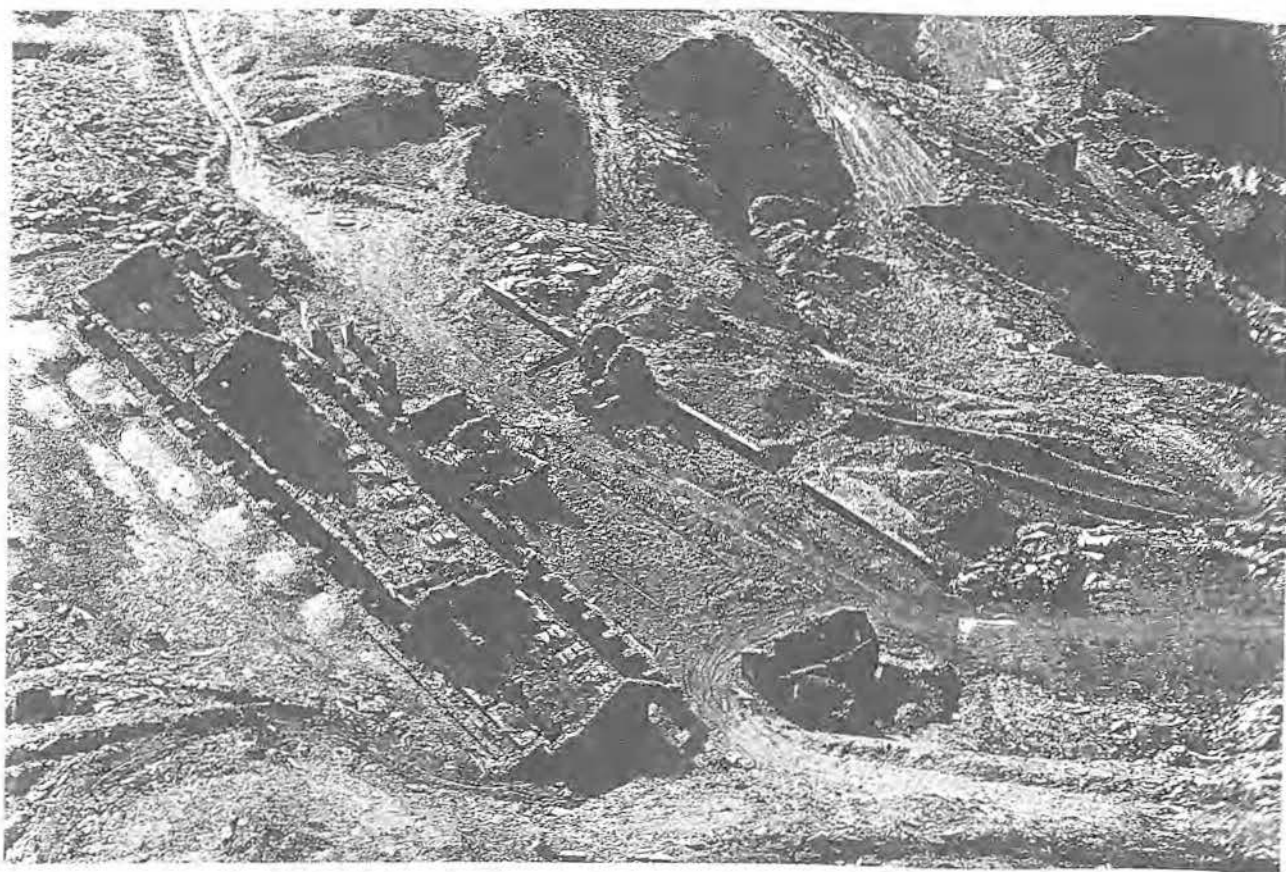
The first quarry to be worked in the area was Diphwys which was established in 1765, with a lease granted in 1799, subsequently bought up by William Turner and the Cassons. English capital was largely responsible for the development of the industry, which expanded with the help of wartime contracts and increasing demand for roofing slates as a result of the Industrial Revolution, with names like the Hollands, Cassons, Greaves and William Turner playing a major part in the industry. By 1873, Blaenau Ffestiniog was described as the 'City of Slates', with seemingly everything inside and outside the houses being made of slate.

The slate area extends beyond the main basin described here. Feeding slate down into the town are a number of hidden valleys, such as Cwmorthin and Cwm Teigl, all of which have distinctive and individual slate remains. The other principal feature of the area is the transport system which moved the slate out. Slate from the early workings of the late 18th and early 19th centuries was taken by pack animals and men and later, by carts down to slate quays on the River Dwyrdd, until the Ffestiniog Railway was opened in 1836. The surrounding valleys each have their own impressive transportation systems, such as the Cwmorthin tramway of 1850, later extended to the Conglog quarry, the Rhiwbach tramroad of 1863, and the spectacular quarry inclines of the multi-pitched Moelwyn and Graig Ddu, and the partly tunnelled Wrysgan.

The Ffestiniog slate range stretches some 20km east-west by 7km north-south, with Blaenau Ffestiniog at its centre. Slate blocks were obtained from five beds or veins, each with its own characteristics, with the Old Vein perhaps being the most important. The first three decades of 19th century were a period of slow but steady development. Organised exploitation of slate developed much later at Ffestiniog than in neighbouring Caernarfonshire, mainly because there was no large single landowner, indeed much of the land was Crown property. While leases were granted, landowners were reluctant to invest capital in developing the industry. The success of the Caernarfonshire ventures motivated development here, but the shortage of manpower and roads were critical in the area's early development.

Much attention concentrated on improving techniques for mining slate, because the dip of the slate beds determined that slate excavation was an underground operation. Increasing mechanization led to the establishment of centralised mills served by railways in the early 1850s, replacing the rows of small huts previously used for dressing, with water power driving the machinery, and providing balances for operating the inclines. Many reservoirs were built in the hills above Blaenau Ffestiniog, though steam was introduced in 1854





*Gweithdai adfeiliedig chwarel Diffwys Casson.*  
*Ruined workshops at Diphwys Casson quarry.*

gan ddisodli rhesi o gytliau bach a ddefnyddid gynt i naddu'r llechi. Erbyn hyn yr oedd pŵer dŵr yn gweithio'r peiriannau ac yn darparu'r mantolion i weithio'r incleinau. Adeiladwyd llawer o gronfeydd dŵr yn y brynau uwchlaw Blaenau Ffestiniog, er y dechreuwyd defnyddio ager ym 1854 ac awyr cywasg a thrydan yn y 1890au. Serch hynny, yr oedd llawer yn dibynnu ar y tywydd ac ar dywydd gerwin byddid yn cau'r cloddfeydd am ddyddiau ar y tro.

Yn ystod 1860–70, yr oedd y galw'n fwy na'r cyflenwad yn wyneb rhagor o gyfleon masnachu yn sgil y twf cendlaethol yn y gyfundrefn reilffyrdd a datblygiad y porthladdoedd. Gwerthwyd hyd at 30% o gynnyrch yr ardal i farchnadoedd tramor yn y cyfnod hwn. Yr oedd oddeutu 25 cloddfa yn gweithio, hwnt ac yma yn yr ardal eang ar ucheldir Manod a Moelwyn, er bod yr wyth cloddfa fwyaf eu maint a mwyaf cynhyrchiol yn dal o fewn un i ddwy gilomedr i ganol Blaenau Ffestiniog, lle'r oedd yr adnoddau llechi o'r ansawdd gorau. Yr oedd y rhelyw o'r cloddfeydd llai megis Moelwyn, Conglog a Chwt-y-Bugail ar dir uwch, ar gyrion yr adnoddau, lle'r oedd y gwelyau llechfaen yn teneuo a lle'r oedd diffyg cludiant. Cafwyd cyfnod maith o ansicrwydd a bu gwasgfa fawr ar ôl 1878, ac ar ddechrau'r 20fed ganrif bu diboblogi difrifol a ddaeth i'w anteeth gyda'r Rhyfel Byd Cyntaf. Ar ôl hynny, ni lwyddwyd i adfer y diwydiant mewn gwirionedd.

Cynllun trydan-dŵr cronfa bwmp Tanygrisiau oedd y cyntaf o'i fath ym Mhrydain. Fe'i cwblhawyd ym 1963 a hwn oedd yr unig ddiwydiant arall i adael ei ôl am byth ar y tirwedd yma. Crëwyd yr argae uchaf trwy helaethu Llyn

and compressed air and electricity in the 1890s. However the weather continued to play a major role, often shutting down operations for days at a time.

During 1860–70, demand exceeded supply as there were increased trading opportunities brought about by the national expansion of the railway system and the development of harbours. Up to 30% of the area's output was sold to foreign markets at this time. There were about 25 mines in operation spread over a wide area of the Manod and Moelwyn uplands although the eight largest and most productive mines were still located within a one to two kilometer radius of the centre of Blaenau Ffestiniog, where the best quality slate reserves were located. Most of the smaller concerns such as Moelwyn Conglog and Cwt-y-Bugail were at higher altitudes, on the margins of the reserves, where the slate beds thinned out and transport was a problem. A protracted period of uncertainty and decline set in after 1878, and intense contraction occurred at the beginning of the 20th century, accompanied by serious depopulation culminating in the First World War, after which the industry never really recovered.

The other industry to have made its indelible mark on this landscape is the Tanygrisiau hydro-electric pumped storage scheme, the first in Britain, completed in 1963. The upper reservoir was formed by enlarging Lake Stwlan with a concrete dam 380m long and 34m high, the lower by damming the river Ystradau near Tanygrisiau, with the power station built on its western side. The dam, which is on the 500m contour and overlooked by the Moelwyn slate quarry, is one of the most prominent man-made landmarks in Gwynedd, visible from great distances to the south. It serves as a potent reminder of the theme in this landscape of man's enduring struggle with natural resources.



Stwlan a chodi argae goncrit 380m ei hyd a 34m ei uchder, a'r argae isaf trwy gau'r Afon Ystradau ger Tanygrisiau gan godi'r orsaf bŵer ar ei glan orllewinol. Saif yr argae 500m uwchben SO gyda chwarel y Moelwyn uwchlaw â'i threm tua'r dŵr. Mae'r argae hon yn un o'r nodweddion tir mwyaf amlwg o waith dyn yng Ngwynedd, gan ei bod i'w gweld o bellter maith o'r de. Mae'n gofnod pendant am thema'r tirwedd yma sy'n ein hatgoffa am frwydr barhaus dyn am adnoddau naturiol.



#### CRYNODEB

Rhif cyf	HLW (Gw) 3
Rhif map mynegai	21
Map AO	Landranger 115, 124
Sir flaenorol	Gwynedd
Awdurdod unedol	Gwynedd (Conwy)
Prif ddynodiadau helaeth	Mae rhan dde orllewinol yr ardal ym Mharc Cenedlaethol Eryri.
Meini prawf	2
Cynnwys ac arwyddocâd	Dyma'r tirwedd chwareli llechi pennaf yng Nghymru, newn basn naturiol uchel o dir gyda'i dyffrymoedd perthynol yn ne Eryri, lle ceir cyfoeth diambeuol o olion archeolegol diwydiannol, sef chwareli a chloddfeydd llechi helaeth ac yn weledol amlwg, tomennydd riobel a'r adeiladuwaith, cyfundrefnau cludiant ac aneddiadau cysylltiol sy'n dyddio o ddiwedd y 18fed hyd at ddechrau'r 20fed ganrifoedd. Yn yr ardal hefyd ceir cynllun trydan-dŵr cronfa bŵmp Tanygrisiau, y cyntaf o'i fath ym Mhrydain.

#### SUMMARY

Ref number	HLW (Gw) 3
Index map no.	21
OS map	Landranger 115, 124
Former county	Gwynedd
Unitary authority	Gwynedd (Conwy)
Principal area designations	The south western part of the area is within the Snowdonia National Park.
Criteria	2
Contents and significance	The foremost slate mining and quarrying landscape in Wales, sited in an elevated natural basin and its tributary valleys in south Snowdonia, containing an undisputed wealth of industrial archaeological remains comprising visually imposing and extensive slate quarry and mine workings, waste tips, associated buildings, transport systems and settlements dating from the late 18th to the early 20th centuries. The area also includes the Tanygrisiau hydro-electric pumped storage scheme, the first of its kind in Britain.

#### Ffynonellau detoledig / Selected sources

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- J. Lindsay, *A History of the North Wales Slate Industry* (David and Charles: Newton Abbot 1974).

## ABERGLASLYN



*Porthmadog ac arglawdd  
Cob Porthmadog*

*Porthmadog and Porthmadog  
Cob embankment*

YMA: David Thompson © G.T. David Thompson

## Disgrifiad o'r tirwedd

Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys Traeth Mawr, moryd y byddai'r llanw yn llifo iddi gynt yng ngheg Afon Glaslyn sy'n rhedeg tua'r de o Eryri i Fae Tremadog. Mae'n debyg mai'r ardal hon yw un o'r cynlluniau adfer tir mwyaf uchelgeisiol y 19edd ganrif yng Nghymru, os nad ym Mhrydain. Mae'n cynnwys arglawdd Cob Porthmadog, a ddisgrifiwyd unwaith fel rhyfeddod Cymru, tref gynlluniedig Tremadog o gyfnod y brenin Siôr, a Phorthmadog, a oedd unwaith yn un o'r porthladdoedd mwyaf ym Mae Ceredigion. Mae adennill Traeth Mawr ac adeiladu Tremadog yn enghraifft ardderchog o ganlyniad

## Landscape description

The area comprises Traeth Mawr, or the former tidal estuary at the mouth of the River Glaslyn which flows south from Snowdonia into Tremadog Bay. The area represents probably one of the most ambitious 19th century land reclamation schemes, certainly in Wales, if not in Britain. It includes the Porthmadog Cob embankment, which was once described as the wonder of Wales, the planned Georgian town of Tremadog, and Porthmadog, once one of the largest ports on Cardigan Bay. The reclamation of Traeth Mawr and the building of Tremadog is an excellent example of the product of landlord

menter gan berchen tir ac ymdrech bendant i greu tirwedd wrth ddilyn amcanion economaidd penodol yn rhan olaf y 18fed a rhan gyntaf y 19edd ganrifoedd.

Cynhwysir yn yr ardal y cyfan o'r tir a adenillwyd hyd at fôn y clogwyni neu'r llethrau o amgylch yr hyn fu gynt yn foryd cyn belled ag Aberglaslyn, tref gynlluniedig Tremadog, Porthmadog, penrhyn Penrhyndeudraeth tua'r de sy'n cynnwys lleoliad a chefnidir Porthmeirion, y pentref Eidalaidd estron ei bensaernïaeth a ddyluniwyd ac a osodwyd yma gan Clough Williams-Ellis.

Yr oedd gan William Madocks, Aelod Seneddol dros Boston yn Swydd Lincoln, weledigaeth o wella'r rhan hon o dde Sir Gaernarfon, ac un agwedd o hynny oedd greu Tremadog. Agweddau eraill o'i gynllun oedd adfer tir, adeiladu ffyrdd a dod â diwydiant i gefn gwlad, yn ogystal â sicrhau modd i chwareli llechi Ffestiniog ehangu trwy ddarparu porthladd ym Mhorthmadog. Mae'r holl nodweddion hyn i'w gweld hyd heddiw yn y tirwedd presennol.

Cynigiwyd cynlluniau i adennill Traeth Mawr mor gynnar â 1605 gan Syr John Wynn o Wdyr, ond ni ddechreuwyd ar y gwaith hyd ddechrau'r 19edd ganrif. Defnyddiodd Madocks y ffortiwn oedd wedi'i hetifeddu, i brynu nifer o ffermydd ym mhen uchaf Traeth Mawr, yn cynnwys Ynys Fadog, ac ym 1800, daeth â pheiriannydd o Swydd Lincoln i adeiladu arglawdd pridd i adennill tua 400ha o gorsydd a thywod fel tir pori.

Golygai ail gam y cynllun mawr osod allan tref Tremadog, ar ochr orllewinol y tir a adenillwyd. Bwriedid i'r aneddiad fod yn arhosfan ar y brif ffordd arfaethedig i'r Iwerddon, a'i

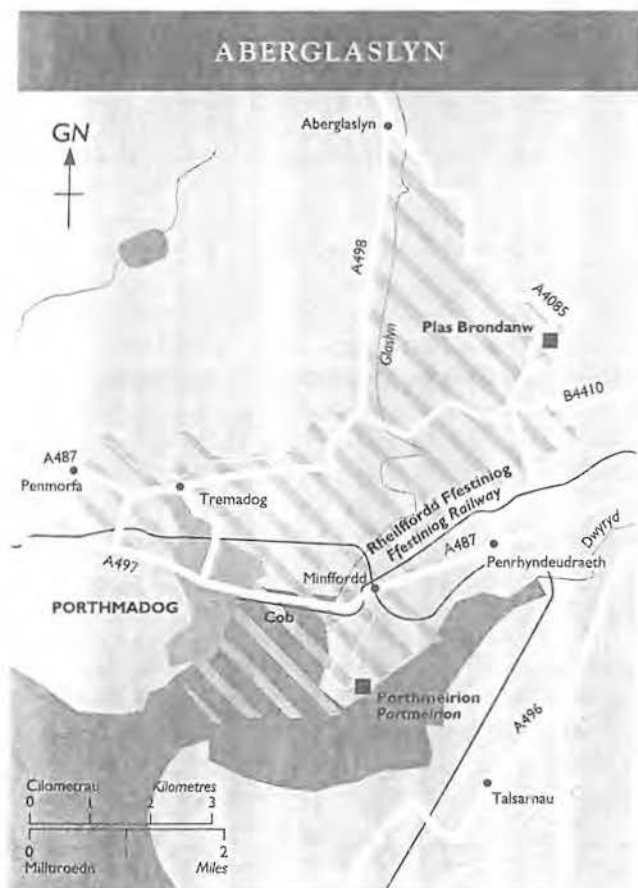
initiative and conscious landscape creation in pursuit of particular economic objectives in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

The area includes all the reclaimed land up to the base of the cliffs or slopes surrounding the former estuary as far as Aberglaslyn, the planned town of Tremadog, Porthmadog, the Penrhyndeudraeth peninsula to the south which includes the location and setting of the architecturally exotic, planted, Italianate village of Portmeirion designed by Clough Williams-Ellis.

The creation of Tremadog represents the fulfilment of the dreams of William Madocks, MP for Boston in Lincolnshire, who had a vision of improving this part of south Caernarfonshire. His scheme also included land reclamation, road building and the introduction of rural industry, as well as securing the means by which the Ffestiniog slate quarries could expand with the provision of harbour works at Porthmadog. All these features survive in the present landscape.

Plans to reclaim Traeth Mawr had been put forward as early as 1605, by Sir John Wynn of Gwydir, but it was not until the beginning of the 19th century that work started. With a fortune he had inherited, Madocks purchased a number of farms at the upper end of Traeth Mawr, including Ynys Fadog, and in 1800 brought in a Lincolnshire engineer to construct an earth embankment to reclaim about 400ha of marsh and sands for grazing.

The second stage of the grand design involved the laying out of the town of Tremadog, on the west side of the land that had been reclaimed. The settlement was intended as a staging post on the proposed main route to Ireland which crossed into Llyn here on its way to Porth Dinllaen. Work began in



Porthmeirion.  
Portmeirion.





ymlaen oddi yma trwy Lŷn i Borth Dinllaen. Dechreuwyd ar y gwaith ym 1805 a threfnwyd y dref ar gynllun ffurf T, gyda ffordd a elwid, yn briodol, yn Dublin Street yn ffurfio rhan uchaf y T, ac yno yr oedd tafarn i wasanaethu'r goets fawr, neuadd y dref a thŷ marchnad. Ar un ochr o'r stryd hon yr oedd Market Square, ac o gwmpas hwnnw safai tai, siopau a thafarnau llai, ac adeiladwyd eglwys a chapel anghydfurfiol y naill ochr o'r ffordd i'r de o'r dref.

I greu gwaith, adeiladwyd melin wlân, bump llawr, a yrrid gan ddŵr, i'r dwyrain o'r dref a chodwyd melin ban ategol a melin ŷd gerllaw. Mae argaeau a'r ffosydd dŵr oedd yn eu cyflenwi wedi goroesi a gellir eu gweld ar y llethrau tua'r de ddwyrain o'r dref. Arweiniai camlas o fan ychydig i'r gorllewin o'r dref i'r môr tua'r gogledd o Borthmadog, gyda'r basn i ganiatáu i longau lwytho a dadlwytho. Crëwyd meithrinfa i'r dwyrain o'r eglwys, i ddarparu coed i rannau eraill o stad Madocks.

Yn gynnar ym 1808, dechreuwyd ar y cam mwyaf yn y cynllun mawr, sef yr Arglawdd Mawr neu, fel y'i gelwir 'nawr, Cob Porthmadog. Ymestynnai hwn o Ynys Tywyn i ochr ddeheuol y foryd, pellter o ychydig dros un cilometr, a bwriedid iddo gludo'r ffordd o Lundain i Borth Dinllaen trwy Dremadog, ac adennill 1200ha pellach o dir. I wneud y gwaith adeiladu, yr oedd angen gwyro Afon Glaslyn o'i gwely yng nghanol y foryd ac fe dorwyd rhigol artiffisial trwy Ynys Tywyn i hwyluso hyn, gyda llifddorau i reoli llif y dŵr. Cwblhawyd yr arglawdd ym 1811, ond bylchwyd ef chwe mis yn ddiweddarach a bu'n ddrud iawn i'w atgyweirio.

Trwy wro Afon Glaslyn, achoswyd i harbwr newydd gael ei garthu ger Ynys Tywyn greigiog, ac fe gafwyd trwydded harbwr ym 1821 a ddechreuodd ddatblygiad Porthmadog. Adeiladwyd yr harbwr a gosodwyd cei newydd ar rent i Samuel Holland, y perchennog chwareli llechi, ac wedyn cafodd y twf o ganlyniad yn y fasnach lechi yr effaith a ddymunwyd, sef y rhan olaf o gynllun mawr Madocks. Adeiladwyd tramffordd lein fach (Rheilffordd Ffestiniog yn awr) ar draws y Cob i gysylltu'r harbwr â chwareli Ffestiniog ym 1836, er y bu Madocks ei hun farw ym 1828. Pan oedd cynhyrchu llechi yn ei anterth ym 1873, amcangyfrifwyd bod 1,000 o longau yn cludo 116,000 tonnall o lechi allan o Borthmadog.

Tyfodd Porthmadog yn raddol yng nghanol y 19edd ganrif, ond heb ddylanwad Madocks i'w rheoli, nid oedd ganddi'r un undod cynllunio a phensaernïol â Thremadog, gyda strydoedd ymyl yn arwain oddi ar echel y Stryd Fawr, cynllun sy'n gyffredin i lawer o drefi diwydiannol o'r oes honno. Efallai mai'r capeli yw'r unig adeiladau i'w nodi yn y dref, ac efallai hefyd ardal Cornhill gyda'i ystordai a thai teras. Mae twf Porthmadog yn rhannol gyfritol, o leiaf, am ddiffyg twf Tremadog, gan fod Rheilffordd y Cambrian, a adeiladwyd ym 1867, wedi dewis mynd trwy Borthmadog ar ei ffordd i Bwllheli.

Mae penrhyn Penrhyndeudraeth lle saiff Porthmeirion yn dirwedd cynlluniedig llai o faint a ddewiswyd gan Clough Williams-Ellis (sydd â'i dŷ, Plas Brondanw, hefyd yn edrych dros ac wedi ei gynnwys yn yr ardal hon) fel y safle delfrydol i'w hoff freuddwyd o bentref ffantasi lle gallai ddefnyddio'r arddulliau pensaernïol a apeliai ato. Mae'r pentref yn creu ei dirwedd gwahanol, unigryw iawn, ei hun, ond heblaw am fod yn atyniad ymwelwyr poblogaidd sy'n enwog yn rhyngwladol, cofir ef gan y mwyafrif o bobl y dyddiau hyn fel y man lle ffilmiwyd *The Prisoner*, cyfres deledu yn y 1960au a ddaeth yn destun cwlw ymysg ei dilynwyd.

1805 and the town was laid out on a T-shaped plan, with the top formed by the aptly-named main road, Dublin Street, which held the coaching inn, town hall and market house. Off this opened Market Square, around which were houses, shops and smaller inns, while a church and a nonconformist chapel were built either side of the road to the south of the town.

In order to generate employment, a five-storey, water powered woollen mill was built to the east of the town and an ancillary fulling mill and a corn mill erected nearby. The dams and leats of the water supply system survive on the slopes to the north east of the town. A canal ran from just west of the town out to sea north of Porthmadog, with a basin to allow ships to load and unload. A nursery was created to the east of the church, supplying trees to other parts of the Madocks estate.

Early in 1808, work began on the greatest undertaking of all in the grand scheme, namely the Great Embankment or, as it is now known, the Porthmadog Cob. This extended from Ynys Tywyn to the south side of the estuary, a distance of just over a kilometre, and intended to carry the post road from London to Porth Dinllaen via Tremadog, and to reclaim a further 1200ha of land. Construction necessitated diverting the River Glaslyn from its mid-estuary course and an artificial channel was cut through Ynys Tywyn to facilitate this, with sluice gates to control the flow of water. Although the embankment was completed in 1811, it was breached six months later and had to be repaired at great cost.

The diversion of the River Glaslyn led to the scouring out of a new harbour alongside the rocky Ynys Tywyn, and a harbour licence was obtained in 1821 which initiated the development of Porthmadog. The harbour was built and a new quay rented to Samuel Holland, the slate quarry owner, and the resultant growth of the slate trade achieved in effect, the last phase of Madocks's grand plan. A narrow gauge tramway (the present Ffestiniog Railway) was built across the Cob connecting the harbour with the Ffestiniog quarries in 1836, although Madocks himself had died in 1828. At the peak of slate production in 1873, an estimated 1,000 ships moved 116,000 tons of slate out of Porthmadog.

Porthmadog grew steadily in the mid-19th century, though without Madocks's controlling influence, the town lacked the planning and architectural unity of Tremadog, with side streets running off the axial High Street, a plan common to many industrial towns of the age. The chapels are perhaps the only buildings of note in the town, and possibly the Cornhill area with its warehouses and terraced housing. The growth of Porthmadog is at least partly responsible for the fossilization of Tremadog, for the Cambrian Railway built in 1867 chose to pass through the former on its way to Pwllheli.

The Penrhyndeudraeth peninsula on which Portmeirion stands is a smaller planned landscape chosen by Clough Williams-Ellis (whose house, Plas Brondanw, also overlooks and is included in this area) as the ideal site for his cherished dream of a fantasy village where he could indulge in the styles of architecture which attracted him. The village creates its own discrete, yet highly distinctive, landscape, but apart from being a popular and internationally famous architectural tourist attraction, it is associated in most minds today as the place where *The Prisoner* was filmed, a 1960s television series that became a cult.

# CRYNODEB

Rhif cyf	HLW (Gw) 7
Rhif map mynegai	25
Map AO	Landranger 124
Sir flaenorol	Gwynedd
Awurdod unedol	Gwynedd
Prif ddynodiadau helaeth	Mae pen gogleddol yr ardal o fewn Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri a'r pen gorllewinol o fewn Ardal Amgylchedd Arbennig Penrhyn Llŷn. Mae'r ardal yn cynnwys: rhan o Warchodfa Natur Genedlaethol Coed Tremadog; rhan o Forfa Harlech a'r cyfan o Gorsydd Glaslyn a Phont Croesor sy'n Safleoedd o Ddiddordeb Gwyddonol Arbennig. Mae'n cynnwys Ardaloedd Cadwraeth Porthmadog, Tremadog a Phorthmeirion. Dosbarthuwyd Cob Porthmadog yn Adeilad Rhestredig Graddfa II*.
Meini prawf	1
Cynnwys ac arwyddocâd	Tirwedd a wnaed gan ddyn ar dir a enillwyd o foryd afon yn ne Eryri, y cyfan yn gynllun enfawr a ddyfeisiwyd gan un dyn, y cynllun mwyaf uchelgeisiol o'i fath, mae'n debyg, ym Mhrydain yn y 19edd ganrif. Mae'n cynnwys: tir a adenillwyd o gorsydd ac arglawdd Cob Porthmadog; tref gynlluniedig Tremadog a thref Porthmadog. Cynhwysir hefyd bentref Porthmeirion sy'n un Eidalaid, estron iawn o ran pensaernïaeth, a ddyluniwyd ac a osodwyd yma gan Clough Williams-Ellis.

# SUMMARY

Ref number	HLW (Gw) 7
Index map no.	25
OS map	Landranger 124
Former county	Gwynedd
Unitary authority	Gwynedd
Principal area designations	The northern end of the area is within the Snowdonia National Park and the western end within the Llyn Peninsula Environmentally Sensitive Area. The area includes: part of the Coed Tremadog National Nature Reserve; part of Morfa Harlech and the whole of Glaslyn Marshes and Pont Croesor Sites of Special Scientific Interest. It includes Porthmadog, Tremadog and Portmeirion Conservation Areas. Porthmadog Cob is categorised as a Grade II* Listed Building.
Criteria	1
Contents and significance	A man-made landscape occupying a reclaimed river estuary situated in south Snowdonia, the whole conceived as one man's grand scheme, probably the most ambitious of its kind in 19th century Britain. The area includes: the reclaimed marshes and Porthmadog Cob embankment; Tremadog planned town and Porthmadog town. Portmeirion, the architecturally-exotic, planted, Italianate village designed by Clough Williams-Ellis is also included.

## Ffynonellau detoledig / Selected sources

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GWYNEDD



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