
Ports and Harbours of Gwynedd: **Aberdaron**



A Threat Related Assessment

GAT Project No. 1824

Report No. 671.2

April, 2007

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Prepared for CADW

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By

John Roberts
&
Andrew Davidson

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ABERDARON

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Introduction

This report contains the results of an archaeological assessment undertaken as part of a wider assessment of ports and harbours throughout Wales. The assessments have been undertaken by the Welsh Archaeological Trusts and funded by CADW. The report has been compiled by the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust.

1.2 Aims of the project

The aim of the project is to identify the nature and status of the heritage resource within the study area and to aid and encourage the incorporation of the resource into the management and future development of the coastal zone.

1.3 Location and topography

The Llŷn Peninsula extends to the southwest of the Snowdonia massif and comprises a dissected plateau with outliers of harder rocks forming a number of isolated, but prominent, hills and ridges. Aberdaron is a former fishing village situated at the western tip of the Llŷn Peninsula at NGR SH17302600, at the mouth of the Afon Daron, in a small valley on the seashore. Bardsey Island lies off the southwestern tip of the peninsula across Bardsey Sound, 6.2km from Aberdaron. Two nineteenth century stone-built bridges span Afon Daron at the centre of the village (PRN 11,674/5; NGR SH17272644).

Within the surrounding coastline, there are several sheltered coves or “entries” along Aberdaron Bay, which include Porth Meudwy, Porth Simdde, Llanllawen, Hen Borth and Parwyd. These coves provided shelter from the westerly gales for the local fishing fleet, and, in the case of Porth Meudwy, is the launching point for vessels sailing to Ynys Enlli/Bardsey Island.

2. HISTORIC BACKGROUND

2.1 Prehistoric and Roman

There is limited prehistoric evidence within the study area: a stone axe was identified at Caerau Farm, 0.5km to the west at NGR SH17002600.

There is no identified Roman period archaeological activity within a 2.0km radius of the study area.

2.2 Medieval

Aberdaron was located in the commote of Cymydmaen in the parish of Aberdaron. Aberdaron was the location for a *clas* or principal church site dedicated to St. Hywyn who established a cell there in the sixth century. Aberdaron was the land terminus of a pilgrim route which ran the length of the Llŷn Peninsula and became the embarkation point for the Bardsey. The ecclesiastical site at Bardsey was traditionally founded by St. Cadfan in the sixth century. The Augustinian Abbey of St. Mary's was subsequently established in the thirteenth century and was in use until the dissolution of the Monasteries in 1537 after which Bardsey was left to the pirates and marauders until the establishment of a farming and fishing community in the mid-eighteenth century.

The small monastic community at St Hywyn's held extensive areas of land in the commote of Cymydmaen. It was alongside this ecclesiastical settlement with its hostelries that the hamlet evolved into a small fishing village catering for the local herring fleets.

Two sixth century inscribed stones: the Senacus Stone and the Veracius Stone now reside in St Hywyn's Church. They were both moved from an earlier site at Cefn Amlwch.

2.3 Post-Medieval

Aberdaron remained, until the twentieth century, an isolated fishing village that almost entirely relied on sea traffic for long distance communication (Jones Hughes, 1960: 131). Although Aberdaron was the terminus of the medieval pilgrim route to Bardsey, the local rail and road network did not reach Aberdaron, which relied on sea traffic for the provision of necessary supplies not available locally as well as a distribution point for local surplus goods produced in the local farms. Other seaports along the Llŷn that performed a similar function included Pwllheli, Nefyn and Porthdinllaen. In the case of Aberdaron, the sea traffic sailed mostly to the ports of Caernarfon and Beaumaris, which served as entrepôts between the little harbourages on the Llŷn and Anglesey coasts and the main distributing centres on the Dee and Mersey estuaries, mainly Chester and Liverpool (*ibid.*).

Aberdaron Bay also contained several coves and creeks that were used as safe anchorages for sailing boats with the largest example located at Porth Meudwy, c. 1.2km to the southwest of Aberdaron.

As a result, Aberdaron Bay developed as a centre for receiving and distributing provisions in the surrounding countryside. In the same capacity it was an embarkation point for Bardsey which had a population of 132 in 1881. The last coastal vessels to enter the Bay came during the First World War. With the improvements in roads during the twentieth century, supplies subsequently arrived from Pwllheli (*ibid.*)

Until the twentieth century, fishing formed an essential activity in a self-supporting coastal community.

During the nineteenth century, the land surrounding Aberdaron Bay was mostly owned by Lord Newborough, who according to the Tithe Schedule of 1844 owned the land west of Porth Simdde, whilst the principal landowners to the east of the Porth included Edwards Richard Lloyd and Charles and Griffith Wynne, who, between them, owned the land east of Porth Simdde to the mouth of the Daron. The land within the boundary of St. Hywyn's Church belonged to Reverend John Evans.

2.3.1 The Herring Industry

The most important fishing ground in the northwest was the Bay of Caernarfon, separating Anglesey from Llŷn. The main catch was herring and the leading centre in the early nineteenth was Nefyn. Aberdaron participated in this fishing, and even in the fourteenth century it was one of the most active herring ports in North Wales, ranking in this respect alongside Abermaw and the borough of Beaumaris (Jones Hughes, T., 1960: 137). Aberdaron's fisherman's main interest however was inshore activity. They would operate along the coast of Pen Llŷn and in Bardsey Sound and around the island, and there were small craft, collectively called the "Bardsey Boats", which carried the fish as far as Liverpool market. Linked with this activity was the local construction of boats for use by fishermen, and such places as Llanbedrog, Abersoch, Rhiw and Porth Golmon, as well as Aberdaron, had their own boatwrights (*ibid.*).

Hyde-Hall in *A Description of Caernarvonshire (1809-1811)* describes the village of Aberdaron as consisting of "a few thatched houses, where a small import traffic is carried on of coals and groceries. The exports at present may be summarily described as none, but some boats are employed during the season in the herring industry" (Hyde-Hall, 1811: 307). Thomas Pennant, in his *A Tour of Wales 1770 (Volume II)*, whilst not referencing Aberdaron Bay directly, describes the herring industry on the Llŷn and the exporting of herrings from Porth Ysgadan (Herring Port) to Bardsey (Pennant, 1770: 205)

2.3.2 The Crustacean Market

Porth Meudwy is currently used as a harbour for the local crustacean fishing industry, which supports 5 full-time and 2 part-time jobs.

2.3.3 Mining

A small barite mine was exploited at Porth Simdde 450m to the west of Aberdaron, between 1883 and 1917. The quarry workings are listed on the 1st to 3rd Edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps and a wooden pier associated with the mine is recorded on the 3rd Edition map, suggesting that the ore was transported by sea.

2.3.4 Tourism

Aberdaron's main commercial trade is tourism and its beach was awarded the Blue flag rural beach award in 2005. Aberdaron is one of several popular destinations along the Llŷn which also include Llanbedrog, Abersoch, Nefyn and Morfa Nefyn, was made possible only by the expansion of road traffic in the twentieth century. The village is a popular destination during the summer months with many local cottages let as holiday homes. Local activities include swimming, sailing, quad biking, clay pigeon shooting, horse riding, fishing, coastal walks, diving courses and boat trips to Bardsey Island with its bird sanctuary.

Aberdaron is also located along the 89km Llŷn Heritage Path that stretches along Pen Llŷn.

There are two hotels - "The Ship" and the "Ty Newydd"; numerous B & Bs; two tearooms / cafes - "Yr Hen Best" and "Y Gegin Fawr" and a centrally located car park, used to access the beach and the heritage walks. The seafront wall was recently repaired to improve visitor facilities.

2.4 Description of Archaeological Features

For the location of the archaeological features see Figure 1 and Figures 9 to 11

2.4.1 Aberdaron Bridges

There are two nineteenth century stone-built bridges within Aberdaron:

Bridge I (PRN 11674; NGR SH17272644; Grade II Listed Ref. 4227) "Pont Fawr": crosses the Daron to enable road access to the shoreline along Aberdaron Bay. Built in the early nineteenth century. Single-arched bridge of rubble stone, with broad shallow arch, stone flush voussoirs and rubble parapets with slab capstones. The parapets extend out, curving to the line of the road, with a rounded pier at the western end. The northeast parapet is continuous with the parapet of Pont Fach (see Plate 5).

Bridge II (PRN 11675; NGR SH17282645; Grade II Listed: Ref. 4228) "Pont Fach": crosses Cyll-y-Felin stream to enable road access to the shoreline along Aberdaron Bay. Rubble stone with two low arches, segmental with stone voussoirs, one voussoir on the southwestern arch dated 1823. Plain low pier between the arches. Rubble parapets with slab copings, with the south parapet extending west to join the parapet of Pont Fawr/Bridge I (see Plate 6)

2.4.2 Aberdaron Buildings

There are several post-medieval vernacular buildings within the village.

- Y Felin: village corn-mill, probably early nineteenth century extended in later nineteenth century and comprising a central cross-range and wings east and west, with additional range parallel and to north of the west wing. Cross-range appears to be the oldest part, marked on 1844 Tithe Map, and the wheel, now gone, was on the north end of this range.
- Y Gegin Fawr: probable seventeenth century vernacular village house, now a cafe, traditionally the gathering point for pilgrims to Bardsey in the medieval period. Said to have been restored in twentieth century by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis. Marked on 1844 Tithe map as one of a number of 'poor cottages' owned by the Nanhoron estate, occupied by Evan Williams (see Plate 4).
- Row of five cottages to the north of St. Hywyn's Church.
- Glasfor, Gwynfor & Uwch-y-Don: three vernacular cottages close to the beach (see Plate 9).
- The Post Office: located in the centre of the village, set back and overlooking the open square on the west side of its main street. A former post-office now holiday house, built in 1950 by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis (see Plate 7).

There are several other cottages close to the sea front: Ty Newydd, the large hotel on the beachfront, the Ship Hotel, opposite Ty Newydd, Glandon, a semi-detached cottage next to Glasfor and Glan y Mor, a detached cottage west of Glandon; the latter two are holiday cottages.

2.4.3 Aberdaron Seafront (Plate 2)

The seafront at Aberdaron comprises a 2.2km stretch of sandy beach with Aberdaron village nestled at the mouth of the Daron towards the western end of the beach (Figure 1). A series of seafront walls

stretch from St. Hywyn's Church to the mouth of the Daron (distance: 129m), with a small slipway located between Ty Newydd Hotel and St. Hywyn's Church. The seafront walls were modified and repaired in the late 1990's due to the damage caused to the existing walls from coastal erosion. In the case of St. Hywyn's Church the graveyard was being undermined causing the sea wall to slip onto the beach. The wall was repaired in 1998 (Plate 3).

An examination of the nineteenth and early twentieth century 25" Ordnance Maps (1st to 3rd Editions) shows the development of the sea wall from discrete property boundaries to a more established seafront wall. The 1st and 2nd Edition Maps (1889 and 1900 respectively) show a large boundary wall surrounding St. Hywyn's Church, whilst the other seafront properties (between Glan-y-Mor cottage and Ty Newydd Hotel) appear to have subtle or no seafront walls. Two disused limekilns are also recorded on both maps right on the seafront (Figure 3). The 3rd Edition map (1918), was published after improvements were made to the seafront in 1900, with a clearly defined wall stretching from Glan-y-Mor cottage to Ty Newydd Hotel and a narrow slipway between Ty Newydd and St. Hywyn's clearly defined. One of the limekilns was removed during the construction of the slipway, whilst the other was removed during modification work to the churchyard in 1906 (Source: www.st-hywyn.org.uk; see Figure 5).

Further improvements were made to the seafront during the twentieth century, with the seafront wall extending to the mouth of the Daron. A photograph from 1950 shows the area between Glan-y-Mor cottage and the mouth of the river as an open area without a seafront wall (Plate 23), whilst the outline of the current seafront wall, which stretches from Ty Newydd Hotel to the mouth of the river, is present on the 1:10000 Ordnance Survey Map published in 1983. A large concrete slipway to the west of the Daron is also present on this map, which is accessed from the coastal road and stretches 206m down a coastal slope to the beach (Plates 10 and 11). Large boulders were also placed along the seafront from Porth Simdde to St. Hywyn's to act as tidal breakers and prevent coastal erosion. Further improvements were made to the seafront walls in the late 1990's and early twenty-first century, which were repaired and modified to include a picnic area and toilet facilities between the mouth of the Daron and the seafront.

It appears that throughout this time that vessels were simply beached and accessed at low tide and that no specific harbour facilities existed. The only access for small vessels to the beach was from the small slipway between Ty Newydd Hotel and St. Hywyn's Church, with the modern slipway to the west enabling vessels to access the beach from the coastal road during the twentieth century.

2.4.4 St Hywyn's Church, Aberdaron

St Hywyn's church (PRN 3290; NGR SH17322637; Grade II Listed: Ref. 4225), Aberdaron takes its dedication from Hywyn, reputedly one of the saints who accompanied Cadfan from Brittany towards the end of the 5th century. Cadfan, jointly with Einion Frenin, Prince of the Llŷn, was thought to have established the religious house on Bardsey Island. Dedication in the early Welsh church of the 5th to 7th century related to the owner and foundation of the original church. Little is known about Hywyn except that after he joined the college of St. Illtud moved to Bardsey and was appointed steward to Cadfan and the confessor to the congregation of saints on Bardsey, where he is considered to have been buried. Dedications to St Hywyn are rare; no other parish in Wales has a dedication to St Hywyn. (Ellis 1950) No trace remains of Hywyn's church. If there had been a church in Aberdaron in this period it would have been made of timber, a wooden oratory or chamber. There is, as yet, no evidence for and masonry church in Wales earlier than the 12th century.

The church is mentioned in c.1094 (Jones.A. 1910) when the canons provided a boat for passage of Gruffydd Ap Cynan to Ireland. In 1115 Gruffydd Ap Rhys, King of Deheubarth returned from Ireland to assume possession of his heritage which was in the hands of Henry I. This concluded in Gruffydd Ap Rhys seeking the protection of Gruffydd Ap Cynan, King of Gwynedd and sanctuary at the church at Aberdaron. In 1137 Gwynedd enjoyed a period of peace and security under the reign of Gruffydd Ap Cynan which allowed the religious communities of Gwynedd to start replacing their wooden oratories with stone structures. It is in this period that the earliest portion of Aberdaron church was built (Ellis 1950).

Shortly after its foundation the church of St Hywyn became a *clas* or mother church. The Abbot in this period was lord of a large area of Cymydmaen, one of three commotes of the cantref of Lleyn. The clas

at Aberdaron survived the Norman policy of dissolving the clas organisations due to the church's remoteness and continued to exist as a portionary church. The first evidence of the existence of a portionary church at Aberdaron is seen in a document of 1252 where an agreement between the abbot and the canons of Bardsey and the secular canons of Aberdaron in which the canons agreed to give the abbey all the land tithes in exchange for sacerdotal vestments, a silver chalice, a missal and a pound of frankincense annually at the feast of St John the Baptist. (Ellis 1950). The church is also listed in the Norwich taxation of 1253, where it had the highest value in the Deanary of the Lleyon (Jones.A. 1910).

In 1504 a visitation of the diocese was made under the request of Archbishop Warham. Aberdaron was seen to be more than twice the size of the original Norman building and still connected to St. Mary's Abbey on Bardsey Island. However this changed with the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII shortly after this date and in 1624 Archbishop Williams, of York., who became Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge bestowed the patronage of the rectory with three other benefices to the college. The college remained the patron of the rectory for almost 300 years.

The rectors of Aberdaron in the 17th and 18th centuries appear to have been instituted by the bishop of Bangor. In the late 17th and early eighteenth century due to the Methodist revival the church in Wales fell into decline and it is in this time that Aberdaron fell into a state of disrepair and was abandoned with its use being solely for burial service.

A school was established in 1835 at the west end of the south nave and a room was constructed in the gable above although the main fabric of the building was in a state of neglect. The church was abandoned in 1841 as it was decided that a strong sea wall to protect St Hywyn's church would cost as much as the building of a new church. A new building was erected on the high ground. Due to its poor architectural character the new church created protest and it was eventually decided to restore St Hywyn's church under the architect Henry Kennedy. By 1868 a new timber roof had been constructed and the window repaired and shortly after a new sea wall was built.

St Hywyn's church is orientated almost northeast. The church is built of local rubble and grit stone dressing consists of two equal aisles separated by an arcade of five bays. The north aisle is the original nave and chancel, which is thought to have been lengthened to the east in the 13th century. The south aisle was added in the 16th century. In the 18th century the western end of the south aisle was used as a school. The church had fallen into disrepair by the early 19th century and was abandoned in favour of a new church. In 1868 the church was restored by Henry Kennedy of Bangor in which the interior was replastered, the roof to the nave and chancel rebuilt and a window placed into the south door of the south aisle.

The 1812 Cefnamlwch Estate Map and the 1844 Tithe Map for Aberdaron both show that the churchyard was originally curvilinear in form and was terraced into the steeply rising ground on the east and north-east in 1906 (Ellis W J, 1950, 11). The present sea wall which was built in the late 19th century encroached on the southern boundary of the churchyard and in 1995 this wall had collapsed onto the beach. The churchyard has been covered with storm blown sand throughout its history.

2.4.5 Limekilns

There are two limekilns recorded on the 1st and 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Maps (1889 and 1900) at Aberdaron, located on the shoreline (NGR SH17182637; Figure 3). They are described as "disused" and are no longer listed on the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map (1918; Figure 5). The harbour wall was developed in 1900, which altered this area and the partial restoration of St. Hywyn's Church in 1906, when the churchyard was enlarged with land given by the Nanhoron Estate, saw the removal of the lime kiln closest to the church gate.

2.4.6 Fishing Weir

A fishing weir is recorded in the HER at NGR SH16602600, located c.0.8km west of Aberdaron (Figure 11). The HER states: Davis records in *The Fishing Gear of England and Wales*, 1958 that an old man used to build small temporary weirs at Aberdaron within living memory. Jones and Bannerman (1999) record a weir at this location. Both a careful field search and examination of aerial photographs failed to locate the weir at or close to the given map reference. A boulder bank that appeared to be natural and was high up the beach could have been the feature identified.

2.4.7 Porth Meudwy

Porth Meudwy (SH16282551) or “Hermit’s Port” is owned by the National Trust and is a small, secluded rocky cove used as a harbour for a number of full and part-time fishermen, working mainly in the high-value crustacean market and is also an embarkation point for Bardsey Island. Pictorial evidence from the late nineteenth and throughout the twentieth century show large boats moored neared the cove and smaller boats beached on the cove in low tide (Plate 25). Porth Meudwy is sheltered from the prevailing south-westerly winds within the Bay, whereas Aberdaron does not afford such shelter.

Historical references, specifically, Thomas Pennant and Hyde Hall, describe the “port” as being used to sail the local herring fleet and also as the launching point for boats laden with coal and lime for the larger entrepôts at Menai Bridge and Caernarfon. Both Aberdaron and Porth Meudwy provided the main commercial links to the north as the road and rail network was severely limited along this portion of the Llŷn certainly until the development of the Llŷn road during the nineteenth century (which was further developed in the twentieth century into the B4413). During the nineteenth century, Porth Meudwy and its environs was owned by Lord Newborough and, according to the Tithe Schedule of 1844, the land was tenanted by Owen Roberts of Cwrt Farm.

A modern concrete slipway for launching boats is located on the shore, 30.0m long and built from concrete (Plates 17 and 18). Tractors are for manoeuvring the boats up and down the slipway. A mortared stone building, single storey with a slate roof, 8.0m long and 5.0m wide is still in use as a fisherman’s storehouse (Plates 15 and 16). The Porth is approached from inland via a modern road terraced into the coastline (Plate 14), leading from a public car park opposite Cwrt Farm owned by the National Trust. The Porth has been modernised with a concrete slipway and a parking area sculpted from the pebbles on the shore.

From September 2006 The Porth Meudwy Harbour Facilities and Improvement Programme has been awarded a grant of £355,000 from the European Union’s Objective 1 Programme, with match funding from the Welsh Assembly Government, making a total investment of £473,778 to help support the local crustacean market. The National Trust will allow local fishermen to use buildings in its Cwrt Farm. The buildings will be totally refurbished and will include facilities to site an ice-making machine and cold store/bait store with an aim to ensure that the fishermen’s catch can be maximised for transporting to a wider market in Wales. The trackway to the cove at Porth Meudwy will be widened in places allowing better access for fisherman and therefore increased safety, especially during the visitor season. The project will also see the refurbishment of the fishermen’s storehouse (Source: www.wefo.wales.gov.uk)

This project will help secure the 5 full-time and 2 part-time jobs reliant upon fishing these waters for a living (*ibid*).

A limekiln is recorded on the 1st and 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Maps (1889 and 1900) at Porth Meudwy. On the 3rd Edition Map (1918; Figure 4), it is recorded as the “Old Limekiln”, suggesting it went out of use between 1900 and 1918. The location of the kiln is now part of the coastal heritage path so the limekiln was presumably demolished during the twentieth century.

2.4.8 Porth Simdde

Porth Simdde (SH16732628), or “Chimney Port” in English, is located at the western end of the 2.2km long beach that extends from Aberdaron at the mouth of Afon Saint. Porth Simdde, like Porth Meudwy, is a natural cove. The Historic Environment Record (HER) identifies a small barite mine within the cove at NGR SH16702630. The site is described in the HER as a series of working pockets near the seashore exploiting a geological fault between Ordovician rocks to the east and Pre-Cambrian rocks to the west. The site was worked intermittently between 1883 and 1917 and was called Pompren (“footbridge” in English) mine and the 1918 25" map shows an open quarry where the dwelling Gwynfa now stands at SH16742649 (Figure 5). The map also shows a 104m long pier at Porth Simdde stretching from the coast and adjacent to a small rectangular building (now a ruin; see Plate 12). It is possible that this building was connected with the mine and its proximity to a local stream (Afon Saint), suggests a waterwheel may have been in use, although any traces no longer exist (Source:

Historic Environment Record). An early twentieth century photograph shows the pier as a simple construction of wooden stilts supporting a walkway (Plate 24). The pier is still visible as a line of timber stumps at low tide (Plate 13). It is assumed that the barite ore was transported along the footbridge to waiting vessels. According to the Tithe Schedule of 1844, the land to the west of Porth Simdde was owned by Lord Newborough and that to the immediate east by an Edwards Richard Lloyd.

2.4.9 Cwrt Farm (Plate 20)

Cwrt Farm (PRN 3480; NGR SH15912607). Nineteenth century farmhouse, rebuilt on ancient site, said to be that of a medieval manorial court. Later owned by the Newborough estate, which rebuilt the farm-buildings, with details similar to those on Ynys Enlli. The 1844 Tithe map shows buildings to a different layout, the farm owned by Lord Newborough, occupied by Owen Roberts, with 215 acres (87ha) (see Figure 2). Cwrt Farm is now a 90.71ha main holding tenanted from the National Trust

Garfi, S. & Latham, J. 1998 *Archaeological Survey of Cwrt, Llyn*. Unpublished report for the National Trust.

3. MANAGEMENT

3.1 Harbour Management

The seafront wall at Aberdaron is owned and maintained by Cyngor Gwynedd Council. Porth Meudwy is owned by National Trust.

3.2 Statutory and Non-Statutory Designations

3.2.1 Environmental Designations

Special Area of Conservation

Aberdaron Bay is close to the **Clogwyni Pen Llyn/ Seacliffs of Llyn** SAC (UK0030271)

3.2.2 Heritage Descriptions

Landscapes of Historic Interest

Aberdaron lies within **Llyn and Bardsey Island** Historic Landscape, as defined within the *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales*, reference HLW (Gw) 8

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

- Cn 089 The Senacus Stone
- Cn 090 The Veracius Stone

Listed Buildings

The following listed buildings lie within the locality of Aberdaron:

4224	Aberdaron New Church	II
4225	Church of St Hywyn	I
4226	Row of five cottages north of and opposite St Hywyn's	II
4227	Pont Fawr	II
4228	Pont Fach	II
4229	Y Cegin Fawr	II
4230	Glasfor, Gwynfor and Uwch-y-Don Cottages	II
4231	Bodernabwy Farmhouse	II
19990	The Post Office	II

19991	Milestone on Pont Fach	II
19992	Y Felin	II
19993	Milestone outside Aberdaron	II
19994	Plas yr Wylan	II
19995	Pencae Farm	II
19996	Milestone	II
19997	Penrhyn Mawr Farmhouse	II
20048	Cwrt Farm	II

3.3 Archaeological potential and recommendations

(Identify the sites within the area which contribute to the harbour/maritime character of the area and any potential threats to their stability)

A high level of protection is currently afforded to the Church, bridges and various dwellings within Aberdaron. However, a number of sites, though not of national significance, do contribute to the character of Aberdaron Bay. Currently, none are scheduled for demolition. These include:

- Aberdaron seafront wall
- The slipway from the coastal road to the beach at Aberdaron
- The slipway and fisherman's cottage at Porth Meudwy

A record of the above sites should be undertaken prior to any impact or significant alterations.

The architectural character of Aberdaron harbour and the bridges leading to the seashore reflect the post-medieval development of the village. Any future development should reflect these themes.

(Any architectural characteristics likely to be affected/need to be respected)

Areas of research potential related to the development of the area are:

- The chronology and nature of the development of Aberdaron harbour
- The chronology and nature of the development of Porth Meudwy
- The chronology and nature of the development of Porth Simdde

Many harbours contain areas that are now silted, but were formerly used for mooring and/or transshipment of people and goods, and which therefore retain good potential for the preservation of remains, including organic archaeology and shipwrecks.

Archaeological assessment and evaluation should precede any development within these areas of archaeological potential.

4. ABERDARON BIBLIOGRAPHY

4.1 Maps

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4.2 Principal Archive Sources

Historic Environment Record

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APPENDIX I: ABERDARON GAZETTEER

The gazetteer is divided into three sections if applicable: Group A are extant sites that are outstanding, often remaining as buildings in use. Group B are sites with good potential for the recovery of archaeology. Group C are sites with little or no potential for the recovery of archaeology. Within the gazetteer the sites are identified by their primary reference number (PRN) as used within the Gwynedd Historic Environment Record and are assessed according to their importance, that is national (A), regional (B), Local (C), Other (D) and unknown (E). The site names are printed in capitals if they are already part of the Historic Environment Record, and in lower case they have been identified during the course of the project.

For the location of the sites see Figures 9 to 11 (located according to PRN).

GROUP A: EXTANT SITES

1202 THE VERACIUS STONE

Assessment of Importance	A	Site Status Reference	SAM Cn090
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A sixth century inscribed stone, previously at Cefn Amlwch, moved to St Hywyn's Church

Easting:	2173	Northing:	3263
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1571 THE SENACUS STONE

Assessment of Importance	A	Site Status Reference	SAM Cn089
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A sixth century inscribed stone, previously at Cefn Amlwch, moved to St Hywyn's Church

Easting:	2173	Northing:	3263
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3291 ST HYWYN'S CHURCH

Assessment of Importance	A	Site Status Reference	G I 4225
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Situated in Aberdaron village, the graveyard running to the cliff edge. Anglican parish church. Nave possibly originally twelfth century, lengthened in fourteenth century and probably raised to match the new south aisle in late fifteenth or early sixteenth century. Founded by St Hywyn in the fifth to seventh century, it was probably rebuilt by Gryffydd ap Cynan of Gwynedd in the early twelfth. First recorded in 1115, it was still a clas church served by secular canons in 1252, but the collegiate status disappeared c. 1500 and at the time of the Reformation the church was subordinate to the Abbey of Bardsey. A long period of decline and non-resident vicars led to decay and in 1841 a new church was built inland. The old church was saved as part of the south aisle had been used as a school from 1835, and by 1848 its restoration was already proposed, to plans by Henry Kennedy and completed in 1868. John Williams of Bangor did further restoration in 1906. The tracery of the two big east windows appears mostly renewed, the 1849 engraving in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, shows the northern one entirely blocked.

Easting:	2173	Northing:	3263
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3480 CWRT FARM

Assessment of Importance	B	Site Status Reference	G II 20048
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Nineteenth century farmhouse, rebuilt on a site said to be that of a medieval manorial court. Later owned by the Newborough estate, which rebuilt the farmbuildings, with details similar to those on Ynys Enlli. The 1844 Tithe map shows buildings to a different layout, the farm owned by Lord Newborough, occupied by Owen Roberts, with 215 acres (87ha). Cwrt Farm is now a 90.71ha main holding tenanted from the National Trust

Easting:	2159	Northing:	2607
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11536 UWCH-Y-DON

Assessment of Importance	B	Site Status Reference	G II 4230
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One of row of three vernacular cottages close to the beach including Gwynfor and Glasfor. Two

storeys high with half dormers, rendered walls and a slate roof.

Easting: 2172 Northing: 3264

11674 PONT FAWR

Assessment of Importance B Site Status Reference G II
4227

Crosses the Daron to enable road access to the shoreline along Aberdaron Bay. Built in the early nineteenth century. Single-arched bridge of rubble stone, with broad shallow arch, stone flush voussoirs and rubble parapets with slab capstones. The parapets extend out, curving to the line of the road, with a rounded pier at the western end. The northeast parapet is continuous with the parapet of Pont Fach.

Easting: 2172 Northing: 3264

11675 PONT FACH

Assessment of Importance B Site Status Reference G II
4228

Crosses Cyll-y-Felin stream to enable road access to the shoreline along Aberdaron Bay. Rubble stone with two low arches, segmental with stone voussoirs, one voussoir on the southwestern arch dated 1823. Plain low pair between the arches. Rubble parapets with slab copings, with the south parapet extending west to join the parapet of Pont Fawr.

Easting: 2172 Northing: 3264

12035 Y CEGIN FAWR

Assessment of Importance B Site Status Reference GII
4229

Probable seventeenth century vernacular village house, now a cafe, traditionally the gathering point for pilgrims to Bardsey in the medieval period. Said to have been restored in twentieth century by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis. Marked on 1844 Tithe map as one of a number of 'poor cottages' owned by the Nanhoron estate, occupied by Evan Williams.

Easting: 2172 Northing: 3264

12155 GLASFOR

Assessment of Importance B Site Status Reference G II
4230

One of row of three vernacular cottages close to the beach including Gwynfor and Uwch-y-Don. Two storeys high with half dormers, rendered walls and a slate roof.

Easting: 2172 Northing: 3264

12191 GWYNFOR

Assessment of Importance B Site Status Reference G II
4230

One of row of three vernacular cottages close to the beach, including Glasfor and Uwch-y-Don. Two storeys high with half dormers, rendered walls and a slate roof.

Easting: 2172 Northing: 3264

21677 POMPREN MINE

Assessment of Importance C Site Status Reference N/A

A series of working pockets near the seashore exploiting a geological fault between Ordovician rocks to the east and Pre-Cambrian rocks to the west. The site was worked intermittently between 1883 and 1917 and was called Pompren ("footbridge" in English) mine and the 1918 25" map shows an open quarry where the dwelling Gwynfa now stands at SH16742649. The map also shows a pier at Porth Simdde stretching from the coast and a small rectangular building (now a ruin).

Easting: 2173 Northing: 3264

25001 ROW OF COTTAGES

Assessment of Importance B Site Status Reference G II
4226

Row of five vernacular cottages north of and opposite Church of St Hywyn

Easting: 2173 Northing: 3263

25002 THE POST OFFICE

Assessment of Importance	B	Site Status Reference	G II 19990
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Twentieth century: located in the centre of the village, set back and overlooking the open square on the west side of its main street. A former post-office now holiday house, built in 1950 by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis.

Easting:	2172	Northing:	3264
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25003 Y FELIN

Assessment of Importance	B	Site Status Reference	G II 19992
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Village corn-mill, probably early nineteenth century extended in later nineteenth century and comprising a central cross-range and wings east and west, with additional range parallel and to north of the west wing. Cross-range appears to be the oldest part, marked on 1844 Tithe Map, and the wheel, now gone, was on the north end of this range.

Easting:	2173	Northing:	3264
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25004 Fisherman's Cottage at Porth Meudwy

Assessment of Importance	C	Site Status Reference	N/A
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A mortared stone building, single storey with a slate roof, 8.0m long and 5.0m wide is still in use as a fisherman's storehouse as part of the local crustacean market. Visible on the 1844 Tithe Map.

Easting:	2162	Northing:	2552
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25005 Modern Slipway at Aberdaron

Assessment of Importance	C	Site Status Reference	N/A
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Modern twentieth century concrete slipway west of the Daron, accessed from the coastal road and stretching 206m down a coastal slope to the beach. In a state of disrepair suggesting it is little used.

Easting:	2170	Northing:	2642
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25006 Modern Slipway at Aberdaron

Assessment of Importance	C	Site Status Reference	N/A
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Located between Ty Newydd Hotel and St. Hywyn's Church: 6.70m wide and 16.70m long. Former site of a limekiln. The available Ordnance Survey Map evidence suggests that between publication of the First and Third Edition 25" Ordnance Survey Maps (1889 and 1918 respectively), the slipway was constructed, removing the limekiln and improving access to the beach. The slipway currently provides pedestrian access to the beach as well as access for small vessels.

Easting:	2172	Northing:	2636
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25011 Modern Slipway at Porth Meudwy

Assessment of Importance	C	Site Status Reference	N/A
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A twentieth century concrete slipway for launching boats is located on the shore, 30.0m long and built from concrete. A small tractor is used for manoeuvring the boats up and down the slipway.

Easting:	2163	Northing:	2552
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GROUP B: SITES WITH GOOD POTENTIAL FOR THE RECOVERY OF ARCHAEOLOGY**25010 Building at Pompren Mine, Porth Simdde**

Assessment of Importance	C	Site Status Reference	N/A
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Stone-built structure, 2.80m wide and 10.00m long, now a ruin. Two of the four elevations forming the building are no longer visible, whilst the remaining two stand to a height of up to a metre. The north facing elevation includes the remains of a doorway. The floor of the building is covered with sand and grass. It is possible that this building was connected with the mine and its proximity to a local stream (Afon Saint), suggests a waterwheel may have been in use, although any traces no longer exist (Source: Historic Environment Record). The building is now adjacent to the heritage coastal path

Easting:	2167	Northing:	2634
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GROUP C: BURIED SITES WITH LIMITED OR NO ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

14596 ABERDARON TEMPORARY WEIRS

Assessment of Importance D Site Status Reference N/A
A fishing weir is recorded in the HER at NGR SH16602600, located c.0.8km west of Aberdaron. The Gwynedd Archaeological Trust Assessment of Coastal Fish Weirs and Traps (G1589) states: Davis records in The Fishing Gear of England and Wales, 1958 that an old man used to build small temporary weirs at Aberdaron within living memory. Jones and Bannerman (1999) record a weir at this location. Both a careful field search and examination of aerial photographs failed to locate the weir at or close to the given map reference. A boulder bank that appeared to be natural and was high up the beach could have been the feature identified.

Easting: 2166 Northing: 3260

25007 Lime Kilns

Assessment of Importance D Site Status Reference N/A
There are two limekilns recorded on the 1st and 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Maps (1889 and 1900) at Aberdaron, located on the shoreline. They are described as “disused” and are no longer listed on the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map (1918). The harbour wall was developed in 1900, which altered this area and the partial restoration of St. Hywyn’s Church in 1906, when the churchyard was enlarged with land given by the Nanhoron Estate, saw the removal of the lime kiln closest to the church gate.

Easting: 2171 Northing: 3263

25008 Lime Kiln at Porth Meudwy

Assessment of Importance D Site Status Reference N/A
A limekiln is recorded on the 1st and 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Maps (1889 and 1900) at Porth Meudwy. On the 3rd Edition Map (1918), it is recorded as the “Old Limekiln”, suggesting it went out of use between 1900 and 1918. A visit to the site on 26th March 2007 failed to identify any standing remains and the location of the kiln is now part of the coastal heritage path. The limekiln was presumably demolished during the twentieth century.

Easting: 2162 Northing: 3255

25009 Wooden Pier at Porth Simdde

Assessment of Importance C Site Status Reference N/A
Wooden pier associated with the barite mine at Porth Simdde. The mine was in operation between 1883 and 1917 and the Third Edition 25" Ordnance Survey Map (1918) shows a 104m long pier at Porth Simdde stretching from the coast adjacent to a small rectangular building (now a ruin). This suggests the pier was constructed between the publication of the Second and Third Edition Ordnance Survey Maps (1900 and 1918 respectively). An early twentieth century photograph of the Porth shows the pier as a simple construction of wooden stilts supporting a walkway and it is assumed that the barite ore was transported along the pier to waiting vessels. (Figure X). The pier is visible at the present time as a line of timber stumps at low tide.

Easting: 2166 Northing: 3260

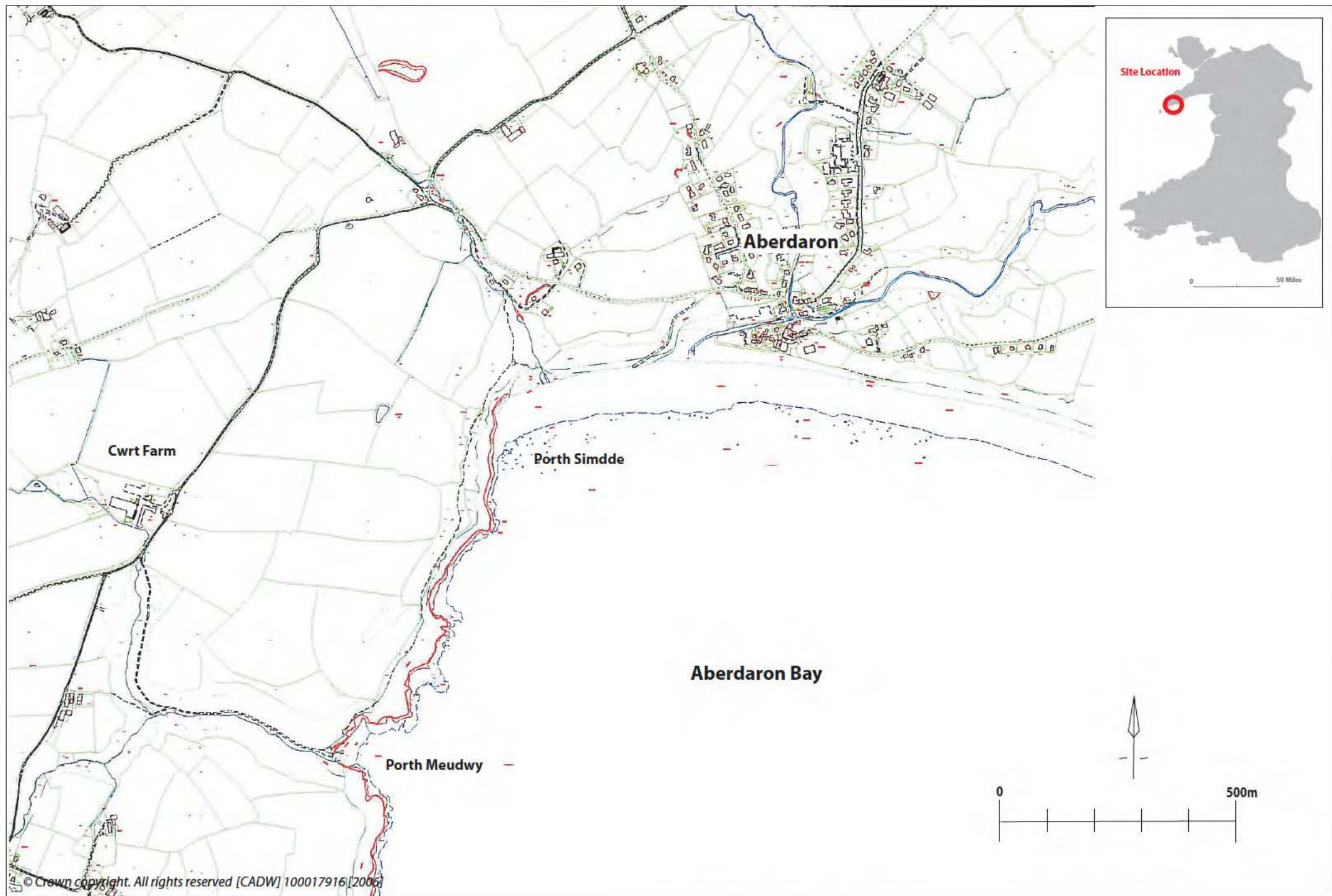


Figure 1: Location Map

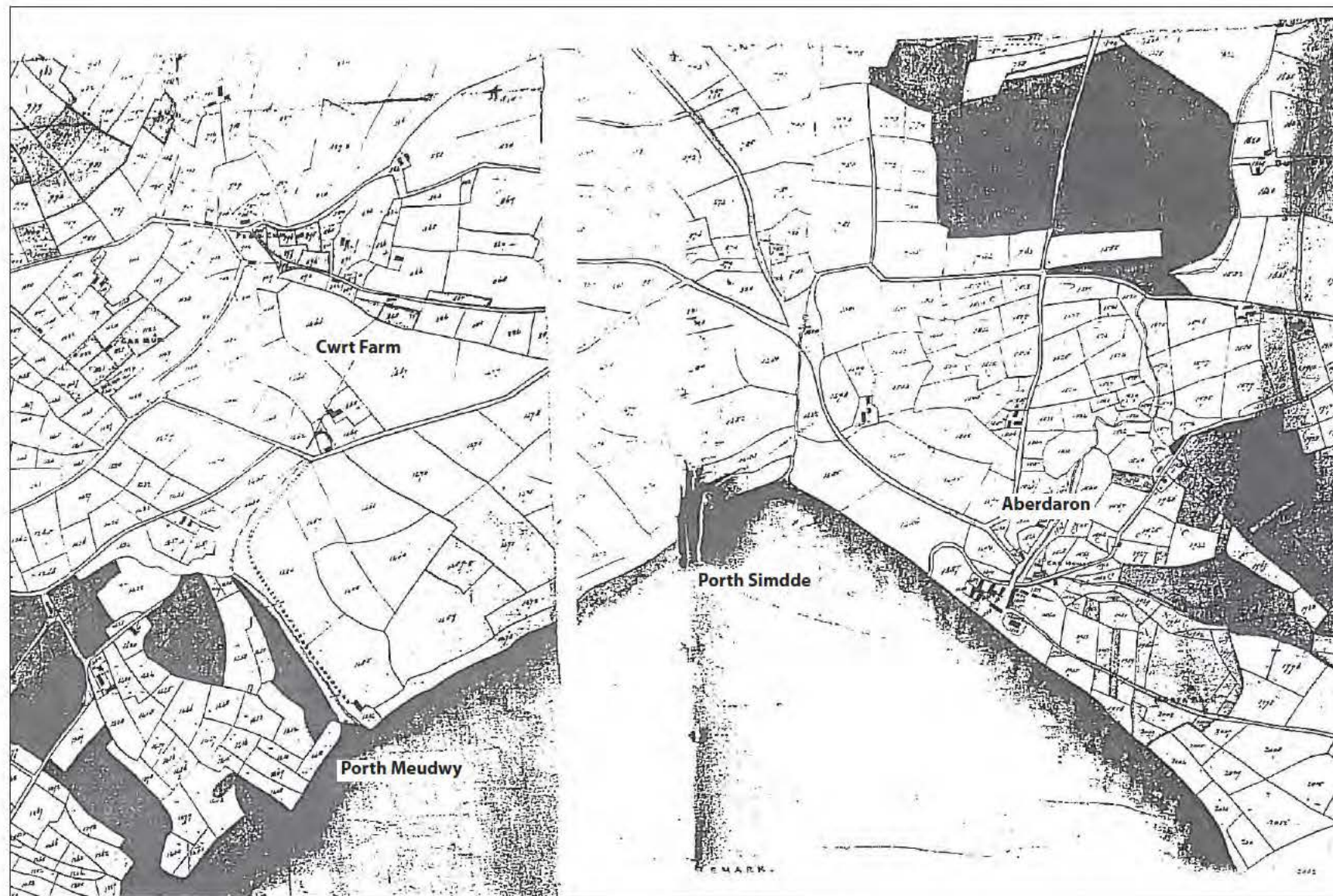


Figure 2: Tithe Map (1844)

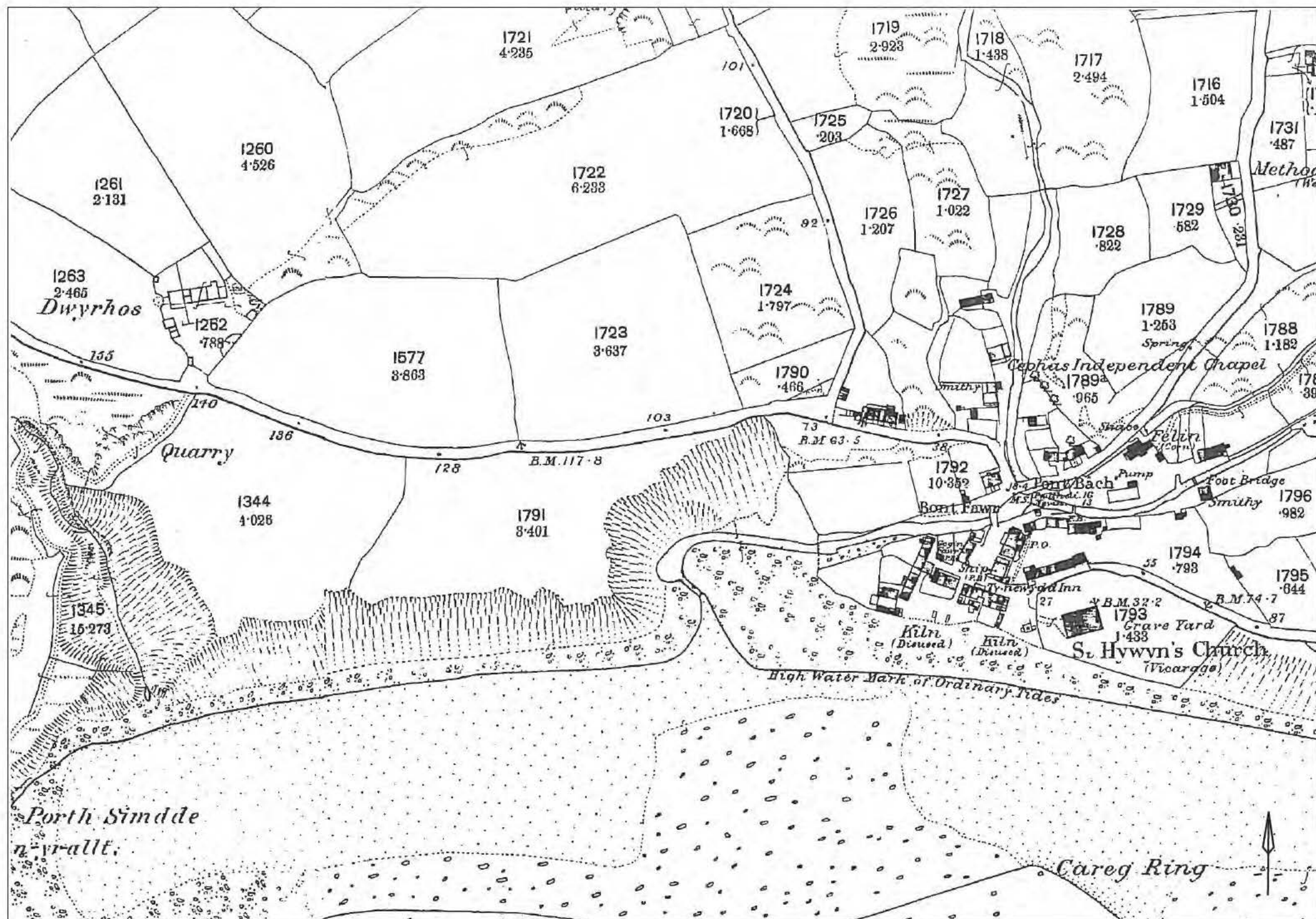


Figure 3: First Edition 25" Ordnance Survey Map of Aberdaron and Porth Simdde XLIII.15 & XLIII.16 (1889). Scale 1:3000



Figure 4: First Edition 25" Ordnance Survey Map of Porth Meudwy XLIII.15 & XLVI.3 (1889). Scale 1:3000



Figure 6: Third Edition 25" Ordnance Survey Map of Porth Porth Meudwy XLIII.15 & XLVI.3 (1918). Scale 1:3000

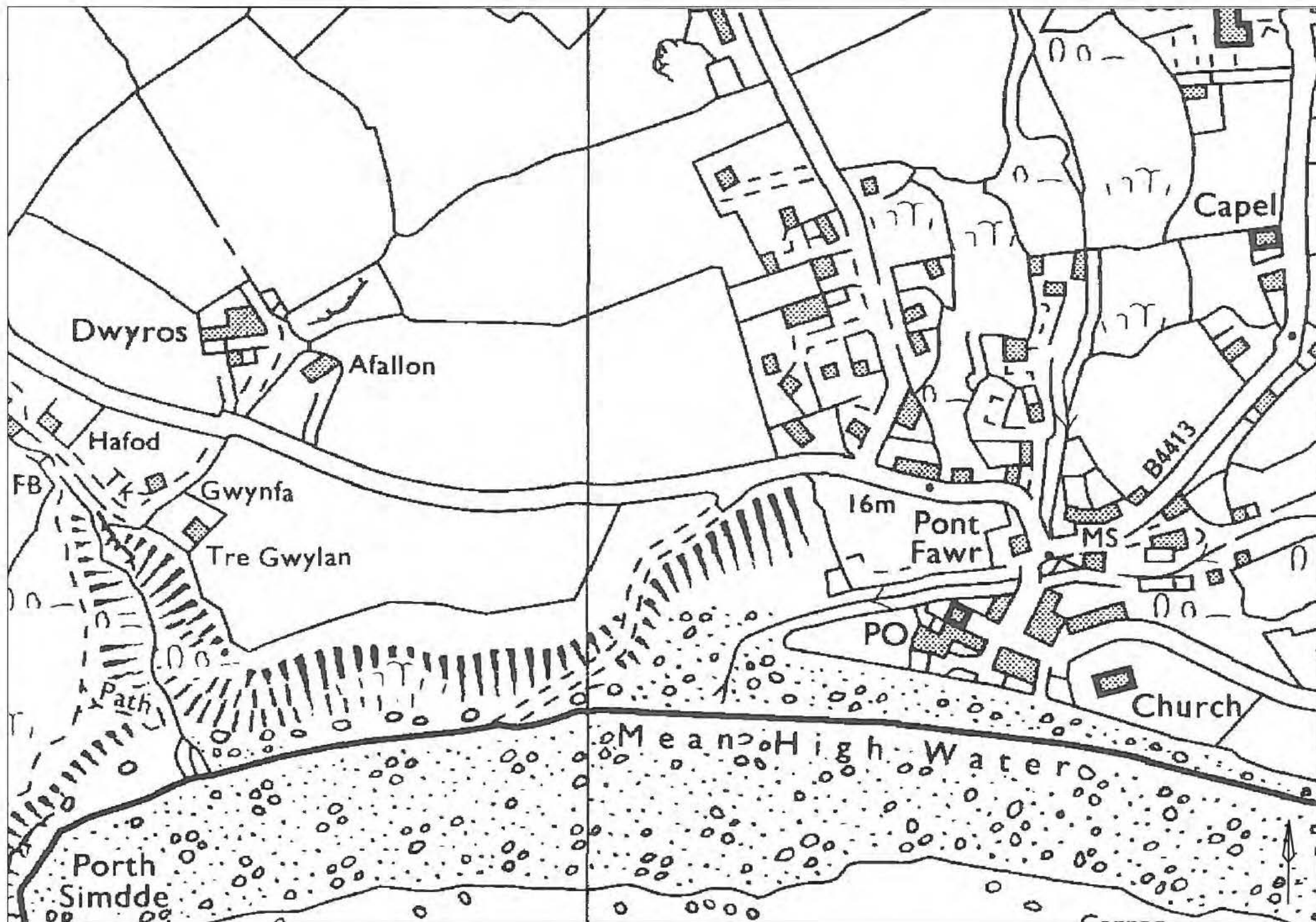


Figure 7: 1:10000 Ordnance Survey Map of Aberdaron and Porth Simdde SH12NE (1982). Scale 1:3000

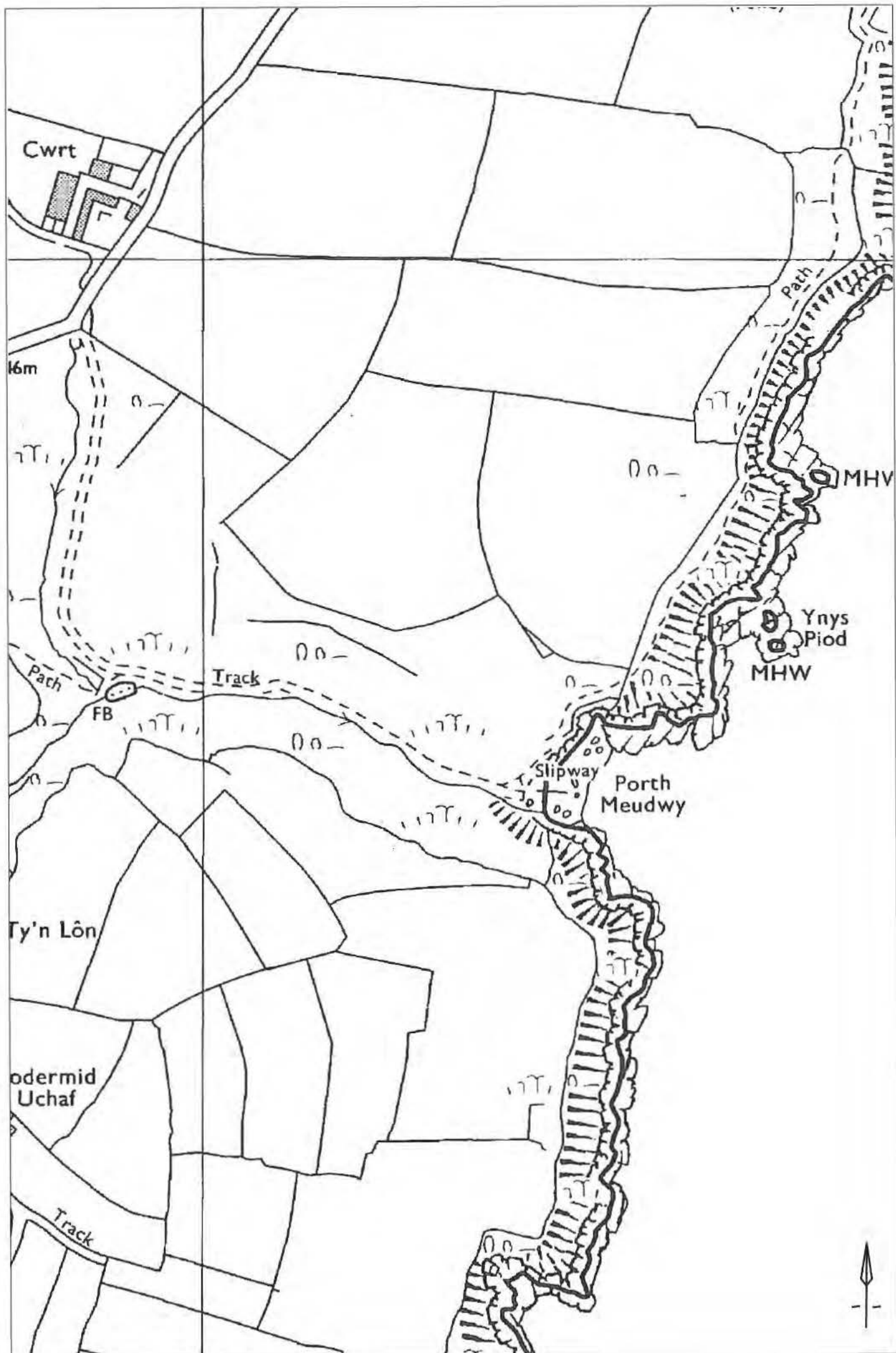


Figure 8: 1:10000 Ordnance Survey Map of Porth Meudwy SH12NE (1982). Scale 1:3000



Figure 10: Aberdaron and Porth Simdde: Location of Sites. Scale 1:5000. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved [CADW] 100017916 [2006]



Figure 11: Porth Meudwy and Cwrt Farm: Location of Sites. Scale 1:2500. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved [CADW] 100017916 [2006]



Plate 1: Aberdaron Bay: View From the West



Plate 2: Aberdaron Seafront: Twentieth Century Sea Wall



**Plate 3: Aberdaron: Sea Wall along Graveyard of St Hywyn's Church (PRN 3291)
(Repaired in 1998)**



Plate 4: Aberdaron: View South of Village. Pont Fach is to the Left (PRN 11675)



Plate 5: Aberdaron: Pont Fawr (PRN 11674)



Plate 6: Aberdaron: Pont Fach (PRN 11675)



**Plate 7: Aberdaron: Grade II Listed (19990) former post-office now holiday house.
Built in 1950 by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis.**



Plate 8: Aberdaron: Glandon Cottage. Example of Holiday Cottage.



Plate 9: Aberdaron: Grade II Listed (4226) Row of Cottages



Plate 10: Aberdaron: Concrete Slipway from Coast Ro View east of concrete slipwayad to Shore (PRN 25005).



**Plate 11: Aberdaron: View East of Concrete Slipway (PRN 25005).
Note State of Disrepair Suggesting Lack of Use.**



Plate 12: Porth Simdde: Remains of Building thought to belong to Pompren mine (PRN 25010).



Plate 13: Porth Simdde: Remains of Pier that belonged to Pompren Mine (PRN 25009).



Plate 14: Porth Meudwy: Road from Cwrt Farm.



Plate 15: Porth Meudwy: Fisherman's Cottage surrounded by Lobster Pots (PRN 25004)



Plate 16: Porth Meudwy: Fisherman's Cottage (PRN 25004)



Plate 17: Porth Meudwy: Concrete Slipway and Vehicles used to Transport Boats From Shore (PRN 25007).



Plate 18: Porth Meudwy: Concrete Slipway from Shore (PRN 25007).



Plate 19: Raised Parking Area Created from Beach Stone.



Plate 20: Cwrt Farm (PRN 3480).



Plate 21: Aberdaron: Late Nineteenth/Early Twentieth Century Photograph of Moored Ships.
(Source: www.rhiw.com)



Plate 22: Aberdaron: Early Twentieth Century Photograph of a Coal Ship. Note Mooring Post. The Sea Wall to the Left has since been replaced.
(Source: www.rhiw.com)



Plate 23: Aberdaron: Photograph from 1950 looking East towards Aberdaron.
 Note the lack of a sea wall leading to the mouth of the river (cf. Plate 2)
 and the construction of the Post Office (PRN 25002) in the centre of the photograph.
 (Source: www.rhiw.com)

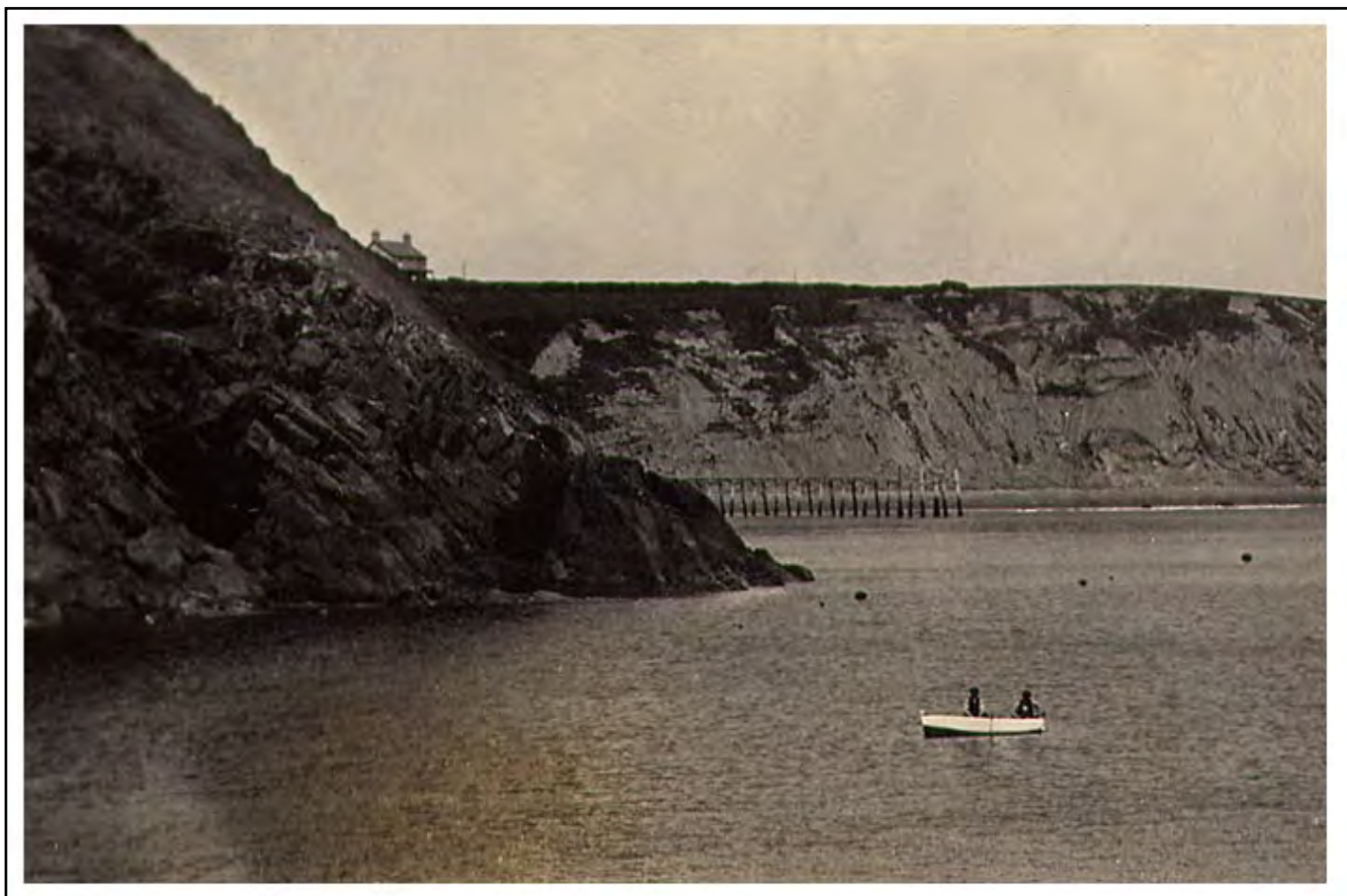


Plate 24: Porth Simdde: Early Twentieth Century. Note Pomren Mine Pier.
 (Source: www.rhiw.com)



**Plate 25: Porth Meudwy: Photograph from 1932. Note the Concrete Slipway (PRN 25011) is not present.
(Source: www.rhiw.com)**



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TRUST

Craig Beuno, Ffordd y Garth, Bangor, Gwynedd. LL57 2RT
Ffon: 01248 352535. Ffacs: 01248 370925. email: gat@heneb.co.uk