
A55 CHESTER TO BANGOR TRUNK ROAD: ABERGWYNGREGYN TO TAI'R MEIBION IMPROVEMENT

ASIDOHL REPORT (G2008)

GAT Report No. 733A



Prepared for Gwynedd Consultancy

*April 2008
(Revised July 2008)*

By
R.T.J. Evans



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Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

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Cover: Bryn Meddyg, from the west

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ASIDOHL STAGE 1: CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

Development Summary

The Welsh Assembly Government Transport Wales (WAGTW) proposes an improvement to the A55 trunk road between Tai'r Meibion and Abergwyngregyn, in the County of Gwynedd, north-west Wales. This consists of the upgrading of a 2.1km (1.3 mile) section of the A55(T). The existing horizontal alignment would essentially be retained and a 1m wide hard strip would be added to each side of both the two lane carriageways. The vertical alignment would be improved to current standards and in general the existing pavement would be overlain with new bituminous construction.

- **Verges**

The northern verge would be 2.5m wide and grassed. A new Non-Motorised User Route (NMU) would run parallel with and to the north of this verge from the Abergwyngregyn Interchange, and adjacent to Pentre Aber Farm (formerly College Farm), westwards to Wig Bach. A 2.6km (1.6 mile) section of new Class 3 road will run north of the A55(T) and will connect Wig Bach, Wig Crossing Cottages and Wig Farm terminating at the Tal y Bont Interchange.

The southern verge would also be 2.5m wide but would consist of a 1.7m wide bituminous hard shoulder with a filter drain alongside. The verge width would vary to provide the required visibility splays at the junction to Y Glyn Farm and the Bryn Meddyg properties.

At the south-western end of the Proposed Improvement, the Unclassified Roman Road would be widened on its northern and eastern side from the existing access track south of Tai'r Meibion up to the western Tai'r Meibion farm entrance in order to accommodate agricultural vehicles. The new width would be 3.5m with a 1.5m wide footway. A new field access track would run north-east from Henffordd Road towards Coed Wern-porchell before turning east to run along the southern edge of the wood, cross over the Afon Wig and link up with the existing Wig Farm subway access track.

- **Kerbs and drainage**

Both carriageways would have standard crossfall to the nearside edge to discharge surface water into a drainage channel alongside. Kerbs would only be provided at the junction on the westbound carriageway, cattle underpasses and locations where there was a footway.

The surface water would be collected in a new drainage system and discharged into existing watercourses as at present. Five watercourses cross under the A55(T) via existing culverts. There are eight culverts affected by the scheme and these would be extended to accommodate the carriageway requirements. New outfalls would be constructed to replace the existing at the eastern end of the scheme. An attenuation pond approximately 640m² in area is to be provided on the northern side of the carriageway, immediately to the west of Wig Bach.

- **New junctions and improved safety**

For safety reasons all the existing private accesses, field accesses and gaps in the central reservation would be permanently closed. There would be no junction on the eastbound carriageway and access to properties on the northern side would be from the Tal-y-Bont Interchange to the west via the new PMA adjacent to the A55(T). Access to properties on the southern side would be via a single westbound junction to Y Glyn Farm with a link road to the Bryn Meddyg properties.

Right turns would not be permitted from the westbound junction. Drivers wishing to travel towards Conwy would have to turn left onto the dual carriageway and then use the Tal-y-Bont Interchange. Access to these properties on journeys from Bangor would have to be via the Abergwyngregyn Interchange.

- **Subways**

The existing cattle underpasses at Tai'r Meibion and Wig Farms would be extended to accommodate for the widened carriageway and to meet current standards.

Land use setting and road take

The Proposed Improvement is situated in a rural area comprising mainly of improved agricultural grazing land with associated farms and farm buildings. There are also small areas of mixed woodland and a small number of private non-agricultural dwellings within the study area.

The land use within the A55 corridor is predominantly pastoral and the fields consist almost entirely of improved pasture within a fertile coastal strip. The proposed access route from Tan-yr-Allt to Wig crosses some smaller fields at the interface between the coastal strip and the uplands to the south.

The topography of the area consists of three distinct zones, the coastal plain, the uplands to the south and the Aber valley. The Aber valley is a deep and steep sided narrow valley with glacial origins, as shown by the truncated stream valleys that enter it, with waterfalls. The river has also worn down into the valley creating a small gorge through the glacial debris on the valley floor. At the mouth of the valley, close to the Aber Falls hotel at 25m OD, the river enters onto a narrow coastal plain. This is gently sloping, formed of the outwash delta of glacial materials from the mountains around. At its north edge it consists of fine sediments only a few metres above maximum high tide and is eroding into the sea.

Legislation and context for the ASIDOHL process

The European Union Council Directive 85/337/EEC, amended by Directive 97/11/EC, requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for certain types of projects likely to have significant effects on the environment. This helps to ensure that the predicted effects and the scope for reducing them are properly understood by the relevant authorities, statutory consultees and general public. The Highways (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations, 1999 (SI No. 369) interpret these Directives. Under these Regulations, a highway scheme such as a motorway widening or new bypass may require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). In accordance with the Schedules to the Regulations and Directive it has been determined that an EIA is required for this highway scheme.

The Environmental Assessment will utilise current guidance set out in DMRB Volume 11, published in 1993 with subsequent amendments, including Interim Advice Notes 76/06 (W) – 82/06 (W). The Stage 3 assessment set out in DMRB Volume 11 will be expanded, as appropriate to incorporate other good practice methodologies. It will also take into account changes arising from any future revisions to the guidance in DMRB.

An Assessment of the Significance of the Impact of Development on Historic Landscape Areas on the Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales (ASIDOHL) is required as part of the EIA. Guidelines and methodology are set out in *Guide to Good Practice on Using the Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales in the Planning and Development Process* (Cadw and CCW 2003).

Methodology

The ASIDOHL was carried out by Robert Evans, a Project Archaeologist at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust using the guidelines and methodology set out in *Guide to Good Practice on Using the Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales in the Planning and Development Process* (Cadw and CCW 2003). The process has been carried out in tandem with the production of a cultural heritage report for the EIA. A full examination of all available information has been undertaken including an examination of archival sources and aerial photographs. Field visits were undertaken in April 2008, including a walk over study of the scheme and an assessment of historic viewpoints.

The scheme falls within the no. 28 Dyffyn Ogwen (HLW(Gw) 10) and no. 30 North Arllechwedd (HLW (Gw) 12) Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in the *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales* (Cadw 1998). The Historic Character Areas

affected are included in the Historic Landscape Characterisation study area of the Ardal Arfon Thompson 2000, Fig. 2).

ASIDOHL STAGE 2: ASSESSMENT OF DIRECT, PHYSICAL IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT

The second stage of the ASIDOHL process, following the description of the contextual information about the project, describes and as far as possible quantifies the direct physical impacts of the development on the Historic Landscape Character Areas (Thompson 2000) affected by the development. This is described and quantified in three ways. These can be summarised as follows:

(more detailed definitions can be found in *The Guide to Good Practice on Using the Register of Historic Interest in Wales in the Planning and Development Process*)

- a) In absolute terms i.e. the proportion of the surface area of the HCA affected
- b) In relative terms i.e. the proportion of each of the *key historic landscape characteristics* (as identified in the Historic Landscape Characterisation report) that will be permanently lost or removed by the development.
- c) In landscape terms, the contribution that the affected elements of the *key historic landscape characteristics* make to the value of the Historic Character Area as a whole.

The physical impacts are each assigned a score and the overall scores for the impacts on the individual Historic Character Area are used to produce a quantified expression of the overall magnitude of direct impact on a 24 point scale. These are presented as a table for each Historic Character Area along with qualifying statements and background information. Copies of the historic landscape citation in the Register and the description of the Historic Character Areas affected are included as an appendix to the ASIDOHL report. These should be consulted alongside the findings of the report.

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 31 LOWLAND COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG

This area was formerly part of the Penrhyn, Madryn, and Bulkeley estates. The area around Henfaes farm in Aber was part of the manor of Aber, which is thought to derive from the *maerdref* associated with the *llys* at Aber. The whole coastal area was radically altered with the coming of the railway and the main road in the 19th century, and bears little evidence of former organisation. It contains a number of listed buildings, such as the farmhouses of Tai'r Meibion and Wig

Key historic landscape characteristics

Large, regular enclosures, substantial farms, road and rail links

A lowland area abutting the Menai Straits, dominated by large estate farmhouses and divided up into large regular enclosures. The main arterial road and rail links between north-west Wales and the north of England dominate the landscape, and are largely responsible for its current appearance.

Conservation priorities and management

Preservation of open character; encouragement to use of traditional building materials and to adaptation in a manner that reflects the appropriate Penrhyn and Baron Hill estate style.

ASSESSMENT OF DIRECT, PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 31 – LOWLAND COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG	
ABSOLUTE IMPACT (LOSS OF AREA)	MAGNITUDE AND SCORE
2%	Very Slight – 1

RELATIVE AND LANDSCAPE IMPACTS (LOSS OF KNOWN CHARACTERISTICS OR ELEMENTS) & SCORES				
ELEMENT/ % LOSS	STATUS	MAGNITUDE	LANDSCAPE VALUE	LANDSCAPE VALUE EFFECT
Improved fields systems(1851) –	C – 2	Very Slight - 1	High – Part of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest	Slightly reduced - 2
Boundary Walls	B- 3	Moderate- 3	High – Part of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest	Slightly Reduced - 2
Hedgerows	B- 4	Considerable-4	High – Part of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest	Moderately Reduced - 3

OVERALL MAGNITUDE OF DIRECT PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 31 – COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG	
SCORE	GRADING
8	Slight

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 34 ABERGWYNGREGYN

Historic background

A village at the seaward end of an enclosed valley associated with one of the Medieval princes' court (*llysoedd*) and its manor. Most of the present dwellings are no earlier than the nineteenth century, and were constructed either by the Bulkeley estate or by their successors, the Penrhyn estate. The motte (*mwd*) dominates the village, both visually and historically.

Key historic landscape characteristics

Medieval motte, estate village

The distinctive form of cottage architecture, vernacular in inspiration but showing the influence of the polite, is apparent here, dating from when the village was in the ownership first of the Bulkeley and then of the Penrhyn estates.

Conservation priorities and management

Preservation of the motte and the open area around it within its landscape, which is of immense archaeological importance, and in general of the character of an estate village.

ASSESSMENT OF DIRECT, PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 34 – ABERGWYNGREGYN				
ABSOLUTE IMPACT (LOSS OF AREA)		MAGNITUDE AND SCORE		
Nil		Very Slight – 1		
RELATIVE AND LANDSCAPE IMPACTS (LOSS OF KNOWN CHARACTERISTICS OR ELEMENTS) & SCORES				
ELEMENT/ %	STATUS	MAGNITUDE	LANDSCAPE VALUE	LANDSCAPE VALUE EFFECT

LOSS				
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OVERALL MAGNITUDE OF DIRECT PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 34 ABERGWYNGREGYN	
SCORE	GRADING
1	Very Slight

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 39 ENCLOSED HILL SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION

Historic background

This area comprises the north-facing coastal steep slopes between low-lying improved coastal flats (31) and unenclosed mountain/uplands (36). It extends for several miles either side of Aber. It has a fairly consistent character, with large enclosures reflecting post-medieval re-organisation, but most importantly still retains a whole series of relict prehistoric and medieval archaeology, including hut group and long hut settlements surrounded by a complex of lynchets, field banks and ridge and furrow, towards the top of the area where the ground is less steep. Twentieth century conifer plantations as well as woodland are visually prominent woods and forestry add to the picture.

Key historic landscape characteristics

Relict archaeology (prehistoric and medieval settlement and fields), woods

An important area containing remains of earlier land divisions and settlement which has immense potential for reconstructing for past landscapes.

Conservation priorities and management

The conservation priorities must be the relict archaeology: some mapping of aerial photographs has taken place, but detailed field survey is needed.

ASSESSMENT OF DIRECT, PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 39- ENCLOSED SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION				
ABSOLUTE IMPACT (LOSS OF AREA)		MAGNITUDE AND SCORE		
Nil		Very Slight - 1		
RELATIVE AND LANDSCAPE IMPACTS (LOSS OF KNOWN CHARACTERISTICS OR ELEMENTS) & SCORES				
ELEMENT/ % LOSS	STATUS	MAGNITUDE	LANDSCAPE VALUE	LANDSCAPE VALUE EFFECT

OVERALL MAGNITUDE OF DIRECT PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 39 – ENCLOSED SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION	
SCORE	GRADING
1	Very Slight

ASIDOHL STAGE 3: ASSESSMENT OF INDIRECT IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT

The third stage of the ASIDOHL process describes and as far as possible quantifies the indirect physical impacts of the development on the Historic Character Areas affected by the development. A clearly defined area will be directly or physically affected by the development but a much greater area could be indirectly affected due to fragmentation or changes to the setting of features in the landscape. Changes to views of, or views from a landscape feature are also important potential impacts. This stage is divided into two categories, the first assesses the indirect physical impacts, the second the indirect (non-physical) visual impacts.

(a) Indirect, physical impacts

The principal types of indirect physical impact listed in the Guide to Good Practice are

- (i) An increased risk of exposure, erosion, disturbance, decay, dereliction or any other detrimental physical change to elements, during or consequent to development.
- (ii) Related to (i), the likelihood of increased management needs to maintain elements as, for example, through altered habitats, water levels, increased erosion, new access provision etc., during or consequent to development.
- (iii) The severance, fragmentation, dislocation or alteration of the functional connections between related elements, for example, a field system becomes 'severed' from its parent farmstead by an intervening development.
- (iv) The frustration or cessation of historic land use practices, for example, it becomes more difficult or impossible to manage an area in a traditional manner as a result of development.
- (v) The frustration of access leading to decreased opportunities for education, understanding or enjoying the amenity of elements, during or consequent to development.

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 31 – COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG

Key historic landscape characteristics:

19th Century Improved Field Systems in a regular rectangular pattern, with associated dispersed farmhouses built by the Penrhyn and Baron Hill estates in their house style.

The functional change to the transport routes within the Character Area is minimal. The development will not alter significantly the historic character of the area. There will be some disruption to routes from farms to and through their associated field systems. Most lanes and roads will be retained so the magnitude of this impact will be slight.

ASSESSMENT OF INDIRECT, PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 31 – COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG		
IMPACTS	CATEGORY & SCORE	MAGNITUDE & SCORE
Disruption of historic landscape patterns	B – 3	Moderate - 3

The development form and appearance will be similar to that of the present road and its impact will therefore be very slight by the A55 carriageway. It will be greatest on the improvement of the 'Roman Road' and access track across the fields between Tan yr Allt to Wig lane.

ASSESSMENT OF INDIRECT, VISUAL IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 31 – COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG		
IMPACTS	CATEGORY & SCORE	MAGNITUDE & SCORE
Development Form	B- 3	Moderate - 3
Development appearance	B - 2	Slight - 2

OVERALL MAGNITUDE OF INDIRECT IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 31-COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG	
SCORE	GRADING
5	Slight

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 34 ABERGWYNGREGYN

Key historic landscape characteristic:

The Aber valley is a deep and steep sided narrow valley with glacial origins, at the mouth of which the river enters onto a narrow coastal plain. Abergwyngregyn was the crossing point at the junction of the coastal road and another taking the upland route through the valleys, which was the key to its importance. In the late 11th century Gruffudd ap Cynan made Aber the *llys* or court of the commote of Arllechwedd Uchaf. The valley was a sheltered place and its position facing Penmon priory across the Lavan sands may also have made it attractive.

ASSESSMENT OF INDIRECT, PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 34 – ABERGWYNGREGYN		
IMPACTS	CATEGORY & SCORE	MAGNITUDE & SCORE
Functional connection between field systems and farms disrupted	B – 3	Slight - 2

Views of parts of the 19th- century field system will be slightly affected. From higher viewpoints the line of the new development will not contrast with the straight roads and ditches in the area. The impact is slight on both sides of the road, where the road is straight and runs to the field boundaries.

ASSESSMENT OF INDIRECT, VISUAL IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 34- ABERGWYNGREGYN		
IMPACTS	CATEGORY & SCORE	MAGNITUDE & SCORE
Impact to views of the field system	B-3	Moderate - 3
Impact to historic viewpoint from the village	A- 3	Moderate - 3

OVERALL MAGNITUDE OF INDIRECT IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 34 – ABERGWYNGREGYN	
SCORE	GRADING
6	Slight

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 39 ENCLOSED HILL SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION

Key historic landscape characteristic:

This area contains smaller fields in undulating countryside at the southern edge of the coastal plain before it meets the uplands to the south. The roads and fields show evidence of estate management, primarily by the Baron Hill and Penrhyn estates, and smaller irregularly shaped fields with distinctive estate fences, and the survival of wooden gates. There is also evidence of estate plantations and trees, forming a distinctive estate landscape.

ASSESSMENT OF INDIRECT, PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 39- ENCLOSED SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION		
IMPACTS	CATEGORY & SCORE	MAGNITUDE & SCORE
Functional connection between minor road to Crymlyn, field systems and farms disrupted	B – 3	Moderate - 3

Views of parts of the estate 19th- century field system will be affected. From higher viewpoints such as Moel y Gest the line of the new development, particularly the new access track will contrast with the historic boundaries in the area. The impact is slight on the view of the A55 carriageway, where the road is straight and runs parallel to the field boundaries.

ASSESSMENT OF INDIRECT, VISUAL IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 39- ENCLOSED SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION		
IMPACTS	CATEGORY & SCORE	MAGNITUDE & SCORE

Impact to views of the field system due to fragmentation of historic field shapes behind Tai'r Meibion	B-3	Considerable - 4
Development Form	-	Moderate - 3
Development appearance	-	Considerable - 4

OVERALL MAGNITUDE OF INDIRECT IMPACTS ON HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 39- ENCLOSED SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION	
SCORE	GRADING
14	Considerable

ASHIDOL STAGE 4: EVALUATION OF RELATIVE IMPORTANCE

The fourth stage of the ASIDOHL process and report evaluates the relative importance of the Historic Character Area(s) (or part(s) thereof) directly and/or indirectly affected by development in relation to:

- (a) the whole of the Historic Character Area(s);
- (b) the whole of the historic landscape area (HLA) on the Register (in many cases the criteria scores will be the same as for the HCA);
- (c) an evaluation of the relative importance of the Historic Character Area(s) concerned in the national context.

The score is summarised as an overall percentage (out of a maximum score of all Very High grades) at the end of stages (a) and (b) and also (c) and a concluding statement is made.

Stage 4 is then completed with a determination of the average, overall value of all the Historic Character Areas (or part(s) thereof) affected

The criteria used to evaluate the relative importance are Secretary of State's Criteria for Scheduling Ancient Monuments from Welsh Office Circular 60/96 (*Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology*, p. 15, Annex 3).

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE IN RELATION TO: (A) THE WHOLE OF THE HCA (B) THE WHOLE OF THE HLA

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA

The elements affected are the A55 road and its wider 19th-century transport links as defined by the earlier turnpike road and Chester to Holyhead railway, along with improved 19th century fields with associated estate farms and some earlier field systems on the higher slopes

Rarity

- a) Moderate: There are some elements of the field systems HCA.
- b) Moderate: There are other 19th-century and earlier elements to the field systems in the HLA

Representativeness

- a) Low: The affected area contains some of the elements that characterise the HCA
- b) Low: The affected area contains some of the elements that characterise the HLA

Documentation

- a) Moderate: There is some relevant material pertaining to the road, rail and field systems
- b) Moderate: There is some relevant material pertaining to the road, rail and field systems

Group Value

- a) Low: Contains transport and agricultural elements
- b) Low: Contains transport and agricultural elements

Survival

- a) Very good: Most of the field system survives
- b) Very good: More than 90% of the field system survives

Condition

- a) Fair: The 19th-century and earlier 20th century road system has been much upgraded and turned into a trunk road
- b) Fair: The 19th-century and earlier 20th century road system has been much upgraded and turned into a trunk road

Coherence

- a) Very high: The road, rail and field systems retain their original function
b) Very high: The road, rail and field systems retain their original function

Integrity

- a) Low: The road system retains little of its original character, its modern appearance is significantly different to the turnpike and previous roads
b) Low: The road system retains little of its original character, its modern appearance is significantly different to the turnpike

Potential

- a) Low: The road has been well recorded and there is little scope for further landscape analysis
b) Low: The road has been well recorded and there is little scope for further landscape analysis

Amenity

- a) Low: Modern trunk road
b) Low: Modern trunk road

Associations

- a) Moderate: The 19th century transport links are a secondary result of the need to provide an alternative route to the A5 to the port of Holyhead and connections to Ireland
b) Moderate: The 19th century transport links are a secondary result of the need to provide an alternative route to the A5 to the port of Holyhead and connections to Ireland

EVALUATION OF THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE PART OF HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 31 – COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG DIRECTLY AND/OR INDIRECTLY AFFECTED BY DEVELOPMENT										
VALUE	V HIGH/ GOOD	HIGH/ GOOD	MOD/ MED	LOW	POOR/ NONE	V HIGH/ GOOD	HIGH/ GOOD	MOD/ MED	LOW	POOR/ NONE
in relation to CRITERION:	(a) WHOLE OF HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA					(b) WHOLE OF HISTORIC LANDSCAPE AREA ON THE REGISTER				
RARITY			x					x		
REPRESENTATIVENESS				x					x	
DOCUMENTATION			x					x		
GROUP VALUE				x					x	
SURVIVAL	x					x				
CONDITION				x					x	
COHERENCE	x					x				
INTEGRITY				x					x	
POTENTIAL				x					x	
AMENITY				x					x	
ASSOCIATIONS			x					x		

Score for stage (a) 48%

Score for stage (b) 48%

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 31 LOWLAND COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG

Part of the improved coastal strip and its constituent parts (fields, drains, roads, railways, etc). The road and field systems are the affected parts

Rarity

- a) Moderate: The improved coastal strip is one of the major defining historic landscape features and is unique. Only a small part of the overall landscape feature will be affected, somewhat downgrading the rarity score.
b) Moderate: The improved land is one of the major defining historic landscape features. Only a small part of the overall landscape feature will be affected, somewhat downgrading the rarity score.

Representativeness

- a) Low: The affected area contains some of the elements that characterise the HCA
b) Low: The affected area contains some of the elements that characterise the HLA

Documentation

- a) High: Plans maps and documents demonstrate the landscape development in some detail since the late 18th century.
b) High: Plans maps and documents demonstrate the landscape development in some detail since the late 18th century.

Group Value

a) High: Contains fields, drains, roads, and railway.

b) High: Contains fields, drains, roads, and railway

Survival

a) Good: Roughly 75% of landscape elements surviving

b) Good: Roughly 75% of landscape elements surviving

Condition

a) Good: Most elements surviving in good condition

b) Good: Most elements surviving in good condition

Coherence

a) High: Most elements present although the original function

b) High: Most elements present although the original function

Integrity

a) High: Most elements retaining much of their original character, visible and fairly easily understood

b) High: Most elements retaining much of their original character, visible and fairly easily understood

Potential

a) Moderate: Some scope for further landscape analysis.

b) Moderate: Some scope for further landscape analysis.

Amenity

a) High: Popular and easily understood landscape.

b) High: Popular and easily understood landscape.

Associations

a) High: The area forms a coherent and easy to understand relationship between agricultural improvement, estate development and transport links

b) High: The area forms a coherent and easy to understand relationship between agricultural improvement, estate development and transport links

EVALUATION OF THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE PART OF HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 31 – COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG DIRECTLY AND/OR INDIRECTLY AFFECTED BY DEVELOPMENT										
VALUE	V HIGH/ GOOD	HIGH/ GOOD	MOD/ MED	LOW	POOR/ NONE	V HIGH/ GOOD	HIGH/ GOOD	MOD/ MED	LOW	POOR/ NONE
in relation to CRITERION:	(a) WHOLE OF HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA					(b) WHOLE OF HISTORIC LANDSCAPE AREA ON THE REGISTER				
RARITY			x					x		
REPRESENTATIVENESS				x					x	
DOCUMENTATION		x					x			
GROUP VALUE		x					x			
SURVIVAL		x					x			
CONDITION		x					x			
COHERENCE		x					x			
INTEGRITY		x					x			
POTENTIAL			x					x		
AMENITY		x					x			
ASSOCIATIONS		x					x			

Score for stage (a) 73%

Score for stage (b) 73%

A part of the improved coastal landscape will be affected. This is one of the defining characteristics of both the HCA and the HLA and survives in good condition.

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 34 ABERGWYNGREGYN

The affected elements are the view from the western edge of the character area to the A55

Rarity

a) Very High: The motte and the open area around it, which is of immense archaeological importance, and in general of the character of an estate village

b) Very High: The motte and the open area around it, which is of immense archaeological importance, and in general of the character of an estate village

Representativeness

a) High: The affected area contains most of the elements that characterise the HCA

b) High: The affected area contains some of the elements that characterise the HLA

Documentation

a) High: There is a considerable amount of documentation relating to the area

b) High: There is a considerable amount of documentation relating to the area

Group Value

a) High: The distinctive form of cottage architecture, vernacular in inspiration but showing the influence of the polite, is apparent here, dating from when the village was in the ownership first of the Bulkeley and then of the Penrhyn estates

b) High: The distinctive form of cottage architecture, vernacular in inspiration but showing the influence of the polite, is apparent here, dating from when the village was in the ownership first of the Bulkeley and then of the Penrhyn estates.

Survival

a) Good: Many original elements survive

b) Good: Many original elements survive

Condition

a) Moderate: Most of the original elements in moderate condition

b) Moderate: Most of the original elements in moderate condition

Coherence

a) High: The area has a coherent character

b) High: The area has a coherent character

Integrity

a) High: Most elements retaining much of their original character, visible and fairly easily understood

b) High: Most elements retaining much of their original character, visible and fairly easily understood

Potential

a) High: Significant scope for further landscape analysis.

b) High: Significant scope for further landscape analysis.

Amenity

a) High: Popular and easily understood landscape.

b) High: Popular and easily understood landscape.

Associations

a) Very High: Associated with a *llys* of the early princes of Gwynedd

b) Very High: Associated with a *llys* of the early princes of Gwynedd

EVALUATION OF THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE PART OF HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 34 – ABERGWYNGREGYN DIRECTLY AND/OR INDIRECTLY AFFECTED BY DEVELOPMENT										
VALUE	V HIGH/ GOOD	HIGH/ GOOD	MOD/ MED	LOW	POOR/ NONE	V HIGH/ GOOD	HIGH/ GOOD	MOD/ MED	LOW	POOR/ NONE
in relation to CRITERION:	(a) WHOLE OF HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA					(b) WHOLE OF HISTORIC LANDSCAPE AREA ON THE REGISTER				
RARITY	x					x				
REPRESENTATIVENESS		x					x			
DOCUMENTATION		x					x			
GROUP VALUE		x					x			
SURVIVAL		x					x			
CONDITION			x					x		
COHERENCE		x					x			
INTEGRITY		x					x			
POTENTIAL		x					x			
AMENITY		x					x			
ASSOCIATIONS	x					x				

Score for stage (a) 18%

Score for stage (b) 18%

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 39- ENCLOSED SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION

The affected element here is the indirect visual impact upon the enclosed field system and early track way. There is no direct effect on this character area.

Rarity

- a) Moderate: The field system is a major element of the key Historic landscape characteristic and is unique. Only a small proportion of its components will, however, be indirectly affected.
- b) Low: The field system is an important landscape characteristic. Only a small proportion of its components will, however, be indirectly affected

Representativeness

- a) Low: The affected area contains some of the elements that characterise the HCA
- b) Low: The affected area contains some of the elements that characterise the HLA

Documentation

- a) Moderate: There is some relevant material pertaining to the field system
- b) Moderate: There is some relevant material pertaining to the field system

Group Value

- a) Low: Contains farms field systems and roads
- b) Low: Contains farms field systems and roads

Survival

- a) Very Good: Fields mostly retain their original layout
- b) Very Good: Fields mostly retain their original layout

Condition

- a) Good: Most elements surviving in good condition
- b) Good: Most elements surviving in good condition

Coherence

- a) Very High: Landscape retains its original function
- b) Very High: Landscape retains its original function

Integrity

- a) High: Agricultural landscape retains much of its original character
- b) High: Agricultural landscape retains much of its original character

Potential

- a) Moderate: Some scope for further study and landscape analysis
- b) Moderate: Some scope for further study and landscape analysis

Amenity

- a) Low: Little scope for development of farmland as an amenity
- b) Low: Little scope for development of farmland as an amenity

Associations

- a) Moderate: Farms improved by major local estates.
- b) Moderate: Farms improved by major local estates

Score for stage (a) 50%

Score for stage (b) 50%

The affected element is the field system. This survives in good condition and retains its original function.

EVALUATION OF THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE PART OF HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 39- ENCLOSED SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION DIRECTLY AND/OR INDIRECTLY AFFECTED BY DEVELOPMENT										
VALUE	V HIGH/ GOOD	HIGH/ GOOD	MOD/ MED	LOW	POOR/ NONE	V HIGH/ GOOD	HIGH/ GOOD	MOD/ MED	LOW	POOR/ NONE
in relation to CRITERION:	(a) WHOLE OF HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA					(b) WHOLE OF HISTORIC LANDSCAPE AREA ON THE REGISTER				
RARITY			x						x	
REPRESENTATIVENESS				x					x	
DOCUMENTATION			x					x		
GROUP VALUE				x					x	
SURVIVAL	x					x				
CONDITION		x					x			
COHERENCE	x					x				
INTEGRITY		x					x			
POTENTIAL			x					x		
AMENITY				x					x	
ASSOCIATIONS			x					x		

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE IN THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

The results are summarised in tables at the end of this section

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 31 LOWLAND COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG

Rarity

High: The HCA contains two landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest (Cadw 1998)

Representativeness

Medium: The HCA contains some of the elements that characterise the wider landscape

Documentation

Moderate: There is some relevant material pertaining to the agricultural and transport remains.

Group Value

Medium: The HCA contains rail and road routes along with agricultural land

Survival

Moderate: about 80% of elements survive

Condition

Good: Elements survive in above average condition

Coherence

Moderate: Historic themes present

Integrity

Moderate: Mines and transport links retain some of their original character but are not easily understood

Potential

Moderate: The landscape has been reasonably well recorded, although there is potential for future work

Amenity

Low: One of the historic transport links, the railway, is still in use, others are visible but inaccessible

Associations

Moderate: The 19th century transport links are a secondary result of the need to provide an access route to the port of Holyhead.

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 34 ABERGWYNGREGYN

Key historic landscape characteristic:

Abergwyngregyn was the crossing point at the junction of the coastal road and another taking the upland route through the valleys, which was the key to its importance. In the late 11th century Gruffudd ap Cynan made Aber the *llys* or court of the commote of Arllechwedd Uchaf. The valley was a sheltered place and its position facing Penmon priory across the Lavan sands may also have made it attractive.

Views of parts of the 19th- century field system will be slightly affected. From higher viewpoints such as Moel y Gest the curvilinear line of the new development will contrast with the straight roads and ditches in the area. The impact is slight on the western side, where the road is straight and runs parallel to the field boundaries.

The form of the development

Rarity

Very High: The historic settlement is one of the major defining historic landscape features within the wider landscape and is unique

Representativeness

Moderate: The HCA contains many of the elements that define the wider landscape

Documentation

High: Plans maps and documents demonstrate the landscape development in some detail since the late 18th century.

Group Value

Very High: Contains settlement, fields, drains, roads and railway

Survival

Good: Roughly 75% of landscape elements surviving

Condition

Good: Most elements surviving in good condition

Coherence

High: Most elements present although the original function of some has now ceased

Integrity

High: Most elements retaining much of their original character, visible and fairly easily understood

Potential

High: Considerable scope for further landscape analysis, particularly in relation early settlement history

Amenity

High: Popular and easily understood landscape

Associations

Very High: Associated with a *llys* of the early princes of Gwynedd

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 39 ENCLOSED HILL SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION

Rarity

High: Forms part of North Arllechwedd landscape of outstanding Historic Interest

Representativeness

Low: The affected area contains some of the elements that characterise the wider landscape

Documentation

Moderate: There is some relevant material pertaining to the area

Group Value

High Contains early and estate enclosed landscapes

Survival

Good: Field boundaries and landscape survive in good condition

Condition

Good: Most of the original elements in good condition

Coherence

Good: The landscape forms a coherent entity

Integrity

High: Landscape elements readily visible and reasonably well understood

Potential

Moderate: The quarry retains some scope for further study and landscape analysis

Amenity

Moderate: Limited scope for development of predominantly agricultural land.

Associations

None: No known associations

VALUE	V HIGH/ GOOD	HIGH/ GOOD	MOD/ MED	LOW	POOR/ NONE	V HIGH/ GOOD	HIGH/ GOOD	MOD/ MED	LOW	POOR/ NONE
in relation to CRITERION:	HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 31 – COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG					HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 34 – ABERGWYNGREGYN				
EVALUATION OF THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE IN THE NATIONAL CONTEXT, OF THE HISTORIC CHARACTER AREADIRECTLY AND/OR	x					x				

INDIRECTLY AFFECTED BY DEVELOPMENT										
REPRESENTATIVENESS			x						x	
DOCUMENTATION		x					x			
GROUP VALUE	x					x				
SURVIVAL		x					x			
CONDITION		x					x			
COHERENCE		x					x			
INTEGRITY		x						x		
POTENTIAL		x						x		
AMENITY		x					x			
ASSOCIATIONS	x					x				
	Score	46				Score	43			

VALUE	V HIGH/ GOOD	HIGH/ GOOD	MOD/ MED	LOW	POOR/ NONE
in relation to CRITERION:	HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA 39- ENCLOSED HILL SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION				
RARITY		x			
REPRESENTATIVENESS				x	
DOCUMENTATION			x		
GROUP VALUE		x			
SURVIVAL		x			
CONDITION		x			
COHERENCE		x			
INTEGRITY			x		
POTENTIAL			x		
AMENITY			x		
ASSOCIATIONS					x
	Score	35			

ASIDOHL STAGE 4: GRADE OF OVERALL VALUE OF RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE HISTORIC CHARACTER AREAS (OR PARTS THEROF) AFFECTED BY DEVELOPMENT	
	Grading
31 LOWLAND COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG	48- Considerable
34 ABERGWYNGREGYN	43 – Considerable
39 ENCLOSED SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION	35 - Moderate
GRADE OF OVERALL VALUE	56 - Considerable

ASIDOHL STAGE 5: SUMMARY OF THE OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACT ON LANDSCAPES OF OUTSTANDING HISTORIC INTEREST DYFFYN OGWEN AND NORTH ARLLECHWEDD HLW (Gw) 10 and 12			
HISTORIC CHARACTER AREA	VALUE OF HCA (Stage 4)	IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT (Stages 2-3)	OVERALL
31- LOWLAND COASTAL AREA AROUND WIG	6 – High	4 – Medium Disruption to historic landscape patterns in the area of Tai'r Meibion	10 – Moderate Slight disruption to historic transport routes. There will be a direct impact on the field system with the new trackway from Tai'r Meibion to Wig Overall impact on HLA moderate.
34- ABERGWYNGREGYN	7 – High	2 –Low. Little or no impact on surviving archaeology	9 – Slight Slight intrusive fragmentation of field patterns result in an impact on one of the major defining features of the landscape. There is therefore a slight reduction in the overall value of the HLA
39- ENCLOSED SLOPES BELOW MOEL WNION	7 – High	2 – Low Little or no impact on surviving archaeology, slight change to setting	9 – Slight Impact on key elements are minimal resulting in little change to the HLA
GRADE OF OVERALL VALUE			12- Moderate The impact on the area around the trackway running from Tai'r Meibion to Wig is the dominant feature of the proposed scheme both in terms of area affected and its importance as an element of the landscape. This will result in a very minor reduction in the value of the HLA. Other impacts are indirect and cumulatively result in a slight reduction in the value of the HLA

The overall significance of impact has been graded as Moderate. It should be noted that the result of a series of impacts is usually as cumulative as opposed to a diluting effect. The overall significance of impact therefore cannot be seen as an average score of the impacts on the individual HLAs.

Possible mitigation

The proposed development runs alongside the existing A55 road and is embanked in places and this lessens its impact on the landscape in this area. The impact can be somewhat reduced by sensitive planting using species already in existence in the surrounding landscape. Low impact lighting and signage should also be used wherever possible.

ASIDOHL CONCLUDING STATEMENT

An assessment of the significance of the impact of development on the Dyffryn Ogwen and North Arllechwedd Landscape Areas of Outstanding Historic Interest (HLW (Gw) 10 and 12) has been carried out.

The improvement route passes through two landscapes of Outstanding Interest in Wales (Cadw 1998), the northern part of number 28 the Ogwen Valley, and number 30 North Arllechwedd. These stress the importance of the area around the A55 as a fertile coastal strip and as a starting point for crossing the Lavan sands for the Beaumaris ferry (Cadw 1998, 115).

The topography of the area consists of three distinct zones, the coastal plain, the uplands to the south and the Aber valley. The Aber valley is a deep and steep sided narrow valley with glacial origins, as shown by the truncated stream valleys that enter it, with waterfalls. The river has also worn down into the valley creating a small gorge through the glacial debris on the valley floor. At the mouth of the valley, close to the Aber Falls hotel at 25m OD, the river enters onto a narrow coastal plain. This is gently sloping, formed of the outwash delta of glacial materials from the mountains around. At its north edge it consists of fine sediments only a few metres above maximum high tide and is eroding into the sea.

The land use within the A55 corridor is predominantly pastoral and the fields consist almost entirely of improved pasture within a fertile coastal strip. The proposed access route from Tan-yr-Allt to Wig, passing under the A55, crosses some smaller fields at the interface between the coastal strip and the uplands to the south.

The assessment area and that surrounding it is rich in archaeological remains from the prehistoric through to the post-medieval period. The majority of the sites are located around the village of Abergwynnregyn. The whole area under assessment is likely to be the site of early settlement, with a particular emphasis on cooking activity close to the water courses. This usually takes the form of mounds of fire cracked rocks. The presence of the Roman road between Caernarfon and Caerhun is of great significance and means that there is significant potential for finding Roman remains. There is significant evidence for medieval settlement at Abergwynnregyn and Y Wig, within the study area.

The principal 19th century landowners in the study area were the Bulkeley and Pennant families, the former having gained control of the manor in 1689, who at some time between 1848 and 1896 reorganised the coastal strip into a landscape of rectilinear fields. This resulted in the loss of many of the small roads and buildings shown on earlier maps. This field pattern has survived with only limited alteration until the present day, the older pattern surviving in discrete areas to the south. The Bulkeley family remained the main proprietors of the manor until 1863 when they sold off their Caernarfonshire lands and Abergwynnregyn holdings to the Penrhyn estate in whose holding it remained until into the 20th century (Evans 2003).

The assessment defines the level of impact as medium. This means that there is a developmental impact on key elements of the Dyffryn Ogwen and North Arllechwedd Landscape Area of Outstanding Historic Interest with a result that there is some reduction in its overall value.

Appendix

Extract from *Historic Landscape Characterisation-Ardal Arfon* (GAT Unpublished Rep. No. 351)

31 Lowland coastal area around Wig

Historic background

This area was formerly part of the Penrhyn, Madryn, Gorddinog and Bulkeley estates. The area around Henfaes farm in Aber was part of the manor of Aber, which is thought to derive from the *maerdref* associated with the *llys* at Aber. The whole coastal area was radically altered with the coming of the railway and the main road in the 19th century, and bears little evidence of former organisation.

Key historic landscape characteristics

Large, regular enclosures, substantial farms, road and rail links

A lowland area abutting the Menai Straits dominated by large estate farmhouses and divided up into large regular enclosures. The main arterial road and rail links between north-west Wales and the north of England dominate the landscape, and are largely responsible for its current appearance.

Conservation priorities and management

Preservation of open character; encouragement to use of traditional building materials and to adaptation in a manner that reflects the appropriate estate style.

34 Abergwyngregyn

Historic background

A village at the seaward end of an enclosed valley associated with one of the Medieval princes' *llysoedd* and its manor. Most of the present dwellings are no earlier than the nineteenth century, and were constructed either by the Bulkeley estate or by their successors, the Penrhyn estate. The motte dominates the village, both visually and historically.

Key historic landscape characteristics

Medieval motte, estate village

The distinctive form of cottage architecture, vernacular in inspiration but showing the influence of the polite, is apparent here, dating from when the village was in the ownership first of the Bulkeley and then of the Penrhyn estates.

Conservation priorities and management

Preservation of the motte and the open area around it, which is of immense archaeological importance, and in general of the character of an estate village.

39 Enclosed hill slopes below Moel Wnion

Historic background

This area comprises the north-facing coastal steep slopes between low-lying improved coastal flats (31) and unenclosed mountain/uplands (36). It extends for several miles either side of Aber. It has a fairly consistent character, with large enclosures reflecting post-medieval re-organisation, but most importantly still retains a whole series of relict prehistoric and medieval archaeology, including hut group and long hut settlements surrounded by a complex of lynchets, field banks and ridge and furrow, towards the top of the area where the ground is less steep. Twentieth century conifer plantations as well as woodland are visually prominent woods and forestry add to the picture.

Key historic landscape characteristics

Relict archaeology (prehistoric and medieval settlement and fields), woods

An important area containing uninterrupted fossil remains of earlier land division and settlement which has immense potential for reconstructing for past landscapes.

Conservation priorities and management

The conservation priorities must be the relict archaeology: some mapping of aerial photographs has taken place, but detailed field survey is needed.

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Fig. 1 Proposed alterations to the Route of the A55 between Tai'r Meibion and Abergwyngregyn

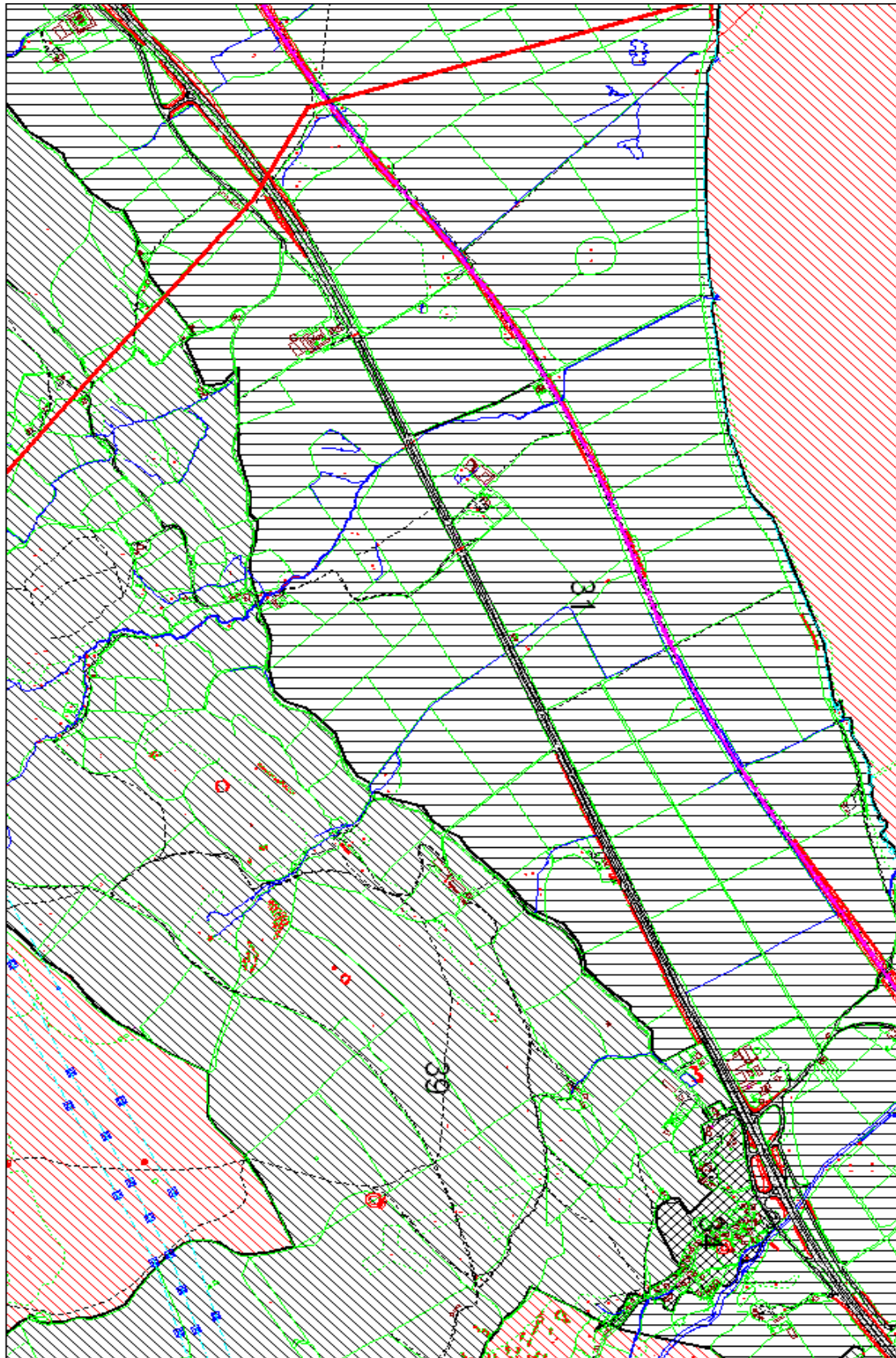


Fig. 2 Historic Landscape Characterisation Areas in the assessment area (Thompson 2000). Red Line Indicates Division Between Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales (Cadw 1998).