
Urban Characterisation: **Nefyn**



GAT Project No. 1913
Report No. 734
March, 2008

Urban Characterisation: **Nefyn**

Report No. 734

Prepared for CADW
&
Gwynedd Council

March 2008

By
Andrew Davidson
&
Robert Evans

Illustrations by Tanya Berks

Urban Characterisation: Nefyn

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Methodology
3. The Planning Process
4. The Landscape Setting of Nefyn
5. Historical Development
6. Archaeological Survival and Potential
7. Present Settlement Character: A summary
8. Statement of Significance and Management Recommendations
9. Character Areas
10. References

Appendix I: Sites and Records on the Gwynedd Historic Environment Record

Appendix II: Extracts from Welsh Office Circular 60/96

Appendix III: Extracts from Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan

Urban Characterisation: Nefyn

Figures

Fig 1. Location map of Bangor

Fig 2. Nanhoron private collection.

Fig 3. NefynTithe Map

Fig 4. Plan of Nevin town and Liberties

Fig 5. Plan and schedule of Lord Newborough's Estate. c. 1815

Fig 6. Proposed layout of the medieval town

Fig 7. Character Areas

Fig 8. Character Area 1

Fig 9. Character Area 2

Fig 10. Character Area 3

Fig 11. Character Area 4

Fig 12. Character Area 5

Fig 13. Character Area 6

Fig 14. Character Area 7

Fig 15. Character Area 8

NEFYN: URBAN CHARACTERISATION

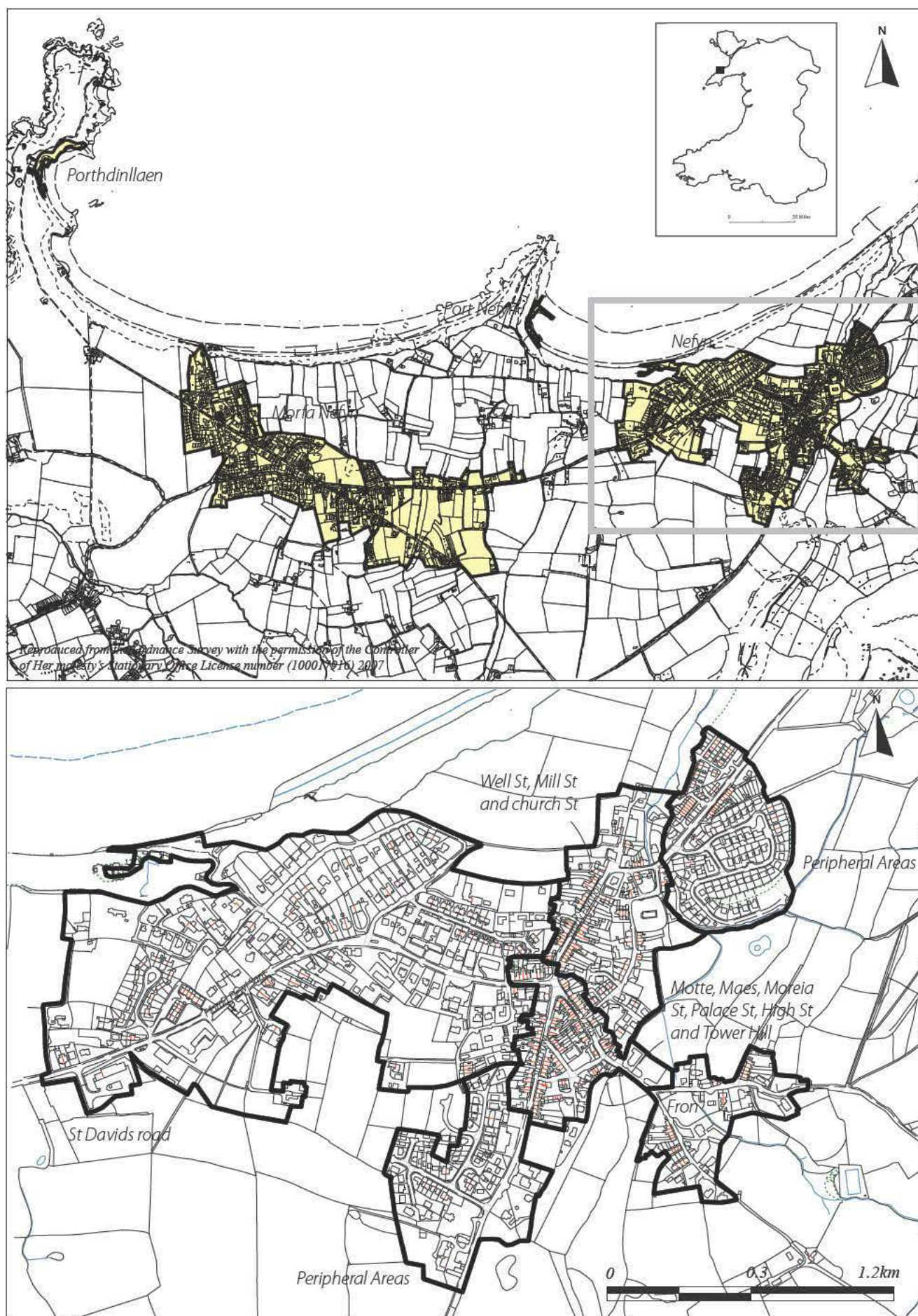


Figure 1. Nefyn: Urban Characterisation. Location Plan

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context to the study

The following document constitutes an urban character assessment of the town of Nefyn, grant-aided by Cadw and Cyngor Gwynedd Council and carried out by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. This is one of a series of urban characterisation studies being carried out within Wales, funded by Cadw and the relevant local authority.

1.2. Statement of Aims

The aim of the characterisation survey is to describe and explain the historic character of towns in order to inform and support positive conservation and regeneration programmes. They should improve the quality of planning advice, and contribute to local interpretation strategies. The survey will define the distinctive historical character of Nefyn, and identify the variety of character within it. The aims of the survey are based upon the understanding that the variety of character identified during the survey is fundamental to local distinctiveness and pride of place, and these are to be seen as assets within the process of regeneration.

1.3. Acknowledgments

Advice from Judith Alfrey of Cadw is gratefully acknowledged. Adam Voelcker generously made his text of the forthcoming Pevsner volume available for study. Mr and Mrs Harden kindly allowed their volume of estate maps to be examined at Nanhoron.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Introduction

The methodology employed to undertake the project is based upon that developed by Cadw following initial projects undertaken by Cambria Archaeology of Carmarthen (Cambria 2005) and Gwynedd Archaeological Trust of Bangor (GAT 2007). These in turn were based upon a methodology developed in England for urban characterization and assessment, and in particular the studies undertaken by the Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey (see details at <http://www.historic-cornwall.org.uk/>).

The following methods were used to achieve the stated aims.

2.1.1. Data collection

This phase included the collection of data from regional and national historic environment records, including those kept at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, RCAHMW, Cadw and National Museums and Galleries of Wales. Archive records were obtained from Gwynedd Archives, University of Wales, Bangor and National Library of Wales. The records were entered onto a database that was compatible with the regional Historic Environment Record, and their location identified through a geographical information system (MapInfo). Additional records and information sources were identified from historic maps, prints and photographs, and literature sources, including early antiquarian works.

2.1.2. Fieldwork

The characterisation process combined understanding gained from the historic and archaeological survey with a visual assessment of the surviving historic fabric. The development of the topography of the town was noted, and phases of historic settlement identified. Distinctive architectural forms, materials and significant elements of town and streetscapes were recorded.

Site visits were conducted on three separate occasions in February and March 2008 by representatives of the Trust. The weather on each occasion was good for the time of year and conditions were conducive to field work.

2.1.3. Interpretation

This phase involved the compilation of a report that described the archaeological and historical development

of the town, as indicated by the data gathered during the first phase.

2.1.4. Strategy

The final phase of the project used the information gained from the earlier phases to provide a series of strategic policies that can feed into local authority plans and documentation. The archaeological and character zones were used to identify planning aims and recommendations.

Wherever possible the work has been undertaken in conjunction with Local Authority planning officers, and has taken into account relevant documentation such as local conservation plans and policy documents concerning urban and brown-field regeneration.

The information gathered as part of this project will be held by the regional Historic Environment Record to allow future advice on developments within historic urban areas to be relevant and up to date, and ensure that policies involving the built environment are based on accurate knowledge.

2.2. Principal sources

A list of sources consulted is given at the end of this report. No comprehensive history has been written concerning Nefyn. General histories of Welsh towns which discuss Nefyn include Lewis (1912), Carter (1966) and Soulsby (1983).

Contemporary descriptions of Nefyn by topographical writers of the 18th and 19th centuries include Pennant (1781); Bingley (1800); Hyde-Hall (Jones 1952); Fenton (Fisher 1917) and Lewis (1833). Secondary sources include the Royal Commission's 1964 Inventory on Caernarfonshire and Adam Voelcker has provided much help, particularly in allowing us to use information from his volume on Gwynedd in the Buildings of Wales series before publication.

The resources of the county record office at Caernarfon, the National Library of Wales and the University of Wales Bangor were assessed, and information obtained from the National Archives, Kew. The archives contain a number of estate maps and documents dating from the third quarter of the 18th century onwards, and in general relate to the main landowning families within the parish, in particular the Edwards of Nanhoron and the Bodfean estate of Lord Newborough. In addition there are also collec-

tions relating to the smaller landowners in Nefyn such as the Cefnamwlch and Madryn estates. Documentation relating to the Borough of Nefyn was also examined at Caernarfon, in addition to the 1840 tithe map and 19th century Ordnance Survey maps. A part of the large collection of historic photographs and postcards relating to Nefyn was also consulted.

2.3. Previous archaeological work

Archaeological studies have been very few. Medieval aspects are examined by Johnstone (2000), as part of a wider examination of Llys and Maerdref sites in Gwynedd. Only a few small scale excavations have been undertaken within the medieval town, though, as will be seen, there is considerable potential for the recovery of archaeological evidence from medieval and later times.

3. THE PLANNING PROCESS

3.1. *Current legislation*

The local Planning authorities are recognised and identified as having the key role in protecting our archaeological heritage. Government advice and planning case law clearly establish archaeology as a 'material consideration' in the planning authorities' assessment and determination of a planning application. This is seen in both national and regional policy documents and guidelines.

The protection of the vulnerable historic environment falls into two broad categories: statutory protection and non-statutory protection.

Statutory protection is provided by the following Acts and Orders:

- The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, as amended by the National Heritage Act 1983
- The Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- The Planning and Compensation Act 1991
- Statutory Instrument 1199, the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988
- Statutory Instrument 1995 No. 419, The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995

Designations arising from these Acts and Orders are Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.

Non-statutory protection is provided by national policies and guidelines contained within:

- Planning Policy Wales, March 2002
- Welsh Office Circular 60/96, Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology, December 1996
- Welsh Office Circular 61/96, Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas, December 1996.

The key document in Wales which expands on the legislative background and provides detailed guidance on the handling of archaeology within the planning process is Welsh Office Circular 60/96 - Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology (1996). This Welsh Assembly guidance expands on Planning Policy Wales (March 2002), Chapter 6 'Conserving the Histor-

ic Environment; particularly paragraphs 6.5.1 to 6.5.6 (see Appendix I for extracts from 60/96).

3.2. *Local Plan Policies*

Current regional and local plan policies are defined in Gwynedd Structure Plan (adopted 1993) and Dwyfor Local Plan (adopted 1996). These are in the process of being superseded by the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan, which is intended for adoption in 2008, though its policies can be used as a material determinant in current planning decisions. The weight to be given to the UDP policies depends upon the current status of the policy and if outstanding objections exist to the policy. The Draft Unitary Development Plan was deposited in 2004, and it is those policies which are given in Appendix II to define the manner in which archaeology is considered within the local and regional planning context.

3.3. *Conservation Areas in Nefyn*

The 1990 Town and Country Planning Act defines a conservation area as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Nefyn has an extensive Conservation Area, designated in 1986, that covers the entire old town. The area was reviewed in 2003 (BDP 2003), when recommendations were made for some slight extensions.

The current Conservation Area is not an adequate recognition of the importance of the built environment, and needs to be extended to include additional significant areas. Recommendations are made in paragraph 8.2 below.

3.4. *Heritage and Local Planning Context*

Advice on the management of the archaeological heritage is provided for the Planning Department by Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service (GAPS), and the Authorities planning officers and GAPS staff combine and contribute to the decision making processes to inform on the likely impact of development on the historic environment and how best to mitigate the impact.

Archaeology is the process by which we can understand past societies through their material remains. These archaeological remains are a finite and non-renewable resource. They are vulnerable to modern development and can, in a short space of time, be entirely destroyed by modern machinery and building methods.

The level of archaeological response is guided by the nature of the archaeological remains and the

significance of the impact. Archaeological mitigation is usually imposed through planning conditions, and a relevant programme of archaeological works is advised by archaeologists from GAPS. On occasion a programme of assessment and evaluation may be required prior to the determination of a planning application, so that the appropriate mitigation can be advised.

3.5. Regional Historic Environment Record

The regional Historic Environment Record (HER) is a database of archaeological sites and finds with details of interventions (surveys, excavations, previous work etc) and references. It consists of both a computerised record and a paper record, and is held at the offices of the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust in Bangor. The digital record combines database and GIS functionality, and forms the key component of the planning and archaeology decision making process. The experience and knowledge of the development control archaeologists is used to interpret the record, and provide relevant advice to the planning officers.

3.6. Other relevant strategic documents

3.6.1. Historic Landscape Characterisation

Nefyn falls within the Lleyn and Bardsey Island Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest (HLW GW8). The contents and significance of this area are described as follows. 'Lleyn is a large and topographically varied peninsula lying to the south west of Snowdonia, with composite, yet highly integrated and well-preserved evidence of land use, showing continuity and territorial unity possibly from prehistoric times. The area includes Mesolithic coastal sites; Neolithic chambered tombs and axe factory; up-standing and crop-mark Bronze Age funerary and ritual

sites; large Iron Age hillforts; Early Christian sites and associations; Bardsey Island; medieval churches; Nefyn and Pwllheli towns; small dispersed villages and settlements in a distinctive enclosed landscape of stone walls, banks and hedges; Parliamentary Enclosures; recent mineral quarries and associated settlements' (CCW, Cadw and Icomos, 1998, 100).

A pilot landscape characterisation project was undertaken on Llŷn in 1997 and 1998 by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (GAT Reports 261, 284, 287), and this has been updated in 2007/8. The former medieval strip fields which surround Nefyn have been recognised as one of the best preserved examples in north Wales.

3.6.2. Heritage Coast

Heritage Coasts are a non-statutory landscape definition, unlike the formally designated National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and are defined by agreement between the relevant maritime local authorities and the Countryside Council for Wales. Most are part of a National Park or AONB, but in the case of the Lleyn Heritage Coast the coastline of Nefyn is included though it lies just outside the AONB.

3.6.3. Landscape Conservation Area

Nefyn lies just outside the Lleyn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty but within the Llyn Peninsula Environmentally Sensitive Area (ADAS 1988). The Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau Landscape Conservation Area extends from Penrhyn Nefyn on the north Llyn coast to the mouth of the Afon Clarach north of Abersytwyth on the West Wales coast, designated primarily because of the presence of special marine and coastal resources.



Plate 1. Aerial photograph of Nefyn showing the old town on the level plateau between the coast and Garn Boduan in the background. In recent years the settlement has expanded from the old town towards the coast.

4. THE LANDSCAPE SETTING OF NEFYN

4.1. Extent of area

The area assessed as part of the urban characterisation includes the core of the built up part of the old borough of Nefyn, centred on Well Street, Mill Street, Church Street, Tower Hill, Palace Street and the High Street, with historic infilled areas such as the Maes. Peripheral areas of the town, with the historic settlement of Fron to the south-east and the early 20th century urban focus of St. David's Road are included. Areas of 20th century development to the north and south of the town are also included. A number of detached built-up urban areas within the wider borough are closely related to the development of the town, including Morfa Nefyn at the junction of the old road from Nefyn to Aberdaron with the Porthdinllaen turnpike, and the harbour settlements of Penrhyn Nefyn and Porthdinllaen since they formed the key links between the town of Nefyn, the wider world, and its principal sources of employment, fishing and boatbuilding. The agricultural hinterland within the parish of Nefyn is not considered in this study, but is further considered in the characterisation of Llŷn being undertaken concurrently.

4.2. Geological background

The Llŷn peninsula projects some 35km into the Irish Sea on the south-west side of the mountain massif of Snowdonia. It constitutes a relatively low-lying area of undulating plateau with occasional isolated hills of intrusive, harder rock. Geologically, the largest part of the plateau consists of slates and shales, while the isolated hills are of igneous rock, mainly granite. The tip of the peninsula and most of the northern coast consists of low hills, of pre-Cambrian rocks, such as gneiss and schist (Smith and George 1961, 7-11). The whole surface has, however, been affected by the passage of the Irish Sea ice sheet that left, in retreat, thick deposits of fluvio-glacial clay, silt and gravel and these have had a strong influence on soil formation. The soil types are largely derived from glacial till and fall into four broad categories: the rock dominant and leached podsols of the volcanic intrusions, the poorly drained gleys of the lowland areas and river valleys, the freely drained brown earths on the hill slopes and an area of organic soils in the marshland along the south-central part of the coast (Soil Survey of England and Wales, Sheet 118). Nefyn lies on an undulating coastal plateau between about 30 to 50m OD. The underlying geology of the town of Nefyn and immediate surround-

ings is slate but the area to the west, at Morfa Nefyn and Edern, lies over igneous gneiss and schist. More importantly, the whole area is covered by deep deposits of glacial till on which have developed brown earths which are relatively productive agricultural soils where drainage is good, as here. The low lying land is mainly classed as of Grade 3, Good to Moderate quality, suitable for a range of arable crops with only moderate limitations so that yields are lower or more variable than on better quality land (MAFF 1977). The medieval success of the town was based on the availability of a good area of land suitable for arable, in comparison to elsewhere in Llŷn. However, much of it is now permanent pasture.

4.3. *Landscape setting*

The town of Nefyn is located 0.5Km from the coast, on a relatively level plateau that has the sea to the west and the steep slopes of Mynydd Nefyn and Garn Boduan to the east. At the coast edge the long crescent bays of Nefyn and Dinllaen are each ended by promontories of hard rock – Penrhyn Nefyn and Trwyn Porth Dinllaen. The promontories protected the bays from the worst of the prevailing winds, and harbours of regional significance with localised shipbuilding industries developed in the lea of each, though neither developed any major infra-structure. This trading capability of Nefyn was influential in its establishment and growth, though communications with the sea were hampered by high cliffs of glacial moraine, down which difficult paths had to be negotiated. Where a natural break in

the cliff occurred it was often termed ‘bwlch’ (a pass or a gap) such as Bwlch Glas or Bwlch y Bridyn which lie between Penrhyn Nefyn and Porth Dinllaen. Development occurred at three specific places on the coast edge, namely Porth Nefyn tucked into the curve of the bay on the east side of Penrhyn Nefyn; Porth Dinllaen similarly located east of Trwyn Dinllaen; and at Bwlch y Bridyn.

The town of Nefyn itself lies in a slight hollow centred on the head of a narrow valley, and the stream which runs into it was probably one of the key factors in the siting of the church and later the town. The town is located at a height of between 40 and 50m OD and is surrounded by a pattern of remnant strip fields close to the town and more irregular fields to the south, quite distinct from the surrounding parishes, where large rectangular 19th century fields predominate. The area of Mynydd Nefyn to the east of the town belonged to the borough and was common land, or under the control of Nefyn Corporation, until enclosure in 1811 (NA LRRO 1/3297).

The town of is located on the important east-west route between Caernarfon and Aberdaron, a known pilgrimage route and the principal northern route onto the peninsula. A cross-roads at the centre of the town leads north to the harbours and a coastal route through Morfa Nefyn to Aberdaron, west through central Llŷn to Aberdaron, and south (skirting Garn Boduan) to Pwllheli. In Morfa Nefyn the old road crosses the Porthmadog-Porthdinllaen turnpike.

5. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1. Prehistoric and Roman

Llŷn or Lleyn, the name for the peninsula, is thought to take its name from the same root as the Irish tribal name Laigin (as in Leinster), probably reflecting early Irish settlement and influence in the area (Carr, 1972, 69). A large, presumably Iron Age, promontory fort near Nefyn on the north coast, Dinas Dinllaen, incorporates the same root name, which also gave its name to the medieval commote or administrative district. The town of Nefyn lies in the shadow of the extensive hillfort of Garn Boduan to the south.

The evidence for prehistoric settlement within the later historic borough of Nefyn is quite limited, although upland areas, particularly in the region of Mynydd Nefyn, show a greater concentration of evidence. A late prehistoric round house settlement has been identified at Cariog Ganol (NGR SH 32614018; PRN 1,337) and a round house at Tyddyn-Blondeg (SH 32224084; PRN 4,398). A circular enclosure has also been identified at Cerniog Bach (SH 32453982; PRN 3,441). In the area to the south-east of Morfa Nefyn, near Ty-mawr a possible round barrow (SH 29383991) is located (Hopewell 2003, 3). Three or four Bronze Age cremation urn burials (SH 29273992; PRN 3,640) are



Plate 2. *The medieval motte and 19th century lookout tower*

recorded as having been found at Pen yr Orsedd in 1691 (Lloyd nd.). The name Pen yr Orsedd is preserved by a house on the road to Morfa Nefyn and a former owner recorded that local tradition maintains that it was the site of an old cemetery.

Despite the limited nature of the evidence, finds from within the area, particularly of Bronze Age date, imply that it may have been more settled than the evidence suggests. A gold bracelet is noted as having been found in the region of SH 3040 (PRN 5,540).



Figure 2. *Nanhoron private Collection, 'Houses, Garden and Lands situated in the Town of Nevin'*

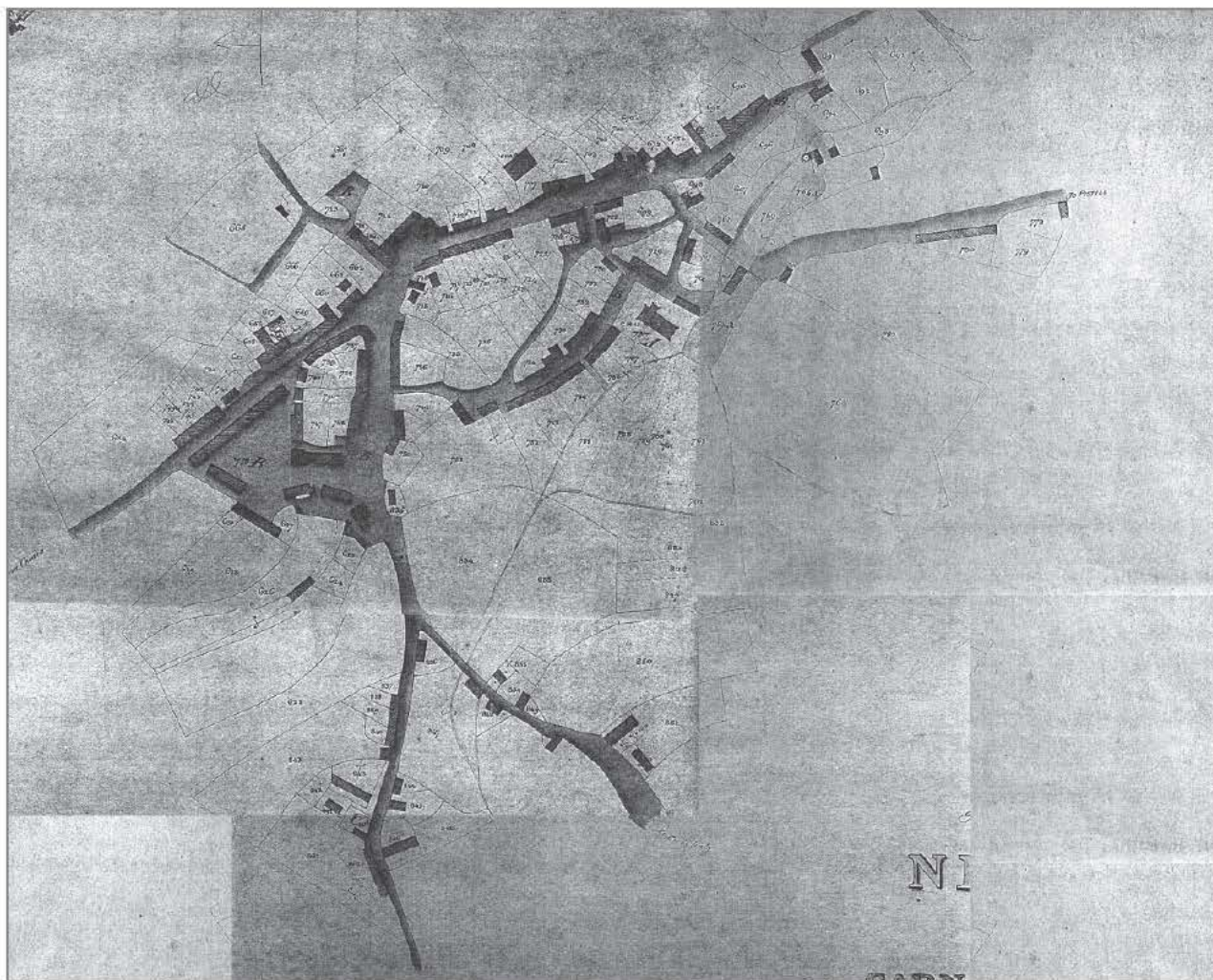


Figure 3. *Nefyn Tithe Map of 1840 (NLW)*

5.2. Medieval

Nefyn is well recorded in the medieval period but may ultimately owe its origins to the presence of the prehistoric fortified settlements at Dinas Dinllaen and Garn Boduan, which it may have succeeded as a settlement and administrative centre. However, the first mention of Nefyn is in the *Life of Gruffydd ap Cynan* in the 11th century, where it is described as a harbour used by Gruffydd (Evans 1990, 72). The medieval motte may be of this date also there are no contemporary references to it, but it is likely to be of Norman origin. Gerald of Wales visited the area during his journey through Wales with Archbishop Baldwin. He spent the night of 9 April 1188 at Nefyn where, he says, 'I myself, Archdeacon of St Davids's, discovered the works of Merlin Silverster, which I had long been looking for, or so I would like you to think' (Thorpe 1978, 183). The exact nature of the discovered works is not known.

The church of Nefyn and 'the land where the church is situated between the two small brooks' was granted, with the land of Cerniog east of Nefyn, to the

Augustinian Abbey of Haughmond by Cadwaladr ap Gruffydd (brother of Owain Gwynedd) some time between 1140 and 1161 (Pryce 2005, charter 197). Further grants were made to the priory by Dafydd, son of Owain Gwynedd, and by Maredudd ap Cynan and Gruffydd ap Cynan, Owain's grandsons, in the later 12th century (ibid, charters 198, 199, 207, 208). All previous grants were confirmed by Llywelyn ap Iorwerth in a confirmation charter of 1230-40 (ibid, charter 258), where the donated land is described as 'all the land between the two streams between which the said church is situated; from the house of Gruffydd Predit (Brydydd?) with the meadow to the house of Waspatlillan'. Other areas included 3 acres given by Gwion the cook; two small portions of land which the bald leper once held near Penodrayt; a detached portion of Boduan in Nefyn and the mill of Nefyn; and the land of Cadwgan ap John Sturrey at Morfa Dinllaen. Cadwaladr, the original grantor, would have been aware of Haughmond Abbey both through his close relations with Ranulf II, earl of Chester (whom he fought with at Lincoln) and because during a period of exile Cadwaladr was granted the manor of Ness situated about 10 miles from

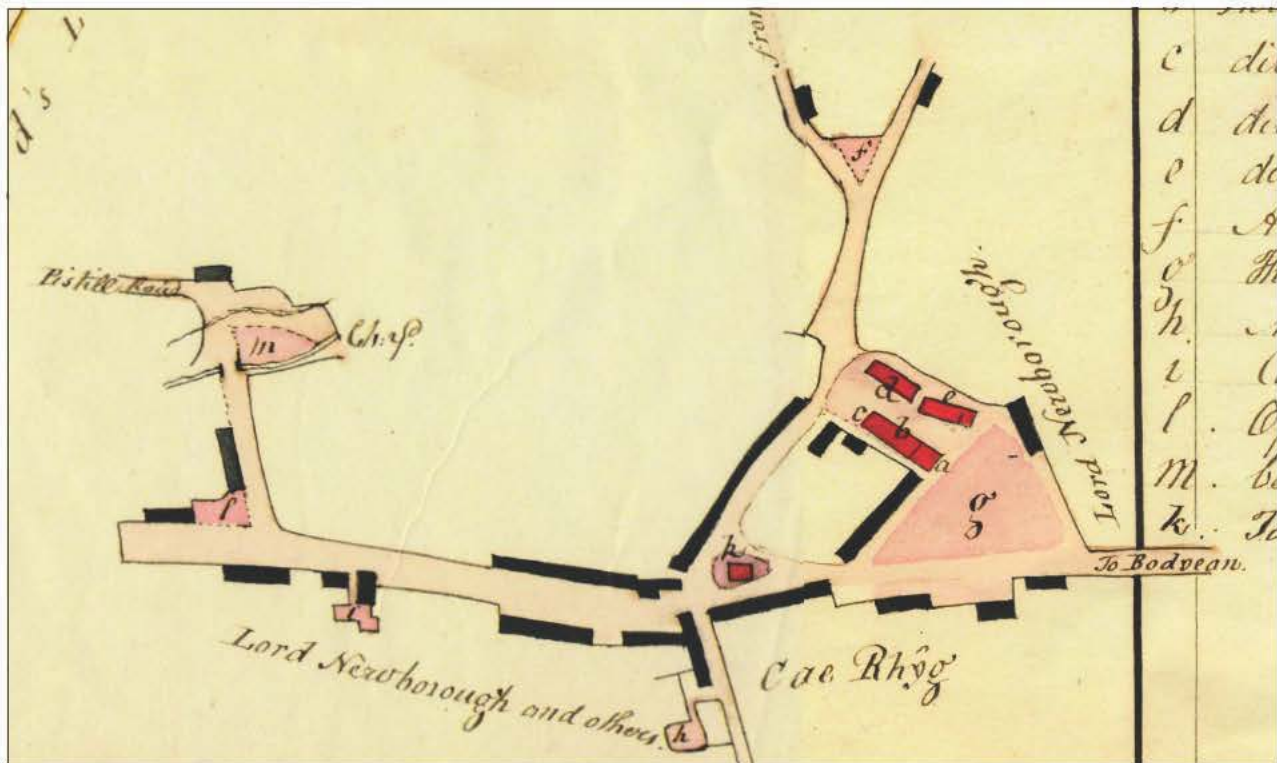


Figure 4. GAS XD2A/1250: 'Plans and Nevin Town and Liberties with the mountain and several cottages and enclosures erected thereon, by and with the consents of the mayor, bailifs and burgesses of Nevin'

Haughmond (Pryce 2005, 330). There is a persistent tradition that a priory was established at Nefyn by the mother house. A charter of 1301 contains a renunciation by David ap Madoc of Nefyn, chaplain, of any claim to the church of Nefyn, and states 'he had been brought up in Haughmond's house at Nefyn with the canons dwelling there, and that when he had been ordained priest he had for a long time undertaken to serve the church in place of a hired priest' (Gaydon & Pugh 1973, 62-70). In 1342 the canons leased 3 acres of land to Griffin ap David ap Madoc White of Nefyn, authorising him to take stones from the canons' house for building purposes (ibid.). These documents would suggest that an Augustinian presence was established at Nefyn, but seemingly not large, and that any Priory buildings were destroyed long before the Reformation. The location of the priory is discussed further in 6.3 below.

The origins of the borough of Nefyn are obscure. It was the commotal centre of Dinllaen, and as such the llys (court) and maerdref (home farm) of the Prince's of Gwynedd would have been established there. Post-conquest documents describe a complex of buildings (Pierce 1957, 37), implying a settlement of some importance. The Extent of 1284 records adiminished maerdref of five households, and a community of fifty free households described as being of the borough of Nefyn. The men of the maerdref were required to 'keep clean the pre-

cincts of the manor house, to bring fuel to the hall from the Prince's woods and turbaries, and there to attend to the fires', a reminder of the unfree origins of the town (Pierce 1957, 39). A grant by Maredudd ap Cynan dated 1195-1199 is witnessed by two burgesses of Nefyn, Robert and Stephen (Pryce 2005, 341). The evidence would suggest that the commotal centre had been reorganised as a borough before the end of the 12th century. Parallels have been drawn with other contemporary Welsh towns such as Llanfaes and Pwllheli, and post-conquest documents make it clear that markets were being held there and that ships were calling in to the harbour to trade (Pierce 1957, 40).

A survey of the town in 1293 recorded 93 taxpayers including an innkeeper, a goldsmith and Madoc the priest (Pierce 1931, 146). The manor included a garden, meadow and vaccaries along with 200 acres of arable land within the demesne (ibid. 1933, 256). This was a sizeable area for the time, suggesting a considerable and profitable surplus. The llys was also of some size and complexity as shown by records of repairs in 1284 and 1306-7, including a 'great barn', presumably for storing grain from taxes, a small hall, with its chamber and private chamber next to the king's chamber and a gallery of the solar. Mention is also made of the wooden shingles of the roof of the solar, of straw for thatching and of the cost of re-erecting a fallen wall of the hall (ibid. 1957, 150).

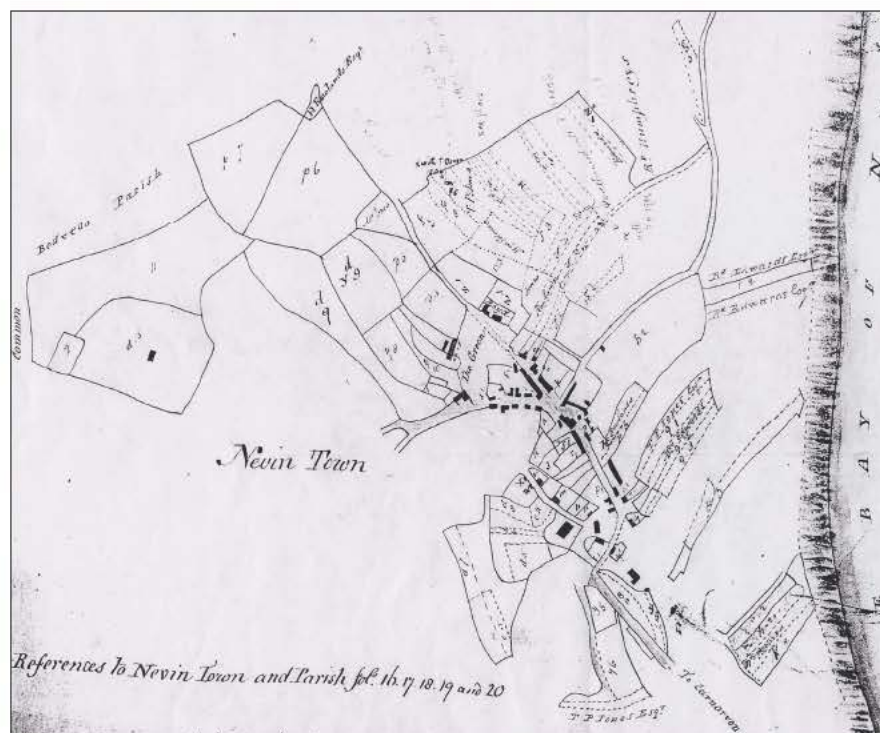


Figure 5. GAS XD2/8356-7: 'Plans and schedule of Lord Newborough's Estates'

The town's importance as a centre was clearly recognised by Edward I when he organised a grand tournament there in 1284 to celebrate his victory over Llywelyn ap Gruffydd in 1282 (Pennant 1783, 212). He ordered new ovens to be built to entertain the number of guests for this occasion. The location of this tournament is not known but was identified by Lewis (1833) to be at a circular earthwork by the Edern road out of Nefyn (PRN 6628).

The town was never fortified and it does not appear to have been reorganised by Edward I in a regular manner to resemble the new fortified towns of Caernarfon and Conwy. The manorial fields lay to the south and south-west of the town, between the cliffs and 'an outer boundary extending roughly from Cae Rhyg to Penymaes, and skirting the lands of Bodtacho Ddu, which at that time was a separate rural district outside the limits of Nefyn' (Jones Pierce 1957, 39). The town fields were made up of the characteristically long curving strips, and these were often to stay in separate ownership up to the 19th century, and many are still recognisable in the landscape today (the strips are clearly marked on a number of the 18th and 19th century estate maps including Parry 1775; Nanhoron 1778; Glynllifon 1790 and 1815 and the Parish Tithe map of 1840. These records provide a rare example of the medieval field system surviving into modern times, and this survival surely explains Hyde-Hall's description of them as 'ragged lines

of earth which by the courtesy of the place pass for fences' (Hyde-Hall 1811, 262).

Very little evidence survives for the subsequent medieval development of the town, but it is known it was granted with Pwllheli to Sir Nigel Loryng in 1349, and that in 1355 Sir Nigel obtained from Edward, the Black Prince, new charters which recognised both Nefyn and Pwllheli as free boroughs. Nefyn was sacked by Owain Glyndwr in 1400, causing considerable destruction which resulted in the town being abandoned for a short period. This may account for the fact that no traces of medieval structures survive today, apart from the motte and church enclosure. A community was re-established a few years later, though on a much reduced scale, and the extent of the damage is indicated by the population's exemption from rent throughout Henry IV's reign.

5.3. 17th and 18th Century Development

The town very gradually recovered but never gained its former wealth and status. It was still not much more than a village by the 18th century, as recorded on the maps of Lewis Morris (1748) and John Evans (1797), where it is shown located between the motte and the church. Pennant (1783) describes Nefyn as a small town. A 1775 map of the town properties of John Parry (Gwynedd Archives XM/7744 1/97) shows the town clustering around the Maes, at this time an open space situated between the High Street and

Palace Street and clearly visible on the enclosure map of 1821 (NA LRRO 1/3297), and with some development northwards along Church Street and Well Street. The Nanhoron Estate Map of 1778 (Private Collection) shows additionally a cluster of properties at the junction of Well Street and the High Street with Tower Hill. The cartographic evidence suggests that with the exception of the church and motte the earliest surviving buildings within the town are Tir Receiver, a house gable end on to the street at the junction of Well Street to the north and Mill Street, noted on the Nanhoron map, and almost certainly a house and land belonging to one of the officials of the borough. By 1790 there had been further development along the High Street and Palace Street, although much of Church Street remained undeveloped, and there remained open plots of land along the main streets (NLW Ms. Maps Vol. 97). This may be a reflection of the lack of development in an area that had been devastated in 1400, with the main focus of settlement surviving to the south at the Maes.

5.4 *Nineteenth Century Development*

In 1811 Nefyn is described as ‘a good deal scattered about [although] they still convey the idea of a considerable collected population’ and since 1800 twenty four new houses had been built (Hyde-Hall 1811, 262). Fenton (1813) describes the town as a ‘poor, straggling miserable place...neither dignified with Town Hall or handsome Church’. Some evidence for this development can be seen on an undated, but circa 1820, Corporation plan of Nefyn (Gwynedd Archives XD2A/1250) and an enclosure map dated 1821 (NA LRRO 1/3297) which both show infilling and encroachment upon the Maes and the creation of two streets there called Moriah Street and The Green (Y Maes). They also show that Well Street had been significantly developed by then. St. Mary’s Church is described as being rebuilt in c.1825 (Lewis 1833), although the tower at least appears to be somewhat earlier, probably later 18th century. However, no tower is mentioned by Hyde Hall (1810) so perhaps it is 1825 also. The building of the Town Hall was commenced on the High Street in 1826 (Gwynedd Archives, XD2/11287). In 1831 the Borough is described as consisting of ‘a few scattered houses....a small port, with little or no commerce, and there is not any prospect, at present, that the town will rise into greater importance’ (NLW Parliamentary Boundary Commission 5745). Lewis (1833) describes the town as having 1726 inhabitants. Further development in the area of the Maes and southwards along the High Street and Palace Street can be seen on the tithe map of 1840

(NLW). Indications of the infilling of empty plots on the main streets of Nefyn by the Bodvean and Nanhoron estates from the second quarter of the 19th century can be seen in the leases issued of plots of building land (Gwynedd Archives, NLW), though further archive work is required to fully understand the urban development in more detail. In 1868 Nefyn is described as ‘a small but improving town’ (National Gazetteer 1868). The settlement eventually expanded to the south and west over the former medieval strip fields. In 1890 the Madryn Hall was built as a new town hall on the Maes. It was demolished in 2005.

Nefyn had a flourishing herring fishing and boat building industry in the late 18th and 19th centuries (Hyde-Hall 1811, 261), both at Penryn Nefyn and at Porth Dinllaen. These were some of the smaller ship building centres of Gwynedd, but locally significant, and the last ship was built in 1880 (Eames 1977, 170). Small concentrations of housing and localised industry were built at the ends of each of the roads leading to the beach, in particular at Porth Nefyn, Bwlch y Bridyn and Porth Dinllaen. In the early 19th century a watch tower was built upon the motte, probably in connection with the herring fishery (RCAHMW 1964, 84).

In the early 19th century the borough became the focus for a proposed scheme to provide a rail and ferry route to connect London with Ireland, via Porth Dinllaen, through mid-Wales. Such a mail route had already been in use via the road and there had been improvements to turnpikes and the harbour from the 1770s (Davies 1977, 173). To this end a new turnpike road was built from Porthmadog to Porth Dinllaen, providing a focus for the settlement of Morfa Nefyn to develop at the point where the new turnpike crossed the early road from Nefyn to Aberdaron. Figures were produced which attempted to show that the route through Porth Dinllaen would be faster, taking the combined time of rail and sea journeys into account (Dodd 1933, 115), and several plans were produced for the development of the harbour (Elis-Williams 1984). However, the north coast route eventually won, and when the rail connection to Holyhead was completed in 1850 following the opening of the Britannia Bridge at Bangor, Porth Dinllaen lost all hope of becoming the principal port for Dublin.

5.5 *Twentieth Century Development*

At the turn of the 20th century the area had become increasingly popular as a holiday destination, and a significant number of large detached villas were built on the outskirts of the town and towards the seashore.

A new focus of settlement grew up along St. David's Road, the old road leaving Nefyn westwards towards Aberdaron. St. David's Church, designed by Shearson of Bangor was built to the west of the motte and consecrated in 1903, and the Nanhoron Arms Hotel built in Art Deco style in 1914. The war memorial, a new cemetery and school buildings were also built in this road. In the mid 20th century three main areas of local authority housing were built in the town, both terraced and semi detached. Recent residential development has taken place on the southern edge of the town off the A497 and also on the northern edge of the town.

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVIVAL AND POTENTIAL

6.1. Prehistoric and Roman

No significant Prehistoric or Roman finds have been found during excavations undertaken within the town of Nefyn itself. Some evidence for settlement and burial has been found within the area of the former borough, and this is discussed in section 5.1. Despite the general lack of prehistoric evidence from within the town itself, prehistoric, particularly Bronze Age, finds from the surrounding area would suggest activity within this period, and there is good potential for prehistoric archaeology to be recovered.

6.2. Early medieval

The nearest find of probable early medieval date is a cross incised stone now used as a lintel at Ty'n y Cae farm to the north of the town (PRN 1536), and no finds of early medieval date have been found within the town itself. The churchyard, or llan surrounding St. Mary's church may however be of early medieval origin and predate the town itself. There remains therefore some potential for early medieval archaeology within the town.

6.3. Medieval

The only surviving structures clearly of medieval date within the borough of Nefyn are the motte (PRN 1535) and churchyard. This may be due to some extent to Owain Glyndwr's destruction of the town in 1400, however the topography of the town shows remarkable survival from medieval times. The street pattern within the town appears to be of medieval origin, with Well Street, Church Street, Tower Hill, Palace Street and the High Street all survivors from medieval times, where the burgrave plots were likely to be located. A medieval jetton (metal token) was found within the town at NGR 230340 (PRN 5554). The rebuilding of much of the cen-

tral area in the 19th century may mean that little archaeological evidence for earlier buildings within the town survives. However there must remain some potential for surviving medieval structural deposits.

In addition to the church and the motte, the elements that made up the medieval settlement included the llys, the maedref settlement, the free borough, the port, and the priory. Identifying the location of each of these elements, with the exception of the harbour, is problematic. Jones Pierce (1957) suggests the llys was located alongside Palace Street, although this seems mainly based on the street name evidence, whereas Johnstone (2000, 181) suggests that the motte site (PRN 1535) and the placename Cae Gadlis to the west of the town are potential locations for the llys (GAT 1999). There are several 'llys' house names in Moriah Street, including one house called 'Henllys', and a possible interpretation would be to locate the llys south of Palace Street, and in the area between Palace Street and Moriah Street. The maes, where the fairs were held, would have lain to the south, and the borough along Well Street. The maedref settlement might have been located between the llys and the church, possibly in the vicinity of Stryd y Llan.

The location of the priory lands cannot be identified with certainty. The principal stream which runs past the east side of the church must mark one boundary, but the other stream mentioned in the charter (see para. 5.2 above) is not so easy to identify. The 18th century Nanhoron estate map clearly marks a stream flowing from the well on Well Street down through the town and west of the church. If this was the western stream, then the east side of Well Street was owned by the Priory. Another, more likely, possibility is that the stream which issues from the south at Fron and currently turns sharply to join the western stream (this would have been carried out to enhance the water supply to the mill), formerly continued straight on to the north, passing to the west of the church, and perhaps also to the west of Stryd y Llan, thus explaining the boundary between Stryd y Llan and Well Street. This area would include the field south and east of the church which is still called Bryn Mynach. The actual priory buildings would have lain close to the church. A 'D'-shaped enclosure lay north of the church between the projected lines of the two rivers. The enclosure is shown on the earliest maps, though with no place name evidence, but it might be suggested as a possible location for the priory buildings. The mill, which was also granted to the priory, lay to the north of this enclosure.

Many elements of the strip field system have survived at Nefyn, and were even more prominent in the 18th and 19th centuries, being clearly shown on surviving estate maps from 1775-1815. Many of the boundaries between the strips remain, and it is important to record the nature of these prior to any further disturbance. In addition they might preserve buried soil horizons and environmental evidence of medieval farming.

6.4. Post Medieval

There is very little known about the development of the town during the 16th and 17th centuries, although an examination of the collection of deeds within the

Glynllifon and Boduan estate MSS suggests that there was some development, and that smaller landowners were being bought out by the larger estates (GAS XD2/6980-7053).

The earliest surviving houses presently identified are of the 18th century. On Well Street two houses gable end on to the street, known as Tir Receiver, must date from before 1778 as they are on the Nanhoron Estate Map. These with the adjoining properties form an interesting group, and still have their old quilllets or burgage plots associated with them to the north. The Three Herrings Inn at the southern end of Well Street is also an early 18th century building, though modernised, and Bron Mellion cottages on the east side of the Hish Street are probably also 18th century. A number of 18th century buildings also survive at the junction of Palace Street and the High Street. The estate maps and corporation map suggests that there was development along High Street and Palace Street by the third quarter of the 18th



Plate 3. *The church was rebuilt in the 19th century on the site of the medieval church.*

Hyde-Hall (1811) noted that 20 new houses had been built since 1800 (Hyde-Hall 1811, 262). This rate of building would appear to have continued into the second and third decades of the 19th century with some limited civic focus, such as the building of the town hall on the High Street after 1826 (GAS XD2/11287). Infilling of the Maes area continues throughout the 19th and into the 20th century. Later Victorian developments include bank and commercial buildings in the central area of Nefyn at Y Groes.

The main potential for furthering our understanding of post-medieval Nefyn lies in the closer study of the upstanding buildings, and attention is drawn to these in the area descriptions. However there may be some below ground 16th-17th century remains surviving within the town, particularly in the area around the Maes.



Figure 6. A proposed layout of the medieval town. More work is required to confirm the validity of the model suggested here.

century, although these buildings have not survived.

7. PRESENT SETTLEMENT CHARACTER: A SUMMARY

7.1. General topographical development

7.1.1. Nefyn

Our knowledge of the medieval layout of Nefyn has been discussed above. It is thought that there were two principal focal points, the church and the llys which lay south of and above the church. The borough developed along Well Street between these two focal points, and the former maerdref settlement and priory lands are thought to have lain parallel to and east of Well Street. Lying either side Well Street were burgage plots, and on the level ground between the settlement and the coast lay open strip fields. Common land lay on Mynydd Nefyn to the west. The priory lands lay around the church, and the mill lay to the north.

A crossroads developed at Y Maes, where the fairs were held, and expansion away from the medieval centre took place in the 18th century southwards along High Street and eastwards along Palace Street towards Y Fron. The

open area of the Maes was slowly built over. Despite all this development, the town would still have looked more like a village with relatively dispersed settlement. However the process of infilling continued into the 20th century. Church Street and Well Street had some 18th century and earlier building, but there were many empty plots that were built on by the Boduan and Nanhoron estates after 1800 and infilling continued until about 1880, suggesting that the main focus of the town was the Maes in the post medieval period. Well Street had been significantly developed by 1821 (NA LRRO 1/3297).

Nefyn had long been known as a centre for herring fishing, and it developed as a major regional fishing and boatbuilding centre in the latter part of the 18th century. The watch tower on top of the motte (PRN 12718) probably dates from this period. Between 1770 and 1890 132 vessels are known to have been built in Nefyn (Eames 1977, 169). Some settlement developed on the eastern, sheltered, side of Penrhyn Nefyn at this time, with a significant number of properties present by 1839 (NLW Tithe Map). Hyde-Hall (1811) refers to these buildings as curing houses for the herrings, and notes that 40 vessels were engaged in herring fishery (Hyde

Hall 1811, 261). These buildings were reached by a track running north of the old Nefyn-Aberdaron road to the west of Nefyn Town.

By the end of the 19th century central Nefyn had developed with nucleated settlement giving it once again an urban character with a business core around the Cross and the northern end of the High Street. However the town had not expanded significantly beyond its core medieval area, with the exception of Fron to the south-east, which consisted of a small 19th century settlement built around the late 18th century Baptist Chapel. This was to change in the early 20th century with the advent of the motor car and the development of the area as a holiday destination. A new area of settlement grew up to the west of the town along St. David's Road, named after the new church built west of the motte in 1903. A new school building was built and the war memorial was placed in this area, suggesting that the focus of town life was moving here. This in turn led to the development of the area to the north of St. David's road between the town and the coast, with holiday villas and hotels, such that in 1914 the large Art Deco style Nanhoron Arms Hotel was built to service the growing tourist industry.

20th century housing developments have built up to the north of St. David's Road on the western side of town, between it and the sea along new roads such as Rhodfar Mor. On the south side of St. David's Road, the former Cae Rhug is built up between St. David's and the High Street, mostly with recent housing, although there are a few early 20th century villas. There has also been recent housing development to the east of St. Mary's Church at Bro Gwylwyr. These areas comprise low density suburban type dwellings. The Holborn Farm estate at the southern end of the High Street consists of housing built on the old Holborn Farm lands.

7.1.2. *Morfa Nefyn*

There is a dispersed pattern of farming settlement throughout the parish of Nefyn that probably dates back to medieval times, and a number of 18th century cottages survive, such as Cae'r Pwll, a grade II listed building gable end on to the road at the eastern end of Morfa Nefyn dating to 1789 (PRN 11992). The settlement of Morfa Nefyn though owes its development to the cross roads created by the Porthmadog-Porthdinllaen turnpike road (PRN 13932) crossing the old Nefyn to Aberdaron road. A hotel, the Castle Inn, was built in the north-western triangle created by this crossroads and a settlement developed in the mid to late 19th century

especially just to the south of the junction. The two main focal points of this settlement are two late 19th century buildings, Capel Moreia, a Calvinist Methodist Chapel, and the former mission church, now St. Mary's Church.

Holiday style villas were built in the early 20th century westwards along both the Aberdaron Road and the Porthdinllaen turnpike, though interspersed with a few earlier cottages.

7.2. *Standing fabric: buildings and architecture*

7.2.1. *Building materials*

The medieval buildings of Nefyn were probably built of timber and clay. This is suggested by the house name Ty Cerrig, later the Three Herrings Inn, suggesting that most of the other buildings were built of material other than stones. The earliest surviving buildings are of stone and probably of late 17th or early 18th century date, such as Ty Cerrig and Tir Receiver, which are built of massive coursed rubble. There is evidence from the steep pitch of the roof and stones protruding from the chimneys that these buildings were once roofed in thatch, and Hyde-Hall in the early 19th century records that the majority of the buildings were roofed in thatch. During the 18th and 19th centuries most of the houses were rubble built with irregular coursing, although with larger window and door openings, and began to be constructed in terraces. During the 19th century many, although by no means all, of the buildings were rendered, which became the norm in the 20th century, with pebble-dashed coverings becoming dominant



Plate 4. *The steep roofs suggest this house on Well Street was formerly thatched.*

7.2.2. *Building styles*

The earliest surviving buildings in the town, which are probably late 17th or early 18th century in date, have

a strong vernacular character with high pitched roofs and tall chimneys, and appear to have formerly been thatched. The predominant style of architecture in the town is one of vernacular Georgian, with proportionate windows and doors, sometimes constructed in terraces. This seems to have developed in the late 18th century and continued well into the 19th, with some of the grander terraces being built of three stories. The windows, though very few now survive, were generally twelve pane sash windows, with later examples of four pane Victorian windows. Some of the



Plate 5. *Many of the houses, as here at Moriah Street, are now pebble dashed.*



Plate 6. *Moriah Chapel with typical classical ornament.*

later buildings were elaborately decorated with attractive window and door labels, particularly in the central commercial area around Y Groes, often associated with rendering. The later 19th century chapels were built using classical ornament.

During the early years of the 20th century there was much building of detached rendered Edwardian style villas, particularly to the west along St. David's Road and in Morfa Nefyn, often with large entrance lobbies and open plan frontages. There are developments of mid to late 20th century terraces, detached and semi-detached bungalows of fairly low density, both as in filling and as estates on the edge of the town.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. *Statement of significance*

The medieval origins of Nefyn as an urban settlement derive from its coastal location, availability of good agricultural land and the choice of the native Welsh princes to use it as their commotal centre and subsequent commercial borough. Though surviving medieval remains are confined to the churchyard and motte, much of the present maze of paths and streets, one of the defining characteristics of the town, also owes its origin to the medieval and sub-medieval borough. The varied topography results in short views along many of the thoroughfares, and the casual visitor is led on, determined to see what is round the next corner. Even Well Street, which preserves the line of the medieval borough, is relatively short, with clearly defined curving ends. The best examples are by the church, where Stryd y Felin, Stryd y Llan and Stryd y Mynach are interlinked by subsidiary paths.

After 1400 the heyday of Nefyn as a commercial borough was largely over, but it continued as a market town with strong agricultural and fishing links and a small ship building industry. The town was particularly well known for its herring fishing, and from medieval times to the early 20th century a large proportion of the population would have been involved with fishing. Nefyn continued to operate as a small market town into the 20th century, though shops have declined in recent years.



Plate 7. *Some of the earliest and best preserved buildings lie at the lower end of Well Street*

There are no known pre-18th century buildings, and by far the majority of the buildings within the old town are 19th century. Significant buildings which remain in the

old part of the town include St Mary's church and the buildings to the north, particularly the Old Bull Inn. Y Felin, the mill, survives to the north, though cannot be seen from Stryd y Felin. At the lower end of Well Street lie Tir Receiver with the houses of Minffordd and Newborough alongside, and south again Nanhoron House. Minffordd and Newborough are two of the best surviving examples of the vernacular Georgian town house, whilst Tir Receiver is of earlier origin and end on to the street. At the south end of the street the well is the focal point, the present stone well house dating from 1868. There are several examples of stone buildings at this end of the street, including the tall 3-storey terrace below the Three Herrings, built of regularly coursed dark stone blocks, which have been unfortunately ribbon pointed and the windows modernised, as also have the windows in the 18th century inn. Nonetheless the scale of these buildings is a reminder that this is the town centre, and the buildings grouped about the cross-roads included two substantial inns, two banks and several shops and cafes.



Plate 8. *Three-storey terraced houses on Well Street.*

Y Maes is defined by tightly packed houses in groups, with more open areas recalling its former use. The resulting effect is complex and busy, with buildings at contrasting angles which reflect the historical boundaries underpinning subsequent development.

Expansion of the town past St David's and towards Morfa Nefyn is an interesting example of early 20th century development of largely civic functions, including the school, church, church hall and war memorial. The wider roads and more open nature of the development contrasts with the older town.

8.2. *Management recommendations*

The number of Listed Buildings is low, and does not reflect the status of the building tradition which sur-

vives within Nefyn. A new survey, particularly within the old town, should be undertaken. Specific examples which fall within the relevant criteria include Tir Receiver, Newborough and Minffordd, The Bull, several buildings on the east side of the High Street, and others grouped around Y Groes.

The boundary of the Conservation Area needs reviewing. It is recommended that it is extended to include the south end of the High Street and Y Fron. The area boundary also cuts across many medieval and historic plot boundaries, and it should be regularised so that it includes these boundaries.

The three coastal settlements at Porth Nefyn, Bwlch y Bridyn and Porth Dinllaen all contain good examples of 18th and 19th century buildings, and all make a significant contribution to the overall character of the area. Porth Dinllaen is owned by the National Trust, and a management plan exists for its future. Any change or development within the other two areas requires careful management to ensure positive planning gains are achieved.

It is important that future development within the old town is minimised, and that new buildings are aligned with the old, enhancing rather than detracting from the medieval layout of the town.

The pattern of paths and roads should be carefully retained and enhanced.

The scale and appearance of existing buildings should be taken into account in any rebuilding or new development. This applies particularly in the

old town, though is also relevant elsewhere. Replacement of appropriate windows and doors should be encouraged. Very few original examples survive, the majority having been replaced with plastic alternatives.

Careful thought needs to be given to the exterior treatment of walls. Whilst pebble-dash has become the norm within the town, many examples are painted which relieves the dominance of this style. Painted render would be a preferred alternative, whilst pointed stone might also be appropriate, though ribbon pointing needs to be avoided.

Any new development or re-development should be preceded by an appropriate programme of archaeological works, particularly within the precincts of the medieval town, but this also applies to the surrounding medieval fields.

A targeted study of the houses and buildings within the old town has the potential to reveal more 18th century or earlier buildings that have subsequently been modernised.

The motte and tower has greater potential both to add chronological depth to the character of the area and as a monument and lookout than is currently realised. The public conveniences and new high fencing detract from this potential.

The lack of available secondary works on the history of Nefyn should be rectified by publication of a simple booklet recording the history and development of the town. This would raise awareness of the importance of the town, and encourage appropriate management.

9. AREA DESCRIPTIONS

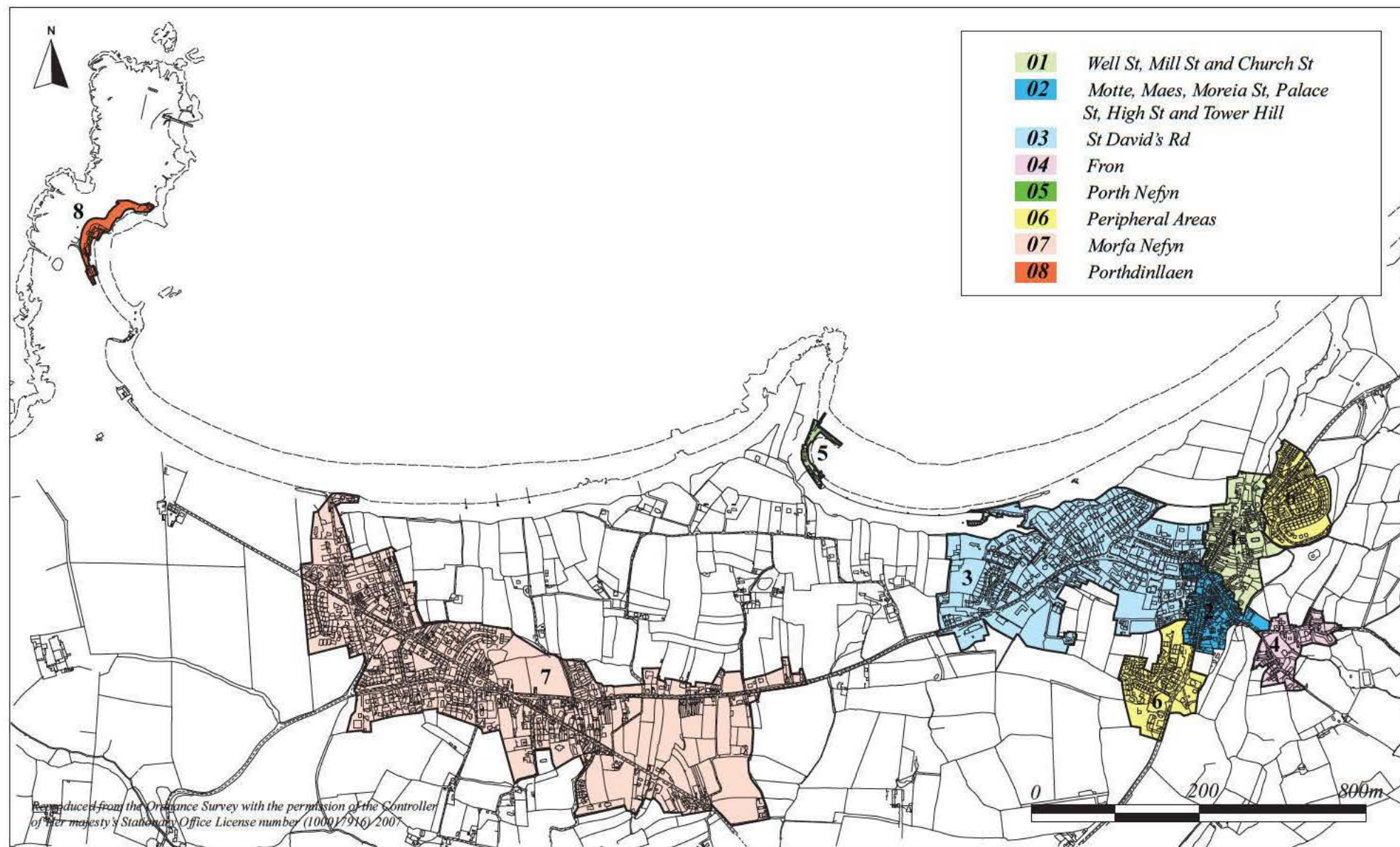


Figure 7. Location of numbered character areas

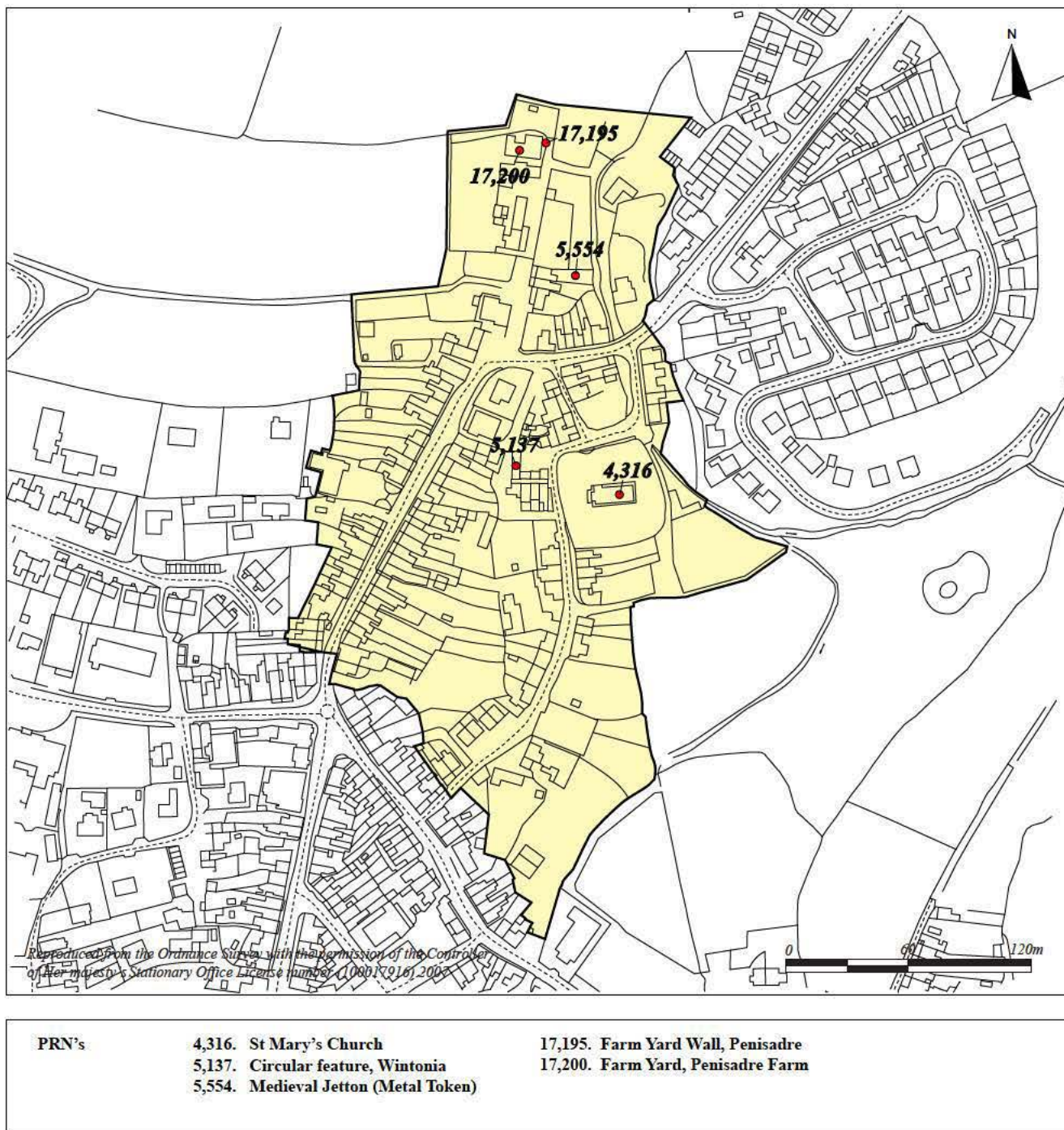


Figure 8. Area 1: Well Street, Mill Street and Church Street

Area 1: Well Street, Mill Street and Church Street

Historical Development

The earliest developments in this area occurred in the early middle ages around the llan or churchyard of the parish church of St. Mary (PRN 4316). The earliest known reference to the site is in 1188 when Giraldus Cambrensis visited Nefyn and mentioned a priory, which was possibly located to the south-east of the church. The parish church was a chapel of ease to Boduan until 1842, “a status consistent with the former existence in the manor of a royal chapel” (Jones Pierce

1957, 37). The shape of the churchyard enclosure or llan appears consistent with an early date.

The churchyard is bounded on the west side by a road, Church Street. Stryd-y-Mynach lies to the north of the church. A small stream lies to the west, running north out to sea, and the mill lay on this river to the north. The mill pond and mill are marked on the Nanhoron Estate map of c.1778. The farm beyond the mill was called Eisingrug, which refers to corn drying and threshing, so presumably a corn drying kiln was close to the mill. Well Street and Church Street enclose an almost pentagonal area of land, which is unevenly divided into

two parts by a rough north-south boundary. Well Street is unusually straight, with rectangular plots running east from it. Church Street is irregular, and the plots associated with it are more square than rectangular. It is not known if either system is medieval, though a possible interpretation would be to recognise Church Street as earlier than Well Street, and the latter as a deliberate creation, more carefully laid out with plots either side.

The Nanhoron map shows the well at the top of Well Street, with an open drain running down the street to merge eventually with the tail-race from the mill. A smithy is shown alongside the well, and opposite is Ty Cerrig, which becomes the Three Herrings Inn. Settlement is conglomerated around the north and at the south end of the street, but is not shown as continuous on either the west or east side. Strip fields are shown running west from the street to the coast.

The narrow streets and passageways in this area are suggestive of early settlement. There is considerable evidence for the survival of burgage plots and strip fields behind Well Street and Church Street. These roads are the main streets between the church and motte and probably formed the focus of early settlement in the town.



Plate 9. *The Three Herrings Inn and Ty Cerrig at the upper end of Well Street*

Current Urban Area Description

Well Street has a varied streetscape, with two and three storey houses with varied rooflines. Many of the terraces appear to be built by either the Glynllifon or Nanhoron estates in the mid 19th century, but a few earlier buildings survive. The former Three Herrings Inn at the southern end of Well Street [show photo], with associated yards and outbuildings may be late 17th or early 18th century in origin. At the northern end a pair of cottages gable end on to the street, known as Tir Receiver must predate 1778. Bron Mellion Cot-



Plate 10. *The well house built in 1868*

tages are also probably of early 18th century origin, with additional buildings to the south of later 18th century character. The post office, north of the well house has a good example of a 19th century commercial property frontage. On the 1821 Parliamentary enclosure map (LRRO 1/3297) Well Street is shown as having been built up with no open fields onto the street frontage.

St. Mary's well house, a grade II listed structure, was built in 1868 by the Corporation of Nefyn of squared rubble stone, with a stone pyramidal roof. It is an unusual example of an elaborate well house and of civic architecture within the town.

Church Street has a number of cottages of early 19th century character, probably Bodvean estate built, as the street had very limited 18th century development. These



Plate 11. *Tir Receiver at the lower end of Well Street*



Plate 12. *The Old Bull Inn is on the right, opposite the terrace*

Archaeological Resource

There are no known prehistoric or Roman sites here. The main medieval site is the churchyard llan, which may be early medieval in date. It is thought that a priory (PRN 4317) may have been located south east of the church in medieval times, so the area may be of great archaeological significance. Evidence of medieval settlement may well survive here. There is significant survival of medieval strip fields beyond the burgage plots in this area, particularly to the north

of Well Street towards the sea. A medieval jetton (metal token) was found within the town at NGR 230340 (PRN 5554).

An excavation carried out at 1 Church Street revealed that in the medieval period the area was a yard with drains but no structures. In post-medieval times this became a cultivated garden plot, probably belonging to the house on Palace Street on to which it backed (GAT 1993, 3). At Wintona, a property near the church there is evidence of a large circular enclosure of unknown purpose (PRN 5137), although it may be medieval in date. Further archaeological evidence for medieval settlement is likely on Church Street and Well Street.

Well Street and Church Street are important as they show evidence of piecemeal and varied development from 18th century to early 20th century. This has created an attractive and varied streetscape. The late Georgian church of St. Mary is listed grade II and is the most prominent landmark in the town. The well house of 1868 is listed grade II as a prominent and architecturally elaborate civic structure. The early 18th century Tir Receiver group of cottages is an important one and should be considered for listing.

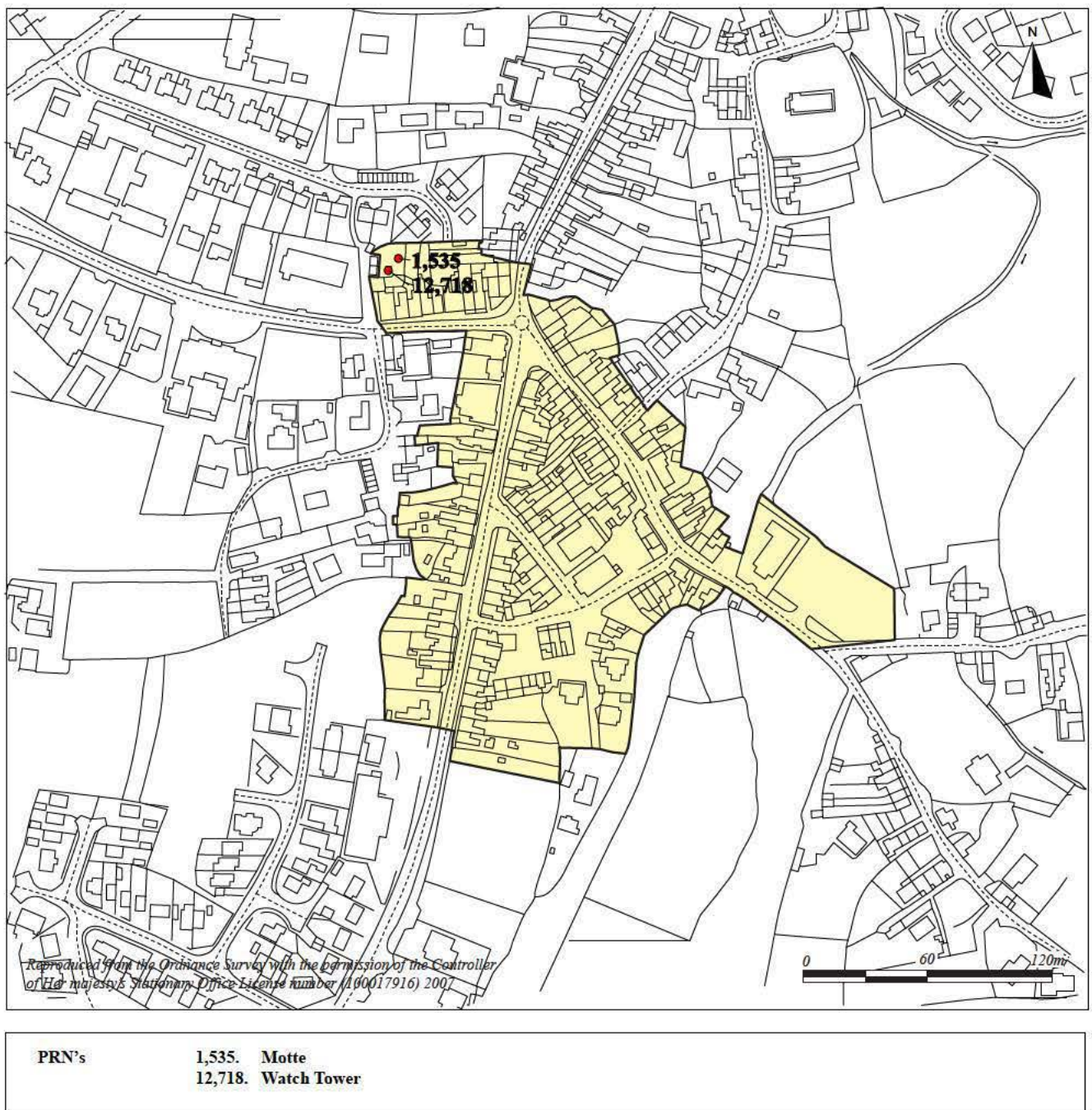


Figure 9. Area 2: The Motte, Maes, Moreia Street, Palace Street, High Street and Tower Hill

Area 2: The Motte, Maes, Moreia Street, Palace Street, High Street and Tower Hill

Historical Development

The motte is of unknown date but it is presumed to be medieval. The location of the medieval llys in Nefyn remains in some doubt but Palace Street, because of the name, and the field Gadlis south of the motte have been suggested as possible locations (Johnstone 2000). A possible market place, Y Maes was created in the space between the northern ends of the High Street and Palace Street, at the point where they meet the southern end of Well Street and Tower Hill, where the motte is located,

on the old route to Aberdaron. The llys or motte could have provided the political control over the Maes in Nefyn, which would have acted as the market place for the whole of Dinllaen, as required by the borough charter of 1355. Medieval settlement is likely to have coalesced in this area around the junction of the main streets, and burgage plots developed, thus creating the commercial centre of the borough of Nefyn. This developed significantly from the latter part of the 18th century onwards with Moreia Street cut across the Maes by at least 1820 (GAS XD2A/1258).



Plate 13. *Y Groes with Palace St to the left and High Street continuing from Well St behind. Tower Hill is right.*

Current Urban Area Description

The motte is crowned by a watch tower (PRN 12718), probably of early 19th century date and connected to the herring fishing industry. A modern public convenience block has cut into it significantly on the western side, and it has been extensively disturbed by the houses and gardens to the south. The Cross (Y Groes) is the commercial centre of the town and contains mainly 19th century banks and other decorative shop buildings. Some earlier 19th century buildings survive at the top of Palace Street. Soar Chapel on Tower Hill was built in 1880 to the designs of O. Morris Roberts. A few cottages of 18th century date survive on Palace Street, although most of the buildings on the High Street appear to have been rebuilt in the 19th century. The Maes was cut by Moriea Street in the early 19th century, on which is the Moriah Chapel, built in 1881 also to the designs of O. Morris Roberts [show photo]. Beyond Moriah Chapel on the other side of the road is a small mid 19th century house, next door to a former public house, which remains unspoilt with rounded hood moulds, now run by the Nefyn town trust. Some of the properties are substantial three storey affairs and suggest that they were the dwelling houses of civic elite of Nefyn who could run houses of some pretension. On the Maes there is an early 19th century rubble built hall-like building with an empty roundel above the main doorway. To the south there is a development of mid to late 20th century housing.

However many of the buildings have unsightly PVC window replacements, and there are a number of inappropriate inserted dormer windows.



Plate 14. *Nefyn Town Trust building on Moriah Street retains decorative window labels*

Archaeological Resource

There are no known prehistoric or Roman sites in this area. The medieval motte, a scheduled ancient monument, is the primary archaeological resource. The site of the medieval llys may lie to the south west of the motte at Cae Gadlis. The medieval township of Botacho (PRN 6479) lies to the south of this area, now intriguingly divided into the farms of Botacho Ddu and Wyn (GAS XD/32/1172). The potential for medieval remains in this area is therefore high.

The watch tower that was constructed on the motte in the early 19th century is listed grade II as a rare example of a coastal watch tower. The High Street and Palace Street are important owing to their mix of late 18th and 19th century buildings and urban character, including some decorative public buildings, such as banks. The Maes provides a good example of 19th century infilling of urban space. Evidence from excavation in the Maes at Bodefi and Craigfryn has revealed evidence of a small terrace of early 19th century cottages (Laws and Brooks 2002, 4-5) although there is the possibility of medieval and later remains surviving in this area.

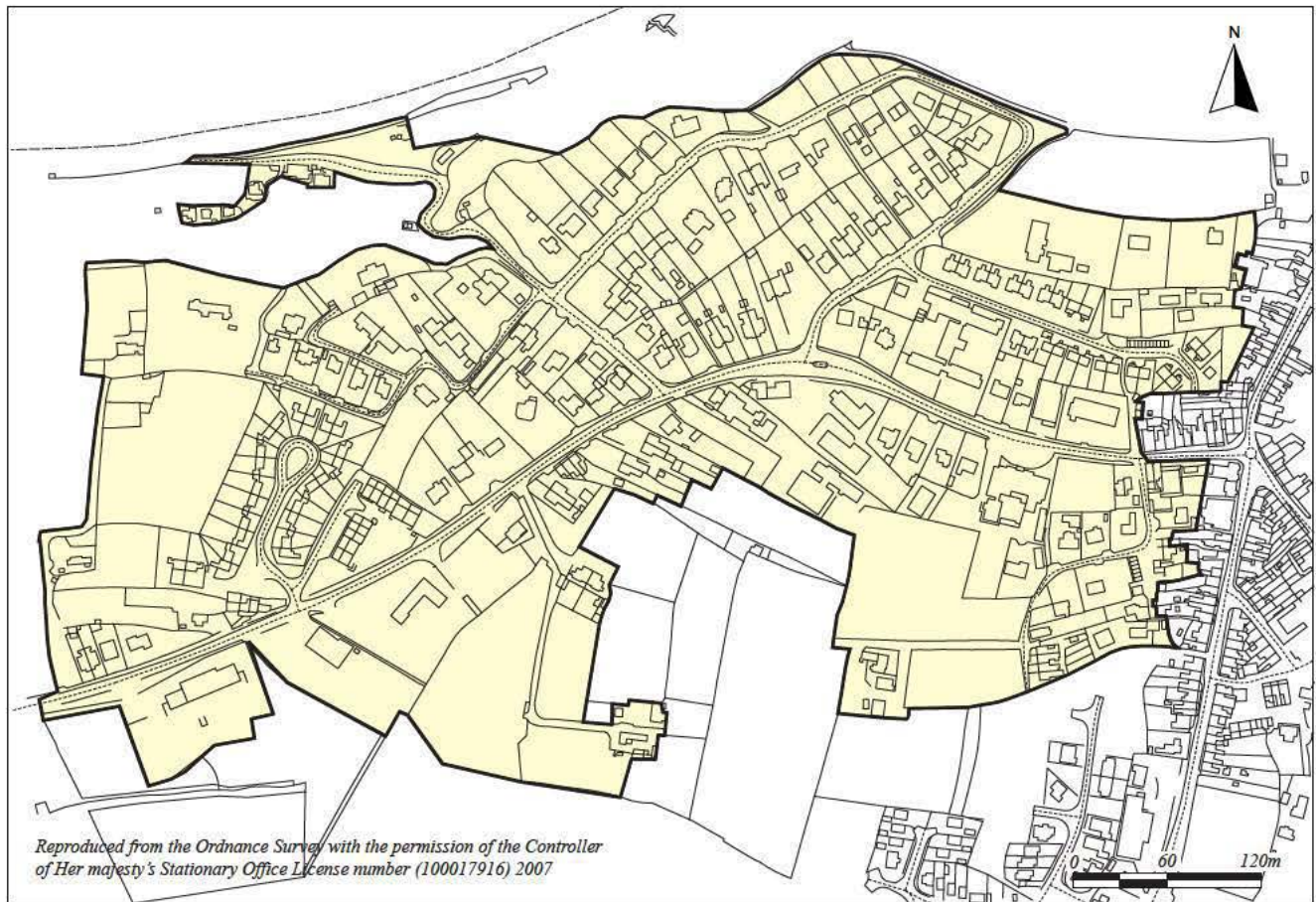


Figure 10. Area 3: St. David's Road

Area 3: St. David's Road

Historical Development

The area of St. David's Road, the old road leading west out of Nefyn towards Aberdaron west of the motte, until it reaches Beach Road, a road from the beach that probably dates from the time of the herring fishery, was relatively undeveloped before the beginning of the 20th century. The estate and title maps show residual remains of strip fields in this area. There is some late 19th century development including buildings such as Cliff House and Rose Hill off Beach Road, present in 1889 and the Caeau Capel Hotel built in about 1880 by the Miller family (who had connections with Clement Atlee), towards the town by the seashore. A new town cemetery was built off St. David's Road in Cae Rhug to the west in the 1870s. A new parish church, St. David's, was built in the late 19th century to the designs of P.S. Gregory and consecrated in 1903. This provides a focus for a new area of settlement on the western edge of Nefyn. The war memorial was placed on an island in St. David's, which provided a central focus for the public buildings in the area. A number of new public buildings were built in this area in the 20th century, such as the Nanhoron Arms Hotel, the primary school, and the Canolfan Nefyn. A mixture of detached

and semi-detached villa type housing, some of which is quite spacious, developed along the road. The area to the north of the town between St. David's Road, Beach Road and the town has been infilled and new streets such as Rhodfa'r Mor created.



Plate 15. Nanhoron Arms Hotel

Current Urban Area Description

The character of the area is largely defined by the late Victorian and early 20th century villas along St. David's Road and villas on Cefn y Twr. An urban focus is provided by some public buildings, such as St.

David's Church, only partially completed since the somewhat unsightly blocked arch was to have opened into a tower which remains unbuilt (Voelcker, forthcoming), the war memorial, Ysgol Nefyn, the main part being that of the former British School designed by G. Northcroft and the Art Deco style Nanhoron Arms Hotel, opened in 1914. Later infilling of houses of the mid to late 20th century remains generally in proportion and scale with the early 20th century development. On the western edge of the town there is a light industrial area.

Archaeological Resource

There are no known prehistoric or medieval sites here. Remnants of medieval field systems noted on the cartographic sources are unlikely to have survived here due to the significant amount of modern development that has taken place. The area is significant as an early 20th century urban development that somewhat shifts the focus of Nefyn westwards.

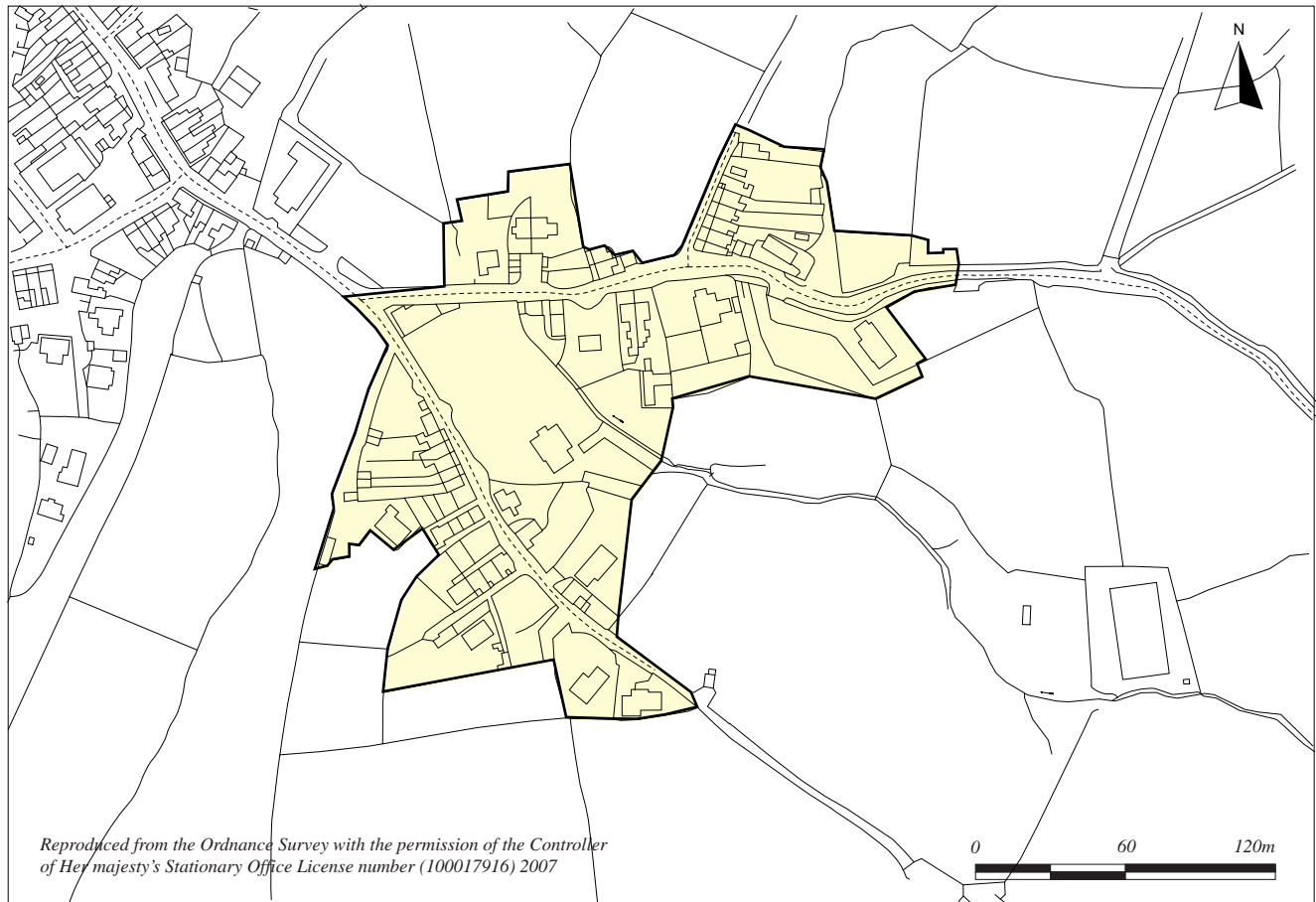


Figure 11. Area 4: Fron

Area 4: Fron

Historical Development

To the south east of the town a small nucleated settlement grew up beyond Palace Street on the road south east out of Nefyn heading towards Llannor. The main focus for the settlement was the late 18th century Baptist Chapel, demolished in 1926, and the junction of the Llannor road with Bryn Glas, which leads eastwards. A large mid 19th century villa, Tan y Dderwen in extensive grounds also provides a focus for the settlement.



Plate 15. Looking up the hill towards Y Fron, with the terrace of 1829 on the right

Current Urban Area Description

The area consists of a clustered settlement around a 'y' junction in the road between Y Fron and Bryn Glas. The late 18th century Baptist Chapel on Y Fron (now demolished, although the graveyard survives) provided



Plate 16. Terrace at Y Fron dated 1829.

the primary focus for settlement, and also the substantial Victorian villa of Tan y Dderwen in extensive grounds. A terrace of rubble built early 19th century houses, Tan y Fron, with a date stone of 1829 is located

ed at the lower end of Y Fron. Opposite these is Dderwen, a large detached house of probably similar date in a big garden. There are also two terraces of mid to late 19th century mainly pebbledashed houses on the higher ground to the south east on narrow side streets running south westwards off Y Fron, along with a few larger houses of similar date. There has been a small amount of mid to late 20th century development in the area.

Archaeological Resource

There are no known prehistoric or medieval sites within this area, although it is likely that early field systems survive in this area. Its main interest lies in the fact that it is a small nucleated settlement focused on a former 18th century nonconformist chapel. The dated 1829 terrace at the north western end of the settlement, Tan Dderwen villa and the terraces of 19th century cottages make this an attractive area.

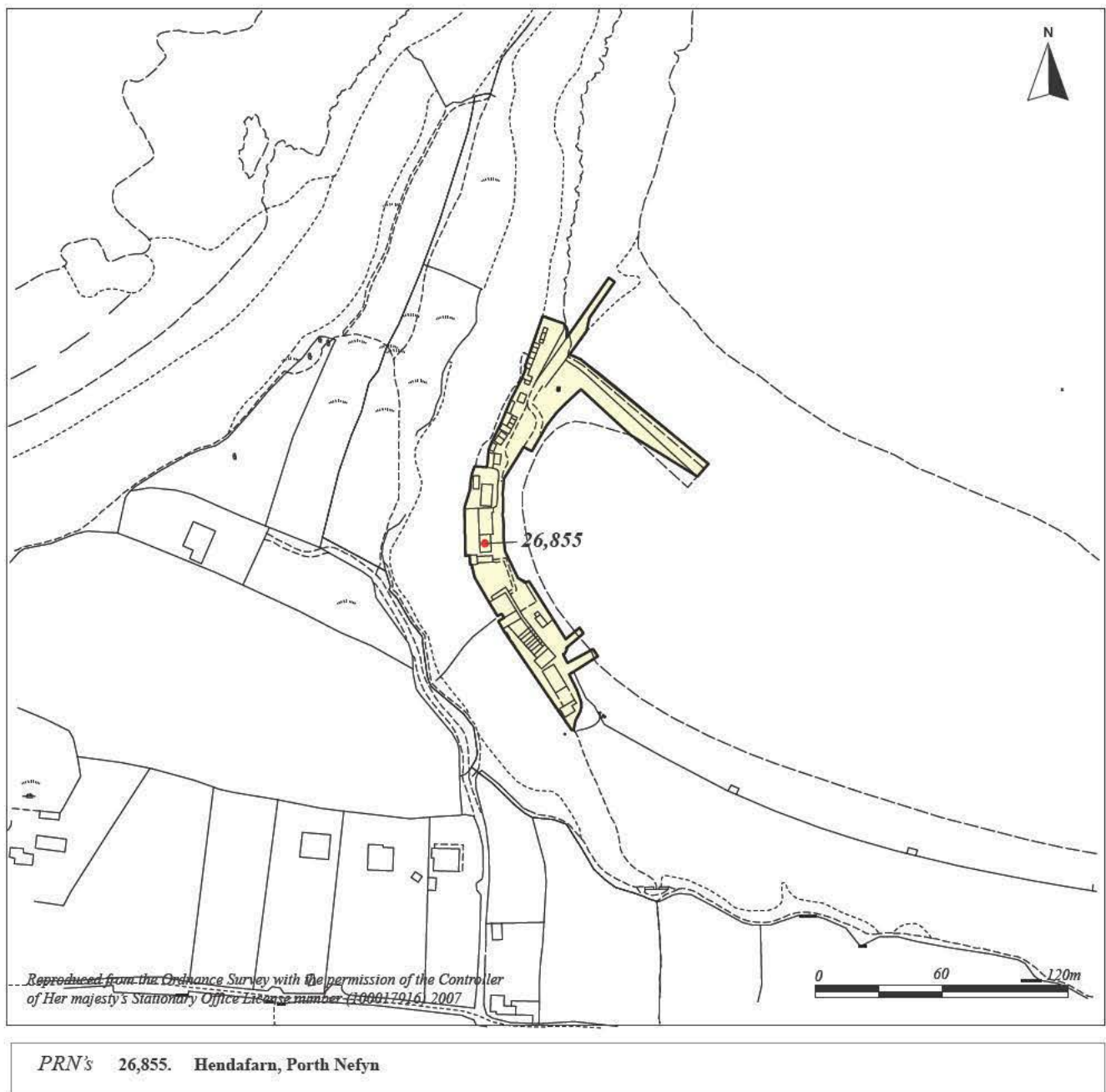


Figure 12. Area 5: Fron

Area 5: Porth Nefyn

Historical Development

Although there is evidence for the importance of herring fishing in Nefyn from the 16th century, it is during the 18th century that a fishing and boatbuilding community grew up on the sheltered cove 350m south of the point at Penrhyn Nefyn, connected by road to the old Nefyn-Aberdaron road west of the motte. The area is shown to be significantly built up by the time of the tithe map of 1839, with a pier, and the surviving buildings are of late 18th and 19th century date.



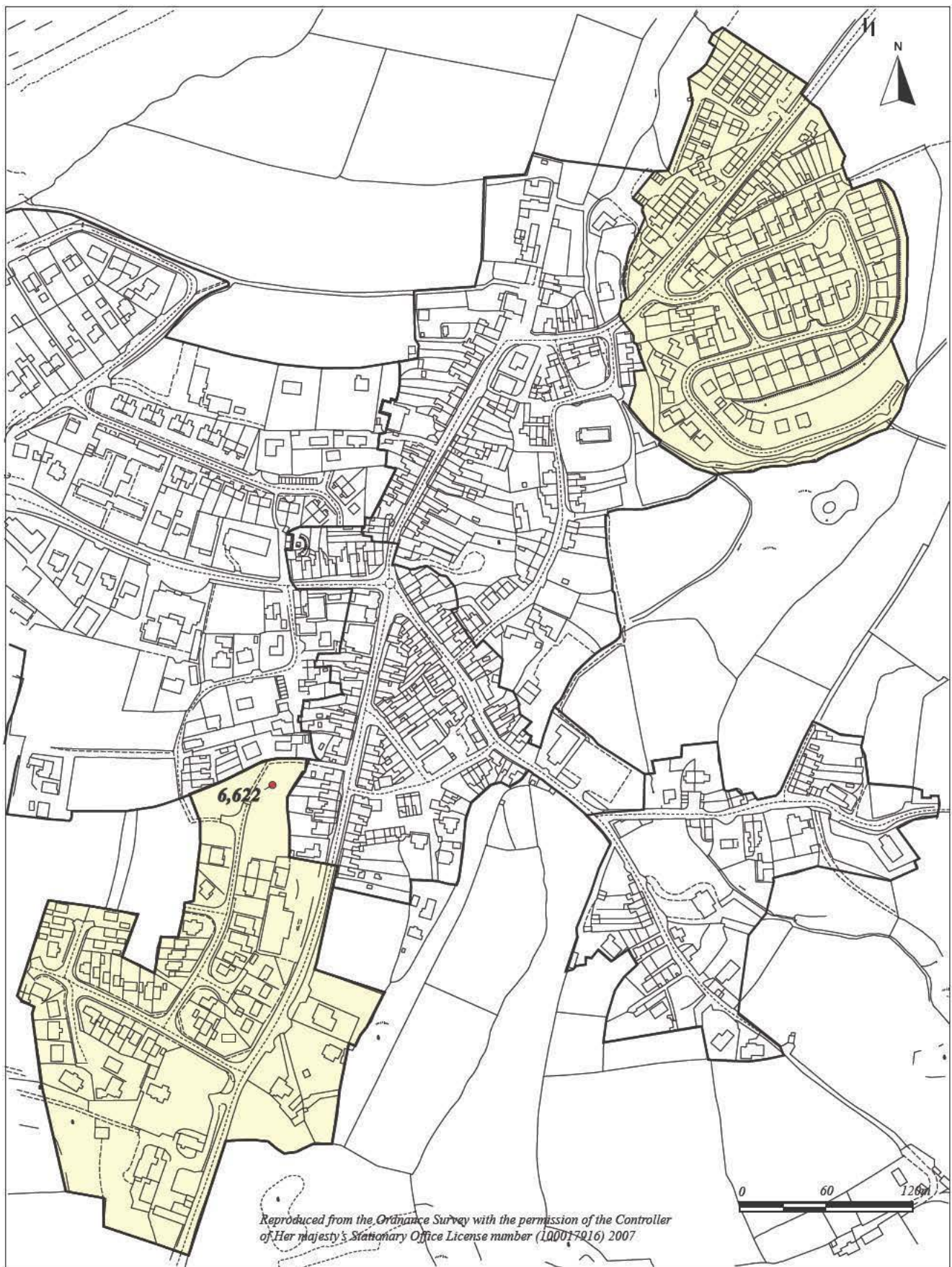
Plate 17. Porth Nefyn lies in the crook of the bay, in a location comparable to Porth Dinllaen just visible behind.

Current Urban Area Description

The beach settlement at Penrhyn Nefyn consists of a four main houses Penogfa, Glan y Mor, Hafor-y-mor, Hendafarn and associated fishing and boatbuilding sheds with a harbour and slipways. Hendafarn (PRN 19982) is a grade II listed building. It is a whitewashed, rubble built stone house with slate roof and stone end stacks. The massive right hand stack is shared with the adjoining cottage Glan-y-mor. It is probably of 17th century origin.

Archaeological Resource

There are no known prehistoric or Roman sites within this area. Relict field systems and field boundaries survive on Penrhyn Nefyn that may be medieval or post-medieval in date. The main resource is the late 18th or early 19th century fishing settlement of Porth Nefyn, which forms an attractive maritime grouping.



PRN's

6,662. Possible site of Llys

Figure 13. Area 6: Peripheral Areas

Area 6: Peripheral Areas

Historical Development

These consist of two areas of extensive areas of late 20th century development, one on the southern end of the town off the High Street beyond the 19th century terraces and the other of mid to late 20th century housing on the northern edge of the town.

The development off the southern end of the High Street is built upon the land and outbuilding yards of Holborn Manor, a large farm forming part of the Bodvean estate in the 18th and 19th centuries and much altered in the 20th century. The possibly 18th century boundary walls of Holborn survive. The large 19th century villa of Plas Iorwerth is located on the south eastern side of the road, one of the locations behind which the 1284 tournament is thought to have taken place.

The development to the north of the town was built on the medieval strip field system shown on the estate maps.

Current Urban Area Description

The Holborn Farm estate comprises detached properties set in fairly extensive grounds near the High Street, with an extensive area of allotment gardens to the east

of the road. To the west of the High Street the development consists of a late 20th century estate of bungalows, terraced and detached houses. This development is currently undergoing expansion.

To the north of Tai Lon is a small estate of mid 20th century local authority housing arranged in terraces and set well back from the road. To the south of Tai Lon is a recent development of detached, semi-detached houses and bungalows. These are arranged on a circular system on elevated ground and are highly visible from the south-east of the town. A row of 19th century cottages survives at the northern end of the town at Tai Lon, surrounded by the 20th century housing.

Archaeological Resource

There are no known prehistoric or medieval sites around Holborn farm, although the land behind Plas Iorwerth is thought to have been the location of the 1284 tournament.

There are no known prehistoric or medieval sites at Tai Lon, however a row of small cottages, probably of 19th century date and visible on the 1st edition OS map of 1889, exists at Tai Lon. These would have stood in open countryside by the road north east out of Nefyn until relatively recent times.

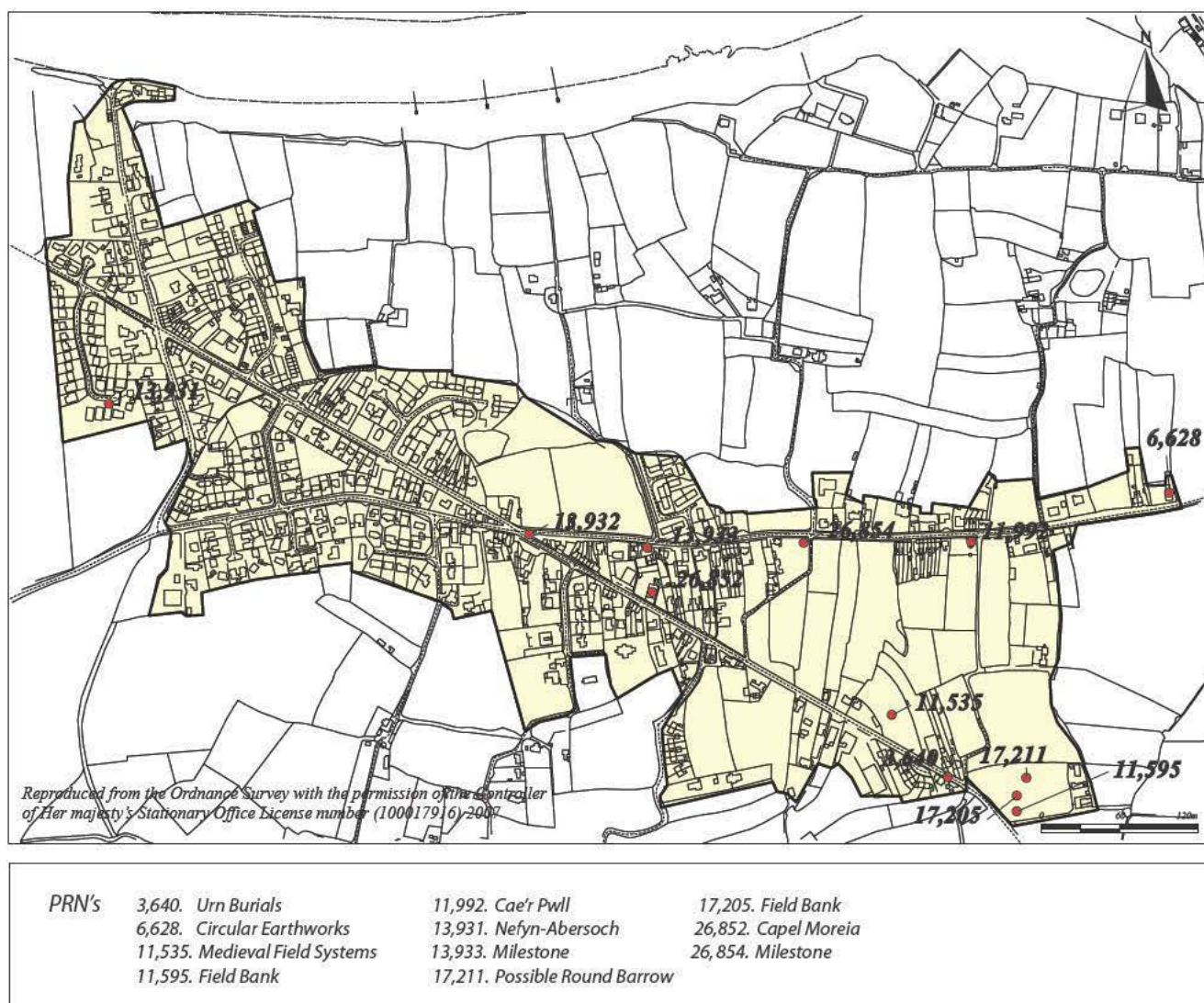


Figure 14. Area 7: Peripheral Areas

Area 7: Morfa Nefyn

Historical Development

In the area that is now Morfa Nefyn there are scattered 18th century cottages, for example Cae'r Pwll, a Grade II listed building that formed part of the rural dispersed settlement pattern. The settlement came into being after the old road from Nefyn to Aberdaron was crossed by the Porthmadog-Porthdinllaen turnpike (Lon Uchaf and Isaf) which was begun in 1803 (Pritchard 1959, 88). A small community developed focused on the Castle Inn (now the Spar shop and Post Office), and later a number of chapels and St. Mary's Mission Church were built. Ribbon development along both the Aberdaron and Porthdinllaen roads is mainly the product of the development of a seaside resort with villas built in the early years of the 20th century. However the Tabernacle Congregational Chapel is of late 19th century date and predated the rest of the development. This is followed by more recent coastal development to the north of the

Porthdinllaen road. This is particularly the case at the western end of the settlement, beyond which the road leads to the coastguard buildings at Porthdinllaen and Nefyn golf course at Porthdinllaen itself.

Current Urban Area Description

A number of 18th and early 19th century buildings survive within Morfa Nefyn pre-dating the development of the nucleated settlement. These include two buildings gable end on to the street, Cae'r Pwll, dated to 1789, and Ardd Wen, which is probably mid 19th century. Set back from Lon Isaf up a track, Glan Dwr is a mid 19th century stucco house of three bays, with a modern extension to the rear, beyond which is Bryn Bras, dated by a plaque to 1789, a rubble built two bay building with dormer windows. On the beach below Lon Las is a group of houses of probably late 18th or early 19th century date connected with the fishing industry.

The majority of buildings within Morfa Nefyn are late 19th and early 20th century in date. The mission church



Plate 18. *Cae'r Pwll, Morfa Nefyn*

of St. Mary, Lon Bach, designed by W. Pritchard of Nanhoron. The earliest chapel in the settlement is the Caer-salem Baptist Chapel, built in 1853, which is rendered with formed quoins, and squarish with two windows to each elevation except on the west where a chapel house has been added. The Tabernacle Congregational Chapel by Joseph Morris of Madryn, dated 1862, has a four centred window above the central door, with an oval slate plaque above. This building has now been converted into dwellings. Moriah Calvinist Methodist Chapel, listed Grade II, by O. Morris Roberts, dated 1882 is an attractive design with a central bay and an upper arcade of three narrow windows breaking the pediment (Voelcker, forthcoming).



Plate 19. *Church of St Mary, Morfa Nefyn*



Plate 20. *The turnpike road of 1803 passing through Morfa Nefyn to Porth Dinllaen*

The character of this area is largely defined by the late Victorian and early 20th century ribbon development of spacious villas along the Aberdaron and Porthdinllaen roads (Lon Pen Rhos). However a small compact settlement is evident to the south east, containing some smaller 19th century terraces. The chapel buildings are grand and imposing and provide monumentality to an area with a domestic character. The one building out of character and scale is a large block of apartments at the junction of Lon Pen Rhos with Lon Las.

Archaeological Resource

There are no known medieval or earlier archaeological remains within Morfa Nefyn itself, although the Iron Age promontory fort at Trwyn Porthdinllaen is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and the medieval township of Morfa is thought to lie south west of Tabernacle chapel (PRN 6522). The likelihood of surviving archaeological remains is moderate.

A late 18th century milestone, listed Grade II, is situated on the south side of the B4417 just E of its junction with Lon Bodlondeb [show photo]. It is significant as an early milestone on one of the old roads of Llyn. The 18th century cottages are significant survivals, and Cae'r Pwll is listed Grade II.

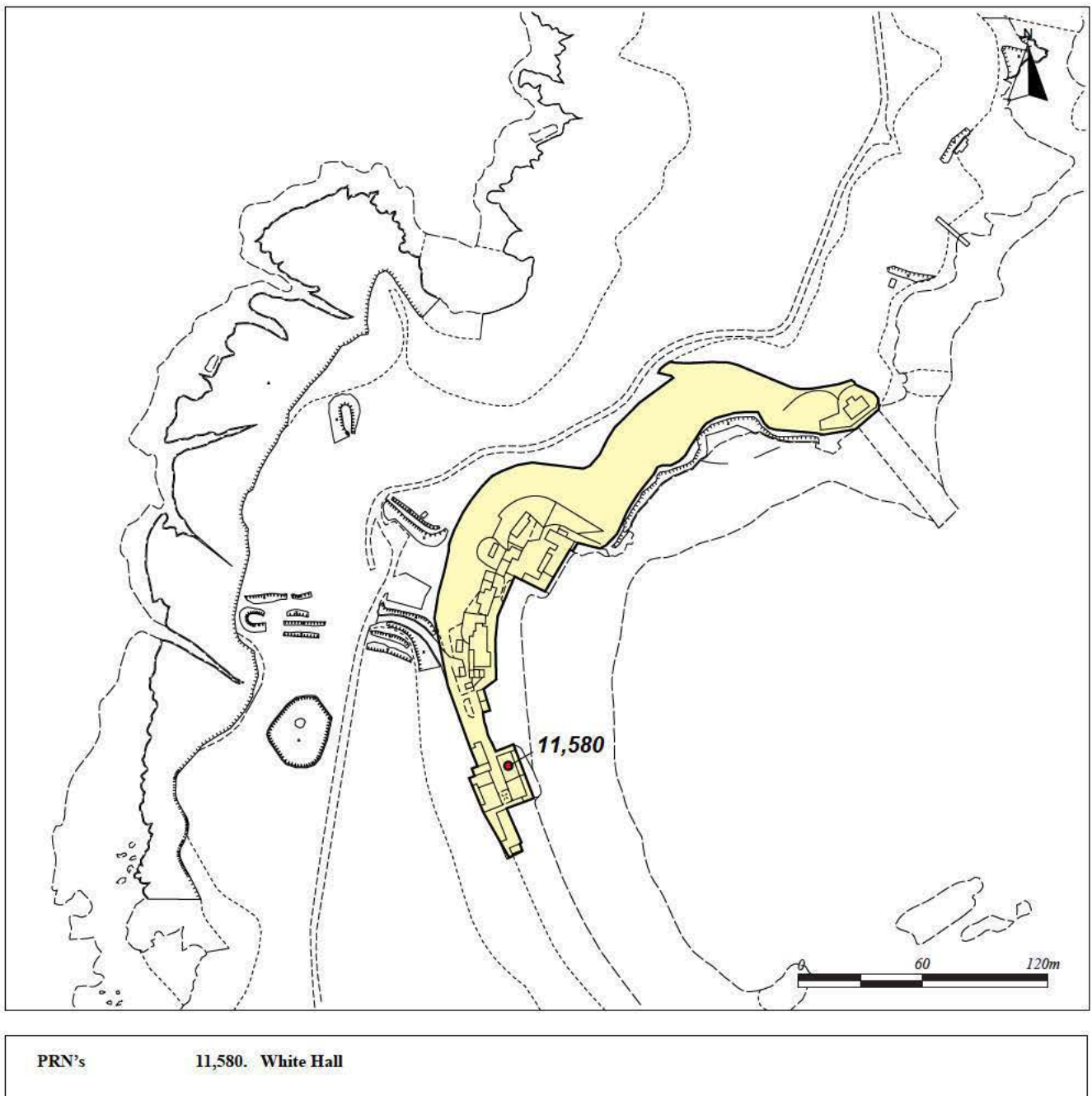


Figure 15. Area 8: Peripheral Areas

Area 8: Porthdinllaen

Historical Development

The earliest activity at Porthdinllaen is associated with a scatter of flints noted in 1923 as found both 'inside and outside the camp' (Hemp 1923, 148) that may be Neolithic in date. Porthdinllaen is the site of a major promontory fort of Iron Age date, which is a scheduled ancient monument.

The village at Porthdinllaen is known to be in existence by the 18th century, and developed along with Nefyn as a significant regional centre of fishing and shipbuilding. Between 1770 and 1890 58 vessels are recorded as

having been built at Porthdinllaen (Eames 1977, 169). It underwent a certain amount of development in the early years of the 19th century under the guidance of William Madocks in anticipation of it being chosen as the terminus for the Irish trade, and in 1807 a new pier and inn were built.

The Porthdinllaen Turnpike Trust was set up in May 1803 in order to try to improve the communications in Llyn and Eifonydd and to develop a line of road that would provide a more convenient route to the border counties of England than the long coastal road of the Caernarfon Turnpike Trust that ran from Pwllheli to Conwy (Pritchard 1959, 87). An important factor in

these calculations was the belief that Porthdinllaen could be made into a safe and convenient harbour, as a rival to Holyhead as the port carrying traffic to Ireland. The plan was enthusiastically supported by William Madocks, and it formed part of his grand scheme to improve trade and communications in the region that included the construction of the great embankment at Traeth Mawr, Porthmadog. The development of the harbour at Porthdinllaen did not materialise because the government did not consider that there would be a sufficient advantage created by moving the terminus for the Irish traffic from Holyhead, however the Turnpike road was commenced from the Porthdinllaen end, forking at Tan-Graig with one route leading to Cricieth via Llanystumdwy, and the other through Boduan to Pwllheli (Beasley 1967, 74). The settlement at Morfa Nefyn developed where this road crossed the old country road from Nefyn to Aberdaron. A number of ambitious schemes for railways to connect Porthdinllaen to the border areas of England failed, so the grand schemes for the development of this part of Llyn came to nothing (Dodd 1933, 118).

Current Urban Area Description

The settlement at Porthdinllaen consists of a small settlement within the natural harbour on the east side of the promontory. This settlement is associated with the large fishing and boat-building industry located here in the late 18th and 19th centuries. The former customs house and boat sheds help to give the area its maritime character. The two main buildings are the 19th century Ty Coch Inn, and 50m south of it the White Hall, a Grade II listed building (PRN 4221). The hall forms part of a 'U' shaped complex of buildings with slate close-eaved roofs and stone and rendered stacks. The White Hall was an inn in 1900 (OS 1:2500 2nd Ed.) [show photo]. The isolated coastal nature of this fishing community is



Plate 21. *Porth Dinllaen*

enhanced by the fact that it can only be accessed by a narrow trackway from the turnpike road across the golf course down onto the seashore.

Archaeological Resource

The headland of Porthdinllaen forms an Iron Age promontory fort (PRN 421), where banks and ditches protect an area of about 14 acres. The western half of the southern defences are well preserved for a length of 39.6m, consisting of a flat bottomed ditch 11m wide and survive to a height of 1.5m. The ramparts of the fort have been badly mutilated by the golf course that is now located upon it.

A possible feature associated with the large fishing and boatbuilding industry shipbuilding once located here consists of a straight, double linear feature over 100m long and lying parallel to the shore at around the low water mark in the bay (PRN 16610), and it may have been a slipway.

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

ADAS 1988 The Llyn Peninsula Environmentally Sensitive Area (HMSO)

Anon. 1868 National Gazetteer of Great Britain and Ireland

Bassett, T.M. and Davies, B.L. (eds.) 1977 Atlas of Caernarfonshire (Caernarfon)

Beasley, E. 1967 Madocks and the Wonder of Wales

Cadw, 1998 Register of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest for the Community of Nefyn (Cardiff)

Carr, A.D. 1972 'Medieval Administrative Divisions, in Bassett and Davies (eds.) 1977, 69-74.

Davies, B.L. 1977 'Communications: Railways' in Bassett and Davies (eds.) 1977, 173-176

Dodd, A.H. 1925 'The Roads of North Wales, 1750-1850', Arch. Camb. LXXX, Part 1, 121-148

Dodd, A.H. 1933 The Industrial Revolution in North Wales (Reprinted 1990)

Eames, A. 1977 'Ships and Harbours', in Bassett and Davies (eds.) 1977, 169-172

Elis-Williams, M., 1984 Packet to Ireland: Porthdinllaens challenge to Holyhead, Gwynedd Archives.

Evans, D.S. 1990 A Medieval Prince of Wales: The Life of Gruffudd ap Cynan

Fenton, R. 1917 Tours in Wales (1804- 1813) (Cambrian Archaeological Association).

Gaydon, A. T., & Pugh, R. B. (eds), 1973 A History of the County of Shropshire, Victoria County History Vol II.

Hemp, W.J. 1923 'Miscellanea', Arch. Camb. LXXVIII, Part I, 143-176

Hyde-Hall, E. 1952 A Description of Caernarvonshire, 1809-1811 (Caernarvonshire Historical Society Rec. Ser. 2 (Caernarfon)

Johnstone, N. 2000 'Llys and Maerdref: The Royal Courts of the Princes of Gwynedd', Studia Celtica XXX-IV, 167-210

Jones- Pierce, T. 1931 'Two Early Caernarvonshire Accounts', Bull. Board of Celtic Studies V, 142-155

Jones-Pierce, T. 1957 'The Old Borough of Nefyn, 1355-1882', Trans. Caernarvon Hist. Soc. Vol. 18, 36-53

Lewis, S. 1833 A Topographical Dictionary of Wales

Lewis, E.A. 1912 The Medieval Boroughs of Snowdonia

MAFF 1977 Agricultural Land Classification, Wales, MAFF (HMSO, London)

Morris, L. 1748 Plans in St. George's Channel (Reprinted 1987, Beaumaris)

Pennant, T. 1783 A Tour in Wales, 1770, Vol. II (Reprinted 1991, Wrexham)

Pritchard, R.T. 1959 'The Porthdinllaen Turnpike Trust', Trans. Caerns. Hist. Soc. 20, 87-98

RCAHMW, 1964 An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Caernarvonshire, Volume III (West) (HMSO, London)

Smith, B. and George, T.N. 1961 British Regional Geology, North Wales (HMSO, London)

Soulsby, I. 1983 The Towns of Medieval Wales. A Study of their History, Archaeology and Early Topography (Chichester)

Thorpe, L., 1978 Gerald of Wales: The Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales (Penguin Classics).

Voelcker, A. et. al. forthcoming. The Buildings of Wales, Gwynedd (Pevsner Architectural Series)

Unpublished Reports

BDP, 2003 Llyn AONB Settlement Character and Conservation Area Appraisal Studies.

GAT, 1993 Archaeological evaluation on Site for Erection of Four Dwellings at 1, Stryn y Llan, Nefyn (Unpublished GAT Report No. 72)

GAT, 1999 Towards a Framework for Archaeological Research in Gwynedd

Hopewell, D. 2003 Nefyn Waste Water Treatment Scheme (Revised Route). Archaeological Assessment: Trial Excavation Report (Unpublished GAT Report No. 509)

Laws, K. and Brooks, I. 2002 Plot Between Bodefi and Craigfryn, Y Maes, Nefyn. Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation (Unpublished EAS Report 2002/15)

Smith, G.H. and Hopewell, D. 2003 Nefyn Waste Water Treatment Scheme (Revised Route). Archaeological Assessment (Unpublished GAT Report No. 487)

Smith, G.H. 2004 Nefyn Waste Water Treatment Scheme. Archaeological Mitigation: Watching Brief Report (Unpublished GAT Report No. 556)

Thompson, D. 1997 Historic Landscape Characterization of Llyn Environmentally Sensitive Area (Unpublished GAT Report No. 261)

Cartographic Sources

GAS XM/7744/1/97 A Map of Houses, Lands in the Town and Parish of Nevin belonging to John Parry 1775

Nanhoron Private Collection Houses, Gardens and Lands situate in the town of Nevin 1778

NLW Ms. Maps Vol. 97 A Survey of the Bodvean Estate in the Counties of Carnarfon and Anglesey belonging to the Right Honourable Thos. Lord Newborough 1790

John Evans, Map of North Wales 1797

GAS XD/32/1172 Survey and Plans of Cefnamwlch Estate 1812

GAS XD2A/1258 Plan of Nevin Town and Liberties with the Mountain and Several Cottages and Inclosures Erected Thereon, by and with the Consents of the Mayor, Bailifs and Burgesses of Nevin

GAS XD2/8356-7 Plans and Schedule of Lord Newborough's Estates c.1815

National Archives LRRO 1/3297 Nevin Parish- Copy Enclosure Plan 1821

NLW Map 5745 Map of the Borough of Nevin (Based on OS 2 inch 1st Edition)

Ordnance Survey 1 inch 1st Series 1838

NLW Tithe Map and Apportionment of Nefyn Parish 1840

NLW Madryn Estate Map 14-16. Cidio and Nevin by R. Lloyd Ellis 1856

Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1st Edition 1889 Sheet XXX-II.9

Ordnance Survey 1:2500 2nd Edition 1900 Sheet XXX-II.9

GAS XD2A/1250 Plan of Church Street, Nevin 1909

GAS XD2A/1243 Elevation and Plans of Houses in Church Street, Nefyn 1913

Ordnance Survey 1:2500 3rd Edition 1918 Sheet XXX-II.9

UCNWB Sale Catalogues Plan of Valuable Freehold Properties in Nevin, Madryn Estate 1924

UCNWB Sale Catalogues Glynllifon and Bodvean Es-

tates. Plans of Properties at Nevin, Morfa Nevin and Edeyrn, to be Offered for Sale at Nevin 1939.

Manuscript Sources

Shrewsbury Public Library Ms., I, ff. 149-150 Cartulary of Haughmond Abbey c.1190

GAS XD2/6980-7053 Deeds and Leases Relating to the Bodvean Estate in Nefyn 1517-c.1900

GAS XD2/11287 Petition of the Bailiffs and Burgesses of Nefin for a Town Hall 1826

Photographs

All historic photographs examined are kept at Gwynedd Archives, Caernarfon

XS/700/1 Nefyn Bay

XS/892/13 The Two Bays, Nevin

XS/831/20 Cross Roads, Morfa Nevin

XS/3324/228 Y Groes, Nevin

XS/3324 Morfa Road, Nevin

XS/3324/220 Pen Bryn Glas

XS/3324/229 High Street, Nevin c. 1920

XS/3324/226 Well Street, Nevin c. 1900

XS/3324/231 Palace Street, Nevin

XS/3324/235 Church Choral Festival, Tower Hill, Nefyn 1912

XS/3324/183 Morfa Nevin, the Cross Roads c.1880

XS/831/20 Cross Roads, Morfa Nevin

APPENDIX 1

Sites Recorded on the Gwynedd Historic Environment Record

The numbers in bold refer to the Project Record Number (PRN) for each site on the Gwynedd Historic Environment Record.

1535 MOTTE, NEFYN

Mutilated remains of circular mound, originally perhaps 3.1 high and 13.1 diameter. A watch tower now crowns the summit. Block of toilets being built cut significantly into the west side of the mound. Extensive disturbance has taken place, not only by building work but also by the houses and gardens to the south and the lookout tower on the summit.

Easting: 230660 *Northing:* 340570

3640 URN BURIALS - SITE OF, PEN YR ORSEDD, NEFYN

A National Library of Wales manuscript possibly written by the Rev John Lloyd headmaster of Ruthin school records that a cist containing three or four large inverted cremation urns was found at Pen yr Orsedd in 1691. Pen yr Orsedd was recorded as being close to Plas yng Nghaidio. The name Pen yr Orsedd is preserved by a house on the road to Morfa Nefyn and a former owner recorded that local tradition maintains that it was the site of an old cemetery. The house stands about 40m to the north of the pipeline. Bronze Age burials are frequently found in groups forming small cemeteries and often have associated barrows. Several urns found in a stone cist in the 17th century.

Easting: 229270 *Northing:* 339920

4316 ST. MARY'S CHURCH, NEFYN

The former parish church, now a maritime museum. It was built in c.1825-7 on a much earlier site, although the tower looks earlier, possibly late 18th century. It is believed to have been established in the fifth century.

Easting: 230860 *Northing:* 340650

5137 CIRCULAR FEATURE, WINTONIA, NEFYN

Easting: 230820 *Northing:* 340660

5554 MEDIAEVAL JETTON (METAL TOKEN) - FINDSPOT,

Easting: 230850 *Northing:* 340750

6529 NEFYN MEDIEVAL TOWNSHIP

Easting: 230700 *Northing:* 340500

6622 POSS. SITE OF LLYS, NEFYN

Easting: 230650 *Northing:* 340410

6628 CIRCULAR EARTHWORK, NEFYN

This is the suggested location of a circular earthwork identified as the possible site of the royal tournament arranged by Edward I in 1284 to celebrate his victory in 1282. This was said to be a 'round table' in the Arthurian tradition and pennant suggested that it would have been held in a circular earthwork. In 1833 Lewis observed '... traces of the circular earthwork within which the military feats took place may still be seen on the road to Edern'. The location of this feature was recorded because of a suggestion that a house on the north side of the road here, named Ty'n Llys, might indicate the site of the royal court or llys of Nefyn. Recent study has suggested that a more likely location was within Nefyn town itself. However, the ground just to the south of Ty'n Llys is distinctively level, compared to nearly all the gently sloping land around and is on the brow of a hill with good prospects to the east, over Nefyn. This would have made it a good location for a tournament. The tithe map of 1839 does show a circular feature of about 50m diameter overall as an area of rough land a little further to the south-west at Cae'r Pwll. However, the name Cae'r Pwll ('pool field') in the tithe apportionment (fields 282 and 292), shows that the feature (which survives as a reed-filled depression) was just a pond.

Another feature nearby (SH 28624025) has also been suggested to be the earthwork described by Lewis. This is a very large curvilinear feature, recognizable in the field pattern. It is an oval feature of c. 750m east to west and 450m north to south. This area was apparently respected by early fields, probably from medieval times. The feature has not yet been fully studied, and there are no previous finds from Morfa Nefyn that hint at any early activity here. It seems to have been an enclosure of some kind, not simply a boundary, because part of its perimeter on the north side exists as an earthwork. It seems rather large to have been the site of Edward I's tournament but a medieval date seems likely because of the pattern of fields. However, it could have been a pre-historic settlement enclosure with substantial banks that were simply utilised as part of later field boundaries. An early Christian monastic enclosure would be another possible interpretation.

Easting: 229570 *Northing:* 340280

11535 MEDIEVAL FIELD SYSTEM, MORFA NEFYN

The fields are characteristically long and curving because they were originally divided into long narrow strips in the medieval open field system. In most places in Britain, these strips were gradually amalgamated into larger, more efficient holdings, and the field patterns eventually changed dramatically. Here, however,

the ownership of many of these strips continued up to the 1839 century when the Parish Tithe map was drawn up. The tithe schedule still used the terms quillet and the Welsh equivalent llain. Both terms refer to medieval style strip holdings. The quilllets have mostly been amalgamated into somewhat larger fields but enough of the boundaries remain to allow the original layout to be traced. The survival of elements of this type of field system is very rare.

Easting: 229200 *Northing:* 340000

11580 WHITE HALL, PORTHDINLLAEN

Site Status: Grade II listed

An altered mid 19th Century two storey rubble built house with slated roof. An extensive 'U' plan complex mainly built in rubble. It was an inn in 1901 (O.S. 25 inch 2nd edition).

Easting: 227400 *Northing:* 340300

11595 FIELD BANK, MORFA NEFYN

Earth field bank standing to a height of 1.3m alongside the B4412 road. This feature forms part of field system 11535 and may include medieval elements. Buried soils could also be preserved beneath the bank which could provide environmental evidence relating to the medieval period.

Easting: 229350 *Northing:* 339880

11992 CAE'R PWLL

Site Status: Grade II listed

A distinctive vernacular 18th century cottage, with an ornamental plaque above the entrance dated 1789. A one and a half storey rubble stone double-fronted cottage. The horned four pane sashes were probably added during the 19th century.

Easting: 229310 *Northing:* 340210

12718 WATCH TOWER

Site Status: Grade II listed

Early 19th century, small, square, once connected with fishing industry, it has external steps to platform with parapet.

Easting: 230660 *Northing:* 340570

13931 NEFYN - ABERSOCH ROAD

The Nefyn to Abersoch road is known as Lon Goch in Eder, possibly because it cut through red or brown soils there.

Easting: 228200 *Northing:* 340440

13932 TURNPIKE ROAD, MORFA NEFYN

Easting: 228750 *Northing:* 340240

13933 MILESTONE, MORFA NEFYN

Site Status: Grade II listed

Set into the dry stone wall at the south side of the road. One of a series of milestones along this road with crudely carved lettering indicating miles to Caernarfon, Nefyn and Aberdaron:
C21 N1 A12

Easting: 228900 *Northing:* 340230

13934 STRIP FIELD, NEFYN

One of several long, curving fields in the area around Nefyn, which still retained partial ownership as remnants of medieval strip fields into the early 19th century. Now amalgamated as one field, part of Penisardre farm.

Easting: 230650 *Northing:* 340710

17195 FARMYARD WALL, PENISADRE FARM, NEFYN

A stone-faced bank topped by a hedge, enclosing a yard (PRN 11744).

Easting: 230840 *Northing:* 340820

17200 FARM YARD, PENISARDRE FARM, NEFYN

A small extension to the main farmyard of Penisardre Farm, enclosed by a wall (PRN 17195). Now disused and overgrown.

Easting: 230830 *Northing:* 340820

17201 FIELD BANK, NEFYN

Overgrown earth field bank topped by fence. Probably dates from post-medieval enclosure.

Easting: 228200 *Northing:* 339770

17205 FIELD BANK, NEFYN

Earth field bank standing to a height of 2.0m, faced with rounded stones in places. This feature forms part of field system PRN 11535 and may include medieval elements.

Easting: 229360 *Northing:* 339890

17211 POSSIBLE ROUND BARROW, NEFYN

This sits on the top of a break of slope in the field and could be a Bronze Age round barrow. This part of the

field also contains another short linear feature suggesting further subsurface remains. Interpretation is however difficult because of masking by the strong readings from the pipe. A further linear anomaly at the north of the area could be a field boundary. Plough scarring is quite prominent in this field running in an east-west direction and curving towards the western boundary. The possible barrow could reflect further Bronze Age funerary and ritual activity in the area around the previous discovery of a cist at Pen yr Orsedd.

Easting: 229380 *Northing:* 339910

26852 CAPEL MOREIA, MORFA NEFYN

Site Status: Grade II listed

Later 19th century Calvinistic Methodist chapel. It has high quality detail to its woodwork, ironwork and plasterwork.

Easting: 228903 *Northing:* 340174

26854 MILESTONE

Site Status: Grade II listed

Probably early 19th century milestone, one of a series of primitive stones inscribed with initial letters on the Caernarfon to Aberdaron road.

Easting: 229090 *Northing:* 340230

26855 HENDAFARN, PORTH NEFYN

Site Status: Grade II listed

A well preserved late 18th or early 19th century house in a beach setting. Possibly connected with the fishing and boatbuilding industries of Porth Nefyn. Of whitewashed rubble with slate roof and stone stacks.

Easting: 229580 *Northing:* 340910

APPENDIX 2

Extracts from Welsh Office Circular 60/96

Archaeological remains are a finite, and non-renewable resource, in many cases highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction. [Paragraph 3]

Archaeological remains are part of our cultural heritage, not least in terms of the information they provide about the past, valuable both for their own sake, and for their role in education leisure and tourism. [Paragraph 3]

The key to the future of the great majority of archaeological sites and historic landscapes lies with local authorities, acting within the framework set by central government, in their various capacities as planning, highways, education and recreational authorities. [Paragraph 7]

Local planning authorities should expect developers to provide the results of such appraisals, assessments and/or evaluations as part of their applications for sites where there is good reason to believe there are remains of archaeological importance. [Paragraph 14]

Authorities will need to consider refusing permission for proposals which are inadequately documented. [Paragraph 14]

When planning applications are made without prior discussion with the local planning authorities, the authorities should seek to identify those applications which have archaeological implications, and to assess their likely impact by consulting the local authority Archaeological Officer, National Park Archaeologist or regional Welsh Archaeological Trust. [Paragraph 15]

In the case of a development proposal that is likely to affect the site of a scheduled ancient monument, planning authorities are required to consult the Secretary of State (Cadw). [Paragraph 15]

Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ i.e. a presumption against proposals which would involve significant alteration or cause damage, or which would have a significant impact on the setting of visible remains. [Paragraph 17]

It may be possible to preserve important archaeological remains where developers prepare sympathetic designs using, for example, foundations which avoid disturbing the remains altogether or minimise damage by raising ground levels under a proposed new structure or by careful siting of landscaped or open areas. [Paragraph 17]

Archaeological investigations such as excavation and recording should be carried out before development commences, working to a project brief prepared by the planning authority (with reference to their archaeologi-

cal advisers). [Paragraph 20]

It is open to the local planning authority to impose conditions designed to protect a monument. [Paragraph 22]

APPENDIX 3

Extracts from Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan (2004)

Policies B1 to B3 concern Listed Buildings.

Policy B1 - Demolition Of Listed Buildings

Proposals for the total or substantial demolition of Listed Buildings¹ will be refused unless there are exceptional circumstances. Such proposals will need to provide clear evidence of all the following:

1. the condition of the building, repair and maintenance costs;
2. that every effort has been made to retain the current use or seek a new viable use and that these efforts have failed;
3. that the property has been on the market for at least two years at a fair price that reflects the true condition of the building and that no reasonable offer has been rejected;
4. that it is not possible or appropriate to retain the building under charitable or community ownership;
5. that there is a detailed plan for redevelopment of the site and that redeveloping the site would offer significant benefits to the local community and override the need to retain the building.

If permission is very occasionally granted to demolish the building or structure, conditions will be attached to the permission prohibiting demolition work until the contract to redevelop the site has been let and to ensure that building materials from the original building are used in the plan to redevelop the site or are available to reuse in another development scheme.

Policy B2 - Alterations to Listed Buildings or Buildings in their Curtilage

Proposals for external or internal alterations, additions, or change of use of Listed Buildings or curtilage buildings (which form part of the land since before 1 July 1948) will only be approved provided that the proposal will not have an unacceptable impact on the special architectural or historical character of the Listed Building.

Policy B3 - Development affecting the setting of Listed Buildings

Proposals on sites affecting the setting of Listed Buildings will only be approved provided that all the following criteria can be met:

1. that the design of the development enhances the special quality of the main building as well as the positive qualities of the local environment;
2. that it does not lead to the loss of features such as walls, railings, ancillary buildings, landscaping, hedges, trees, associated objects, surfaces or archaeological remains that contribute to the special character of the Listed Building;
3. that it does not have an unacceptable impact on important views of and from the building.

Conservation Areas

Policies B4 to B6 concern Conservation Areas. The plan states

Section 72 of the 1990 Planning Act (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) places a duty on local authorities to note in particular the desirability of preserving or improving the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. Existing Conservation Areas are shown on the relevant Proposals Maps and Inset Maps. This Policy will also apply to Conservation Areas designated after the Plan's publication. The relationship between buildings and open spaces and the quality of those open spaces is equally important to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area as the buildings and structures within the Area. This is not limited to an area within the Conservation Area. In determining an application for a development, which would affect a Conservation Area, the Local Planning Authority will consider the development's impact on views across, within and outside the Conservation Area as well as the effect that the development would have on natural features that play an important role in the setting of a Conservation Area.

In assessing applications thorough consideration will be given to Gwynedd Design Guide 2002, any published Conservation Area Appraisals, any published Conservation Area Plans and Delivery Strategies, and (in the case of the Caernarfon Conservation Area) to the Caernarfon Castle and Town Walls World Heritage Site Management Plan.

Policy B4 - Developments in or affecting the setting of Conservation Areas

Proposals in or near conservation areas will be refused unless they preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and its setting. All proposals should:

1. retain the historic street pattern and the character of individual streets or public spaces;
2. ensure that the scale, mass, form, use of materials and building techniques harmonise with the buildings and features that contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area;
3. ensure that important views across, into or out of the Conservation Area are retained.

Thorough consideration will be given to the information provided by any published Conservation Area Appraisals or Conservation Area Plans and Delivery Strategies.

Policy B5 - Demolition of Buildings in Conservation Areas

Proposals to demolish buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be refused unless there are exceptional reasons for granting permission. In such cases the following matters will be considered:

1. the condition of the building and the possibility of renovation or alternative use;
2. the contribution the building makes to the special architectural and historical quality of the conservation area;
3. the effect of demolition on the surrounding area and

on the character or appearance of the whole conservation area;

4. the reasons for the demolition and whether those reasons are more important than the importance of the building to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5. the existence of a detailed plan for redevelopment of the site, and that redevelopment of the site would offer significant benefits to the local community and override the need to retain the building.

When conservation area consent for demolition is granted, conditions will be attached prohibiting demolition work until the contract to redevelop the site has been let, and that either building materials from the original building are used in the scheme to redevelop the site or they would be available for reuse in another development scheme.

Sites of Archaeological Importance

Policy B7 refers to archaeological sites which are identifiable as being of national importance and sites which do not meet the criteria for national importance.

Policy B7 - Sites of Archaeological Importance

Proposals that will damage or destroy archaeological remains of national importance (whether scheduled or not) or their setting will be refused.

A development which affects other archaeological remains will be permitted only if the need for the development overrides the significance of the archaeological remains.

In areas where there are likely to be archaeological remains, the developer will be required to commission either an archaeological assessment and/or field evaluation in order to determine the archaeological impact of the proposed development before the planning authority determines the application. The assessment/evaluation results must be submitted with the planning application, in addition to a plan showing how the impact of the proposal on the archaeological remains will be mitigated.

If a proposed development will have an adverse impact on archaeological remains, then the developer should prepare sympathetic plans, which retain the remains in situ. Planning conditions or agreements will be used in appropriate cases to ensure that the work of excavating and recording the remains takes place prior to commencement of the development.

Schemes that will facilitate the management and interpretation of archaeological sites for educational or tourism purposes will be supported.



YMDDIRIEDOLAETH
ARCHAEOLEGOL
GWYNEDD



GWYNEDD
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
TRUST

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