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# Degannwy Castle, Degannwy, Conwy

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## Report on an archaeological assessment

GAT Project No.2068

Report No. 781

March 2009



**DEGANNWY CASTLE, DEGANNWY**  
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

**GAT Project no. G2068**

**GAT Report No. 781**

**Prepared for Cadw**

**By J Kenney**

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Cover: The two hills on which Degannwy Castle stood, seen from the north

**Gwynedd Archaeological Trust**  
**Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd**



# G2068 DEGANNWY CASTLE, DEGANNWY

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

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# DEGANNWY CASTLE, DEGANNWY (G2068)

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

### SUMMARY

*An archaeological assessment of Degannwy Castle and immediate environs has been undertaken for Cadw as part of a wider programme to improve interpretation of the castle. Despite a long history of antiquarian and archaeological interest in Degannwy Castle the assessment has revealed that there is still much that can be learnt about the site and its immediate landscape. All the known features have been described and re-assessed, and several new features have been located. These include a field system to the south of the castle, thought to be contemporary with the medieval occupation of the site, and a hollow-way leading through to the castle. The platforms north of the castle are interpreted as the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century borough established by Henry III. New house platforms around the foot of the hills have been identified, as well as a possible large building within the bailey and a quarry below the south side of the donjon. Possible construction inclines for the construction of the donjon have been identified. Recommendations for future work include topographical survey and archive search, and the need to understand more clearly not only the development of the castle but also the wider environs.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (GAT) was asked by Cadw to carry out an archaeological assessment of Degannwy Castle and its immediate environs. The castle, which has few upstanding walls surviving, is located at SH 7822 7945 and occupies two low hills overlooking the eastern bank of the River Conwy close to the river's mouth (Figure 1). The hills on which the castle stood may have been occupied in the Roman period and there was probably a defended site in the early medieval period. Castles were repeatedly built and demolished from the late 11<sup>th</sup> century to the late 13<sup>th</sup> century. The main phase of building in stone was in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and the castle was finally demolished in 1263. Much of the stone may have been removed to build Conwy Castle, but the remaining fragments have been left largely undisturbed for centuries. The site is a scheduled ancient monument, and is surrounded by an area of parkland, called the Vardre, that is also rich in archaeology, including an extensive field system of possible 13<sup>th</sup> century origin. This assessment concentrates on a study area that includes the fields around the castle, as well as the scheduled area.

### 2. DESIGN BRIEF AND SPECIFICATION

A brief was written by Cadw, and from this a project design was produced. The design reflects the requirements of the brief and confirms to the guidelines specified in *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessment* (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994, rev. 2001). This desk-based assessment has been carried out according to the project design.

A desk-based assessment is defined as 'a programme of assessment of the known or potential archaeological resource within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. It consists of a collation of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic information in order to identify the likely character, extent, quality and worth of the known or potential archaeological resource in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate' (*Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessment*, IFA 2008, 2).

The aims of the assessment are:

- to identify and record the cultural heritage within the defined study area;
- to evaluate the importance of what has been identified;
- to recommend further investigations that might answer some of the questions raised in the assessment and would contribute to the understanding and presentation of the site.



### **3. METHODS AND TECHNIQUES**

#### **3.1 Desk top study**

The desktop study comprised the consultation of maps, documents, computer records, written records and reference works that form part of the Historic Environment Record (HER), located at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (GAT), Bangor. The HER includes Cadw's information on listed buildings, the 1:2500 County Series Ordnance Survey maps, and the National Archaeological Record index cards. The archives held by the Conwy Record Office, Llandudno were consulted, particularly for information from the relevant tithe map. Aerial photographs from the collection in the National Monuments Record (NMR), Aberystwyth were examined, and photographic copies of 11 aerial photographs held by the Air Photographs Unit, Cardiff were obtained for study.

Relevant unpublished papers and reports held in both the HER and NMR were consulted. Secondary sources were examined, including the Inventories of the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments for Wales, and works held within the regional libraries. Indices to relevant journals, including county history and archaeology society journals and national society journals such as *Archaeologia Cambrensis* were checked for relevant papers.

Relevant archive maps were inspected. A search was made for useful material in the Mostyn Papers held at the archives of the University of Wales, Bangor. This holds almost all the documents relating to parts of the Mostyn Estate in Caernarfonshire. A small amount of relevant material is held by Flintshire Record Office, but this is mostly deeds and rentals and has not been inspected at this stage of the project. No early estate maps were discovered but some of the rentals may have information. One rental dating to 1763-4 provided evidence of an 18<sup>th</sup> century date for the farmsteads in the area, and others might hold similar information. Further work on rentals and estate surveys would help our understanding of the development of the Vardre, but has not been carried out at this stage.

The report concentrates on the study area and does not discuss the wider history of Creuddyn. Appendix I contains a list of sites, buildings and find spots listed in the vicinity of the castle, and also contains a broader list of HER sites lying within a 1.5km radius of the castle to give a general context of the castles historical environment. These sites are located on figures 1 and 2. Site numbers are either Primary Record Numbers (PRNs) allocated by Gwynedd HER, National Primary Record Numbers (NPRNs) allocated by the NMR or listed building numbers allocated by Cadw.

#### **3.2 Field Search**

The field search was undertaken on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2009. The area inspected included all the land on and around the castle open to public access (as indicated on figure 2). Most of this area is under short grass providing excellent conditions for identifying even very slight earthworks. The two hills occupied by the castle are more overgrown. Bracken covers much of the flanks of the hills but at this time of year has died back and features can be seen within it. The western slope of the western hill has extensive scrub, mostly of blackthorn as well as bracken making some areas largely inaccessible. Much of the southern slope of this hill is overgrown by gorse, entirely obscuring this area. The tops of both hills are covered in short grass, although they will be partly obscured by nettles in summer these did not cause a problem at the time of the field search. Much of the bailey between the two hills is also covered by short grass and slight earthworks can be clearly seen. The weather at the time of the field search was conducive to identifying earthworks. In the morning there was good light casting shadows and enabling clear photographs of the field system to the south of the castle to be taken. The weather clouded over during the day but never deteriorated to a level to pose a problem in the field search.

The field search concentrated on investigating earthworks rather than recording the upstanding masonry, as a masonry record is to form a separate part of the project.

#### **3.3 Report**

The available information was synthesised to give a summary of the archaeological and historic background and of the assessment and recommendations, as set out below. The separate features, their importance, condition and recommendations are listed separately, and a summary of the overall assessment of the area is given at the end.



The criteria used for assessing the value of features was based upon those used by the Secretary of State for Wales when considering sites for protection as scheduled ancient monuments, as set out in the Welsh Office circular 60/96. The condition of features was rated as *very good*, *good*, *poor*, *very poor* or *no visible remains*. The definitions of categories of importance and condition are set out in appendix II.

The archive consists of copies of historic maps, plans with annotations made in the field and transcribed from aerial photographs, along with notes and 139 digital images taken on the field visit. New sites have been allocated Primary Record Numbers (PRNs) and are recorded in a database to aid their input to the HER.

The paper record will be held by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, Bangor, and the digital archive will be curated by the National Monument Record, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales, Aberystwyth.

## **4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

### **4.1 Topographic description**

Degannwy Castle is situated on two hills overlooking the mouth of the river Conwy (figure 1). The two hills are igneous intrusions through the surrounding Ordovician rocks (British Geological Survey, 1930), and appear as rocky outcrops. The western hill has impressive crags whilst the eastern hill is smoother and more conical. The hills are separated by a saddle about 60m wide. The hills rise from a raised plateau lying at 70m OD, and rise to a maximum height of about 100m OD. The southern edge of the plateau is bounded by rocky outcrops reaching 90m OD and to the north is the rocky hill of Bryn Gosol, which reaches 80m OD. To the east the land is mainly covered by pasture fields and slopes gradually down towards the east. To the north, west and south the open land around the castle is hemmed in by housing estates. The ground falls quite steeply away to the west and south, descending to sea level less than 0.5km west of the castle on the shore of the Conwy estuary. The river Conwy opens out into a broad estuary with extensive sand banks and mussel beds. The castle is positioned on the southern edge of the Creuddyn Peninsula, which projects into the Irish Sea. The peninsula is formed from the massive limestone outcrop of the Great Orme linked to the mainland by a sand spit now occupied by the town of Llandudno. To the south of Degannwy Castle and across the river Conwy is the castle and town of Conwy on an important river crossing. To the west and south-west of the town rise the eastern hills of Snowdonia. The vale of Conwy separates these rugged mountains from the more rolling hills to the east.

### **4.2 Archaeological and historical background**

(See figures 2 and 3)

Degannwy Castle was known in the 13<sup>th</sup> century as Gannock or Gannoc Castle and at other periods various spellings have been used such as 'Diganwy', 'Dyganwy' and 'Tiganwy'. It lies within the parish of Llanrhos (also known as Eglwysrhos), in the medieval commote of Creuddyn and cantref of Rhos. Although the cantref is on the east side of the Conwy it was included in Caernarfonshire when that county was formed in 1284 (Carr 1977, 69). Edward I's castle and walled town of Conwy lie across the Conwy River and the area is rich in medieval and later history. Earlier history is represented by the earliest known copper mine in the country, the Bronze Age mine on the Great Orme, as well as many other prehistoric sites throughout the Creuddyn Peninsula.

#### **4.2.1. Prehistoric**

Prehistoric activity is represented in the study area solely by chance finds of artefacts. Two polished stone axes and a hoard of bronze palstaves have been found within the area, with another axe not far away. A broken polished axe of Graig Lwyd stone (PRN 5182) was found at Gannock Park. The grid reference given in the HER is approximate and presumably it came from one of the gardens along Gannock Park rather than within the open fields as the mark on the plan suggests. Another Graig Lwyd axe (PRN 4581) came from Plas Mariandir, about 400m north of the study area (RCAHMW 1956, liii and Fig. 10). The third axe (PRN 2831) was found near Cae'r Dail on the Vardre. This axe is complete and was made of a stone other than Graig Lwyd (RCAHMW 1956, lix and Fig. 13).

In 1720 a 'considerable deposit of celts' was found. These were identified by Way (1856, 123) as bronze palstaves of Bronze Age date. They were found under a 'great stone', but the find location is not known beyond it being at Degannwy. This is presumably the castle, but a farmstead near the shore was called Degannwy at this time, so the provenance of this hoard cannot be known with any certainty.



The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) recorded an Iron Age roundhouse settlement just north of the castle (NPRN 303133, PRN 2837). As will be discussed below, it is thought that this feature is better interpreted as part of the medieval settlement.

#### 4.2.2 Roman

There appears to have been Roman activity on or between the hills. The RCAHMW recorded the discovery of 5 Constantinian coins on the slopes of the western hill and one Roman coin embedded in mortar of a 13<sup>th</sup> century wall on eastern hill, although these coins were lost before they could be seen by the Commission staff. During their survey of the site a member of the Commission's staff picked up a small sherd of Roman Samian ware on the western hill (RCAHMW 1956, 154).

More evidence of a Roman settlement in the area was found during excavations carried out by Leslie Alcock in the 1960s (Alcock 1967). He found sherds of pottery dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, and a series of coins from Gallienus (260-8) to Valens (364-78). Alcock suggests that the occupation probably took the form of a stronghold (Alcock 1967, 198). Davies (1983, 92) notes that the coins are 'essentially an urban and military coinage' and probably indicate links with what remained of the monetary economy through contact with Caerhun and soldiers travelling along the main Roman road. The Roman pottery also includes some 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> century sherds and some earlier Roman activity seems possible (Alcock 1967, 198, 200). Some of the pottery, especially wheel thrown jars and bowls with large white calcite grits may indicate very late Roman and post-Roman activity from the 4<sup>th</sup> into the 5<sup>th</sup> century (Alcock 1989, 199). To conclude, there is evidence for Roman activity at Deganwy, but at present there is insufficient evidence to identify its nature or the location of any structures.

#### 4.2.3. Early Medieval

Degannwy is traditionally linked with Maelgwn Gwynedd, the 6<sup>th</sup> century king of Gwynedd, and one of the five kings castigated by Gildas (Morris 1978, 32-3), who calls him 'dragon of the island', usually thought to mean Anglesey. The *Annales Cambriae* has Maelgwn dying in 547 of the great plague:

Year

547     *A great death [i.e. plague] in which Maelgwn, king of Gwynedd died. Thus they say 'The long sleep of Maelgwn in the court of Rhos'. Then was the yellow plague.* (Morris 1980, 45)<sup>1</sup>.

Evidence from other texts suggests this date of 547 may be some 50 years too early (RCAHMW III, cviii; Bromwich 1961, 437), whilst the note about his long sleep is a later addition not present in the earliest manuscript of the *Annales* (Morris 1980, 44). Later use of this phrase, which became proverbial for any long sleep, tended to refer to the church rather than the court of Rhos (Humphreys 1910). Doubts have been raised about the link between Maelgwn and Deganwy, which lies outside his main heartland of Gwynedd, which traditionally had the River Conwy as its eastern boundary (Longley pers. com.). Alcock (1989, 160-1) recognises this point and suggests that it could only have been a frontier fortress for the kingdom of Gwynedd. The commote of Creuddyn was included in the county of Caernarfon in 1284 to keep the crossing of the Conwy within Caernarfonshire (Carr 1977, 69; RCAHMW III, cxx). Similar priorities may have applied in Maelgwn's time.

Alcock's 1960s excavations on the castle produced evidence for a 6<sup>th</sup> century site of some status. He reports 'about a dozen sherds of east Mediterranean amphorae of Tintagel Class B' (Alcock 1967, 198), although there was only a single sherd of class Bi type closely datable to the late 5<sup>th</sup> to mid 6<sup>th</sup> century (Edwards and Lane 1988, 51). Bi amphorae were produced in the Argolid region of the Peloponnese, and possibly on Chios and Kos in Greece (Campbell 2007, 19). The B ware amphorae sherds are important evidence linking North Wales through trade with the Mediterranean in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. One of the most productive sites of this and other imported ware in Britain is Tintagel, which may have acted as a centre for the redistribution of these wares around the Severn Sea and further afield, including up the coast of Wales finally to Degannwy (Barrowman et al 2007). The number of sherds is very small, probably mainly due to the small area excavated, and much relies on the single diagnostic sherd.

Alcock found traces of a drystone wall, at least 1.75m wide, around the eastern side of the west hill (figure 3, trenches 31 and DY1). He could not date this feature, which might have encircled the hill, and places it

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<sup>1</sup> *Mortalitas magna in qua pausat Mailcun rex Gendotae. Unde dicitur, 'Hir hun Wailgun en llis Ros'. Tunc fuit wallwelen.* (Morris 1980, 85)



anywhere from Robert of Rhuddlan's 11<sup>th</sup> century castle to the Iron Age (Alcock 1967, 198), but other authors (Edwards and Lane 1988, 51; Dark 1994, 100) have linked this feature with the 6<sup>th</sup> century activity. The combined historical and archaeological evidence does suggest a 6<sup>th</sup> century fortified site of high status on the western hill. Alcock and Alcock (1990) note that many early medieval high status sites in Britain have features in common, including a location on pronounced rocky outcrops, with fluvial or marine connections, and the presence of a safe harbour. Imported wares have also been found on many of them, thought to represent not only foreign trade but the function of these sites as local centres of trade and redistribution. Degannwy is typical of this type of site, with its location on the rocky hills and the presence of a sheltered harbour in the mouth of the river close to the foot of the hills.

The identification of Degannwy as a ninth century fortress rests entirely on the identification of the site with the name 'Decanorum arx' in the *Annales Cambriae* (Edwards and Lane 1988, 52; Morris 1980, 46-7). If this identification is correct Degannwy is mentioned twice as follows:

Year

812     *The fortress of Degannwy is struck by lightning and burnt*<sup>2</sup>

822     *The fortress of Degannwy is destroyed by the Saxons and they took the kingdom of Powys into their own control*<sup>3</sup> (Morris 1980, 48-49)

However, there may also be some archaeological support for this period. Dark (1994, 11) has suggested that some of the less diagnostic B-ware sherds from Degannwy may date later than the 6<sup>th</sup> century, possibly the 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> centuries. The top of the western hill has probably been too disturbed by later building programmes for much of the early medieval fortresses to survive; Alcock notes that the hill top has been disturbed not only by the 13<sup>th</sup> century builders but by also by rabbits (Alcock 1967, 198). However, this is not to deny the possibility of remains being found from this period. For example, midden material might survive below the crags, or pockets of deposits within the later castle.

#### 4.2.4. Medieval

##### *The castle*

The site of Degannwy Castle commanded the crossing to the Conwy River and was repeatedly fought over by the Welsh and the Anglo-Normans (RCAHMW 1956, cxix). Ordericus Vitalis (quoted in Humphreys 1910, 43<sup>4</sup>) states that the Anglo-Norman Robert of Rhuddlan built 'a strong castle on mount Diganwy', and this must have been between 1073 and 1088 (Alcock 1967, 197). No medieval motte exists at Degannwy so it is probable that the 11<sup>th</sup> century castle was built on the summit of one of the hills. Although castles of this period were usually in timber Alcock suggests that it might have taken the form of a stone keep (Alcock 1967, 198).

Robert of Rhuddlan died in 1088 on the Great Orme repulsing a Welsh raid (Lloyd 1939, 390-1). During 1094 the Normans lost control of Gwynedd west of the Conwy, but in 1098 the Earls of Chester and Shrewsbury marched through North Wales as far as Anglesey. The Welsh were supposed to be defended from the sea by Vikings from Ireland, but these abandoned them leaving them open to attack by the Normans (Williams 1941, 8). However, Magnus Barefoot, King of Norway, almost incidentally was drawn into a battle with the Normans. Ordericus Vitalis relates the Battle of Diganoth in AD 1098, when Norman forces were stationed at Degannwy and Magnus's forces, apparently accidentally, killed Hugh de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, after which the Normans retreated. King Magnus of Norway was apparently in the area to fight the Irish rather than the Normans (Humphreys 1910, 45-6).

Bezant Lowe (1912, 173) lists some documentary evidence of building and rebuilding of the castle both before and after Robert of Rhuddlan's constructions, but the history seems confused. In 1188 Giraldus Cambrensis passed the castle, merely commenting 'We crossed the River Conway, or rather an arm of the sea below Degannwy, leaving on our right the Cistercian monastery of Conway, which is on the western bank of the river' (Thorpe 1978, 195), though in the Description of Wales he comments 'The Conway flows down from the northern bastion of Snowdon and joins the sea below Degannwy Castle' (Thorpe 1978, 230). However the castle only becomes more clearly visible to history in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In 1210 Llywelyn ap Iorwerth demolished Degannwy Castle in fear of an invasion by the Earl of Chester (Williams 1941, 66), and the castle was rebuilt in the same year by the Earl of Chester, probably still in timber (RCAHMW 1956, 152). King

<sup>2</sup> Decanorum arx ictu fulminis comburit (Morris 1980, 88)

<sup>3</sup> Arcem Decanorum a Saxonibus destruitur et regionem Poyvis in sua potestate traxerunt (Morris 1980, 89)

<sup>4</sup> Humphreys quotes T Forester's translation of 1853-6



John's army reached as far as Degannwy in 1211, but were starved into retreat by Llewellyn's control of the surrounding countryside (Bezant Lowe 1912, 177).

In 1213 Owain ap Dafydd ap Owain Gwynedd was granted the cantref of Rhos, Rhufonoig and Dyffryn Clwyd by King John, although the castle of Gannock (Degannwy) was specifically excluded from the grant. Owain was defeated by Llywelyn, who captured all of Perfeddwlad except the castles of Rhuddlan and Degannwy (Williams 1941, 67). In 1213 Llywelyn laid siege to and took the two castles (Williams 1941, 68). From 1228 to 1234 Llewellyn used Degannwy Castle to imprison his son Gruffydd (Bezant Lowe 1912, 177, Alcock 1967, 196).

Henry III annexed the earldom of Chester to the Crown in 1237 and issued a letters patent in 1238 confirming that the earldom, including the castles of 'Gannock (Degannwy) and Dincolyn (Dyserth)' belonged to the Crown (Edwards 1912, 278). This did not stop the Welsh from taking the castle again but in 1241 Dafydd ap Llywelyn was forced to surrender Degannwy Castle to repay the king for his costs in his campaign. However, Dafydd surrendered only the site, having demolished the castle (Brown et al 1963, 624). Work started on rebuilding the castle in 1241, but little was done until 1244, when Henry III ordered that the castle be rebuilt in stone (Alcock 1967, 193). The building was interrupted by Dafydd's raids and in 1245 Henry himself came to Degannwy with an army (Brown et al 1963, 624-625). Henry occupied the castle for two months and his army lived in tents surrounding the castle, where they were cold, hungry and miserable (Bezant Lowe 1912, 179-180 quoting Matthew Paris' English History).

The castle was composed of a principle tower, or donjon, on the west hill, a smaller tower, Mansel's Tower, on the east hill, and the two were linked by a defended bailey (figure 3). The donjon was begun in 1247 and not completed before 1249 (Brown et al 1963, 625). The tower on the eastern hill was completed by 1249 (Alcock 1967, 193), and they were initially linked by palisades. In 1249 and 1250 the king issued orders for the bailey to be fortified in stone, with two stone gateways. (Brown et al 1963, 625). The construction of a horse mill was also ordered in 1250 and a mill stone found just outside the south gate of the bailey probably came from this (RCAHMW 1956, 154).

In 1250 an engineer called Master Gerard was sent to oversee the works, which continued over the next 3 years, although the building seems never to have been completed (Brown et al 1963, 625). The southern bailey wall and gateway was completed but there is no evidence in records from the reign of Henry III for the completion of the northern bailey defences. Alcock believes that the ditch, rampart and gate tower on this side were constructed after 1254 (Alcock 1967, 194). The northern defences were composed of a large ditch and rampart, presumably with a palisade on top, with no stone wall, except perhaps at the western end where a wall may have joined to a stone gate tower to the donjon enclosure wall.

In 1254 the new castle was given by Henry III to his son Edward as part of the Earldom of Chester. In 1257 Henry and his army rescued the castle from siege by Llywelyn ap Gruffydd and Henry stayed at the castle for 10 days (Edwards 1912, 289-90). In 1263 Llywelyn ap Gruffydd starved its garrison into surrender and destroyed the castle so thoroughly that very few upstanding walls remain (Brown et al 1963, 626). Alcock's excavations showed that the demolition involved mines dug under walls and then fired to cause their collapse. This technique was used on the southern gateway, curtain wall of the donjon and the buildings inside the donjon (Alcock 1967, 192). Alcock sees the comprehensiveness of the demolition work as 'a striking testimony to the authority, power and malice of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd' (Alcock 1963, 192). The site then appeared to have been abandoned (RCAHMW 1956, cxix), despite the absence of a castle here leaving Gwynedd open to attack by the English (RCAHMW 1956, cxlv). However, Alcock found traces of a hasty refortification of the site possibly during the campaign of 1277, when Edward I signed letters from 'Gannou' (Alcock 1967, 200). When Edward I came to fortify the river crossing he preferred the more accessible site at Conwy, and may have used stone from Degannwy to build his new castle.

### *The Maerdref*

In the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries the Welsh kingdoms were divided into administrative units called *commotes*. The base for the administration of the commote and for the collection of taxes was the *maerdref* (township of the king's administrator) and its *llys* (a royal court). Each commote had a maerdref, and this land was held in demesne by the king and contained hamlets of his bond tenants. The *llys* was a complex of buildings, including a hall, and stood at the nucleus of the maerdref. This administrative framework was in decline by the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Longley 1997). The Welsh name for Degannwy Castle was Castell y Faerdre (castle of the maerdref) and this is reflected in the name in the 1846 tithe schedule for the field in which the castle stands (Vaerdref)



and the current name for the area (Vardre). This name indicates that the maerdref of Creuddyn lay on or near the site of the castle (RCAHMW 1956, cxliii).

#### *The Borough*

There is mention in 1241 of 'tenements at Degannwy' suggesting the presence of a small Welsh vill at this period. In 1248 Henry III ordered burgages to be assigned to 'Gannoc', while fairs and markets were granted in 1250, and the borough received its royal charter in 1252, and was allowed to enclose the town with a ditch and wall (Soulsby 1983, 120). Henry III established a Tuesday market and a 6 day fair on St Martin's Day (Lewis 1912, 171, 193). Despite the demolition of the castle in 1263, the market reappeared, and in 1295 six men are named as burgesses of 'Gannou'. A rental of 1305-6 lists '19 placeae in villa de Ganneu'. From 1284 until 1536 the market was held on Mondays and the annular fair on St Simon and St Jude's Day (28<sup>th</sup> October) (Lewis 1912, 171). In the 15<sup>th</sup> century the market is specifically described as the 'market at the ferry' (Lewis 1912, 194). Soulsby (1983, 120) assumes the early borough was adjacent to the castle and the later settlement was near the ferry crossing on the shore of the Conwy. The market continued until the 16<sup>th</sup> century but it is not clear if the township continued to exist (Soulsby 1983, 120), although a hamlet or farmstead was using the name in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Lewis Morris's maps of 1735-6 and 1748) (figure 4). A map of 1849 (Bangor Ms 3/179) (figure 5) shows the settlement of Tywyn with the 'Old Ferry House' a little down the shore to the south. A ferry across the river to Conwy is likely from the Tywyn area and this could provide a location for the later borough. In 1988 the wooden stakes of a fish weir were identified near the former settlement at the foot of Tywyn Hill. This was radiocarbon dated to 1570 AD  $\pm$  20 (one standard deviation)<sup>5</sup> (PRN 4392, FI file).

#### **4.2.5 Post-Medieval**

Leland, writing in 1536 -1542, describes the 'greate ruines of Hegannoye Castel stondding on a hille' (Toulmin Smith 1906, 92), although it is unlikely that there were more upstanding walls then than there are today. The land on which the castle stands was bought from the Crown by the Wynn family in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and became part of the Bodysgallen Estate (Humphreys 1910, 35). The estate and the castle passed to the Mostyns of Mostyn when Margaret Wynne, daughter and heiress of Dr Hugh Wynn of Bodysgallen and Berth Ddu married Sir Roger Mostyn, 5th baronet in 1766 (Bibliographical note introducing the Mostyn Manuscripts, Flintshire Record Office). When the land was owned by Miss Margaret Wynne, prior to her marriage, a rental book (Mostyn Mss 5452) lists the farmsteads of Fattw and Cae'r Dial that lie within the study area (figure 6). This shows that they date from at least the middle 18<sup>th</sup> century. The rental states that the 'Vaerdre' had been let out from May until All Saints Day for grazing for 12 oxen.

The castle is marked on Lewis Morris's map of 1748 and is named as 'Castell y Fadre'. 'Digannwy' is marked just to the north, and is presumably the same hamlet or farmstead marked on the 1846 tithe map as 'Dyganwy' and owned and occupied by John Lloyd Jones, esq. Morris indicates that the owner in 1748 was called Stodart.

The fields covering the study area are shown on the 1846 tithe map (figure 7) much as they are today. That in which the castle stands was called 'Vaerdref' and the other to the south was 'Vattw' and contained a small enclosure named 'Ty Fattw'. Both were owned by the Bodysgallen Estate, part of the Mostyn Estate and occupied in 1846 by Bridget Mostyn.

The fields around the western side of the castle were put up for sale in 1892. Described as 'highly-valuable building estate' they were divided up into building plots with proposed roads marked out. The sale catalogue provides an idyllic vision of the scattered detached mansions that it was hoped would be built (Bangor Archives, Mostyn Mss f31644) (figure 8). This ideal was not quite achieved by the higher density of houses actually built between 1900 and the mid 1960s, forming Gannock Park and, to the north, the housing estate off Deganwy Road.

The castle was subject to antiquarian interest and occasional artefacts were found and reported. G A Humphreys, the architect and surveyor for the Mostyn Estates, had a particular interest in the site, and in 1886 dug up a bone potter's tool that he assumed to be Roman, although there is no indication that the digging was of an archaeological nature (Humphreys 1910, 9). Humphreys published a plan of the castle drawn by E W Cox (Humphreys 1910, Fig 2) (figure 9), but some features are quite fancifully reconstructed. No serious work was undertaken before the RCAHMW undertook a survey for the Caernarvonshire Inventory (figure 11). The survey was carried out in 1948 and a copy of the original plan held in the NMR shows that the published plan included several reconstructions, especially around the south gate (figure 12). The Commission requested

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<sup>5</sup> This is presumably an uncalibrated date, i.e. the date AD has been achieved merely by subtracting 1950 from the date BP. The original date BP and laboratory number has not yet been identified.



permission from the Mostyn Estate for '*slight clearance works*' to aid their survey that would '*not disturb any stratification*' (letters held in NMR). Some five trenches were excavated in 1952, some up to 1m deep. No description has been found of the results, but there is a photographic record.

Leslie Alcock carried out small excavations from 1961 to 1966 (Alcock 1967). His trenches investigated the donjon, Mansel's Tower, the south gate and bailey wall, and the northern rampart, and helped to fill out much of the history as described above (figure 10). However many features of the castle and surrounding earthworks remain undated.

The Ordnance Survey has undertaken surveys of the earthworks independently of RCAHMW. The County Series maps and the 1:10,560 sheet show only a very basic outline of the castle, although they are useful for the identification of farmsteads, springs and the development of the housing in the area (figures 13-17). A simplified plan appears on the 1:2,500 map but it includes earthworks beyond the limits of the castle, such as the track leading to the castle from the south-east (figure 18). The OS resurveyed the castle in more detail for the digital map data (figure 2). This survey does not include the outer earthworks and, although detailed and accurate, does not interpret the features as seen on the ground as well as the Inventory plan. However, it does pick up some slighter features not included on the Commission survey.

### 4.3 Statutory and non-statutory designations

The site is a scheduled ancient monument (Cn016) and the scheduled area covers the whole of the two hills, the northern settlement area and part of the field to the south. The castle lies within a defined landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest (HLW (Gw) 5, Creuddyn and Conwy; Cadw 1988, 87). The prominent hills form a significant part of the defined landscape, described as a 'mainly coastal landscape' which 'contains evidence of highly diverse landuse and settlement from the early prehistoric period to the present' (Cadw 1998, 87).

### 4.4 Aerial photographs

There are numerous available aerial photographs of Degannwy Castle and its environs both vertical and oblique, the earliest found so far dating from 1945. Photographs held by both the NMR and the Air Photograph Unit in Cardiff were inspected as well as oblique slides taken by GAT. Many show the field system to the south of the castle very clearly, and some, with particularly good lighting give a very clear view of the building platforms to the north of the castle (plates 1 and 2). Other features are more often hidden by vegetation and only rarely appear on the photographs. The two inclines at the south-west corner of the castle are only visible on a couple of photographs. Features have been transcribed from the vertical photographs and are indicated on figure 2.

The earlier photographs give an indication of the date of the spread of housing around the Vardre and provide a record of changes in landuse and vegetation cover.

### 4.4 The Archaeological Survey (Figures 2 and 3)

Features already identified and given Primary Record Numbers (PRNs) were inspected and additional descriptions or interpretations are given below. The castle has been split into three new PRNs to aid description. Features not previously described have been allocated new PRN numbers.

#### **PRN 30301                      Donjon of Degannwy Castle**

*SH 78155 79456*

*Period: Medieval (13<sup>th</sup> century)*

*Category: A                      Condition: Poor*

The donjon of the 13th century castle was built on the western hill (plate 3). It had a polygonal enclosure wall around the top of the hill, and the RCAHMW recognised two phases of building. They attribute the northern curtain wall and tower to rebuilding in stone between 1213 and 1241 (RCAHMW 1956, 154). Alcock agrees that the earlier curtain wall belongs to a pre-Henrician phase and could be Welsh and attributable to Llywelyn Fawr (Alcock 1967, 194, 196). A fine stone pre-Henrician hall may be indicated by the discovery of a crowned stone head and arch-mouldings in rubble to the south of the bailey wall. The style of the head indicates the early 13<sup>th</sup> century and Alcock suggests these are more likely to have come from earlier buildings rather than



part of the later 13<sup>th</sup> century donjon (Alcock 1967, 197). A rectangular building to the east of the central quarry may also belong to this earlier period (RCAHMW 1956, 154).

The main tower was not built until 1247 (Brown 1963, 625). The RCAHMW identifies the south-eastern tower with the '*turris castri*' (tower of the castle) described in the pipe rolls as being built in 1247 and increased in height in 1248 (RCAHMW 1956, 154). This was essentially a strong circular keep with the rest of the donjon acting as a bailey (Alcock 1967, 195). A substantial, high quality building within the southern part of the donjon was probably the king's hall, completed by 1250 (Alcock 1967, 195, RCAHMW 1956, 154). There were domestic buildings on the north side of the donjon as well, served by latrine chutes in the in the north-west corner of the curtain wall (Alcock 1967, 195). All the masonry remains are fragmentary, with only the northern revetment wall providing any substantial section of surviving masonry. The RCAHMW considers the large rectangular quarry, c.5m deep, within the middle of the area, to be of uncertain period, although it seems likely that it provided stone for one of the main construction phases (RCAHMW 1956, 154). The entrance to the donjon was in the south-west corner, where it was approached by a steep track with a gate at each end, of which fragments survive.

### **PRN 30302                      Mansel's Tower**

SH 78308 79458

*Period: Medieval (13<sup>th</sup> century)*

*Category: A                      Condition: Poor*

Mansel's Tower, named after John Mansel, Henry III's chief clerk and counsellor, was built by 1249, when its height was ordered to be raised. It was further raised and roofed in 1250 (Brown et al 1963, 625; Alcock 1967, 193). Its foundations can be seen on the eastern hill as low stony banks, no more than 0.4m high, forming a D-shape in plan with a central division. Alcock's excavations found no evidence for a closing wall on the west side of the 'D' (Alcock 1967, 193), and little can be seen on the ground at this side. Just below the tower, where the bailey wall would have joined on it are the traces of a small turret (RCAHMW 1956, 154).

### **PRN 30303                      The Bailey**

SH 78234 79456

*Period: Medieval (13<sup>th</sup> century)*

*Category: A                      Condition: Masonry – Poor; earthworks - good*

The bailey lies in the saddle between the two hills. It is defined on the south side by a wall, shown by Alcock to be about 3m wide (Alcock 1967, 193) with a rock cut ditch outside. The wall survives in a much more fragmentary condition than indicated on the published Inventory plan, and its true nature is better recorded on the Commission's field survey drawings. There are traces of a square tower inside this wall at the foot of the east hill. The bailey was entered on this south side through a stone gateway, probably consisting of two D-shaped towers as indicated in the inventory, but again the actual remains are much slighter than the published plan suggests (RCAHMW 1956, Fig, 148). Alcock's excavation trenches revealed traces of the original palisade behind the bailey wall (Alcock 1967, 193).

The north side of the bailey is defended by a massive ditch, up to 4.5m deep at its western end, and a bank deposited along its southern edge. The ditch runs down the eastern hill and ends in a rounded terminal just east of the northern gate. It continues as a slighter feature west of the gate. The northern gate seems to have consisted of a rectangular tower, a fragment of which still stands to a height of about 2.5m. Alcock believes that the ditch, rampart and gate tower were constructed after 1254, as there is no record for the payment for their construction under Henry III (Alcock 1967, 194).

The line of the roadway leading to the gate shows that the entrance was immediately east of this tower. It is possible that there was a timber tower on the east side of the entrance to match the timber palisade that presumably ran along the rampart above the ditch. It appears that to the west of the gate the rampart and palisade was replaced by a stone wall to match the stone tower. The Commission does not discuss this but does mark the stub of a wall projecting from the donjon wall on this side (RCAHMW 1956, Fig. 148). The 'bank' running down from this stub is full of stone, some of it apparently *in situ* and built up in courses. This seems to be the remains of a wall, which was presumably linked to the stone tower to block access except through the gate.

Inside the bailey well-defined earthworks indicate buildings just inside the southern gate. The rest of the bailey is quite level. A particularly level area covers most of the northern side of the bailey and is defined by low, straight scarps. In the southern scarp facing stones of a wall foundation can be seen and this almost certainly represents a substantial building or range of buildings measuring about 28m by 23m.



**PRN 30304                      The roadway to Degannwy Castle**

*Castle entrances SH 78228 79456 and SH 78251 79411; junction where road splits SH 78383 79512; point where road enters the study area SH 78626 79368*

*Period: Medieval (13<sup>th</sup> century)*

*Category: A                      Condition: Good*

Access to each gateway was along trackways terraced into the slope of the eastern hill or built up to provide a level track. The track from the northern gate runs north-east down the slope at an angle, curves to the east at the base of the slope and then runs in a straight line. The Inventory plan shows it curving more towards the north, which seems to be incorrect. The southern track runs south-east from the southern gate, again crossing the contours at an angle to prevent the road from being too steep. It hugs the base of the eastern hill following its curve and curves north to join the track from the northern gate. From this junction the track runs as a hollow-way to the south-east (plate 8). The southern part of this route is still a footpath and is marked on one side and then the other by high banks, recently in active use as field boundaries.

At its end the hollow-way joins the track that leads past Pant y Fran Farm down to Pentywyn Road. This track is shown on the 1846 tithe map. Its original route was around the southern side of the Bwlch Farm Caravan site, where there is now a footpath and down Bwlch Farm Road. The fact that this track leads to the castle gates strongly suggests that it is contemporary with the castle. As the road from the castle links to Pentywyn Road this probably also has a medieval origin. To the west Pentywyn Road leads down to the shore, and presumably to the ferry across the Conwy; to the east it would have formed the main route along the North Wales coast. It ran along its present route in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (Bangor Ms 3/179) (figure 5) and this probably reflects its ancient route.

Most surveys of the castle have ignored the main hollow-way, although they record the tracks near the castle gates. The exception is the OS survey which indicates the hollow-way running south-east from the eastern side of the east hill on the 1:2,500 map (figure 18). The track is rarely discussed in descriptions of the castle. In 2000 M Mason noted 'a clear track approaching the castle on the S side of the west hill', which may refer to this feature if she meant to refer to the east hill (Cadw Scheduled Ancient Monument Record Cn016, SAM Visit Description Text).

The RCAHMW (NPRN 400533) associates the track leading to the north gate of the castle with the borough of Degannwy but as it leads directly to the castle there seems little reason not to assume that it was built to serve the castle itself. If the borough was located outside the castle the road could certainly have been used as access for that as well.

An existing PRN record for a hollow-way (PRN 5544) seems to refer to a track that may have run from the main track along the southern edge of the study area.

**PRN 30305 (NPRN 400535)                      Vardre north settlement**

*(Includes PRN 2836 and 3837 and NPRN 303133)*

*SH 78217 79521*

*Period: Medieval (13<sup>th</sup> century)*

*Category: A                      Condition: Good*

Aerial photographs clearly show 5 rectangular enclosures or platforms terraced into the slope and running north from the north gate of the castle. These are clearly visible on the ground as scarps generally about 0.5m high but some of the terrace slopes are 1m high or more (plate 3). There are also two rectangular features set into the base of the hill slope adjacent to the main defensive ditch. One of these has low banks and seems to be clearly a building platform. The other is less well defined but is probably also a building platform. The 5 main platforms have internal features suggestive of buildings. They are represented on the Inventory plan but more detail can be seen on the ground than is shown on the plan. There is also a straight, terraced path leading from the base of the western hill and sloping up from west-north-west to east-south-east to this group of platforms. It seems to be aligned on a gap between the platforms that leads to a ramp giving access to the north gate of the castle, making it appear to be contemporary with the platforms. The latter also seem to respect the main roadway leading to the north gate and the bank defining one platform turns sharply and becomes the bank defining the trackway. These details are not shown on the Inventory plan.

The coherent layout of the platforms in two rough lines leading from the north gate and their relationship to the path and roadway from the gate as well as the similarity in the character of the earthworks strongly suggest that they are all contemporary and were in use when the castle was in active use. The platforms almost certainly



held buildings. Stones visible in some of the banks may indicate that some of these were stone buildings.

The earthworks have been identified with the medieval borough of Degannwy (see discussion below for PRN 30307; RCAHMW 1956, 154). Whilst they might identify the site of the earlier Welsh *llys*, the visible earthworks seem to be contemporary with the masonry castle of Henry III, and therefore better interpreted as the contemporary borough.

This PRN includes PRN 2836, which has been separately recorded as a probable medieval farmstead. It is however, clearly part of the complex and not a separate feature. The NAR card (SH 77 NE 29) describes it as 'Certainly later than the castle as the site is on the line of the outer ditch'. The present author would dispute this. It fits well with the main ditch, roadway and gateway of the main 13<sup>th</sup> century phase of the castle's use and is almost certainly contemporary with this use. The outer ditch referred to could be an earlier phase of defensive ditch but may not be a ditch at all as discussed below (PRN 30313), either way it cannot be used to argue that the platform is later than the main phase of the castle. The present PRN record gives a description in 1998 of 'No obvious remains. Destroyed'. This is clearly an error as the earthworks are well preserved and clearly visible.

PRN 30305 also includes the existing PRN 2837 (NPRN 303133). This is described on the NAR card SH 77 NE 30 as an Iron Age or Romano-British roundhouse settlement and the NMR and HER have followed this interpretation, although the NPRN record does concede that it could be part of the medieval platform complex. It is not clear why it was interpreted as a roundhouse settlement. The main revetting scarp around this area is 1m high and has two clear near right-angled corners. The internal hollows are also generally rectangular. The inventory plan shows it as rectangular, although a more recent OS survey shows curving scarps that cannot be reconciled with anything to be seen on the ground. When seen on aerial photographs and on the ground it is clear that this feature is on the same alignment as the rest of the platforms in this area and the scarps are of the same character. There is no reason to assign this to a different date to the rest, and particularly no reason to consider it a roundhouse settlement.

**PRN 2836 (NPRN 15073)**

**House platforms**

*SH 78314 79514*

*Period: Medieval?*

*Category: A Condition: Good*

The NAR card SH 77 NE 31 describes a house platform and paddock, 20m long overall and 5m in average width, cut into base of the north side of the east hill. The 'paddock' seems too small for such an interpretation and probably there were two structures on the platform or a house and a small yard. The Inventory plan shows a smaller house platform immediately to the north-west, but there is also a third a little further west and slightly further up the hill slope. This latter may have an access ramp leading to it. They are all convincing as house platforms and could be seen as lining the road to the castle. However, their position cut into the foot of the hill is very similar to the Vardre south settlement (PRN 30308) and it is tempting to associate them with the use or more likely the construction of the castle. These may have been buildings to accommodate workers on the castle. They seem to be smaller and of a different character to the main platforms of the Vardre north settlement (PRN 30305) but they could be related. The possibility remains that they are later structures set into the hill like the sheep pens (PRN 30317) but they seem to respect the medieval trackway and fit well with the other medieval features.

**PRN 30306**

**House platform?**

*SH 78165 79548*

*Period: Medieval?*

*Category: E Condition: Good*

A platform measuring about 11m by 5m is terraced into the foot of the north side of the west hill. There is a heap of rubble in the middle of the platform. Immediately to the north of it is a level platform built up to a height of c.0.6m above the natural slope. These might be interpreted as a building platform with a garden or yard area in front. Where the building platform is terraced into the hill the scarp is up to 2m high and the platform is similar to others on the east hill, although perhaps rather more sharply defined. The eastern end of garden or yard platform merges into the terraced pathway leading to the Vardre north settlement (PRN 30305). The path continues west of this point but it is no longer on a well defined terrace. The terraced part of the path starts at this platform and seems to link it directly with the Vardre north settlement and the north gate, making this possibly another medieval house platform. This feature seems not to have been previously recognized, and there are slighter traces of another platform area further west.



**PRN 30307 and 30322****The medieval borough of Degannwy**

*Early borough possibly SH 78217 79521 (PRN 30307)*

*Later borough possibly c.SH 7772 7925 (PRN 30322)*

*Period: Medieval*

*Category: A*

*Condition: Early borough – good; Later borough - no visible remains*

A borough was established at Degannwy in 1248 by Henry III following the refortification of the castle in 1245. Markets and fairs were granted in 1250 and a borough chapel was ordered to be constructed in the same year. The borough received its royal charter in 1252, which stipulated ‘the burgesses may enclose the said town with a dike and wall’ though there is no evidence for this having been done (for full references see Soulsby 1983, 120). The RCAHMW suggest that this borough is represented by the earthworks to the north of the castle outside the castle gate (PRN 30305). As discussed above the layout of the visible earthworks suggests that they were contemporary with the use of the castle and do not suggest any later development.

It seems likely that the later borough was near the ferry crossing on the shore of the Conwy, as assumed by Soulsby (1983, 120). The demolition of the castle may have disrupted the original borough but the market was re-established by 1284 (Lewis 1912, 171). In 1305 there were 19 *placeae* in the borough of Degannwy and early in the reign of Edward II there were 29 inhabited places (Lewis 1912, 194). The earthworks near the castle show five main building platforms in front of the north gate and a small number of other platforms but not enough to account for up to 29 buildings. It is therefore thought that the site of the borough shifted to the river bank, where perhaps a nascent settlement already lay close to the ferry. Johnstone (2000, 178) considers this possibility, and suggests the borough was located on the banks of the river where the later farm or hamlet called Degannwy was recorded in the mid nineteenth century.

The tithe map shows the settlement of Tywyn at the western end of Pentywyn Road. As discussed above Pentywyn Road was probably medieval in origin and presumably led down to the ferry across the Conwy River to Conwy town. Unfortunately the copy of the tithe map held in Conwy Record Office is damaged in this area and no indication of a ferry survived, but a map of 1849 (Bangor Ms 3/179) shows the ferry crossing a little further up river. A medieval ferry somewhere near Tywyn seems likely, but if Tywyn was the borough of Degannwy it is probable that it would have retained the name. The name of Degannwy was maintained by a farmstead near the present site of the Deganwy Castle Hotel. This was called Dyganwy on the tithe map and was owned and occupied by John Lloyd Jones, who owned many other properties in the area. It is also marked on Lewis Morris’s map of 1748 and is named as ‘Digannwy’. This is perhaps the most likely location of the later medieval borough.

**PRN 30308 (NPRN 400533)****Vardre south settlement**

*SH 78209 79360*

*Period: Medieval (13<sup>th</sup> century?)*

*Category: A*

*Condition: Good*

Four rectangular platforms are terraced into the southern foot of the west hill. The largest measures about 15m by 5m and they are quite well defined. They are just visible on some of the aerial photographs and form a roughly straight line leading towards the south entrance to the bailey. A narrow terraced path or trackway runs roughly parallel to the line of platforms just up hill from them. This can be seen on the ground for a length of c. 45m but aerial photographs suggest it being about 65m in total. The relationship between the track and the platforms suggests that they are contemporary. The platforms are typical of those created for rectangular timber buildings, and their relationship to the castle implies a medieval date. Their location near the south gate and neat alignment in a row may suggest that they were accommodation for workers while building the castle.

The present NPRN record for Vardre south settlement (NPRN 400533) does not mention these house platforms but refers to the field system to the south of the castle. This includes very little settlement evidence and the record is rather confusing.

**PRN 30309 (NPRN 400533)****Field system south of Degannwy Castle**

*Centre SH 78350 79310*

*Period: Medieval/ Post medieval*

*Category: A*

*Condition: Good*

The whole of the plateau between the castle and the line of rocky outcrops to the south is covered by a field system defined by banks and ditches (plate 5). These are particularly well preserved and up to 0.5m high, or occasionally higher. One field contains 3m wide, straight ridge and furrow. This can be seen on aerial photographs and in the right light from the top of the castle but at less than 0.1m in height they are difficult to identify on the ground.



Some of these field boundaries are fairly straight but one major boundary is very sinuous. A hollow-way runs along the eastern boundary of the field system and this is described above (PRN 30304). Another hollow-way (PRN 30310) leads into the northern corner of the field system.

The tithe map shows the boundaries around the southern foot of the castle hills and around the outer perimeter of the open, public access area much as they are today (figure 7). None of the other boundaries are shown and so they presumably pre-date the tithe map and are at least 18<sup>th</sup> century in date. The single field (field number 206) shown on the tithe map to the south of the castle belongs to a small holding called Fattw, with the house in the middle of the field. The 19<sup>th</sup> century house and yard (PRN 30315) seems to have been preceded by a house platform (PRN 5777) about 16m to the north-east. This is on a very straight field boundary that forms the western side of a field containing narrow ridge and furrow. This narrow, shallow, straight ridge and furrow is more typical of spade cultivation than ploughing. The house and field are probably contemporary and later than the other field boundaries in this area. They could be medieval but perhaps an early post medieval date is more likely.

The large sinuous field boundary and boundaries running off it to the trackway to the castle are likely to be much older. The trackway, as discussed above (PRN 30304) seems to be contemporary with the castle and the sinuous field boundary seems to be related to this. It is likely that some of the fields, possibly all except the one with ridge and furrow, are contemporary with the castle, although they may have continued to have been used long after the castle was destroyed.

The record for NPRN 400533 refers to the field system as Vardre south settlement but, with the exception of house platform (PRN 5777) they contain no evidence for settlement.

**PRN 30310                      Hollow-way (track to Deganwy?)**

*SH 78312 79506 to SH 78456 79615, continuation at foot of castle to SH 78180 79318*

*Period: Post medieval?*

*Category: B*

*Condition: Good*

A well defined hollow-way runs across the saddle of a low hill to the east of the castle (plate 8). Where it crosses the saddle it cuts up to 1m into the hill. The hollow-way is about 8m wide and it has a bank about 6m wide along much of its northern side. At its south-western end this feature seems to cut across the earthworks defining the road-way to the castle (PRN 30304), and is presumably later. It runs into the field to the south and continues south-westward along the present fence, appearing as a well-defined terraced track in places. At its north-eastern end the hollow-way stops abruptly at the modern field boundary and has probably been obliterated in the next field, which seems to have been heavily ploughed. However it may have continued to join a track exiting from the north-east side of this field. This track is shown on the tithe map turning north-west to head for Bryn Gosol, but at an earlier period there may have been a branch to the hollow-way. It seems probable that the hollow-way is related to the later medieval or early post-medieval use of the field system south of the castle. Its route along the foot of the castle hills suggests that it was heading towards the farm of Dyganwy near the shore. The tithe map does not show a track along this route but does show a continuous field boundary that the track might have followed.

**PRN 30311                      North field**

*Centre SH 78145 79619*

*Period: Medieval and Modern*

*Category: B*

*Condition: Medieval field boundary – Poor; Modern field boundary - Good*

The most obvious divisions of the area to the north of the castle appear to be quite recent field boundary banks although they are not shown on any maps. Aerial photographs show very narrow, straight ridge and furrow across much of the area to the west of the north-south boundary. These are very slight ridges, less than 50mm high, but can just be seen on the ground and appear to be 2m wide. The ridges are defined by the recent field boundary and it is likely that they are the result of machine ploughing in the early or middle 20<sup>th</sup> century. Steam ploughs with engines stationary at each end of the field pulling the plough between them create ridge and furrow of this sort. It is possible that the area was fenced and ploughed during either the First or Second World War and then the field was abandoned before it could be recorded on a map. Aerial photographs from 1945 show the boundary as a bank much as today, so a First World War date might be likely.

There is a spring within this field that may have been used at earlier periods, although there is no visible evidence of this.



There is evidence for the earlier field system in a broad, low scarp that curves from the northern boundary of the study area towards the castle. On some aerial photographs this can just be seen and seems to run up to the foot of the east hill. It is most probably the ploughed-out remains of a field boundary contemporary with the castle and the field system to the south of the castle.

**PRN 30312                      Ditch/platform on the east hill**

*SH 78312 79474*

*Period: Medieval (13<sup>th</sup> century)*

*Category: A                      Condition: Good*

Just below Mansel's Tower on the north side of the hill is a level platform measuring about 14m long and 5m wide. At its south-eastern end it merges into a less well defined terrace that runs around the eastern side of the hill just below the summit (plate 4). This was planned by the RCAHMW and interpreted as the remains of unfinished work on a barrier outside the tower ordered in 1250 according to the Pipe Rolls (RCAHMW 1956, 154). Alcock dug a trench across this feature and describes it as 'a rock cut ditch', although his report does not include a section drawing of this trench (Alcock 1967, 193). The current appearance of the earthworks is more suggestive of a platform, possibly to aid the construction of the tower.

**PRN 30313                      Construction inclines**

*(a) SH 78167 79527*

*(b) SH 78102 79546*

*(c) SH 78092 79380*

*(d) SH 78281 79486*

*Period: Medieval (13<sup>th</sup> century)*

*Category: A                      Condition: Good (but obscured in parts)*

Around the castle there are several straight ditches or linear hollows running very steeply down the hills from the corners of the donjon and possibly one from Mansel's Tower. Some of these have been recorded by RCAHMW but not commented on. They are, however, almost certainly features of considerable importance.

(a) This hollow is about 40m long and about 3m wide with a bank on the south-eastern side. It runs straight downhill, from south-west to north-east, from the base of a crag under the north-east corner of the donjon (plate 3).

(b) This hollow is up to 0.75m deep and about 3m wide with a slight bank about 3m wide on its south-western side. The Inventory plan also shows a bank on the north-eastern side, which may exist higher up than the location inspected. The hollow runs steeply down hill for about 70m running from south-east to north-west and starting not far from the northern revetment and tower of the donjon. At its north-western end it turns sharply to the west and continues for another 40m before being cut by the fence and gardens. This last section runs at a gentle angle across the contours much as a track might be expected to.

(c) Two roughly parallel linear hollows run from north-east to south-west steeply downhill from close to the base of the crag on which the south-west corner of the donjon is built. The hollows are up to 2m deep and about 4m wide with traces of banks on their south-eastern sides (plate 7). They run for about 50m before being lost at the fence.

(d) A linear hollow runs down the west side of the east hill to the north of and roughly parallel to the main defensive ditch (plate 6). This hollow is much shallower than the main ditch, being never more than 0.5m deep and becomes broader as it descends from south-east to north-west. Its north-west end is confused by what appears to be a small house platform built within it and the track to the north gate is built over the end of the hollow. The main ditch also cuts the linear hollow. It is possible this hollow continues in a feature to the north-west of the track but this feature is deeper and more clearly defined than the linear hollow and fits better with the rectangular house platforms in this area.

Feature (d) could be an early version of the defensive ditch, but unless it was backfilled when the main ditch was dug it seems to be very shallow. It certainly seems to predate features related to the main bailey ditch and northern gate. The other linear hollows are clearly not defensive, but they do run to positions below critical points on the donjon. Feature (b) also seems to have a trackway running to its bottom end. It is suggested that these hollows were inclines designed for hauling building materials up to the base of the crags from which they were presumably winched up to the donjon. How the hauling was done and whether there were some kind of rails to aid the process is intriguing. It seems probable that buried remains might help answer these questions. Feature (d) runs up to the ditch or platform (PRN 30312) below Mansel's Tower and may be functionally



related to it. If the interpretation of feature (d) as a construction incline is correct it allows a more precise dating for the north settlement (PRN 30305). Features apparently related to this settlement overlie the incline, as does the track to the gate. Other parts of the settlement would have blocked access to the start of the incline. It is suggested that the north settlement was built after Mansel's Tower (c. 1249) but before the castle was demolished in 1263.

An alternative interpretation may be that some of these were inclines for the removal of stone. Many of the stones of Degannwy Castle are said to have been used in Conwy Castle (Bezant Lowe 1912, 185), and these inclines would have greatly aided dismantling and carrying away the stone, though this interpretation would disagree with the stratigraphy seen on (d) running down the east hill.

**PRN 30314 Quarry on the west hill**

SH 78146 79394

*Period: Medieval (13<sup>th</sup> century)*

*Category: B Condition: Good*

At the foot of the crags on which the south-west corner of the donjon is built there is a quarry. This consists of two hollows containing loose, broken stone with rounded heaps of quarry waste on their southern sides. On the southern side of the quarry, towards the eastern end, is a chunk of mortared masonry. This has probably fallen from the gatehouse on top of the crags above, though it seems surprisingly intact to have survived such a fall. However it may indicate a stone structure closer to its present location. The crag above can be seen to have been extensively quarried with quarried faces visible to a considerable height. The date of the quarry is not known, though it might well have supplied the stone for the construction of the donjon and related features.

**PRN 5777 Rectangular house platform**

SH 7837 7922

*Period: Medieval/ Post medieval*

*Category: B Condition: Good*

The current PRN record has the following description and this is still correct:-

'A positive platform, orientated at right angles to a moderate slope (axis NW-SE). A low bank 0.2m high is visible on the edges of the platform apart from the upslope end. The platform is 0.5 - 0.6m high down slope and between 0.3 - 0.4m high elsewhere. Internally the platform is 7.5m wide and c.17m long though the upslope perimeter of the feature is unclear. A depression adjacent to the NE corner appears to be a spring which has slightly eroded to the NE corner of the platform itself. A slightly curvilinear bank 1m wide and up to 0.7m runs from the outcropping to the SW corner of the platform. The platform is protected from the prevailing SW wind by the outcrop'.

The platform is located on the western boundary of a field with narrow, slight ridge and furrow, and both field and platform are probably contemporary. This might represent an earlier location of the Fattw farmstead (PRN 30315), and is possibly the house mentioned in the 1764 rental (Mostyn Mss 5452) (figure 6). Its date is not known but it could have a late medieval origin. The rental also mentions a meadow as separate from the main Fattw field. This is presumably the field adjacent to the house platform and the reference may indicate that the cultivation of this field predates the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century.

**PRN 30315 Fattw**

SH 78358 79192

*Period: Post medieval (18<sup>th</sup> century)*

*Category: C Condition: Poor*

This is a rectangular stone-built enclosure with the remains of buildings at the north end. The walls now stand no more than 0.5m high, but the layout of the enclosure is clearly defined. The enclosure is shown on the tithe map in the middle of a field called Vattw, whilst the enclosure itself is called Ty Fattw. 'Mattw house and meadows' is listed in a 1763-4 rental (Mostyn Mss 5452), as well as the adjacent field, just called Mattw, so the farmstead dates from at least the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. However, the enclosure marked on the tithe map is closer in location and alignment to the house platform (PRN 5777) and the similarity of the present stone remains to the sheep pens (PRN 30317) suggests these are of late 19<sup>th</sup> century date. The house platform may have been used up until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the surviving buildings were constructed.

**PRN 30316 Cae'r Dial**

SH 78578 79519

*Period: Post medieval (18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century)*

*Category: C Condition: Poor*



Two small buildings linked by a wall are shown on maps dating from 1889 to 1953 (figures 13-17), and named as Cae'r Dail. These are now totally ruined with stone walls no more than 0.5m high. The present remains are suggestive of a 19<sup>th</sup> century date and their form implies agricultural rather than domestic structures, although this could be a small farmstead. The Bodysgallen rental of 1763-4 (Mostyn Mss 5452) names Cae'r Ddoiol and Cae'r Lloia as part of the Vaerdre Tenement. Both fields together were worth £7 in rent, but it is not clear whether there was an associated dwelling. The tithe map shows no structures in the present location but does mark the cottage and garden of a farmstead called Tŷ Newydd Towyn just to the north (field number 208).

**PRN 30317                      Sheep pens**

*SH 78355 79497*

*Period: Post medieval (19<sup>th</sup> century)*

*Category: D                      Condition: Good*

A rectangular stone-built enclosure with a range of buildings along the western side (plates 4 and 8). The walls of the enclosure slope from the height of the buildings (c.4m) down towards the east to about 2m. Much of the walls survive to full height and fragile traces of the roof remain on part of the buildings. The structure is currently used for sheep pens, and was probably always intended for an agricultural rather than domestic function. The enclosure appears on the 1889 OS map (figure 13), and was probably built in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**PRN 30318                      First World War Practice Trenches**

*SH 78362 79297*

*Period: Modern (1914-1918)*

*Category: C                      Condition: Good*

The trenches run for c. 50m and are 8m across. They are visible as a narrow trench forming a series of regular conjoined squares, with a bank on the north-west side and what appears to be an access trench on the south-east side. Cross trenches appear to form entrances into the main zig-zag trench. This pattern is typical of First World War practice trenches as were recorded by aerial photographs on the Maesdu golf course (PRN 13991) (Driver 2003, 71).

**PRN 30319                      Well/water tank**

*SH 78083 79334*

*Period: Post medieval*

*Category: D                      Condition: Good*

An underground chamber is visible through a window-like opening 0.6m by 0.5m wide. The chamber itself appears to be only slightly wider (c.1m) and about 2m deep. The walls are about 0.5m thick and made of local stone with occasional hand-made bricks and pale brown sandy mortar. The chamber is set within a hollow, presumably created for the chamber's construction. The entrance to the chamber is blocked by a modern grill to prevent access. It is marked as a small black square in the 1889 and 1900 OS maps, as a well on the 1913 map (figure 13) and as a tank on the 1937 map (figure 16). It predates the houses in the area, so was presumably for the supply of water, possibly for livestock.

**PRN 30320                      Culvert**

*SH 78373 79398 to SH 78197 79279*

*Period: Post medieval*

*Category: D                      Condition: Good*

A well-built stone-lined culvert runs through the field south of the castle. It runs down the slope from north-east to south-west and is over 200m long. It still carries water but in places has collapsed showing its structure. The sides are of drystone and the top is capped by large stone slabs. The 1913 and 1937 25 inch maps (figures 15 and 16) show a tank and a spring on the line of the culvert, little trace of which survive on the ground. As an underground feature the culvert itself is unlikely to be shown on a map, but is of a character typical of 19<sup>th</sup> century estate work.

## **5. SUMMARY OF FIELD SURVEY**

Previous survey and excavation work at Degannwy has done much to resolve the layout and date of the remains. However, much still remains unknown, and this is partly because of the lack of a coherent survey of all the earthworks. Although the RCAHMW survey is detailed and accurate it was restricted only to the area of the castle and did not include the south-western foot of the west hill. This limited survey area means the importance of the construction inclines was not recognised and the roadway to the castle was not fully



interpreted. The later OS survey filled in some small gaps but it is a less subtle survey than that of the RCAHMS and some features seem to have been incorrectly interpreted. The most surprising omission is the field system to the south of the castle, briefly mentioned in NPRN 400533, and partially planned by the OS but apparently never completely planned or described in detail. This means that the significance of the hollow-way to the castle was never fully realised.

The present brief assessment has placed the castle within its landscape and has allowed a reassessment of many of the features on and around it. A detailed topographic survey involving close inspection and description of the earthworks would lead to a much clearer understanding of the castle and its phases. The masonry remains have been studied in some detail but the earthworks have been less well analysed. The main questions that are raised by this report include:

- What is the date and function of the Vardre north settlement? Can it be identified with the early borough?
- What is the date and function of other building platforms around the foot of the castle hills?
- Can individual buildings be identified within the bailey?
- What is the relationship between the castle and surrounding field and roadway earthworks? Can their contemporaneity be proved?
- Can phases within the field system to the south of the castle be identified and dated?
- Can the function of the features suggested to be construction inclines be proved?
- Are there other earthwork features on and around the castle still to be identified?
- Can remains of the early medieval and Roman activity be located?

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The earthworks on the site are so clear and the post 13<sup>th</sup> century disturbance so slight that it seems likely that many of the questions relating to the castle could be answered without extensive excavations. Finding the earliest phases of activity would almost certainly require excavation, but geophysical and topographic survey would provide much of the evidence. A magnetometer survey of the castle bailey and the area of the north settlement has been undertaken as part of this project and the results will be described in a separate report. It is possible that more geophysical survey, including use of high resolution survey, might provide more detail.

A new topographic survey is needed to both record the field systems around the castle and also to record new features identified on the castle hills. Careful recording and inspection, if necessary by hand survey combined with Total Station survey, would allow a much clearer understanding of the northern earthworks and a more secure identification of stratigraphic relationships visible within them. Although the field system to the south of the castle has been transcribed from aerial photographs for this report, a topographical survey of this area would also provide more detailed information, and improved identification of earlier and later elements.

Some questions of dating and stratigraphy cannot be answered without excavation but a small number of test trenches could produce substantial results if carefully located. Trenches could help date the north and south settlements and investigate the construction inclines. If there are buildings in the northern part of the bailey these are only just below the turf and their plan could easily be exposed. Leslie Alcock's final excavation report provides relatively little detail on many of the trenches that he dug. An inspection of the original records, especially if combined with new excavation, has great potential for providing a much clearer understanding of the site.

Further documentary research, including a thorough search through the Mostyn rentals and leases held in Bangor and Hawarden, has considerable potential to reveal evidence for post-medieval land use.

An understanding of the archaeology of the Vardre is essential for a full understanding of the castle and its place within the immediate landscape. It is recommended that future interpretation include this wider landscape, and take account of the full range of archaeological remains still visible. Whilst this would include the castle, the medieval borough and contemporary field systems and roads, it is also necessary to acknowledge later history and archaeology, including the post-medieval farmsteads, the First World War practice trenches and the growth of Degannwy as a resort in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By presenting the whole of the Vardre as a site of historical and archaeological interest visitors could discover for themselves features dating from the medieval period through to the First World War.



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Ordnance Survey 25 inch County Series maps Caernarvonshire sheet IV.8 (1889, 1900, 1912, 1937)

Ordnance Survey 25 inch County Series maps Caernarvonshire sheet V.5 (1889, 1900, 1913, 1937)

Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 maps Caernarvonshire sheet IV NE (1920, 1953)

Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 maps Caernarvonshire sheet V NW (1919, 1953)

Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map (SAM area map)

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#### **Bangor University Archives**

Mostyn Collection MSS f31644: Plan and particulars of the Deganwy Estate near Llandudno to be sold by auction by George F Felton on August 23<sup>rd</sup> 1892

Mostyn Collection Mss 5452: Rental of the Berthddu and Bodysgallen Estates belonging to Miss Margaret Wynne (1763-64)

Bangor Collection Ms 3/179: Plan of Llandudno (and environs). Sale of building land on the Gloddaeth Estate (1849)

#### **Conwy Record Office, Llandudno**

Tithe map for the parish of Eglwysrhos in the County of Caernarvon 1846.

Tithe Apportionment Schedule for the parish of Eglwysrhos in the County of Caernarvon 1846.

Lewis Morris: a plan of the bay and harbour of Conwy in Carnarvonshire, 1748

#### **National Monuments Record, Aberystwyth**

##### ***Aerial Photographs***

###### ***Verticals***

CPE UK 1939, frames 4222-3, date 20/01/1947

541 RAF 38, frames 4004-5, date 21/05/1948

58 RAF 2196, frames 174-6, date 14/06/1957

73-050, frames 039-41, date 28/03/1973

86-003, frames 033-5, date 02/03/1986

###### ***Obliques***

945115, frames 52-3, date 1994

965001, frames 49-51, date 1996

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2003/5114, frames 62-3, date 2003

###### ***Colour slides***

94-CS-0847-51, date 30/04/1994

96-CS-0010-11, date 14/02/1996

98-CS-208, date 18/04/1998

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##### ***Other photographs***

Black and white photographs of the castle and of excavation trenches dated 06/05/1952 (in Degannwy Castle site folder)

Black and white photograph of 'Gannog Castle' by E Shirley Jones dated 16/01/1945

##### ***Other material***

Correspondance relating to the management of the SAM, Inventory entry and Alcock's excavations (in the Llanrhos parish file)



Hand drawn version of Inventory plan and copy of original survey by RCAHMW of Degannwy Castle (1948)  
(in Degannwy Castle site file)

**Central Register of Aerial Photography for Wales, Cardiff**

***Aerial Photographs***

*Photographic copies bought for this project*

Library No. 4536, 106G UK 735, frame 4013, date 27/08/1945  
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Library No. 9109, OS 91 148, frame 72, date 11/08/1991  
Library No. 9333, OS 93 142, frame 15, date 08/05/1993  
Library No. 9501, BKS 95/12, frame 95 14:46, date 01/03/1995



# APPENDIX I: Previously known sites from the HER, NMR and listed building register

**Table 1: HER sites within or very close to the study area**

| PRN  | NPRN  | Site name  | NGR          | SAM or LB    | Site type                        | Period                   | Notes   |
|------|-------|--|--------------|--------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1697 | 59509 | Roman material - findspot, Deganwy Castle            | SH782079 50C |              | Find spot                        | Roman                    | Pottery characteristic of 3 <sup>rd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> centuries AD and coin series running from Gallienus (260-8) to Valens (364-78). Also some pottery of late 1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup> centuries (Alcock 1967, 198)  |
| 2814 | 59094 | Deganwy Castle                                       | SH782079 50C | SAM (Cn 016) | Castle, building - ruined        | Medieval                 | Deganwy Castle has had a long and varied history although very little in the way of physical remains survive to testify to it. It's origins date back to the 6th century AD as the court of Maelgwyn Gwynedd and excavations in 1961-6 revealed broken amphorae of that date. Although no buildings from this early phase of use survive, the site may have remained a royal residence into the 9th century when it is recorded as having been destroyed by the Saxons. The Norman, Robert of Rhuddlan built a castle at Deganwy in 1080 which was later regained by the Welsh. Under threat from King John, it was destroyed by the Welsh themselves and rebuilt in 1213 by Llywelyn ap Iorwerth. It was again demolished in anticipation of its loss, this time by the sons of Llywelyn. The remains visible today are largely those of the walls and towers built by Henry III between 1245 and 1254 but never finished. It was captured and demolished by Llywelyn ap Gruffudd in 1263. Henry's son, Edward founded a new castle at Conwy and the site at Deganwy was finally abandoned. A carved corbel from the site is thought to be Llywelyn ap Iorwerth. Earthworks in the vicinity of the castle belong to the borough founded in 1252 and cultivation ridges can also be seen along with practise trenches from the First World War. |
| 2815 | 55143 | Bronze axe hoard - findspot, Degannwy                | SH780079 00A |              | Find spot                        | Prehistoric (Bronze Age) | 'Here (Degannwy) a considerable deposit of celts was found in 1720, under a great stone' (Way 1856, 123). Compared to other bronze palstaves.   |
| 2831 | 55513 | Polished stone axe - findspot, nr Cae'r Dial, Vardre | SH785279 52  |              | Find spot                        | Prehistoric              | Axe of non-Graig Lwyd stone   |
| 2836 | 55517 | Farmstead (prob. Med.), N of Deganwy Castle          | SH782379 51  |              | Farmstead, earthwork             | Medieval                 | Described by OS as a building platform 6m by 4m and an enclosure 20m by 25m, consisting of a leveled area cut into the N side of Degannwy Castle. The enclosure is defined by a bank on its NE side. 2 small platforms to the SE may be associated. Probably a medieval farmstead. Certainly later than the castle as the site is on the line of the outer ditch (OS card SH77NE29). Described in 1998 as 'No obvious remains. Destroyed.' (GAT report 289)   |
| 2837 | 55518 | Iron Age homestead, Deganwy                          | SH782079 54  |              | Hut circle settlement, earthwork | Roman                    | Group of 3 enclosed huts scooped into NW facing slope and visible as shallow depression 6m to 7m in diameter. The entrance was on the NE side and there was probably a fourth hut on the S side of the entrance. Typical of IA/RB settlements (OS card SH 77 NE 30).  |
| 2838 | 55519 | House platform & paddock, Deganwy                    | SH783279 50  |              | Platform house, earthwork        | Medieval                 | House and paddock, 20m long overall and 5m in average width, cut into base of steep N facing slope below Deganwy Castle. Probably medieval or later (OS card SH 77 NE 31).  |
| 4581 | 55057 | Polished stone axe - findspot, Plas Mariandir        | SH785080 10A |              | Find spot                        | Prehistoric              | Graig Lwyd axe.   |
| 5182 | 58881 | Polished stone axe - findspot, S of Deganwy Castle   | SH782079 30A |              | Find spot                        | Prehistoric              | Presumably the Graig Lwyd axe from Gannock Park listed in the Inventory (No. 28)  |



|       |       |                                      |             |    |                     |               |  |
|-------|-------|--------------------------------------|-------------|----|---------------------|---------------|--|
| 5544  | 58902 | Hollow way, Castell Deganwy          | SH785779 33 |    | Holloway, earthwork | Unknown       | No information   |
| 5777  | 63205 | Rectangular platform, Deganwy Castle | SH783779 22 |    | Platform, earthwork | Unknown       | A positive platform, orientated at right angles to a moderate slope (axis NW-SE). A low bank 0.2m high is visible on the edges of the platform apart from the upslope end. The platform is 0.5 - 0.6m high downslope and between 0.3 - 0.4m high elsewhere. Internally the platform is 7.5m wide and c.17m long though the upslope perimeter of the feature is unclear. A depression adjacent to the NE corner appears to be a spring which has slightly eroded to the NE corner of the platform itself. A slightly curvilinear bank 1m wide and up to 0.7m runs from the outcropping to the SW corner of the platform. The platform is protected from the prevailing SW wind by the outcrop. The platform is situated approx. 18-19m NE of the stone and brick constructed remains of Fatw Farm (Mostyn Ms 5452 1763) and may represent a preceeding C14th farmstead associated with the borough/township of Deganwy. |
| 7377  | 64443 | Gannoc medieval township             | SH780079 00 |    | Township            | Medieval      |  |
| 11973 | 26105 | Bryngosol                            | SH782079 80 | LB | Building            | Post-Medieval | Late 17th century to early 18th century, fireplace bressumer dated 1718, 2 storeys.  |
| 21053 | 61630 | Shaft, Cae'r Dail                    | SH786079 40 |    | Shaft               | Post-Medieval | Pit, tunnel  |
| 21921 | 0     | Bwlch mine                           | SH787079 40 |    | Antimony mine       | Post-Medieval | Pit, mound<br>Geology: a vein bearing stibnite, semseyite, a sulphide of lead and antimony, one of two (with Glendenning in Scotland) in Britain. History: marked on a map of 1837. Workings: all surface evidence has been destroyed by the farmer as a result of unauthorised underground exploration.   |

**Table 2: Listed buildings within or very close to the study area**

| Number | Name                       | History | Reason | Description   | NGR            |
|--------|----------------------------|---------|--------|---|----------------|
| 3237   | Bryn Gosol, Arfryn Deganwy |         |        | Later C17 to early C18; fireplace bressumer dated 1817. Two storey house with external front elevation much modernised but retaining much of the original structure and listed for this reason. Front elevation of 3 bays; slate gabled roof with flanking stacks; stone walls with pebbledash cladding. Large modern wood framed casements, the upper ones with heads at eaves level. Centre doorway with modern door. Inside, fireplace with dated wood bressumer concealed in 9 foot thick east wall. Thick chamfered centre beams, one with run-out stops; unchamfered joists. Rear lean-to added circa 1850 (according to evidence of previous occupier given in 1930s). | SH 78275 79899 |
| 3365   | Deganwy Castle             |         |        | Scheduled Ancient Monument. Hilltop site. Traditionally a fortress built here in C5 by Cunedda - pieces of Mediterranean amphorae of C5 and C6 have been discovered. Traditionally, also, the seat of Maelgwyn Gwynedd, grandson of Cunedda. The present remaining masonry if the castle appears to date from two probably C13 periods; these comprise fragments disposed about two hillocks, with the Donjon on the Western hillock and Mansell's tower on the Eastern hillock and with the bailey   | SH 78223 79438 |



|       |                |  |  |   |                   |
|-------|----------------|--|--|---|-------------------|
|       |                |  |  | lying in the saddle between. The castle was destroyed by Llewelyn at Gruffydd in 1283 and was never rebuilt.  |                   |
| 87415 | Brackenrigg    | Built in the 1930s for Sidney Aston, furniture retailer of N Wales and NW England. The architect is not known.   | Listed for its special architectural interest as a fine and well-preserved 1930s suburban house.   | A house in free Domestic-revival style combining Arts and Crafts and Georgian elements, of 1 storey with attic and basement, of whitened pebble-dashed walls, steep tile roof, hipped to the main range and with mansard roofs to outer bays, and tall end brick stacks. The front is 3 main bays, near-symmetrical. In the central bay the entrance is offset to the L and reached up an arc of stone steps. The Lutyens-like entrance has a brick surround to a round-headed doorway with 4 orders of brickwork, and double studded doors incorporating upper mullioned lights with patterned glazing. On its R side is a 2-light small-pane canted bay window. Outer bays have prominent bow windows under domed roofs, small-pane iron-frame glazing under round heads, between wooden Tuscan engaged columns supporting a continuous architrave, with basement windows below. The attic has a central raked roof dormer with 4-light mullioned and transomed small-pane window, and shutters. Outer bays have canted oriels to the attic, with cross windows and small-pane glazing. | SH 78013<br>79437 |
| 87419 | Coed y Castell | A 1930s house (although not shown on the 1937 Ordnance Survey) by Clough Williams-Ellis, architect. It is probably the house listed by the architect as built at Deganwy shortly before 1939. It was built for the Mostyn Estate, perhaps for its chief agent. | Listed for its special architectural interest as a fine and well-preserved 1930s suburban house by one of the foremost architects working in N Wales in the mid C20. | A 2-storey house displaying both Arts-and-Crafts and modernist influence, of whitened pebble-dashed walls, slate roof on wide boarded eaves, with external stacks to the ends. The symmetrical front comprises a central bay with prominent full-height bowed outer bays under conical roofs. The central half-glazed steel-framed doors incorporate marginal glazing. Above is a 2-light window. The bow windows have continuous strips of glazing, incorporating steel-framed casements, and with a transom in the lower storey.  | SH 78023<br>79582 |

**Table 3: NMR sites within or very close to the study area**

| NPRN  | Name   | NGR          | Period                 | Description   |
|-------|--|--------------|------------------------|---|
| 15073 | Earthworks Of Settlement Features North-East Of Deganwy Castle | SH7832579515 | Medieval;Post Medieval | NAR SH77NE31A rectangular building platform about 10m west-north-west to east-south-east by 5.0m, with an enclosure about 10m by 7.0m attached on the west. These features are terraced into the base of steep north-facing slopes below Degannwy castle (NPRN 95282).The site can be considered as part of an extensive settlement complex around the castle (see NPRN 400535).John Wiles 09.06.04   |
| 26105 | Bryngosol  | SH782798     | Post Medieval?         | Late 17th century to early 18th century, fireplace bressumer dated 1718, 2 storeys.   |
| 95282 | Deganwy Castle   | SH7822079450 | Medieval               | NAR SH77NE1<br>Fragmentary shattered ruins of a great stone-built fortress crown the twin peaks of Deganwy Castle. This was Arx Decantorum, the seat of Maelgwn tyrant of Gwynedd in the sixth century, burnt by lightning in 812 and destroyed by the Saxons in 822 AD (see NPRN 404377). In the late eleventh century this was the seat of Robert of Rhuddlan from which he levied extortion on Gwynedd and from which he rode out to his death. As the Castrum de Gannoc it changed hands, was rebuilt and destroyed throughout the thirteenth century. The visible ruins are those of the great castle, accompanied by a borough, built by Henry III in 1245-50 that was beleaguered for seven years before being systematically destroyed by Llywelyn ab Gruffudd in 1263. Some activity continued at the site and the borough was |



|        |   |              |                         |   |
|--------|---|--------------|-------------------------|---|
|        |   |              |                         | still active in 1305. The castle was excavated in 1961-6, when evidence was recovered for a later prehistoric style fortress on the western peak, along with first to third century Roman material. The main castle court occupied the western crag and enclosed an area about 60m across. It included at least one great round tower and several domestic blocks. The smaller eastern crag was crowned by the irregular Mansel's Tower. The area between the crags was enclosed by great ramparts and walls, with a monumental twin-towered gatehouse on the south-side. Extensive settlement earthworks to the north and south of the castle (NPRN 400533, 400535) may represent several periods of occupation, including the thirteenth century borough (see NPRN 400533). The name attached to this area, 'the Vardre', suggests that it was at some time a bond settlement associated with a local court. Sources: RCAHMW Caernarvonshire Inventory I (1956), 152-5 ; Alcock in the Archaeological Journal 124 (1967), 190-201 John Wiles 27.07.07   |
| 303133 | Homestead, Deganwy  | SH7820579555 | Unknown                 | NAR SH77NE30<br>A curvilinear earthwork enclosure, about 24m north-west to south-east by 18m, in which three, possibly four shallow depressions in the region of 6.0-7.0m across may represent circular buildings. This may be a later prehistoric style enclosure enclosed settlement, although it can also be considered part of a more extensive medieval or later complex (see NPRN 400535). John Wiles 09.06.04  |
| 400533 | Vardre South, Settlement Earthworks South Of Deganwy Castle: Medieval Borough | SH78357931   | Medieval; Post Medieval | Settlement earthworks that can be associated with the thirteenth century borough or else with a medieval bond settlement or maerdref [VARDRE]. A similar earthwork complex lies north of the castle (see NPRN 400535). The borough was founded with the castle in the mid thirteenth century. House plots or burgages, were to be assigned in 1248 & 1251, and a charter was issued in 1252. Each burgess or householder, was to have half an acre for a building plot in the borough and two acres of arable land outside. Something of the borough appears to have survived the destruction of the castle in 1263 to be attached to the new borough of Conway, chartered in 1284 (see NPRN 33013). Weekly markets and annual fairs continued to be held and nineteen houses are listed in the 1305-6 Conway rental.<br>This is a complex of earthwork features covering an area about 200m across on open land south of Deganwy Castle (NPRN 95282). These mostly appear to be field boundary features. A north-south trackway crosses the area, continuing the line of a holloway leading from the castle entrance. This appears to be flanked by building sites and could be the borough street.<br>Source: Beresford 'New Towns of the Middle Ages' revised edition (1988), 42-3, 546-7<br>Aerial coverage RCAHMW AP94-CS 0849-50: AP945115/52-5; 945116/56] |
| 400535 | Vardre North Settlement   | SH7820579555 | Medieval; Post          | Settlement earthworks that can be associated with the thirteenth century borough (see NPRN 400533) or else with a medieval bond settlement or maerdref [VARDRE]. This is a complex of earthwork features covering an area about 200m across on open ground north of Deganwy Castle (NPRN 95282). There are possible field boundaries together with indications of more organised enclosures and what appears to be a north-west to south-east lane or track passing south of given NGR. Features recorded as a prehistoric settlement (NPRN 303133) may be associated with this complex, as may other settlement features in the vicinity (NPRN 15073, 400536). More extensive earthworks are located south of the castle (NPRN 400533). Source: RCAHMW aerial coverage [AP94-CS 0851: AP945115/52-3; 945116/56]  |
| 400536 | Earthworks Of Building And Enclosure North Of Deganwy Castle                  | SH7822079489 | Medieval; Post Medieval | NAR SH77NE29<br>A rectangular building platform, 6.0m by 4.0m. On the north-west is a rather irregular D-shaped levelled and subdivided enclosure, 25m north-west to south-east by 20m, its straight north-eastern edge defined by a bank. These features appear to form part of a more extensive settlement(?) complex (see NPRN 400535).  |
| 404377 | Deganwy; Deganwy, Site Of Battle  | SH7822079450 | Medieval                | In 820 the castle of Deganwy was destroyed by the Saxons, who then took over rulership of Powys. Source: Thomas Jones, The Chronicle of the Princes, 1955, p.7.<br>". . . in 822 the Welsh fortress of Deganwy, once the seure stronghold of Maelgwn Gwynedd, was destroyed and the realm of Powys was overrun." Source: J.E. Lloyd, A History of Wales, vol I, 1912, p.202.<br>In 822, the citadel of Deganwy was destroyed by the [Anglo-]Saxons and they took the region of Powys into their power. Source: D.N. Dumville, Annales Cambriae A.D. 682-954, Cambridge, 2003.<br>Various other sources, as yet unverified, suggest that the fortress or citadel of Deganwy (Deganwy) was attacked   |



|        |                           |        |          |  |
|--------|---------------------------|--------|----------|--|
|        |                           |        |          | and destroyed by the Saxons in 822. B.A.Malaws, RCAHMW, 18 May 2006.Concerns: Deganwy Castle (NPRN 95282).Other conflicts here include the slaughter of Robert of Rhuddlan and a seven years blockade and siege ending in the castle's destruction in 1263.  |
| 404453 | Aberconwy, Site Of Battle | SH7878 | Medieval | "But shortly after [i.e.after 1188] there appears upon the stage the greatest of Welsh princes in the person of Llywelyn, son of Iorwerth ab Owain, who in 1194 won two notable victories hereabouts, at Aberconwy (Conway) and Porthaethwy (Menai Bridge) [nprn 404316], which launched him upon his triumphant career."Cambridge County Histories: Carnarvonshire, 1911; p. 91.<br>"After the victory of Aberconwy, Llywelyn [ab Iorwerth] won fresh triumphs at the passage of the Menai at Porthaethwy."Source: J.E.Lloyd, A History of Wales, vol II, 1912, p.589 B.A.Malaws, RCAHMW, 09 June 2006. |

**Table 4: HER sites within 1.5km of the study area**

| PRN   | NPRN  | Site name                                       | NGR         | SAM or LB | Period                 | NOTES   |
|-------|-------|---|-------------|-----------|------------------------|---|
| 79    | 57173 | Stone Head - Findspot, Queens Road, Craig Y Don | SH79358107  |           | Post medieval          | Carved stone head. Originally thought medieval. Actually Victorian. Found at near of "Addison", Queens Road, Craig-y-Don, Llandudno.  |
| 2823  | 55504 | Spindle Whorl - Findspot, Aberconwy School      | SH77627824  |           | Roman                  | Spindle whorl: an Iron Age spindle whorl was found in April 1965 in the garden of Aberconwy School, during extension to the dining room. Now in the National Museum of Wales, presented by Mr R. N. Pritchard, headmaster.            |
| 2853  | 55582 | Tithe Barn (Rebuilt), Twt Hill                  | SH77667807  | LB        | Post-Medieval          | Single storey 85ft 9in by 25ft 9in. Site mentioned earlier. Rubble walls, two wide doorways, double row ventilation slits; burnt in 1920's, but rebuilt with same pitched roof and inscribed dated lintel reset in original position. |
| 4392  | 63327 | Fish Weir (Site Of) Afon Conwy                  | SH78347840  |           | Medieval               | A fish weir comprising a line of wooden stakes up to 100mm in diameter, spaced 350-400mm apart, driven through a mussel bed on river mud and partially into the underlying, glacially derived, red-brown clay.                        |
| 4555  | 59401 | Inscribed Stone ("Sanctinvs"), Llanrhos Church  | SH79338032  |           | Early-Medieval         |   |
| 4578  | 55054 | Watchtower, Bryniau Tower, Llanrhos             | SH78568030  | SAM       | Post-Medieval          |   |
| 4594  | 55070 | Castell Tremlyd - Site Of, Maesdu Golf Course   | SH77358056  |           | Unknown                |   |
| 4596  | 55072 | St Hilary's Church, Llandudno                   | SH79338032  |           | Medieval               |   |
| 5553  | 58910 | Quernstone - Findspot, Farmer's Arms, Deganwy   | SH78677867R |           | Prehistoric            |   |
| 6932  | 0     | Eglwys-Rhos Parish Church                       | SH79338032  |           | Medieval;Post-Medieval |   |
| 7882  | 0     | POW Camp - Site Of, Deganwy                     | SH77007900A |           | Modern                 |   |
| 11484 | 16861 | Station Road                                    | SH77007900  | LB        | Post-Medieval          | [1 Gorse Bank, Sunnyside, 3 Bank Buildings]. Late 19th Century to early 20th Century contemporary verandah of 6 bays.   |
| 11546 | 16988 | Tyn y Coed House                                | SH79107970  | LB        | Post-Medieval          | Front block is late 19th - early 20th Century. Gothic style.  |
| 11972 | 26104 | Conway Lodge                                    | SH79458001  | LB        | Post-Medieval          | Dated 1894, former lodge to Gloddaeth Hall.   |
| 12006 | 26202 | Castle Hotel                                    | SH77757922  | LB        | Post-Medieval          | later 19th century, to believed to incorporate older house, 4 storey tower at W.  |



|       |        |  |            |    |               |  |
|-------|--------|--|------------|----|---------------|--|
| 12049 | 26270  | Church House                           | SH79288032 | LB | Post-Medieval | Stone rubble walls, slate roof.  |
| 12050 | 26271  | Church House                           | SH79288032 | LB | Post-Medieval | Stone rubble wall.   |
| 12177 | 26534  | Gorphwysfa                             | SH79007900 | LB | Post-Medieval | Mid 19th century or earlier, proferbing centre bay   |
| 12666 | 32581  | Conway Road, Drinking Fountain         | SH79038030 | LB | Post-Medieval | Wall of stone rubble, late 19th century fountain.  |
| 12726 | 0      | Settlement Remains, Llanrhos           | SH79418034 |    | Prehistoric   | The evaluation has revealed evidence of occupation of likely prehistoric date within Trench B, consisting of a series of at least four shallow gullies and a possible posthole. A layer of burnt material within two of the gullies contained fragments of daub, some with wattle impressions, which was presumably derived from some form of structure. At this stage the only dating evidence consists of a cortical flint flake with slight retouch, although a sample of charcoal has been submitted to Belfast for radiocarbon dating. The exact nature and extent of the occupation could not be determined within the scope of the evaluation.  |
| 12991 | 0      | Glebe House Earthworks, Llanrhos       | SH79348028 |    | Post-Medieval | Earthwork remains of glebe house and associated buildings, consisting of a raised platform with low earthworks suggesting several buildings.   |
| 12992 | 0      | Mostyn Arms Earthworks, Llanrhos       | SH79338020 |    | Post-Medieval | Earthwork remains of two buildings forming the Mostyn Arms public house, together with adjacent enclosure or yard measuring 34m x 31m, defined by banks.   |
| 12993 | 0      | Gloddaeth Estate Drive                 | SH79458034 |    | Post-Medieval | Former drive and avenue of trees associated with Gloddaeth Estate.   |
| 12994 | 0      | Boundary, Llanrhos                     | SH79418034 |    | Medieval?     | Slight earthwork bank with possible track alongside.   |
| 12995 | 0      | Boundary, Llanrhos                     | SH79408027 |    | Medieval?     | Slight earth bank with possible ditch alongside.   |
| 12996 | 0      | Boundary, Llanrhos                     | SH79448025 |    | Medieval?     | Earthwork lynchet with possible ditch along s side and suggestion of revetment wall along eastern section.   |
| 12997 | 0      | Ridge And Furrow, Llanrhos             | SH79458025 |    | Medieval?     | Slight ridge and furrow aligned n-s, c.3-4m apart and 0.1m high.   |
| 12998 | 0      | Possible Burial, Llanrhos              | SH79258030 |    | Unknown       | There is a local tradition that burials have been noted in the field to the west of the road, opposite the church. Exact location unknown.   |
| 12999 | 0      | Possible Burial, Llanrhos              | SH79398027 |    | Unknown       | There is a local tradition that a burial, apparently of early Christian date, was found during laterations to the road close to the church. Exact location unknown.  |
| 13991 | 308518 | Practice Trenches, Maesdu Golf Course  | SH77838022 |    | Modern        | System of 1st World War practice trenches, centered at NGR but extending to the north, discovered as parchmarks in golf course during RCAHMW aerial reconnaissance in 15th July 2003.  |
| 14607 |        | Cored Maelgwyn                         | SH77158068 |    | Medieval      | Site rediscovered by N. Bannerman. Site shown on 18th century Lewis Morris chart as Cored Faelgwn. The gorad can be seen on the foreshore close to the coastal defences off Cerrig Duon to the south of Llandudno West Shore. It comprises a well defined line of stones, some possibly the remnants of facing running in a slightly curving line at 90 degrees to the shore. The trap curves towards the flood tide.  |
| 14608 |        | Conway North Marsh Trap (Site Of)      | SH76607940 |    |               | Site shown on Collins chart of 1695 and listed as lost by Bannerman and Jones. Not visited, as reclaimed land etc in the vicinity supports Bannerman and Jones observation.  |
| 14609 |        | Gorad Wythno                           | SH77158078 |    |               | The gorad can be seen on the foreshore close to the coastal defences off Cerrig Duon to the south of Llandudno West Shore. It is defined by a somewhat diffuse line of stones forming a semi-circle with the mouth facing the shore.   |
| 15804 | 0      | Morfa Rhianned - Landscape             | SH77808070 |    | Multi-period  | This area forms part, occupies land which has remained otherwise undeveloped between the southern extremity of Llandudno and the northern part of Deganwy. The North Wales Path runs alongside it, and it is bisected by the railway. It is described by Lewis Morris as 'Morva Rhianedd a Low Marsh' in his Plans of 1748. This area has legendary associations with the story of Maelgwn Gwynedd, as the place where the fad felen ('yellow plague') arrived, which claimed the king's life. It is also mentioned in the Englynion y Beddau. Much of it now forms links of the Maesdu golf-club. Key historic landscape characteristics: undeveloped, golf links.  |
| 15806 |        | Deganwy/Llandudno Junction - Landscape | SH79307840 |    | Multi-period  | A low-lying area which in its present form is largely a creation of the growth of the railway network. The area in the south-western part of the Creuddyn peninsula which is now covered by the nineteenth and twentieth century dwellings of Deganwy and Llandudno Junction is known to have been granted to the Cistercian monastery of Aberconwy by Llywelyn. The monastic presence is recorded in the name Sarn y Mynach, by which the A47 is known at the point where it crosses the main line railway and the Afon Ganol. Another axis which predates the Modern period is the north-south road through Llandudno Junction known as Marl Lane which formerly connected the dwelling Marl (2021) with |



|       |   |                                      |             |               |  |
|-------|---|--------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|--|
|       |   |                                      |             |               | <p>the ferry. The Telford post road passes through the character area, which includes the embankment over the Conwy on which the Telford suspension bridge and the Stephenson tubular bridge are built.</p> <p>The main-line railway from Chester to Bangor was opened in 1848, and the branch to Llandudno in 1858; Llandudno Junction station was opened in 1860, and was upgraded several times, including the construction of a locomotive shed in the 1880s. The construction of the branch-line railway to Llandudno, opened in 1858, made possible the development of a resort on the western-facing shores of the peninsula at Deganwy; a station was opened in 1866. After the opening of the branch line railway to Blaenau Ffestiniog in 1879, the railway company also began the construction of a wharf to ship the slate at Deganwy in 1882, using spoil from the Belmont tunnel in Bangor. This saw comparatively little use, and now services pleasure craft.</p> <p>The settlements have continued to grow into the twentieth century. Whereas Deganwy has been largely a holiday and retirement area, Llandudno Junction was also the home to a considerable number of railway employees and more recently to workers in the Hotpoint factory. The North Wales Weekly News building is also a prominent local landmark.</p> <p>The area is characterised by suburban housing stock which dates almost entirely from the late nineteenth or twentieth centuries, and is constructed largely of brick. Roofing materials are a mixture of tiles and slates. A distinctive feature is the row of houses built by the Llanfairfechan architect North at SH 781 804, which makes distinctive use of rustic slates, some of them from the Tal y Fan quarry (2023). Here and there earlier houses or chapels built out of local limestone and roofed with more common commercially available slates are evident. The shops on the front at Deganwy incorporate an attractive cast-iron canopy over the pavement.</p> <p>The area is also characterised by the transport routes which pass through it - the Telford road, the railway, the modern A55T, which passes under the Conwy in a tunnel, and the quays at Deganwy and by Conwy bridge. As well as the two bridges over the Conwy, there are a number of other items of transport infrastructure, such as the signalbox at Deganwy, the locomotive sheds at the Junction, and in various bridges. Llandudno Junction station is an unusual example for the area of a Victorian station-building with Modernist accretions, and the Modernist style is also evident in the extensive Hotpoint factory at SH 803 777, now disused.</p> |
| 15807 |   | Conwy Morfa - Landscape              | SH76607880  | Multi-period  | <p>Conwy Morfa was used for grazing sheep and for defensive purposes by the time it enters the historic record in the eighteenth century. As early as 1768 a map appears to show a military camp there, and it was used in the latter part of the nineteenth century as a training camp for the Volunteer movement, in particular the 20th regiment of the Lancashire Fusiliers and the 6th and 7th Battalions of the Territorial Army. It was the scene of the young David Lloyd George's brief flirtation with military life in 1880.</p> <p>Much of the area is now given over to a caravan park and a golf course. A fish house is shown on Lewis Morris's map of 1748 on the north coast.</p> <p>Key historic landscape characteristics: sand dunes, golf course. A largely featureless area of encroachment from the sea.</p>  |
| 16580 | 0 | Llandudno West Shore Submerged Peats | SH77308000A | Prehistoric   | <p>No peat seen. The beach is covered by a sand bank, probably about a metre deep. A few mussel beds on cobbles show through in the upper part of the beach. N. Bannerman reports this peat to be a continuation of the Morfa Conwy peat and so presumably also on the upper beach where it would be visible at most tides if not buried. This east side of the estuary seems to be aggrading, while the west side (Morfa Conwy) is being depleted.</p>  |
| 16740 | 0 | Quarry, Coed Marl Hall               | SH79867894  | Post-Medieval | <p>Limestone exposure which has been quarried. 6 m high, 18 m long, 6 m wide. One main working face is evident with two smaller side faces.</p>  |
| 16750 | 0 | Terraced Path, Coed Marl Hall        | SH7867883   | Post-Medieval | <p>Terraced path running from Marl Hall in the direction of the spring pool, 16742, 4m in width.</p>   |
| 16752 | 0 | Wall, Coed Marl Hall                 | SH79847894  | Post-Medieval | <p>Stone wall of large limestone blocks perched along the uppermost edge of a natural limestone scarp. The wall is 0.5 m high and composed of blocks up to 0.5 x 0.5 x 0.5 m.</p>  |



## **APPENDIX II: Definition of categories of importance and condition**

### ***Categories of importance***

The following categories were used to define the importance of the archaeological resource.

#### ***Category A - Sites of National Importance.***

Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings of grade II\* and above, as well as those that would meet the requirements for scheduling (ancient monuments) or listing (buildings) or both.

Sites that are scheduled or listed have legal protection, and it is recommended that all Category A sites remain preserved and protected *in situ*.

#### ***Category B - Sites of regional or county importance.***

Grade II listed buildings and sites which would not fulfil the criteria for scheduling or listing, but which are nevertheless of particular importance within the region.

Preservation *in situ* is the preferred option for Category B sites, but if damage or destruction cannot be avoided, appropriate detailed recording might be an acceptable alternative.

#### ***Category C - Sites of district or local importance.***

Sites which are not of sufficient importance to justify a recommendation for preservation if threatened.

Category C sites nevertheless merit adequate recording in advance of damage or destruction.

#### ***Category D - Minor and damaged sites.***

Sites that are of minor importance or are so badly damaged that too little remains to justify their inclusion in a higher category.

For Category D sites, rapid recording, either in advance of or during destruction, should be sufficient.

#### ***Category E - Sites needing further investigation.***

Sites, the importance of which is as yet undetermined and which will require further work before they can be allocated to categories A - D are temporarily placed in this category, with specific recommendations for further evaluation. By the end of the assessment there should usually be no sites remaining in this category.

### ***Definition of Condition***

The present condition of each feature has been assessed and grades as *very good*, *good*, *poor*, *very poor* and *no visible remains* as described below.

#### ***Very good***

Buildings are roofed and intact; earthworks survive to their original height or depth and are entirely uneroded.

#### ***Good***

Buildings may have lost their roofs but the walls still stand to full or nearly full height and may features are still clearly visible. Earthworks have suffered some erosion over time but have not be disturbed significantly by later ploughing or other activity.

#### ***Poor***

Buildings have been largely demolished but foundations can still be seen and understood. Earthworks are eroded and hard to understand.



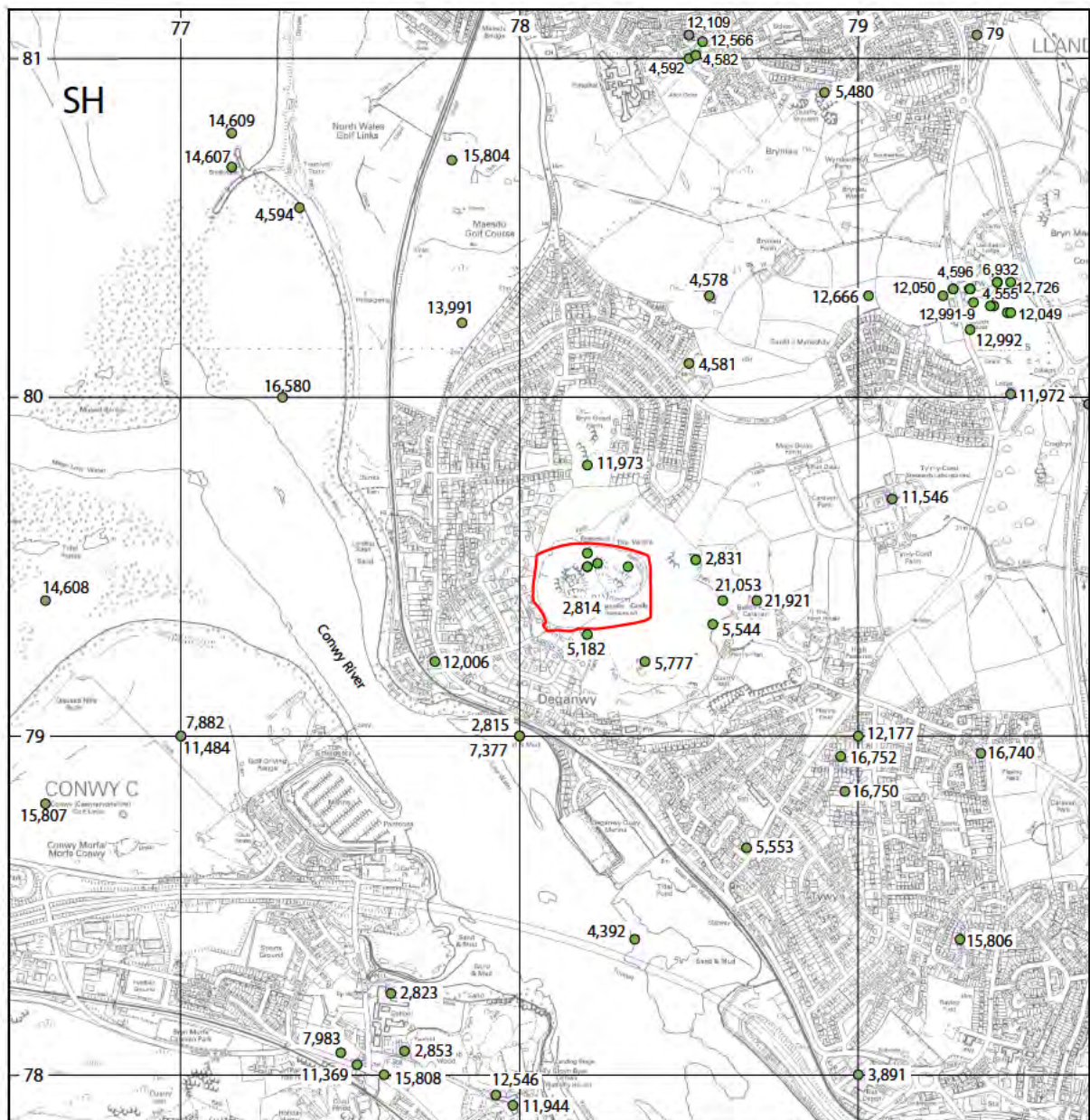
*Very poor*

Traces of both buildings and earthworks can be seen but are very difficult to interpret and follow in any coherent plan

*No remains visible*

Nothing can be seen on the ground surface but this does not exclude the survival of buried remains.





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Figure 1. Location of Degannwy Castle and sites in the area  
(Degannwy Castle SAM in red, other HER sites are green circles, the numbers are PRNs)



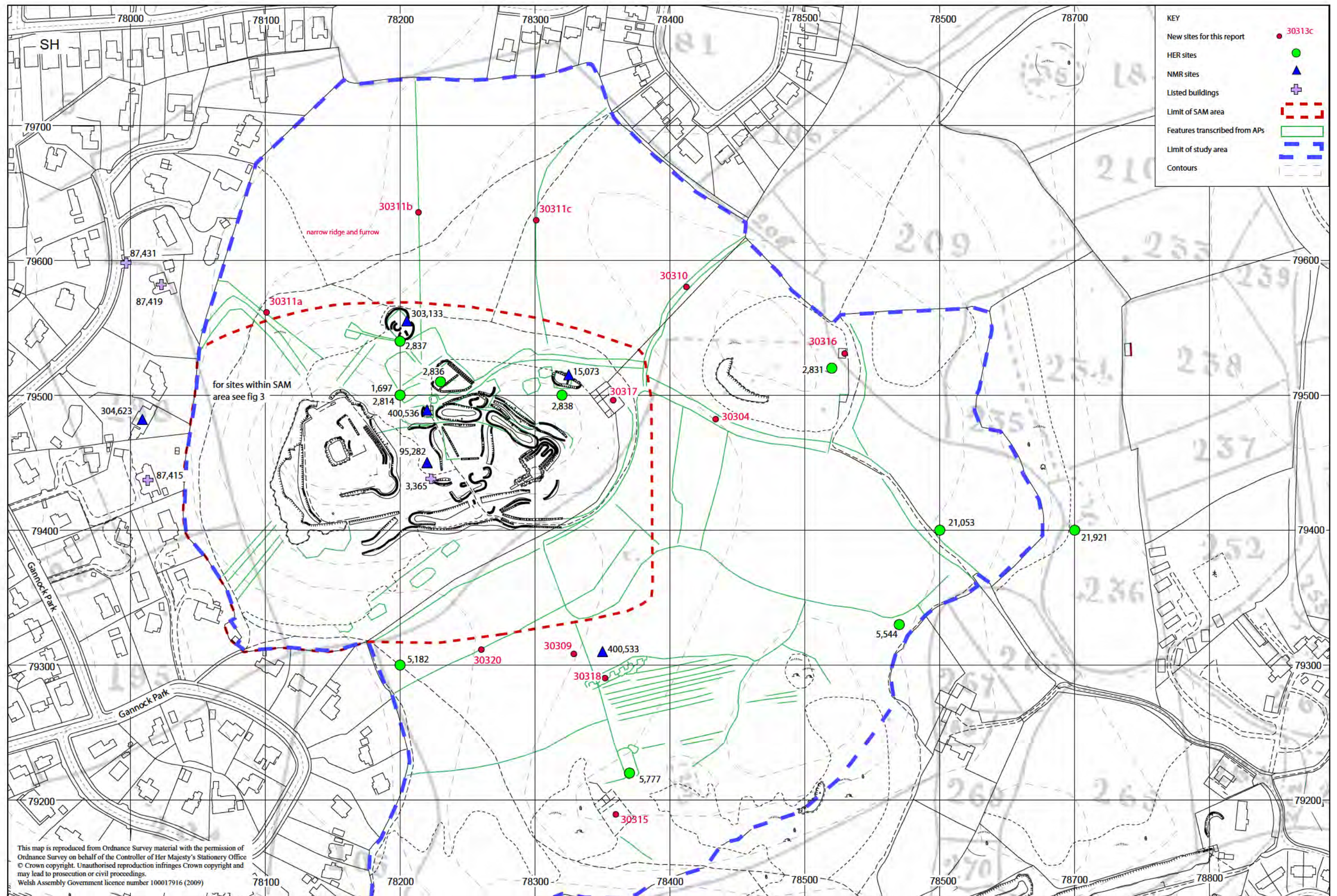
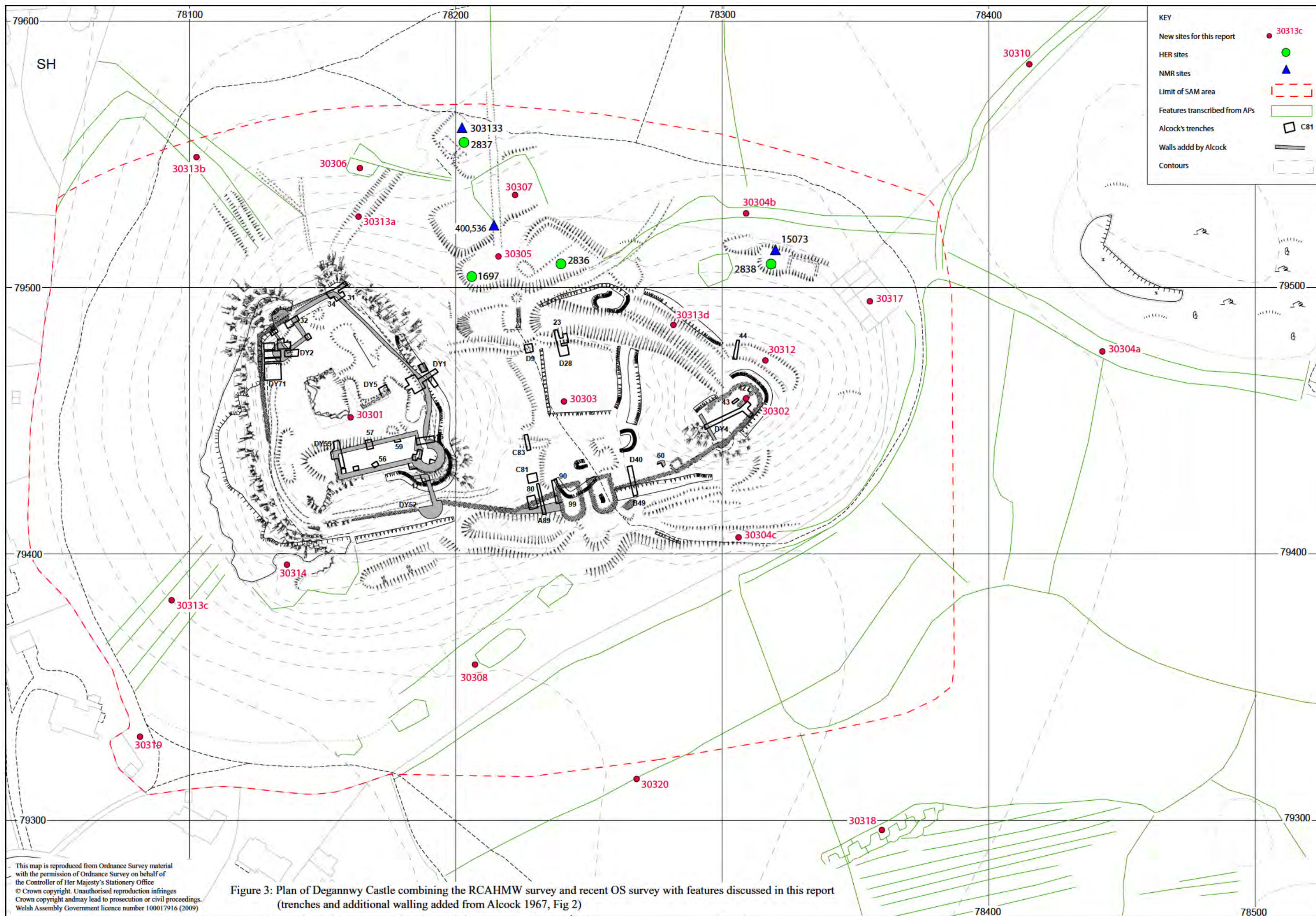


Figure 2. Study area and features described (with tithe map superimposed in background)







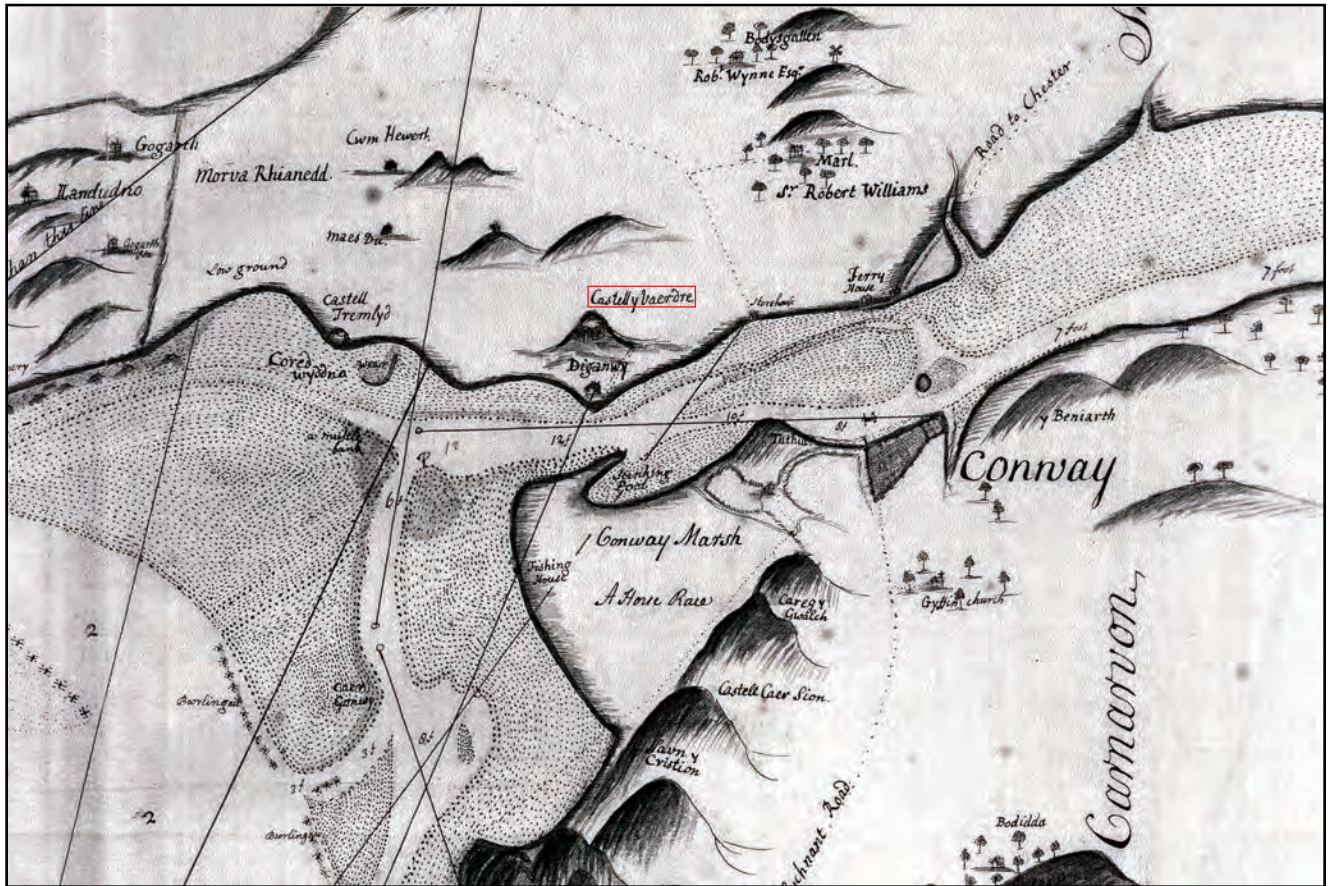


Figure 4. Lewis Morris, 1735-6 Cambrian Coasting Pilot (Anglesey Record Office WM/1905)

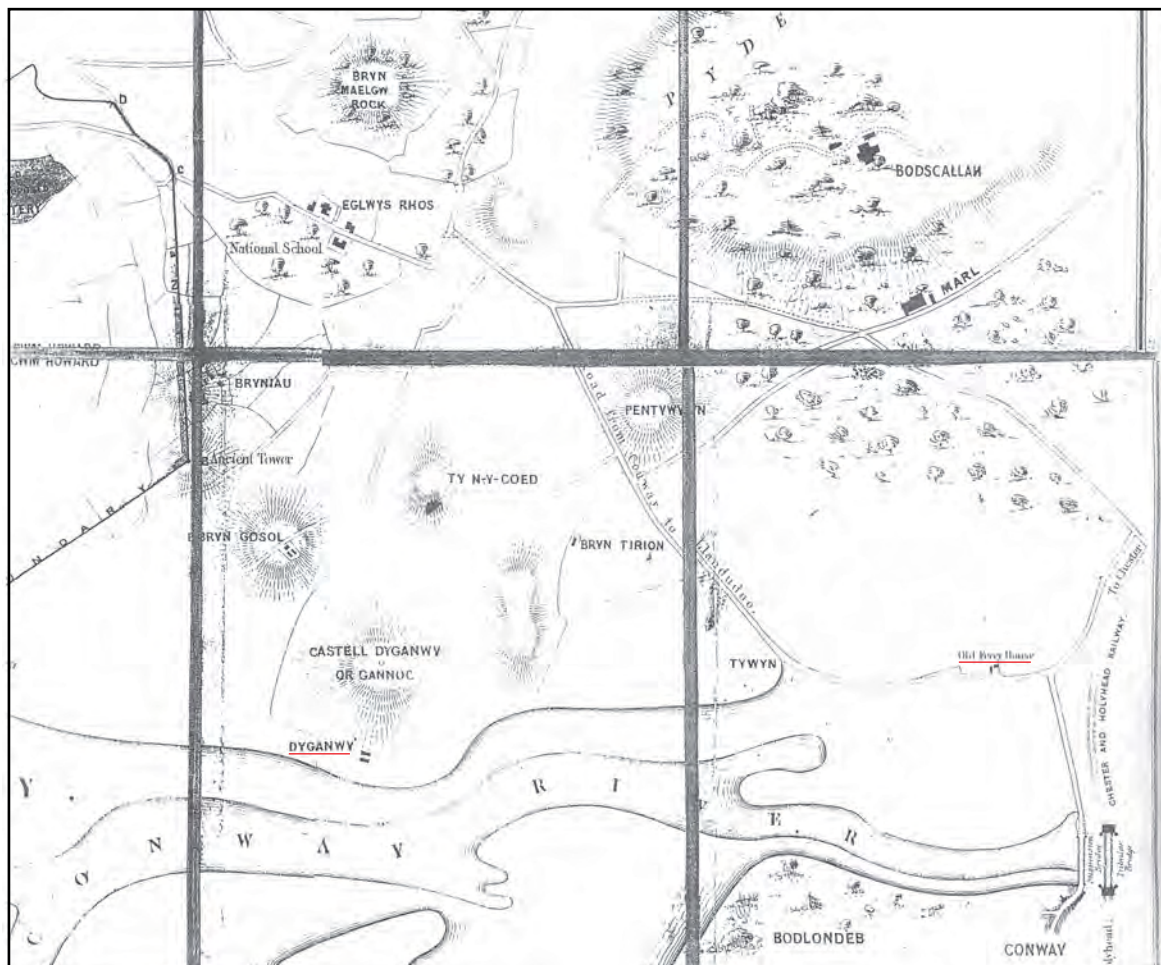


Figure 5. Plan of Llandudno (and environs), Gloddaeth Estate c. 1849 (Bangor Collection Ms 3/179)



|                                   |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| County of Carmarthen              |  | A Rental of the Estate of Miss Wynne of Bodysgallen in the Hundred of Goyddemolion 1764. |  |
| The Names of the Tenants.         |  | The Names of the Tenants.  |  |
|                                   |  | Arrears due for 1764   |  |
|                                   |  | 1764   |  |
|                                   |  | L. s. d. L. s. d.  |  |
| Glyngwroth Parish                 |  |  |  |
| Bodysgallen Demesne               |  | In Miss Wynne's Holding  |  |
| Date of Parcel & Valuation        |  | worth from £100. to £120. p. Ann.  |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 0. 0. 0  |  |
| <u>Mattus</u>                     |  | Roger Jones  |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 9. 0. 0  |  |
| <u>Mattus House &amp; Meadows</u> |  | Simon Hughes   |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 0. 12. 0   |  |
| <u>Caer dres</u>                  |  | Sol in Ley from May to tillage   |  |
|                                   |  | Vacate for the grazing of 12   |  |
|                                   |  | Upon at £1. 5. 0. p. head  |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 15. 0. 0   |  |
| <u>Caer Dsiol and</u>             |  | part of Caer dres Town.  |  |
| <u>Caer dloia</u>                 |  | John Lewis   |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 7. 0. 0  |  |
| <u>Cwm rhoswal</u>                |  | Hugh Edwards   |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 30. 0. 0   |  |
| <u>Tythen &amp; Glanymor</u>      |  | Catherine Williams   |  |
|                                   |  | (Wm Edwards's Widow)   |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 4. 0. 0  |  |
| <u>Gwerglodd y Bregfryn</u>       |  | H. Leavitt to Miss Wynne   |  |
|                                   |  | Wm   |  |
|                                   |  | John Salisbury   |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 2. 10. 0   |  |
| Llandidno Parish                  |  |  |  |
| <u>Tynygwll</u>                   |  | John Rogers  |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 5. 0. 0  |  |
| <u>Shopyhroes</u>                 |  | John Hughes Jones  |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 1. 10. 0   |  |
| Llangwystennor Parish             |  |  |  |
| <u>Ben's Orford</u>               |  | Wm. John Salisbury   |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 9. 0. 0  |  |
| <u>Quillots in Gilvach</u>        |  | Wm. Richard Griffith   |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 0. 16. 0   |  |
| <u>a Croft by Tyny morva.</u>     |  | David Williams Annals  |  |
|                                   |  | for 1763   |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 10. 0   |  |
|                                   |  | Richard Foulkes Tenants  |  |
|                                   |  | for 1764   |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 0. 0 0. 10. 0   |  |
|                                   |  | 0. 10. 0 8. 18. 0  |  |

Figure 6. Rental of the Berthddu and Bodysgallen Estates belonging to Miss Margaret Wynne (1763-64) (Mostyn Collection Mss 5452)



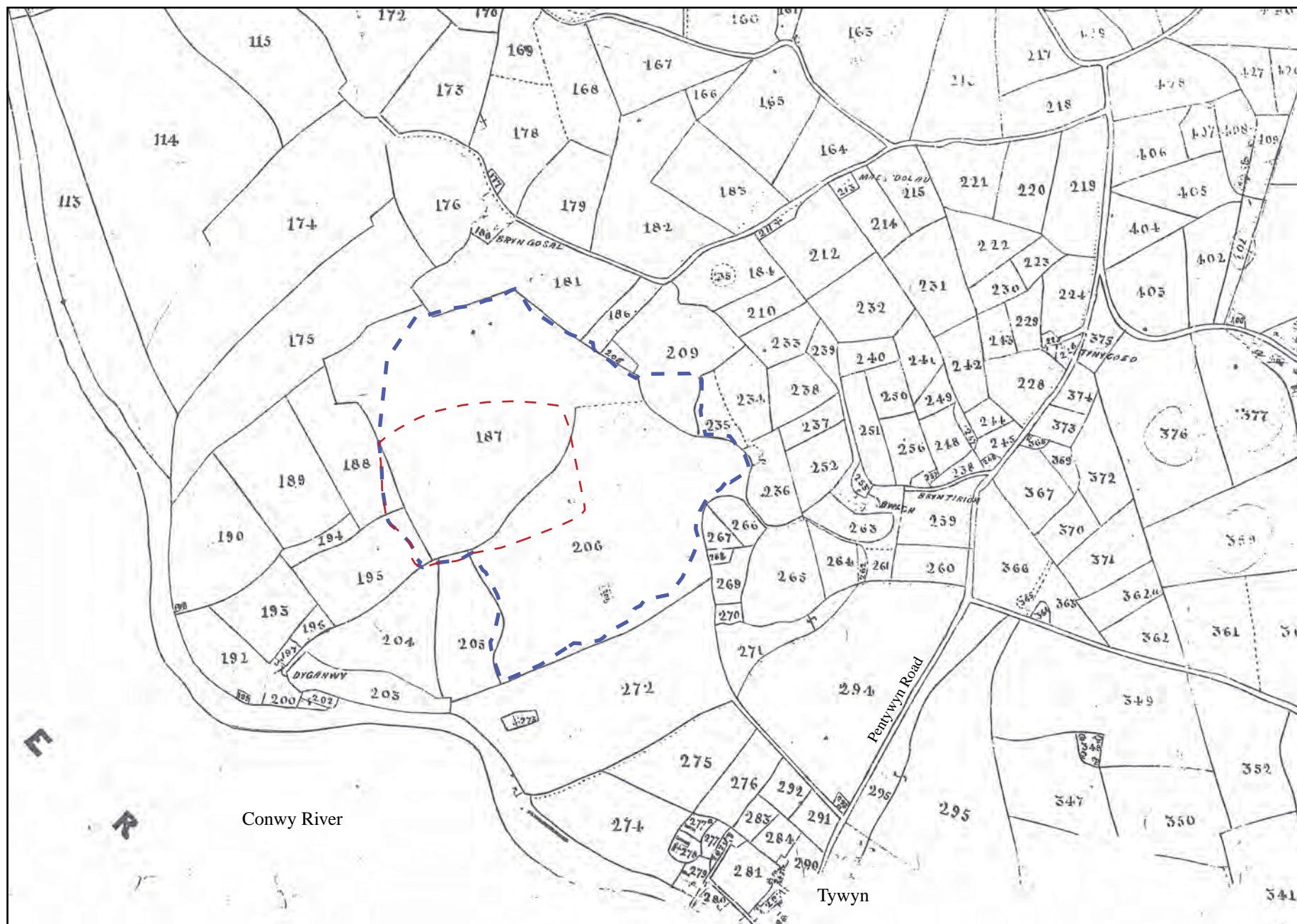


Figure 7. Part of tithe map for Eglwysrhos parish with SAM area (red) and study area (blue) marked.



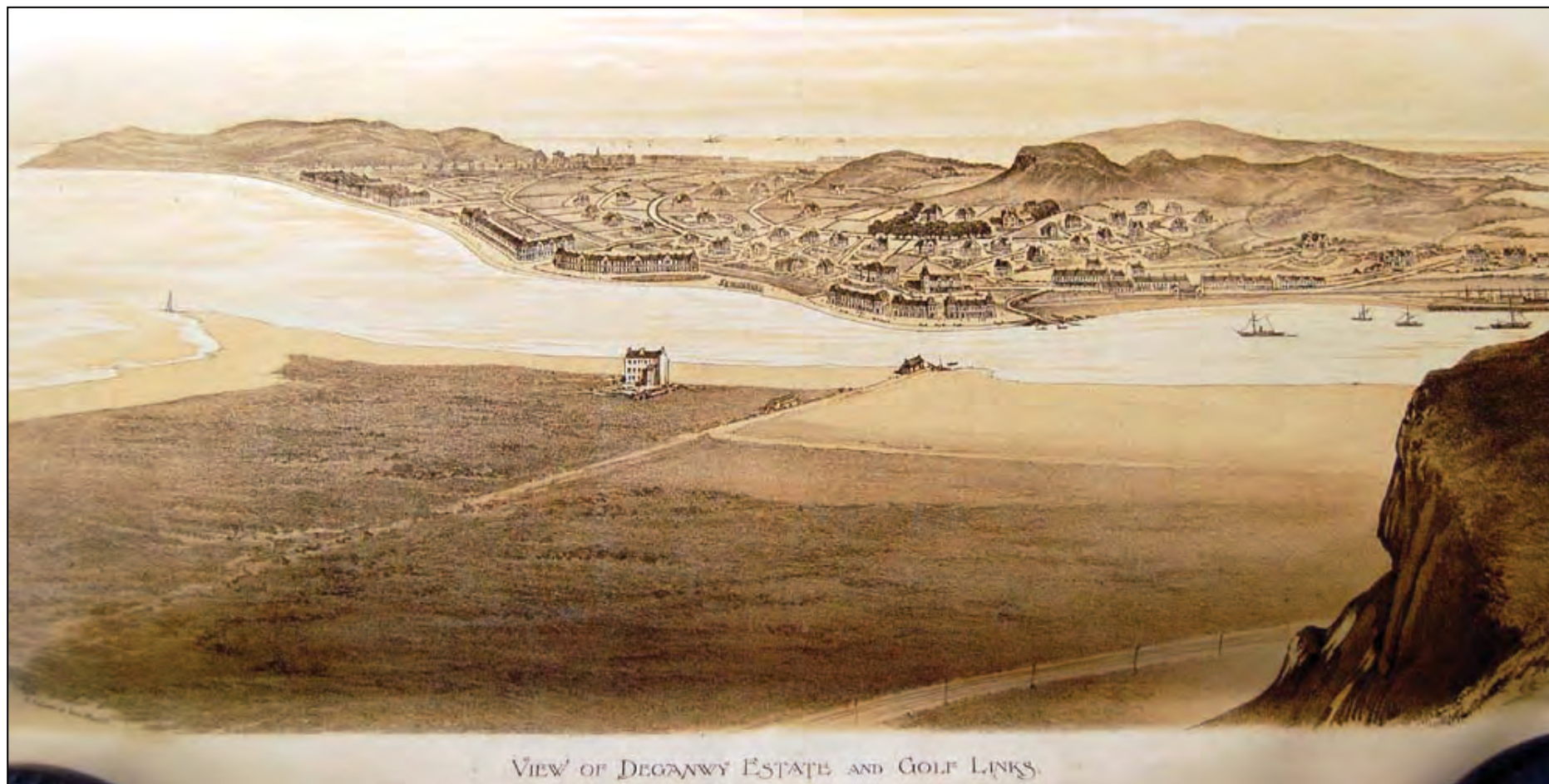


Figure 8. Plate from 'Plan and particulars of the Deganwy Estate near Llandudno to be sold by auction by George F Felton on August 23rd 1892'  
(Mostyn Collection MSS f31644)



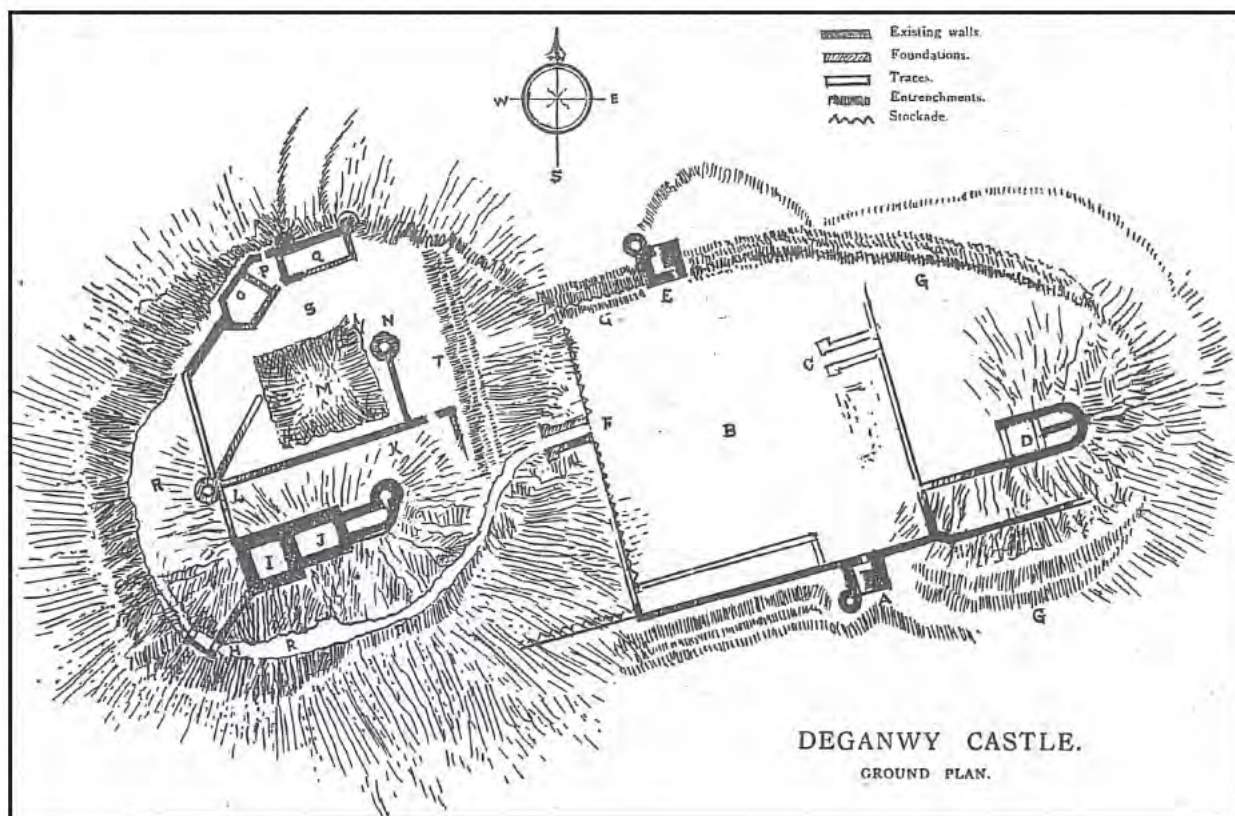


Figure 9. Plan of Degannwy Castle by EW Cox, prior to 1910

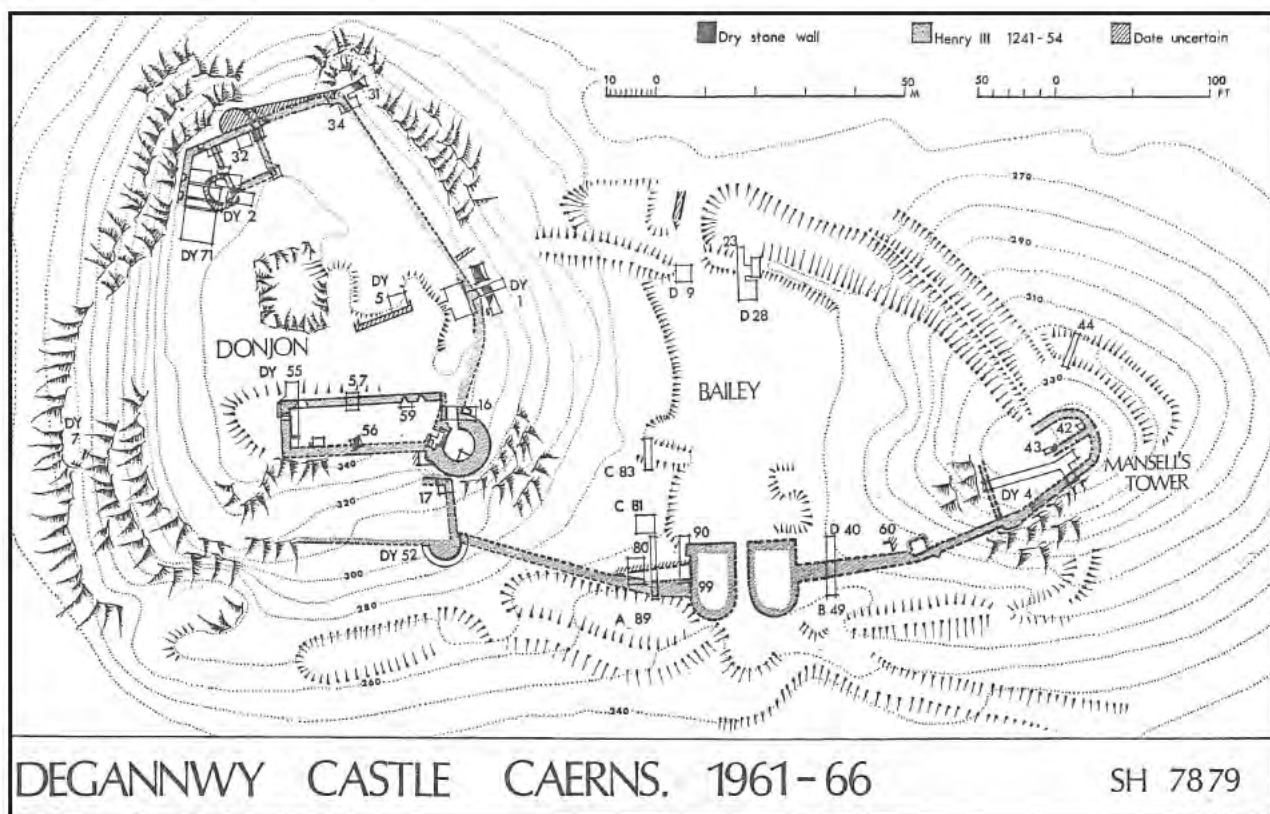


Figure 10. Plan of Alcock's trenches and additional walls (from Alcock 1967, Fig. 2)



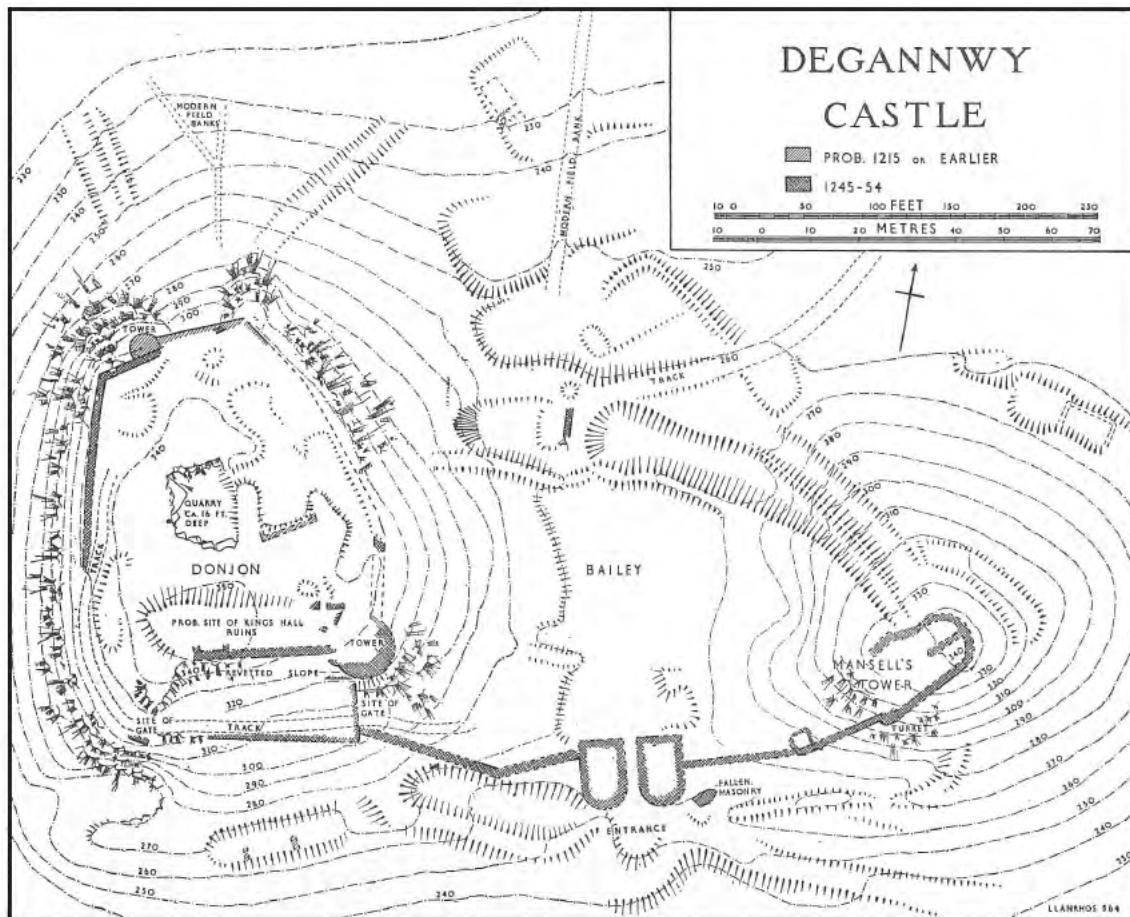


Figure 11. Published survey of Degannwy Castle in the Inventory (RCAHMW 1956, Fig 148)

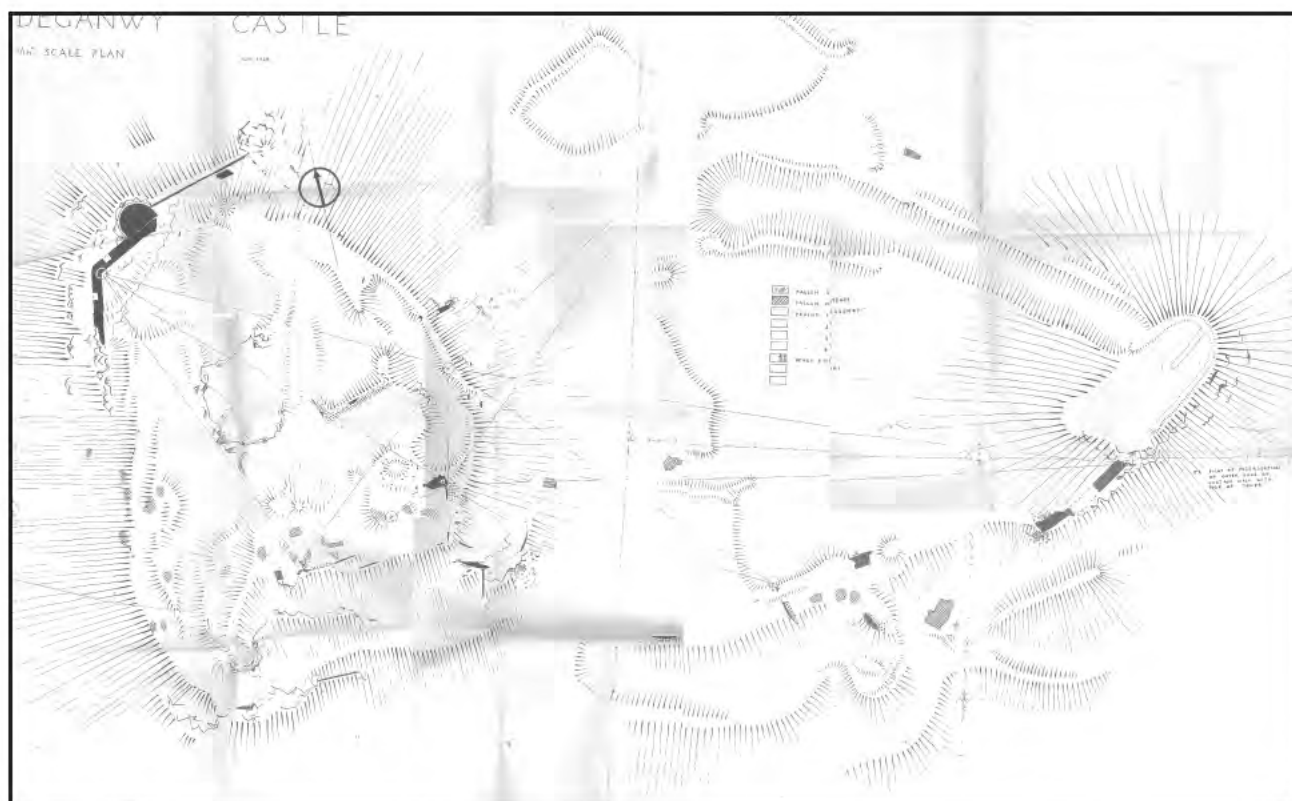
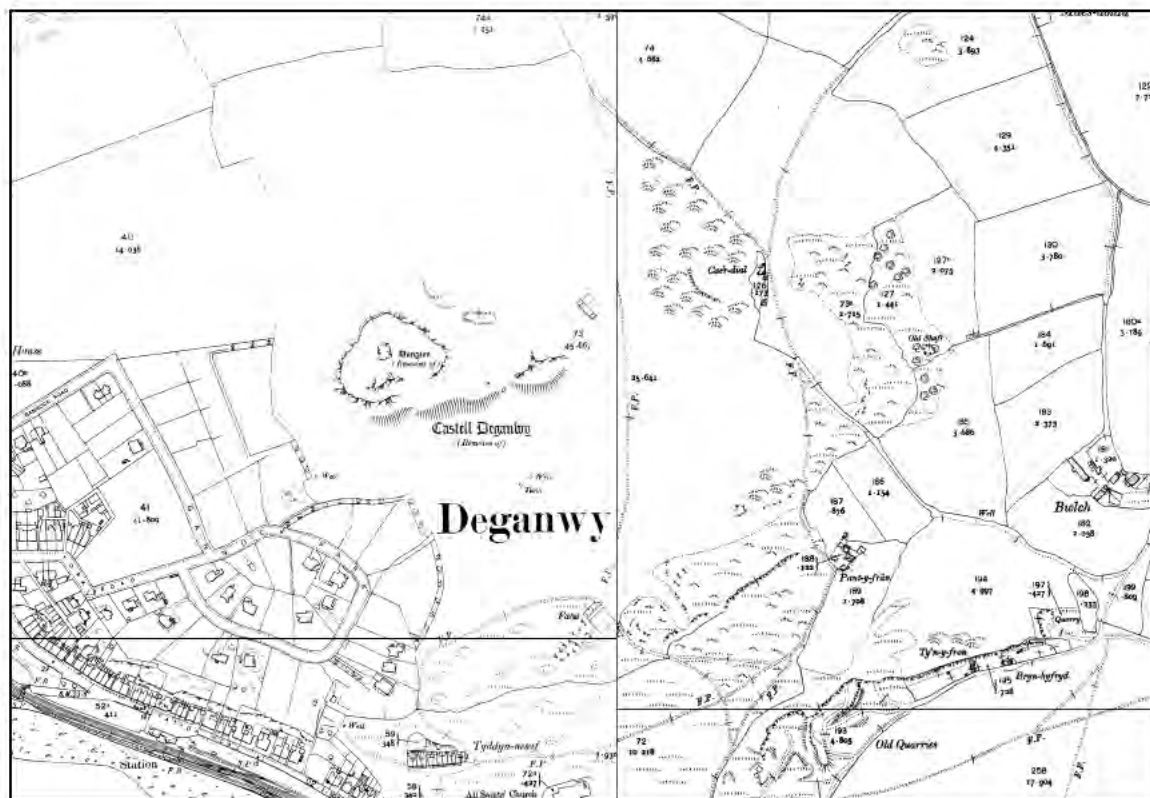


Figure 12. Copy of original survey of Degannwy Castle by RCAHMW (1948)



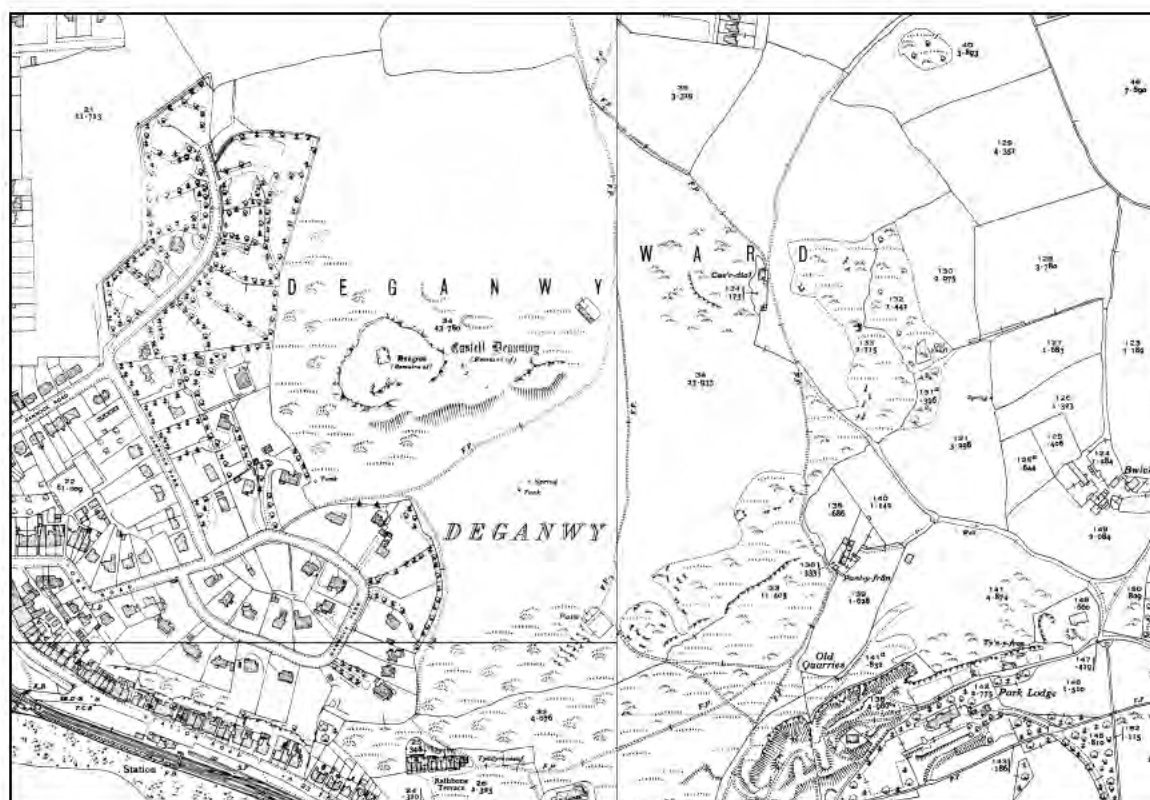






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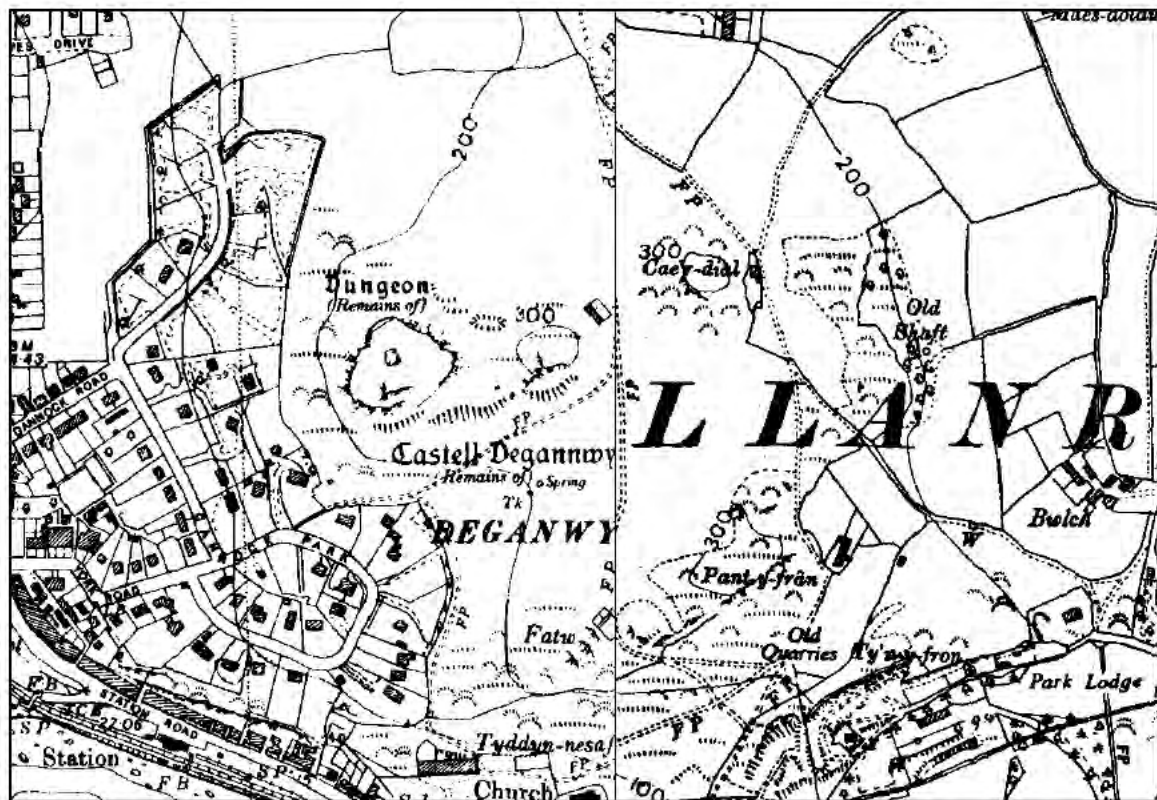
Figure 15. Third Edition Ordnance Survey 25 inch County Series maps, Caernarvonshire sheets IV.8 and V.5 (1912, 1913)



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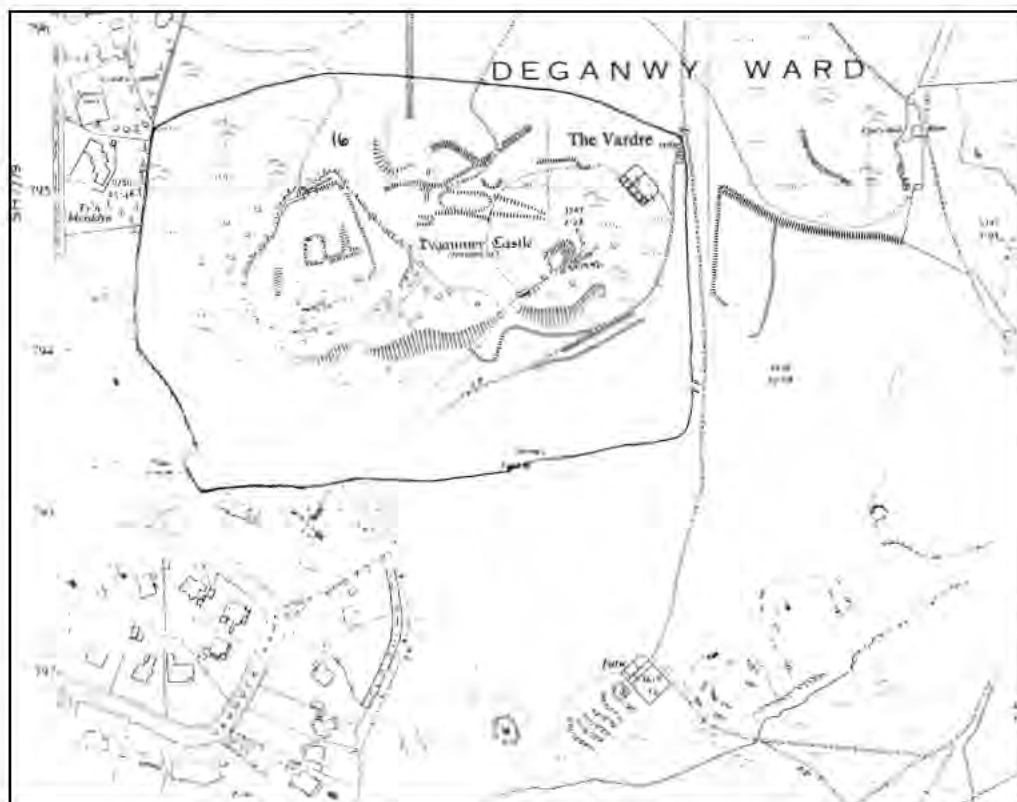
Figure 16. Fourth Edition Ordnance Survey 25 inch County Series maps, Caernarvonshire sheets IV.8 and V.5 (1937)





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Figure 17. Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 map, Caernarvonshire sheets IV NE and V NW (1953)



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Figure 18. Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map (SAM area map)





Plate 1. Part of air photograph showing field system (CPE UK 1939, frame 4222, date 20/01/1947)



Plate 2. Part of air photograph showing settlement to the north of the castle (106G UK 735, frame 4013, date 27/08/1945)

Plates 1 and 2: copies of photographs from Central Register of Aerial Photography for Wales (Welsh Assembly Government)





Plate 3. West hill of Degannwy Castle with donjon (PRN 30301) on top, building platforms (PRN 30305) in front and construction incline (PRN 30313a) running up the slope



Plate 4. East hill of Degannwy Castle with Mansel's Tower (PRN 30302) on top, possible ditch/platform (PRN 30312) just below the summit, and 19th century farm buildings (PRN 30317) at the foot of the hill



Plate 5. Composite photograph of field system (PRN 30309) to the south of the castle. View from the east hill.





Plate 6. Main north ditch with possible construction incline (PRN 30313d) on the outside, running down east hill



Plate 7. One of the possible construction inclines (PRN 30313c) seen at the foot of the west hill

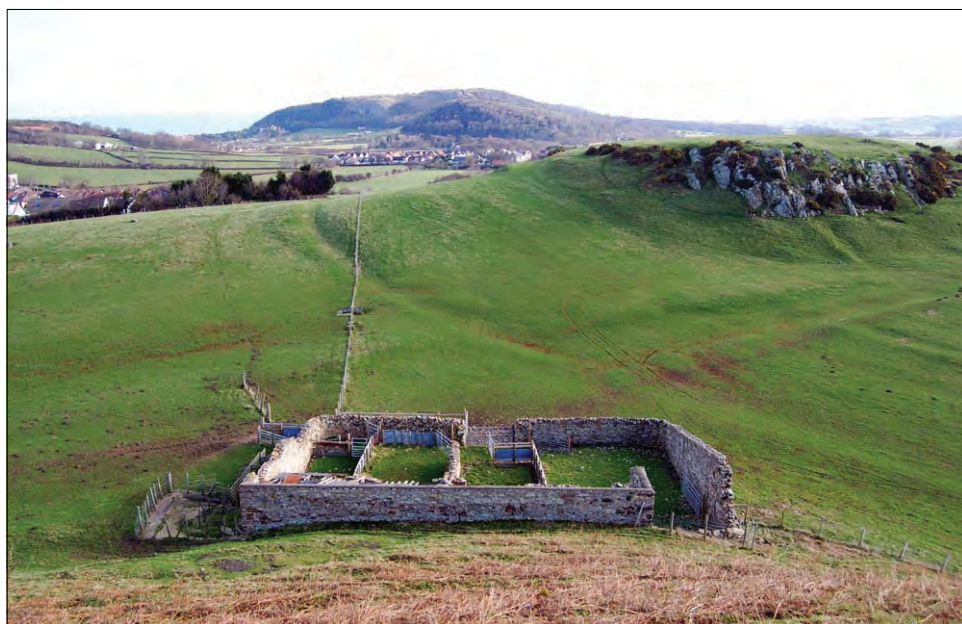


Plate 8. Later hollow-way (PRN 30310) cutting junction of tracks (PRN 30304) to the castle





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