
Conservation Area Appraisal: **Aberdyfi, Gwynedd**



GAT Project No. 2155

Report No. 956

June, 2011

Conservation Area Appraisal: **Aberdyfi, Gwynedd**

Report No. 956

Prepared for
the

Snowdonia National Park Authority

June 2011

By
Andrew Davidson

Conservation Area Appraisal: **Aberdyfi, Gwynedd**

Contents:

1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 General introduction	1
1.2 Acknowledgements	2
2. METHODOLOGY	2
2.1 Introduction	2
2.2 Bibliographic sources	2
2.3 Previous archaeological work	3
3. THE PLANNING BACKGROUND	3
3.1 Introduction	3
3.2 Statutory protection	3
4. THE PHYSICAL SETTING	3
4.1 Extent of Area	3
4.2 Landscape and Setting	3
5. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT	3
5.1 Ferry port and fishing harbour	4
5.2 From commercial harbour to seaside resort	5
5.3 The railway and the seaside resort	5
6. PRESENT SETTLEMENT CHARACTER: A SUMMARY	6
6.1 The topographic development of the settlement	6
6.2 The style and development of building	7
6.3 The character of building	8
6.3.1 Wall materials and finishes	8
6.3.2 Roofs	9
6.3.3 Architectural detail	9
7. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	9
8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	9
9. MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	9
9.1 Conservation area bounday	9
9.2 Listed Buildings	10
10. CHARACTER AREAS	10
11. PRINCIPAL SOURCES	15
11.1 Archival sources	16
11.2 Visual material	16
11.3 Secondary sources	16
APPENDIX I	18

Conservation Area Appraisal:

Aberdyfi, Gwynedd

Figures:

Figure 01: Character areas

Figure 02: Area 1 Glan Dyfi Terrace

Figure 03: Area 2 Copperhill Street and Chapel Square

Figure 04: Area 3 Sea View Terrace (east)

Figure 05: Area 4 Penhelyg

Figure 06: Area 5 Balkan Hill and Hopeland Road

Figure 07: Area 6 Maesnewydd and Mynydd Isaf

Figure 08: Area 7 Aberdyfi West and Gwelfor Road

Figure 09: Conservation area

Conservation Area Appraisal: **Aberdyfi, Gwynedd**

Plates:

- Plate 01. Aber Dyfi Terrace from the beach
- Plate 02. Sea View Terrace
- Plate 03. Copperhill Street looking north
- Plate 04. New Street
- Plate 05. Church Street – the rear of New Street on the left
- Plate 06. Evans Terrace
- Plate 07. Railway Terrace
- Plate 08. Railway Court
- Plate 09. Copperhill Street looking north towards Tai Newyddion
- Plate 10. Tai Newyddion
- Plate 11. Looking from Bandstand over Balkan Hill
- Plate 12. Hopeland Road
- Plate 13. Terrace Road
- Plate 14. Penhelyg
- Plate 15. No's 14 and 15 Glan Dyfi Terrace. An early 19th century pair with bow windows. The shop fronts are later 19th century.
- Plate 16. No's 19 and 20 Sea View Terrace. Another well-preserved early 19th century pair with bow windows
- Plate 17. Mid-19th century terraced houses on Glan Dyfi Terrace. Different treatment to the windows, particularly the bay windows and dormers, is apparent.
- Plate 18. Rear of Glan Dyfi Terrace

Conservation Area Appraisal: **Aberdyfi, Gwynedd**

Plates continued:

- Plate 19. The houses on New Street are largely without bay windows, and contain good examples of mid-19th century sash windows.
- Plate 20. Well preserved doorway detail on the west side of New Street, though the windows have been replaced.
- Plate 21. A pair of terraced cottages in Chapel Square, Copperhill Street. Probably 18th century in origin but with later raised render architrave picked out in a different colour. This photo taken in 2007.
- Plate 22. The cottages repainted in 2011.
- Plate 23. Liverpool House, Copperhill Street, of brick construction.
- Plate 24. The 1867 station also of brick, now converted to residential accommodation.
- Plate 25. Example of gothic style villa off Hopeland Road
- Plate 26. Craig y Don at west end of Aberdyfi, the first of the detached houses built on the west side.
- Plate 27. No. 5 Terrace Road, a small single front cottage as seen in 2007
- Plate 28. No. 5 Terrace Road after renovation in 2011, with lower sash window replaced
- Plate 29. No. 20 Plas Meirion (The Cottage)
- Plate 30. Tanyrallt, Plas Meirion
- Plate 31. Typical example of vernacular walling on Hopeland road
- Plate 32. Example of modern walling above Hopeland Road, which loses vernacular character
- Plate 33. The Church Hall, now residential use, an example of 1920's Arts and Crafts style
- Plate 34. The later village hall at the west end of the village
- Plate 35. Maes Newydd (far left) and Mynydd Isaf housing estates
- Plate 36. Mynydd Isaf housing estate

ABERDYFI: CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General introduction

This report contains the results of an appraisal of the Conservation Area of Aberdyfi undertaken by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust on behalf of Snowdonia National Park Authority.

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

1.2 Acknowledgements

Mr Gwilym Jones, Snowdonia National Park Authority, instigated the project, and generously provided help and information to aid the project.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

A brief was provided by Snowdonia National Park Authority. The methodology employed to answer the brief is based upon that developed by Cadw following initial urban characterization projects undertaken by Welsh Archaeological Trusts. These in turn were based upon a methodology developed in England for urban characterization and assessment, but also include English Heritage guidelines for Conservation Area Appraisal.¹

The following methods were used to achieve the stated aims.

Data collection

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

Characterisation

The characterisation process combined the understanding gained from the desk-based phase with comprehensive fieldwork and a visual assessment of the surviving historic fabric. The development of the topography of the settlement was noted, and phases of historic change identified. Distinctive architectural forms, materials and significant elements of town and streetscapes were recorded. This process allowed the identification of areas of distinctive character, and these formed the basis of the character areas presented in this report.

2.2 Bibliographic sources

A list of works consulted, combined with bibliographic references is given at the end of this report.

¹ English Heritage 2006

The principal studies of the maritime history of Aberdyfi are by Morgan and Lloyd.² Descriptions of specific structures are given in the Listed Building descriptions³ and the Gwynedd volume of *Buildings of Wales* series.⁴ A series of local history studies have been published by Hugh Lewis.⁵

2.3 Previous archaeological work

No known previous archaeological work has been undertaken at Aberdyfi.

3. THE PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction

Details of the planning process and how it affects management of the conservation area can be found in Appendix 1.

3.2 Statutory protection

There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the Conservation Area, and none lie immediately adjacent. There are some 34 listed buildings within the area, many of them terraces such as Evans Terrace and Minervia Terrace, though with some individual dwellings, the church and two chapels.

4. THE PHYSICAL SETTING

4.1 Extent of Area

The extent of the area included within this study is shown on figure 1. It includes the conservation area and adjacent areas. The full study area has been sub-divided into eight character areas.

4.2 Landscape and Setting

Aberdyfi lies on the northern shore of the Dyfi estuary, at the southern littoral tip of Gwynedd. Behind the village a ridge of hills rises to 278m OD. The Afon Dyfi marks the boundary between Gwynedd and Ceredigion; it is tidal to Derwenlas, and higher up river again, on its south bank, is the market town of Machynlleth. Ships of fairly large tonnage could make their way up river to Derwenlas, from where goods could be transported to and from Machynlleth. Around the coast and north from Aberdyfi, at the mouth of the Dysynni estuary, is Tywyn, the location of the parish church until 1832 when St Peter's church was built in Aberdyfi.

Aberdyfi, like Barmouth to the north, was not the easiest settlement to reach overland. Though no north-south route now survives, prior to the construction of the first coast road in 1808 by the Ynysmaengwyn estate the principle route in and out was north along Copperhill Street and over the high ground to Cwm Maethlon, where an early east-west route ran between Tywyn and Pennal. The settlement developed within the narrow confines of the valley, whilst to the east a parallel valley was occupied by the small settlement of Penhelyg. Development along the sea front, resulting in an east-west reorientation, took place following road and rail improvements, when the two settlements became linked by a continuous run of buildings.

² Morgan 1948; Lloyd 1996

³ Cadw

⁴ Haslam, Orbach, Voelcker 2009

⁵ E.g. Lewis 2001; 2003

5. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Ferry port and fishing harbour

'Here and at Borth they have some years a good Herring-fishery, and of other Fish a constant plenty: but their chief commodities are timber and oak bark'.⁶

Evidence for prehistoric activity is sparse in the vicinity, and though this may be partly through lack of intensive survey, the likelihood is that the area was always sparsely populated. Fenton, however, visiting in 1808, describes copper mines behind the town with *'hard stones worn round by the attrition of being used as mallets to pound the ore'* and *'old cavities'* in the workings, which sound remarkably similar to the Bronze Age mines excavated on the Great Orme and at Parys Mountain, Amlwch.⁷ In later years the Roman fort of Cefn Caer was established on the north side of the river at Pennal, some 10Km from the mouth of the estuary, close to the first good crossing point.

A council was held at Aberdyfi in 1216 by Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, when he presided over a partition of Deheubarth among the descendants of the Lord Rhys. This may have been at Tomen Las, the likely site of the castle of Aberdyfi, mentioned also in 1157-8, when it was taken by Roger, earl of Clare. This is located in Ceredigion, on the south bank of the river, and some 8Km up river of the coast.

The ferry, or crossing, of Aberdyfi was a valuable asset in medieval times, when it was held from the crown by the Ynysmaengwyn family, and later by John Palgus of Harlech, who leased it in 1415-16. The location of the crossing is not known, though it may well have been across the mouth of the estuary. Certainly there was a ferry in operation on the site of the later settlement by the 17th century, and a ferry house established – indeed the settlement may have consisted of little more than a ferry house at this time. In the mid-16th century it is described as *'a barred haven for small boates and very daungerous. Here is grete trade of ffyshing and moche resorte yerely at Michelmas for heryng. And no man hathe charge of this porte, but all men are free to do what they will at their libertie in transporting'*.⁸ A similar description of 1565 describes it as *'a Haven and having no habitacion, but only three houses whereunto there is no resorte: save only in the type of herring fishing at which time of fishing there is a wonderfull greate resorte of ffyshers assembled from all places within this Realme with Shippes Boottes and Vessells.....And there is neither Shippe nor vessel that belongeth to the same Haven'*.⁹ It is interesting to note the lack of Royal involvement in the harbour, and this is later confirmed by its status as a proprietary harbour which formed part of the Ynysmaengwyn estate. Prior to the 18th century records of shipping in the Dyfi estuary are few, though in 1599 the *Seahog* brought in 15 t. of salt and 5 t. of wine, and took away 15 t. of lead ore.¹⁰ The export of lead ore increased in the 17th century, and Aberdovey, *'a small ferry hamlet in 1566, gradually developed (without shipping of its own) to be the most active centre of maritime activity in Mid and North Cardigan Bay'*.¹¹ There are few records to help trace this growth, though a will of one William Vaughan, dated 1677, refers to *'All that messuage houses and garden messuage houses, storehouses and gardens to Aberdyfi now or late in the severall & respective tenures of ... all that great storehouse called Ty Llwyd, the lime kill and lime storehouse ... keys and all other storehouses rights, priviledges, profits and inheritances lying between the brookes of Penhelig and Aberdyfi'*.¹² This suggests a high level of economic activity in Aberdyfi, though other than a beam dated 1645 from the Raven Hotel there are very few remains from that date. Trade increased further in the 18th century, when the chief exports became timber and oak bark supplemented by lead ore and farm produce. The principal imports were grain, coal and timber. Though trade was undertaken within the estuary as a whole, Aberdovey at the mouth of the estuary became the principal harbour, and on his chart drawn in the 1740's the cartographer Lewis Morris, later collector of tolls at Aberdydi, depicts a small village with rows of houses and river anchorage alongside, and though

⁶ Lewis Morris, 1748, in Budenburg 1987.

⁷ Fisher 1917, 121

⁸ Robinson 1972, 500

⁹ Lewis 1927, 309

¹⁰ Lewis 1927, 182; Lloyd 1996, 46

¹¹ Lewis 1927, xl

¹² NLW Peniarth DA383

this was Morris's typical depiction of a settlement, it underlines the case for growth in the early 18th century.¹³ To this period belong the investment by the Owen's of Ynysmaengwyn, recorded in plaques both on the Dovey Hotel (formerly the Ship, and dated 1729) and on the single fronted terraced houses in Copperhill Street, where there is a plaque dated 1733.

5.2 From commercial harbour to seaside resort

'the beach is highly favourable for bathing, being composed of hard firm sand, and several respectable houses and a commodious hotel have been erected of late years' Lewis, 1833.

Though Aberdyfi was a harbour town, its early growth was encouraged by developments in local industry, including copper and lead mining and processing. Fenton, visiting in 1808, was shown copper works above the port, *'just at the back of the houses'*, and Copperhill Street is named after this. At the time of Fenton's visit there were considerable quantities of ore stored waiting for coal trials by Corbet of Ynysmaengwyn, to try to smelt the ore *'on the spot'*.¹⁴ Lead was mined in Cwm Maethlon to the north, and on the opposite shore to Aberdyfi, particularly at Garreg, where there was a smelting-house and silver mill. Smelting houses were also established at Ynys Hir and Tal y Bont, though smelting had largely stopped by 1800.¹⁵ Elsewhere small slate and stone quarries contributed to industrial output.

Fenton, in 1808, records *'from Aberdovey to Machynlleth a new road is begun, which will skirt the estuary all the way till it joins the Pennal Road ... it will link with Towyn by way of the sands'*.¹⁶ This road, known as 'Hen Ffordd Corbet' lay down close to High Water Mark, and can still be seen cutting through the rock by the shore. It was not a great success and a replacement road was designed by Thomas Penson, and completed in 1827.¹⁷ Development in Aberdyfi could now take place on an east-west axis alongside the road, and visitors were encouraged to travel from the English border counties. In 1833 Lewis describes Aberdyfi as a *'sea port and bathing place'*, and it was bathing and seaside holiday trade which would now accompany, and later supplant, fishing, industry and trade as a principal source of wealth for the inhabitants. Coaches traveled from Shrewsbury and Oswestry to Machynlleth and on to Aberdyfi and Tywyn. New hotels and boarding houses were built, and considerable expansion of the town took place. In 1829 Athelstan Corbet of Ynysmaengwyn, the largest landowner in the area, built the Corbet Arms Family Hotel at the western end of the village. It was rebuilt in 1867 to a grander design, but was never entirely successful, and in 1914 it burnt down, to remain a ruin until 1968. A chapel of ease (the parish church was at Tywyn) was built in the town in 1832, and expanded with a new chancel in 1890.

The housing stock reflects the multi-faceted economy of sea port, industrial development and leisure. Squashed in behind Copperhill Street are the terraces of small single fronted houses such as Evans Terrace (built 1827) and the even smaller Railway Cottages, whilst the three storey Georgian façade of New Street suggests confident growth and investment for the emerging middle classes. Along the sea front the first of the tall boarding houses were being built to take the increasing numbers of visitors – 19 and 20 Sea View Terrace are good examples.

Ship and boat building became an industry of increasing importance. Whilst vessels were built at various places in the estuary, many at Derwenlas in the 18th and early 19th centuries, from 1840 to 1880 the industry came to be concentrated at Aberdyfi and particularly Penhelyg. Some 45-50 vessels were built in 6 or so shipbuilding yards during this period.¹⁸

5.3 The railway and the seaside resort

The Cambrian Railway was an amalgamation of lines, of which the Aberystwith and Welsh Coast Railway was part. An isolated section of track operated between Aberdyfi harbour and Llwyngwril from 1863, and

¹³ Cambrian Coasting Pilot (Anglesey Record Office WM/1903/23)

¹⁴ Fisher 1917, 121

¹⁵ Lewis 1994, 176

¹⁶ Fisher 1917, 121-2

¹⁷ DRO Z/CD/168

¹⁸ Lloyd 1996; Morgan 1948

further development was prevented by political machinations until 1867, when the line to the Dovey Junction was opened. Part of the former line down to the harbour was kept open as a branch line for goods, and was used until 1964. During the 19th century slate became the main export, and several quarries were established in the vicinity. Direct transport was never easy from these and various trans-shipment methods were devised to get the slate products to the harbour. Slates from Bryneglwys were carried by pack animals to a wharf at Pennal, where it was loaded into river craft and taken to Aberdyfi. From 1866 the Talylllyn Railway was taking slate to Tywyn, where it was trans-shipped either out along the standard gauge line to the English midlands or to Aberdyfi for shipment.¹⁹ The railway leased the harbour rights, and developed a new wharf reached by a branch line. A steam corn mill was built west of the station, with its own siding.

The railway increased visitor numbers, and created the need for additional accommodation, resulting in the construction and rebuilding of Victorian 3-storey houses along the sea front at Bodfor Terrace, Glan Dyfi Terrace and Sea View Terrace. Industry declined from the late 19th century, and the future of the town as a seaside resort was confirmed by the provision of new accommodation and new amenities. The golf course was developed from the 1880's, and in the 1890's new villa style houses in spacious grounds were built on the higher ground above the railway – first on Balkan Hill then later around Hopeland Road. The decline in industry led to the eventual removal of the harbour branch line and associated sheds and storage. Much of the area is now a car park, and houses occupy the site of the former flour mill. In the later 20th century development spread north into open fields along Maes Newydd and Mynydd Isaf.

6. PRESENT SETTLEMENT CHARACTER: A SUMMARY

6.1 The topographic development of the settlement

The layout of Aberdyfi is severely constrained by the natural topography. The easiest places to build were north up the narrow valley occupied by Copperhill Street, and east-west along the sea front. The land rises steeply elsewhere, and houses were built in terraces one above the other, typically with footpath access only. The earliest settlement developed at the seaward end of Copperhill Street. No medieval buildings survive, but a description of 1565 (above 5.1) mentions three houses, one of which may well have been the ferry house. Located on the sea front and at the south end of Copperhill Street was the Royal Raven Inn, formerly Ty Mawr, which by tradition is associated with the ferry. A beam dated 1645 was found when converting the inn to the present shops. To the east of the Raven is The Dovey Hotel (formerly 'The Ship') built by Athelstan Owen in 1729, his name proudly inscribed on the board above the door. His widow's name, Anne Owen is recorded on a plaque on Copperhill Street, which records 'Built By / AnneOwen /Widow/AD /1733'.²⁰ New Street, running back from the sea front to join Copperhill Street at an angle, creates a triangle around which the early settlement grew, and a square developed where the two roads joined. By 1834, as shown on a picture of that date, there had been considerable development along the sea front, dominated by tall three-storey houses which were newly built. It also shows, however, a stone quay and set back from the quay, at the west end of Sea View Terrace, houses of 18th century or earlier character, the nearest one of which must be Ty Mawr. The date of the quay is not known, though quays are mentioned in the 17th century (above 5.1).

The growth of Aberdyfi as a seaside resort is clearly reflected in the tall 3 storey boarding houses which line the sea front and create nearly a continuous line of development from Aberdyfi to Penhelyg. The construction of these was matched by an increase in workers housing, built on rising ground either side Copperhill Street, such as Evans Terrace on the west side, built by Edward Price in 1827 (according to a plaque), and Brynhyfryd, further east and above the sea front, which is clearly visible on the 1834 print. Of similar or slightly later date must be the development of the houses lining the north side of New Street, and Church Street behind. What is now an arcade of shops in the middle of Chapel Square started life as the

¹⁹ Boyd 1988

²⁰ Anne Owen was responsible for building the three linked houses between 1723 and 1758 at Ynysmaengwyn. Smith 1960, 174.

Calvanistic Methodist chapel in 1828, but was later converted into an assembly room before conversion to shops. The large Wesleyan chapel to the north was built 1868. Dating from the later 19th century are several tall boarding houses along Glan Dyfi Terrace which infill earlier gaps, sometimes left because of rock outcrop which was now blasted away, whilst Bodfor Terrace to the west and Penhelyg Terrace to the east extended the village on both sides. This extension was further encouraged by the construction of the railway, opened 1867. The physical impact on the village, though it must have occasioned a massive temporary rise in population, perhaps partly reflected by the small row called 'Railway Court' behind Copperhill Street, was lessened by the construction of two tunnels west and east of Penhelyg. Because of space constraints the station was built well to the west of the settlement, and development including new hotels, such as the Corbet Arms Hotel and later Trefiddian was encouraged here, not least by the construction of a golf course which opened in 1892. A large flour mill, taking advantage of combined rail and harbour facilities, was built west of the station in 1881.

By the early 20th century most available space had been developed along the sea front and within the valley behind. However an increasingly wealthy population, looking for the benefits of a seaside resort and modern housing, no longer wanted to live on the sea front, but on the rising ground behind in detached villas set in their own grounds and overlooking the sea. The higher fields north of the town were ideally suited. First to be developed in the 1890's was Balkan Hill, to be followed by Hopeland Road – an area of Edwardian villas in spacious grounds. Meanwhile development continued wherever land was available. Copperhill Street was lengthened to the north, where Frondeg, a late Victorian house contrasts with the Arts and Crafts styled houses of Tai Newyddion on the opposite side. In the mid- to late- 20th century development a council estate was developed on the north edge of the town at Maesnewydd, and later a housing estate was developed north of Balkan Hill at Mynydd Isaf.

6.2 The style and development of building

The buildings of Aberdyfi reflect its complex history and economy, though it is difficult to date the origins of many of the structures because of later alterations. Two storey terraced houses along Copper Hill Street are certainly some of the earliest remaining, and are thought to be part of the growth of the settlement in the 18th century. Behind these are the early 19th century terraces of workers houses, including Evans Street and Railway Court, the latter very small, and no longer occupied. Penhelyg Lodge may be of similar date, and there are several smaller dwellings (e.g. 13 New Street, 5 Cliffside and 20 Plas Meirion) still extant squeezed between larger neighbours.

The former Raven Inn is shown in 1834 as a 1½ storey double fronted house with hipped dormers, typical of the pre-19th century vernacular style of the area, to be seen in Dolgellau and Machynlleth. It contrasts with the reflected pairs of three-storey houses that, by 1834, were starting to typify the burgeoning resort. These early 19th century houses generally have no bay windows and no dormer windows, though the delicate curved bow windows of 19 and 20 Sea View Terrace are indicative of the origins of the later ubiquitous bay windows. As the century progressed so the polygonal, or splayed, bay window came to dominate. A view of c. 1900 shows a transitional period where a new block at Bodfor Terrace has two and three-storey polygonal bay windows with red terracotta columns in the bays, also visible in a pair to the east, whilst to the west of the latter is a lower reflected pair of c. 1800, still of three storeys, but with no bay windows or dormer windows. East again are mid-19th century three-storey terraces flat fronted with sash windows. Small skylights lighting the attics are being replaced by small pitched dormers, set well back from the eaves. After 1900 these in turn are replaced by a wide variety of larger dormers, whilst splayed bay windows were added to the front of the majority of houses. More recent additions have included squared bays and larger dormer windows, running the full width of the house.

Within the town the more sedate New street, with no river views, has largely resisted the embayment of windows, and these double fronted houses with their 12-pane sash windows are characteristic of mid-19th century building.

Late Victorian and Edwardian villas were built as private residences on Balkan Hill to the north of the resort. Craig y Don, west of the resort, is neo-gothic, with decorative bargeboards and labels over the windows. Balkan Hill house, late 19th century, is characterised by its asymmetry and multiple gables, and

was soon joined by Preswylfa, Brynarfor and Argoed to the south-west, also characterised by multiple gables and relatively steeply pitched roofs with red ridge tiles and red brick chimneys. Hopeland Road was developed shortly after, a series of villas in a variety of styles, many with applied half timbering, whilst projecting wings and gabled dormers are typical here as at Balkan Hill.

At the north end of Copperhill Street (Tai Newyddion), in Arts and Crafts style, are a row of two storey roughcast cottages with eyebrow eaves. Also in this style is the former roughcast church hall on Terrace Road, built 1922.

Striking architectural differences separate the 1950's housing estate of Mynydd Isaf, built in typical neo-georgian local authority style with hipped roofs, from the mono-pitched brick-built later houses of the 1980's. Private housing development on the western slopes of Balkan Hill resulted in a number of small estates of typical low cost 1970's town houses.

Commercial development, mainly shops, inns and cafes, is located primarily around the square and west on Glan Dyfi Terrace. The Royal Raven has now been rebuilt as shops, but the Dovey Inn, established in the 18th century is prominent in black and white half-timbered style, and the Britannia Inn, gable end on to the road, lies close-by. Most of the banks have closed, though the National Westminster still occupies the corner opposite the Britannia Inn, in a building typical of the late 19th century, with bay windows on the first floor. Many of the buildings around the square and along the river front either side Copperhill Street either are or have been shops. Good examples of early shop fronts can be seen at 13a, 14 and 15 Glan Dyfi Terrace. Liverpool House, on Copperhill Street, was purpose built as a shop – a door in the upper floor (now a window) was used for getting goods to the upper floors. It is brick built, with a long front divided by fluted pilasters. The Medical Hall on Glan Dyfi Terrace preserves a late 19th century splayed shop front, with original lettering in the entablature and windows.

St Peter's church, built in 1837 in gothic style is the earliest of the places of Christian worship to survive. The church stands on a rock terrace, above the street, and is one of the few buildings of exposed stone, built of long slate blocks. Bethel Chapel in Chapel Square and Tabernacle Calvinistic Methodist Chapel on Sea View Terrace both have broad gothic fronts and were both built in the 1860's. The Congregational Chapel on Glan Dyfi Terrace, in gothic style with steeple, and the English Presbyterian chapel on Sea View Terrace with a large arched window and door tower were built in 1880 and 1893.

6.3 The character of building

6.3.1 Wall materials and finishes

The building stone of Aberdyfi consists of thin schist slabs, and though not an ideal stone, builders have made the most of it over the years. Because of the poor quality few buildings are of exposed stone, and most have stucco, scribed render or roughcast finish. A number of smaller houses, however, are painted over the stone, revealing thin narrow ridges of stone underneath. A local style of render (called 'Dyfi daub') has the render marked with narrow horizontal lines – a depiction, surely, of the painted stonework. It is quite common for quoins to be raised and picked out in a different colour.

Whilst post-railway brick is not uncommon, it is only exposed on chimney stacks, and elsewhere tends to be rendered or painted over. Bethel Chapel was built of brick in 1828, and Liverpool House, in Chapel Square, is of brick, though painted. The railway station is of bright red brick with dark blue banding.

St Peter's church and the Congregational chapel are of unrendered stone, the dark stone granite of the chapel coming from Penrhyndeudraeth. Similar stone can be seen on two large former hotels on Glan Dyfi Terrace and Penhelyg Road.

6.3.2 Roofs

Roof coverings are of mid- to late-19th or 20th century thin slates. No examples of small or roughly cut slates, or of slates laid in diminishing courses, were noted, and the likelihood is that most buildings have been re-roofed within the last century. Red ridge tiles are common, often in conjunction with red-brick

chimneys, and particularly so along Glandovey Terrace and Sea View Terrace, though less so on New Street and Copperhill Street.

6.3.3 Architectural detail

Aberdyfi contains a wealth of architectural detail, reflecting a wide variety of styles. Whilst the majority of windows have been replaced in Glan Dyfi Terrace some vertical sash windows remain (e.g. No's 14 and 15), also examples survive on Sea View Terrace, but the finest are in New Street. A wide variety of bay windows survive, but of particular importance are the curved bow windows at 14 and 15 Glan Dyfi and at 19 and 20 Sea View Terrace (all listed buildings). Horizontal sliding sash windows survive at Evans Terrace. A good number of examples of classical doorways, combining columns or fluted pilasters with bracketed cornice and panelled doors. Many of the doorways on Glan Dyfi Terrace and on New Street are round arched. From the mid-19th century are examples of raised architraves around doors and windows, sometimes picked out in different colours. Similarly raised quoins are also often picked out.

7. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

The potential for the survival of buried archaeology within Aberdyfi is relatively low. However, new development within the historic core needs to be monitored so that any surviving evidence of pre-19th century development can be recovered.

A closer scrutiny of the housing stock, particularly inside, may reveal a longer history than is apparent from the external appearance of the houses. This again is most applicable to the earlier historic core focusing around Copperhill Street and its junction with Glan Dyfi Terrace and Sea View Terrace.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The character of Aberdyfi reflects its mixed origins and influences which arise primarily from its location alongside the river mouth, so providing good harbour facilities to serve a wide entrepote of a river port, industrial town and seaside resort. river harbour which served a wide , industry and seaside resort. Aberdyfi Terrace and Sea View Terrace, despite many changes renovation, best examples of core of the old town, particularly Copperhill Street and Chapel Square,

9. MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Conservation area bounday

It is recommended that the current Conservation Area boundary be reviewed, and that consideration is given to extending it in three areas. First to the north along Copperhill Street. This is a natural extension of the area to include 19th century terraces which complements the area to the south, and includes the two early 20th century terraces at Tai Newyddion, built in Arts and Crafts style.

Secondly the main road west of Penhelyg, along Plas Meirion, continues the character of the settlement along one of the principal approach roads. To the south lies the estuary, but the north side of the road is lined with a variety of houses, including Copper Cottage (the stone-built former police house) and Tanyrallt, another stone-built house, two storey and double fronted, with sash windows. Number 20 Plas Meirion (The Cottage) is smaller, but again two storey and double fronted, with unusual 24-pane sash windows.

Thirdly the area to the west is crucial to the setting of Aberdyfi when travelling the coast road from Tywyn. The recreational grounds to the south, and the houses clustered within the corner below the ridge, and sited on raised terraces indicate the continued growth of Aberdyfi as a resort in the mid- and later-20th century. Houses of particular note include Craig y Don, Gorwel, Carreg Wen, Hendre and Murmur y Don.

9.2 Listed Buildings

The number of listed buildings within Aberdyfi is surprisingly low, though this can partly be explained by the relatively late date for many of the buildings, and the continuous upgrading of the boarding houses. The best examples of the latter are listed (No's 14, 15 Aberdyfi Terrace and No's 19, 20, 26 Sea View Terrace). Also listed are the houses in New Street and Evans Terrace within the centre, and the terraces of Brynhyfryd and Mervinia to the east. St Peter's church and Tabernacle chapel are the only two of the ecclesiastical buildings listed. Consideration should be given to extending statutory protection to the following buildings: the Wesleyan Chapel in Chapel Square; the cottages at Tai Newyddion at the north end of Copperhill Street; No. 20 Plas Meirion (The Cottage); Tanyrallt, Plas Meirion; No. 5 Cliffside (unfortunately the lower sash window has just been replaced at this property); No's 8 and 9 Glan Dyfi Terrace. Further work is required to identify the best examples of the early- to mid-20th century houses, and also to identify the status of the small single-fronted houses just off the square on Copperhill Street. Glan

10. CHARACTER AREAS

Area 1 Glan Dyfi Terrace

Historical Background

This area includes the Terrace, the former quays now the carpark to the south, and the Penybryn outcrop and bandstand to the north. The construction of Glan Dyfi Terrace was no single event, and changes have been made over the years. The earliest development here took place in the first half of the 19th century, when increasing visitor numbers arriving by road encouraged the construction of tall seaside boarding houses on the sea front. The construction of the new road clearly divided the houses from the sea, but allowed easy access to the beach. No's 14 and 15 were built in the early 19th century, presumably shortly after the construction of the road in 1827. Infill between those and The Royal Raven, which marked the approximate limits of the older settlement, would have developed sporadically. The Congregational chapel was not built until 1880, but No. 19, the former Post Office, can be seen in a photograph of c. 1900 without the upper bay windows and an upper 12 pane sash window, of early- to mid-19th century date. Similarly No's 1 and 2 at the west end of the Terrace are shown on a photograph of c. 1900 as 3-storey with no bay windows. To the west of 1 and 2 lay an open space – a former ship-building yard. Bodfor Terrace was built shortly after 1900, and the in-filling between Bodfor Terrace and No. 1 Glan Dyfi on the site of the yard occurred later again.

The first railway to serve the harbour was built 1861-2. This later became a branch line, when the main line was continued through to Aderdovey Junction in 1867. The branch line continued to serve the harbour until it was closed in 1964. The main station and a new flour mill were established in a previously undeveloped area of coastal dunes to the west, and the branch line served the harbour, though it is not clear what form the early railway wharf arrangements took, though in 1869 the slate quarries were complaining about inadequate facilities.²¹ A new wharf and jetty was built in 1885 by Abraham Williams, a local contractor. An undated plan shows a 'wharf', a 'new wharf', a pier, as well as facilities for cattle. The wharf itself included two contiguous warehouses, the 'general warehouse' and Tomlinson's warehouse, as well as a small store shed, a coal bunker and a shed for the rail-traveling crane. Most of the infrastructure and buildings were in place by 1887.²² Following closure of the line the harbour was rebuilt and officially reopened as a leisure facility in 1972.

The character of building

The continuous line of terraced boarding houses along the coastal river front resembles seaside resorts throughout the length of Britain, and clearly typifies Aberdyfi in its late Victorian and Edwardian resort phase. Perhaps less typical was the mix of commerce and industry, for within the dunes on the opposite side of the road were railway sidings and storage depots which hampered access to the beach. The sand dunes, railway sidings and related structures have now all given way to a large carpark, with a boatyard at

²¹ Green 1996, 83

²² Boyd 1988, 319; Green 1996, 87-112

the east end, leading onto the wharf and jetty with new lifeboat station and boat house and harbour masters office.

Whilst there is pictorial evidence of early 19th century houses without bay windows, nearly all the houses have now been rebuilt to a relatively standard height of three storeys with attics with polygonal bay windows added. No's 14 and 15 retain interesting early 19th century detail, including 2-storey bow windows on the upper floors, and in between 12-pane sash windows with flanking colonettes, and a moulded fan and quatrefoil above the upper pair. The ground floor recessed doorways also have colonettes with columned cornice, though the left column is missing. The ground floors were converted to shop fronts in the later 19th century. The remainder are a mixture of styles with Italianate decoration, including some columns on the bay windows, and round door arches, whilst other doors are square headed with bracketed cornice. A wide mixture of window styles, mostly now replaced, some with small panes, others with large single panes. No. 16 is lower, and squeezed in, which emphasises the height of No. 17, a large dark stone block with square bays which lies on the corner between Glan Dyfi Terrace and Sea View Terrace. The impact is heightened by contrasting pink bays, dark stone and white painted detail. Bodfor Terrace at the west end is of less generous proportions, of 2½ storeys with large gabled dormers above the bay windows, and red ridge tiles.

Behind the houses a rock outcrop rises sharply, with the railway running behind both houses and outcrop. The outcrop is a public space with a bandstand on its summit, and good views across the estuary and over the town to the east.

Archaeological potential

There is little archaeological potential within this area.

Area 2 Copperhill Street and Chapel Square

Historical background

This is the area occupied by the earliest settlement. It is thought to have grown up around a ferry house and inn. Certainly a timber dated 1647 was found in the former Royal Raven (previously Ty Mawr). The Owen's of Ynysmaengwyn were building here in the early 18th century - the present Dovey Inn, previously 'The Ship', has a date stone recording construction by Athelstan Owen in 1729. Higher up on Copperhill Street Anne Owen, his widow, built another house in 1733. The extent of the village by the end of the 18th century is not known, but a 'T' shape formed by Copperhill Street and what became Sea View Terrace is probable. Several low buildings survive which may be 18th century in origin, including 14 New Street, and 14 Sea View Terrace, the former Custom House. Copper working was taking place above Copperhill Street, and access was required to the quay at the sea front. The two storey terraced housing fronting the street may also be 18th century in origin. Development in the early 19th century was rapid, initially driven by industry, later as a bathing place and resort, though the railway, harbour and shipbuilding ensured retention of a working population, as evidenced by Evans Terrace built 1827. The first Calvinistic Methodist chapel was built in the square in 1828, and New Street must be of similar date, the impressive houses revealing growth and confidence. The Britannia Inn was built on a plot between New Street and the Custom House by John Felix after 1827, the long shape of the plot end on to the sea suggesting it may have been preceded by a storehouse.²³ In 1864 the chapel was vacated for a new building on the sea front, and the old one became an Assembly Room, an essential addition for any resort. The ground floor was later converted to a market hall, and later again into shops, whilst the upper floor served a variety of public duties. A Wesleyan Methodist chapel was first built on the north side of the square in 1828, later rebuilt in its present form in 1868.

The character of building

Sea View Terrace presents a mixed front of largely 20th century refurbishing, though older buildings lie beneath. The norm are three storey buildings with rendered walls, typically white but other colours are also used, all with slate pitched roofs. Building type is part commercial, part domestic, featuring a mixture of houses, shops, cafes, one remaining bank, and inns. The Dovey Inn has squared bay windows and gabled

²³ Morgan 1948, 93

dormers, the walls painted white with detail and raised quoins painted black. Raised quoins, often painted a contrasting colour to the wall, are seen elsewhere in the village, and are a feature of the Britannia Inn to the west, a building unusually end on to the coast. The former Custom House is to the right of the steps – it has been refurbished but a large central stone chimney stack remains. All rendered and painted white. West of the Dovey Inn lies the narrow entrance to Copperhill Street, then the row of shops which occupy the former Royal Raven Inn. These have rendered painted fronts, with polygonal bay windows on the first floor, and four pane sash windows (partly renewed) elsewhere. No. 1 is late Victorian in character, with more prominent bay windows leading to large gabled dormers, and red ridge tiles contrasting with the dark blue slates.

Behind the sea front Copperhill St and New St form a triangle meeting in Chapel Square. New Street is a fine example of early- to mid-19th century town houses, three storey at the front, and two storey on Church St behind. Scribed render double fronted houses with central round arched doors and 12 pane sash windows (9 pane on the second floor). First floor bay windows have been added to No. 12. No. 14, closer to the sea front, is 2 storey only, and looks 18th century in origin, tightly fitted into the narrow curving street before it opens out into the square.

The west front of the Wesleyan chapel, with paired lancet windows, originally in brick but covered over in 1924, overlooks the north side of the square, behind New Street. The former Calvinistic chapel, now a variety of shops occupies the centre of the square. A jumble of buildings, it has a wide arched door in the centre of the west facing gable, raised quoins and square projecting labels over the upper windows. The south-west side of the square is occupied by 3 storey town houses with small pane sash windows. Liverpool House alongside is brick built, painted, and a purpose built shop, with a door in the upper floor for unloading, now fitted with a 12 pane sash window. No's 6 and 7 are painted roughcast with 4 pane sash windows.

Immediately out of the square up Copperhill Street the houses become two storey, and many single fronted, several with only a single first floor window, a relatively unusual arrangement. These include No's 12 – 14, which have the Anne Owen 18th century plaque on the wall, and they may well be 18th century in origin. No's 8 and 9 are also low and small, presently painted yellow and blue. Other houses are double fronted. The walls are rendered and painted a variety of colours, many with raised render architraves painted a contrasting colour. Most windows and doors are modern. The street is fairly narrow, and dominated by the railway bridge to the north, which prevents visibility beyond. Terraces of smaller houses, accessible only by foot, are built above and behind on the west. Evans Terrace is two storey, rendered and painted walls, with some surviving examples of horizontal sliding windows, plain boarded doors with small light above. No. 5 is a particularly good example. To the north is the later Railway Terrace, taller, with 12 pane sash windows on first and second floors, the houses originally built as reflected pairs, though some doors have been changed. Large stone chimneys. Behind the east side of Copperhill Street is Railway Cottages, accessible by a narrow passage, they are smaller than the other terraces but still two storey, and now used for storage and workshops by the adjoining houses. The walls are limewashed stone, now largely washed off to reveal the thin stone slabs of the walls and stone voussoirs above the doors.

North of the railway bridge the street maintains a similar character as far as Frondeg. On the left the houses are partly raised above the road, and though the occasional larger house has been built, the majority are single fronted terraced houses, as at No's 1-4 Tai Newyddion. No's 9-10 and 5-8 Tai Newyddion are Arts and Crafts style roughcast cottages of c. 1920, the larger block with eyebrow eaves. No. 38 on the west side retains 12-pane sash windows.

Archaeological potential

There is good potential within this area for recovering evidence relating to the origins and early growth of Aberdyfi. This may be found both in the fabric of standing buildings and as buried archaeology.

Area 3 Sea View Terrace (east side) and Terrace Road

Historical background

This area fronts on to the tidal estuary, separated from it by the road and a promenade, and links Aberdyfi with Penhelig. Development started in the early 19th century, one suspects most of it post-dating the road (1827), though the view dated 1834 shows the paired tall lodging houses (No's 17-20) east of the plot where the church was to be built three years later in 1837. The original architect of the church is not known, but Henry Kennedy added the chancel in 1890. The terraces of Brynhyfryd and Mervinia were built above the road in the mid-19th century, as was the Taberncl chapel in 1863-4. The bath house was established in 1842 and used for baptism by a sect of the Plymouth Brethren; it was refurbished as the Literary Institute in 1882. The railway, largely hidden in a tunnel, runs at the back of the houses. Some of the quays, built to replace shipbuilding yards removed when the railway was built, were constructed from stone excavated from the tunnels. A new lifeboat house was established at Cliffside in 1884, and closed 1931 – the slipway opposite was built 1903. The terrace at Cliffside is late 19th century, and the former Church Hall, on the south side of the road, was built 1924. Subsequent development has taken place in the 20th century.

The character of building

The road of 1827 sweeps round from Aberdyfi towards Penhelyg, with the river foreshore and promenade on its south side, and tall seaside boarding houses on its north. Examples of the latter range from the early 19th century through to the early 20th century. They are rendered and painted, usually white. Some of the best early 19th century houses seaside houses are here, particularly No's 19-20, a reflected pair with curved bay windows, 12 pane sash windows between the bays (9 pane on the second floor), and fluted columns either side the doors. No. 26 is a detached double fronted house with wide columned doorway and elliptical fanlight. Later polygonal bay windows have been added to the ground floor, but 9 and 12-pane sash windows remain in the second and first floors. No's 24 and 25 are early 20th century, with red tiled bay windows and dormers with rounded tops. Both the chapel and Mervinia Terrace are reached by broad flights of steps leading up from the road. Limited development has taken place on the south side of the road, on stone quays built out into the river. The Literary Institute and Bath Place are located on one, and the roughcast church hall of 1924 with No. 24 alongside another, both former shipbuilding yards.

Archaeological potential

Information relating to the shipbuilding industry may lie buried beneath later development.

Area 4 Penhelyg

Historical background

Penhelyg developed within a north-south valley, parallel to Copperhill Street at Aberdyfi, where there was good sheltered access to the river foreshore. A shipbuilding industry was established here, and some six yards produced a large number of craft of varying sizes and tonnages. Whilst boats may have been built here from the 17th century or earlier, the industry was at its busiest in the 19th century. The construction of the railway in 1867 made several of the yards redundant, though these were replaced by new ones constructed out of the waste from tunnelling. Houses can be seen here on a picture of 1834, alongside the river road and at the junction with Nantiestyn, which runs north up the valley. These three storey houses are similar to those originally built on the seafront at Aberdyfi, but the construction of the railway divorced them from the sea, and consequently the later bay windows were never added. The houses at the north end of Nantiestyn are late 19th century. Penhelyg Terrace was built on the site of a shipyard after the construction of the railway, again utilising waste rock from the railway tunnel. Penhelyg lodge is an earlier terrace that, prior to the railway, would have been located on the river front – it is early 19th century, and once housed a school, as well as being the home of Dr John Pughe. From the lodge a drive leads round to Plas Penhelig, a country house built 1903-6. The vicarage (now Plas y Coed) behind Nantiestyn was built in the late 19th century. A small station halt was built on the railway in 1933.

The character of building

Penhelyg, though linked to Aberdyfi by a continuous run of houses, feels a different settlement. It is less of a seaside resort and more of a coastal fishing and shipbuilding village. The railway, which runs high up on an embankment, cuts through the village, severing it from the river front. The three-storey lodging houses on Terrace Road and Nantiestyn, now separated from the coast edge, are rendered and painted, with 12 pane sash windows. A small bay window has been built onto the first floor of No. 2, but otherwise bay

windows are largely absent here, except for a late 19th century terrace at the north end of Nantiestyn. Low down, and overshadowed by the railway, is Penhelyg Lodge, partly rendered, but not painted and the first floor of pointed stone, with tall stone chimneys. A variety of small pane sash windows indicate changes to the internal layout over the years. Plashelyg Terrace was built on a former shipbuilding yard, on ground reputed to have been made up from waste stone from the railway tunnels. The back of the houses look onto the railway embankment, and the front look onto gardens which run down to the edge of the quay. Typically Victorian, of 2-storeys with attics, bay windows, and a mixture of dormer windows, the slate roofs with contrasting red ridge tiles and red brick chimneys. Another former yard alongside is now a public park. The small single waiting room at the railway halt is original, with flared slate roof, in pagoda style.

The village continues round the corner and up the hill, towards Machynlleth, with a mixture of houses of various sizes, but mostly late 19th century and early 20th century. No. 4 is a three-storey house with bay windows fronting the road, walls of squared dark stone and quoins of red sandstone. Further up the hill and around the corner again Copper Cottage is the former police house, built of larger slabs than the Aberdyfi houses, it has slate lintels on the ground floor, and small pane sash windows. Tanyrallt is an attractive late Georgian stone-built house, double fronted, with 12 pane sash windows. Closer to Penhelyg, 'Cottage' sits above the corner of the road, dwarfed by houses either side. It is a relatively small double fronted two-storey house with end chimneys, and 24 pane sash windows.

Area 5 Balkland Hill and Hopeland Road

Historical background

Balkland Hill was the first these two areas to be developed, in the very late 19th century. This followed the sale of land by Ynysmaengwen, and roads laid out on the 1900 OS map show the development in its early stages of growth. This was typical villa development, high on the hill behind the town overlooking the river. Hopeland Road was constructed after 1900, in formerly open fields.

The character of building

A series of detached villas set in open gardens. Balkan Hill House is more austere and Victorian, but the later houses on Hopeland Road are typically Edwardian, rendered painted walls, usually white, with large gabled dormers, half-timber decoration and verandas. They are set in a landscape of developed gardens separated by large privet hedges and walls of the small thin local stone. They form an interesting haphazard pattern, better for being irregular. Late 20th century infill has taken place on Balkan Hill, though not on Hopeland Road.

Area 6 Maesnewydd

In the 1950's the fields above and to the north of Copperhill Street were chosen for building the first council houses at Aberdyfi. The estate was considerably expanded in the 1970's and 80's to the north of Balkan Hill when the Mynydd Isaf estate was built. The topography has not allowed the development of discrete housing estates in closes, but rather ribbon development along roads. The 1950's houses, typical neo-georgian, are set at angles to the road to avoid the tedium of regularity. The later housing is more regular, and typical of system building of the 1970's. Infilling with private houses and further extension into the surrounding fields is continuing.

Area 7 Aberdyfi west and Gwelfor Road

Historical background

This area is separated from the original settlement of Aberdyfi by a rock ridge orientated approximately north-south. The ridge has been cut through by the railway cutting at the south end. The small isolated part of the ridge south of the railway contains the bandstand, and is fronted by Glan Dyfi Terrace and Bodfor Terrace (Character Area 1). At the north end the ridge is crossed by Gwelfor Road, leading east into Maes Newydd and Mynydd Isaf housing estates.

The first development west of the ridge was the 'Corbet Arms Family Hotel' built 1829 after the completion of Penson's road. The hotel was rebuilt in 1867 with the hope of capitalising on the increased visitor numbers brought in by the railway. The station was built just below the hotel, but the hotel struggled to survive, and was destroyed by fire in 1914, the final empty shell only being cleared in 1968 to make way for the school. The steam mills at Aberdyfi were established west of the station, and by the 1890's the only other development was the house at Craig y Don. The creation of the golf course and the increased demand for villa style housing, led to rapid growth, though not until the mid-20th century, and the initial building on the slopes above the road appears, from the 1938 map, to be mainly small industrial terraces, presumably housing a working population for the small quarries which lay adjacent. By the mid-20th century these were being replaced by detached houses each in their own grounds, regularly spaced along the terraced slopes. Gwelfor terrace is the only partial survivor from the earlier development. In the later 20th century development spread west onto the former quarry, and Gwelfor Road was extended east over the rock ridge, linking the two sides. The lower ground south of the A496 was slowly developed for leisure purposes. The recreation ground was established by the council in the early 20th century, Neuadd Dyfi, a large community hall, was initially built here in the 1920's, and replaced by the present building in 1957. South of the railway line is Penrhos Caravan Park, established in the 1940's.

The character of building

The main A496 road runs approximately east-west on the low-lying coastal terrace. To the south of the road lie playing fields and recreational grounds, separated from the golf links and dune by the railway. Though small modern housing estates have been built (e.g. Rhos Dyfi and Melin Ardudwy) most of the buildings are functional. The red-brick station is now converted to residential use, but Neuadd Dyfi, the club house for the golf course, and the boat yard are typical of the non-residential use of this area. North of the road the land rises steeply apart from a small corner at Craig y Don. Houses are built on long terraces above the road, and serviced by a number of small roads and tracks. Craig y Don is the only pre-1900 building on this side of the ridge. It is typically late Victorian with multiple gables, sash windows with marginal glazing bars, square labels, and decorative bargeboards on overhanging eaves. The majority of the remainder of the housing is mid-20th century and later. Gwelfor Road is characterized by a mixture of styles, from the more traditional three-storey terrace of Gwelfor, with bay windows rising to pitched dormers, to the Arts and Crafts of Gorwel and Carreg Wen, to the modernist, almost brutal, Dovey Heights at the junction with Corbett Lane. The vernacular garden walls and round gate pillars of Gorwel in thin stone slabs are significant here, as are the allotment gardens opposite. The long row of houses on the level terrace to the east are served by their own road from the A496. The westernmost of these are early 20th century, and include Murmur y Don, with verandah and irregular roof with slightly upturned eaves. The remainder of the row contains a variety of modern detached houses.

11. PRINCIPAL SOURCES

11.1 Archival sources

DRO

Z/DAB (Ynysymaengwyn papers)

Z/M/620/1 (copy of Thomas Owen Morgan, *The Aberdovey Guide and Handbook*, second ed., 1863)

Z/M/806 (Cambrian Railways account book for port, 1882-8)

M Mackenzie, *The North Part of Cardigan Bay in North Wales* (n.d. – late 18th century? – shows smelting house on Dyfi)

NLW

Bob Owen papers 25/5,

Minor Deposits 289/B, ms 19266E, 21069ED

Peniarth DA383 (will of William Vaughan, 1677)

Western Sea Fisheries papers (Aberdyfi Mussel Fishers)

Gogerddan Estate box 75 (Gors Fochno enclosure).

Llangefni Record Office

WM/1905/23 (copy of Lewis Morris map, 1740s; original in hydrographic office)

National archive, Kew

State papers, Domestic, Elizabeth I, vol. 38, no. 30.

11.2 Visual material

NLW

Lithograph (view of Aberdyfi from south identical to following but shows steam boat and does not show jetty or bridge)

Lithograph 13558182 (view of Aberdyfi from south, with prayer by Rev. George Eyre Evans; shows railway bridge, timber pier)

Lithograph 13558182 (view by Newman and Co., 1860, from west)

Engraving 13558182 (view by A.F. Goddard from west 'Aberdovey North Wales', dated to 1880 by cataloguer but does not show railway)

Lithograph 13558182 (identified as 'Carnarvon: Wm Potter', dated c. 1835)

Lithograph 13558182 (allegedly 1880)

John Thomas jtm 025 (view of wharf and pier from east)

John Thomas jtm 025 (view of Penhelyg)

John Thomas jtm 013 (view of wharf and town from pier)

John Thomas jtm 017 (view of pier)

John Thomas jtm 019 (view from pier)

John Thomas jtm 025 (view of old lifeboat station)

John Thomas view of village pump

11.3 Secondary sources

Anon (Darlington, R.), (no date) *Aberdovey Golf Club: A Round of a Hundred Years* (Aberdovey)

Birch, H.K. (1982), *The Pages of Time: A Brief History of the Aberdovey Literary Institute 1882-1982* (privately published)

Boyd, J.I.C. (1988), *The Talylyn Railway* (Wild Swan)

Bradley, V.J. (1992), *Industrial Locomotives of North Wales* (Brimingham)

Bromwich, R. (2006), *Trioedd Ynys Prydein: The Triads of the Isle of Britain* (Cardiff: UWP, 2006)

Chapman, J. (1992), *A Guide to Parliamentary Enclosures in Wales* (Cardiff: UWP)

Colyer, R.J. (1977), 'The Enclosure and Drainage of Cors Fochno (Borth Bog), 1813-47', *Ceredigion* 8, 181-192.

Coulls, A. (2006), 'The Corris, Machynlleth and River Dovey Tramroad', in *Early Railways* 3, ed. by Michael Bailey (Sudbury: Six Martlets), 118-25.

Davies, R. (1995), *The Revolt of Owain Glyndŵr* (Oxford, New York, OUP)

Dinn, J. (1988), 'Dyfi Furnace Excavations 1982-87', *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 22, 111-42.

Gerald (of Wales; Giraldus Cambrensis) (1978), *The Journey through Wales/The Description of Wales* trans Lewis Thorpe (Penguin ed.)

Green, C.C., *Coast Lines of the Cambrian Railways* 2 (Wild Swan, 1996)

Gwyn, D. (2006), *Gwynedd: Inheriting a Revolution: The Archaeology of Industrialisation in North-west Wales* (Chichester, Phillimore)

Lewis, H.M. (no date): *A Riverside Story: The History of the Aberdyfi Wharf and jetty* (privately published)

Lewis, H. M., 1989 *Pages of Time: A pictorial history of Aberdyfi* (privately published)

Lewis, H. M., 2003 *Aberdyfi: Past and Present*, Y Lolfa Press.

Lewis, S. (1838), *Topographical Dictionary* (London)

- Lewis, W.J. (1994), 'Lead Mining in Cardiganshire' in *Cardiganshire County History 3* (Cardiganshire Antiquarian Society in association with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales by the University of Wales Press)
- Lloyd, L. (1996), *A Real Little Seaport: The Port of Aberdyfi and its People 1565-1920* (privately published)
- Morgan, D.W. (1948), *Brief Glory* (Liverpool)
- Morgan, K. (1996), foreword to Lloyd L (1996), qv.
- Morris, J. (no date), 'A Brief History of the Aberdovey Life-Boat Station' in DRO *Aberdyfi* file.
- Pritchard, R.T. (1961-4), 'Merionethshire Roads and Turnpike Trusts', *JMHS* 4
- Richard, A.J. (2001), *The Slate Railways of Wales* (Gwasg Carreg Gwalch)
- 'Philip Sidney' (1900), *Aberdovey and its Literary Institute* (Abersytwyth)
- Williams, M.I., 'Commercial Relations' in *CCH 3* (Cardiganshire Antiquarian Society in association with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales by the University of Wales Press)
- Skempton, A.W. (2002), *Biographical Dictionary of Civil Engineers Volume 1 1500 to 1830* (Institute of Civil Engineers)

APPENDIX I

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Current legislation

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

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

Statutory protection is provided by the following Acts and Orders:

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

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

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

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

The key document in Wales which expands on the legislative background and provides detailed guidance on the handling of archaeology within the planning process is Welsh Office Circular 60/96 - *Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology (1996)*. This Welsh Assembly guidance expands on Planning Policy Wales (March 2002), Chapter 6 'Conserving the Historic Environment'; particularly paragraphs 6.5.1 to 6.5.6 (see Appendix I for extracts from 60/96).

Local Plan Policies

The town lies entirely within the Snowdonia National Park. Current regional and local plan policies are defined in *Gwynedd Structure Plan* (adopted 1993) and *Eryri Local Plan* (adopted 1999). The plan can be consulted in the offices of the National Park, or online at http://www.eryri-npa.co.uk/images/eryri_local_plan/elp_english.pdf. Policies concerning archaeology, including historic towns, are given in section 5, policies AR 1-4. Policies concerning the built heritage, including listed buildings and conservation areas, are given section 6, policies TA 1-12.

Conservation Areas

The 1990 Town and Country Planning Act defines a conservation area as ‘an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’.

Heritage and Local Planning Context

Advice on the management of the archaeological heritage is provided by the National Park Archaeologist, who, together with the Park’s building conservation and planning officers contribute to the decision making processes to inform on the likely impact of development on the historic environment and how best to mitigate the impact. Advice on Conservation Areas and the Built Heritage is given by the National Park Planning Department through their Building Conservation Officer.

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

The level of archaeological response is guided by the nature of the archaeological remains and the significance of the impact. Archaeological mitigation is usually imposed through planning conditions, and a relevant programme of archaeological works is advised by the National Park archaeologist. On occasion a programme of assessment and evaluation may be required prior to the determination of a planning application, so that the appropriate mitigation can be advised.

Regional Historic Environment Record

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

Extracts from Welsh Office Circular 60/96

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

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

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

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

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

When planning applications are made without prior discussion with the local planning authorities, the authorities should seek to identify those applications which have archaeological implications, and to

assess their likely impact by consulting the local authority Archaeological Officer, National Park Archaeologist or regional Welsh Archaeological Trust. [Paragraph 15]

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

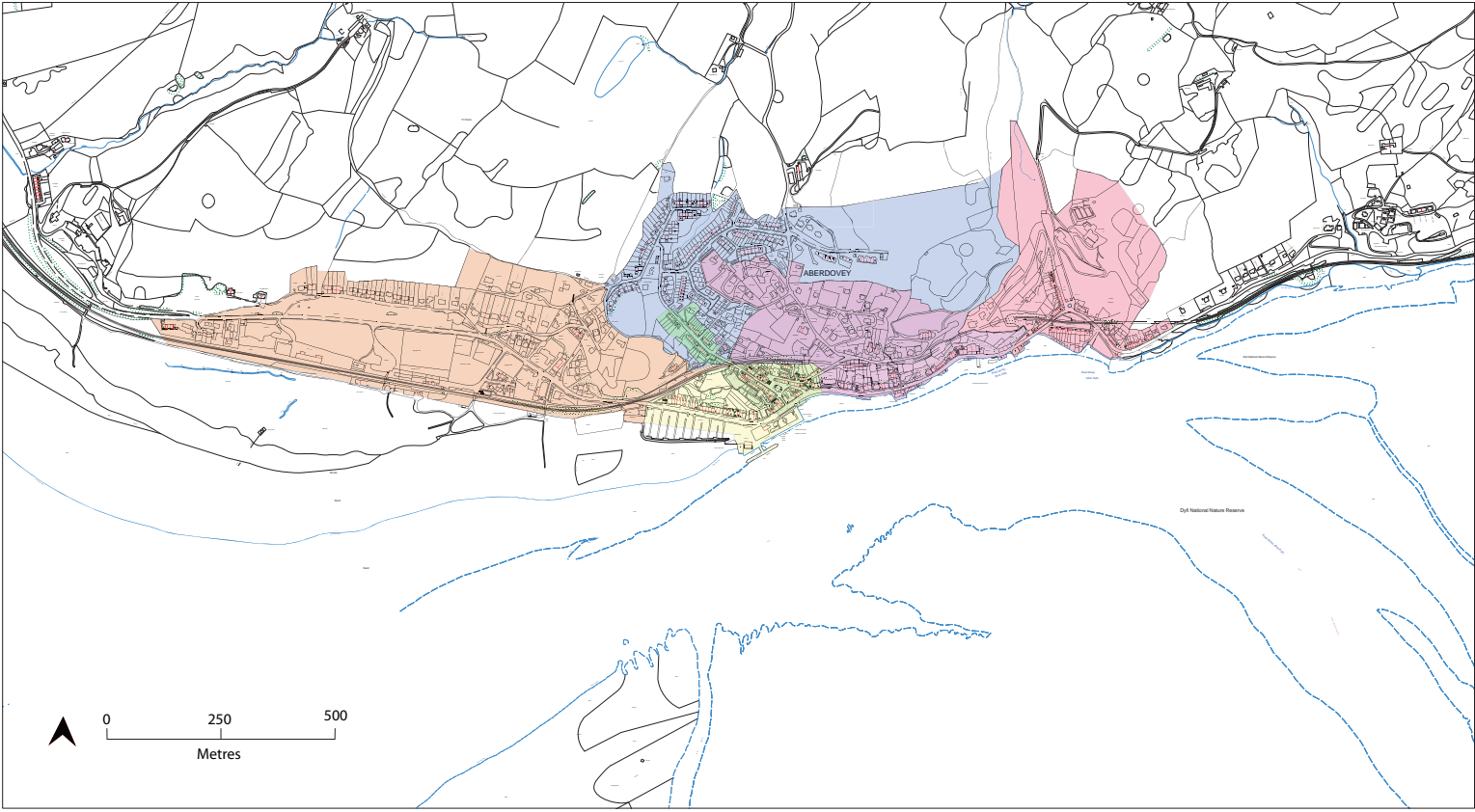
Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ i.e. a presumption against proposals which would involve significant alteration or cause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

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

Archaeological investigations such as excavation and recording should be carried out before development commences, working to a project brief prepared by the planning authority (with reference to their archaeological advisers). [Paragraph 20]

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

Figure 01: Character areas



The map displays the National Park Centre area in Gwynedd. The proposed development site is outlined in black, covering a large area of land. Surrounding streets include Brynau Llanall, Moranedd, Glan Dovey Terrace, and Sea View Terrace. Landmarks such as St Peter's Church, Bryn Gwyllt, and the National Park Centre are labeled. A legend indicates that red dots represent listed buildings. A scale bar shows distances up to 100 meters.

Figure 03: Area 2 Copperhill Street and Chapel Square

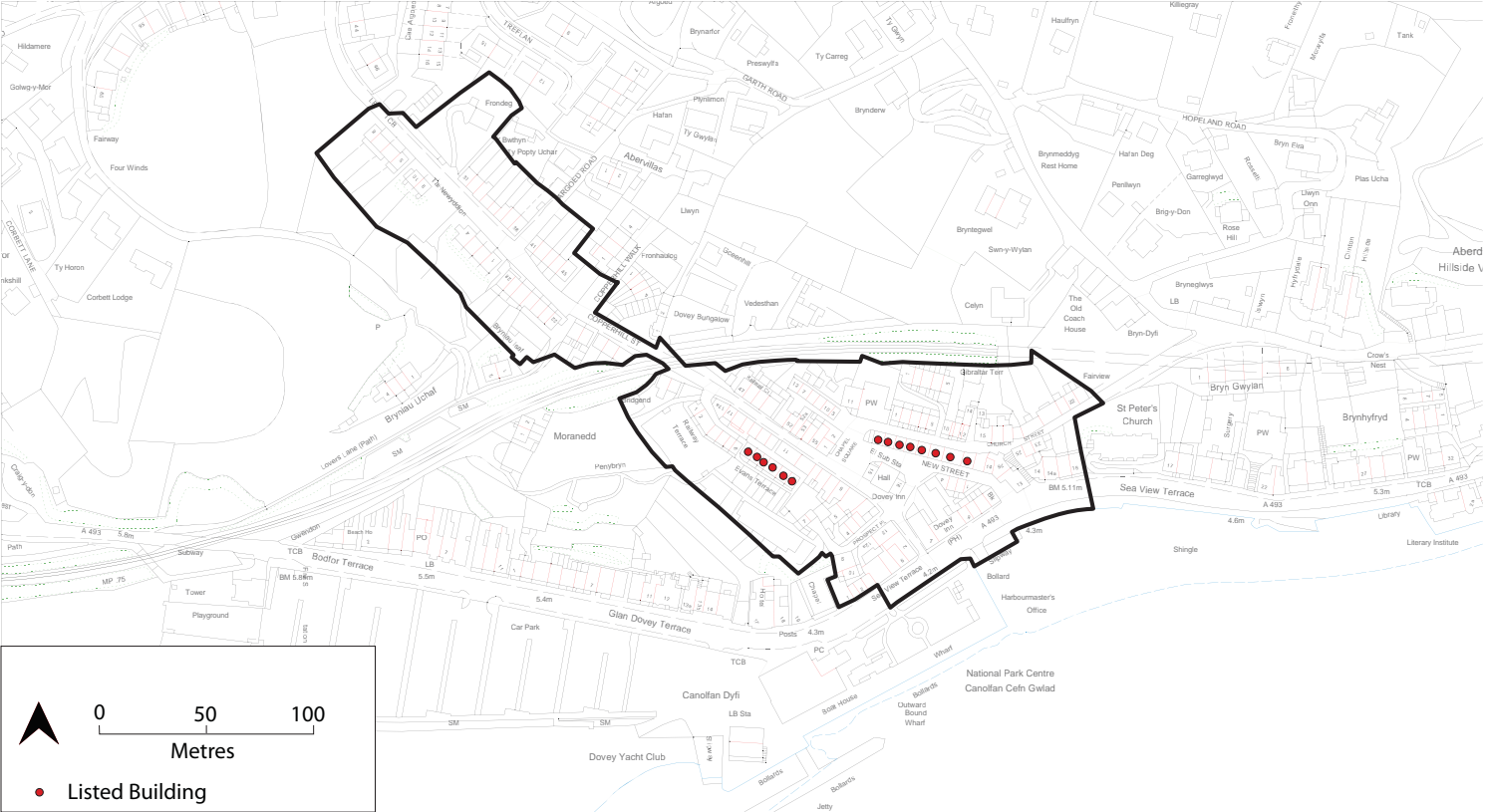
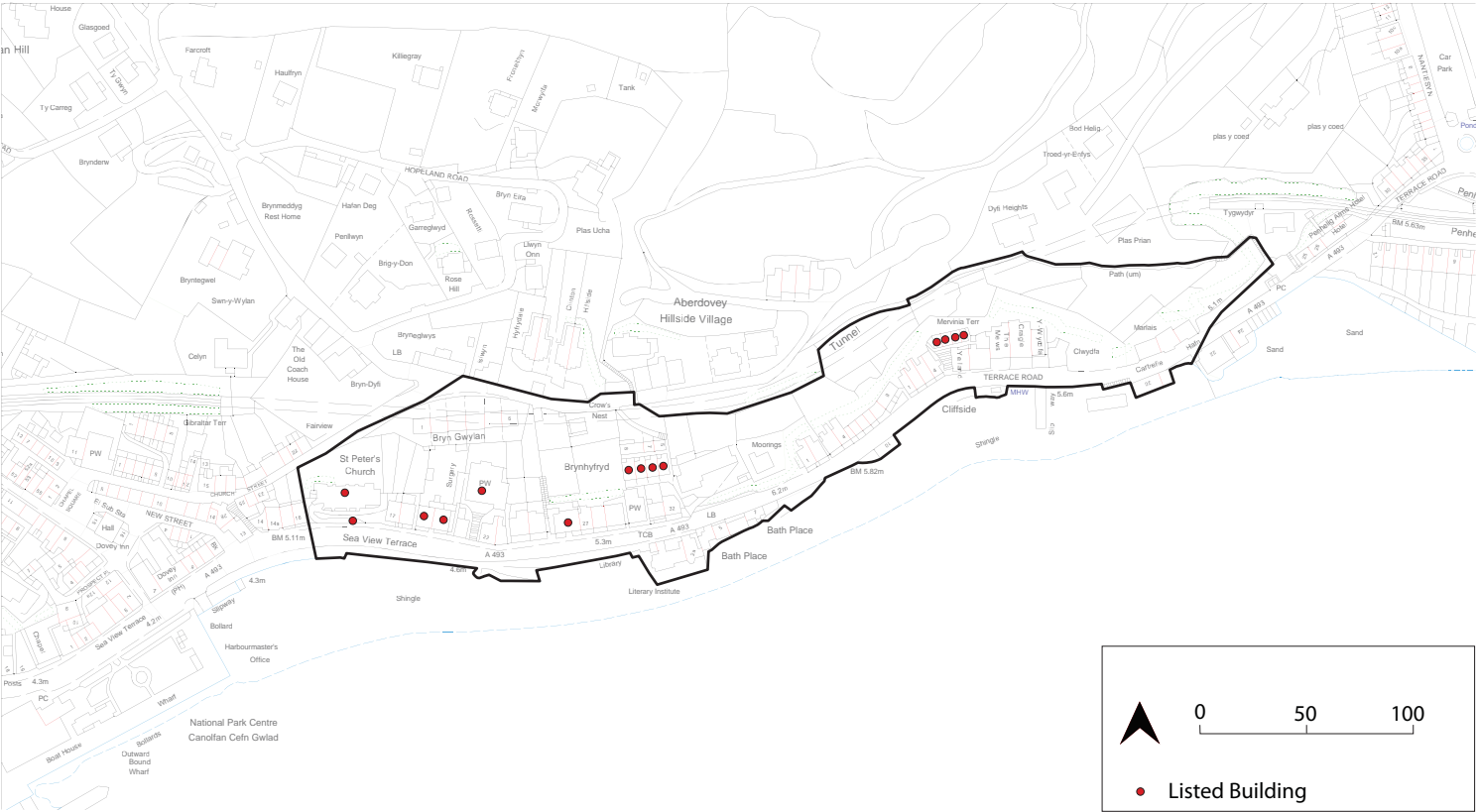


Figure 04: Area 3 Sea View Terrace (east)



The map displays the Penhelig (Penhelyg) area, highlighting three listed buildings with red dots. Key locations include Plas Penhelig Hotel, Penhelig Station, and Penhelyg Terrace. The map also shows roads such as Terrace Road and A 493, and features like a pond and a tunnel. A scale bar and a north arrow are provided in the bottom left corner.

Listed Building

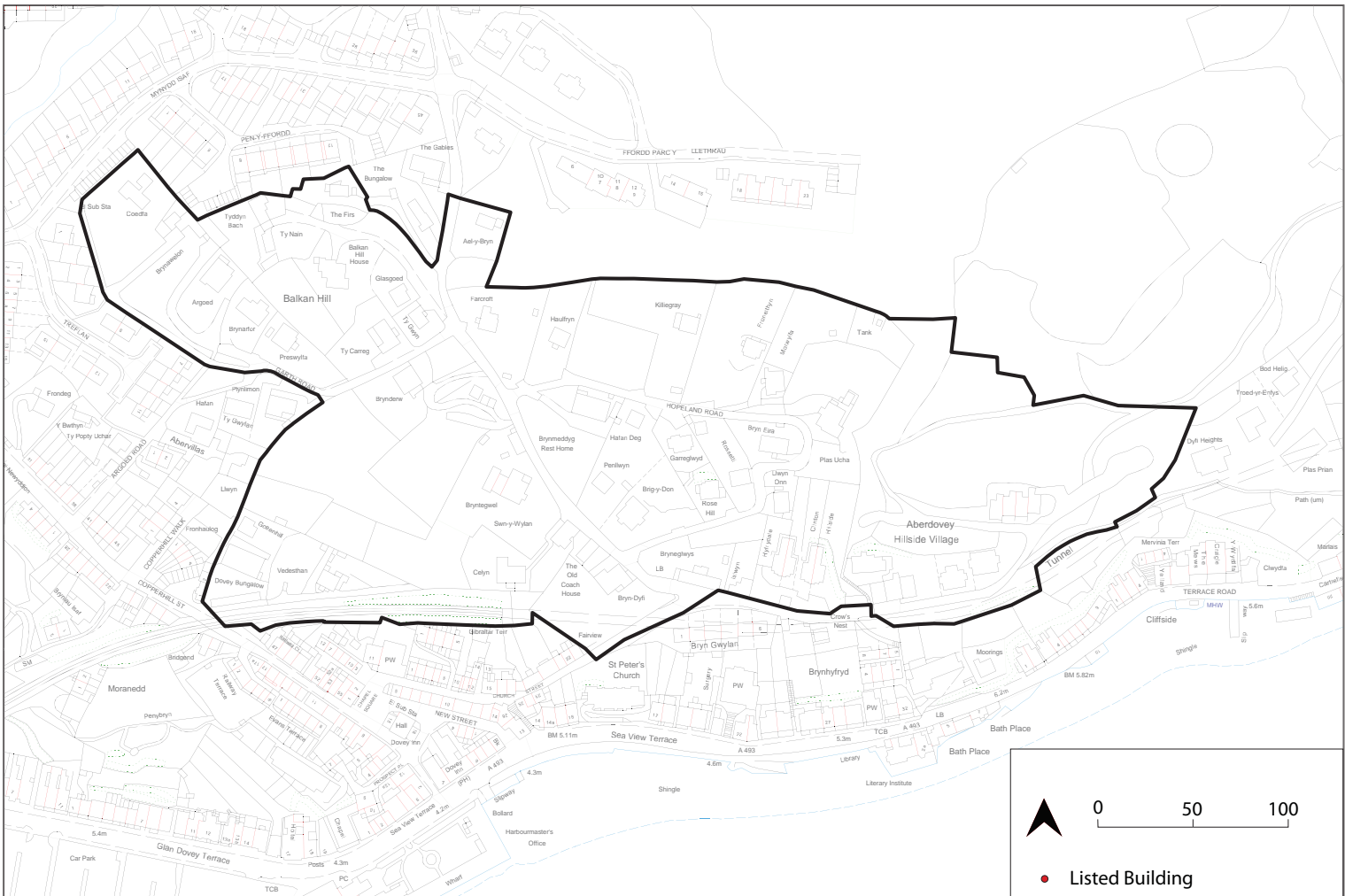


Figure 07: Area 6 Maesnewydd and Mynydd Isaf

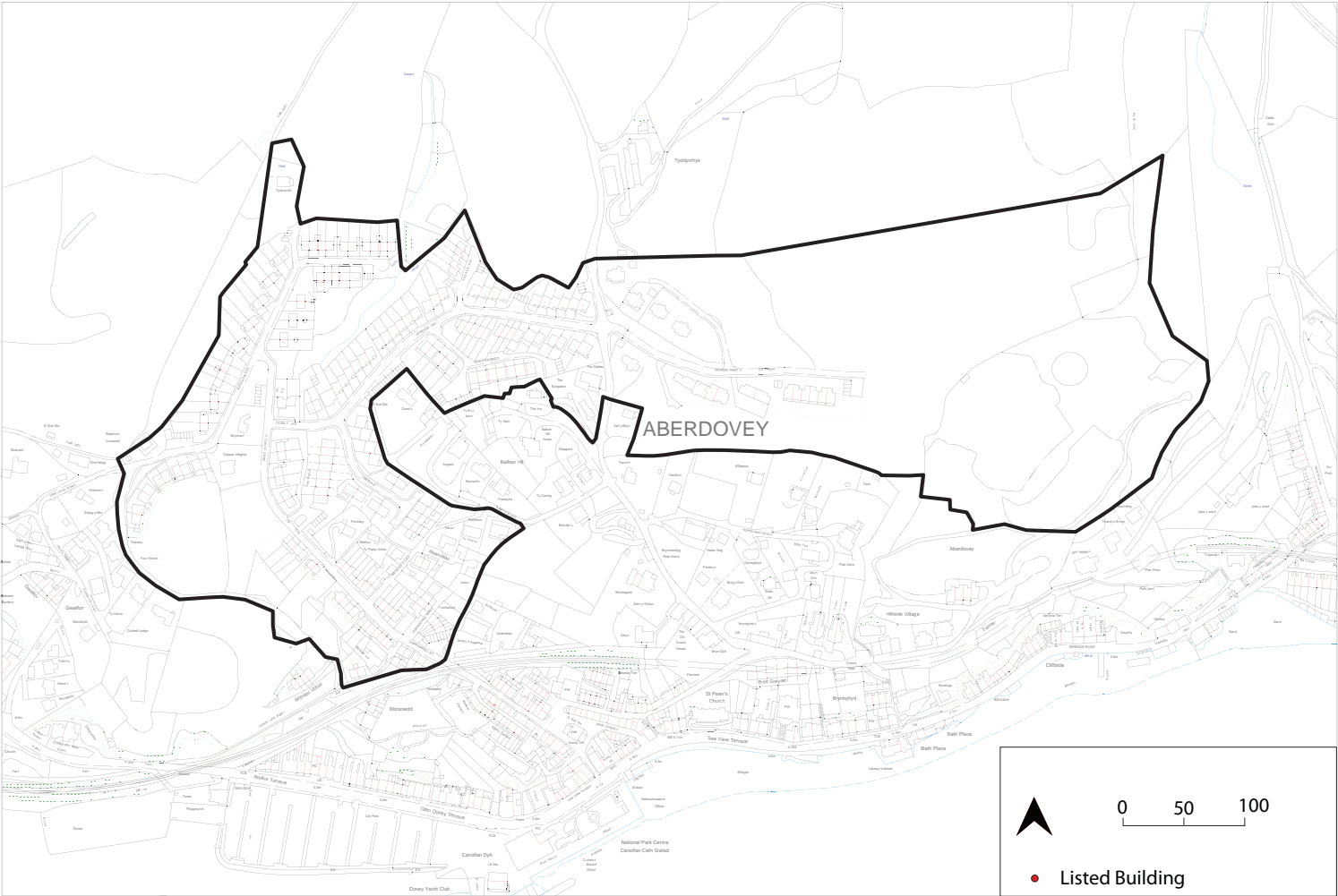


Figure 08: Area 7 Aberdyfi West and Gwelfor Road

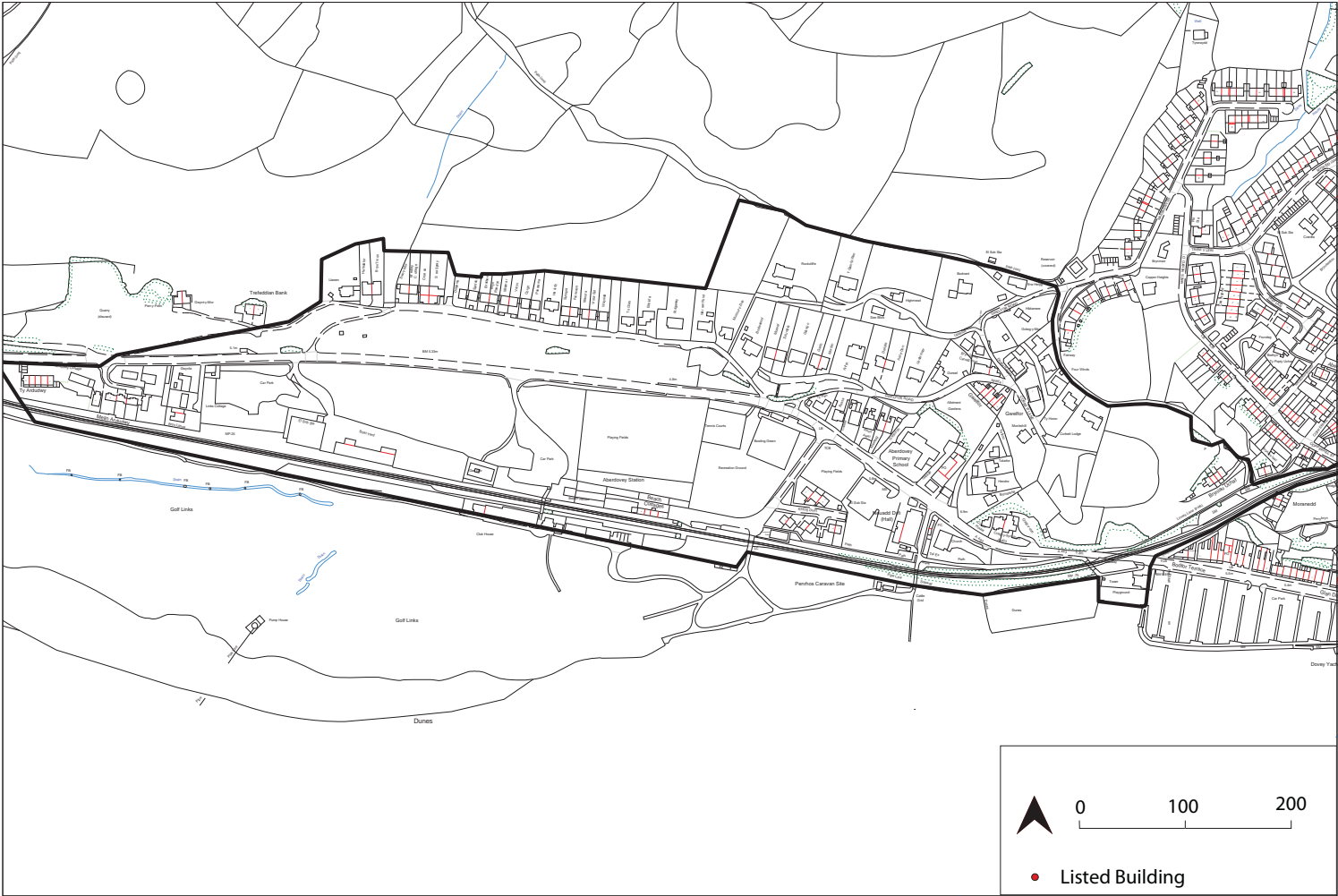


Figure 09: Conservation area

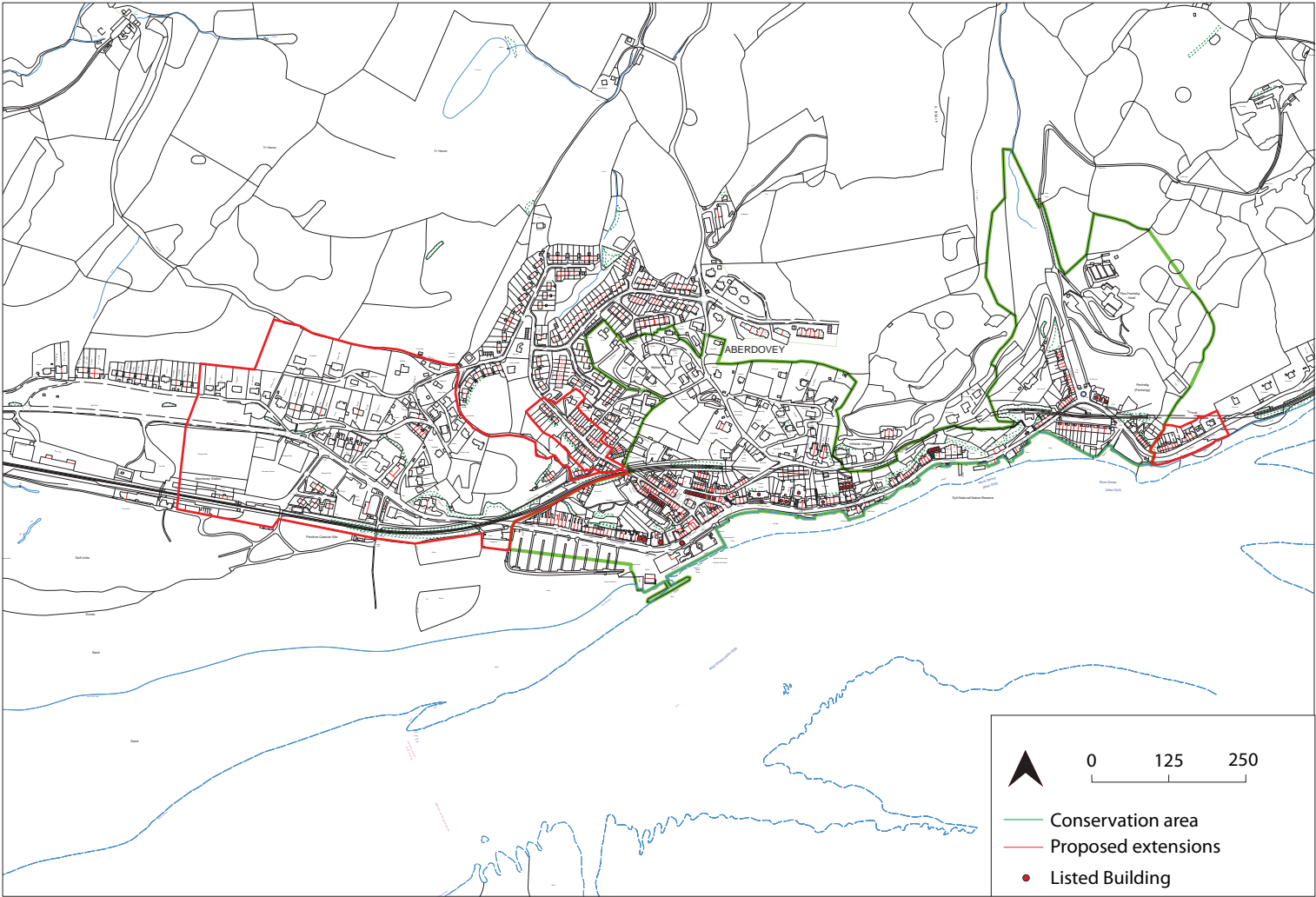




Plate 01: Aber Dyfi Terrace from the beach



Plate 02: Sea View Terrace



Plate 03: Copperhill Street looking north



Plate 04: New Street



Plate 05: Church Street – the rear of New Street on the left



Plate 06: Evans Terrace



Plate 07: Railway Terrace



Plate 08: Railway Court



Plate 09: Copperhill Street looking north towards Tai Newydd



Plate 10: Tai Newydd



Plate 11: Looking from Bandstand over Balkan Hill



Plate 12: Hopeland Road



Plate 13: Terrace Road



Plate 14: Penhelyg



Plate 15: No's 14 and 15 Glan Dyfi Terrace. An early 19th century pair with bow windows. The shop fronts are later 19th century.



Plate 16: No's 19 and 20 Sea View Terrace. Another wellpreserved early 19th century pair with bow windows



Plate 17: Mid-19th century terraced houses on Glan Dyfi Terrace. Different treatment to the windows, particularly the bay windows and dormers, is apparent.



Plate 18: Rear of Glan Dyfi Terrace



Plate 19: The houses on New Street are largely without bay windows, and contain good examples of mid-19th century sash windows.



Plate 20: Well preserved doorway detail on the west side of New Street, though the windows have been replaced.



Plate 21: A pair of terraced cottages in Chapel Square, Copperhill Street. Probably 18th century in origin but with later raised render arc hitrave picked out in a different colour. This photo taken in 2007.



Plate 22: The cottages repainted in 2011.



Plate 23: Liverpool House, Copperhill Street, of brick construction.



Plate 24: The 1867 station also of brick, now converted to residential accommodation.



Plate 25: Example of gothic style villa off Hopeland Road



Plate 26: Craig y Don at west end of Aberdyfi, the first of the detached houses built on the west side.



Plate 27: No. 5 Terrace Road, a small single front cottage as seen in 2007



Plate 28: No. 5 Terrace Road after renovation in 2011, with lower sash window replaced



Plate 29: No. 20 Plas Meirion (The Cottage)



Plate 30: Tanyrallt, Plas Meirion



Plate 31: Typical example of vernacular walling on Hopeland road



Plate 32: Example of modern walling above Hopeland Road, which loses vernacular character



Plate 33: The Church Hall, now residential use, an example of 1920's Arts and Crafts style

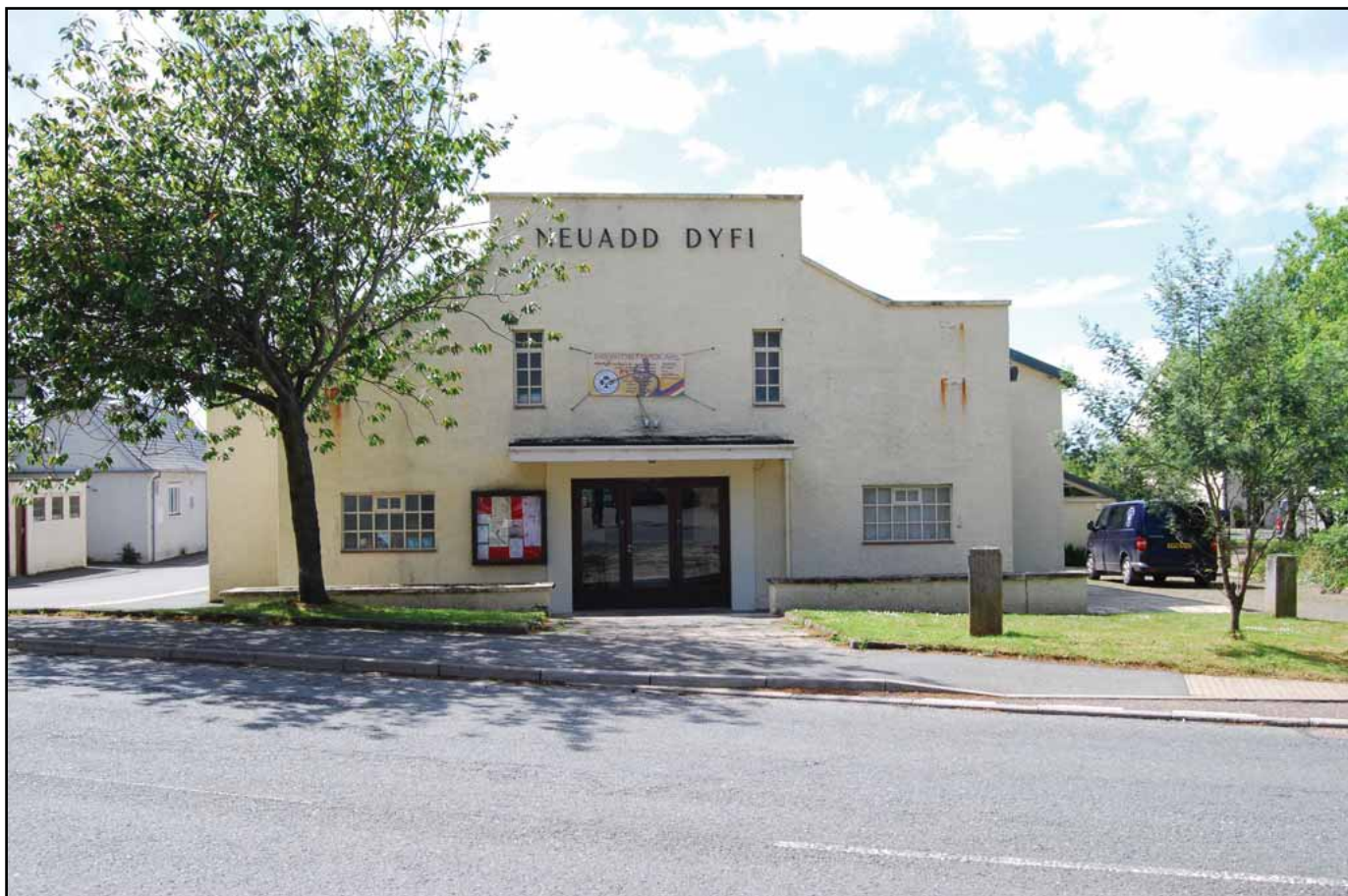


Plate 34: The later village hall at the west end of the village



Plate 35: Maes Newydd (far left) and Mynydd Isaf housing estates



Plate 36: Mynydd Isaf housing estate



YMDDIRIEDOLAETH
ARCHAEOLEGOL
GWYNEDD



GWYNEDD
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
TRUST

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