

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg
HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERIZATION



Llangollen, Castell Dinas Brân, and Creigiau Eglwyseg. Photo CPAT 1766-08

CPAT Report No 683

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by W J Britnell
March 2005

The study was undertaken during the 2004/05 financial year (project CPAT 761)
with funding provided by Cadw



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Preface

Natural forces and human activity acting together over the last six thousand years have contributed to produce a landscape of great beauty and variety in Wales, a national asset that is essential both to our national identity and to our individual 'sense of place' and well-being. The diversity and imprint of human activity on the landscape is everywhere to be seen, from the enigmatic stone monuments of the prehistoric period and the magnificent castles and abbeys of the medieval period, to quite commonplace and typical features like field boundaries that can often be of great age. But the landscape is more than just attractive scenery or a record of the past; it also provides a place for us to live, work and sustain ourselves, through farming, forestry, tourism and so on, processes that all shape, and will continue to shape, the landscape.

Recognising and raising awareness of the importance and wealth of the historic fabric of the landscape has been the central theme and message of the non-statutory, *Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales*, the first part of which, covering thirty-six 'outstanding' landscapes, was published in January 1998. This is being compiled as a joint initiative between Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), working in collaboration with the four Welsh Archaeological Trusts, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales and the Welsh unitary authorities.

The *Historic Landscapes Register* provides a first step, a national overview of the historic content of the Welsh landscape. The next step, so essential to the process of informing the way in which aspects of the historic landscape may be managed, is to make available more detailed information about the character of this landscape at a more local level. This is achieved through a process known as historic landscape characterisation which has been developed in Wales jointly by Cadw, the CCW and the Welsh Archaeological Trusts. This involves the identification of geographically definable and mappable areas of historic character, as determined by the range and distribution of surviving archaeological and historical

Rhagair

Mae'r grymoedd naturiol a'r gweithgaredd dynol a fu'n gweithredu ar y cyd dros y chwe mil o flynyddoedd diwethaf wedi cyfrannu at y broses o gynhyrchu tirwedd o harddwch ac amrywiaeth hynod yng Ngymru, ased cenedlaethol sy'n hanfodol i ni o ran ein hunaniaeth henedlaethol a hefyd o ran ein lles a'n 'hymdeimlad o berthyn i le' unigol. Gellir gweld ymhobman yr amrywiaeth a'r olion a adawyd ar y tirwedd gan weithgaredd dynol, o henebion cerrig enigmatig y cyfnod cynhanesyddol a chestyll ac abatai gwych y cyfnod canoloesol, i'r nodweddion eithaf cyffredin a nodweddiadol fel ffiniau caeau a all yn aml fod yn hen iawn. Ond nid dim ond golygyfeydd deniadol neu gofnod o'r gorffennol yn unig yw'r tirwedd; mae hyfyd yn darparu lle i ni fyw, gweithio a chynnal ein hunain ynddo, drwy gyfrwng amaeth, coedwigaeth, twristiaeth ac ati, oll yn broseu sy'n llunio, ac a fydd yn yn parhau i lunio'r tirwedd.

Bu cydnabod a chodi ymwybyddiaeth o bwysigrwydd a chyfoeth ffariog hanesyddol y tirwedd yn thema ac yn neges ganolog y gofrestr anstatudol, Cofrestr o Dirweddau o Ddiddordeb Hanesyddol Eithriadol Yng Nghymru, y cynoeddwyd y rhan gyntaf ohoni, sy'n cwmaus trideg chwech o dirweddau 'eithriadol' ym mis Ionawr 1998. Caiiff y Gofrestr ei llunio fel menter ar y cyd rhwng Cadw, Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru a'r Cyngor Rhyngwladol ar Henebion a Safleoedd (ICOMOS) sy'n gweithio mewn cydweithrediad â phedair Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Cymru, y Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru ac awdurdodau unedol Cymru.

Cofrestr o Dirweddau o Ddiddordeb Hanesyddol yw'r cam cyntaf, trosolwg cenedlaethol o gynnwys hanesyddol tirwedd Cymru. Y cam nesaf, mor hanfodol i'r broses o lywio'r modd y gellir rheoli agweddau ar y tirwedd cenedlaethol, yw trefnu bod gwybodaeth fwy manwl ar gael ynglyn â chymeriad y tirwedd hwn ar lefel fwy lleol. Cyflawnir hyn drwy broses a elwir yn nodweddiad tirweddau hanesyddol y gellir eu diffinio a'u mapio'n ddaearyddol, yn ôl yr hyn a benderfynir gan ystod a dosbarthiad y nodweddion archeolegol a hanesyddol sy'n goroesi a'r prif fathau o batrymau defnydd tir hanesyddol neu 'themâe' hanesyddol

features and the main types of historical land use patterns or historic ‘themes’ that have shaped the area. The key historic characteristics of the area are then identified along with recommendations for their positive management.

This report is one of a series of landscape characterisation exercises being undertaken by the Welsh Archaeological Trusts with grant-aid from Cadw. These studies will initially concentrate on those areas identified on the *Historic Landscapes Register*, although it is accepted that the whole of the Welsh landscape can be said to be, in one way or another, historic. Information is being prepared in a form which is compatible to the CCW’s landscape assessment and decision making methodology, known as *LANDMAP*. It will be made available to a wide range of organisations and will feed into various initiatives to protect and manage the Welsh countryside, most notably the *Tir Gofal* agri-environment scheme. It is also seen as making a particularly important contribution to raising awareness and heightening a feeling of local distinctiveness.

The *Historic Landscapes Register* and these characterisation exercises fully acknowledge the dynamic and evolving nature of the landscape. They promote the view that protecting the legacy of the past in the landscape is not to be achieved by preventing change or fossilising the landscape but rather by informing the process of change, creating tomorrow’s landscapes without necessarily sacrificing the best of yesterday’s.

sydd wedi llunio'r ardal. Nodir nodweddion hanesyddol allweddol yr ardal felly ynghyd ag argymhellion ar gyfer eu rheli'n gadarnhaol.

Mae'r adroddiad hwn yn un o gyfres o ymarfeirion nodweddiad tirweddau hanesyddol yr ymngmeirir ag efgan Ymddiriedolaethau Archaeoleogol Cymru gyda chymorth grant gan Cadw. Bydd yr astudiaethau hyn yn canolbwyntio yn y lle cyntaf ar yr ardaloedd hynny a nodwyd yn y Gofestr o Ddiddordeb Hanessyddol, er y caiff ei dderbyn bod modd disgrifio tirwedd Cymru gyfan, mewn un ffordd neu'r llall, fel yn hanesyddol. Mae gwybodaeth yn cael ei pharatoi ar ffurf sy'n cydweddau â methodoleg asesu tirweddau a gwneud penderfyniadau Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru, sef LANDMAP. Bydd ar gael i ystod eang o sefydliadau a chaiff ei fwydo i fentrau amrywiol er mwyn diogelu a rheoli cefn gwlad Cymru, yn bennaf y cynllun agri-amgylcheddol sef, Tir Gofal. Caiff ei weld hefyd yn gwneud cyfraniad arbennig o bwysig i'r broses o godi ymwybyddiaeth a dwyshau'r ymdeimlad o arbenigrydd lleol.

Cydnabydda'r Gofestr o Dirweddau o Ddiddordeb Hanessyddol a'r ymarfeirion nodweddiad hyn yn llawn natur ddeinamig y tirwedd sy'n parhau i esblygu. Hyrwyddant y farn mai nid trwy rwystro newid neu ffosileiddio'r tirwedd y mae diogelu treftadaeth y gorffennol yn y tirwedd, ond yn hytrach drwy lywio'r broses o newid, gan greu tirweddau'r dyfodol heb o anghenraid abethu tirweddau gorau'r gorffennol.

Richard Avent

Cadw

Richard Kelly

Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru/Countryside Council for Wales

Introduction

THE PURPOSE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

This study is a contribution to the overall historic landscape initiative currently being funded by Cadw, the Countryside Council for Wales and ICOMOS UK. Its principal aim is to provide information to aid the management of the historic landscape. The following uses of historic landscape characterization were identified by Cadw:

- Planning, including large-scale intrusions such as roads, windfarms, mineral extraction, large-scale landfill/waste disposal, reclamation, water schemes, major settlement schemes, and major industrial developments
- Landscape management by large corporate landowners, farmers, industrial companies, water and electricity companies, the forestry industry, and the National Trust
- Advice to conservation bodies such as Cadw, the Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment Agency, local authorities, national parks
- Local landscape conservation initiatives and management agreements by Cadw, Countryside Council for Wales, local authorities
- To enhance our understanding of the historic aspects of landscape, stimulating further research, raising public perception of the landscape, and the preparation of policy statements by public bodies

EVOLVING HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERIZATION METHODOLOGY

Historic landscape characterization is a contribution towards the overall historic landscape initiative currently being funded by Cadw, the Countryside Council for Wales and ICOMOS UK. Its principal aim is to provide information to aid the management of the historic environment.

Historical landscape characteristics are the tangible evidence of the activities and habits of the people who occupied, developed, used and shaped the land to serve human needs in the past; they reflect the beliefs, attitudes, traditions and values of these people. They include the physical remains of all aspects of human activities and the exploitation in the past (above and below ground, known and potential), and our understanding, interpretation and even perception of those remains. They may reflect a variety of activities occurring at one time, or evolving functions in different periods of time.

The Countryside Commission (in its document *Views from the Past*, 1996) states that as managers we should be concerned with the historic character of the present landscape, and not with the study of the past for its own sake. It places the idea of 'historic landscape character' at the centre of these ideas. Characterization is defined as the process of identifying and defining the particular characteristics which make each area distinctive, and is rapidly emerging as the basis for describing and understanding the environment. Historic landscape characterization is one dimension of this approach: it sets out to identify the principal historic components within the current landscape. It is the great depth of human activity which underpins much of that which we feel is important and helps to give an idea of its local distinctiveness.

The term ‘historic character’ is generally preferred to ‘historic landscape’, as it is now accepted that all landscape is historic in that it reflects, to a greater or lesser degree, the processes which have occurred in history and which have formed its present appearance.

At present there is no standard, accepted methodology for establishing the historical characterization of landscape, but work on Llyn and elsewhere in Wales has suggested a practical approach based on considering the evidence as a series of themes which may provide an answer. At a landscape level, what is significant in historical terms includes field boundary patterns (whether they are irregular or regular, their size, their date etc); settlement patterns (whether they are scattered, nucleated, their date of origin etc); the relict remains of earlier periods which are to be found in upland or marginal landscapes; the effect of 18th- and 19th-century estates on the landscape; the impact of industry, military installations and so on.

The dominant historic themes or patterns in a locality help define local historic character. The combination of these characteristics give an area its local distinctiveness, and it is the definition of areas of local distinctiveness which leads to the definition of ‘character areas’.

The concept of ‘character areas’ differs somewhat from comparable studies in England, which are based on ‘historic landscape types’, where the predominant form of the present landscape is identified principally by the existing patterns of enclosures within areas of landscape.

The process of characterization adopted here can be summarised as follows:

one or more <u>dominant patterns</u>	→	<u>coherent character</u>
<u>coherent character</u> with definable limits	→	<u>character area</u>
one or more <u>character areas</u>	→	<u>historic landscape area</u>

Characterization is a practical tool intended to aid management in its broadest forms. In order to be of any practical use, this has to be translated into the management of ‘landscape tangibles’ (ie the evidence for historical processes and periods in the present landscape). It is essential, therefore, that the key historic landscape characteristics are features and/or patterns to which can be applied management prescriptions whose success or otherwise can be measured for monitoring purposes.

The reports emanating from this work contain a number of elements: the description of each character area split into three parts — historical background, key historic landscape characteristics, and key historic landscape management priorities — accompanied by a map and a photograph. The historical background provides a straightforward description of the archaeological and historical development of the area. The section on key historic landscape characteristics lists the principal characteristics which make that area distinctive and which future management should therefore concentrate on. The section on key historic landscape management priorities begins to define the scope for creative action within a number of initiatives (including LANDMAP, Unitary Development Plans, and Tir Gofal, the all-Wales agri-environment scheme) which can sustain or even enhance elements considered essential to the historic character of the areas.

MANAGING HISTORIC CHARACTER

Rural land-use change

There have been many pressures on the rural environment and the countryside over the last 50 years as a result of changes in land use and shifting priorities for agriculture (the principal rural land use). Agricultural intensification and the maximization of productivity were the priorities up until the mid-1980s, and as a conse-

quence the character of rural landscapes changed dramatically during this period as hedgerows and trees were removed to create more efficient farming systems. Reclamation of the hills and marginal land led to the removal of significant upstanding archaeological sites and palimpsest landscapes.

Currently, due to agricultural overproduction and a general greater awareness of and concern for the quality and protection of the rural environment, the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy provides a number of incentives to farmers and landowners to manage their land in an environmentally sensitive manner. The all-Wales Tir Gofal scheme includes provision for the conservation of certain habitats as well as sites and features of archaeological and historic landscape interest.

However, of the estimated 27,000 farms in Wales, only about 600 farms per year are currently entering into such agreements, which leaves the vast majority outside any formal management scheme, and so many important archaeological sites and landscape features continue to be lost. The challenge therefore is to identify historic landscape priorities for conservation, protection, enhancement or even restoration both within the scheme and without it.

Three of the principal advantages of an approach using character areas are that (a) it is able to identify and map both local distinctiveness and national importance; (b) by identifying physical features which can be managed it can feed directly into land management and development planning strategies; and (c) it sets the management of individual features within their local landscape context, allowing emphasis to be placed on those features which best define local landscape character. It can assist in management plans by setting priorities for management and enhancement, highlighting intrinsic values, and encouraging links to multi-purpose management.

Characterization is about management: if we are going to manage effectively, we must know what is there, what is important and what we want to do with it. Character areas can tell us what is distinctive (ie important both locally and nationally) about a particular area, and therefore what needs to be managed in order to retain that area's distinctiveness (character).

General considerations

Positive management should be aimed at halting and, if necessary, reversing any trends that can be shown to be causing unacceptable damage to the historic landscape resource. If at the same time management can actually enhance the historic landscape, then that is even better. It is essential that such management is continuous, and contains provisions for monitoring and review.

One of the basic tenets underpinning management is that we should be aiming to continue (rather than halt) the past evolution of the landscape: to do this we must first identify what is important and significant in historic landscape terms. It is the overall historic character of the present landscape (as evidenced in important and significant groupings and patterns) which we should aim to retain, but in order to do this we must concentrate management actions at the level of individual components. We must identify, conserve and enhance the local and regional historic diversity of our landscapes.

Agri-environment and other rural initiatives offer the opportunity to integrate the needs of the historic environment with modern land-use requirements to produce a workable, effective management system. More importantly, they should result in a working, viable landscape, which should provide ways and means for the various human activities in an area to be integrated with each other and with conservation, at the same time providing opportunities for study, research, education, interpretation and quiet enjoyment.

This means that sites and features of historic landscape interest are positively managed for their own sake, rather than just left unimproved. It is important that the management of such features is integral to the management of the farm, or the scheme, as a whole, rather than an isolated, unrelated activity.

By working at the most basic level, management can be used to retain the general historic character of the area.

management of components → retain character → conserve diversity
 boundaries, buildings, and character areas
 archaeological sites etc

A management plan should specify conservation objectives for a site/area and how they will be monitored: it should identify points at which some response will be made if monitoring shows that a feature is changing: it should establish what activities/processes will be the subject of monitoring: it should establish what management of on-going activities is required; and identify the types of development or activities which might adversely affect the site.

Not all the sites and features which comprise the historic environment require the same detailed level of management: some sites can be adequately managed by the application of simple, general strategies, while more complex sites merit more detailed, site-specific, problem-led responses.

General mechanisms

It is envisaged that characterization has many potential applications to management including the following:

- assisting in developing landscape conservation and enhancement projects, by identifying elements and patterns of the historic environment which are considered either typical of a local area (provide local distinctiveness) or are of particular importance (rare at a national level)
- targeting resources within grant-aid by government and other organisations towards conserving elements and patterns of the historic environment in the same way
- developing policies for unitary development plans
- assisting in determining planning applications, especially large-scale developments such as roads, windfarms, mineral extraction, large-scale landfill, waste disposal, reclamation, water schemes, major settlement and major industrial development
- aiding the management of land by farmers, and large corporate landowners such as industrial companies, water or electricity companies, the forestry industry and the National Trust
- providing baseline information for local areas against which future change can be monitored, for example as part of the Tir Gofal scheme
- providing general information not already on the SMR which can be used to inform advice given as part of a number of rural initiatives such as Tir Gofal, Woodland Grant Schemes etc
- providing advice in a rural framework to conservation agencies including Cadw, Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency, local authorities, national parks and others

- providing information to a number of wider initiatives, including contributing to our academic understanding of landscape, stimulating further research, raising public perception of the landscape, and the preparation of policy statements by public bodies

Specific mechanisms

Tir Gofal is open to applications from farmers throughout Wales. Within the scheme, payments will be made to farmers for observing 'codes of good environmental practice', one of which is care and enhancement of the historic environment. As the scheme is a 'whole farm' scheme, it will allow archaeological management strategies sensitive to the character of the landscape as a whole to be integrated with farming practices. Characterization is useful for monitoring purposes, as it sets out the wider historic environment framework within which individual farm plans will sit. It can also help prioritise management within a broader landscape context.

Unitary Development Plans address 'land use' issues and are currently being compiled by unitary authorities in Wales and England.

Countryside strategies are the responsibility of local authorities (together with others), which have a general duty under section 1 of the Countryside Act, 1981, to have regard to the desirability of conserving the natural beauty and amenity of the countryside in the exercise of their functions relating to land. Countryside strategies principally address management of the countryside in areas outside settlement limits, but they are also a mechanism, at least in part, of implementing development plan policies. In Wales, such strategies are supported by the Countryside Council for Wales and in England by the Countryside Agency.

Local authorities have a number of powers which have implications for the management of the historic environment including the power to establish Country Parks (section 7 of the Countryside Act 1968); the ability to declare Local Nature Reserves (section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949); the ability to enter into access agreements with landowners (section 64 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949); the ability to buy derelict land (often of industrial archaeological interest) for reclamation purposes (section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949); the duty to make Tree Preservation Orders where appropriate (section 198 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990); and the duty to apply The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 which controls the removal of certain important hedgerows (from section 97 of the Environment Act 1995). Other powers are treated separately below.

Local Agenda 21 programme At Rio, governments committed themselves to setting up national targets for safeguarding and improving the environment. Local Agenda 21 and Local Biodiversity Action Plans provide the means of meeting these targets, and of promoting the principles of sustainable development, at a local level. Both initiatives are about embracing a conscientious vision of the long-term future by identifying what matters locally and paying serious attention to the global costs of maintaining local lifestyles.

This has implications for archaeology and the historic environment. At a local level, sense of place is a fundamental aspect of quality of life. The present-day landscape underpins our sense of the place in which we live. Much of its character and distinctiveness is derived from the historic environment (archaeology and the built heritage in all its forms). The historic environment is of course both fragile and non-renewable. We have a responsibility to maintain it so that future generations can also appreciate and benefit from it in the same way that we do. However, the landscape is not static. Just as today's landscape is a product of the changing relationships between people and their environment through time, so it must be allowed to continue to change.

The point of sustainability is that it promotes change which meets the needs of the future whilst retaining the integrity of the historic environment. In order to do so decisions have to be made about the relative importance of

different elements. Traditionally, evaluation has been based on individual sites, with particular examples being selected out for special protection (known as scheduling). However, it is the sum total of archaeological features not individual sites which give landscape its grain and it is often the more ordinary features that create 'local distinctiveness'. In order to ensure that decisions about the future of the historic environment are made on a secure basis, sound information needs to be gathered. Historic landscape characterization work of the kind being carried out by the Welsh Archaeological Trusts provides historic environment audits, from which decisions of this kind can be made.

Biodiversity Action Plans Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) are a means by which Local Government Authorities can implement the biodiversity recommendations established after the Rio Summit. They achieve this by building up local partnerships and taking account of both national and local biodiversity priorities to develop strategies for the conservation of species and habitats of local significance. As we are still at the early stages of our involvement, more information will be forthcoming at a later date, but it is already obvious that the type of general information coming from characterization projects will be able to feed into such plans.

At a general level, archaeology is of relevance to LBAPs because it raises awareness of the historical origins of the contemporary environment. There are no purely 'natural' environments in Britain; the landscape is the product of millennia of human activity. Our knowledge of the changing relationship between people and their environment through history allows us to understand the land-use activities which have led to the creation of contemporary landscapes, and comment from an informed historical perspective on those practices which could be encouraged in order to protect and conserve particular landscapes and ecosystems.

Access is a key issue in the countryside, if we are to enjoy the landscape and all its inherent interests and in turn engender understanding and respect for the countryside and the way it works. In addition to the rights of way network, a bill has recently been passed by Parliament with proposals to provide greater public access to open areas of countryside. As many of the best-preserved and most fragile palimpsest archaeological sites and landscapes lie within open areas of countryside, this has potential implications for archaeological management.

Historic landscape characterization can identify these areas (ie where there are well-preserved yet fragile archaeological remains) and thus highlight the potential management problems if the areas are 'opened up' to public access. It may even be that such areas could be excluded from unfettered access under new legislation, either permanently or on a temporary basis.

Characterization also has the potential to inform leaflets, trails and other interpretative material.

Leisure strategy Historic landscape characterization may have a bearing on local authority leisure strategies.

Tourism The Tourist Boards for Wales and England have the strategic responsibility for encouraging people to visit the borderlands and for the provision of tourist facilities. In recent years tourism has become one of the most important growth sectors of the economy. Unitary authorities all have a tourism strategy of some description, and historic characterization has a part to play in sustainable 'green tourism' in that it can help identify local distinctiveness which can be used both to attract visitors (by way of advertising), create atmosphere and to inform quality initiatives such as local walks, guides and other recreational activities. It can also direct visitors to areas with a robust historic environment, and away from those which are particularly fragile.

Management agreements In addition, local authorities have the ability (under section 39 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981) to enter into management agreements with landowners. This is an area which could be explored further from the historic environment perspective, as such agreements could cover not only individual monuments but also historic landscape characteristics (such as boundary types).

Other local authority programmes Local authorities have programmes for economic development, highways maintenance, environmental education and coastal protection. These would all benefit from the information which is being compiled through the characterization projects, and, in the other direction, the safeguarding of the historic environment would benefit from those drawing up these programmes having direct access to historic landscape characterization data. In fact, information at this broad level would probably be more useful than detailed, site-specific SMR data.

Forestry Commission Information from characterization projects will be invaluable in contributing to national and regional indicative forestry strategies, indicating where new proposals for planting are likely to be acceptable (or unacceptable) from an historic environment perspective. On a day to day basis, it can provide information at a landscape level which can inform proposals for new planting. It will be particularly useful when considering proposals under any of the challenge schemes.

Environment Agency is responsible for producing Local Environment Action Plans (LEAPs) and Catchment Management Plans (CMPs). The historic environment does not have a high profile in either of these, and both could therefore benefit from information which characterization can provide.

Other bodies Historic landscape characterization information can be used to educate and inform a wide range of organisations and individuals including statutory agencies, voluntary bodies (RSPB, Woodland Trust, Wildlife Trusts, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, National Trust) town councils, community councils, farming unions and others. It is our experience that often it is easier to explain the importance of, and inherent interest of, the historic environment by using historic characterization, than by the more traditional means of individual archaeological sites and excavations.

Local distinctiveness and a sense of place, which are of undoubted interest to people, can all be conveyed by such means, and the potential importance of this aspect of characterization cannot be emphasised too strongly.

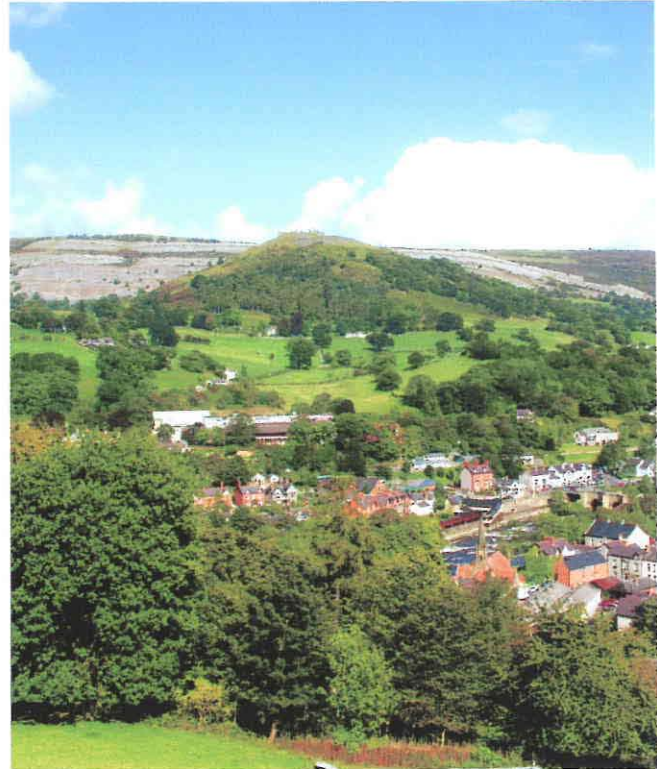
David Thompson and Dafydd Gwyn
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

The Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg historic landscape area

The *Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg* represents a diverse and well-preserved historic landscape. The following description, taken from the *Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest in Wales* (Cadw 2001, 80-3), identifies the essential historic landscape themes in the historic character area that are considered in greater detail in the sections which follow.

The Vale of Llangollen in North East Wales presents a remarkable visual combination of stark natural landforms and ancient and modern man-made features. Geomorphologically the vale is a broad rift valley, dominated on the north by the towering limestone cliffs of Eglwyseg Mountain. The cliff tops gradually gain in height from 300m above OD at their southernmost point overlooking the middle of the vale, to 450m above OD at their northernmost point overlooking the upper reaches of the narrow tributary valley of the Eglwyseg river. On the south side of the vale, the slopes rise steeply to 400m above OD along the summit of the ridge that divides the vale from the Ceiriog valley to the south.

The flat floor of the vale is about 100m above OD and contains the winding course of the River Dee, although at Llangollen, the vale narrows into what is more characteristically a river valley, first turning north and then west to continue beyond the part of the vale



described here. Overlooking Llangollen from the east are the imposing remains of Castell Dinas Brân, a medieval masonry castle located within the earthworks of an earlier, Iron Age hillfort. The site occupies the summit of a steep sided, conical shaped hill which rises spectacularly to 320m above OD out of the valley floor and is topped by the picturesque ruins of the castle which was possibly built by Gruffudd ap Madog, son of the founder of Valle Crucis Abbey.

The Cistercian abbey of Valle Crucis lies near the confluence of the Eglwyseg and the Dee north of Llangollen, and was founded by Madog ap Gruffudd in 1201 as a colony of Strata Marcella near Welshpool. The now ruined abbey buildings are typical of many Cistercian foundations, lying in a secluded river valley surrounded by farmland. Local folklore associates Valle Crucis with Owain Glyn Dŵr who disappeared in about 1410 after the failure of his rebellion against the English.

The fragmentary 9th-century cross, the Pillar of Eliseg, is set on a small circular mound which is perhaps a Bronze Age barrow, just to the north of the abbey. The cross has a Latin inscription which is now too eroded to read, but according to a transcription of 1696, celebrated the glories of the house of Powys and recorded that the stone was erected by Cyngen in honour of his great-grandfather Eliseg.

At the northern end of the Eglwyseg valley, at World's End, lies the impressive timber-framed manor house Plas Uchaf which bears a date of 1563. West of the Eglwyseg valley, the northern limit of the landscape is dominated by the majestic sweep of the Horseshoe Pass where the road finally climbs over Maesyrychen Mountain, past abandoned 19th century slate quarries, and on towards the Vale of Clwyd.

The Dee valley has always been a major communications route and bears the evidence of successive innovations in

the history of transport. Perhaps the most notable of these is the Llangollen branch of the Shropshire Union Canal, constructed by Thomas Telford and opened in 1805. From its source at the Horseshoe Falls the canal follows the northern side of the valley before crossing the Dee with the dramatic Pontcysyllte aqueduct, overshadowing its medieval 'counterpart' which carried the road over the River Dee. At the northern end of the aqueduct is Trevor Wharf where Telford reputedly stayed during its construction. Telford was also responsible for the construction of the new Holyhead Road, now the A5, which runs through the vale and was recently officially marked as a historic route.

The vale also bears the scars of an industrial past. The limestone cliffs of Eglwyseg have been quarried for centuries both for building stone and as a source of lime. Several lead mines drove adits directly into the cliffs, and the remains of both industries are still to be seen. The north west of the area displays the remains of slate quarrying, including inclines and parts of an embanked tramway, while its southern end is dominated by the industrial complexes of Cefn-mawr and Acre-fair (both currently outside the area described here).

Llangollen itself straddles the Dee via the arched bridge built about 1500. The historic core of the town lies on the southern side, focusing on the church and the river crossing. Later development occurred largely because of the woollen industry, which used the natural power source of the Dee to drive several mills, and then during the 19th century because of the coming of the railway which, although finally closed to traffic in 1968, has now been partly reopened for tourists, as the Dee Valley Railway. On the outskirts of the town is Plas Newydd, the home of the Ladies of Llangollen who at the turn of the 19th century were renowned patrons of the arts and did much to promote a resurgent interest in Welsh culture. Llangollen has built on these artistic traditions and is now known throughout the world for the International Eisteddfod held annually in the town.



SUMMARY

Reference number	HLW (C) 6
Index map number	40
OS Map	Landranger 116, 117
Former county	Clwyd
Unitary authority	Denbighshire (Wrexham)
Principal area designations	Some peripheral parts north of the River Dee are within Ruabon/Llantysilio Mountains and Minera Site of Special Scientific Interest. The area includes Eliseg's Pillar and Valle Crucis Abbey Guardianship Sites; Castell Dinas Brân and Pontcysyllte aqueduct Scheduled Ancient Monuments; Llangollen Town and Plas-yn-y-Pentre, Froncysyllte, and Trevor Basin Conservation Areas. Pontcysyllte is also categorized as a Grade 1 Listed Building.
Criteria	3
Contents and significance	This picturesque part of the Dee valley presents a spectacular natural backdrop to a rich diversity of archaeological and historic sites representing evidence of a variety of land uses that have left their imprint on the area. The area includes: Castell Dinas Brân, an impressive fortified site of the prehistoric and medieval periods; Valle Crucis Abbey monastic site; the remains of later mineral extraction and industrial sites including significant communications and transport systems; historic cultural and artistic associations, the expression of which continues today with the annual International Eisteddfod held at Llangollen.



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About this study

The Study Area

The purpose of the present study is to provide a fuller and more detailed characterization of the *Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg* historic landscape area. For the sake of convenience the area covered by this study has covers a significantly larger area (approximately 100 square kilometres) than the *Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg* historic landscape area defined in the *Historic Landscapes Register* (Map 1). For the sake of succinctness in the following text the study area is generally referred to more simply as the Vale of Llangollen historic landscape area. The study area in this report thus covers the entire extent of the communities of Llantysilio and Llangollen (Denbighshire) and Llangollen Rural (Wrexham) and includes the unenclosed areas of Llantysilio Mountain and Cym-y-brain in the communities of Corwen, Bryneglwys and Llandegla (Denbighshire) and the unenclosed areas of Ruabon Mountain in the communities of Minera, Esclusham and Penycae (Wrexham). The *Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg* historic landscape area remains that defined in the register.

Methodology

A MapInfo 6 workspace was created, within which the Historic Environment Record (formerly SMR) held and maintained by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust could be interrogated against modern Ordnance Survey (OS) raster (1:10,000) and vector (LandLine) map-bases.

MapInfo polygons were drawn, representing *historic landscape types* defining settlements, field types and other land use types. These were classified according to a system devised for the project (see Appendix 2 and Map 6), which formed base-level data for this study. A topographical model of the area was also created (see Map 2) as a tool for landscape analysis.

As part of the historic landscape characterization process a total of 17 *historic landscape character areas* were defined (see Map 5), representing discrete geographical areas of broadly consistent historic character represented physically by a dominant land use or form of settlement, for example, informed by the datasets noted above, or by historical associations (Cadw & CCW 2003). The character areas are primarily intended as a means of describing rather than classifying the historic elements of the landscape

The study has been primarily desk-based, drawing upon information in the Historical Environment Record and in readily available published sources. Limited fieldwork was undertaken to test the validity of the desk-based assessment and to provide ground-based photography. A single aircraft flight was undertaken to provide oblique aerial photography. The identification of unrecorded sites of archaeological or historical significance and the confirmation of sites already identified was beyond the scope of the project and was not attempted.

Presentation

The results of the study are presented in two sections. The first provides a thematic narrative of the development of the *Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg* landscape. This is followed by a description of individual historic landscape character areas, accompanied by a list of essential sources and a location map. Photographs of character areas are presented towards the end.

In the absence of a condition survey of the historic landscape features in the *Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg* no attempt has been made to evaluate the historic landscape elements considered in this report or to formulate detailed management prescriptions, though a number of key historic landscape management issues are identified in the case of each of the character areas.

A bilingual version of the report will be available in due course on the CPAT website (www.cpat.org.uk) as part of

the historic landscape characterization initiative, a consideration that has influenced the format and layout of this printed report to some extent. An illustrated leaflet about the historic landscape will also be produced to draw attention to the information available on the internet.

Spelling of place-names

The spelling and punctuation of a number of Welsh place-names in the *Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg* historic landscape area have changed over the years. Generally, an attempt has been made in this report to use the spelling and punctuation shown on various recent editions of Ordnance Survey 6-inch maps which, though not necessarily 'correct', are at least generally consistent with each other.

Recommendations

There is an urgent need to complete a comprehensive fieldwork recording and audit of sites of archaeological or historical interest within the *Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg* and to integrate records of these sites into a single record base, both of which were beyond the resources available to the present study.

Acknowledgments

Help during the preparation of this report was given by Chris Martin of CPAT and by Judith Alfrey of Cadw who provided much of the text relating to buildings. Aerial photography was undertaken by Nigel Jones of CPAT.

The Making of the Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg Historic Landscape

ENVIRONMENTS AND BOUNDARIES

The Natural Landscape

The Vale of Llangollen is a dramatic, steep-sided valley cutting through Ruabon and Llantysilio Mountains to the north and the Berwyn Mountains to the south. In origin it is a broad rift valley, sculpted by the action of glaciers during the last glaciation. Llantysilio Mountain to the west and the Berwyn mountain to the south are composed of Silurian slates and shales, with Ordovician shales to the north of Cynr-y-brain. Ruabon Mountain, by contrast, is composed of underlying strata of Carboniferous limestone which form the dramatic escarpment of Creigiau Eglwyseg and Trevor Rocks, overlain by a band of sandstone and by Coal Measures including sandstones and marls which extend towards Ruabon and Wrexham and which outcrop at the south-eastern corner of the study area. The floor of the Vale lies at between about 80–100 metres above Ordnance Datum whilst the surrounding hills rise to over 500 metres.

During the last Ice Age the area was affected by two ice sheets which met approximately along the eastern boundary of the study area, one moving southwards from the Irish Sea and the other which had formed over the mountains of central Wales to the south. Pre-existing river meanders between Llantysilio and Valle Crucis and in Pengwern Vale to the south-east of Llangollen were blocked by ice, forcing the river Dee to cut new narrower river channels, isolating these earlier river meanders. Ice action resulted in a scattering of erratic boulders which are to be found in various places on the surrounding hills. Frost action as the ice retreated gave rise to the scree slopes at the base of the limestone escarpment of Creigiau Eglwyseg. Following the late glacial period alluvial deposits have built up within the floor of the Vale which now contains the meandering course of the river Dee.

Little detailed study has been made of the early environmental history of this part of the Dee Valley or the surrounding hills. However, it is likely that in common with other areas of north Wales that there was a general sequence in the post-glacial period which began with the establishment of pine forest in the early colder periods leading to the development of extensive broadleaved woodland dominated by oak, elm, lime and hazel and birch and alder scrub in the uplands. Much of this original woodland cover has been gradually cleared by human activity since early prehistoric times though some small areas of ancient or replanted broadleaved woodland survives on some of the steeper hill slopes and stream valleys. Some more extensive areas of woodland are recorded in the 14th century. One forest called 'Cwmcaeth' lay on the higher ground to the south of Llangollen and another known as 'Isclawdd' lay in the Froncysyllte and Trevor area were managed by the forester of the marcher lordship of Chirkland.

The Administrative Landscape

From the 7th or 8th century the area formed part of the Welsh kingdom of Powys. The eastern borders of the kingdom came under threat from the neighbouring Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia whose frontier in the later 8th century was formed by Offa's Dyke which lies just beyond the eastern boundary of the study area. Eliseg's Pillar, the lower portion of a stone cross near Valle Crucis, was erected in the first half of the 9th century by Cyngen in honour of his great-grandfather Eliseg who had reunited the kingdom by retaking land which had once been conquered by the English. The siting of this important monument at a focal point of a tributary valley of the Dee, suggests the presence a royal estate here in the Eglwyseg valley in the 9th century.

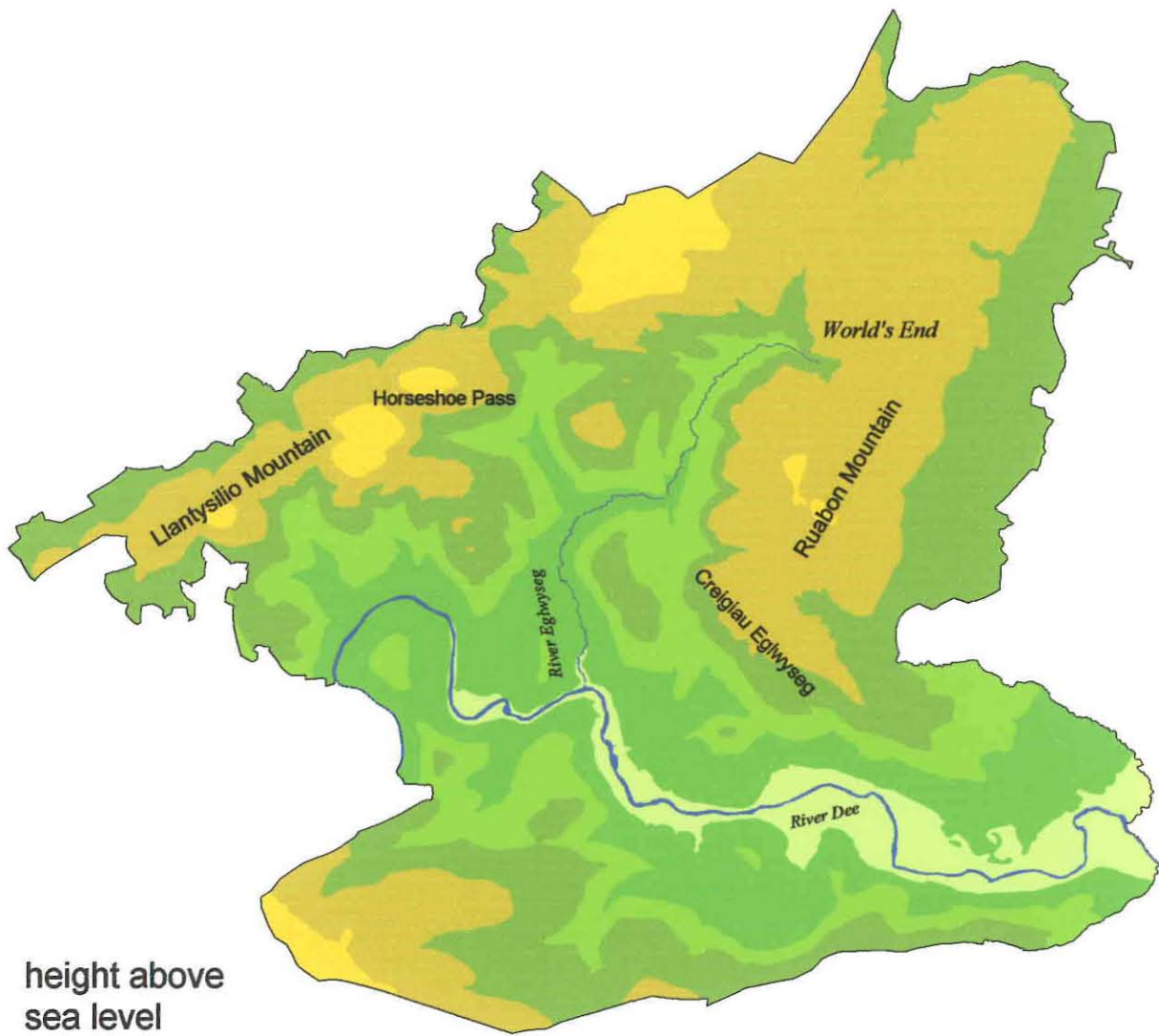
On the death of Gruffudd Maelor in 1191 Powys was subdivided into the kingdoms of Powys Fadog in the north, which included the area of the Vale of Llangollen, and Powys Wenwynwyn further to the south. The area of the Vale fell within the commotes of Nanheudwy to the south, Maelor Gymraeg (Bromfield) to the north-east and Iâl (Yale) to the north-west.

Map 2

Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg

topography and principal rivers

1km²



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The portion of Powys Fadog containing the commotes Iâl and Nanheudwy, fell to Madog ap Gruffudd who founded the Cistercian monastery at Valle Crucis in 1201 which subsequently became the dynastic burial ground. Following Madog's death in 1236 the kingdom was inherited by his son Gruffudd ap Madog Maelor. Gruffudd built the castle at Dinas Brân in the 1260s as the administrative centre of the kingdom, before his death in 1269.

Edward I took possession of the kingdom of Powys Fadog in 1282 during the course of the conquest of Wales by the English crown. Powys Fadog ceased to exist as a separate entity thereafter, and from this time Dinas Brân lost both its military and administrative significance. The land to the south of the Dee, as well as the portion of Iâl which included Dinas Brân and Valle Crucis to the north of the river, were granted to Roger Mortimer, son of Roger, lord of Wigmore, and went to form part of the marcher lordship of Chirkland (Swydd y Waun), administered from Chirk Castle. The remaining lands to the north of the river were granted to John, earl of Warrene, and formed part of the newly created marcher lordship of Bromfield and Yale, administered from Holt Castle.

The marcher lordships of Chirkland, and Bromfield and Yale passed through various hands but continued to be ruled as independent territories until the Act of Union in 1536 when they came to form the hundreds of Chirk, Bromfield and Yale in the newly created county of Denbighshire.

Denbighshire formed part of the new county of Clwyd created in the local government reorganisation of 1974, but was reconstituted again as the unitary authority of Denbighshire in the local government reorganisation of 1996. The community of Llangollen Without, at the eastern corner of the study area, was transferred to Wrexham County Borough Council in 1997.

In ecclesiastical terms the parochial structure of the area was dominated by the Cistercian monastery of Valle Crucis (Llanegwestl) founded in 1201 by Madog ap Gruffudd, the ruler of Powys Fadog, which eclipsed a number of the pre-existing ecclesiastical parishes in the area. The abbey held extensive possessions scattered across southern Denbighshire and depended to a significant extent on its tithes. These included the tithes of the appropriated churches at Llandysilio-yn-Iâl and Llangollen which may have been founded in the 6th or 7th centuries and which in the case of Llangollen had probably formed the mother church of the commote of Nanheudwy. Valle Crucis underwent a long period of decline before its dissolution in 1536, during the reign of Henry VIII.

In the 19th century the parish of Llantysilio was, divided into the townships of Coedrwg, Maesyrychain, Llandynan, Cymmo-Dupart and Cymmo-Traian (Brithdir). The parish of Llangollen included the townships of Trevor Isa, Trevor Ucha, Dinbren, Eglwyseg, Cysyllte, Llangollen Fechan, Llangollen Fawr, Llangollen Abbot, Pengwern, Bache, Vivod, and Rhisgog.

LAND USE AND SETTLEMENT

Prehistoric and Roman settlement and land use

The fertile lands of the Dee valley represented an important economic resource as well as an access route into central Wales from early times, which helps to explain the widespread evidence of human activity in the area during the earlier prehistoric periods.

A more detailed study of the archaeological sites and finds and an analysis of the vegetation history is needed, before a clearer picture can be drawn of the character of early settlement and land use within the area. However, woodland clearance and hunting during the Neolithic and earlier Bronze Age periods, between about 4000–2000 BC, are perhaps represented by occasional chance finds, such as the stone axes that have been found near Moel y Gaer hillfort on Llantysilio Mountain and by those found near Ty'n Celyn and Trevor Hall, and by flint arrowheads like those found near Blaenau Uchaf on the hills south of Llangollen. Despite the lack of known settlement sites, permanent

settlement from the earlier Bronze Age between about 2300–1500 BC is clearly indicated by scattered burial mounds such as those at Moel y Gamelin and Gribin Oernant on Llantysilio Mountain, those on the peaks of Cyrn-y-brain overlooking Nant Craig y Moch and Aber Sychnant, and on the hills to the south of Llangollen near Ffynnon-las and Blaen Nant. The monuments on Ruabon Mountain include simple cairns of stone, occasionally with a stone kerb, as well as stone ring-banks and a stone circle which were probably associated with ritual or ceremonial activity.

These upland monuments, frequently sited on hilltops, ridge tops or on hill scarps, are often visible from some distance away. They appear singly or in small groups and are likely to have performed various roles in the the developing landscape of the fourth to second millennia BC, between about 3500 and 1500 BC. Clusters of monuments may represent ceremonial foci within the emerging landscape utilized by man and may have helped to define the activities of different family or tribal groupings. No contemporary settlement evidence has yet been found but it seems likely that the monuments are to be associated in some way with the exploitation of upland summer hunting grounds and summer grazing for domesticated animals, possibly associated with home bases sited in less exposed positions in the adjacent valley lowlands.

Continued activity in the Later Bronze Age period, between about 1200–700 BC, is indicated by chance finds of metalwork possibly to be associated with continued woodland clearance or with warfare, including a small hoard of socketed bronze axes and a leaf-shaped spearhead found in Llantysilo parish and by a single socketed axes found near Pentredwr and on Fron Fawr, east of Valle Crucis, and by two found separately within several hundred metres of the summit of Dinas Brân.

It was during this period or in the succeeding Iron Age period, between about 700 BC – AD 50, that the first evidence of defended settlements appears within the area. These are represented by the hillfort which preceded the medieval castle on Dinas Brân, by Moel y Gaer hillfort on the summit of Llantysilio Mountain, and by Pen y Gaer hillfort, on a spur of Ruabon Mountain to the east of Garth. It is uncertain whether or not these hillforts represent permanently occupied settlements, but it is clearly significant that they are not only sited in locations which are naturally well defended but also give ready access to extensive areas of upland grazing. Dinas Brân, like the subsequent medieval castle appears to control the Dee valley and like both Moel y Gaer, and Pen y Gaer probably represents a tribal centre possibly to be associated with early cattle ranching on the neighbouring moorland.

The narrow valley of the Dee near Llangollen has been of importance since early times, providing a narrow, lowland corridor to the lands of central Wales, further to the west. The strategic significance of the later prehistoric hillfort on Dinas Brân is perhaps emphasised by the fact that in order to avoid being ambushed in the valley in the late 1st century the invading Roman army chose a route across the Berwyns to the south, via the Ceiriog valley, though the hazardous nature of this mountain route to west Wales is exemplified by King Henry II's disastrous expedition against the Welsh princes in 1165.

Relatively little evidence of Roman activity has been discovered in the Vale of Llangollen apart from a number of chance finds, including a small hoard of 2nd-century coins from near Maesyrychen-bach and a Roman brooch found near Trevor Hall. It is probable, however, that during the course of the later prehistoric and Roman periods an integrated economic system developed that exploited the resources provided by arable farming in the lowlands, woodland resources on the valley edge, and extensive upland grazing. This would have given rise to a gradually evolving landscape probably characterised by scattered farmsteads and associated arable on the lower ground, ever-diminishing areas of native broadleaved woodland and scrub on the more difficult slopes, and extensive areas of heather moorland on the surrounding hills.

Early medieval and medieval settlement and land use

It was from these early beginnings that the early medieval landscape emerged, again probably characterized by a pattern of arable ploughlands, residual ancient woodland, scrub and moorland. What is known about the area in the 14th century suggests that Welsh systems of land tenure by extended family groupings emerged during the early medieval period, between about the 6th and 11th centuries.

It was probably also during this period that the local commotal structure and the pattern of farmsteads, townships and parishes that are known in later history had already begun to develop. A picture of the possible settlement pattern that had evolved by this period is given by a number of early religious centres. A mythical story of the christianization of the area is given in the legendary Life of St Collen, a person associated with the slaying of a giantess aided by her god Arthur, the giant of Creigiau Eglwyseg. The church dedicated to saint Collen at Llangollen may have come into existence by the 6th or 7th century. The former grave chapel, known as the 'Old Church' survived here up until the mid 18th century when it was demolished together with the Romanesque shrine it contained, the material being used to build the church tower, replacing an earlier wooden one. Until the church was appropriated by Valle Crucis abbey in the early 13th century it was probably formed the mother church of the commote of Nanheudwy, forming a locally important religious centre both in terms of its geographical location and its association with the cult of saint Collen. It seems likely that an early nucleated settlement grew up in the area of the church, at the river crossing of the Dee. There are suggestions that a small nucleated settlement may also have grown up around Llantysilio Church, which may again have had an early foundation.

The Vale came to form part of the Welsh kingdom of Powys from about the 7th or 8th century, the setting up of the Pillar of Eliseg by a prominent member of the ruling family in the 9th century in honour of his great-grandfather demonstrates the existence of a significant royal estate here at that date probably associated with bonded villages and holdings from which revenue and services were levied. The pillar, the base of a cross set up on a large mound, once bore an inscription relating the 'foundation myth' of the ruling dynasty.

Two important 14th-century documents, known as the *Extent of Bromfield and Yale* and the *Extent of Chirkland*, were compiled by the marcher lordships for taxation purposes in 1315 and 1391–93 respectively. These provide a fuller picture of the extent of settlement and land use in the 14th century, following the extinction of the native kingdom of Powys Fadog in the late 13th century. The extent to which the native inhabitants of Powys Fadog would have been affected by the creation of the new marcher lordships is uncertain. Unlike the more extensive fertile lands of the Vale of Clwyd and Maelor Saesneg there is no record of lands being confiscated from their original Welsh owners or of the deportation or removal of Welsh tenants taking place to make way for incoming English settlers. Some tenants may have been deprived of their ancient rights to common pasture and hunting, though the marcher lordships may simply have taken over many of the rights formerly held by the native princes. Plas Uchaf, at the head of the Eglwyseg valley, is thought to stand on the site of a hunting lodge of the princes of Powys in the later 11th century.

In the later 14th century tenants of the lordships were still overwhelmingly of Welsh origin and Welsh forms of inheritance known as gavelkind, by which possessions were shared by the heirs, continued to be followed until the later 15th and early 16th centuries. The occurrence of numerous holdings termed *gafael* in the extents indicates the widespread native tradition of shared rights in arable and pasture by a family group according to Welsh custom, but during the course of the 14th century, partly due to the disruptions caused by plague and perhaps partly due to remoteness from the administrative centres of the lordships, this system was breaking down in favour of a pattern of freehold farms grouped into townships. The Black Death had been particularly severe in the Llangollen area in 1349, after which many holdings were abandoned for many years. From the extents it is evident that the cultivation of wheat and oats was widespread in the later 14th century, other mainstays of the local economy at this period being the rearing of lambs, pigs and nut-gathering.

The establishment of the Cistercian monastery of Valle Crucis in 1201 had a considerable impact upon the local economy. The foundation of the monastery involved removal of a number of families to townships in the vicinity of Wrexham and probably also involved the reorganisation of the landscape around the abbey. Farming activity was focused on the home grange, to the north of the abbey precinct in addition to the Tirabad grange in the townships of Bache and Pengwern to the south of Llangollen and other poorly documented granges near Trevor Mill and near Pengwern Hall. Evidence of the local produce available to Valle Crucis is known from a wide variety of sources. Excavation suggests that cattle and pigs were important in the economy in its early years, but were overtaken by sheep and goats later in the 13th century. Hunted red deer also formed part of the diet. Fish was obtained from fishing in the river Dee in addition to the fishponds close to the abbey. The poet Guto'r Glyn, praised the provision of fruit for the guests of Valle Crucis before his death there in about 1493, in the care of the abbot, Dafydd ap Ieuan: 'We shall have have thousand apples for dessert . . . honey, grapes, the fruit of the orchards'.

Transhumance, involving seasonal movement of families to upland settlements during the summer months to exploit the extensive moorland grazing would no doubt have been known during the early medieval and medieval periods though the extent to which it was important to the local economy is difficult to gauge. The site of a possible medieval *hafod* or summer house have been identified on the eastern slopes of Cynr-y-brain near a tributary stream of the Eglwyseg, close to a deserted house nearby on the boundary with the lower unenclosed land significantly called Cae'r-hafod. A small number of abandoned house platforms and ruined buildings are to be seen around the margins of Ruabon Mountain, some of which may represent *hafodydd*, and there are several early references to *hafodydd* in the possession of Valle Crucis on the northern end of Esclusham Mountain in the vicinity of the later Lower Park and Pool Park lead mines. Elsewhere the evidence is slight, but is suggested by the place-names Hafod-y-maidd, Hafod-rhysg, Hafod-y-coed and Hafod-isaf which occur within the area, and perhaps also by the name Vivod which is probably derived from *meifod* ('May house'). The element *maid* ('whey') in the name Hafod-y-maidd suggests association between *hafodydd* and upland dairy farms.

It seems likely that a pattern of dispersed freehold farms and cottages and lowland and valley-edge fieldscapes evident in the present-day landscape had largely evolved by the end of the medieval period, a number of the smaller farms having the place-name element *tyddyn*, generally contracted to *ty'n*, as in Ty'n-y-celyn, Ty'n-y-mynydd, and Ty'n-twill and cottages with the place-name element *ty*, as in Ty-uchaf and Ty-isaf. The predominant field patterns in these area are both small and large irregular fields which have evolved by the gradual clearance and enclosure of woodland from prehistoric times onwards, their boundaries mostly formed of multi-species hedges. Medieval open field arable farming was not an important influence on the creation of the modern landscape, though there several small and discrete areas which appear to represent the enclosure of former strip fields, close to Llandynan, on the eastern outskirts of Llangollen, and between Llangollen and Dinas Brân, which may indicate manorial farming in these areas.

Apart from the early use of water-power for milling and fulling on the river Eglwyseg near Valle Crucis and on the Dee near Llangollen there is little other evidence for the development of industry within the area by the end of the medieval period and the area continued to be essentially rural apart from small nucleated settlements which had come into being at Llangollen and possibly Llantysilio, both possibly from early medieval times, in association with early church foundations. Castell Dinas Brân was built within the earlier hillfort during the 1260s by Gruffudd ap Madog, lord of Powys Fadog, and it is probably significant that it lay close to an existing settlement at Llangollen as well as occupying a position which dominates the Vale of Llangollen. The castle ceased to have any military importance following the Edwardian conquest, a matter of only about 20 years later, but the settlement at Llangollen came to have both economic and administrative significance, being granted a market charter and the right to hold two annual fairs by Edward I in 1284.

Post medieval and modern settlement and land use

Changes in the pattern of land holdings, improvements in communications and the growth of industry came to have a notable impact upon the essentially agricultural landscape that had emerged by the end of the medieval period.

The dissolution of Valle Crucis and its granges in 1537 led to the sale and disintegration of the large monastic estates which had dominated the agricultural regime of the Vale of Llangollen and the Eglwyseg valley for over 300 years. The monastic buildings themselves became a source of building materials which have turned up in the make-up of farm buildings at Maes-y-llyn, just to the north of the abbey, at Llangollen Bridge, and at Pengwern Hall to the south of Llangollen. The release of farmland gave an added spur to the growth of the agricultural estates by a number of prominent local families which were to have an important impact upon the landscape during the course of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries in addition to consolidation of freehold farm holdings in a number of areas. The late 16th to early 17th century is the first period from which a significant number of buildings survive and which begin to have an impact upon the present-day landscape. Characteristic also, however, is extensive rebuilding and reworking from the late 18th and during the 19th century especially. During the 19th century there was also a major investment in building, notably in the case of the reconstruction of gentry houses and the rebuilding of farms which has played a major role in shaping the architectural character of the area.

The varied settlement patterns of the valley clearly relate to a long and varied history of land-use. A base-layer is represented by an agricultural landscape of dispersed farms, with its own geography related to topography, in the characteristic split between lowland and upland. Although size of farm varied (in some parts of the area, the lowland farms are relatively closely spaced and small), lowland farms appear more likely to have multiple, detached farm-buildings. Upland farms more often comprise linear ranges of buildings, as in the case of Ty Isa, a small upland farm in Llantysilio community dating to about 1700. Most existing farm buildings appear to have been rebuilt during the period when agricultural improvements were being made in the 19th-century, though earlier examples can be found: the most dominant building types are cow-houses and haybarns, typical of a pastoral economy. However, the presence of early, substantial barns such as examples at Pengwern, Llandyn and Pendre, indicates the importance of crop-growing at least in an earlier period.

The long chronology of settlement is partly revealed in the range of building materials displayed in the area. Traditions of timber-framing are important in the evolution of local building styles, though in practice little is visible owing to the extent of 19th century remodelling: the high quality framing of Plas uchaf and Plas yn-y-pentre is the visible face of a highly developed, sophisticated carpentry tradition. Elsewhere, timber-framing is often masked by later remodelling. Most farm-buildings, surviving in significant numbers only from the later periods, are brick or stone, but there are some examples of timber-framed construction, with weather-board cladding.

It seems that from the 18th century, there were readily available supplies of local stone for building. The geology of the area dictates much of its architectural character, with a clear distinction between the good limestone to the east, and slates and shales to the west. The building stone is often left exposed but there are instances of lime wash or render which possibly indicate the use of poorer stone. From the mid 18th century brick makes its presence felt as a building material, of which Trevor Hall is an early example. The wider use of brick from the earlier 19th century was sustained by the development of transport, but also presumably by greater investment in its production. By the later 19th century, local industries producing brick, tile, and terracotta, made a strong contribution to the architectural character of the area, either combined with stone, or used independently of it. The vernacular traditions of building in the Vale are often blurred by the extent of later refurbishment, but in terms of planning, the lobby entry seems to have been favoured, though there are plenty of examples of end-chimney, central entry houses.

The later 18th and early 19th centuries witnessed the continued growth of estates of varying sizes focused on a 'polite' landscape of prominently or picturesquely-sited gentry houses such as those at Plas Berwyn, Trevor Hall, Llantysilio Hall, Dinbren Hall, Plas-yn-Vivod and Pengwern Hall. Many of these houses adopted prominent locations

within the Vale and involved landscape reorganisation for the creation of gardens, avenues and parks. The hilltop towers known as Sir Watkin's Tower, now in ruins on the summit of Cynr-y-brain, and Trevor Tower, a three-storey castellated tower still surviving in woodland to the north of Garth, were erected as follies by two of the prominent landowners in the area during this period.

The basic field pattern continued to be that which had emerged by the end of the medieval period but some reorganisation of lowland fieldscapes seems to have taken place in some areas during the post-medieval period, resulting in discrete patterns of either large or small straight-sided or regular fields as for example along the floodplain of the Dee near Froncysyllte, in Pengwern Vale and in the vicinity of Llantysilio Hall.

More widespread changes to the landscape around the upland margin took place during the course of the 19th century. Reasonably extensive areas of conifer woodland were planted by a number of the estates to supply the construction and mining industries, as in the case of Ty-cerrig Wood, south of Vivod, Craig-y-dduallt Wood and Gwernant Wood to the south of Llangollen and at Black Wood and Tower Wood to the north-east of Garth, all of which appear to have been planted early in the second half of the 19th century. Some of these areas were felled in the earlier 20th century and were not replanted, though other areas were replanted at that time. Small-scale planting continued into the later 19th century, as in the case of small plantations to the north of Rhewl, and a number other plantations such as Foel Plantation near Pentredwr date to the second half of the 20th century. In addition, extensive areas of upland pasture to the south of Llangollen and on the southern edge of Ruabon Mountain were enclosed and improved during the first half of the 19th century by a number of the larger estates, giving rise to distinctive fieldscapes of large, straight-sided fields bounded either by drystone walls or by post and wire fences.

Superimposed on the medieval farming landscape in the Vale is a landscape of industry, connected variously with stone quarrying, lead mining and slate quarrying. Of these, it was stone quarrying which had the most obvious impact on settlement patterns as well as upon local building traditions. Pentredwr at the head of the Eglwyseg valley and Rhewl and Llandynan in the Dee valley to the west of Llangollen had probably all begun to develop as hamlets accommodating both agricultural workers and workers engaged in the extraction and transportation of slate from the quarries on Llantysilio Mountain, close to the Horseshoe Pass, from the late 17th century onwards. As noted in greater detail below, improvements to the turnpike roads in the later 18th century, but more particular the coming of the canal, improvements to the Holyhead Road and the coming of the railway during the course of the 19th century combined with growing demands for raw materials in the expanding industrial settlements to the east, at Acrefair, Cefn Mawr, Ruabon and Wrexham, and further afield in the English Midlands, led to the creation of new mining and quarrying landscapes within the area as well resulting in the emergence of a number of other smaller nucleated settlements which were needed for the accommodation of industrial workers. In addition, Llangollen continued to expand as a commercial, industrial and tourist centre. Froncysyllte, Trevor Uchaf and Garth emerged as loosely clustered settlements of quarry, limekiln and brick and tile workers between the early 19th and early 20th centuries. These settlements display the distinctive form of early industrial settlement, characterized by an absence of formal planning, with a jigsaw of housing development in small blocks, on small plots of land. The area also has a distinctive industrial vernacular, and at Froncysyllte there is at least one terrace of low, blind-backed two storey cottages marking an early phase in the formation of industrial and urban forms of building. A greater degree of planning is evident in terraces along the main road at Trevor, for example, perhaps built speculatively, the historic landscape area lying just on the margin of Cefn Mawr and Acrefair where the continuation of industrial development through the later 19th century and into the 20th century has resulted in examples of more rigorously planned industrial and urban settlements.

Improvements in communications also helped the Vale of Llangollen to become fashionable as a centre for visitors from the later 18th century onwards, fostered by cultural circle surrounding Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Sarah Ponsonby — the Ladies of Llangollen — who developed the house and gardens at Plas Newydd on the southern outskirts of the town. Cultural influences of this kind combined with the inherently picturesque qualities the area

became a rural retreat for the emerging class of entrepreneurs towards the end of the 19th century, which led to the embellishment of several of the existing gentry houses and the construction of several new country houses and villas set in their own grounds, along with lodges, outbuildings, parks and gardens, including one or two estates which maintained few direct ties with the land. There are small numbers of cottages clearly associated with some of these estates, though there is generally little distinctiveness in cottage architecture in the wider landscape.

The influx of wealth from the later 18th and in the 19th century especially has meant that 'polite' architectural traditions are more than usually evident in the area. The valley is punctuated by small country seats in a variety of styles, ranging from the Georgian classicism of Trevor Hall, or Dinbren hall, to the Gothic extravagance of Vivod. Trevor Hall, the ancient seat of the Trevor family was occupied by in the 1860s by James Coster Edwards senior, owner of several brick and tile works in the area. Tyn Dwr (now a Youth Hostel) was rebuilt in the late 1860s for the ironmaster John Dickin, replacing an earlier house associated with the adjacent home farm. Argoed Hall was built in 1864 for the German-born industrialist Robert F. Graesser associated with the Wrexham Lager Brewery and the founder of the chemical complex at Acrefair. The Italianate villa and gardens at Bryntysilio, just to east of Llangollen, was built between 1865–75 for Sir Theodore Martin, official biographer of Prince Abert, and his wife, the well-known Shakespearean actress Helen Faucit, replacing an earlier farm and farmhouse called Braich y Gwynt. Vivod was acquired and considerably remodelled in 1871 by William Wagstaff, the solicitor in charge of the construction of the Vale of Llangollen Railway, significant investment also being made at this time in the construction of the large industrial home farm complex next to the existing farmhouse at Bryn-newydd, with cartshed, granary, dairy, cattleshed, stables and hay-barn. Llantysilio Hall was built in 1872–74 for the German-born industrialist Charles F. Beyer, a partner a Manchester-based firm of locomotive builders. It replaced an earlier gentry house and like Vivod investment was extended to farm-buildings and housing for estate workers nearby. Bryn Howel (now a hotel) was built in 1896 by James Coster Edwards junior, as his retirement home. The relatively long chronology of surviving building combined with the particular social and cultural history of the area created a rich source-book for stylistic experiment during the nineteenth century especially, though the Ladies of Llangollen were pioneers in the 'invention of tradition'. Plas Newydd is the first and most flamboyant of a series of buildings playing with ideas of history and tradition: filtered by the vocabulary of the picturesque (an important element in the cultural history of the area), what most often emerged was a fanciful neo-vernacular based on timber-framing. Other examples of this include Bryn Howell, Berwyn Station, and the Chain Bridge Hotel, and Tyn Dwr Hall. Influence of the picturesque movement is however also manifest in a number of Regency and gothick houses, and even in the pretty refronting of Dinbren Isaf.

Some of the estates that had emerged during the course of the 17th and 18th centuries have survived to the present day, most notably at Vivod, though a number of other country houses, such as Trevor, Llantysilio and Dinbren were sold away from the estates following the end of the Second World War.

The town of Llangollen which forms the commercial and cultural focus of the Vale of Llangollen from the late Middle Ages has its own social and architectural geography. The town underwent a rapid expansion between the later 18th and earlier 20th centuries in response to the coming of the branch from the Ellesmere canal, the Holyhead Road, and the railway. These greatly encouraged local processing industries including slate processing, cloth manufacture and timber, based upon water power, and upon the burgeoning tourist industry and giving rise to speculative developments in the southern and western parts of the town in the 1880s and 1890s.

Numerous buildings in the town have early origins in the 16th or more frequently the 17th century. These early buildings were probably all timber-framed; when the town began to expand from the later 18th century, it did so in stone and brick, and most of the earlier buildings were refronted in these newer materials. There was a major phase of development in the town centre in about 1860, coinciding with the arrival of the railway, the properties on Castle Street being particularly characteristic of this period. The distinction between those buildings with an earlier core, and those which were built of a piece in the later 18th century or during the 19th century, is an important one and

has contributed to the highly varied and picturesque form of the town.

There is a complex social hierarchy of building within the town, each with its own geography. Houses within the confines of the town range from the detached villa, such as Siambur Wen, and the substantial terraced house to the small cottage. The architectural characteristics of the town are first and foremost, however, its urbanised form, with a recognisable commercial core, with densely developed residential streets around it, and small-scale 19th- and 20th-century suburbs — notably the detached and semi-detached houses that stretch out towards Pentrefelin, those which scale the slopes on the south side of the river, and the 20th-century housing estates on the east side of the town. Much of the urban development takes the form of terraced houses, ranging from the three-storeyed Georgian style rows on Berwyn Street and Bridge Street, to smaller rows of cottages. This implies an organisation of building work which is rare in a rural context; it produces a formality of design which seems recognisably urban.

Llangollen is also characterised by a surprising variety of styles and materials, indicating its growth over a considerable period, and via a number of different hands. Building in the town departs from rural vernacular traditions in a number of important respects: the constraints of urban building plots lead to tighter, more compact house-planning, often with an emphasis on height. There is much variety of building materials and finishes within the town, based on brick and stone, with some emphasis on style and detail, such as the gothic window detailing in Abbey Square and the use of polychrome brickwork on buildings along the Holyhead Road (A5). There is also extensive use of pebbledash, roughcast, and scribed render or stucco, and instances of painted brickwork. On occasion these surface coverings may serve to conceal alterations to structure and detail, many of the buildings in the town appearing to have been remodelled on a number of different occasions. In addition to domestic buildings, Llangollen also possesses several industrial buildings, such as the old tannery, but there are also examples of an identifiable commercial architecture. The Old Bank in Berwyn Street is a good example of this: it is built on a corner site, which it exploits by a distinctive curving façade, and with emphasis given to the ground floor former bank premises. The town also has a number of civic buildings, like the town hall and police station.

The impact of the town can also be seen in a string of villas close to it such as Fron Deg, Abbey Road, and Dinbren, Henllys and Wenffrwd. Urban and industrial growth appears to have given a spur to the development of farming in the area — for instance in the industrial home farm at Vivod which appears to have been established as a specialist dairy farm.

Landscape changes in the rural environment during the later 19th and 20th centuries have been relatively minor, but have resulted in the gradual loss, generally through neglect, of some traditional hedged or walled field boundaries and the abandonment or conversion of a number of the more isolated farms and cottages as a result of the creation of larger farming units. Public and private housing schemes from the second half of the 20th century onwards have given rise to a number of small housing estates, notably at Llidiart Annie near Llantysilio, on the southern and eastern outskirts of Llangollen, and at Trevor as well as the infilling of undeveloped plots within existing settlements elsewhere. The later 20th century has laid a heavy hand on the character of buildings in parts of the area, with its overlay of modernisation and 'improvement'.

INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPES

Early industry associated with the harnessing of water power and the processing of local agricultural produce — corn milling and woollen mills poor road network; improvements in transport and developments elsewhere gave rise to demands in raw materials and saw development of slate, lime, ceramic, the latter based upon imported coal, and brewing based upon imported grain, and tanning. A number of other extractive and processing industries had a lesser impact upon the landscape, not described in detail here, such as the widespread occurrence of small stone quarries for house and wall building, perhaps mostly dating to the 16th to 18th centuries. Other local industries in

the 19th and 20th centuries were undertaken at tanneries, sawmills, gasworks, printing works, smithies and breweries, some of which are still represented by surviving buildings or structures, notably within Llangollen, such as the former tannery in Hall Street and on Church Street, the former Sun Brewery on Queen Street and former Tanquery's Brewery on Berwyn Street.

Early use of water power for corn milling and textile production

Many of the early industries harnessed the use of water power, most notably in the Vivod, Llangollen, Pant-y-groes and Dol-isaf historic landscape character areas. Mills were principally sited on the river Dee as well as on the river Eglwyseg and the Cyflymen stream to the south of Llangollen and elsewhere. Water corn mills appear to have been in existence since the 13th century, including those belonging to Valle Crucis abbey which are thought to have existed at Pentrefelin and Llangollen. Water corn mills and mills for animal feeds were still in operation in the 18th, 19th and in some instance in the earlier 20th century at Llangollen, Trevor Mill on the river Dee and by the later Bache and Pengwern mill complexes on the Cyflymen stream just to the south of Llangollen. The textile industry in the area had equally early origins, several early sites being indicated by the Welsh place-name element *pandy*, referring to fulling mills in the case of Pandy, just to the north of Valle Crucis Abbey, and at Hen-bandy on the river Eglwyseg.

The Dee valley, particularly the town of Llangollen, became an important textile manufacturing district during the 19th century, where large mills were erected, resembling those of Yorkshire and Lancashire. In the 1830s there were three large mills — the Mile End Factory, the Upper Dee Mills and the Lower Dee Mills. Power mills were known at Llangollen earlier than anywhere in Wales, being introduced into a cotton mill by a firm from Manchester as early as 1805, some factories producing 15,000 yards of material a week in the 1820s and though undergoing a recession in the 1830s and 1840s was to continue into the earlier 20th century.

The large mills of Llangollen were different in character to those in the remainder of Denbighshire, not being a natural development from the earlier *pandai* or weaving shops, but requiring considerable investment by incoming capitalists, though until the 1860s most of the mills were engaged carding and spinning wool that produced yarn for a large number of domestic weavers in the surrounding districts. George Borrow in the mid 19th century, for example, describes in his *Wild Wales* how John James, his guide at Llangollen, showed him the path across the mountain along which he used to carry the flannel he wove at home to the mill-owner that employed him.

The three Llangollen mills operated until the 1940s and the last, the Lower Dee Mill finally closed in 1960, being mainly concerned with blanket and tweed manufacture with Australian, New Zealand and Shetland wools. The decline of textile manufacture during the inter-war and post-war periods released a number of former mills for various alternative uses.

Metal mining

A landscape with extensive traces of mining for lead, silver and zinc ores is to be found on the northern side of Ruabon Mountain character area where the workings of Pool Park mine lie on the undulating, heather-covered moorland which includes natural sink-holes in the limestone.

The main period of mining activity was in the 1860s and 1870s and though earlier, undated workings appear to be represented by a number of the smaller shafts dotted along the veins, these are perhaps of 18th- or early 19th-century date, there being no explicit evidence of medieval mining in this particular area. The more intensive mining remains here cover an area of over 10 hectares, forming part of a more extensive though dispersed mining landscape extending to three or four kilometres southwards across the mountain to Pool Park, Cefn y Gist and Eglwyseg and northwards beyond the limits of the study area to Minera. Pool Park mine lay in the angle between the steep-sided valley of the Aber Sychnant stream to the west and the equally steep-sided valley of one of its tributaries to the north, dissecting

the Carboniferous limestone plateau, at a height of about 400 metres above sea level. The waste heaps resulting from the sinking of shafts and ore processing still bare of vegetation and standing out starkly from the surrounding moorland.

The area has generally been unaffected by later activity, although with the notable exception of the destruction of the engine house, so that the earthworks which survive represent a largely fossilized mining landscape. Two runs of shafts follow the main veins, although the main area of activity is concentrated around a large shaft with extensive spoil tips, close to which are the remains of the engine house and a substantial embankment for a tramway linking the site to a second area of workings.

The remains of several smaller structures survive, along with evidence for possible hushing. As well as the main workings, the major landscape features include the two leat systems which drew water from the Aber Sychnant stream to supply Minera Mines, one also supplying Pool Park and Lower Park. Field evidence shows that some of the larger shafts were originally worked by means of horse whims, later replaced by a steam-driven engines supplied by water from artificial ponds and leats which also supplied power for crushing and processing the ore. The engines were housed in stone-built engine houses, which were mostly destroyed by the army in the 1960s after falling into disrepair. Two major leat systems are apparent. A more substantial one, sluiced from the Aber Sychnant some way upstream, bypassed the western side of the Pool Park mine and supplied the Minera mines, 2 kilometres to the north-east. A second leat, also sluiced from the Aber Sychnant upstream, was culverted under the tramway from Boundary Shaft to feed a large reservoir lying in the angle between the tramways to the south-east of the engine house. The reservoir evidently provided the main water supply for Pool Park and probably fed both the boilers of the engine house and the small waterwheel on the northern side of a dressing floor where the ores were processed. It then continued northwards across the mountain in the direction of Park Mine.

Slate quarrying and processing

The exploitation of the Silurian slates which outcrop in the western and southern parts of the area and resulted in the creation of a number of distinctive industrial landscapes. The Llangollen district formed a distinct region of the slate industry in north-east Wales and though small by contrast with the scale of the industry in north-west Wales was significant locally. Quarrying began in the 17th century, though the most intensive period of working came in the 19th and the earlier 20th centuries, following in the wake firstly of the canal and secondly the railway which transformed a predominantly local industry into one exporting outside the region to the Wrexham area and the English Midlands.

A number of groupings of quarries can be distinguished. One group of large quarries lay around the fringes of Llantysilio Mountain and the Horseshoe Pass in the Maesyrychen and Llantysilio Mountain historic landscape character areas at Oernant, Moel-y-faen, Clogau (Berwyn), Craig y Glan, Cymmo and Rhiw Goch. The original workings at Oernant lie in the conifer plantation below the Horseshoe Pass where early hillside working, mainly for the production of slate slabs but including some roofing slate is said to have been produced in the 17th century. From 1852 the transport of slate from the large Oernant, Moel y Faen, Berwyn quarries was facilitated by the opening of a tramway which skirted the eastern fringes of Llantysilio Mountain to feed the incline at Maesyrychain, within sight of Valle Crucis Abbey. The slate was transferred by this means to a lower tramway which ran to the Pentre Felin Slab and Slate Works sited on the canal just to the north-west of Llangollen.

The extensive open, hilltop workings with some underground workings at Moel-y-faen were mainly developed following connection to canal by an extension of the Oernant tramway in 1857, though by the end of its working life in the 1940s slate was being carted away from the quarry by lorry. Traces of buildings are still visible including dressing sheds and traces of steam winding house or sawing mill, and smithy. Also visible are the line of tramway with some slate sleepers still clearly visible. A complex of workers' cottages at Tai-newyddion, to the north of the

study area, are still occupied. The shallow, open hilltop workings at Clogau (Berwyn) cover an extensive area. Originally finished products, mainly slab were dispatched by incline down to the road, but later the Oernant tramroad served it. The production of specialist slate products still continues to the present day on a reduced scale. The hillside workings at Craig y Glan on the northern edge of Llantysilo Mountain operated in 1870–80s, being closed in 1940s, then depending exclusively on road transport. The small hillside quarry at Rhiw Goch near Cymmo, to the west of Rhowl included some underground workings and remained in operation from the 1840s up until the Second World War.

A second group of smaller quarries lay near Pentredwr at Craig Wynnstay, Ffynnon y Gog, and Foel in the Pant-y-groes historic landscape character area. These quarries were again mainly in production in the later 19th and earlier 20th centuries. The workings at Ffynnon y Gog and Foel are now largely hidden by later conifer plantation though some traces of quarry buildings and other structures still survive. A further small group of quarries lay in the Dinbren character area at Aber-gwern, Eglwyseg and Pant Glas. Aber-gwern was a small hillside quarry with a small dressing shed and other buildings which appear to have all closed by the 1920s, though some traces of buildings and structures are still visible in addition to the quarry sites themselves. Finally, a small, possibly mid 19th-century slate quarry lay on the hills to the south of Llangollen at Craig y Dduallt in the Craig-y-dduallt historic landscape character area.

The Pentrefelin slate works, dating from the 1840s, lay on the canal wharf and were later provided with a railway loading point. The mill was powered by a waterwheel driven by the canal itself and handled material brought from the Horseshoe Pass quarries by the Oernant tramway. It continued in operation until the 1920s despite tipping problems and complaints about river pollution. The former slate works were acquired by the White Sand and Silica Company in the 1940s, providing ground quartz from sandstone quarried on the Black Mountain near Nerquis and transported to Pentrefelin. It supplied the vitreous enamelling market, steel foundries and fine cement trade during the Second World War and thereafter up until the 1960s, the buildings subsequently becoming taken over by the Llangollen Motor Museum.

Limestone quarrying and lime manufacture

The coming of the canal at the end of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th century led to an expansion of the lime production industry in the eastern part of the area in the Trevor Uchaf and Cysyllte historic landscape character areas, making use of coal imported from the Ruabon coalfield. Canal-side limekilns were in operation at on the south side of the valley at Froncysyllte from the later 18th century onwards, producing lime for both agricultural and industrial purposes, transported as far as Cheshire, Staffordshire and the Midlands. The kilns were supplied by stone quarried from the isolated outcrop of limestone at the Pen y Graig quarries on the hillside above Froncysyllte, transported downhill by a series of tramroads and inclines, and gave rise to the small nucleated settlement at Froncysyllte. The limekilns on the opposite side of the valley at Tref-y-nant were in operation from the 1830s. These were based upon limestone brought down from Trevor Rocks where there are also many surviving remains of the limestone industry including both larger and smaller quarries, former tramlines which carried for transporting the quarried rock, several banks of limekilns and a number of more dispersed single limekilns. Several inclines were constructed which transported quarried material to the canal and railway and the dispersed settlement of miners' cottages at Trevor Uchaf. The local lime industry underwent a decline at about the end of the 19th century, though quarrying for limestone was to continue at the Pen y Graig quarries up to the 1950s.

Brick and tile manufacture

A flourishing brick and tile industry emerged in the Cysyllte character area during the second half of the 19th century based upon the good quality clay from the marl beds and coal deposits available locally in the Ruabon Coalfield. The industry also benefiting from the proximity to the canal and railway and was ideally sited to meet the

demands of the expanding industrial settlements of the Wrexham area and the growing centre of tourism at Llangollen. The former brickworks at Garth were in operation near the Australia Arms public house in 1862, operating at first with a single kiln near the road, which produced 'large quantities of good, sound and serviceable cherry red bricks, which are well adapted for all ordinary building purposes'. By the First World War the works was producing silica bricks for the steel industry and ganister, a plastic cement used for iron founding. Production eventually came to an end in 1979 as a consequence of the recession in the steel industry. The works are now demolished though there are some ruins at the back of the site and part of former offices still survive on the roadside. The earliest record of brickworks at Tref-y-nant is in 1852 and by the 1860s it was operating six kilns. The Tref-y-nant brickworks produced firebricks, chimney pots and ornamental terracotta goods, being one of four local works James Coster Edwards which became the most successful brickmaking companies in north-east Wales. The works specialised in the production of glazed sanitary pipes, for which there was a great demand following the new sanitary regulations which came into force after the passing of the Public Health Acts of 1848 and 1858. Clay was quarried from opencast holes and by pit mines, the opencast exposing a strata of coal not extracted commercially, the clay quarried at Tref-y-nant produced wares of a pale buff colour which were ideal for sanitary stoneware pipes. The Tref-y-nant works had closed by 1958 having for several years produced red floor tiles. Purchased by Monsanto Chemical Works, the old brickworks having been mostly demolished and left to become overgrown, the only remnants of the former works surviving intact being the two brick piers of the office gates.

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Vale of Llangollen has provided an important access route through the mountains since early times, linking the borderland area with the lands of central Wales further to the west since early times. The crossing of the Dee at Llangollen also provided an important link northwards to the Vale of Clwyd.

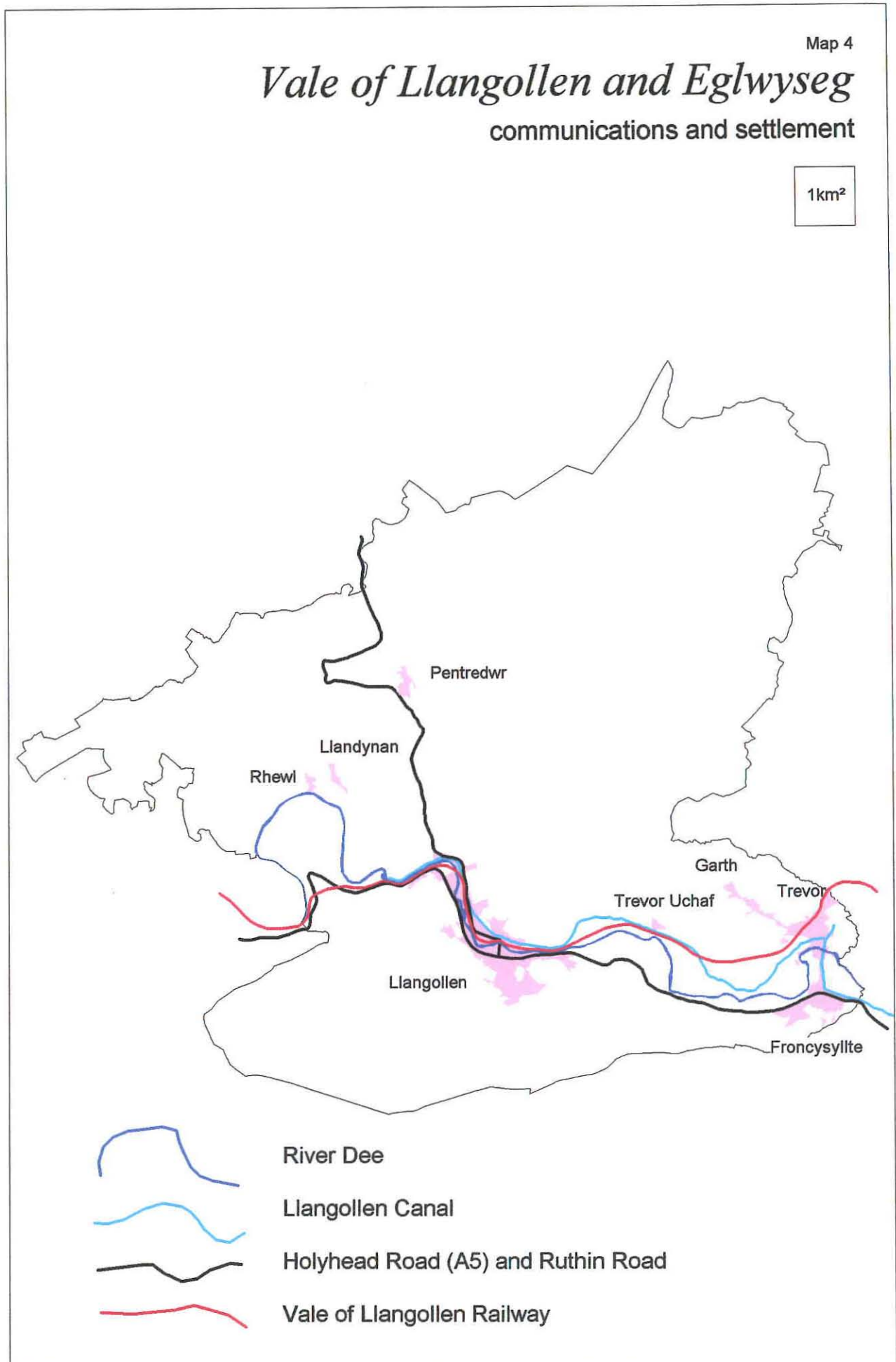
Bridges across the Dee

A bridge across the river at Llangollen has been in existence since at least the 13th century, there being documentary evidence for the repair of the bridge here in 1284. A subsequent bridge is said to have been built by John Trevor in the mid 14th century, but the present bridge is probably originally of about 1500, with major repairs in 1656, with an additional span being added in 1863 across the railway. The bridge has since been widened twice on the up-river side, once in 1873 and again in 1968–69. Thomas Pennant's *Tour in Wales* published in 1783 noted that it was considered one of the '*Tri Thlws Cymru*, or three beauties of Wales'. It also features in the anonymous verse entitled *The Seven Wonders of Wales*.

Pistyll Rhaeadr and Wrexham Steeple,
Snowdon's mountain without its people,
Overton yew trees, Gresford bells,
Llangollen bridge and St Winifred's well

A former Victorian castellated folly at the north end of the bridge was demolished in 1939.

Other early crossings of the Dee were no doubt by ferry or by ford, said to have been a ferry at Cysyllte in the late 14th century. The stone-built bridge further downstream at Pont Cysyllte was built in the 1690s, being substantially remodelled in the later 18th century. A further notable crossing of the river Dee was the first chain bridge at Berwyn, to the west of Llangollen, built by Exuperius Pickering in 1814 to take coal across the river for delivery to Corwen and Bala. In practical terms this was replaced by the stone-built King's Bridge 1906, the original chain bridge being replaced in 1929 by a suspension bridge.



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Turnpike Roads

Considerable improvements were made to the major routes westwards to Corwen and northwards across Llantysilio Mountain to Ruthin by the turnpike trusts during the second half of the 18th century. Thomas Pennant in his *Tour of Wales* published in 1783, for example, mentioned the ‘excellent turnpike-road leading to *Ruthyn*’ past the Pillar of Eliseg. This was the former route across the mountains via Pentredwr, by way of the pass known to Pennant as *Bwlch y Rhiw Velen*. In 1808, according to the antiquary Richard Fenton

The Road ascending from the Vale, is . . . prodigiously steep, and continues so for a mile and a half. Then we come to a Mountain track and open an extensive View. See the Arrennig, our old acquaintances, and have a clear View of Snowdon’.

A less demanding turnpike road, the now famous Horseshoe Pass (A542), was constructed in 1811, to avoid this steep slope, equipped with milestones and a turnpike gate just to the north of the Britannia Inn.

Telford’s Holyhead Road

The present A5 was further considerably improved as part of the major improvement between 1815–26 of the London to Holyhead Road — the Great Irish Road — strengthening, as a matter of political expediency, the physical links between the centres of government in Whitehall and Dublin in the years following the 1800 Act of Union between England and Ireland. This was one of most ambitious and influential road-building schemes of the 19th century. It was an outstanding feat of civil engineering for its day, made possible by the generous funding awarded by Parliament and arguably the first major state-funded road-building programmes of modern times. The Holyhead Road had a relatively short heyday in the late 1820s and 1830s, however, being superseded for the purposes of long-distance travel by the London to Holyhead railway in the middle of the nineteenth century. The decline in importance of the road in the second half of the nineteenth century undoubtedly contributed to the remarkable degree of survival of much of the original work. The road has enjoyed a new lease of life since the invention of the internal combustion engine in the early twentieth century and today is seen as a living and working industrial monument, to be cherished and sympathetically managed in its own right. It is regrettable that much of the original character of Telford’s road has been spoilt by insensitive ‘improvements’ in recent years, but still surviving are some stretches of original roadside walling, road revetments, and a number of characteristic milestones with cast-iron plates set into upright sandstone pillars.

Llangollen Canal

Construction work on the canal running through the Vale of Llangollen began in 1795 and was completed in 1808, though open to some traffic in 1805. It was conceived, according to the cast-iron plaque on one of the piers of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, as being ‘for the mutual benefit of agriculture and trades’. It formed part of a canal system linking the Mersey with the rivers Dee and Severn, the name Llangollen Canal, which only became commonly used in the 1940s, is the name of the section from Welsh Frankton in Shropshire and the Horseshoe Falls weir at Llantysilio, west of Llangollen, where it was supplied with water from the river Dee. The canal gave access to the Ruabon collieries, and stimulated the growth of the limekilns and pottery works at Froncysyllte and Tref-y-nant, extensive basin with railways through the Acrefair collieries and chemical works to the Plas Kynaston iron works and Cwm Mawr stone quarries.

Construction work on the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct began in 1795 and was completed in 1805, for the purpose of carrying the canal across the river Dee. This masterpiece of engineering, regarded as the finest aqueduct in Britain, was designed by Thomas Telford working under William Jessop the most prolific canal engineer of the period. Tall slender stone pillars and arches support an iron trough over 300 metres in length just under 40 metres above the river Dee which runs below it. The height of the aqueduct required innovative techniques to replace former heavy

construction techniques which had depended upon double skins of masonry sealed with puddle clay. Instead, the aqueduct was carried by an trough made from cast-iron plates bolted together, supported beneath by cast-iron ribs, the ironwork being cast by William Hazledine, one of the leading iron founders of the period at the nearby Plas Kynaston Ironworks, about 450 metres to the east of Trevor Wharf, first constructed to carry out the contract. The embankment on the south side of the aqueduct is one of the largest canal earthworks ever constructed, built from material quarried to form the canal cutting and tunnel near Chirk, about 5 kilometres to the south. Trevor Wharf, with spacious wharfs for coal, timber and lime, was served by railways from the adjacent coal mines and the Plas Kynaston ironworks. Surviving ancillary buildings and structures include dry docks, a canal hotel, former warehouse and lengthman's house.

Most of the road bridges crossing the canal within the historic landscape area are of the humped-back type, many making use of brick or stone or a combination of the two, as well as on lifting bridge just to the south of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. Originally intended as a means of conveying agricultural produce, the canal became an important factor in the industrial development of the area. The canal became a tourist attraction from its early years. The Reverend Bingley, for example, was amongst the first to write about the aqueduct in a journal kept during a tour of north Wales in 1798, even before the piers had been completed and the iron trough added to the top.

The Vale of Llangollen Railway

Llangollen originally served by the Llangollen Road halt at Whitehurst, north of Chirk, which opened in 1849 on the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway, passengers transferring to coaches travelling along the Holyhead Road. The railway was initially opened in 1861 from Ruabon to Llangollen as the Vale of Llangollen Railway, branching from the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway south of Ruabon, running via Acrefair and Trevor. The railway was subsequently extended westwards as the Llangollen and Corwen Railway. This reached Corwen in 1865 via the Berwyn Tunnel which took a year to complete, and subsequently to the north Wales coast at Rhyl via the Vale of Clwyd Railway, branching at Corwen by 1864, and to the west coast of Wales by means of the Bala and Dolgellau Railway by the late 1868.

For a period of nearly a century the railway took over much of the traffic formerly carried by road and canal. It became an important means of exporting slate, limestone and timber balanced by imports of foodstuffs, barley and malt for supplying the Llangollen breweries, and for tourists. The picturesque Dee Valley, surrounded by the Berwyn, Llantysilio and Ruabon mountains had been favoured by tourists since the late 18th century, the railway offering one of the countries most scenic routes from Ruabon to Barmouth via Llangollen and Bala.

All freight services except Ruabon to Llangollen ceased in 1964, this being withdrawn in 1968. The line between Llangollen and Carrog to the west is now privately operated by the Llangollen Railway Society, but preserved elsewhere along the dismantled course of the railway line are embankments, cuttings, road crossings and bridge abutments which represent significant historic landscape features relating to the history of transport in the area.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

The dramatic topography of the Vale of Llangollen has inspired a long tradition of literary and artistic associations since early medieval times which have themselves influenced the ways in which the landscape has been perceived and developed — having influenced certain aspects of its architectural heritage, the creation of designed landscapes, and the conservation of natural features.

Folklore and medieval poetry

As elsewhere in Wales, the earliest cultural associations within the Vale of Llangollen are probably to be seen in folklore associated with a number of natural features which perhaps originate in the early medieval period if not earlier. This is most notably focused on Craig Arthur and Craig y Forwyn ('Maiden's Crag') — place-names associated with two of the prominent outcrops of the dramatic limestone escarpment of Eglwyseg Rocks.

Subsequent associations in the early medieval and medieval periods are predominantly with reference to structures or buildings created within the natural landscape, and frequently arose through royal or ecclesiastical patronage. The Pillar of Eliseg, the base of a stone cross prominently sited in the Eglwyseg valley, was erected in the first half of the 9th century by Cyngen in honour of his great-grandfather Eliseg who had reunited the kingdom by retaking land once conquered by the English. In 1696 the antiquarian Edward Lhuyd recorded the original inscription on the Pillar of Eliseg, before it had deteriorated to its now largely illegible state. The inscription on this symbolically important monument traced the legendary descent of the royal house of Powys from the early 5th-century king Gwrtheyrn (Vortigern), the late 4th century Maccsen Wledig (Magnus Maximus), and a religious blessing from St Germanus of Auxerre, thus laying down political and territorial claims reaching back to the late Roman world. The origin of the place-name element *eglywseg* in Afon Eglywseg and Creigiau Eglwyseg is hotly debated, but some authorities have been considered that the place-name element are derived from Eliseg.

Perhaps the earliest record of place-names in the vale appeared in the 9th or 10th cycle of poems known as *Canu Llywarch Hen* ('Song of Llywarch the old'), which alludes to the settlement of Llangollen and the pass known as *Bwlch y Rhiw Velen* northwards over the mountains to Ruthin with reference to the burial places of Llywarch's sons.

Further poetical associations were to be made in the early 13th century by the court poet Einion Wan whose surviving works include an *englyn* (an early metrical form of Welsh poetry), which includes an elegy for Madog ap Gruffudd Maelor, the first ruler of the subdivided kingdom of Powys Fadog. Madog founded Valle Crucis Abbey in 1201, his son Gruffudd ap Madog built Castell Dinas Brân in the 1260s, two buildings which were later to acquire iconic status within the region.

Despite its loss of political and strategic significance following the Edwardian conquest of Wales in the 1280s, Dinas Brân was to feature in a number of literary works in the later 13th and 14th centuries. It appears in the prose romance known as *Fouke le Fitz Waryn*, a manuscript written in Old French and dating from the first half of the 14th century now in the British Library but based on a now missing late 13th-century verse romance. Also dating from the 14th century is the only extant work of the Welsh poet Hywel ab Einion, who composed a love-poem to Myfanwy Fychan of Dinas Brân, a young lady belonging to a branch of the Trevor family. The poem, said to have been left in the cleft of an oak tree on the slopes of the hill, was first published in an English translation by Thomas Pennant in his *Tour in Wales*. It includes the following memorable metaphor alluding to the impregnability of the hilltop:

Though hard the steep ascent to gain,
Thy smiles were harder to obtain

The medieval poem was to inspire the the well-known Victorian poem, *Myfanwy Fychan*, by the poet John Ceiriog Hughes. The poem, with its emphasis on moral standards, was written for the Eisteddfod held in Llangollen in 1858 and formed a model for Welsh love poetry in the second half of the 19th century.

In addition to its significant ecclesiastical and economic impact, the Cistercian abbey at Valle Crucis also became an important focus of cultural life within the region due to patronage by successive abbots, having associations with the poet Iolo Goch in the 14th century and with Guto'r Glyn and Gutun Owain in the 15th century. A well-known poem by Gutun Owain praises the hospitality of Dafydd ab Ieunan, the same abbot who had harboured the poet Guto'r

Glyn in old age:

He'll provide drink from flourishing orchards
 And from wheat malt and splendid grapevines.
 What the bees carry from the meadow corners
 Will make liquors in his enclosures.
 The best of fruits, like Gweirydd the Strong,
 That grow from the earth, Dafydd bestows.

The Romantic movement

By now in ruins, Castell Dinas Brân and Valle Crucis continued to be referred to in works composed in the 16th and 17th centuries and were first remarked upon by early antiquaries. John Leland, the King's Antiquary, visiting some time after 1534, mentioned 'the castle of Dinas Brane was never a bygge thing, but sette al for strength in a place half inaccessible for enemies'. Early Romantic images of the ruined castle were conjured up in an *englyn* by the Denbighshire poet Roger Cyffyn in the late 16th or early 17th century, given in translation in George Borrow's *Wild Wales*:

Gone, gone are thy gates, Dinas Brân on the height!
 Thy warders are blood-crows and ravens, I trow;
 Now no one will wend from the field of the fight
 To the fortress on high, save the raven and crow.

General improvements in communications and greater mobility for social and leisure purposes by the elite classes resulted in a flurry of visitors to the area from about the middle of the 18th century together with the earliest appearance of published illustrations of the Vale of Llangollen, which were influential in promoting a picturesque image of its antiquities and scenery. Engravings of Valle Crucis were published by the Buck brothers in 1741–42 and by S. H. Grimm in 1770. The Welsh artist, Richard Wilson painted several views Dinas Brân in about 1770, one commissioned by Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1771. Wilson had previously studied landscape painting in Italy, the Dee valley with its fertile countryside and ruined castle and abbey forming ideal subject matter for landscapes in the Italian fashion. Indeed, X-ray analysis of one of his views of Dinas Brân suggests that it was painted over an abandoned landscape of Tivoli. John Ingleby undertook a watercolour of the landscape near Llangollen including both Valle Crucis and Dinas Brân and in 1776 Paul Sandby published *Views of North Wales* which included one of the Vale of Llangollen from the east showing Dinas Brân.

Despite the influx of visitors, a strong local bardic tradition continued by such native poets as the Denbighshire poet Jonathan Hughes (1721–1805), born at Ty'n-y-pistyll farmhouse, Pengwern, near Llangollen, a competitor in the *eisteddfodau* organised by the Gwyneddigion Society. Hughes, whose epitaph was written by his friend Twm o'r Nant (Thomas Edwards) published several volumes of poetry both during his lifetime and shortly after his death.

The principal cultural influences upon the area were to come from further afield, however, and despite improvements to the network of turnpike roads some visitors went out of their way to pit themselves against the most arduous and adventurous routes that the area could offer. Thomas Pennant's *Tour in Wales*, published in 1783, described the Eglwyseg valley as being 'adapted only for the travel of the horsemen', being

long and narrow, bounded on the right by the astonishing precipices, divided into numberless parallel strata of white limestone, often giving birth to vast yew-trees: and on the left, by smooth and verdant hills, bordered by pretty woods. One of the principal of the *Glisseg* rocks is honoured with the name of *Craig-Arthur*. That at the end of the vale is called *Craig y Forwyn*, or maiden's rock; is bold, precipitous, and terminates with a vast

natural column. . . . This valley is chiefly inhabited (happily) by an independent race of warm and wealthy yeomanry, undevoured as yet by the great men of the country.

The hills above Froncysyllte he described as having ‘a prospect uncommonly great. The distant view is boundless. One side impends over a most beautiful valley, watered by the Dee; diversified with groves and bounded towards the end by barren and naked rocks, tier above tier’. The notable houses of the gentry are also first described and praised in these works. Pennant noted that ‘Trevor house makes a handsome appearance’ though the timber-framed hall at Plas yn y Pentre was considered ‘a grotesque antient house, which gives variety to the scenery’. The first descriptions of the settlements of the Vale also appear at this period, Pennant describing Llangollen as

a small and poor town, seated in a most romantic spot, near a pretty common watered by the *Dee*, which emblematic of its country, runs with great passion through the valley. The mountains soar to a great height above their wooded bases; and one, whose summit is crowned with the ancient castle *Brân*, is uncommonly grand. . . . I know of no place in North Wales, where the refined lover of picturesque scenes, the sentimental, or the romantic, can give a fuller indulgence to his inclination. No place abounds more with various rides or solemn walks.

Valle Crucis was to be described as ‘solemnly seated at the foot of the mountains, on a small meadowy flat, watered by a pretty stream, and shaded with hanging woods’ and engraving taken from watercolours of Dinas Brân, Valle Crucis and the Pillar of Eliseg by Moses Griffiths, were to be published in Pennant’s *Tour in Wales*. A further engraving depicting a view of Valle Crucis and Dinas Brân appeared in Henry Boswell’s *Antiquities of England and Wales* published in 1786.

Continental travel had become hazardous in the last years of the 18th century because of the French Wars and this was consequently a time when many would-be travellers sought adventures at home rather than attempting the Grand Tour. Numerous publications exploited the needs of this new and growing market. *A Map of the Six Counties of North Wales* was published in 1795 with engravings by Robert Baugh, which included a view of the ruins of Valle Crucis Abbey. An engraving of Llantysilo Hall was published in 1796 and a drawing of the Pillar of Eliseg was made by Thomas Rowlandson in 1797.

The last two decades of the 18th century was to see the Vale fully embraced by the European-wide Romantic Movement. By the 1780s Plas Newydd, then the small stone cottage of Pen y Maes on the southern outskirts of Llangollen, had become the home of two remarkable Irish ladies, Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby, who became known as the Ladies of Llangollen. Living there until their deaths in 1829 and 1831, they played host to an illustrious coterie of friends and acquaintances including members of the local Welsh gentry, as well as national and international figures from the world of art, politics and literature who represented a further generation of cultural tourists to the area. Visitors to Plas Newydd over this period of 40 years or more included such diverse personalities as Arthur Wellesly (later Duke of Wellington), the Duke of Gloucester, Prince Paul Esterhazy (Austrian minister of foreign affairs), Sir Walter Scott, Robert Southey, Josiah Wedgewood, Charles Darwin, Richard Sheridan, and Sir Humphrey Davey. In the grounds of Plas Newydd in 1824, overlooked by the imposing ruins of Dinas Brân, William Wordsworth composed the following lines about the ruined castle,

Through shattered galleries, 'mid roofless halls,
Wandering with timid footsteps oft betrayed,
The Stranger sighs . . .

He was subsequently to describe his visit to the Ladies of Llangollen in a letter to his friend Sir George Beaumont:

Called upon the celebrated Recluses We drank tea and passed a couple of hours with them in the

evening, having visited the aqueduct over the Dee and Chirk Castle in the afternoon. . . . Next day I sent them the following sonnet from Ruthin, which was conceived, and in great measure composed, in their grounds.

Glyn Cafailgaroch, in the Cambrian tongue,
 In ours, the Vale of Friendship, let *this* spot
 Be nam'd; where, faithful to a low roof'd Cot,
 On Deva's banks, ye have abode so long;
 Sisters in love, a love allowed to climb,
 Ev'n on this earth, above the reach of time!

The allusion to the Vale of Meditation in the above, would recall to the Ladies' minds, as it was meant to do, their own good-natured jokes of the preceding evening . . .

Anna Seward was a further Romantic poet to visit the Ladies during this period, subsequently composing the following lines, published posthumously in her *Llangollen Vale: with other poems*:

Say, ivy'd Valle Crucis, time decay'd,
 Dim on the brink of Deva's wandering flood,
 Your riv'd arch glimmering thro' the tangled glade,
 Your gay hills, towering o'er your night of wood,
 Deep in the vale's recesses as you stand,
 And desolately great the rising sigh command.

The legacy of Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby was to long outlive them. The house was enlarged and elaborate timbering added in the 1880s by a subsequent owner, General John Yorke. Improvements were made to its gardens, including the erection of a summerhouse and ornamental bridges across the Cyflymen stream on whose banks the house was sited. Richard Llewelyn is said to have written *How Green Was My Valley* at the house in 1924, which was also briefly home to the Welsh National Theatre Company in the 1930s. Today the house and gardens are managed as a tourist attraction.

The Reverend Bingley was to note Plas Newydd on his tour in 1798:

the charming retreat of lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby, which, however, has of late years been probably too much intruded upon by the curiosity of the multitudes of tourists who every summer visit Llangollen. . . . These two females, delighted with the scenery around Llangollen, when it was little known to the rest of the world, sought here a philosophical retirement from the frivolities of fashionable life, erected a dwelling that commands a fine mountain prospect, and have resided here ever since.

Bingley also wrote in 1798 about Castell Dinas Brân and gave a first-hand account of the construction of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, but was less flattering of the number of visitors to the town of Llangollen: 'in the summer time I have more than once found it very unpleasant, from the crowd of travellers that are constantly passing on the roads to and from Ireland, and from the number of . . . tourists'.

Britain's finest landscape painter, J. M. W. Turner, was to be numbered amongst these visitors in about 1798, when he sketched a view of the river Dee with Dinas Brân in the background. In 1808 he made a preliminary sketch of Valle Crucis again with Dinas Brân in the background, which became the subject of a later watercolour, the principal themes of which include one of the central themes of the Romantic art of the period, juxtaposing a shepherdess and labourers making hay in the foreground against the background of the natural scene including the ruins of abbey and castle.

A vociferous campaign against industrialization mounted by a number of prominent local figures in the early years of the 19th century was influential in the long-term conservation of the rural landscape of the Vale of Llangollen. Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby had long campaigned against quarries being opened within view of their windows, and they likewise campaigned against Telford's Holyhead Road. They also rallied their friends and acquaintances, including members of the local gentry such as the Myddletons, Myttons, Mostyns and Williams Wynns, to oppose the construction of mills within Llangollen, which were considered 'destructive'. Eleanor Butler wrote to solicit the support of Mr Thomas Jones of Llantysilio Hall, expressing her concern about 'the peace Health and Morals of the Inhabitants'. According to the newspapers the ladies had threatened to abandon Llangollen:

Lady Eleanor Butler, and her fair friend Miss Ponsonby, who have for so many years been the fair recluses of the Vale of Llangollen in Wales are going to leave their beautiful seat no longer a *retreat* from the 'busy hum of men', by two extensive cotton mills having been erected near their abode.

By the summer of 1804, however, they were comforted by the knowledge that they would be invaded 'neither by Buonaparte nor the Cotton Mills'. The canal, however, was apparently not included in their campaign against industrialization. Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby were amongst the party of distinguished guests occupying the first barges to cross the Telford's Pontcysyllte Aqueduct amidst great pomp at the opening ceremony in 1805. Some later visitors such as Richard Fenton and his companion Sir Richard Colt Hoare visiting in 1808 were less approving, and whilst taking a trip along the canal, considered that 'though it may bring commerce to a Country, yet in a picturesque point of view disfigures it', though today, of course, the canal is regarded as one of the areas most cherished attractions.

The growth of tourism and cultural life in the 19th and 20th centuries

Well-heeled and predominantly English tourists continued to flock to the Vale throughout the earlier part of the 19th century. The young physicist, Michael Faraday, visited the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct in the second decade of the century, remarking upon the embankment on the southern side of the valley 'jutting out like a promontory', and upon its slender stone piers which made it seem 'light as a cloud'. A visit was made in 1823 by the essayist William Hazlitt who wrote 'I went to Llangollen Vale, by way of initiating myself in the mysteries of natural scenery; and I must say I was enchanted with it . . . the valley was to me . . . the cradle of a new existence . . . on passing a certain point you come all at once upon the valley, which opens like an amphitheatre, broad and barren hills rising in majestic state on either side, with [quoting Samuel Taylor Coleridge] 'green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks' below, and the river Dee babbling over its stony bed in the midst of them'.

In 1829 a visit was made by the German composer Felix Mendelssohn, who sought refuge from the harpists sitting 'in the hall of every reputable tavern playing so called fold melodies — that is to say, dreadful, vulgar, out-of-tune, trash with a hurdy-gurdy going on at the same time!' by venturing into the surrounding countryside:

yesterday afternoon I had already climbed to the top of a high mountain, with the ruins of a Roman citadel [Dinas Brân] at the summit, had looked far out into the blue distance, and down to the dark, lonely valleys below — then climbed right back down into one of these quiet valleys, in which the walls and windows of an old abbey are covered and overgrown with lovely green trees — the abbey is right next to a rushing, babbling brook, mountains and rocky cliffs are spread all around, the choir of the church has been converted into a stable, the altar into a kitchen, above the tops of the gables you can see the tops of the beeches towering in the distance which could be a chapter in themselves

A similar picturesque image of the Vale of Llangollen is given by Samuel Lewis in his *Topographical Dictionary* published in 1833, setting the scene for a more popular appreciation of the attractions of the district that was to burgeon later in the century:

The situation of Llangollen on the mail coach road from London through Shrewsbury to Holyhead causes it to be enlivened by the daily passage of travellers; and its inhabitants derive considerable advantage from the number of persons who visit it in the summer season, and make this their temporary abode, for the purpose of enjoying the scenery of the neighbourhood, which is equally pre-eminent for its grandeur and sublimity, and for its picturesque and romantic beauty. The parish is very extensive, and the Vale of Llangollen is deservedly celebrated as containing, in proportion to its extent, a greater variety of interesting objects, and a more beautiful and striking combination of the milder and nobler features of pleasing and majestic scenery, than probably any other in the principality.

The local cultural life of the district was to receive a fillip in the middle of the century, the National Eisteddfod held in Llangollen in 1858, at which, as noted above, the Silver Crown was won by John Ceiriog Hughes for his now well-known poem *Myfanwy Fychan*.

The tourist industry was being actively promoted locally from the 1880s, the period between then and the end of the first decade of the 20th century seeing a rapid expansion in hotels, inns and boarding houses in Llangollen. The attractions of the area were detailed in a number of new publications such as *Jones's Picturesque Views* of 1880, which enable the improvements that were being made for visitors to be traced. Thus Black's *Picturesque Guide* of 1870 noted that the 'old and mean' houses which formerly existed in the town were being 'gradually giving place to modern and more handsome dwellings'. In 1898 travel writer A. G. Bradley was to write of Llangollen, long seen as a blight in the vale: 'the village has this long time ceased to be the unsophisticated Arcady whose deficiencies – matter nothing – since it is the situation and the surroundings which make it famous'. The ultimate accolade that the writers of the age could give came from John Ruskin who declared that 'the Dee itself is a quite perfect mountain stream, and the village of Llangollen – one of the most beautiful and delightful in Wales'.

Long-standing attractions had been Castell Dinas Brân and Valle Crucis Abbey, to which canal trips and the picturesque walk to the Horseshoe Falls had been added with the coming of the canal in the early years of the 19th century. New diversions created for tourists in the period up to the first few decades of the 20th were to include the Victoria Promenade along the riverside in Llangollen, a *camera obscura* and tea-room within the castle ruins on Dinas Brân, and the Panorama Walk, high on the hillside below the Trevor Rocks. The coming of the railway had taken trade away from the canal and enabled the canal to be fully exploited by pleasure boats. Day visitors or weekly boarders arriving by road, rail or on foot across Ruabon Mountain from the industrial towns and cities of north-east Wales and the Midlands. By the end of the 19th century there were so many visitors arriving by train from the Midlands especially that in 1897 the railway platform was extended, and the waiting room at the station enlarged. Additional facilities in Llangollen and the surrounding district were provided to capitalise on increased demand which all had an impact upon the physical aspects of the environment, including shops, tea rooms, hotels and lodging houses. Horse-drawn vehicles and later motor buses were needed to convey visitors to accommodation and excursions to the Horseshoe Falls or Valle Crucis.

Queen Victoria was herself to visit the Llangollen in 1889 at perhaps the height of the Victorian tourist trade, recording in her diary the visit she made to the Martins of Bryntysilio in its pleasure grounds overlooking the Horseshoe Falls:

drove up the beautiful wooded, mountain-girt, deep valley, dotted with villas and cottages, to Bryntysilio, the well-known residence of Sir Theodore Martin, who with Lady Martin received us as the door. The place is beautifully situated, and the house is furnished and arranged with the greatest taste. They showed us all their rooms and his study, with the table at which he wrote dearest Albert's life. Had tea in the Drawing-room, during which a selected number of Llangollen choirs sang Welsh songs, in the pretty sloping garden. It is wonderful how well these choirs sing, being composed merely of shopkeepers and flannel weavers.

Literary associations in the early decades of the 20th century were to be maintained by John Cowper Powys whose *Owen Glendower*, published in 1940, was partly written in the ruins of Valle Crucis. Its early chapters are set in and around Dinas Brân, which is seen through the eyes of Powys's young hero, Master Rhisiart:

There it was! There before him, towering up beneath a great bank of white clouds and against a jagged ridge of bare desolate rock, rose the castle of his imagination.

For some minutes he remained spell-bound, absolutely caught out of himself, lost to everything but that majestic sight. It was not less, *it was more* than the picture he had in mind.

All ramparts ever built, all towers, all fortresses, all castles, seemed to him mere clumsy reproductions of the ideal perfection of Dinas Brân. It wasn't that it was so large—and he could see clearly, even from this distance, that it was in a battered, broken condition—but it took into itself that whole hill it was built upon! Yes, that was the thing. Dinas Brân was not the stones of its human walls, not the majestic outlines of its towering embattlements, not its soaring arches and turrets and bastions; it was an impregnable mountain called up out of that deep valley by some supernatural mandate. Its foundations were sunk in the earth, but they were sunk in more than the earth; they were sunk in that mysterious underworld of beyond-reality whence rise the eternal archetypes of all the refuges and all the sanctuaries of the spirit, untouched by time, inviolable ramparts not built by hands!

The historic landscape area was to become only marginally affected by the Second World War. Various firms were relocated to Llangollen during the war, occupying a number of former mill buildings. Llantysilio Hall became temporarily occupied by a school evacuated from Shropshire and Bryntysilio was occupied by the military. A new minor road was constructed across Ruabon Mountain from Minera to World's End to improve access, and a pillbox was built for the Home Guard on the Horseshoe Pass. Practically the only active involvement in hostilities came during 1941 when extensive areas of the heather moorland on Ruabon Mountain were set ablaze by enemy bombers and parts of Plas Uchaf were damaged by an incendiary bomb.

The period since the Second World War brought a number of changes which are marked in the physical environment. Llangollen is now widely known for the International Music Festival established in 1947, promoting international peace and today playing host to more than six thousand competitors from over fifty countries taking part in competitions for choirs and dance groups. The festival was first held on the Recreation Ground above the town but subsequently moved to its present permanent site on land formerly belonging to Penddol Farm, and now equipped with new permanent structures. Dylan Thomas described in a radio talk broadcast in 1953, subsequently published in his *Quite Early One Morning* (1954), the impact of the festival on the town in its early years, describing the way in which it 'spills colourfully, multilingually and confraternally into the streets of Llangollen and the surrounding countryside'.

The growth of private cars and the closure of the railway line in the 1960s, apart from the stretch now run privately running eastwards for a distance from Llangollen, resulted in an increase in the proportion of day visitors which led to a decline in the trade for boarding houses (many of which were converted to private residences). This in turn gave rise to pressures for the creation of car-parks in the town, including one which now occupies the former livestock market in the centre of the town.

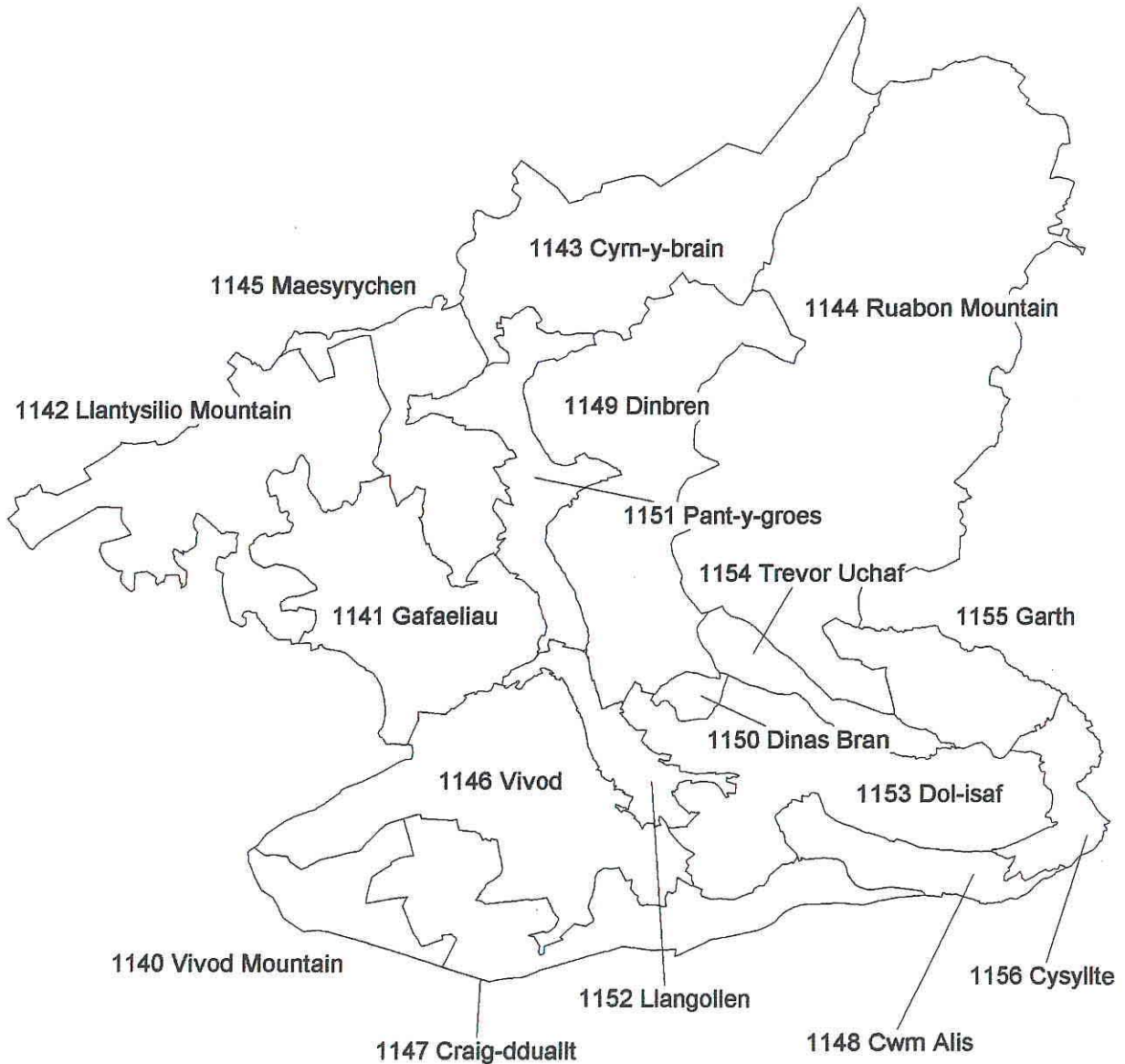
Historic landscape character areas in the Vale of Llangollen

Map 5

Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg

historic landscape character areas

1km²



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Vivod Mountain* Llangollen Community, Denbighshire (HLCA 1140)

Former 19th-century conifer woodland south of Vivod now forming heather moorland managed for game shooting.

Historic background

Early activity is represented by two Bronze Age burial mounds, one sited on a hilltop and one on the crest of a hill, which may indicate clearance for grazing domestic animals in the early prehistoric period. By the 7th or 8th century the area fell within the Welsh kingdom of Powys, and from the late 12th century within the subdivided northern portion of the kingdom, known as Powys Fadog. Following the Edwardian conquest of Wales in the late 13th century the area to the south of the Dee fell within the newly-created marcher lordship of Chirkland. Following the Act of Union in 1536 it formed part of the newly created county of Denbighshire.

Key historic landscape characteristics

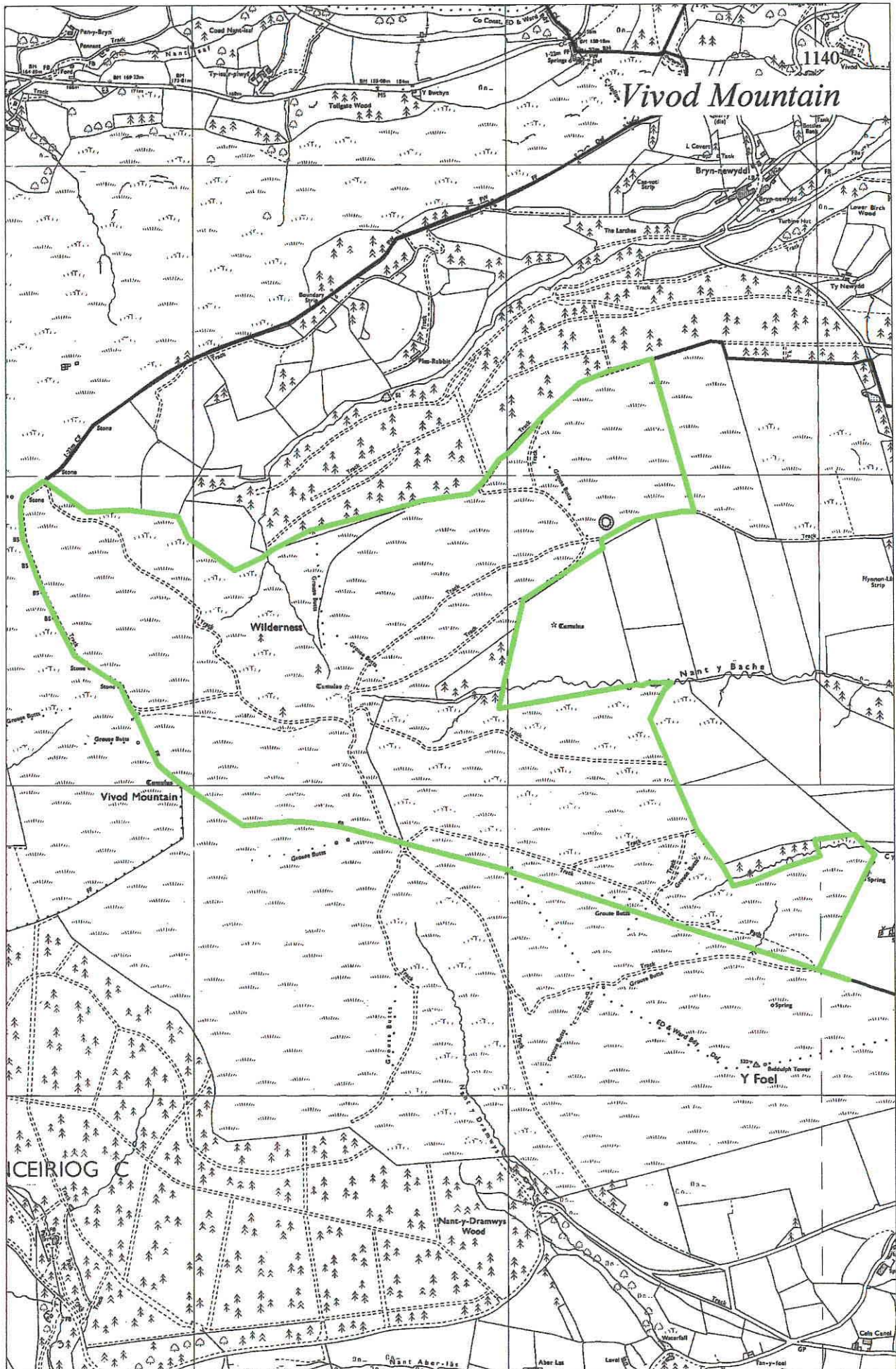
Gently undulating land between a height of 390–500 metres south of Vivod, the moorland edge being defined by drystone walls in places. Much of the area formed a conifer plantation felled during the first half of the 20th century which has now reverted to heather moorland, the pattern of trackways in the area reflecting earlier rides within the woodland. Lines of shooting butts relate to the modern management of much of the area for game shooting which has been carried out since the 1950s.

Sources

CPAT Historic Environment Record; Davies 1929

Key historic landscape management issues

- *Conservation and management of Bronze Age burial mounds.*
- *Conservation of peat deposits which are of potential palaeoenvironmental significance.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Gafaeliau* Llantysilio and Llangollen Communities, Denbighshire (HLCA 1141)

Isolated tract of the Dee valley west of Llangollen, with lowland and upland margin farms and fieldscapes of medieval and later origin; Victorian country houses, parkland and gardens, estate farms and cottages; small nucleated settlements partly associated with former slate mining.

Historic background

Early, prehistoric settlement is suggested by the discovery of a small late Bronze Age hoard of socketed bronze axes and a leaf-shaped spearhead found in Llantysilio parish though there is little clear evidence of settlement and land use before the medieval period. By the 7th or 8th century the area fell within the Welsh kingdom of Powys, and from the late 12th century within the subdivided northern portion of the kingdom, known as Powys Fadog. Llantysilio Church had been founded by at least the 12th century probably serving a dispersed rural community in the area. Following the Edwardian conquest of Wales in the late 13th century the area to the south of the Dee fell within two newly-created marcher lordships — that of Chirkland to the south of the Dee and that of Bromfield and Yale to the north of the river. Being isolated from the remainder of the lordships it appears that a number of small freehold farms had come into existence by the early 14th century and probably much earlier, whose economy is known to have included the rearing of lambs, pigs, oats and nut-gathering. The 17th and 18th centuries saw the emergence of estate farming, principally that of the Llantysilio estate which began to be dispersed following the Second World War.

Key historic landscape characteristics

The area forms a distinctive tract of the Dee valley to the west of Llangollen which because of a distinctive loop in the river is isolated from the major east-west lines of communication. The valley bottom is generally between 130–150 metres above sea level, but the area has also been drawn to include a number of hill farms on the southern margins of Llantysilio Mountain and the small upland area in the loop of the river which rise to a height of over 300 metres.

Predominant modern land use is pasture with 20th-century conifer plantations and some ancient remnant broadleaved woodland on steeper ground and around the upland margins and several small discrete areas of unenclosed upland. Fieldscapes are dominated by small irregular fields with some large irregular fields and a small area of possible reorganised medieval strip fields to the south of Llandynan. Field boundaries on lower-lying ground predominantly multi-species hedges, some now outgrown, with post-and-wire fences around the upland margins.

Several contrasting settlement patterns are evident within the area. Around the margins of the upland on either side of the valley is a landscape of dispersed farms probably of medieval and late medieval origin. Much of the lower-lying ground in the Dee valley and the relict meander of the Dee to the eastern side of the character area is occupied by the estate farm and farmland of Llantysilio Farm and associated farm workers' cottages and the smaller Plas Berwyn estate, Rhysgog, with its late Georgian house of 1836 and associated coach-house and stables. The area includes several small hamlets. The origin of Llandynan is obscure, but was in existence by the 14th century and judging by place-name evidence may have originated as a church settlement. Both Llandynan and Rhewl appear to have benefited from lying on an 18th and earlier 19th-century drovers' road

across Llantysilio Mountain via Cymmo, with facilities said to have been provided at the Sun Inn at Rhewl and Ty-isaf farm, Llandynan. The settlements, each with a nonconformist chapel, also provided accommodation for quarrymen working at the Berwyn slate quarries in the later 19th and earlier 20th centuries about half a kilometre to the north. Llidiart Annie is one of the few rural local authority housing schemes in the area, built in about the mid 20th century in a cottage style next to the school built in 1858 for the education of workers' children in Llantysilio parish.

The southern part of the area along the Dee is characterised by a picturesque landscape encompassing Llantysilio Hall, Llantysilio Church, Bryntysilio, and the Horseshoe Falls. Llantysilio Hall is a substantial stone-built country house of the 1870s in Victorian Jacobean style; stables, yard and coach house with an early 18th-century walled garden and avenue of 18th and later 19th century and two-storey lodge. The present house replaced an early Georgian brick-built hall which in turn had probably replaced a much earlier farmhouse.

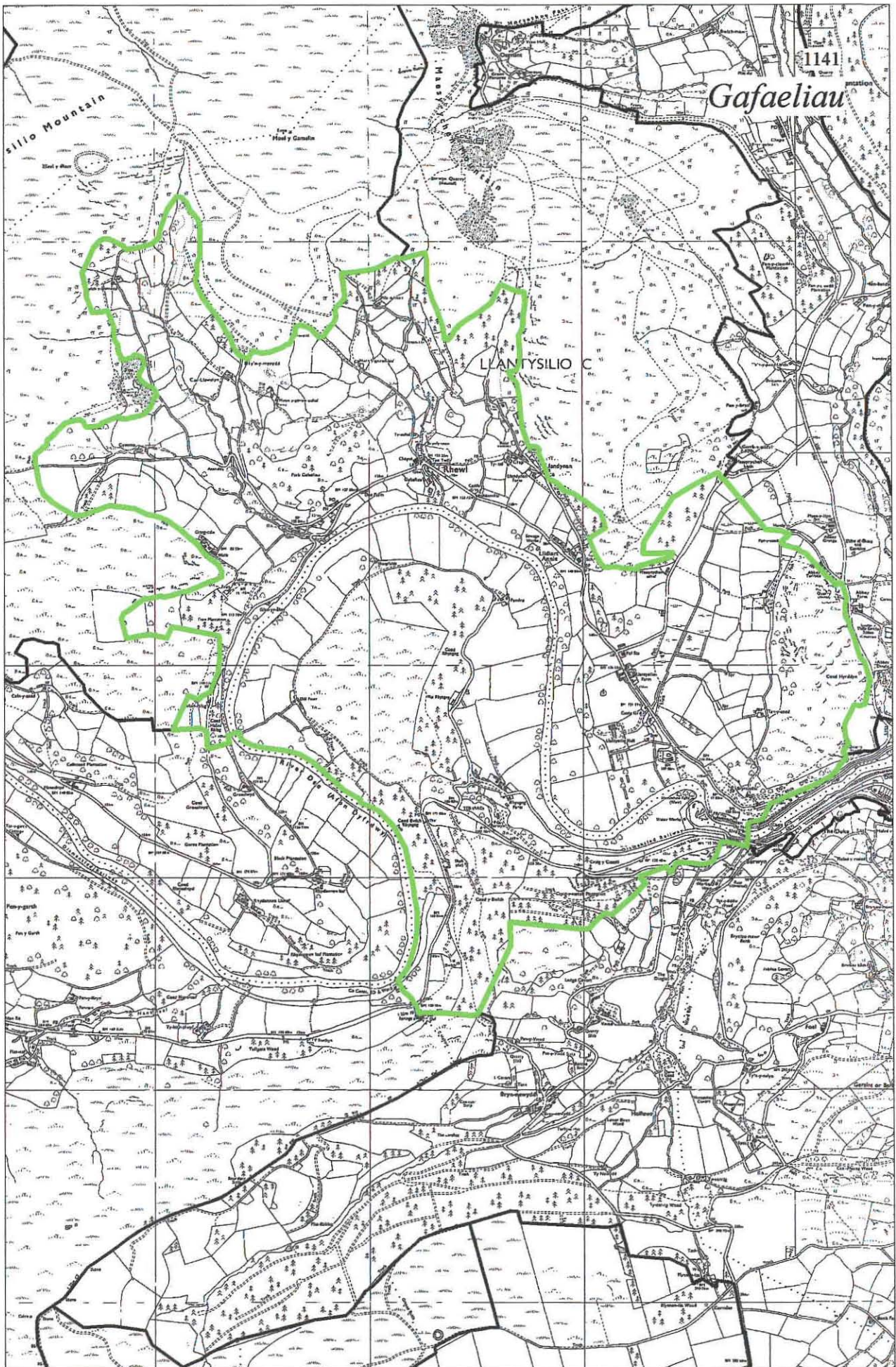
The substantial stuccoed Italianate Bryntysilio house and its gardens were established in the 1860s and 70s overlooking the Horseshoe Falls, built by Thomas Telford across the Dee to supply water to the canal at Llangollen in the early years of the 19th century.

Sources

Cadw 1995; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Cadw Listed Building Lists; Coulter 1986; Davies 1929; Ellis 1924; Hubbard 1986; Lloyd-Williams and Underwood; Quartermaine *et al.* 2003; Radford and Hemp 1959; Sivewright 1986; Silvester 1995; Silvester 1999; Wheeler 1923; Wheeler 1925; Sherrat 2000; Thomas 1908-13.

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Preservation of traces of early settlement evidence in the vicinity of Llantysilio church.*
- *Preservation and management of historic buildings within the character area including vernacular farmhouses and farm buildings and later country houses and associated buildings.*
- *Conservation of the registered garden, parkland, avenues and picturesque landscape features at Bryntysilio and Llantysilio Hall and landscape setting of Llantysilio Hall and the Horseshoe Falls.*
- *Management and conservation of original features associated with Telford's early 19th-century Holyhead Road including roadside walling and revetted embankments.*
- *Management and conservation of structures associated with the canal feeder below the Horseshoe Falls.*
- *Preservation of structures associated with railway still operating between Llangollen and Carrog, including tunnel and associated features.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Llantysilio Mountain* Bryneglwys, Corwen and Llantysilio Communities, Denbighshire (HLCA 1142)

Extensive, uninhabited upland moorland ridge mostly forming unenclosed common land, with prehistoric ridge-top hillfort and burial mounds, formerly partly managed as a grouse moor.

Historic background

In the earlier medieval period the area fell within the kingdom of Powys and from the late 12th century within the subdivided northern portion of the kingdom known as Powys Fadog. Following the Edwardian conquest of Wales in the late 13th century the area fell within the marcher lordship of Bromfield and Yale. Following the Act of Union in 1536 it fell within the hundred of Yale in the newly created county of Denbighshire.

Key historic landscape characteristics

Extensive upland heath with heather, gorse, bilberry, bracken and rushes, with some areas of improved pasture. The area lies between a height of 300–580 metres above sea level, with an underlying geology of Silurian shales, forming a long ridge running in a north-easterly to south-westerly direction.

The early environmental history of the area since the last glaciation has been little studied but some indication of early prehistoric activity is indicated by the chance discovery of a stone axe from near Moel y Gaer hillfort and by Bronze Age hilltop burial monuments on Moel y Gamelin and Gribin Oernant. These monuments, together with the probably Iron Age hillfort at Moel y Gaer are probably to be associated with the early exploitation of upland pastures for grazing.

The former management of parts of the area as a grouse moor is indicated by dispersed shooting butts. Today, the area is mostly unenclosed common land, formerly managed for sheep grazing and as a grouse moor. The area has a number of modern recreational uses including hill walking and illegal motorbike scrambling.

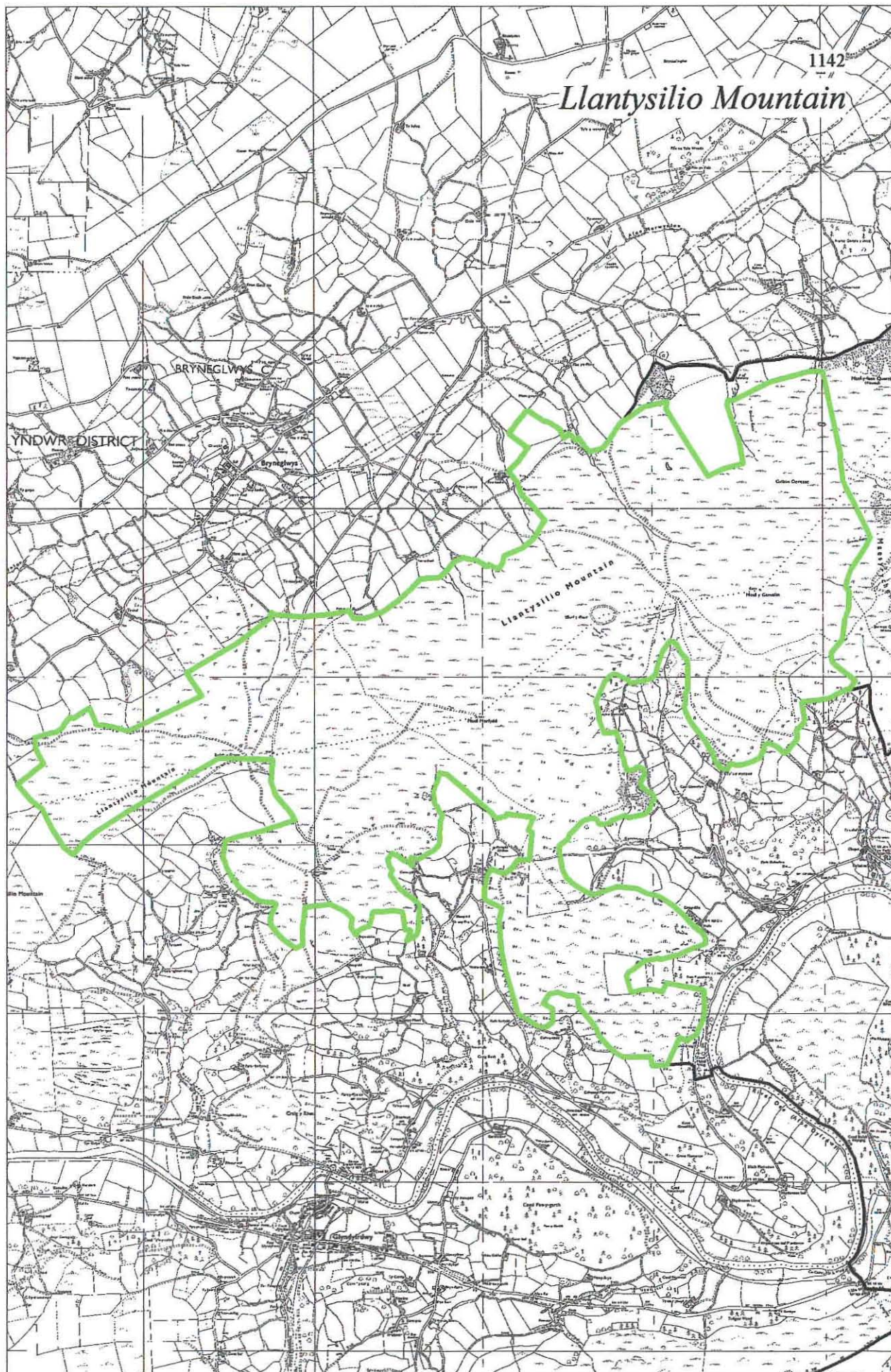
The area includes a number of small stone quarries, probably for building materials in the post-medieval period.

Sources

Burnham 1995; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Davies 1929; Denbighshire Countryside Service 2003b; Ellis 1924; Jones 1999; Hogg 1979; Richards 1969

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *waterlogged areas of potential palaeoenvironmental significance*
- *damage to ridge-top prehistoric earthwork monuments caused by motorbike scrambling*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Cyrn-y-brain*

Llandegla, Llantysilio Communities, Denbighshire, and Minera Community, Wrexham (HLCA 1143)

Uninhabited upland moorland ridge mostly forming unenclosed common land, with prehistoric burial mounds, formerly partly managed as a grouse moor.

Historic background

In the earlier medieval period the area fell within the kingdom of Powys and from the late 12th century within the subdivided northern portion of the kingdom known as Powys Fadog. Following the Edwardian conquest of Wales in the late 13th century the area fell within the marcher lordship of Bromfield and Yale. Following the Act of Union in 1536 it fell within the hundred of Yale in the newly created county of Denbighshire.

Key historic landscape characteristics

Extensive upland heath with heather, gorse, bilberry, bracken and rushes, with some areas of improved pasture. The area lies between a height of about 350–560 metres above sea level with an underlying geology of Silurian and Ordovician shales, forming part of an upland ridge continuous with the Llantysilio Mountain and Maesyrychen character areas.

The early environmental history of the area since the last glaciation has been little studied but some indication of early prehistoric activity is indicated by a group of Bronze Age hilltop burial monuments on the peaks of Cyrn-y-brain and isolated mounds on the eastern slopes of the mountain overlooking Nant Craig y Moch and Aber Sychnant. These monuments are probably to be associated with the early exploitation of upland pastures for grazing. On the eastern slopes of the upland near a tributary stream of the Eglwyseg are the remains of a possible medieval or late medieval *hafod* or 'summer house' which seems to indicate the exploitation of upland summer pastures at a later period. Significantly, a deserted house nearby on the boundary with the lower unenclosed land has the name Cae'r-hafod. The later management of sheep grazing is represented by a nearby cruciform sheep shelter and by stone sheepfold near the summit of Cyrn-y-brain, which are most probably of later medieval or post-medieval date.

The former management of parts of the area as a grouse moor is indicated by groups of shooting butts on the eastern flanks of Cyrn-y-brain. Today, the area is mostly unenclosed common land, formerly managed for sheep grazing and as a grouse moor. The area has a number of modern recreational uses including hill walking. There are three telecommunications masts on the summit of Cyrn-y-brain which form a distinctive landmark for many miles around. The remains of a wartime radar mast can be seen lower down the hill

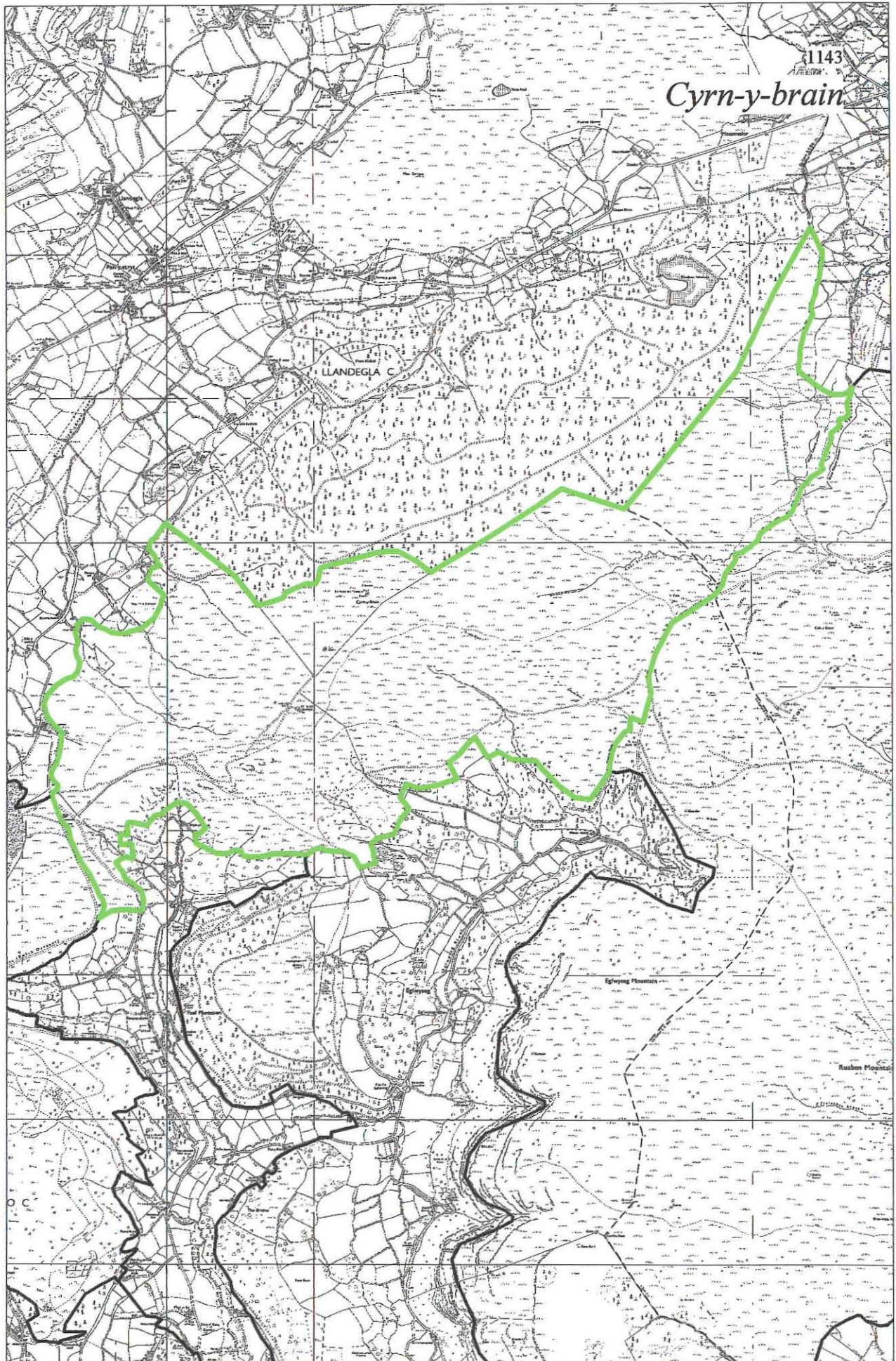
Several of small stone quarries fall within the area were probably for building materials in the post-medieval period.

Sources

Burnham 1995; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Davies 1929; Denbighshire Countryside Service 2003b; Ellis 1924; Jones 1999; Llandegla MAG 2003; Richards 1969; Silvester and Hankinson 1995

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Conservation of waterlogged areas which are of potential palaeoenvironmental significance.*
- *Conservation and management of prehistoric burial mounds, some of which have suffered from later disturbance including visitor erosion.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Ruabon Mountain*

Llangollen and Llantysilio Communities, Denbighshire, and Esclusham, Minera and Penycae Communities, Wrexham
(HLCA 1144)

Extensive, uninhabited upland moorland plateau mostly forming unenclosed common land, managed as a grouse moor, with clustered and more isolated Bronze Age burial and ritual monuments and the remains of metal mining and prospecting in the 19th century.

Historic background

In the earlier medieval period the area fell within the kingdom of Powys and from the late 12th century within the subdivided northern portion of the kingdom known as Powys Fadog. Following the conquest of Wales in the late 13th century the area fell within the marcher lordship of Bromfield and Yale. Following the Act of Union in 1536 it fell within the hundred of Yale in the newly created county of Denbighshire.

Key historic landscape characteristics

Extensive and remote moorland, mostly peaty and heather-covered between a height of about 250–500 metres above sea level, ending abruptly with the limestone escarpment of Creigiau Eglwyseg to the south-west and south, steeply dropping to the valley of the Aber Sychnant to the north and sloping more gently towards Wrexham to the east. Some areas of enclosed improved pasture on the south side of the moor. The underlying geology is composed of a bed of Millstone grit overlying Carboniferous limestone. Large areas are still managed as a grouse moor, the predominant modern land use being summer grazing for sheep.

Early activity in the area is represented by numerous Bronze Age burial mounds which are scattered across the moor in ridge top or on hill scarps and often visible from some distance away. Some are simple cairns of stone, occasionally with a stone kerb. Others take the form of a stone ring-bank or stone circle. The monuments appear singly or in small clusters and are likely to have performed various roles in the the developing landscape of the fourth to second millennia BC, between about 3500 and 1500 BC. Clusters of monuments may represent ceremonial foci within this landscape and may define the activities of different family or tribal groupings. There is no associated settlement evidence of this period and it seems likely that the monuments are to be associated in some way with the exploitation of upland summer grazing.

A small number of abandoned house platforms and ruined buildings are to be seen around the margins of the moor, of which some may represent seasonally occupied *hafodydd* or ‘summer houses’ associated with the exploitation of upland pastures in the the medieval period, though a number may represent later squatters’ cottages of the 18th and 19th centuries. A relatively small number of drystone sheepfolds are to be seen, probably again of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Several small limekilns are present near limestone outcrops, but more obtrusive are the remains of 19th-century lead, silver and zinc mines, largely of the period between the 1860s and 1890s, particularly on the northern area of the moor and forming part of a more extensive mining landscape which extends northwards towards Minera, including the well-preserved extensive above and below-ground complexes at Park and Pool Park mines and generally more isolated shafts elsewhere, interlinked by a network of trackways and footpaths. Characteristic mining remains include runs of shaft along mineral veins in the sandstone, drainage adits,

heaps of mineral waste, processing areas, and the foundations of tramways and engine houses. Other landscape features include two leat systems which drew water from the Aber Sychnant stream, one supplying the Pool Park and Lower Park just to the north, and the other supplying the Minera mines across the valley, several kilometres further north.

The moorland has been managed for grouse shooting intermittently since the 19th century administered from the Wynnstay estate's Mountain Lodge on the eastern side of the moor. Lines of shooting butts, in the form of scoops in the ground encircled by a horseshoe-shaped bank are to be seen on various parts of the moor. These sometimes occur in small groups but there are a number of much longer lines of butts spaced at intervals of about 50 metres and stretching in some instances for more than a kilometre.

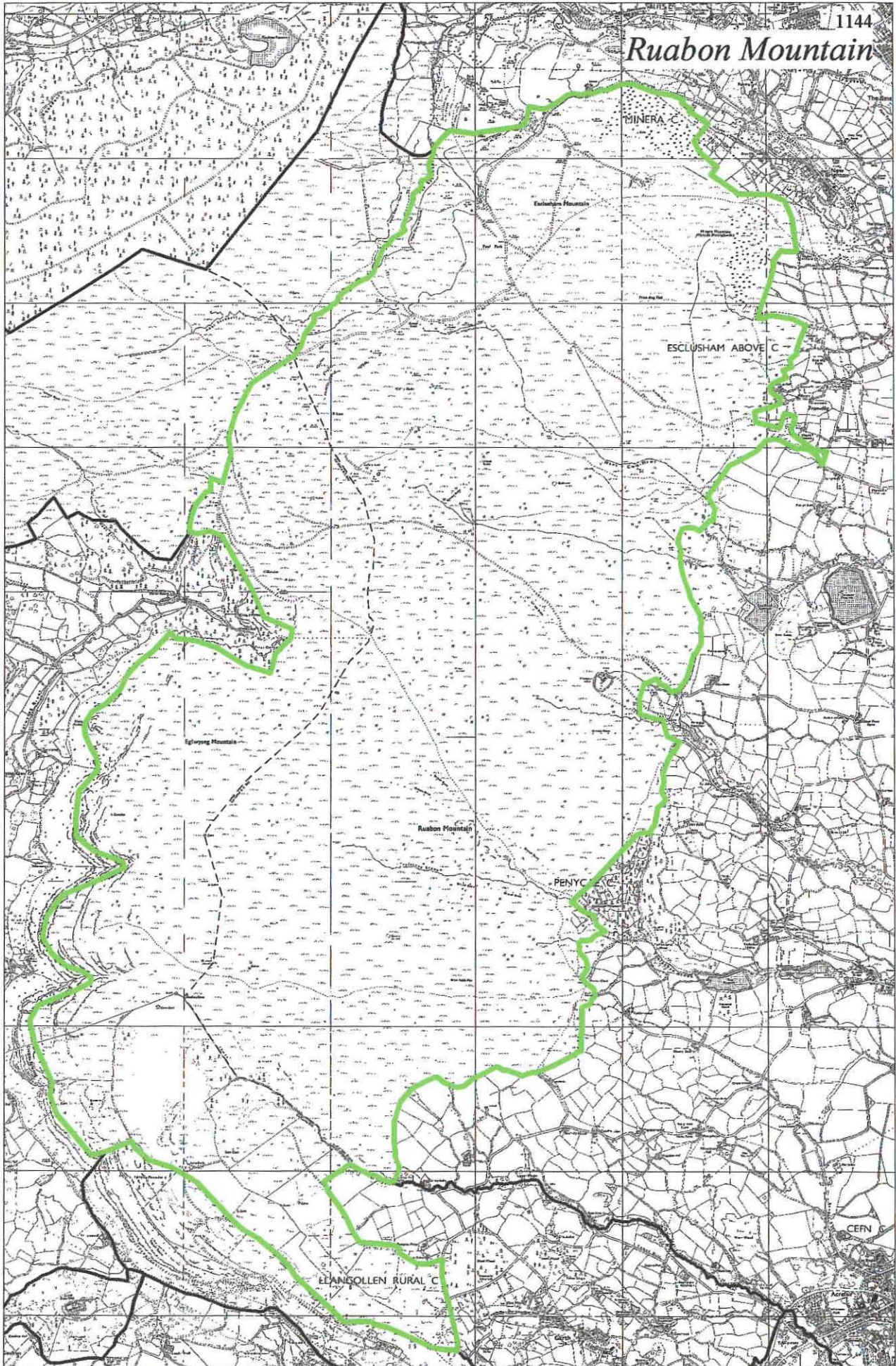
Parts of the moor were mistakenly targeted by enemy incendiary bombs during the Second World War, leaving bomb craters which are still visible in places. Other remains of this period include the mountain-top road between Minera and World's End that was created along the line of earlier trackways, and a brick and concrete observation post on the eastern side of the moor overlooking Wrexham.

Sources

Bennett 1995; Burnham 1995; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Davies 1929; Denbighshire Countryside Service 2003b; Jones 1999; Jones *et al.* 2004; Lynch 1969; Richards 1969; Silvester and Hankinson 1995; Wrexham 2003

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Conservation of peat and other waterlogged deposits which are of potential palaeoenvironmental significance.*
- *Preservation and management of prehistoric burial and funerary monuments.*
- *Preservation and management of 19th-century and earlier metal mining remains including mine shafts, waste heaps, processing areas, foundations of structures, and tramways, trackways and inclines.*
- *Conservation of the physical remains of Second World War activity.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Maesyrychen* Llantysilio Community, Denbighshire (HLCA 1145)

Open moorland with extensive remains of predominantly 19th-century slate quarries, waste heaps, tramways and inclines.

Historic background

Anciently, the area formed part of the early medieval Powys and the subsequent early medieval kingdom of Powys Fadog. Following the Edwardian conquest of the later 13th century it formed part of the marcher lordship of Bromfield and Yale. At the Act of Union in 1536 it formed part of the newly created county of Denbighshire.

Slate quarrying appears to have begun at a number of the quarries on land belonging to the Wynnstay Estate within the character area in the 1690s, one of the earliest written record being by the antiquary Edward Lhwyd who recorded hearing blasting from the Moel y Faen Quarry in 1696. Early quarrying also appears to have been carried out in the immediately adjacent area, lower down the hill on the hillslopes above Pentredwr (in the Pant-y-groes character area). Products from the various quarries included roofing slates and finely finished slabs for a variety of purposes including work-surfaces, hearths, gravestones and billiard tables. These goods were formerly finished on site and transported first by trackway, then by means of the Horseshoe Pass (Bwlch Oernant) and from 1852 by a tramway system linking a number of the quarries. The tramway carried material to the former slate mill and canal wharfs and subsequent railway sidings at Pentrefelin, a total distance of about 7.5 kilometres to the south, by means of horse-drawn wagons and a series of inclines. Large-scale production took place between the mid 19th century and the 1940s. The workforce was principally housed in the farms and villages below the hill-top, at Pentredwr in the Eglwyseg valley to the east, in the area of Rhewl and Llandynan in the Dee valley to the south-west, and in the Alun valley to the north where a complex of quarrymen's cottages were built at Tai-newyddion probably early in the second half of the 19th century.

Key historic landscape characteristics

Predominantly unenclosed heather moorland between a height of about 200–540 metres above sea level, with an underlying solid geology of Silurian shales. The present-day land use is predominantly as unimproved upland pasture and for recreation, though there is some small-scale slate extraction still taking place at the Berwyn quarry.

Former slate quarrying at the Craig y Glan, Moel-y-faen, Oernant, and Clogau (Berwyn) slate quarries has left a landscape visually dominated by extensive heaps of quarry waste and deep and extensive excavations, occasionally filled with water and adits. Ancilliary structures include traces of engine houses and other mill buildings, tramways sometimes still accompanied by slate sleepers, and inclines at the Clogau quarry and just above Maesyrychen. The hill is criss-crossed by numerous tracks and footpaths used by quarrymen on their daily journeys between the quarries.

The eastern boundary of the character area is partly defined by the Horseshoe Pass road, a turnpike road (since improved) built in 1811 to replace the former turnpike road across the hills, which ran along the lower Eglwyseg valley through Pentredwr. The modern road is overlooked by a Second World War concrete pill-box of about 1940.

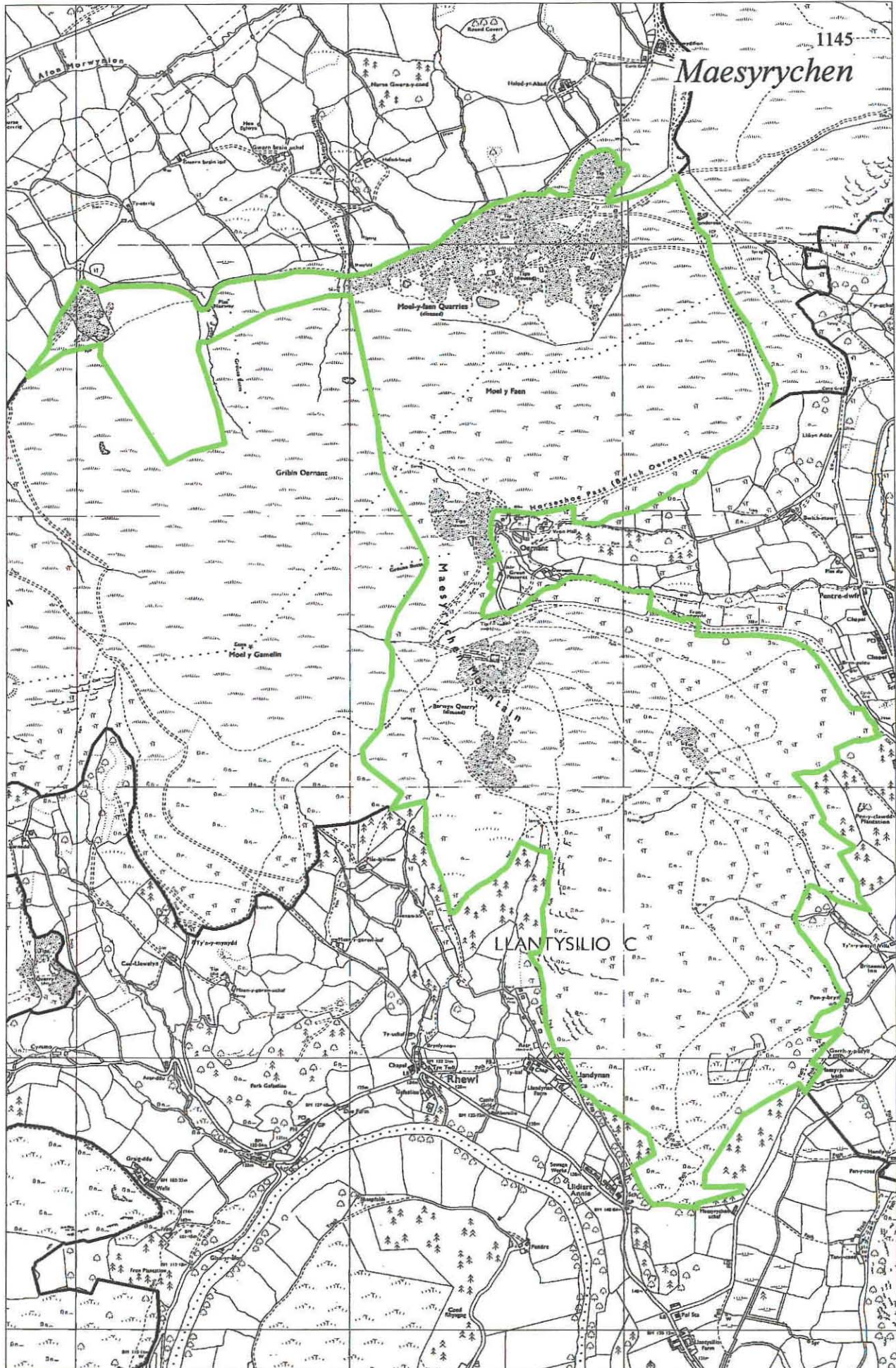
Intense recreational pressures including motor bike scrambling within the area, particularly from the 1980s onwards, has given rise to problems of erosion affecting vegetation, soils and mining remains.

Sources

CPAT Historic Environment Record; Crane 2000; Denbighshire Countryside Service 2003b; Edwards 1985; Lhwyd 1909–11; Llandegla 2003; Martin 1999; Richards 1991; Richards 1995; Silvester and Brassil 1991

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Preservation of slate mines and associated structures including waste heaps, building structures, tramways and inclines, some of which are currently suffering from erosion caused by motorbike scrambling.*
- *Preservation of Second World War concrete pill-box.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Vivod* Llangollen Community, Denbighshire (HLCA 1146)

Irregular fieldscapes and woodland in stream valleys and hillslopes south and west of Llangollen with 19th-century estate, estate farms and cottages.

Historic background

By the 7th or 8th century the area fell within the Welsh kingdom of Powys, and from the late 12th century within the subdivided northern portion of the kingdom, known as Powys Fadog. Following the Edwardian conquest of Wales in the late 13th century the area to the south of the Dee fell within the newly-created marcher lordship of Chirkland. Following the Act of Union in 1536 it formed part of the newly created county of Denbighshire.

Little evidence of early settlement and land use has so far been found within the character area. The western part of the area, together with part of the Craig-dduallt character area, fell within the extent of woodland known as Cwmcathi forest in the 14th century, belonging to the medieval lordship of Chirk. The townships of Vivod and Bache were in existence by at least the 14th century, each comprising a number of *gafaelion* or family holdings which produced wheat and oats amongst other produce. Part of the eastern part of the area appears to have formed part of the medieval monastic grange of Tirabad belonging to the Cistercian monastery of Valle Crucis. Some indication of the nature of earlier settlement and land-use of perhaps the medieval period is suggested by place-name evidence. The element *maid* ('whey') in the name Hafod-y-maidd suggests an origin as a seasonally-occupied upland farm associated with dairying. Unusually, only one farm — Ty'n-y-pistyll — includes the common element *tyddyn* representing upland farms of free tenants. Several isolated houses, such as Ty-cerrig, Ty-uchaf and Ty-isaf have the common element *ty* which often refers to a cottage. In the later 18th and 19th centuries much of the area came to form part of the Vivod estate which remains to the present day.

Key historic landscape characteristics

The area occupies the steeply sloping hills and stream valleys of the Eirianallt, Nant y Bache and Cyflymen to the south and west of Llangollen, mostly between a height of 100–400m above sea level. A patchwork of predominantly small irregular fields on much of the lower lying ground representing gradual woodland clearance and enclosure from at least medieval times. Areas of remnant native broadleaved woodland and scrub vegetation survive on some of the steeper slopes and in stream valleys. Patterns of more regular, straight-sided fields on some of the higher ground within and around the margins of the area probably represent enclosure of fringe areas of upland grazing from about the 17th and 18th centuries onwards. A number of areas of estate conifer plantations were created in the 19th and 20th centuries. Many of the field boundaries on the lower, more anciently enclosed land are marked by multiple-species hedges some mature trees, supplemented in many areas by distinctive forged-iron estate fencing, giving way to single-species hedges, some now overgrown, together with post and wire fences and drystone walls in more marginal upland parts of the area. Modern land use is predominantly for sheep grazing though lynchet formation is widespread and confirms that arable farming was more widely practised in the past.

Settlement is largely represented by dispersed, medium-sized farms, many still belonging to the Vivod estate.

Typical of these is Ty Cerrig, a stone-built farmhouse of the mid 18th century, built up and down the slope and with an attached range on the downhill side. The focus of the Vivod estate is represented by the Victorian house at Plas-yn-Vivod of the 1850s and 60s, built on the site of an 18th-century and probably earlier house, together with its associated gardens and former picturesque walks, lodge, estate workers' cottages and the extensive contemporary stone-built dairy complex and stable and cartshed at the adjacent estate farm of Bryn-Newydd.

Water-power was probably harnessed for grinding corn within the character area from medieval times, being represented by the later Bache and Pengwern mill complexes on the Cyflymen stream just to the south of Llangollen, the Eirianallt stream being harnessed for electrical power by the Vivod estate.

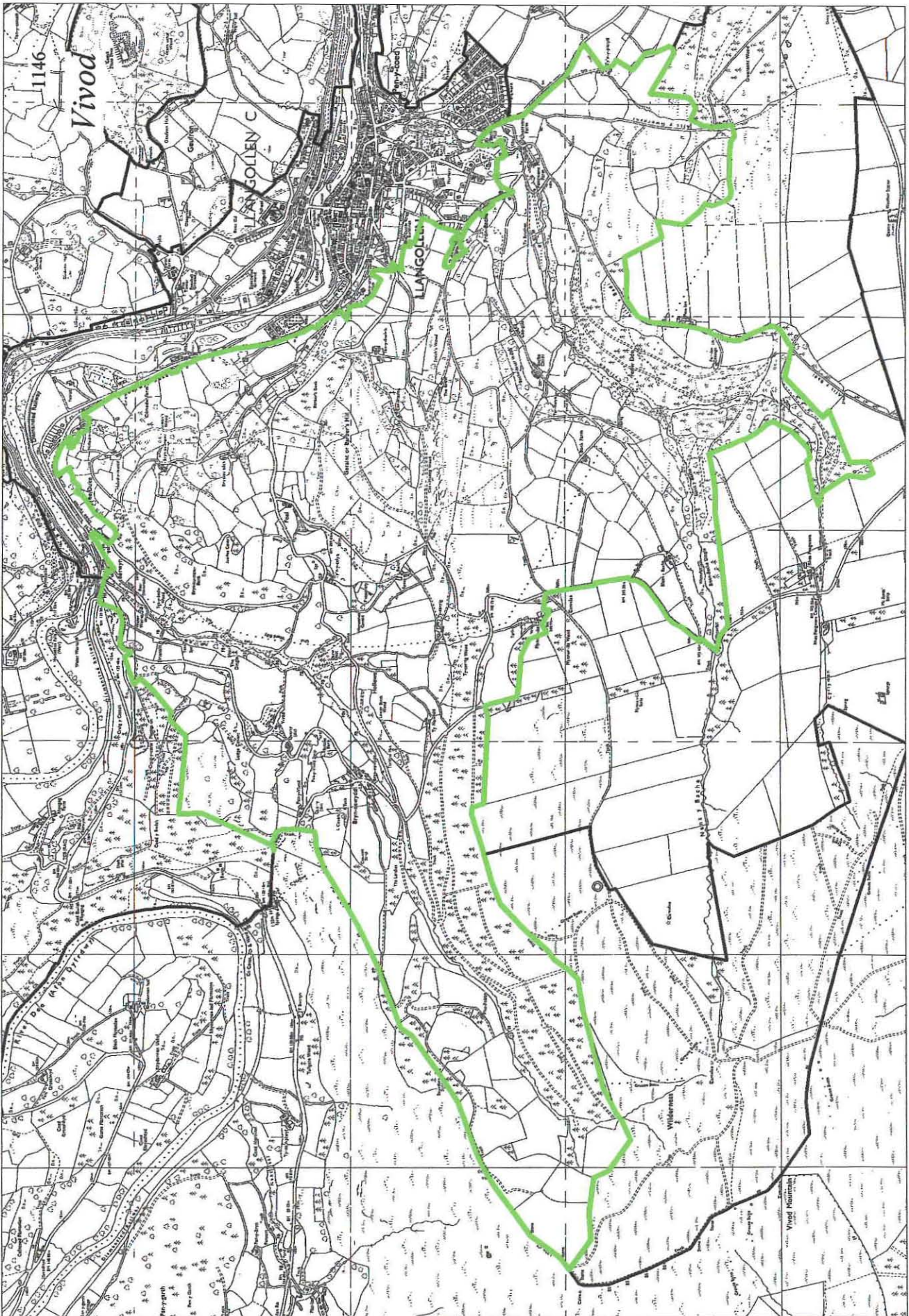
Small stone quarries sprang up generally around the upland fringes of the area probably from the later medieval period onwards, principally for house and wall building.

Sources

Cadw Listed Building Lists; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Frost 1995; Hubbard 1986; Williams 1990; Jones 1932

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Conservation and management of traditional field boundaries, including hedges and drystone walls.*
- *Conservation of vernacular farm buildings and farmhouses of historic interest.*
- *Preservation of the sites of former water mills, mill leats and millponds.*
- *Conservation and management of Plas-yn-Vivod and its associated gardens, lodge, ancillary buildings and their setting and associated features characteristic of 19th and early 20th-century estate management, including widespread roadside iron estate railings.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Craig-dduallt* Llangollen Community, Denbighshire (HLCA 1147)

19th-century enclosed upland and woodland bordering southern side of the Vale of Llangollen with evidence of early prehistoric activity.

Historic background

Early activity is indicated by a single flint arrowhead found near Blaenau Uchaf and two isolated Bronze Age burial mounds on land between 390–430 above sea level in the western part of the area near Ffynnon-las and Blaen Nant, which might indicate hunting and clearance for grazing domestic animals in the early prehistoric period. The western part of the area, together with part of the Vivod character area, fell within the extent of woodland known as Cwmcathi Forest in the 14th century, belonging to the medieval lordship of Chirk. Small-scale lead and barytes mining was carried out in the early 20th century at a mine site on the northern margins of the area, near Ty'n y Celyn.

Key historic landscape characteristics

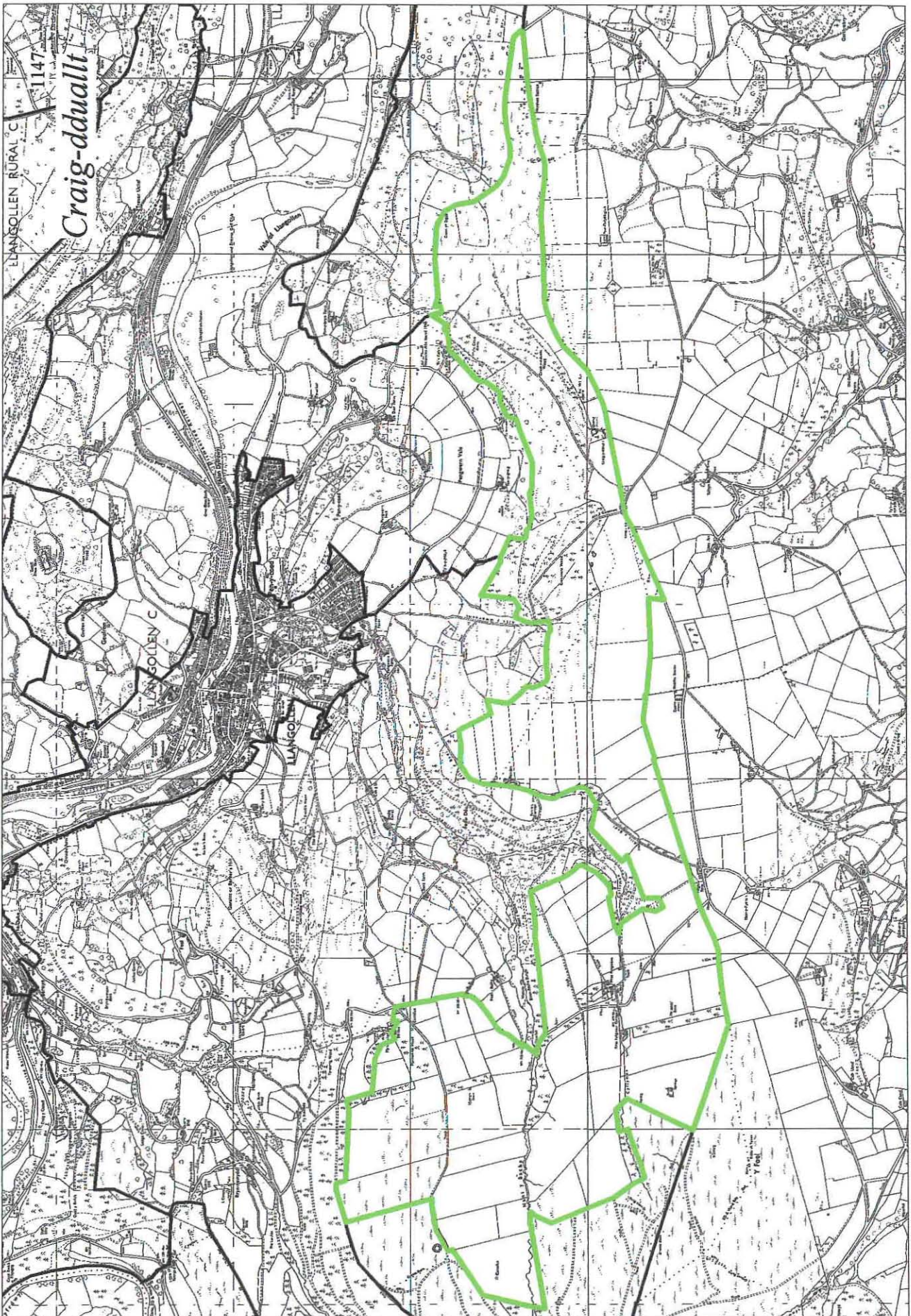
Steeply-sloping and more gently sloping hilltop of the uplands bordering the southern side of the Vale of Llangollen at a height of between about 200–450m above sea level, with improved and enclosed upland pasture, with large and small straight-sided pasture fields representing 19th-century enclosure of hill land. Field boundaries are mostly single-species hawthorn hedges, some now overgrown, and post and wire fences. There are occasional drystone walls and stone-revetted field banks, probably of 19th-century date, some of which are in a dilapidated condition. Scattered large glacial erratic boulders on field margins. Blocks of mixed woodland and 20th-century conifer plantation and strips on some of the steeper slopes or higher ground. Small discrete waterlogged boggy areas. Only a small number of farmhouses and cottages fall within the area, which are largely of 19th-century origin. A number of small stone quarries of probably post-medieval date, for building and wall construction, are scattered throughout the area.

Sources

Archer 1959; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Davies 1929; Pratt 1990; RCAHMW 1914

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Conservation of waterlogged areas which are of potential palaeoenvironmental significance.*
- *Conservation and management of prehistoric burial monuments.*
- *Conservation and management of traditional field boundaries, especially drystone walls and stone revetted banks.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Cwm Alis*

Llangollen Community, Denbighshire, and Llangollen Rural Community, Wrexham (HLCA 1148)

Broadleaved woodland, scrub and patches of small irregular fields on steep-sided valley slopes on the southern side of the Vale of Llangollen.

Historic background

Little is known of the early history and settlement of the area. Before the Edwardian conquest in the late 13th century it fell within the early medieval kingdom of Powys and latterly within the northern portion of the kingdom known as Powys Fadog. Following the Edwardian conquest in the later 13th century it fell within the marcher lordship of Chirkland. Following the Act of Union in 1536 it formed part of the newly created county of Denbighshire.

Key historic landscape characteristics

Steeply-sloping land on the valley slopes on the southern side of the Vale of Llangollen, between about 100–360m above sea level, occupied by broadleaved woodland and scrub interspersed with small irregular fields predominantly for grazing on flatter ground representing piecemeal woodland clearance and enclosure probably from at least medieval times onwards. A variety of field boundary types are represented, including multi-species hedges, earth and stone banks, and some roadside drystone walls, some replaced by modern post and wire fences. Occasional large glacial erratic boulders on field margins.

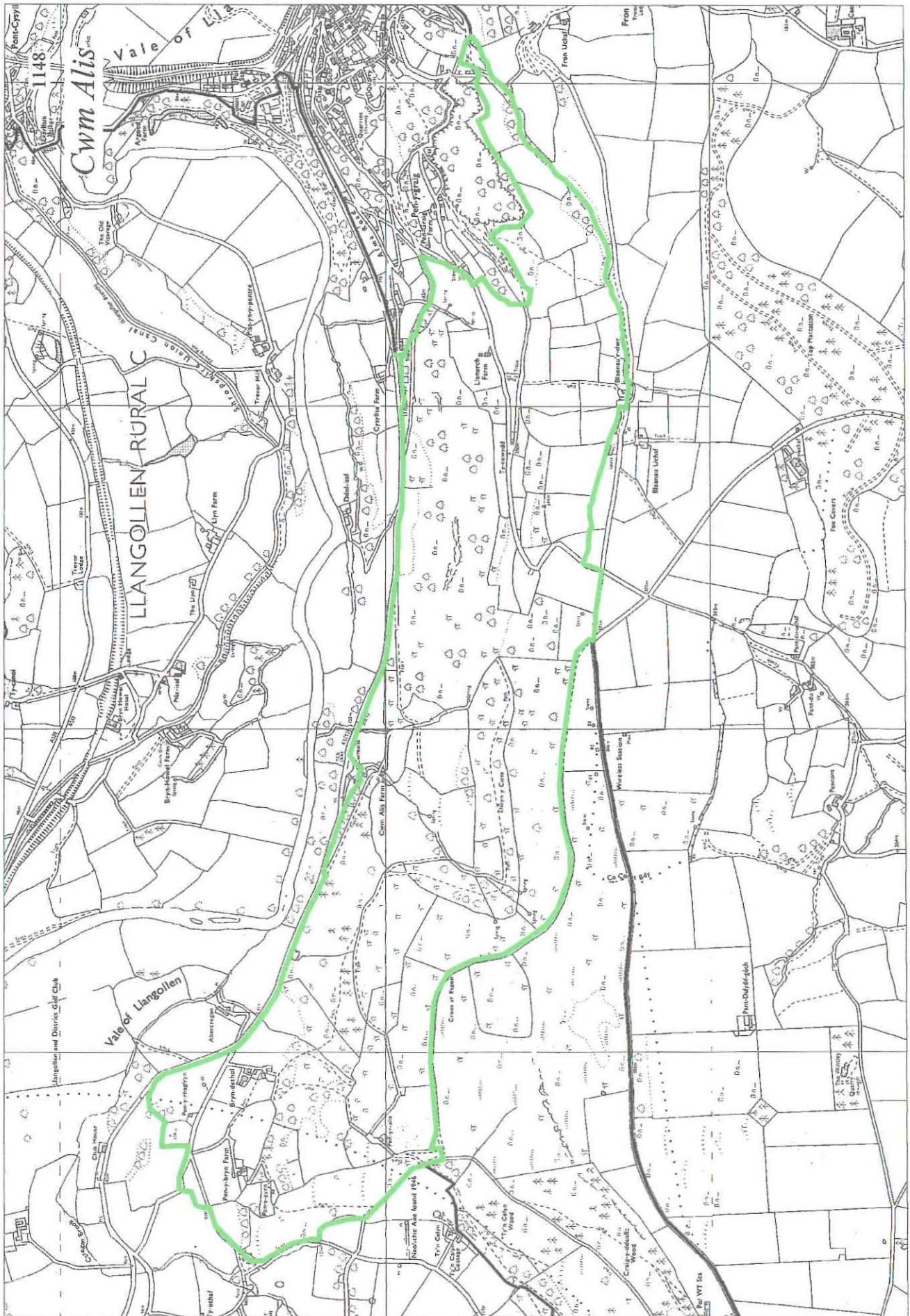
Present-day settlement is characterised by a pattern of dispersed farms and cottages. Early building traditions in the area are evident at Bryn-dethol, a former farmhouse which originated as a late medieval cruck-built building, with 18th-century and later alterations.

Sources

Cadw Listed Building Lists; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Jones 1932; Suggett 2001

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Conservation and management of vernacular farmhouses and farm buildings.*
- *Conservation and management of traditional field boundaries, including hedges and drystone walls.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Dinbren*

Llangollen Community, Denbighshire, and Llangollen Rural Community, Wrexham (HLCA 1149)

Relatively remote area of dispersed farms and woodland bordering Eglwyseg Mountain with traces of quarrying and mining in the later 19th and early 20th centuries.

Historic background

Early land use and possibly woodland clearance is suggested by the discovery of a Late Bronze Age socketed axe on Fron Fawr. The area formed part of the early medieval kingdom of Powys and from later 12th century it constituted part of the separate northern portion of the kingdom known as Powys Fadog. Following the Edwardian conquest in the late 13th century it formed part of the marcher lordship of Chirkland. Little is known of the history of land use and settlement in the later prehistoric and early historic periods, though it is evident from the *Extent of Chirkland* that by the later 14th century the area was being farmed by a number of family groups. Agricultural produce at this period including the rearing of pigs, sheep and goats, and the growing of oats, farmers also no doubt exploiting the upland summer pastures of Eglwyseg Mountain as well as the lower-lying and more sheltered winter grazing within the valleys. The area continued to be relatively remote and largely farmed by freehold farmers despite the growth of estate farming in neighbouring areas in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Eglwyseg valley being described by Thomas Pennant in *A Tour in Wales*, published in 1783, as being 'adapted only for the travel of the horsemen' and 'chiefly inhabited (happily) by an independent race of warm and wealthy yeomanry, undevoured as yet by the great men of the country'. A medieval church in Eglwyseg is marked on the 16th- to 17th-century maps of Saxton and Speed but this evidently disappeared by 1808. The school church of St Mary's, Eglwyseg, was opened in 1871 and has now converted to a dwelling. A Calvinistic Methodist chapel also existed to the north of Plas yn Eglwyseg in the 1870s, now lies in ruins.

Key historic landscape characteristics

Higher ground, between about 100–470m above sea level, above the valley floor and bordering the upper reaches of the Eglwyseg river including the distinctive smaller rounded hills of Fron-fawr and Foel Eglwyseg, visually dominated by the limestone escarpment of Creigiau Eglwyseg. The underlying solid geology is largely composed of Silurian shales. Predominantly small irregular fieldscapes with some large irregular fields representing piecemeal woodland clearance and enclosure probably from at least early medieval times onwards. Sinuous broadleaved woodland, including some ancient broadleaved woodland, on some of the steeper valley slopes with modern conifer woodland around the lower slopes of Foel Eglwyseg, planted in the second half of the 20th century. Most of the enclosed farmland is used for pasture today though it is evident from the presence of field lynchets and traces of ridge and furrow that arable cultivation was more widespread in the past. There are also relatively extensive areas of unenclosed rough pasture on the summit of Foel Eglwyseg and on the western flanks of Fron-fawr. Field boundaries are predominantly represented by multi-species hedges, often with a high proportion of mature trees, but there are also a number of areas with drystone walls.

Narrow twisting lanes give access to the dispersed farms and houses within the area. Several small 18th-century stone bridges survive across the Eglwyseg streams such as that near Plas yn Eglwyseg. There were many fords across the streams until the early 20th century when a number were culverted below the road. A number of the farmhouses are evidently of 15th to earlier 17th century in origin, Ty-brith being in origin an

open hall house with raised crucks on stone rubble walls and Dinbren Isaf being a timber-framed farmhouse (associated with a former cruck-built farmbuilding) later encased in stone, superseded by an early 19th-century farmhouse. Later stone or stone and timber farmhouses such as Ty-canol and Plas Uchaf are of later 17th- and 18th-century form though probably occupy earlier sites. Likewise, Plas yn Eglwys farmhouse was newly built in the 19th century but is associated with earlier farm buildings.

Dinbren Hall is the sole representative of a gentry house within the character area, once the centre of a small estate. Picturesquely sited in view of Creigiau Eglwyseg and Castell Dinas Brân it was again built on the site of an earlier house, extended in the 1790s and formerly had pleasure grounds and tree-lined avenues.

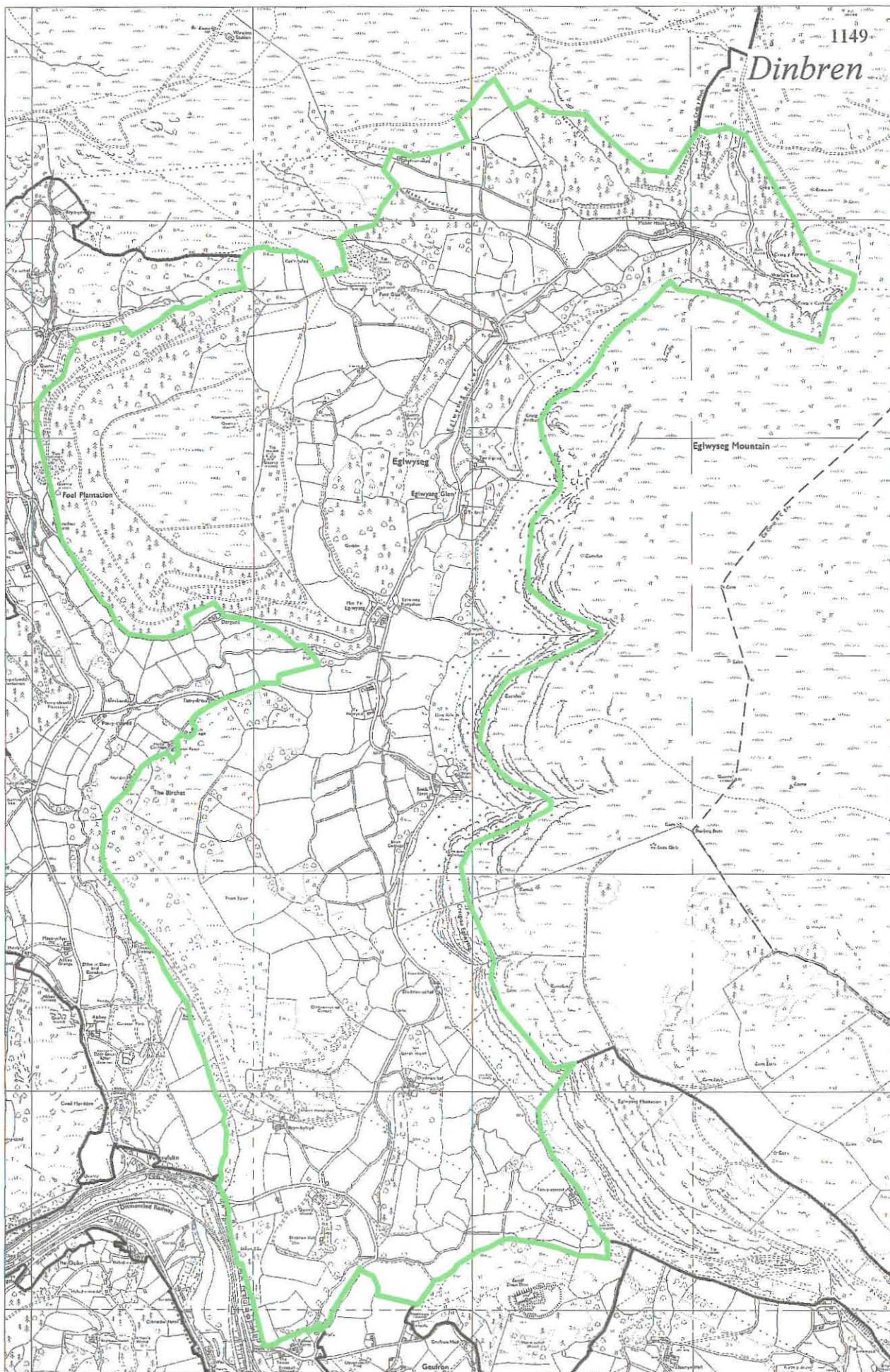
A number of discrete areas of former industry and processing survive within the area, mostly dating from the later 18th and 19th centuries. Water power was harnessed to operate a flour mill on the Eglwyseg river at the Mill in the 1870s. The remains of former small surface and subsurface hillside slate workings are to be seen at Pant Glas and Aber-gwern the latter now partly in conifer woodland. Traces of processing buildings survive at both quarries, the former slate mill at Pant Glas now having an alternative use. Both quarries were in operation in the 1870, Aber-gwern having closed by the end of the 19th century and Pant Glas by about 1920. Smaller stone quarries for building materials, dating from perhaps the 18th and earlier 19th centuries, are to be found elsewhere in the area. Several small limekilns again probably of later 18th- or early 19th-century date lie just below the limestone escarpment of Creigiau Eglwyseg and at World's End, where there are also traces of a short-lived lead and silver mine in operation between the 1860s and 1880s.

Sources

Bradley 1898; Cadw Listed Building Lists; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Denbighshire County Council 2003; Edwards 1993; Hubbard 1986; Jones 1932; Pennant 1773; RCAM 1914; Richards 1991; Sherratt 2000; Smith 1988; Stephens 1986; Thomas 1908-13

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Conservation and management of traditional field boundaries including multi-species hedges and drystone walls.*
- *Preservation of former industrial remains including slate processing works and inclines, limekilns, buildings and structures relating to water mills.*
- *Conservation and management of early road stone bridges.*
- *Conservation and management of vernacular farmhouses and farm buildings.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Dinas Brân*

Llangollen Community, Denbighshire
(HLCA 1150)

Steep, conical hill with gaunt, picturesque ruins of medieval castle inside prehistoric hillfort defences, overlooking Llangollen and visually dominating the Vale of Llangollen

Historic background

The earliest evidence of activity is represented by two late Bronze Age socketed axes found within several hundred metres of the summit of the hill and possibly to be associated with early woodland clearance or defence of the hilltop. The summit of the hill is crowned by the single bank and ditch of a hillfort of later Bronze Age to Iron Age date, covering an area of over 2 hectares, probably with a single entrance on the south-west, which from its size and setting is likely to represent an important local tribal centre in the later prehistoric period. Little further is known of its history before the later 13th century, though no doubt Dinas Brân ('crow fort') continued to form an important landmark. A Welsh medieval castle was built within the earlier hillfort during the 1260s, by Gruffudd ap Madog, lord of Powys Fadog, most probably at a period of alliance with the Welsh prince, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd — the plan of the castle being closely similar to Llywelyn's contemporary castle at Dolforwyn in the Severn valley between Welshpool and Newtown. The location of 'the isolated and almost impregnable fortress of Dinas Brân' is of strategic importance and has been considered 'next to the Breiddin, the strongest natural position in all the March'. Its siting dominates the surrounding landscape from all directions and was no doubt also chosen for its symbolic significance. Occupation of the castle was relatively short-lived, however. It was burnt by its Welsh defenders in 1277 against English attack and though briefly held by English forces it was finally abandoned soon after the Edwardian conquest of 1282 and has had no military significance since that time. Having formally lain at the centre of Powys Fadog and acting as a symbol of its unity it was now to become redundant, lying on the boundary between two distinct lordships of Chirk and Bromfield and Yale with their castles at Chirk and Holt respectively.

Visited by the antiquary John Leland in about 1536 it was described as 'Now all in ruin', a sentiment also expressed late 16th or early 17th century in an *englyn* by the Welsh poet Roger Cyffin. Since the burgeoning of antiquarian and sightseeing interests from the later 18th century the hill has become an important picturesque icon within the Dee valley, fuelled by the associations with the outlaw appearing as the principal character in the Anglo-Norman historical romance *Fouke le fitz Warin* which features activities within 'Chastiel Bran', and also with the 14th-century love poem by Hywel ab Einion Llygliw to the princess Myfanwy who lived the castle. The latter was retold by the Victorian poet John Ceiriog Hughes in the love-poem *Myfanwy Fychan* which won the Silver Crown at the 1858 Llangollen Eisteddfod and which became a model for Welsh love poetry during the latter part of the 19th century. The dramatic setting has continued to be an inspiration to more recent writers, the castle featuring in the earlier part of John Cowper Powys's historical novel *Owen Glendower*, published in 1940. A room had been made available amongst the ruins for visitors by the 1820s and by the 1880s a cottage provided refreshments. A *camera obscura*, housed in an octagonal metal-clad structure provided panoramas of the surrounding countryside and continued in operation until the Second World War. These commercial enterprises have since been withdrawn and following recent repair by Denbighshire County Council the castle has returned to the isolated and windswept state in which perhaps Leland observed it in the earlier 16th century.

Key historic landscape characteristics

Steep-sided, conical hill, composed of Silurian shales and siltstones, between a height of about 160–310 metres above sea level. The hill divided into a small number of large parcels of land, with mature broadleaved woodland on the slopes to the east, south and west and with grassland and bracken on the summit and on the slopes to the north with some small areas of scree.

Waymarked paths from the south-west and north-east lead through the distinctive hillfort defences of earth and stone to the summit of the hill, dominated by the ruins of the 13th-century Welsh castle which crowns the hill, built of local shales with some surviving sandstone dressings brought from further afield.

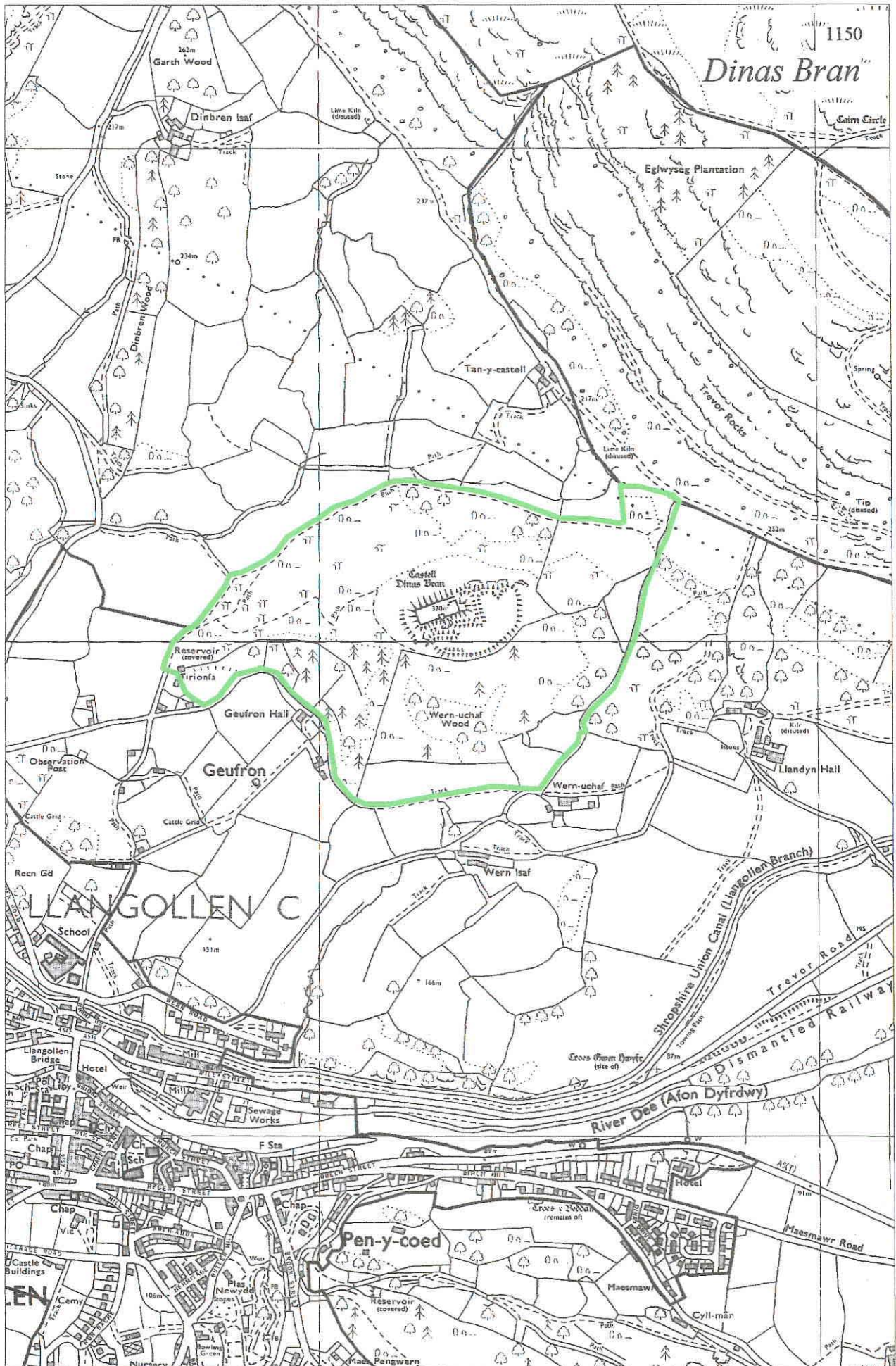
The landscape setting of the hillfort and castle has formed an important picturesque landscape image within the Vale of Llangollen since the 18th century, and has influenced the siting, orientation and aspect of a number of gentry houses within the vale, including Plas Newydd, Dinbren Hall, and Ty'n-dwr Hall.

Sources

Amgueddfa Llangollen 2003; Burnham 1995; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Davies 1929; Denbighshire Countryside Service 2003a; Fisher 1917; Hathaway et al. 1975; Hewitt 1977; Kemp 1935; King 1974; Musson 1994; Pennant 1773; Smith 1998; Stephens 1998; Thomas 1908-13

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Conservation and management earthwork remains of hillfort and castle defences and the upstanding masonry of the castle.*
- *Preservation of the landscape setting of the hillfort and castle.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Pant-y-groes* Llantysilio Community, Denbighshire (HLCA 1151)

Anciently enclosed farmland and scattered farms in the valley of the Eglwyseg river, below the Horseshoe Pass, including the historically important remains of Eliseg's Pillar and Valle Crucis abbey and significant remains of the slate industry.

Historic background

Scant evidence of prehistoric activity is suggested by the chance find of a late Bronze Age socketed axe from near Pentredwr dating to about the 10th-century BC and Roman activity by the discovery of a small hoard of 2nd-century AD coins from near Maesyrychen-bach. From about the 7th century the area fell within the kingdom of Powys. Eliseg's Pillar, the lower portion of a stone cross, was set up on a mound at a focal point in the valley in the first half of the 9th century by Cyngen, king of Powys, in honour of his great-grandfather, Eliseg, who had reunited the kingdom by taking land taken by the English. The location of this important and unusual monument, sited either on Eliseg's burial mound or upon an earlier prehistoric monument, suggests the presence of a royal estate here in the valley. The recording of the inscription by Edward Llwyd in the late 17th century has been important to our understanding of the early history of the kingdom of Powys. From 1191 the commote of Iâl fell within the subdivided northern portion of the kingdom known as Powys Fadog. The lower portion of the Eglwyseg valley was granted by Madog ap Gruffudd Maelor for the foundation of the Cistercian monastery known in Welsh as Llanegwestl in Latin as Valle Crucis in Latin, the latter at least being named after the earlier cross, Eliseg's Pillar. The foundation of the monastery involved the displacement of a number of inhabitants of Llanegwestl and their removal to townships in the vicinity of Wrexham and will almost certainly have involved the reorganisation of the landscape in its immediate vicinity. The lands granted to the monastery continued to be administered as a separate monastic manor up until the Dissolution of the abbey in 1537, and included a farm, a corn mill on the river Dee at Pentrefelin and a fulling mill at Pandy, to the north of the abbey. Following the Edwardian conquest in the later 13th-century the northern portion of the area formed part of the newly-created marcher lordship of Bromfield and Yale until the Act of Union in 1536, following which the whole area formed part of the newly created county of Denbighshire. Antiquarian interest in the antiquities of the Eglwyseg valley commenced in the 16th and 17th centuries. Before the opening of the Horseshoe Pass (Bwlch Oernant) turnpike road in 1811 the main road between Llangollen and Ruthin was by way of the earlier turnpike road Eglwyseg valley through Pentredwr, described by the antiquary Richard Fenton in 1808 as 'prodigiously steep, and continues so for a mile and a half' and it was from the second half of the 18th century that the picturesque qualities of the Pillar of Eliseg and Valle Crucis began to ensure that they became important sites of interest to early tourists in north Wales. Tourism and pastoral farming form the mainstay of the local economy at the present day.

Key historic landscape characteristics

The character area falls within and encompasses the enclosed land within the middle and lower portions of the valley of the river Eglwyseg and its tributaries, between a height of 90–390 metres above sea level, a deep and narrow valley of glacial origin which joins the Dee valley just to the west of Llangollen. The underlying solid geology is composed of Silurian shales. The character area is dominated by fieldscapes, with some areas of scrub, broadleaved woodland and conifer plantation. The upper portion of the valley is predominantly composed of small irregular fields and the lower portion of the valley is predominantly large irregular fields, the latter

probably reflecting landscape reorganisation carried out at the time when Valle Crucis was founded. Field boundaries are mostly multi-species hedges, in many cases probably of ancient origin. Modern land use is mostly as improved pasture, though the widespread occurrence of field lynchets indicates that ploughing for cereals was much more widespread at periods during the past.

Present-day settlement is largely representative of a traditional farming community with a short period of prosperity from the slate quarrying industry. In terms of settlement farming is characterised by a relatively small number of farmsteads, often sited on the hill margins. An early phase of timber building is evident at Bwlch-issa where there is a rare survival of a probably 17th-century timber-framed farmhouse and associated outbuilding in a complex of later stone buildings including a cowhouse and barn with vent holes. The whitewashed rubble stone farmhouse at Pen-y-clawdd is characteristic of a somewhat later horizon of stone-built farm complexes. The late 18th or early 19th-century farmbuildings at Maes-y-llyn are particularly interesting because they are partly built of stonework taken from the ruins of Valle Crucis Abbey following the Dissolution. The small nucleated settlement at Pentredwr lies on the former course of the turnpike road between Llangollen and Ruthin and largely developed at the time of the when the slate quarrying industry was at its height in the 19th century. It formerly possessed a school, shop, post office, public houses, and two 19th-century chapels, and includes a number of former mine workers' cottages. A row of cottages at Abbey Terrace probably also owes its origin to the slate industry and the haulage of slate to the slate mill at Pentrefelin.

Former fulling mills are indicated by place-name evidence, including Pandy, just to the north of Abbey Farm, fed by a leat taken off the Eglwyseg a little distance to the north, appears to have originated as a monastic mill during the medieval period. Its later history is poorly documented but evidently continued up to the 1870s or beyond, tenters (drying racks) being shown on the field now occupied by the caravan park next to the abbey on Ordnance Survey maps published in 1875. A further poorly-documented fulling mill is indicated by the place-name Hên-bandy on the Eglwyseg just over a kilometre further north.

Several small early hillside slate workings probably of the 17th century are survive within woodland plantations at Oernant old quarry below the Horseshoe Pass and the small workings at Foel to the east of Pentredwr. The Craig Wynnstay quarry to the north of Pentredwr opened in 1886 and closed in the early 1900s. The opening of the larger Moel-y-faen, Clogau and Oernant quarries on the hillsides to the west of the character area during the earlier 19th century led to great pressures on the local road network and as a consequence a horse-drawn tramway system was constructed through the character area in the 1850s, which by means of an incline passing below a road bridge at Maesyrychen, a stone-revetted embankment alongside the main Ruthin road, and a tramway viaduct across the Eglwyseg river carried material to the slate mill on the canal wharf at Pentrefelin.

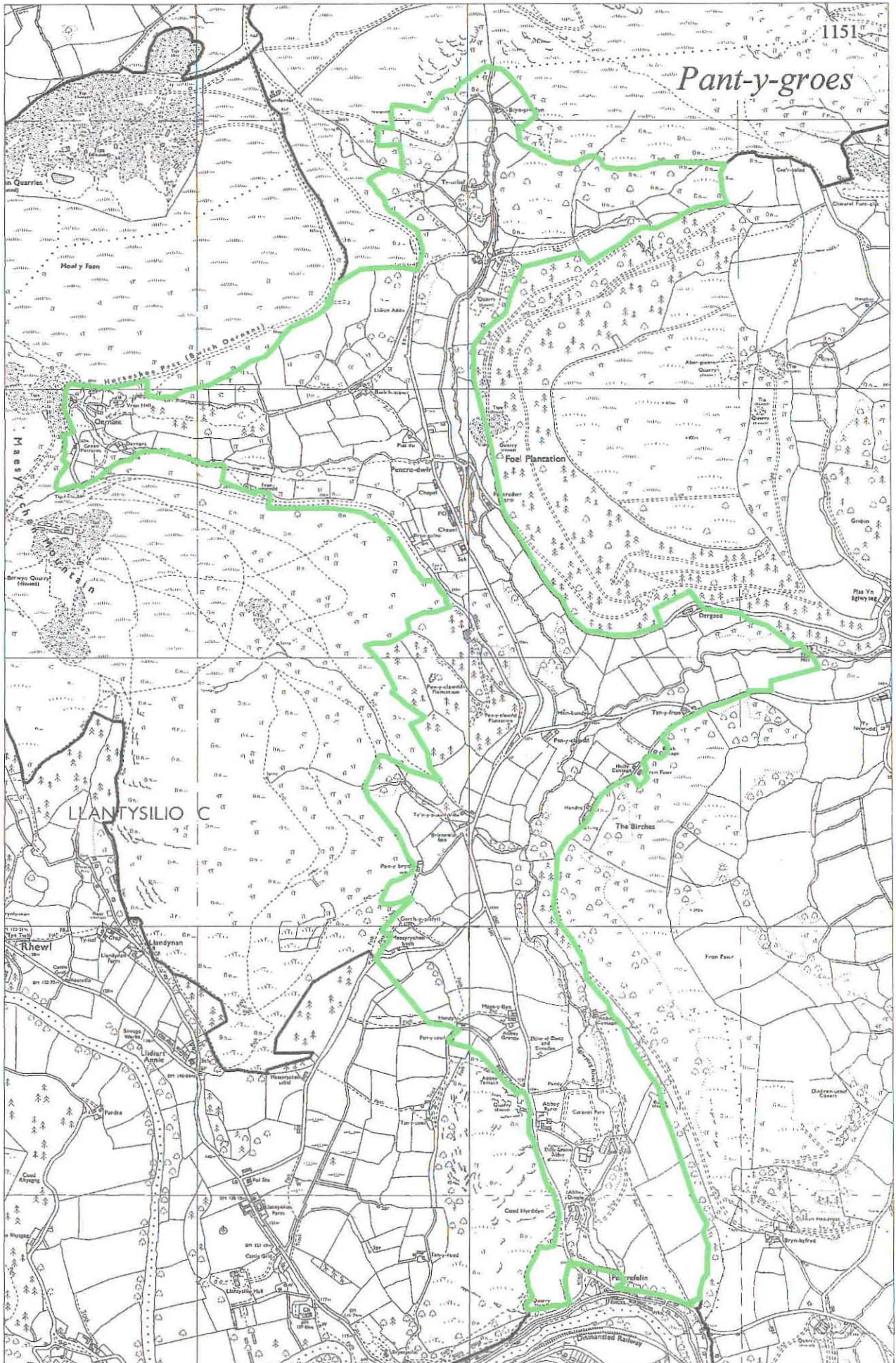
A toll-gate is shown on early editions of the Ordnance Survey, just to the north of the Britannia Inn. Probably contemporary with the improvements to the turnpike road in the early 19th century is the Gothic-style well-house on the roadside facing the lane to Valle Crucis abbey.

Sources

Abse 2000; Bingley 1814; Borrow 1862; Burnham 1995; Butler 1976; Cadw Listed Clwyd Fine Arts Trust (not dated); Building Lists; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Davies 1929; Davies 1977; Denbighshire Countryside Service 2003b; Edwards 1985; Emery 2000; Evans 1995; Fisher 1917; Hill and Worthington 2003; Hubbard 1986; Jack 1981; Jenkins 1969; Jones 1932; Jones 1999; Knight 1995; Lewis 1833; Lhwyd 1909-11; Knowles and Hadcock 1963; Lord 2000; Martin 1999; Moore 2000; Nash-Williams 1950; Pennant 1773; Pratt 1987; Pratt 1995; Pratt 1997; Price 1952; Radford 1971; Radford 1974; RCAM 1914; Richards 1991; Roberts 2001; Robinson 1998; Shanes 1979; Sherratt 2000; Smith 1988; Stephens 1986; Williams 1974; Williams 1990; Williams 2001

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Conservation and management of Eliseg's Pillar and Valle Crucis Abbey and their landscape setting.*
- *Conservation of vernacular farmhouses and farm buildings.*
- *Conservation and management of traditional field boundaries, including ancient multi-species hedges.*
- *Preservation of the remains of 17 to 19th-century slate quarrying and processing, including tramway and associated road-bridge and viaduct.*
- *Preservation of buildings and structures associated with former woollen watermills.*
- *Preservation of features and structures associated with early road transport history including the 18th-century turnpike road along the Eglwyseg valley.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Llangollen* Llangollen Community, Denbighshire (HLCA 1152)

Small market town of early medieval and medieval origins now forming an important regional tourist centre exploiting its canal and railway heritage.

Historic background

The origins of the earliest settlement at Llangollen are uncertain, though it has been supposed that a church dedicated to St Collen was established in the 6th or 7th century, the site of whose grave may have been indicated by the *cell-y-bedd* ('grave chapel') which existed as separate building structure next to the church until about 1749. An original shrine of the second half of the 12th century is possibly represented by Romanesque fragments built into the more recent fabric of the church. By the early years of the 13th century the church's income was probably granted to the Cistercian abbey at Valle Crucis, which had been founded in about 1201 but little is known of the nature of the nucleated settlement that probably existed in the vicinity of the church at this time. The location of the settlement is strategically important: it controls both the important river crossing of the Dee and access along the Dee valley, though it was never to acquire military significance.

In about 1234 the establishment of new fisheries on the Dee led to friction with the freemen of the town. A local trading centre probably became established here by at least the 1260s, once the neighbouring castle had been built Dinas Brân, which formed the administrative focus of the Welsh lordship of Powys Fadog. The castle ceased to have any military importance following the Edwardian conquest, but the town continued to have economic significance, the king granting Roger Mortimer the right to hold a weekly market and two annual fairs. The river Dee has been bridged by a river at Llangollen since at least the 1280s. The present bridge was built in about 1500 but has been repaired and extended on many occasions between the 17th and 20th centuries. Nothing is known of the form or extent of the medieval settlement of Llangollen, though it is evident that water-power had been harnessed between Llangollen and Pentrefelin for monastic corn mills and for a fulling mill by 14th century.

The town, described as a village by John Leland in the 1530s and said by Edward Llwyd to comprise about 70 houses in the later 17th, underwent a rapid expansion between the later 18th and earlier 20th centuries in response to the coming of the branch from the Ellesmere canal (1805), the Holyhead Road (1815), and the railway (1861) which greatly encouraged local processing industries including slate processing, cloth manufacture and timber, based upon water power, and upon the burgeoning tourist industry and giving rise to speculative developments in the southern and western parts of the town in the 1880s and 1890s.

A general decline in these processing industries during the inter-war and post-war periods made available a number of former mills and factories for various alternative uses. The economy of the town today is largely based upon the tourist industry exploiting its canal and railway heritage and is the focus for cultural events, notably including the Llangollen International Music Festival.

Key historic landscape characteristics

The town of Llangollen spans the full width of the valley floor, between a height of about 90–140 metres OD to the north and south of the river Dee. As well as taking in the whole of the historic core and modern built-up

area of the town, the historic landscape character area has for convenience been extended to include some adjacent areas with buildings and structures relating to industrial and transport history on the western side of the town, as far as Berwyn Station, just below the Horseshoe Falls.

The older quarter of the town lay to the south of the river, probably along the line of Bridge Street, in the area between the church and the bridge, where the market house is known to have been sited. Little is known of the surviving extent of buried archaeological deposits which might yield information about the early history of the settlement. Its primary historical interest today is its built heritage predominantly of the later 18th to early 20th centuries which illustrate the origins and development of the town.

A number of buildings have earlier origins, however, being timber-framed of 16th or more commonly 17th-century date, suggesting that the buildings of the early town were mostly half-timbered and probably closely related in form to those in the surrounding countryside. When the town began to expand in the later 18th century most building works were carried out in either local grey slates and shales or in locally manufactured brick, most of the surviving earlier timber buildings being refronted in these materials.

The town had become important as a local commercial centre and staging point on the turnpike roads to Corwen and Ruthin by the mid to late 18th century, with the establishment of Public houses and coaching inns such as the Royal Hotel (formerly the King's Head) and the Hand Hotel. A major phase of town-centre redevelopment evidently took place in the 1860s, coinciding with the arrival of the railway. The distinction between those buildings with an earlier core, and those which were built of a piece in the later 18th century or during the 19th century, is an important one and partly explains the highly varied and picturesque form of the town.

The architectural characteristics of the town are firstly its urbanised form, with a recognisable commercial core, with densely developed residential streets around it; secondly, its and small-scale 19th and 20th-century suburbs, from the detached and semi-detached houses that stretch out towards Pentrefelin and scale the slopes on the south side of the river; and thirdly, the 20th-century housing estates on the east side of the town. Much of the urban development takes the form of terraced houses, ranging from the three-storeyed Georgian-style rows on Berwyn Street and Bridge Street, to smaller rows of cottages. This implies an organisation of building work which is rare in a rural context; it produces a formality of design which seems recognisably urban. Llangollen is also characterised by a surprising variety of styles and materials, indicating its growth over a considerable period, and via a number of different hands. The buildings in the town depart from rural vernacular traditions in a number of important respects: the constraints of urban building plots lead to tighter, more compact house-planning, often with an emphasis on height. There is more emphasis on style and detail such as the gothic window detailing in Abbey Square and the polychrome brickwork of several buildings along on the A5.

A number of public areas were created about the turn of the 20th century — the Victoria Promenade being opened in 1899 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, and later extended to the Riverside Park.

The town also includes a number specialist building types of the 19th and early 20th centuries. These include several industrial buildings within the town such as the old tannery, former and nonconformist chapels. There are also examples of an identifiable commercial architecture. The Old Bank, Berwyn Street is a good example of this: it is built on a corner site, which it exploits by a distinctive curving façade, and with emphasis given to the ground floor former bank premises. The town also includes a number of civic buildings including town hall and police station.

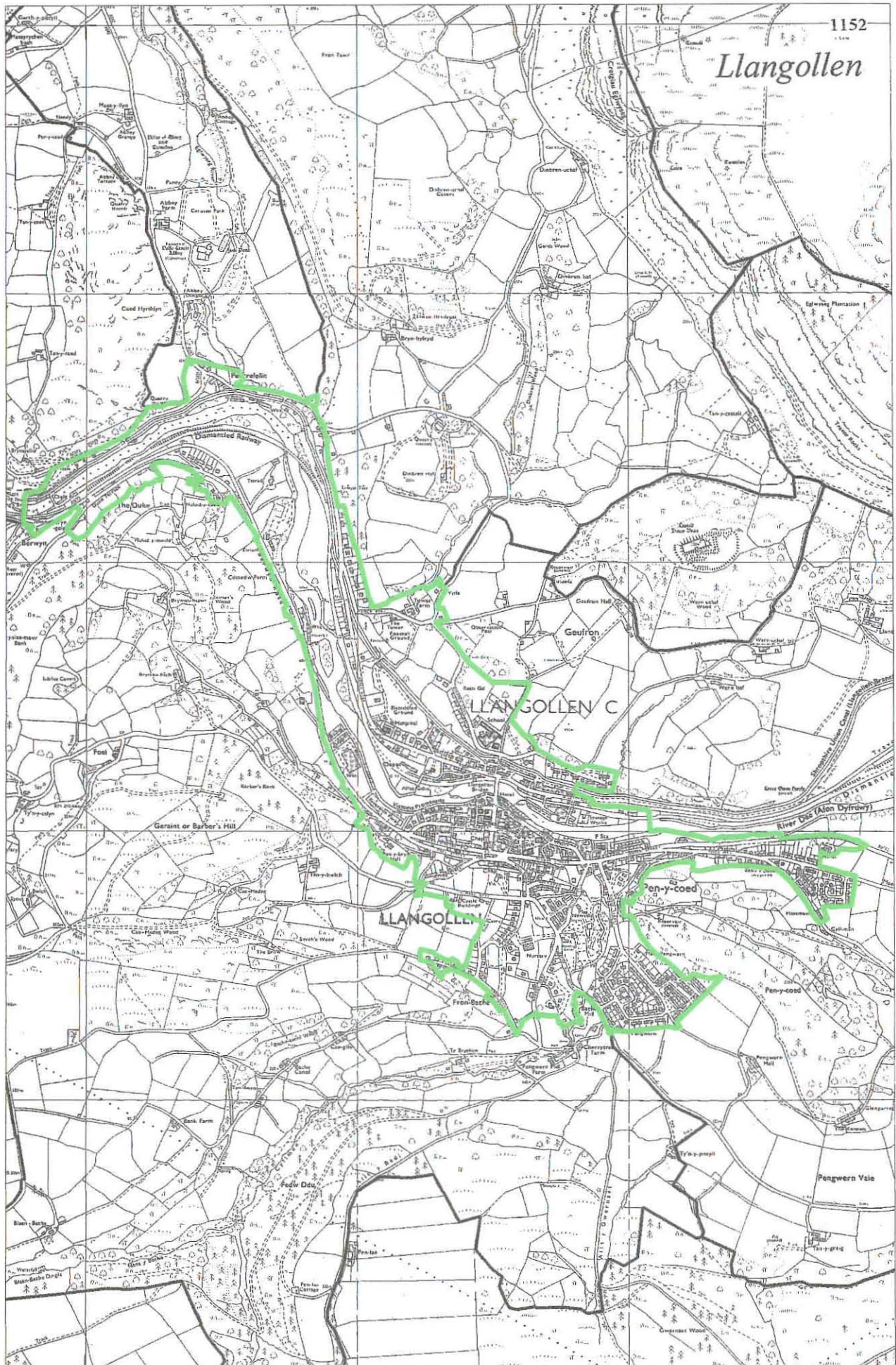
The town possesses a complex social hierarchy of building, each with its own geography. Houses within the confines of the town range from the detached villa such as Siambur Wen, to substantial terraced houses and small cottages.

Sources

Amgueddfa Llangollen 2003; Baughan 1980; Bingley 1814; Borrow 1862; Breese 2001; Cadw 1995; Cadw Listed Building Lists; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Edwards 1969; Edwards 1988; Edwards 1991; Ffoulkes-Jones 1980; Hubbard 1986; Lhwyd 1909-11; Jack 1981; Jenkins 1969; Jervoise 1936; Lewis 1833; Mavor 1971; Pennant 1773; Pratt 1997; Quartermaine et al. 2003; Radford and Hemp 1959; Thomas 1908-13; RCAM 1914; Roberts 0000; Sherrat 2000; Silvester 1995; Silvester 1999; Simpson 1827; Simpson 1853; Smith 1906; Smith 1988; Soulsby 1983; Thomas 1908-13; Thomas 1954; Williams 1990; Williams 2001; Wilson 1975.

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Preservation, either in situ or by record, of buried archaeological deposits associated with the early history of the medieval and later church and town of Llangollen.*
- *Preservation of private houses, commercial and industrial buildings relating to the social, industrial, cultural history of tourism of Llangollen.*
- *Conservation and management of designed landscapes relating to private gardens and tourist attractions.*
- *Preservation of buildings and structures relating to the history of the Holyhead Road (A5), the Llangollen Canal and the Vale of Llangollen Railway.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Dol-isaf*

Llangollen Community, Denbighshire, and Llangollen Rural Community, Wrexham (HLCA 1153)

Visually outstanding valley floor of the steep-sided Dee valley between Llangollen and Pontcysyllte, with fieldscapes, golf-course and prominent gardens and parkland areas.

Historic background

The discovery of a number of early finds in the area, including fragments of a Neolithic stone axes near Ty'n Celyn and Trevor Hall, and a Roman brooch again near Trevor Hall are probably indicative of early settlement and land use in the Vale, which is perhaps unsurprising in view of the rich agricultural land to be found here. Anciently, the area fell within the native kingdom of Powys and subsequently, from the late 12th century formed parts of the commotes of Nanheudwy principally to the south of the Dee and Maelor Gymraeg to the north of the Dee in the subdivided northern portion of the kingdom known as Powys Fadog. Following the Edwardian conquest in the late 13th century most of the area to the north of the river came to form part of the marcher lordship of Bromfield and Yale and the area to the south of the river part of the marcher lordship of Chirk. Historically, much of the land in the valley has been in the ownership of a small number of prominent estates since perhaps before the 11th century associated with ancient families including the Mostyn family associated with Pengwern and the Trevor family associated with Trevor Hall. Though poorly documented, monastic granges belonging to Valle Crucis Abbey have been thought to have existed at both Pengwern Hall and in the vicinity of Trevor Mill. A number of other large houses, notably Argoed Hall, Tyn-dwr, and Bryn Howell were the creation of local industrialists during the second half of the 19th century.

Key historic landscape characteristics

The character area constitutes the valley floor and lower-lying ground on the valley sides of the meandering river Dee to the east of Llangollen, between a height of about 100–200 metres above sea level and including ancient river terraces and cut-offs. For convenience of defining character areas it also includes Pengwern Vale, a relict meander of the Dee and the isolated intervening Pen-y-coed hill to the east of Llangollen. Present-day land use is predominantly improved pasture.

The area includes a mosaic of different fieldscapes including both large and small irregular fields which are probably represent more anciently enclosed land. Small areas of reorganised strip fields on the eastern and northern outskirts of Llangollen may represent enclosed medieval open fields associated with the early settlement. Discrete areas of large and small straight-sided fields, notably in Pengwern Vale and at the eastern end of the character appear to represent landscape reorganisation associated with the management of post-medieval estate farming. Field boundaries are mostly composed of mature hedges. Other prominent historic landscape types include the recent designed landscape of the Llangollen Golf Course, gardens and landscape parkland areas and plantings associated with Trevor Hall, Argoed Hall and Tyn'dwr, as well as those associated with present and former communications along the valley including roads, the canal and the dismantled railway line.

Present-day settlement is characterized by a dispersed pattern of farms, cottages and larger country houses. Traces of high status 13th- to 14th-century domestic structures with a vaulted undercroft are represented at Pengwern Hall but perhaps more typical of earlier building traditions in the area is the three-storey timber-framed farmhouse of earlier 17th-century date at Plas yn y Pentre. Late 17th and early 18th-century stone-built

barns are preserved at Llandyn Hall and Pengwern. Trevor Hall lies on the site of the ancient Trevor family seat and set in the wooded hillside overlooking its own parkland and formal gardens towards the eastern end of the Vale of Llangollen, the hall was largely rebuilt as the three-storey brick mansion in early Georgian style by the Lloyd family to whom it had passed in marriage 1742. The hall is associated with a contemporary complex of earlier and contemporary domestic and farm buildings at Trevor Hall Farm and with the earlier 18th-century Trevor Chapel. Cwm Alis was built as a substantial house in the 1770s close to the turnpike road between Chirk and Llangollen and overlooking the Vale of Llangollen. Improvements to the road by Telford in the early 19th century involved the construction of extensive retaining walls close to the house.

A distinctive feature of the area are a group of country houses occupying picturesquely-sited locations within the vale were built for industrialists in the later 19th century. Argoed Hall, a substantial two-storey stone house on the outskirts of Froncysyllte and overlooking the river Dee, is of early Victorian and later date in Elizabethan and Queen Anne style, and has associated kennels, stables, formal terraced gardens and wooded grounds laid out with woodland walks and summerhouse on the river scarp of the Dee and with a lake on the floodplain below, occupying a former ox-bow. It was built for the German-born industrialist Robert F. Graesser associated with the Wrexham Lager Brewery and the neighbouring chemical complex at Acrefair. Parts of the former kitchen gardens are now occupied by a community centre. Tyn-dwr is a Tudor black and white style mansion built in about the 1860s for John Dickin, ironmaster, now converted to Youth Hostel, set in its own grounds with a tree-lined drive. The brick-built Bryn Howell and its lodge were built in 1896 as a retirement home for the brickworks and tilery manufacturer, James Coster Edwards junior, in a mock Tudor style combining products from the family kilns and some half-timbering, now converted to use as a hotel.

The Vale includes various important elements of transport history which gave rise to the industrial exploitation of the adjacent limestone and slate quarries. The feeder branch of the Ellesmere Canal which runs along the northern margins of the valley floor between Trevor and Llangollen, was completed in 1808, with numerous humped-back bridges at road crossings. Thomas Telford's new Holyhead Road was built along the southern edge of the Vale commencing in 1815. For about 30 years it formed the main communication route to and from Ireland and London, the former course of the road being traceable here and there between Llangollen and Froncysyllte. Some original roadside walling survives, though often in a poor condition, but there are a number of milestones survive in good condition with characteristic cast-iron plaques set in short stone pillars. The former railway between Ruabon and Llangollen was opened as the Vale of Llangollen Railway Company in 1861 again ran along the northern side of the valley. It took over much of the freight traffic originally carried by canal barge and horse-drawn carts, and continued in existence until the 1960s since when only part of the line to the west of Llangollen station has retained as a tourist attraction.

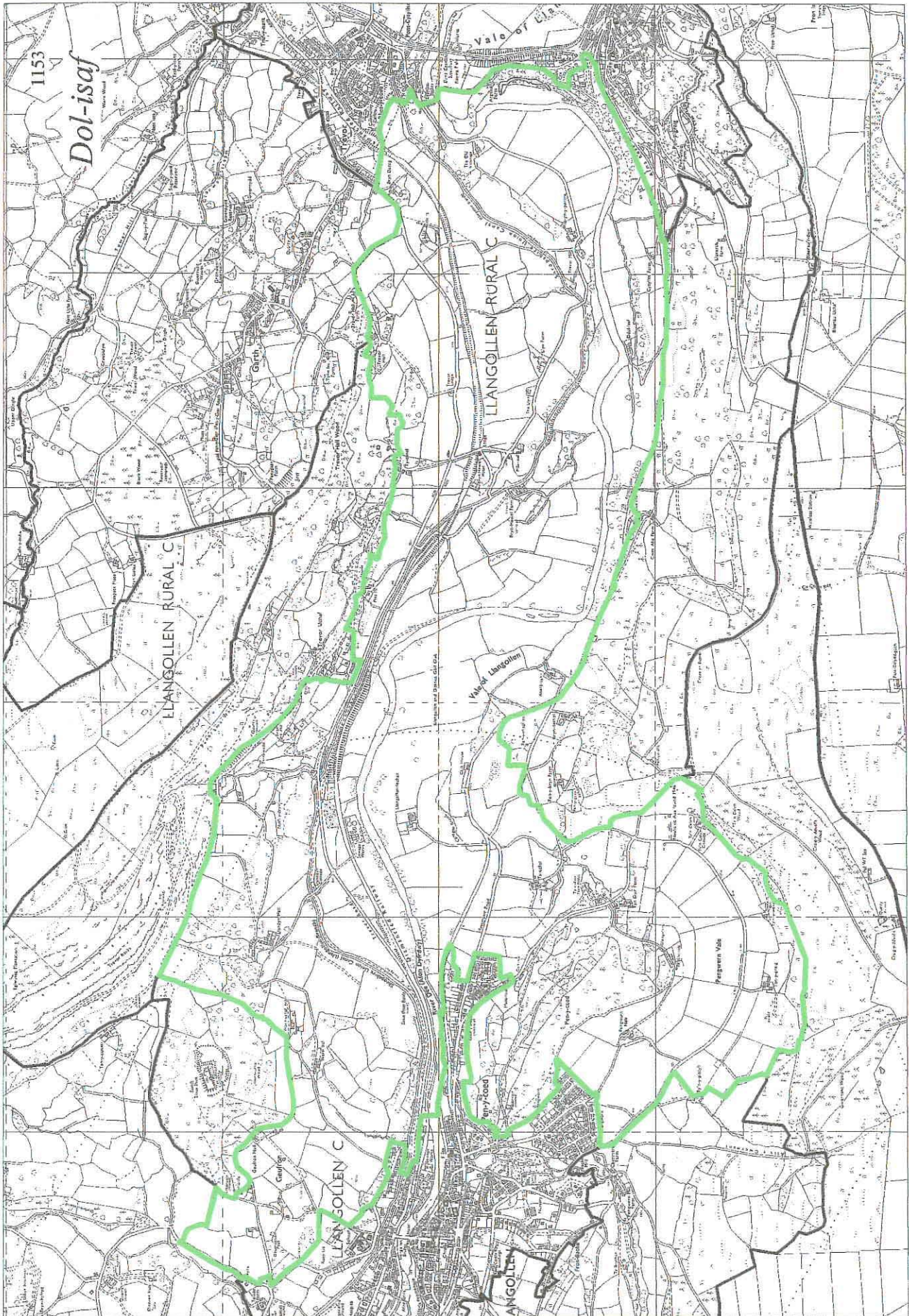
Trevor Rocks incline, just to the west of Bryn Howel brought lime from limekilns up above down to loading bays on a minerals branch line on the Vale of Llangollen Railway. Water power was harnessed at the 18th-century stone built Trevor Mill, now converted to domestic accommodation.

Sources

Baughan 1980; Bingley 1814; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Cadw 1995; Cadw Listed Building Lists; Davies 1929; Denbighshire Countryside Service 2003b; Hadfield 1969; Hubbard 1986; Jones 1932; Pellow and Bowen 1988; Pritchard 1963; Quartermaine *et al.* 2003; Sherratt 2000; Smith 1988; Suggett 2001; RCAM 1914; Thomas 1998; Wiliam 1982; Williams 1974; Williams 1990; Williams 2001; Wilson 1975

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Conservation of ancient river meanders and cut-offs which are of potential palaeoenvironmental significance.*
- *Preservation in situ or by record of buried deposits possibly associated with medieval monastic grange sites.*
- *Preservation of historically and culturally significant picturesque views of the Vale, particularly in relation to Trevor Rocks and Dinas Brân.*
- *Preservation of the Llangollen Canal, its visual setting and associated structures including road bridges.*
- *Conservation and management of features and structures associated with Telford's Holyhead Road (A5).*
- *Preservation of structures associated with the former Vale of Llangollen railway.*
- *Preservation of vernacular farmhouses and farmbuildings.*
- *Preservation of a number of more substantial country houses and associated garden and parkland features and their settings.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Trevor Uchaf*

Llangollen Community, Denbighshire, and Llangollen Rural Community, Wrexham (HLCA 1154)

Rural landscape of dispersed farms and irregular fields of medieval and late medieval origin with 18th- and 19th-century industrial remains associated with the lime industry and dispersed linear settlement originally of quarrymen's cottages.

Historic background

Anciently, the area fell within the native kingdom of Powys and subsequently, from the late 12th century, formed part of the commote Maelor Gymraeg to the north of the Dee in the subdivided northern portion of the kingdom known as Powys Fadog. Following the Edwardian conquest in the late 13th century it came to form part of the marcher lordship of Chirk which at the Act of Union in 1536 came to form part of Denbighshire. Welsh land-holdings are first recorded at Trevor Uchaf in the late 14th-century whose produce included corn, but little other evidence of settlement or land use in the character area is recorded before an intensive period of limestone quarrying and lime production carried out between the early 19th century and the earlier 20th century, encouraged by the opening of the Llangollen branch of the Ellesmere Canal in 1805. Together with coal imported from the coalfields in the Wrexham area this produced both agricultural lime and industrial lime for the iron foundries at Plas Kynaston, Broseley and further afield.

Key historic landscape characteristics

The area includes the eastern portion of the distinctive Carboniferous limestone outcrops known as Creigiau Eglwyseg or Trevor Rocks and the lower, steeply sloping and wooded land above Trevor Uchaf towards the east, lying between about 410 and 110 metres above sea level.

A number of distinct historic landscape types including areas of rock outcrop and screens, areas of scrub, fragments of small irregular fieldscapes probably representing medieval piecemeal enclosure, 19th and 20th-century conifer plantation and some probably more ancient broadleaved woodland and on some of the steeper slopes, as well as areas of 19th-century enclosed moorland on the southern edge of Ruabon Mountain.

Surviving remains of the limestone industry in the area including both larger and smaller quarries, former tramlines which carried for transporting the quarried rock. Traces of several banks of limekilns survive as well as a number of more dispersed single limekilns, together with inclines at Trevor Uchaf and to the west of Ty-canol which transported quarried stone, lime and coal down to an up from firstly the canal and latterly the railway, the foot of the incline to the west of Ty-canol having been served by a railway mineral branch line from the 1870s.

The small dispersed settlement of about ten houses at Trevor Uchaf, now mostly modernised, originated as quarrymen's and kiln-workers cottages in the early 19th century and also formerly included an Independent chapel.

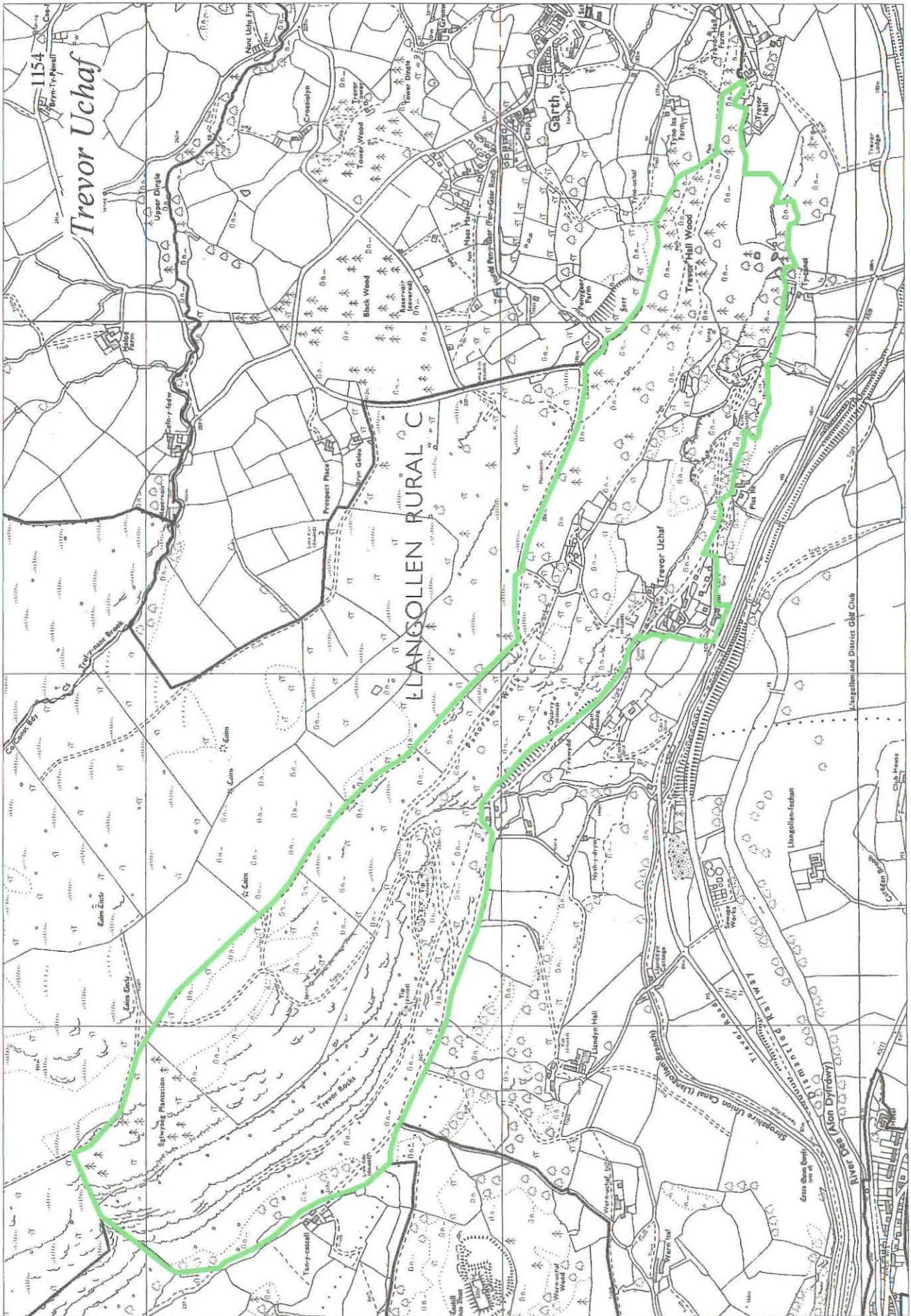
A trackway along the contour of the hill below the limestone became popular as a scenic walk for tourists during the 19th century. This gave dramatic views of the Vale of Llangollen and Castell Dinas Brân and had become known as the Panorama Walk by the early decades of the 20th century.

Sources

CPAT Historic Environment Record; Denbighshire Countryside Service 1993b; Jones 1932; Martin 1999; Pratt 1990

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Preservation of industrial archaeology remains including quarries, tramroads, inclines and limekilns.*
- *Preservation of the form and setting of the culturally significant Panorama Walk*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Garth*

Llangollen Community, Denbighshire, and Llangollen Rural Community, Wrexham (HLCA 1155)

Sloping ground on south-eastern edge of Ruabon Mountain with rural landscape of medieval and late medieval origin partly superimposed by 19th and 20th-century industrial remains and dispersed settlement at Garth.

Historic background

Early settlement and land use in the area is suggested by antiquarian records of a number of possible earlier prehistoric burial mounds (now unlocated) and the later prehistoric Pen-y-gaer hillfort on a hill spur to the east of Garth. From the early medieval period the area fell within the Welsh kingdom of Powys and from the late 12th century in the commote of Maelor Gymraeg within the subdivided northern portion of the kingdom known as Powys Fadog. Following the Edwardian conquest in the late 13th century the area formed part of the marcher lordship of Chirk and in the 14th century it may have formed part of the forest of Isclawdd. Native Welsh farming communities were in existence at Trevor Issa by the late 14th century. Following the Act of Union in 1536 the area became part of the newly created county of Denbighshire. Part of the area was transferred to Wrexham County Borough Council in 1997.

Key historic landscape characteristics

The area lies on the south-eastern edge of Ruabon Mountain, dropping fairly regularly in height from the unenclosed land at about 360 metres above sea level down to the edge of the Dee valley above Trevor, at about 130 metres. The underlying geology is composed of sandstone overlain by Coal Measures including marls to the east. Topographically, the area is bounded to the east by the steep-sided valley of the Tref-y-nant stream which includes sinuous broadleaved woodland, possibly representing residual ancient woodland.

The area lies on the margins of the margins of the industrialised area of Acrefair and Cefn Mawr and bears some traces of earlier industry and associated workers' housing, superimposed upon an earlier agricultural landscape characterized by scattered farmsteads and predominantly small irregular fields probably of medieval and early post-medieval origin, mostly in use as improved pasture. Towards the upland margin are a number of smaller areas of large and small straight-sided fields deriving from post-medieval upland enclosure together with areas of probably 19th-century estate conifer plantation at Black Wood and Trevor Wood.

Industrial remains of the earlier 19th century within the area include a number of isolated limekilns mostly around the upland margin to the west, together with several small limestone quarries and a small isolated former coal mine. From the middle of the 19th century industry was focused on the former complex close to the railway at Trevor, known as the Garth Brickworks, where marls, silica deposits and stone were quarried from opencast workings and a drift mine at various periods, used for the manufacture of bricks, fire-bricks and other materials for the steel industry until the late 1970s. The workings were once linked by aerial ropeway to an additional clay pit further uphill. Many of the former buildings and structures have been demolished and the site is about to be redeveloped for a housing development within which a flooded former stone quarry will be retained as a wildlife pond.

The linear settlement running downhill from Garth to Garth Trefor and Trefor-isaf originated as a settlement for quarrymen and industrial workers in the 19th and earlier 20th century, and included at various times a

school, three nonconformist chapels and several public houses.

The small Gronwen, Gwernydd and Sugn-y-pwll reservoirs were constructed on the hillside above Trevor in about the mid 19th century to supply the industrial centres at Cefn, Acrefair and Rhosymedre.

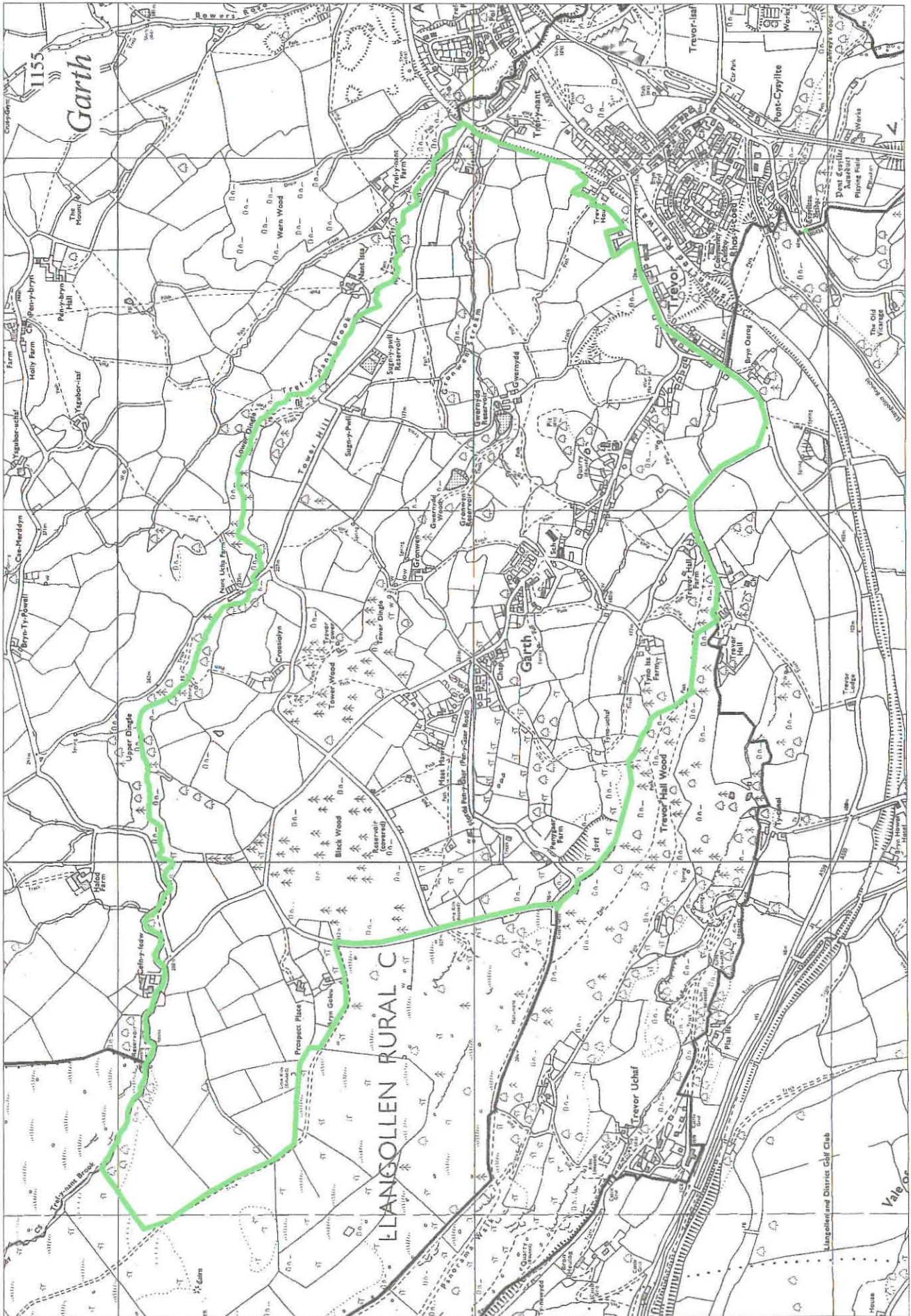
The castellated, stone-built folly known as Trevor Tower was constructed on part of the Trevor Estate in the 1820s. It is sited on the south-eastern edge of Tower Wood on the hillside overlooking the Vale of Llangollen.

Sources

Baughan 1980; Bruce 1921; Cadw Listed Building List; Connolly 2003; CPAT Historic Environment Record; Davies 1929; Edwards 1987; Forde Johnston 1976; Hubbard 1986; Jones 1932; Pratt 1990; RCAM 1914; Wrexham 2003

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Conservation and management of the traces of prehistoric burial monuments.*
- *Conservation and management of prehistoric hillfort defences and internal deposits and their setting.*
- *Preservation of Trevor Tower folly and its picturesque landscape setting.*
- *Preservation of the industrial remains of brickworks, clay pits, coal mine, quarries and limekilns and associated features.*



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Historic Landscape Characterization

Vale of Llangollen: *Cysyllte* Llangollen Rural Community, Wrexham (HLCA 1156)

Area of 19th and early 20th industrial expansion including limestone quarrying, lime burning and industrial ceramics and associated workers' housing spanning the Dee valley to either side of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

Historic background

From the early medieval period the area fell within the Welsh kingdom of Powys and from the late 12th century within the commote of Nanheudwy in the subdivided northern portion of the kingdom known as Powys Fadog. Following the Edwardian conquest in the late 13th century the area formed part of the marcher lordship of Chirk and in the 14th century may have formed part of the forest of Isclawdd within the lordship. Native Welsh farming communities at Cysyllte are first recorded in the late 14th century. Following the Act of Union in 1536 the area became part of the newly created county of Denbighshire. Part of the area was transferred to Wrexham County Borough Council in 1997.

Key historic landscape characteristics

The character area spans the northern and southern sides of the Dee valley with the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct at its centre, and includes the settlements of Trevor and Froncysyllte. Topographically the area falls between about 60–280 metres above sea level. The northern and eastern parts of the area are composed of sandstones and marls associated with the Coal Measures overlain by glacial till and recent alluvial deposits in the valley bottom. At Froncysyllte, on the south side of the valley, is an isolated block of Carboniferous Limestone. The present-day land use is predominantly for housing but includes some former manufacturing and processing complexes and areas devoted to sporting and leisure activities. An area of pasture on the northern bank of the Dee has been included in this area because of the essential setting it provides for the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

An important river crossing of the river Dee on the route between Chirk and Wrexham appears to have been first achieved by the construction of the stone-built Pont Cysyllte in the 1690s. The bridge is mentioned by the antiquary Edward Lhwyd in the early 18th century probably before the substantial reconstruction of the bridge later in that century.

The coming of the canal and the construction of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct between 1795 and 1805 greatly encouraged the industrial exploitation of the area which has now almost completely masked a earlier and probably medieval landscape of small irregular fields. Canal-side limekilns were in operation at Froncysyllte from the end of the 18th century onwards, producing lime for both agricultural and industrial purposes and transported as far as Cheshire, Staffordshire and the Midlands. The kilns were supplied by stone quarried in the Pen y Graig quarries on the hillside above Froncysyllte, being transported by a series of tramroads and inclines, lime being produced by coal imported by barge from the Ruabon coalfield. The small nucleated settlement at Froncysyllte with its miners' and kiln workers' cottages, nonconformist chapels, church and public houses having come into existence during the 19th century along Telford's Holyhead Road (A5) and on the hillside to the south. The local lime industry underwent a period of decline towards the end of the 19th century though quarrying for limestone was to continue at the Pen y Graig quarries up to the 1950s.

The construction of the canal wharf at Trevor together with the opening of the Vale of Llangollen Railway in

the 1860s fostered the development of a focus of industrial activity here, to the north of the river. The availability of Coal Measures marls from opencast quarries and deeper mines, combined with the ready availability of coal from the Ruabon Coalfield gave rise to brick and tile works from about the 1850s onwards. The Tref-y-nant brickworks subsequently developed on an ideal site just to the north of the canal wharf and alongside the railway, producing at first firebricks and chimney pots and ornamental terracotta, but specialising in glazed sanitary pipes, for which there was a rapidly expanding market following the passing of the Public Health Acts of the 1840s and 1850s. The works continued in operation until the 1950s following which practically all of the buildings and structures on the site were demolished.

In the second half of the 20th century chemical and industrial processing works were established in part of the eastern side of the area largely as an offshoot of the Monsanto industrial complex in the adjacent community of Acrefair.

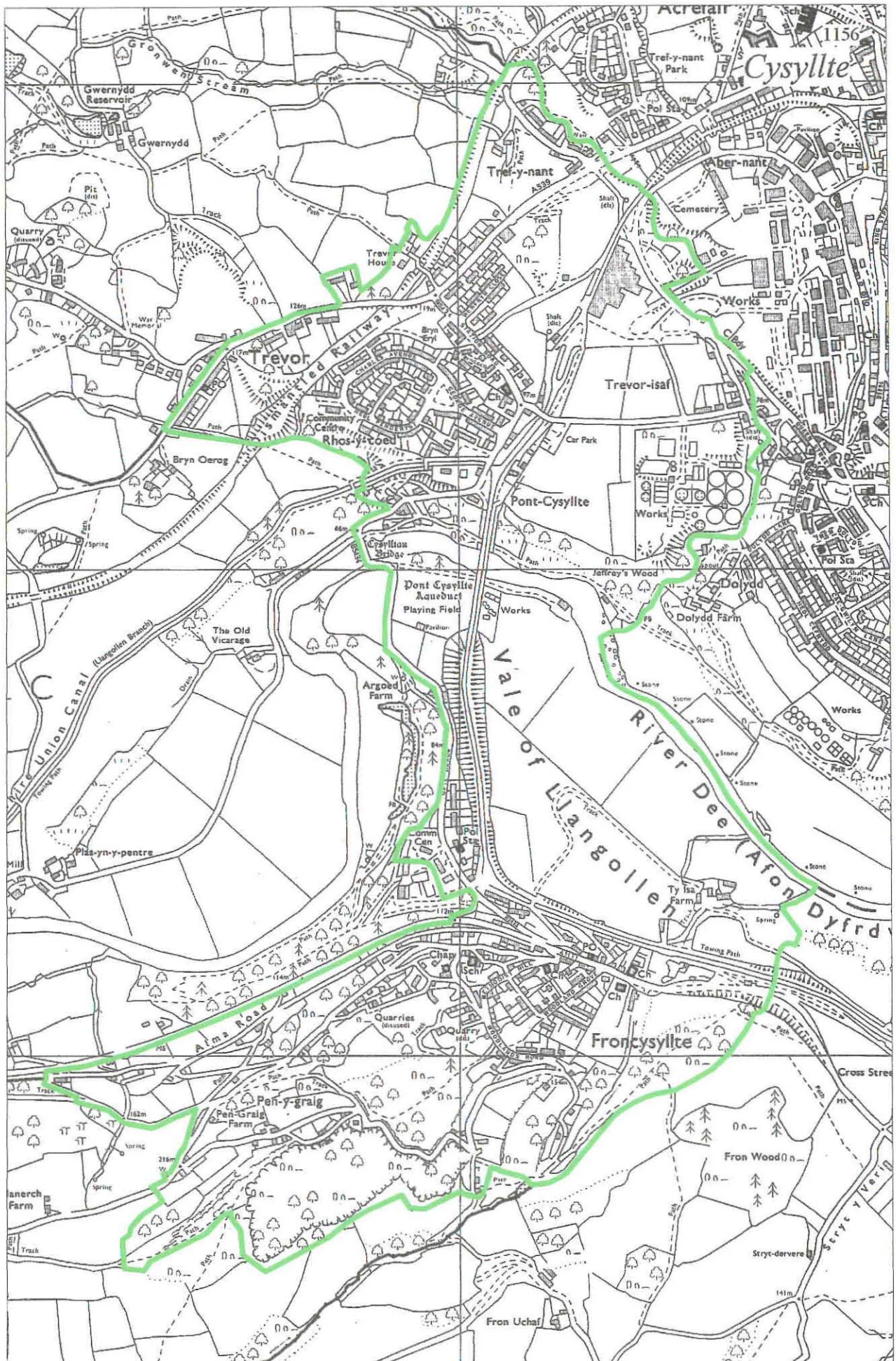
The closure of the Pen y Graig quarries at Froncysyllte in the 1950s released land which enabled the expansion of the settlement with local authority housing, meeting the need for housing for people working in the neighbouring expanding industrial centres of Acrefair and Cefn Mawr. Former farmland at Trevor was likewise developed for housing in the later 20th century and early 21st century.

Sources

Baughan 1980; Breese 2001; Burnham 1995; Cadw Listed Buildings Lists; Clwyd Fine Arts Trust nd; CPAT Historic Environment Record; DCMS 1999; Hadfield 1969; Harper 1902; Hubbard 1986; Jervoise 1932; Jones 1932; Lewis 1833; Lhwyd 1909-10; Martin 1999; Musson 1994; Owen and Silvester 1993; Pellow and Bowen 1988; Pratt 1990; Quartermaine *et al.* 2003; Quenby 1992; Sherratt 2000; Sivewright 1986; Williams 1999; Wilson 1975; Wrexham 2003

Key historic landscape management priorities

- *Conservation and management of features and structures associated with Telford's Holyhead Road (A5).*
- *Conservation and management of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and its setting.*
- *Preservation of the industrial remains of the lime industry, including former quarries, tramlines, inclines and limekilns.*
- *Preservation of buildings and structures characteristic of the 19th and early 20th-century quarrymans' and limekiln workers' settlement, including miners' cottages, church and nonconformist chapels.*



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Photographs of Character Areas

Vale of Llangollen: *Vivod Mountain* (HLCA 1140)



Unenclosed moorland in the Vivod Mountain character area. *Photo: CPAT 1766-10*



Unenclosed moorland on the far horizon, formerly under conifer plantation but now managed as a shooting moor. *Photo: CPAT 1766-76*

Vale of Llangollen: *Gafaeliau* (HLCA 1141)



The small mining and agricultural settlement at Llandynan with 20th-century housing development at Llidiart Annie in the foreground. On the hills in the background are the 19th and early 20th-century waste tips of the Berwyn (Clogau) slate quarry. *Photo: CPAT 1766-179*



Part of the undulating Dee valley to the west of Llangollen with the settlement of Rhewl in the middle distance and enclosed hill land and rising towards Cymmo in the distance, on the route of a former drovers' road from the direction of Corwen. *Photo: CPAT 1766-184*

Vale of Llangollen: *Llantysilio Mountain* (HLCA 1142)



Llantysilio Mountain in the background with part of the small settlement of Llandynan in the middle distance. *Photo: CPAT 1766-187*



Moel y Gamelin, one of the peaks on Llantysilio Mountain towards the left, with spoil tips of the Berwyn (Clogau) slate quarry in the distance towards the right. *Photo: CPAT 1766-259*

Vale of Llangollen: *Cyrn-y-brain* (HLCA 1143)



Summit of Cyrn-y-brain with communications mast in the background with the Ponderosa roadside restaurant on the Horseshoe Pass in the middle distance. *Photo: CPAT 1766-267*



The eastern side of the Cyrn-y-brain upland looking towards Ruabon Mountain in the background. *Photo: CPAT 1766-269*

Vale of Llangollen: *Ruabon Mountain* (HLCA 1144)



Aerial view of shafts and waste heaps at Pool Park Mine on the northern edge of Ruabon Mountain, overlooking Minera. Photo: Crown Copyright, RCAHMW, 93-CS-1550



Aerial view of shaft and waste heaps at Walker's Shaft on Ruabon Mountain. Photo: Crown Copyright, RCAHMW

Vale of Llangollen: *Maesyrychen* (HLCA 1145)



19th-century waste tips at the Moel-y-faen slate quarry on the northern edge of Llantysilo Mountain.
Photo: CPAT 1766-91



Aerial view of waste tips at the Moel-y-faen slate quarry on the northern edge of Llantysilo Mountain.
Photo: Crown copyright, RCAHMW, 93-CS-1507

Vale of Llangollen: *Vivod* (HLCA 1146)



Fields and woodland near Bache Canol. *Photo: CPAT 1766-205*



Fields, woodland and parkland in the vicinity of Plas-yn-Vivod country house. *Photo: CPAT 1766-35*

Vale of Llangollen: *Craig-dduallt* (HLCA 1147)



Large straight-sided fields representing 19th-century enclosure near Pen lan on the hills to the south of Llangollen on the southern side of the Dee valley. *Photo: CPAT 1766-75*



Modern conifer plantations and improved pasture near Blaen-Bache farm on the hills to the south of the Dee valley. *Photo: CPAT 1766-79*

Vale of Llangollen: *Cwm-alis* (HLCA 1148)



Fields and woodland looking towards the former Pen-y-graig limestone quarry above Froncysyllte, just visible to the right. *Photo: CPAT 1766-43*



Woodland and fields on the steeply sloping southern side of the Dee valley to the west of Froncysyllte. *Photo: CPAT 1766-252*

Vale of Llangollen: *Dinbren* (HLCA 1149)



Farmland and dispersed farms of medieval and late medieval origin below the dramatic limestone escarpment of Creigiau Eglwyseg. *Photo: CPAT 1766-126*



Fieldscape below Creigiau Eglwyseg near Dinbren Isaf. *Photo: CPAT 1766-315*

Vale of Llangollen: *Dinas Brân* (HLCA 1150)



Castell Dinas Brân seen from the east. In the journal kept by the Revd Bingley on his tour of north Wales in 1798 he noted that 'its conical hill, seem to close up the end of the vale, and imperiously to hold in subjugation all the surrounding country. This sylvan vale, justly celebrated for its numerous beauties, affords many picturesque and highly romantic scenes'. *Photo: CPAT 1766-303*



The gaunt remains of the Welsh medieval Castell Dinas Brân, built within the ramparts of an early Iron Age hillfort by Gruffudd ap Madog in the 1260s. *Photo: 1766-321*

Vale of Llangollen: *Pant-y-groes* (HLCA 1151)



Fields and farms probably of medieval origin in the upper Eglwyseg valley near Dergoed, with Ruabon Mountain in the background. *Photo: CPAT 1766-144*

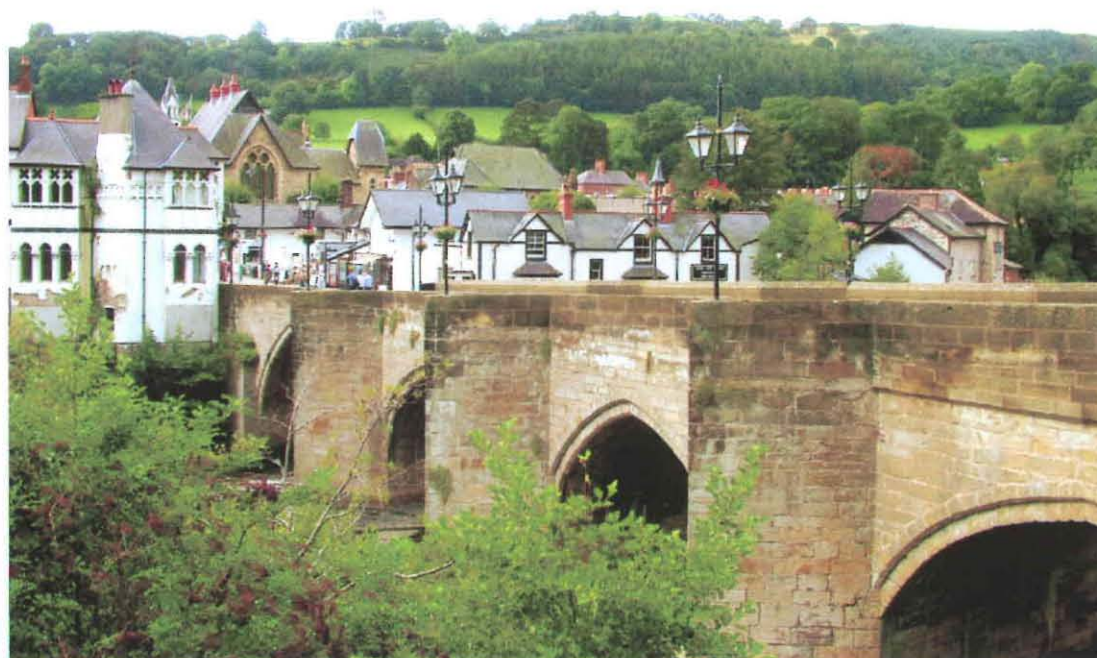


Remains of the Cistercian abbey at Valle Crucis founded by the Welsh prince Madog ap Gruffudd Maelor, in 1201. Dinas Bran is just visible in the distance towards the right. *Photo: CPAT 1766-154*

Vale of Llangollen: *Llangollen* (HLCA 1152)



Llangollen from the south-east with the railway station towards the left and the bridge over the river Dee towards the centre. *Photo: CPAT 1766-01*



Bridge across the river Dee at Llangollen. *Photo: CPAT 1766-216*

Vale of Llangollen: *Dol-isaf* (HLCA 1153)



One of the country houses set within its own parkland in this part of the Vale of Llangollen. The Revd Bingley noted in the journal kept on his tour in 1798: ‘Trevor Hall, seated on its eminence, embosomed in woods, lent its aid to decorate the scene’. *Photo: CPAT 1766-21*



The Vale of Llangollen Canal and dismantled railway converging upon the river Dee, just to the east of Llangollen. *Photo: CPAT 1766-300*

Vale of Llangollen: *Trevor Uchaf* (HLCA 1154)



Aerial view of the limestone escarpment of Trevor Rocks *Photo: CPAT 89-C-53*



Trevor Uchaf viewed across the Vale of Llangollen from the south. The settlement once housed quarrymen and kilnworkers producing lime which was carried down by an incline to be loaded on to canal barges and later on to railway wagons at the foot of the slope. *Photo: CPAT 1766-370*

Vale of Llangollen: *Garth* (HLCA 1155)



Farmland on the eastern margins of Ruabon Mountain, to the north of Garth. *Photo: CPAT 1766-541*



Distant view of Garth from the south, with Trevor Hall set in its parkland in the foreground. The settlement came into existence to house quarrymen and limekiln workers in the late 18th century. *Photo: CPAT 1766-26*

Vale of Llangollen: *Cysyllte* (HLCA 1156)



Pleasure craft on the Vale of Llangollen Canal at Froncysyllte. Former limekilns, in operation from the late 18th century, line the left bank of the canal at this point, fed by limestone quarried above Froncysyllte and coal brought by canal from mines in the Ruabon area. *Photo: CPAT 1766-53*



Telford's Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, built between 1795 and 1805, and considered the finest aqueduct built in Britain, carried the canal across the river Dee. *Photo: CPAT 1766-50*

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Appendix 1: Chronological Guide

The following chronological guide is adapted from that given in the Council for British Archaeology's online British and Irish Archaeological Bibliography, available at <<http://www.biab.ac.uk/chronology.asp>>. This provides an indication of the approximate span of each period in calendar years. These dates should not be taken as definitive or absolute and may well be debated.

Palaeolithic 500,000-10,000 BC

- Lower Palaeolithic 500,000-70,000 BC
- Middle Palaeolithic 70,000-35,000 BC
- Upper Palaeolithic 35,000-10,000 BC
- Early Upper Palaeolithic 35,000-20,000 BC
- Last Glacial 23,000-15,000 BC
- Late Upper Palaeolithic 15,000-10,000 BC

Mesolithic 10,000-4000 BC

- Earlier Mesolithic 10,000-8000 BC
- Later Mesolithic 8000-4000 BC

Neolithic 4000-2300 BC

- Early Neolithic 4000-3400 BC
- Later Neolithic 3400-2300 BC

Bronze Age (BA) 2300-700 BC

- Early Bronze Age 2300-1500 BC
- Middle Bronze Age 1500-1200 BC
- Late Bronze Age 1200-700 BC

Iron Age 700 BC - AD 43

- Early Iron Age 700 BC – 400 BC
- Middle Iron Age 400 BC – 100 BC
- Late Iron Age 100 BC – AD 43

Romano-British AD 43-450

Early Medieval AD 450-1066

Medieval 1066-1547

Post-medieval 1547-

Industrial 1700-

Modern 1901-

Appendix 2: Historic Landscape types

Historic Landscape Types (generally >1ha) evident within the present-day landscape have been defined in the Vale of Llangollen historic landscape area according to the following classification, not all of which are to be found within the historic landscape area, however.

COASTAL

dune
saltmarsh
coastal marsh
mudflat

COMMUNICATIONS

canal	including towpath, wharves and associated structures
airfield/landing strip	
railway station	including goods yard
former railway station	including goods yard
communications corridor	eg adjacent railway/road or road/canal with a width of >50m including small fields etc in between

ENCLOSED LAND

assart	obvious areas of cleared ancient woodland, largely surrounded by extant wood
drained wetland	floodplain fields of various types enclosed by drainage ditches and dykes
floodplain fields	riverside fields and meadows of various shapes and sizes, liable to flood
large irregular fields	> 3ha; including irregularly enclosed moorland
large regular fields	> 3ha; imprecisely rectilinear fields without precisely straight boundaries; set out in relationship to other fields in an organised system; having the appearance of an organised or reorganised landscape
small irregular fields	< 3ha
small regular fields	< 3ha, imprecisely rectilinear; set out in relationship to other fields in a system; generally only if >3 fields in system
paddocks/closes	including farms, farmyards, gardens, singly or contiguous, or linked by shortish stretch of road > 1ha
strip fields	length:breadth ratio generally >2:1, generally in series; (generally up and down slope if on sloping land); generally only if >3 fields in system; often
reorganised strip fields	indication of former strip fields which have now been amalgamated, shown on eg tithe map or early edition of Ordnance Survey
large straight-sided fields	> 3ha, strictly straight-sided fields, as set out by surveyor, on at least 2-3 sides with irregular sides up against eg road or stream on other side
small straight-sided fields	< 3ha, strictly straight-sided fields, as set out by surveyor, on

upland encroachment nursery	at least 2-3 sides with irregular sides up against eg road or stream on other side discrete encroachment enclosed by eg moorland
MOUNTAINLAND	
open moorland enclosed moorland rock	large, polygonal/straight-sided enclosures cliff, outcrop, scree, unwooded gorge
HOSPITAL	
hospital	isolated hospital complex
INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL, RETAIL, UTILITIES	
manufacturing/processing complex former manufacturing/processing complex former mine quarry former quarry gravel pit telecommunications complex water treatment works	works; industrial park; waterworks including waste tips including sewage works
MILITARY	
barracks/training grounds	
RELIGIOUS	
cemetery	>1ha and detached from settlement
SETTLEMENT	
historic settlement core post 1880s settlement small linear settlement small nucleated settlement large country house convent	medieval to 1880 nucleated settlement large, nucleated, expansion to historic settlement; including school buildings and school grounds attached to settlement >5 houses >5 houses including house, stables, adjacent gardens and driveway detached from settlement
SPORT, RECREATION, CONSERVATION	
garden parkland golf course sports field racecourse former parkland heritage site caravan site nature reserve	including club house and ancillary buildings including school playing field, tennis courts partitioned, retaining some parkland character >2ha: hillfort, Roman fort, castle, monastery >3ha: including campsite with facilities
WATER	
natural lake artificial lake reservoir major river fishery	'atlas' river; can include shingle, banks, small islands, active erosion scarps
WETLAND AND BOG	
moss/raised bog floodplain marsh	including lowland marsh

WOODLAND, SCRUB, ORCHARD

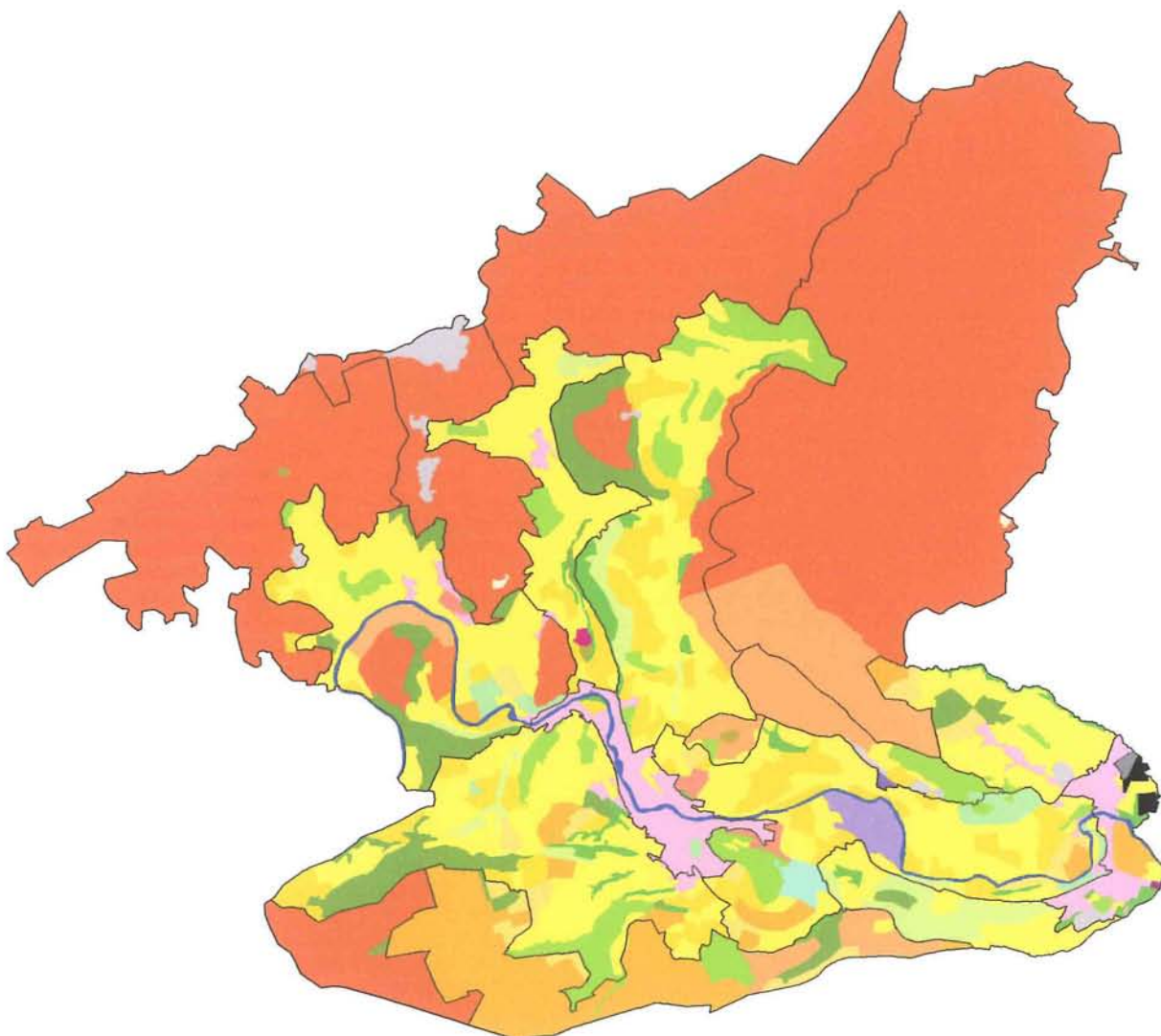
broadleaved woodland
mixed woodland
broadleaved plantation
mixed plantation
conifer plantation
sinuous broadleaved woodland
sinuous mixed woodland
sinuous conifer woodland
scrub
orchard




















Map 6

Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg

historic landscape types and character areas

1km²



- | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|---|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
|  | open moorland |  | small irregular fields |  | reorganised strip fields |  | heritage site |
|  | enclosed moorland |  | large irregular fields |  | nucleated settlement |  | caravan park |
|  | conifer plantation |  | small regular fields |  | golf course |  | quarry |
|  | mixed woodland |  | small straight-sided fields |  | parkland, garden |  | manufacturing/
processing complex |
|  | scrub |  | large straight-sided fields |  | former parkland | | |

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