Historic landscape characterisation on Llyn -

a methodological statement

GAT Projects G1449 & G1509

Report No. 287

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I love her foreshore and her mountains, her castle near the woods and her cultivated land, her water meadows, her valleys and her fountains, her white seagulls and gracious women. I love her armed men, their trained stallions, her woodland, her heroes and their homes. I love the small clover on her pastures where I was honoured with a certain joy. I love all her *broydd* to which my valour entitles me, all the wide wasteland and the wealth that hides there.

Hywel ap Owain Gwynedd (d. 1170)

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1   Background

1.1   The physical and social environments (past and present) are of fundamental importance to our understanding of the landscape. The physical environment (topography, water, soils, slope) is the skeleton on which the social environment (distribution of settlements, patterns of agriculture, road networks) is draped: it sets the conditions and boundaries within which the processes which comprise the social environment took place. The nature of relationships between the physical environment and past behaviours, of course, vary through time, culturally and from region-to-region, and the evidence for past behaviour varies accordingly. This can be defined as the historic character of an area.

1.2   The characterisation work described in this report was aimed at defining and interpreting the evidence for historical time/depth that exists in the current landscape of Llyn. It started with the identification of the general historical character of the area, and proceeded to identify important themes in that character, and the components which comprise those themes: it then went on (a) to describe the historic character of pre-defined areas of landscape in terms of those themes, and (b) to define historic character areas by way of visually and historically dominant patterns in the landscape typical of (or peculiar to) particular periods in history in particular areas. Although in no way an evaluation, it also attempted to identify areas of particular value for the historic environment, by placing them in the context of the historical dimension of the whole landscape.

1.3   Llyn is a large peninsula extending south west of the main mountain massif of Snowdonia. Topographically, it comprises a dissected plateau with outliers of harder rocks forming a number of isolated, but prominent, hills and ridges (this is looking northwards across the peninsula towards Garn Fadryn). Garn Fadryn at 371m OD is the highest point west of Yr Eifl, while the gently undulating plateau surface below the peaks is generally between 50 and 100m OD, with occasional lower areas formed by shallow valley basins, coastal margins or narrow, deeply-incised hidden valleys.

1.4   The western part of the Llyn peninsula, including Bardsey, an area extending to approximately 300 square kilometres in extent, has been included in the *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales* by Cadw, CCW and ICOMOS (Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, 1995, HLW(GW)8, pp 88-9). It contains important and well-preserved evidence of land-use and settlement from the prehistoric period onwards, which contribute significantly to the present character and appearance of this landscape, parts of which are designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Heritage Coast and Environmentally Sensitive Area ESA).

2　Structure of report

2.1　This report is intended as general methodological statement which summarises the findings and development of a methodology to characterise the historical dimension of the current landscape of Llyn. The report combines the work undertaken in two separate but linked projects.

2.2　The first project (G1449 and G1509) was carried as part of the overall historic landscape initiative currently being funded by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and ICOMOS UK. The aim was to add an historic dimension to a landscape assessment already carried out by ADAS as part of their monitoring of the effectiveness of the ESA programme. It was intended that the project should test and develop a methodology for carrying out historic landscape characterisation, building on earlier work (Countryside Council, 1994; Rippon, 1995). The results of this work are included in two unpublished GAT reports, numbers 261 (an interim) and 284.

2.3　The second project (G1495) was undertaken as part of one of CCW's pilot Landscape Assessment and Decision-making Process (Landmap) studies, which was examining the same area. The information already gathered during the ESA project was (in a different format) used as the historical aspect specialist input to that overall landscape assessment process. The results of that project are contained in GAT Report number 270.

2.4　This report has been divided into a series of sections as follows –

i) defining the purpose of the studies (section 3);

ii) defining historic character and general methodological considerations (section 4);

iii) defining the end-user requirements (section 5);

iv) defining historic character on Llyn
　　　desk-study alongside fieldwork and aerial photograph study leading to provisional **overall** impression (framework) of historic character (section 6).
　　　with the identification of potentially-important historic landscape **components** (themes), which combine into patterns which lead to character areas (section 7);

v) identifying character of different landscape types/ character areas
　　　analyse general characteristics of Llyn, and define how areas differ from each other, this includes characterising already-defined areas (section 8),
　　　as well as defining 'character areas' using the date gathered (section 9);

vi) management implications
　　　at what level should management be carried out, how to define components which can be managed, and monitoring (section 10);

vii) conclusions and recommendations
　　　review methodology, resource implications, scale of mapping, timescale *etc.* (section 11)

viii) suggested methodology for future work (section 12);

ix) series of supporting information
　　　glossaries, bibliography, maps and illustrations (sections 13 and 14 and appendices)

3 Purpose of the studies

3.1 Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA)

3.1.1 The project (G1449 and G1509) which began examining the question of historic characterisation on Llyn was begun in November, 1996, and probably has its origins in a suggestion put forward by Cadw that, as a follow-up to the Historic Landscapes Register (see above, 1.4), *'More work could be done on the characterisation of those identified historic landscapes that lie within ESAs, particularly with a view to reconciling these with the recent work on landscape types within each ESA.* (for further details, see GAT Report no 284).

3.1.2 The project was, therefore, intended at least partly as a contribution towards the overall historic landscape initiative currently being funded by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, Countryside Council for Wales and ICOMOS UK, and the first stage of data-gathering was carried out in conjunction with a student placement at Countryside Council for Wales, under the supervision of Richard Kelly, Historic Landscape Project Officer, CCW.

3.1.3 The Llyn Peninsula Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) was designated in 1988 by the Secretary of State for Wales under provisions made in the Agriculture Act 1986 (Section 18). The ESA scheme aims to conserve and enhance the landscape, wildlife and historic interest of the area.

3.1.4 In each ESA, an environmental monitoring programme has been established to help assess whether the Scheme meets its overall aims and objectives. Each ESA has been subject to a landscape assessment, which has resulted in it being sub-divided into a series of landscape types. For each ESA Landscape Type, the important elements and features are defined, and objectives and prescriptions drawn up for their conservation.

3.1.5 In this instance, the project (G1449) took as a starting point the Welsh Office Agriculture Department's document *Lleyn Peninsula Environmentally Sensitive Area - Landscape Assessment* (1995), which sets out the description and key characteristics of the landscape in the Lleyn Peninsula ESA, according to a series of defined Landscape Types. These are summarised in GAT Report no. 284.

3.1.6 It was clear that the ADAS landscape assessment did not take sufficient account of the historical dimension of the landscape, and therefore the impact of the ESA designation on elements and features relating to the historical dimension could not be adequately monitored. The project set out, therefore, to try to push the notion of historic landscape towards the centre of ESA management, based on a characterisation of the different landscapes already established

3.1.7 To achieve this, the project had to provide a base-line description of the landscape's historic character (including its component parts), against which future decisions could be taken and effects measured, cross-referenced to the ESA Landscape Types drawn up by ADAS in 1998 (and revised 1995). The exercise was not, however, designed to be an evaluation of the relative importance of the landscape areas: rather it was concerned with the protection and management, and possibly some enhanced conservation, of the historical dimension of the designated ESA landscape.

3.1.8 The project, therefore, had three main aims - (a) to contribute to our understanding of Llyn as an area of identified historic landscape; (b) to aid ADAS (now FRCA's) monitoring of the effectiveness of the ESA system of farming conservation; and (c) to test a methodology for characterising historic landscape.

3.1.9 GAT Report numbers 261 and 284 contain the results of this work in more detail.

3.2 Landscape and decision-making process (Landmap)

3.2.1 In November, 1996, CCW published for consultation The Welsh Landscape; our inheritance and its future protection and enhancement. This contained an annex outlining an approach and process for landscape assessment and decision making, now referred to as Landmap. The Landmap process underwent a pilot phase during April – November, 1997, and one of three area selected for piloting the process was Llyn: this was a chosen for a number of reasons including its areas of coastal lowland contrasting with uplands; its designations (already mentioned) as AONB, Heritage Coast and ESA; its identification as an area of outstanding historic landscape interest; Welsh language and culture; and the need for visitor management.

3.2.2   The Landmap pilots assessed seven broad aspects of landscape – geology and landform; vegetation; the visual, sensory and spiritual; historical; rural land-use; settlement and development; and artistic associations and folklore.

3.2.3   The Welsh Archaeological Trusts were taken on as aspect specialists to provide information and advice on the historic dimension of the landscapes within the pilot area. This Trust carried out that function on Llyn (under project number G1495), where it also served on the local steering group.

3.2.4   The timing of GAT's project (see above) looking at historical characterisation coincided with the start of the Landmap pilot, and it became clear at an early stage that the information that was being collected for the former was in a form, and at a level, which would also be compatible with the latter.

3.2.5   A decision was thus taken to expand the characterisation project in order to take account of the needs of Landmap which was also concerned with non-agricultural land-uses on Llyn, such as settlement, roads, industrial areas and so on. This was achieved principally by expanding the themes which were examined (see section 6 below).

3.2.6   Due to time restrictions, only seventeen discrete historic landscape character areas were delineated and described (see appendix iv). These were areas where historical components and character were probably most dominant, but it was sufficient to demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach to historic landscape characterisation and has since been further refined (see section 11).

3.2.7   GAT Report number 270 contains the results of this work in more detail.

3.3   *Other*

3.3.1   During the projects described above, and in associated presentations, discussions with other countryside managers, planners and others , the potential relevance of the work to wider landscape conservation or planning management, such as unitary authorities' unitary development plans and countryside strategies, has become clear.

4 Historic landscape characterisation – general considerations

4.1 History in the landscape

4.1.1 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 man's activities and 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 various characteristics of a landscape interrelate and may, in some cases, overlap.

4.1.2 The historical dimension of landscape is usually described as the time/depth dimension: it is concerned with the chronological structure of the landscape, and in fact it might be useful to view it as having two dimensions, time (where the emphasis is on change and continuity) and space (where the emphasis is on patterns at different scales, complexity and diversity). In the landscape, one can discern a series of chronological horizons, some appear now to be isolated while others can be seen to be earlier or later in relation to each other. By recording, mapping and analysing the evidence in this way, the development of the landscape over time can be seen and described.

4.1.3 The evidence for these horizons occurs in features or elements (such as relict archaeological sites, buried remains, buildings and earthworks, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas and so on), and the information held in these features and the relationships between them (including the intervening spaces) provide a record of the way in which the landscape has evolved over time.

4.2 Historic landscape character

4.2.1 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.

4.2.2 Characterisation 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 a unified approach to describing and understanding the environment (Countryside Commission *et al*, 1997, 4). Ultimately, in order to be of any practical use, this has to be translated into the management of physical things.

4.2.3 It was considered that Llyn represented a good opportunity to test a variety of approaches, some of which had been initially developed elsewhere (for example, Countryside Commission 1994, Rippon 1995). Recent studies in England, such as the Cotswold AONB Historic Landscape Type Characterisation, are based on the principal of *the predominant form of the present landscape [which] is identified principally by the existing patterns of enclosures within certain areas.*

4.2.4 It is probably true to say that, as Llyn is a predominantly agricultural landscape, the natural topography (hills, coast, valleys, plains), and current land-cover are, to most people, the most dominant characteristics in its landscape. However, closer inspection reveals that field walls and patterns, settlements, routeways, relict archaeology, industrial remains and ornamental and leisure uses to be important too. Visual terms used to describe such elements might include conspicuous, evident or even missing.

4.2.5 It is necessary to quantify the contribution that particular components of the historic landscape make to the present landscape. These are features/characteristics which contribute most to the appearance of an area of landscape: a list of typical examples might include field patterns, boundary types, farms and farm buildings, other settlements /buildings, historic land-use including woodland, industry, roads/ trackways/railways, and different types of upstanding archaeological monuments (as well as buried archaeology and findspots). At the first stage, we must define (describe, quantify, and assess the contribution of) the evidence for history in the landscape, and then we can go on to decide what is critical to the appearance and character of the landscape.

4.2.6 Historic character can be most easily defined in terms of historically dominant elements. These are features which, either singly or in groups, can be seen to dominate certain zones of landscape, whilst being less obvious or even absent from others: defining and describing these provides a way forward towards characterising areas of landscape.

4.2.7 The historic character of an area is formed through a combination of key (dominant) historic elements, and where these are distinctive (which does not necessarily equate with importance or good), the historic character of an area can be defined.

4.2.8 For descriptive purposes, historic landscape character within an area must be coherent across a range of (historic landscape) topics (or themes). In some cases, one characteristic (e.g. area of relict archaeological remains, pattern of stone-walled fields) may be over-riding: in other cases, it may be a combination of two or more less-dominant but strong characteristics (e.g. scattered settlement pattern of cottages with small, regular pattern of fields); in other cases, there may be no clear pattern amongst any of the characterising elements and this in itself may the 'character' of the area (see below section, 8).

4.2.9 However, in order to define areas where historic landscape characteristics might be distinctive, first it is necessary to gain an overall impression of the historical depth of the Llyn landscape. This provided an overall historic landscape framework character within which the descriptions of the different Landscape Types and historic character areas could be fitted, and against which the differing characters could be compared.

5   General historic character of Llyn

5.1   For the most part, Llyn is a quilt of small-scale, intricate pasture fields sewn together by miles of *cloddiau*, walls and hedges, draped over a rolling, plunging, climbing skeleton of valleys and hills, coastline and plateaux. It is in the main an enclosed landscape, overshadowed in places by looming hills and giving out on to open cliff tops; small and irregular fields are mainly green pasture, with areas of yellow and brown arable splashed across them. Small pockets of woodland give height, variety and colour and add a sense of shelter, while areas of heather and grass moorland, many the result of poor past management, create areas of open, expansive uplands.

5.2   Routeways are principally winding, often deeply-incised, lanes, with species-rich deep hedgerows and verges, which twist and turn giving constantly-changing views (where views can be had) and perceptions. The twists and turns reflect earlier (and now often disappeared) landscape patterns of fields and settlements: sharp right-angles might follow a medieval pattern of strip fields, while curving routes might indicate an even earlier (prehistoric) curvilinear pattern of fields. Footpaths are particularly interesting in that many also follow patterns now lost. This is in contrast with more recent (turnpike, nineteenth century) roads which head straight off across the landscape towards their destinations.

5.3   There is a pattern of dispersed settlement, with farm complexes lying alongside lanes or at the end of narrow tracks, apparently randomly scattered but many actually representing the remnants (perhaps in name only) of medieval townships. Several isolated churches also bear witness to the settlement of the medieval countryside. There are relatively few nucleated (village) settlements, and many of these include disproportionate numbers of modern council houses.

5.4   Above the densely-packed fields rises a series of upland blocks which are often blanketed by large areas of upstanding, relict archaeological remains, mainly settlement- and agriculture-related and prehistoric and medieval in date. The importance of these to both the professional archaeologist and the enquiring visitor, more used to swathes of arable and buried remains, cannot be over-estimated. In between, there are girdles of small, regular, stone-walled fields which are the result of enclosure of the commons in the last century.

5.5   The earliest evidence for occupation is in the form of finds of flints (the result of tool manufacture) on headlands on both the north and south coasts; apart from these sites, however, the area is, historically, remarkably poor in terms of artefacts.

5.6   In the last few years evidence has begun to emerge of former settlement in areas which were previously blank: detailed survey has begun to reveal the existence of sites surviving still as earthworks particularly in marginal areas and on hilltops, while there is a growing body of evidence, in the form of crop- and parch-marks, of settlement on the hillslopes and lower-lying ground which exist only as buried remains.

5.7   Farms form the basic settlement blocks of the area: these are usually family-owned larger or smaller conglomerations of buildings in a single location; barns in the outfield areas are virtually unknown in the area. The variety in terrain is reflected in the agricultural land-uses: the moorland environments are poor, reserved for the rearing and fattening of sheep and a few cattle. Below these are temporary and permanent grasslands, while cereals and other fodder crops are restricted to the well-drained soils further west. The relatively small size of holdings throughout the area is reflected in the proportion of holdings that MAFF would regard as being worthy of only part-time operation.

5.8   The area is characterised by its general lack of modern artefacts, especially once beyond the main centres of population and away from the industrial north coast: there are the occasional housing estate and farm buildings, a hidden quarry and a wood-mill, but no factory complexes, no semi-urban sprawls of shops or industrial estates. The one concession to the twentieth century are the (now all-too-characteristic) permanent and transient caravan parks. This adds to the feeling of remoteness and perhaps isolation (in space and time) from the modern industrial century.

5.9   There are few ancient or semi-ancient woodlands in the area, and those that exist are generally limited to the incised valleys: there are no stretches of open water. Language and the institutions which support and rely on it are also key elements in the human landscape of Llyn which have tangible roots in the historic landscape.

5.10   Perhaps the most recent chapter in Llyn's landscape history concerns the value in which it has been held over the past few decades: much of the area is Heritage Coast and a large proportion of it is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: it also contains a National Nature Reserve, several Sites of Special Scientific Interest and a number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The whole of it is also, of course, an Environmentally Sensitive Area.

6 Development of historic landscape themes (processes)

6.1 General

6.1.1 The process of familiarisation with the landscape, involving a mixture of literature review, fieldwork and aerial photographic study, led to a basic appreciation of the historic character and distinctiveness of the local landscapes which served to underpin the subsequent, more detailed, work.

6.1.2 During this stage of the work, in examining several sources of information including the regional sites and monuments record, archive maps in the record office, aerial photographs, and a number of unpublished research works, it soon became apparent that some way had to be found to marshal the huge and growing amounts of available data and make them relevant to our purpose. This led to the idea of using historic landscape 'themes'.

6.1.3 The reasoning behind this was that all elements relating to the historic dimension of the landscape can be classified as relating to one of a number of themes, dependent on the historical processes which had brought them about. A working list of such processes (themes) was drawn up which consisted of agriculture, settlement, industry, relict archaeology, ornamental, communication, military, coastal, ceremonial/religious, and leisure.

6.1.4 In order to test the validity of this, the list was tested against various other indices of site types, including the regional sites and monuments record (where all 255 site types (*i.e.* historic landscape elements) could be allocated to one of these themes), uplands survey site types (where most of the types could!), listed building lists, as well as various other lists (including one compiled specially for the project which resulted from a detailed study of ground- and aerial photographs which listed all the features visible in a number of photographs of the area which could possibly be considered as 'historic'). This was thought to be a reasonable premise on which to proceed and has proved, with a few alterations, quite effective.

6.1.5 The appearance of 'relict archaeology' may at first seem slightly at odds with the other themes as there is cross-over (e.g. hut groups could fall within settlement and relict archaeology), but it was felt after due consideration that the presence (or conversely absence) of upstanding archaeological remains is a landscape characteristic in its own right, in the same way that settlement types and field patterns are, especially in marginal areas such as Llyn. Buried archaeology was also be considered as part of this theme.

6.1.6 Obviously, not all of these themes were of equal significance in terms of the historic characterisation of ESA landscape types, for example, or for subsequent management. Agriculture and relict archaeology, it was decided, were probably most significant in terms of characterising the rural landscape, and certainly of future management within the ESA and that work concentrated on these (especially for management) whilst obviously considering the other themes.

6.1.7 However, settlement, communications, industry and the other themes were equally as important and relevant to Landmap. The relative importance of the various themes to other initiatives will obviously vary, and this flexibility is considered on the main strengths to this type of approach to historical characterisation compared to the use of single landscape types used repetitively (see above).

6.1.8 The above list does not pretend to be exhaustive or definitive. Further themes are also doubtless relevant to historic character in other areas, or to meet the different demands of different end-users. Some of these are currently being examined by the Trust in its role as cultural aspect specialists for the ongoing completion of the Landmap pilot project to cover Gwynedd (GAT project G1539, report forthcoming). These include work and occupation (in this instance largely agricultural), language (the continuing everyday use of the Welsh language is responsible for much of the local feeling of place), land ownership, social institutions and associative elements in the landscape (where place may be connected to historical works of art, poetry, literature or other expressions of culture).

6.1.9 These themes were examined individually in the following ways.

6.2 Individual themes

Fig. 1. Fossilised medieval strip fields on Uwchmynydd

6.2.1 Agriculture

6.2.1.1 Here the aim was to try to define and record the survival of agricultural (*i.e.* field) planning (or lack of it) at different periods in the past, as well as establish phases of succession and replacement, to try to determine which areas of the current landscape reflect use in various previous periods.

6.2.1.2 Llyn was examined for recognisable field types, considering *field patterns* (irregular / intermediate / regular (square, rectangular) / none discernible); *field size* (small / medium / large / na); scale (large or small); and whether the pattern was *intact or fragmented.*

6.2.1.3 Where possible, we tested these against early maps and plans (i.e. late 18th and early 19th century estate surveys), but this was necessarily a rapid overview. Appendix I contains the working list of types that was drawn up during the project (although this did change during the project, and may not be directly relevant other areas).

6.2.1.4 This was mapped in much the same way as others have done before: in the absence of a computerised system, having drawn up a working list of field types, a colour was allocated to each type and, using aerial photographs and some fieldwork, a 1:25,000 OS map was coloured accordingly. Fields were assigned to a category by considering it in its surrounding context (*i.e.* they were not considered individually, but within the pattern they formed in their immediate context, so that perhaps three – five fields would be coloured at once).

6.2.1.5 Work was begun on examining *field boundaries* (dry stone wall / hedge (thick, laid, intermittent) / with/without trees / clawdd / fencing / post and wire fence / dyke) and *buildings* (farms / inner outbuildings / outer outbuildings (construction, position)), but unfortunately time and resources ran out before this work was very far advanced.

6.2.2 Relict archaeology

6.2.2.1 The regional sites and monuments record covering the study area contained information on 520 sites of archaeological/historical interest. This included sites which varied in date from the mesolithic to 19th century, in function from inscribed stone to barn, and in form from findspots to stone buildings.

6.2.2.2 In order to make the data manageable and capable of being mapped at a 'landscape' scale, mirroring the approach to agriculture described above, the concept of 'historic contexts' was developed. An historic context could be described as an important theme, pattern or trend in the historical development of an area at a particular time in prehistory/history, which is reflected in the surviving archaeological/landscape evidence. (Rather late in the project, the idea of using this approach for all the themes was considered, and this is something the Trust will look at in its next historic characterisation project).

6.2.2.3 Most areas reflect multiple land uses and physical evolution over many years, and therefore more than one historic context will usually be associated with any particular area. However, some areas contain particularly good or typical evidence of one or a few historic contexts, which can be defined as a combination of *period* and *function.* Twenty four simple historic contexts were defined (see appendix I), using the criteria of period (*i.e.* early prehistoric, late prehistoric/Romano-British, medieval, post-medieval, modern, unassigned) and function (based on reducing the 255 site types in the SMR to 6 broad categories, along the lines outlined above for themes (*i.e.* settlement and land-use, religious and ritual, industrial, military, communications and leisure). Again, these historic contexts are not definitive, and in other areas or for other purposes, other contexts may be more appropriate.

6.2.2.4 The ESA Landscape Type areas were digitised, and the information from the SMR was printed out in FastCad against this background in various formats, including all earthwork sites, sites by period, prehistoric sites surviving as earthworks and so on.

6.2.2.5 For management purposes within the ESA, it was determined that *form* might also be relevant, and so a current form category was given to each site judged from SMR information, local knowledge and professional judgement (*i.e.* earthwork / relict, building or structure in use, find only, cropmark / parchmark, not known / unlocated / placename). The use of this data is described in more detail in GAT Report 284.

6.2.3 Settlement

Fig. 2. Relict archaeological site (hut group - centre) in improved fields.

6.2.3.1 Settlements are the building blocks of the landscape: in strictly archaeological /historical terms these are probably more important than field patterns as they can potentially provide more information on the economic basis which dictates the field pattern (type), but in landscape terms they are also a vital element in defining and characterising an area. Of principal importance are the date, form, plan and type of settlement.

6.2.3.2 Settlement is based on exploitation and the need to make a living: this includes agricultural exploitation, industrial exploitation and commercial exploitation. Settlements can thus include farms and outbuildings, cottages, towns, rural building clusters, terraces, shops, churches, chapels, inns, industrial buildings and so on.

6.2.3.3 While it was generally sufficient for the Llyn ESA study to make only general comments regarding settlement patterns, an attempt was made to map the degree of dispersal or nucleation of settlement, as well as describe the individual circumstance of settlements where known, for Landmap purposes. Even so, the level of detail employed could obviously be magnified as required. For example, the modern town of Pwllheli was counted as a single character area, whereas it could easily be divided, for example, into the 'old town' (corresponding to the former medieval borough lands), and the 'new' town developed by Solomon Andrews at the turn of the century. (It could probably be divided up even further.) The scale depends on what is required of the end product.

6.2.3.4 Heeding the advice given by Countryside Council (see above), it was thought necessary to start with the modern settlement pattern.

6.2.3.5 The predominant settlement form, as in much of Wales, is dispersed settlement, and attempts to characterise this are, in effect, measurements of the degree of dispersal. The present settlement pattern visible in the landscape was examined principally using aerial photographic and map coverage. Analysis considered first of all *degree* (nucleated / dispersed / isolated), then *density* (rural (farms) / semi-rural (villages) / urban (town)) and then *components* (house, terraces, mill, church, chapel, shop etc.). Finally, a series of seven discernible types (cut down from the original ten - see appendix I)) was drawn up.

6.2.3.6 Density of settlement was established by examining each kilometre square, and recording the principal settlement type present in that square, as well as by estimating the number of currently-occupied dwellings per kilometre square.

6.2.3.7 This is obviously fairly restricted in what it tells us about the development of settlement from the medieval period onwards, but added to this was information on the present place-names of medieval townships as well as a certain amount of information from unpublished research work carried out in the 1940s on land allocation on the 1840 tithe maps, and the results of a fairly detailed survey of Llyn carried out in 1947-8 by the Rural Survey of Wales which visited, as far as could be discerned, every occupied house in the area. As a result, certain character areas could be defined and described for Landmap.

6.2.3.8 It was considered that equally as important are *building types* (vernacular architecture tradition), *building materials* (type of stone, brick etc.) (*i.e.* local distinctiveness) and obviously *period*, but detailed analysis could not be undertaken due to lack of time and readily-available data.

6.2.4 *Industry*

6.2.4.1 Industrial remains are relatively uncommon on Llyn (there are only two working quarries in the area), and only six areas were noted which could be said to be dominated by industrial archaeological remains: small, disused quarries marked by the OS were ignored.

6.2.4.2 The areas are Trefor (granite quarry, still working, with a system of inclines, piers etc. and an attached quarry community): Nant Gwrtheyrn (granite quarry with a system of inclines, jetties etc. with associated village now a language centre): Nefyn (former series of terraced stone quarries east of the town): Mynydd Rhiw (neolithic stone axe factory at its north-east end, while in C19 Benallt at south-west end was most productive manganese mine in Britain - series of mines, railways, aerial ropeways etc.): Llanengan/Bwlch (important lead-mining complex - underground workings, shafts, chimneys, adits etc.): Llanbedrog (coastal granite (Cambrian) quarries - see also Pwllheli-Llanbedrog tramway): and Nanhoron (small stone quarry, still active)

6.2.4.3 The approximate extent of visible and former remains was mapped on OS 1:25,000 maps, using local knowledge and some documentary evidence.

Fig. 3. Scattered farms are a common settlement pattern.

6.2.4.4 In addition, other areas formerly had major industries which do not appear to have left their mark on the landscape: these are Nefyn/Porth Dinllaen (formerly a centre for sailing vessels, import and export trade): Porth Neigwl (area of ship-wrecks, small jetties and brickworks) and Abersoch (small but important harbour). These could and should be considered by other initiatives if relevant.

6.2.5 Communications

6.2.5.1 The approach to this theme resembled that of agriculture. The main communication routes applicable to the study area were coastal and road/trackway (there being no canals, and railways only in the eastern part of the area).

6.2.6.2 Analysis considered roads as either trunk, county, minor, lanes (straight/winding), tracks (straight/winding) or footpath straight/winding) only, along with an estimate of their date. These were again simply marked on to an OS map at 1:25,000 scale, according to which colour each type had been allocated.

6.2.6 Other

6.2.6.1 A number of other (relatively small) areas were considered important in historic landscape terms, mainly from Landmap rather than the ESA perspective. Local knowledge of the area has led to the definition of a number of historic parks and gardens, and three WWII military sites (an airfield, a bombing range and an area of defences) as being relevant.

6.2.6.2 Other themes which might be relevant to a full historic characterisation on Llyn include leisure (caravan parks, tourist attractions) and coastal, but these were not considered by either study due to time restrictions.

Fig. 4. Deeply-incised lanes are characteristic of much of Llyn.

7 Application of characterisation to existing landscape types (ESA)

7.1 As the principle means of identifying historic character is by working out from sites/features, to groups of features (patterns) to landscapes which then need to be related to the ESA landscape types, mapping was considered the most appropriate method of showing and analysing data.

7.2 The scale of mapping chosen was 1:25,000. This was considered ideal as, for example, the various types of field patterns or settlement patterns discernible in the landscape were defined at this scale, and yet it was large enough a scale to allow for fieldwork, aerial photograph transcription fieldwork *etc.*

7.3 The previous section has described how a series of types was established for the various themes, which were subsequently mapped (these types are included in appendix I).

7.4 The results of these mapped data were compared against FRCA's ESA Landscape Types (simply by the relatively unsophisticated use of overlays in most cases), and then combined to give a description of the historic character of each type. An example of this (for the Hills and Knolls type, D) is given in appendix III.

7.5 For *agriculture*, the mapped were compared against the ESA Landscape Types to determine areas of dominant patterns within the Types.

7.6 For *relict archaeology*, as has already been stated, the Landscape Types had already been digitised, and the data from the SMR was then printed out in various combinations on maps showing these areas. The results of this exercise were quite interesting, if not entirely a surprise. For example, the majority of prehistoric and medieval sites which survive as earthwork features fell within the 'Hills and knolls' and 'Moorland basin' areas, while the vast majority of cropmarks did not.

7.7 Nevertheless, it was interesting that pockets of relict, upstanding sites do exist within areas generally considered to be heavily-improved, and it is obviously important that, in countryside management terms, efforts should be concentrated on preserving these.

7.8 *Settlement* patterns were established by examining each kilometre square, and recording the principal settlement type present in that square, as well as by estimating the number of currently-occupied dwellings per kilometre square. This was overlain on a map showing the Landscape Types, and general conclusions about settlement patterns in each area were drawn and described.

7.9 Areas of industrial archaeological importance were mapped using local knowledge and some supporting documentary sources. Again, this was overlain on a map showing the Landscape Types, and a general description was drawn up.

7.10 *Communication* routes were categorised, mapped and examined against an overlay showing the Landscape Types. Comments were then included in the general description.

7.11 *Other* themes were described under the relevant Landscape Type as appropriate.

7.12 Full details of the background to this project and the remainder of the historic landscape descriptions are in GAT Report numbers 261 and 284.

8 Application of characterisation to defining character areas

8.1 The methodology used to arrive at historic character areas must analyse the extent to which historical elements survive in the landscape, and how important they are in reflecting its history and character. To achieve this, the relevant evidence (as far as it is available) must first be mapped and drawn together.

8.2 Defining significance should not be confused with evaluation and assigning a degree of 'more' or 'less' importance to an area, rather it is concerned with actually defining an area of character by allocating 'significance' to a distinct part of the landscape (*i.e.* deciding that there is something which can be described as an entity).

8.3 For an area to have historical integrity, the various (human) characteristics that shaped the land in the past should be present today in recognisably the same way as they were historically, principally in the form of tangible sites, monuments or other features (components). The general character and feeling of the historical period (or periods) must have been retained. An area's period(s) of significance is/are the benchmark for measuring whether subsequent changes contribute to its historic evolution or alter its historic integrity. The 'condition' of the area and its ability to convey significance are perhaps the most significant factors on which decisions are to be based.

8.4 The definition of areas of historic character entails two principal activities – (i) defining an area of 'significance' (*i.e.* a unit of description), including assessing its historical integrity and selecting boundaries; and (ii) compiling the description. These depend upon the presence of tangible landscape features and the evidence of the processes, cultural and natural, that have shaped the landscape. The presence of significant historic landscape characteristics should be confirmed. (A later step might involve comparing areas which display comparable historic character if some form of evaluation is required). Character areas may also contain smaller, designed landscapes that have importance (*e.g.* formal parks or gardens).

8.5 The historic character of an area is formed through a combination of key (dominant) historic elements, and where these are <u>distinctive</u> (which does not necessarily equate with importance or good) a character area can be defined -

Components	Distinctive character	Character area
Boundaries	Field patterns	
Archaeological sites	Relict landscapes	
Historic buildings	Settlement patterns	Combination of one, two or more distinctive characters creates a coherent character area.
Industrial features	Industrial areas	
Routeways	Mosaic of routes	

8.6 A historic landscape character area can be considered as an area which has a relatively coherent character across a range of (historic landscape) topics (themes). In some cases, one characteristic (*e.g.* area of relict archaeological remains, pattern of stone-walled fields) may be over-riding; in other cases, it may be a combination of two or more less-dominant but strong characteristics (*e.g.* scattered settlement pattern of cottages with small, regular pattern of fields); in other cases, there may be no clear pattern amongst any of the characterising elements and this in itself may the 'character' of the area.

8.7 Briefly, historic character areas could be defined as either

a) areas which embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or theme, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

b) areas which show organisation of space either during one particular period or through time. This may be visible in the arrangement of fields or siting of settlements; or a pattern of land-use which represents traditional practices unique to a community; or in the sheer density of remains relating to either a single theme/period or succession of periods/themes; or contain buildings etc distinctive in style, design or method of construction; or a transportation system reflecting an important innovation in engineering, etc:

8.8   The boundaries of an area must encompass the area containing particular characteristics, and contain components which express the characteristics of the historic landscape. They must encompass a concentration of historical landscape characteristics which are either synchronic or diachronic (or both – see above), and contain land which has either historical significance or integrity. Historical landscape characteristics should predominate the area and occur throughout - peripheral areas lacking these should be ascribed a different character area.

8.9   Edges should be appropriate to the location, historical significance and integrity of the area, and can include legal (historical and current) boundaries, boundary demarcations, rights of way, natural features (topography), edges of new developments, drawn lines or vegetation.

8.10   The Trust' report on the historic aspect of Landmap (prepared for CCW/Cyngor Gwynedd – GAT Report no. 270) contains detailed descriptions of 18 such character areas (the number was restricted by available time and resources, and does not indicate the historical depth and complexity of the Llyn landscape.

8.11   Examples of two of these character areas are contained in appendix IV, in the format (and with the numbering) that was specifically required by Landmap (this format could easily be restructured, once the basic data has been collated). These are areas G/H/2 (central Uwchmynydd), selected principally for its dominant and rare field pattern, and G/H/5 (Mynydd Rhiw), selected for its relict archaeology and distinctive upland pattern of small stone-walled fields.

8.12   Full details of the background to the project and the character areas defined are contained in GAT Report no. 270.

9   Managing character

9.1   This section is intended to be indicative only, as the main project reports (261, 284 and 270) deal with management in much more detail.

9.2   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 have identified what is important and significant in historic landscape terms. It should also be noted that now we can influence the way in which the landscape evolves from this point on, and that is significant in itself. It is the overall historic character of the present landscape (as evidenced in important and significant groupings and patterns) which we should aim at retaining, but in order to do this we must manage at the component level. We must identify, conserve and enhance the local and regional historic diversity of our landscapes.

Management of   →   Retain character   →   Conserve diversity and character areas
components -
field walls, buildings,
archaeological sites *etc.*

9.3   The reports on characterisation for management within the ESA (GAT Reports 261 and 284) contain a series of management guidelines and recommendations. The report also identified ways in which the management recommendations might be put in place by project officers, particularly when farms are entering the ESA scheme. Essentially, a list of landscape component types was established for each of the themes (for example, *cloddiau*, field walls, hedges, ancient woodlands *etc.* for agriculture, and relict landscape types, cropmarks and parchmarks and findspots for relict archaeological features), and a set of broad management guidelines drawn up. It suggested the idea of assessing farms for their historic landscape interest, introducing the notion of categorising sites and the need for detailed management plans for the more important (significant) landscape component sites.

9.4   The report also suggested ways in which the effectiveness of this management in conserving the historic landscape character of an area could be monitored, essentially by establishing decent base-line data, and regular visiting (either on foot or by air).

9.5   The report has been subsequently circulated to both Cadw and FRCA for their comments, and the work was followed by both an open day (for potential new ESA farmers) and a training course (for FRCA ESA project officers). It remains to be seen how this will be carried forward into the new All Wales Agri-Environment Scheme.

9.6   It is probably fair to say that the Landmap pilot exercise was management-driven (GAT Report no. 270). The intention of Landmap is to carry out a thorough assessment of a landscape area, generating landscape policies, landscape strategies, management and design guidelines and action programmes. These are based on landscape policy areas, formed by the combination of information and advice from all the specialist aspects (see above, section 3.2).

9.7   When the aspect specialists drew up their individual areas, brief notes on 'tolerance to change' and 'management strategies' (see appendix IV) were drawn up. These are amplified and drawn together into general landscape policies *etc.* at a later stage.

10 Conclusions and recommendations

10.1 Both of the pilot projects described above (ESA characterisation for management and Landmap) were considered successful. They gathered and stored historic landscape data in a format and at a level which was well-suited to various management initiatives which could put the data and management recommendations into practice. The studies, therefore, had direct practical application. It is recommended that historic landscape characterisation is continued as an effective management tool for the management of historic landscapes.

10.2 The most obvious drawback was that neither study was computer (*i.e.* GIS) -based. One of the CCW Landmap pilots has been GIS-based (using Mapinfo and OS digital data), and this has clearly demonstrated the advantages of a computerised GIS-based system for mapping and analysing landscape-based data. It is suggested that the preferred option for any subsequent historic landscape characterisation project should be GIS-based (resources and access to data permitting).

10.3 The map scale used was 1:25,000: this was considered ideal in that it showed all the field boundaries and settlements, roads and routes and much of the relict archaeology, and yet was manageable for both fieldwork and reports. It can also be readily transferred to the regional sites and monuments records at this scale. It is recommended that any future historic landscape characterisation work is mapped at this level.

10.4 In order to be most effective, it is better if the number of personnel involved in any project is restricted to the minimum. Obviously it will necessary to consult with various aspect experts, but ideally a two-person team should carry out the project work in order to achieve consistency and professional integrity. (Landscape assessment, as carried out by the Countryside Commission, insists on two people undertaking the exercise.) It is also important to try to build on previous work, by using the same team for subsequent work: this is largely because of the different approach and 'mind set' that is required to deal with issues at a landscape (rather than site-specific) level.

10.5 Character areas are defined by consideration of the dominant elements of more than one theme, and in addition they can be tailored individually to specific areas. They are this flexible and adaptable to both different areas and different types of management initiative. An approach using 'type categories', as are being used elsewhere, are considered too complex, inflexible and non-specific.

10.6 It is considered that the approach to characterisation described in this report has the following advantages over landscape type characterisation -

i) it compiles data in more than one format and is thus more flexible;
ii) the 'areas' can be drawn up according to the differing requirements of initiatives;
iii) it allows detailed description of different areas, all of which are probably unique in some way;
iv) landscape 'types' invariably involve internal discussion of elements such as roads and settlement densities anyway;
v) it is unambiguous (whereas, for example, the Cotswold AONB landscape type B1, 'ancient unenclosed common pasture', may overlap with type C4 'unenclosed areas of common permanent pasture derived from areas of ancient woodland denuded within historical record').

10.7 However, further work needs to be carried out, perhaps comparing the two, before any definite conclusions can be drawn.

11   Suggested model methodology for historic landscape characterisation

1 Liaison

The initial stage of the project will comprise two elements – i) to inform unitary authorities, CCW and other key agencies in the area of the intentions of the project and to seek their assistance and co-operation, primarily through the provision of OS digital map data; and ii) to gather information on all existing landscape designations, management opportunities and previous landscape assessments. Sources of local information will be established. Liaison will, of course, continue throughout the project.

2 Scoping

Rapid appraisal of the relevant parts of the SMR, aerial photographs and published sources, as well as limited fieldwork, will take place to allow the main historic landscape themes to be evaluated, and working ideas and area types to be drafted. This should lead to a basic appreciation of the historic character and distinctiveness of the local landscape which can serve to underpin the selection, delineation and description of historic character areas.

3 Desk based assessment

It is envisaged that the landscape 'themes' identified during the pilot project will be the basis for the characterisation work (*i.e.* agriculture, settlement, relict archaeology, industrial archaeology, communications, designed landscapes and other – see GAT report 261, pages 41-43). However, these will be open to revision and change as different projects take place in different areas.

Agriculture   The 1:25000 maps of the area and corresponding APs will be analysed for the identification of field pattern and settlement blocks (relict medieval strips, post medieval fields, 19th century enclosures). The analysis will consider field patterns, field size, scale, whether the pattern is intact or fragmented, field boundaries and buildings. Fieldwork will also be required.

This will be supported by information from a rapid trawl of the available cartographic sources in the SMR, at NLW and the local record office (the report on the project should indicate the scope of this resource). Particular use will be made of the OS surveyor's 2 inch preparatory survey drawings, early estate maps and Enclosure maps and awards. There is no intention however to carry out either fresh research or an exhaustive search, but to use this source material to refine the information visible in the present landscape.

Relict archaeology   The regional Sites and Monuments Record covering the study area is the most comprehensive and up-to-date source of information for this theme, and includes sites which vary in date from the mesolithic to 19th century, in function from inscribed stone to barn and in form from findspots to stone buildings. The need to map information at a 'landscape' scale, mirroring the approach to settlement and agriculture described elsewhere, led in the pilot study to the development of the concept of 'historic contexts'. Twenty three simple historic contexts were defined then using the criteria of period (*i.e.* early prehistoric, late prehistoric/Romano-British, medieval, post-medieval, modern, unassigned) and function (based on six broad categories (settlement and land-use, religious and ritual, industrial, military, communications and leisure). For management purposes, it was determined that the form of particular sites might also be relevant, and so a *current form* category was to be allocated to each site judged from SMR information and local knowledge (*i.e.* earthwork/relict, building or structure in use, find only, cropmark/parchmark, not known/unlocated /place-name). It is envisaged that a similar approach will be adopted by future studies, although the actual definitions of historic contexts may need to be revised depending on differing local circumstances.

Settlement   Settlements are the building blocks of the landscape and in landscape terms they are a vital element in defining and characterising an area. Of principal importance are the date, form, plan and type of settlement. Analysis considered first of all degree of dispersal (nucleated/dispersed/isolated), density (rural (farms)/semi-rural (villages)/urban (town)) and components (house, terrace, mill, church, chapel, shop). The present settlement pattern visible in the landscape will be examined using aerial photographic and map coverage, and a series of discernible types drawn up, based on degree of dispersal and components as described in the pilot study.

It is considered equally important that building types (vernacular architecture tradition), building materials (type of stone, brick, roofing material, *etc.*) and period be taken into consideration. Information on this will come from a rapid assessment of available published sources (i.e. listed building lists, RCAHM(W) Inventories, Houses of the Welsh Countryside (Smith, 1985), local guides and other books and local

knowledge). An awareness and understanding of the key (Welsh) place-name elements is also necessary, since this forms an important aspect of an area's character and distinctiveness, from both an historical and cultural viewpoint.

Industry Industrial remains are probably best dealt with by an approach similar to that of Llyn, whereby areas which could be said to be dominated by industrial archaeological remains will be noted, mapped and described. (This theme will probably need to be developed further for heavily industrialised areas such as Blaenau Ffestiniog.)

Designated and ornamental landscapes Again it is intended that an approach similar to that of Llyn will be adopted whereby areas which could be said to contain (or be) designed landscapes will be noted, mapped and described. Many of these will be sub-sumed within larger character areas.

Communications The theme of communication routes should also be approached in a way similar to Llyn. Analysis will consider roads as either trunk, county, minor, lanes (straight/winding), tracks (straight/winding) or footpath (straight/winding) only, along with an estimate of their date. Railways also may also need to be considered, along with canals, coastal transport etc. Obviously this theme will need to be expanded and refined.

Other Other themes which might be relevant to a full historic characterisation might be leisure (caravan parks, resort development, golf courses, tourist attractions), coastal and military. These must be dealt with as and when necessary.

4 Fieldwork

Fieldwork will support and develop the themes outlined above, and define character areas. It is envisaged that fieldwork will take place throughout the project alongside the desk-based work, and following the analysis stage. Descriptions and photographs will support (or contradict) the conclusion of the latter.

5 Analysis

Historic landscape character areas will be identified and their relationship to land use areas will be analysed. The inter-relationship of current land use and ancient landscape should be analysed. It may be possible to record and manipulate the data using Mapinfo and the OS digital map base and this option is to be preferred: however it is more likely in the near future that the working maps for characterisation will be the paper OS 1:25000 series. The factual description of the individual historic landscape characteristic areas can follow the templates used by GAT in the Llyn ESA report (no. 284) and the Landmap pilot (report no. 270, part B), although some revisions will probably be required.

6 Report

The final stage of the project involves the production of a report detailing the aims, objectives and methodology used and the results of the characterisation, again loosely following the format of previous work. It will include a short background description of the area, as well as an overall historical characterisation of the whole area, against which individual areas can be assessed.

Recommendations for management, conservation and further (detailed) work will be made as appropriate, and an important feature of the report will be a bibliography listing relevant published and unpublished sources to aid further work in the area.

The production of finalised mapped information will support the written text. Management prescriptions and recommendations will be drawn up as appropriate.

At the same time, the actual data produced (text, maps, photographs, *etc.*) will be fed directly into the Sites and Monuments Record.

7 Report production and circulation

It is intended that any reports produced will receive as wide a circulation as possible. It is recommended that WATs will liase on producing a standard format for the reports, which will include maps, figures and line and colour illustrations. These will be widely-distributed amongst unitary authorities, AWAES staff, conservation agencies, land-owning interests and members of the public (including local schools).

8 Co-ordination meetings

It is important to achieve broad consistency across projects, and to this end regular meetings throughout the projects should be held involving staff from other WATs involved in historic landscape projects. This is particularly important in the first year of the project in establishing a consistent pan-Wales approach. It is suggested that short reports should be produced for circulation after these meetings to ensure consistency.

12   Glossary of keywords and expressions

12.1   Definitions

Character

      the overall impression created by an area of landscape which is susceptible to being described

Characterisation

      the process of identifying and defining the particular characteristics which make each area of landscape distinctive

Character area

      where components form dominant patterns to allow the definition of an area which can be clearly described: historic character areas are either

      a) areas which embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or theme, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction: or

      b) areas which show organisation of space either during one particular period or through time. This may be visible in the arrangement of fields or siting of settlements; or a pattern of land-use which represents traditional practices unique to a community; or in the sheer density of remains relating to either a single theme/period or succession of periods/themes; or contain buildings etc distinctive in style, design or method of construction; or a transportation system reflecting an important innovation in engineering, etc:

Coherent character

      where the components and patterns across an area of landscape are consistent, coherent character can be defined which can lead to character areas

Component

      the most basic building blocks of the historic landscape, including walls, farms, cottages, archaeological monuments *etc.*, which, when combined, form <u>dominant patterns</u>.

Dominant patterns

      patterns formed by <u>components</u> such as field walls which are visually dominant in an area: the spread of a single dominant pattern, or the co-incidence of two or more, leads to coherent character.

Element

      another word for <u>component</u> (preferred)

Feature

      another word for <u>component</u> (preferred)

Historic landscape

      the physical remains in the current landscape of the evidence for past human exploitation of the environment over time

Relict

      historic landscape components which are no longer 'in-use' are described as relict for management purposes.

12.2   Process of characterisation

This can be briefly summarised as -

(several) components → dominant patterns
(one or more) dominant patterns → coherent character
coherent character (with definable limits) → character area
(several) character areas → landscape

12.3   Levels at work

level	*action*
landscape	strategic policies, overviews (<u>national</u>)
character areas	management policies - Landmap, UDPs, countryside strategies (<u>regional</u>)
(coherent character	stage of characterisation (general management guidelines))
patterns/groupings	actually work at this level for characterisation (<u>local</u>)
components	define what's important/typical & manage landscape components (SAMs, ESA) (<u>site specific</u>)

12.4   Useful descriptive terms

scale
open, exposed, enclosed, secluded, confined, small scale, medium scale, large scale

diversity
uniform, simple, diverse, complex

unity
unified, ordered, interrupted, fragmented, chaotic, rambling, structured, organic

other
palimpsest, aesthetic value, visual amenity, educational potential, sense of place, distinctive character, common character, historically complex, domesticated character, essentially wild

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APPENDICES

Working list of historic landscape character themes

Working list of historic character themes

Agriculture

Up to nine (and this is probably too many) basic field type patterns can be defined, based on size and boundary line. Some fields can be more easily categorised than others, and each field must be viewed in the setting of its surrounding fields to discern patterns. The main differences are between 'regular' and 'irregular', 'intact' and 'disintegrated' and in size. One pattern, probably relating to 'anciently enclosed land' was used as a default type (see below).

> small to medium fields, irregular (curvilinear) (possibly prehistoric in origin)
>
> small, elongated fields (possibly fossilised medieval strip fields)
>
> medium fields, irregular patterns (odd corners and sides) <3 straight sides, not obviously laid out (default)
>
> medium/large fields, regular pattern (axial) 3 or 4 straight sides (or 2 + natural), laid out end-18 or 19th century: pattern dominated by straight lines
>
> small fields, regular pattern (deliberately laid out – recently enclosed)
>
> large areas of upland, unenclosed or lately enclosed
>
> large lowland enclosures (disintegrated pattern, recent amalgamations)
>
> remnant coastal edge
>
> ancient woodland/valley sides (no particular pattern visible)

In addition, the following boundary types were identified

> *clawdd* (with hedge/trees)
>
> *clawdd* (without hedge/trees)
>
> *clawdd* (with post+wire fence)
>
> dry stone wall (various types)
>
> hedge only
>
> hedge with trees

Relict archaeology

Working historic contexts are

    1a Early prehistoric settlement and land division.
    1b Early prehistoric ritual activity.
    1c Early prehistoric industrial activity.

    2a Late prehistoric/Romano-British settlement and land division.
    2b Late prehistoric/Romano-British religious and ritual activity.
    2c Late prehistoric/Romano-British industrial activity.
    2d Late prehistoric/Roman military activity including communications.

    3a Medieval settlement and land division.
    3b Medieval religious and ritual activity.
    3c Medieval industrial activity.
    3d Medieval military activity.
    3e Medieval communications.

    4a Post medieval settlement and land division.
    4b Post medieval religious and ritual activity.
    4c Post medieval industrial activity.
    4d Post medieval military activity.
    4e Post medieval communications.

    5a Unassigned settlement and land division.
    5b Unassigned religious and ritual activity.
    5c Unassigned industrial activity.
    5d Unassigned military activity.
    5e Unassigned communications.
    5f Unassigned leisure activity.
    5g Unassigned site/evidence

Current form categories are

    Earthwork / Relict
    Building / Structure in use
    Find only
    Cropmark / Parchmark
    Not known / Unlocated / Place-name

Settlement

The settlement types which have been identified are:-

dispersed, undeveloped settlements

IF   isolated farm

SH   scatter of houses

SHF   scatter of houses and farms

nucleated, developed settlements

SHC   scatter of houses plus church/chapel/amenity building *etc.*

CH   cluster of houses

CHC   cluster of houses plus church/chapel/amenity building *etc.*

T   town

Industry

The areas are

Trefor (granite quarry, still working, with a system of inclines, piers etc. and an attached quarry community)

Nant Gwrtheyrn (granite quarry with a system of inclines, jetties etc. with associated village now a language centre)

Nefyn (former series of terraced stone quarries east of the town)

Mynydd Rhiw (neolithic stone axe factory at its north-east end, while in C19 Benallt at south-west end was most productive manganese mine in Britain - series of mines, railways, aerial ropeways etc.)

Llanengan/Bwlch (important lead-mining complex - underground workings, shafts, chimneys, adits etc.)

Llanbedrog (coastal granite (Cambrian) quarries - see also Pwllheli-Llanbedrog tramway)

Nanhoron (small stone quarry, still active)

Communications

Communication routes can be categorised as follows:

trunk road

county (A) road

minor (B) road

lanes (principally straight)

lanes (principally winding)

trackways (unsurfaced) (straight)

trackways (unsurfaced) (winding)

footpaths

Other

former RAF bombing school at Penrhos (now Polish home) and bombing range at Hell's Mouth

parks and gardens (Nanhoron, Cefnamwlch, Plas Bodegroes, Madryn, Plas yn Rhiw, Plas Boduan, Bodfel, Trallwyn Hall and Plas Gelliwig)

Maps 1 – 5 showing examples of historic landscape patterns/character
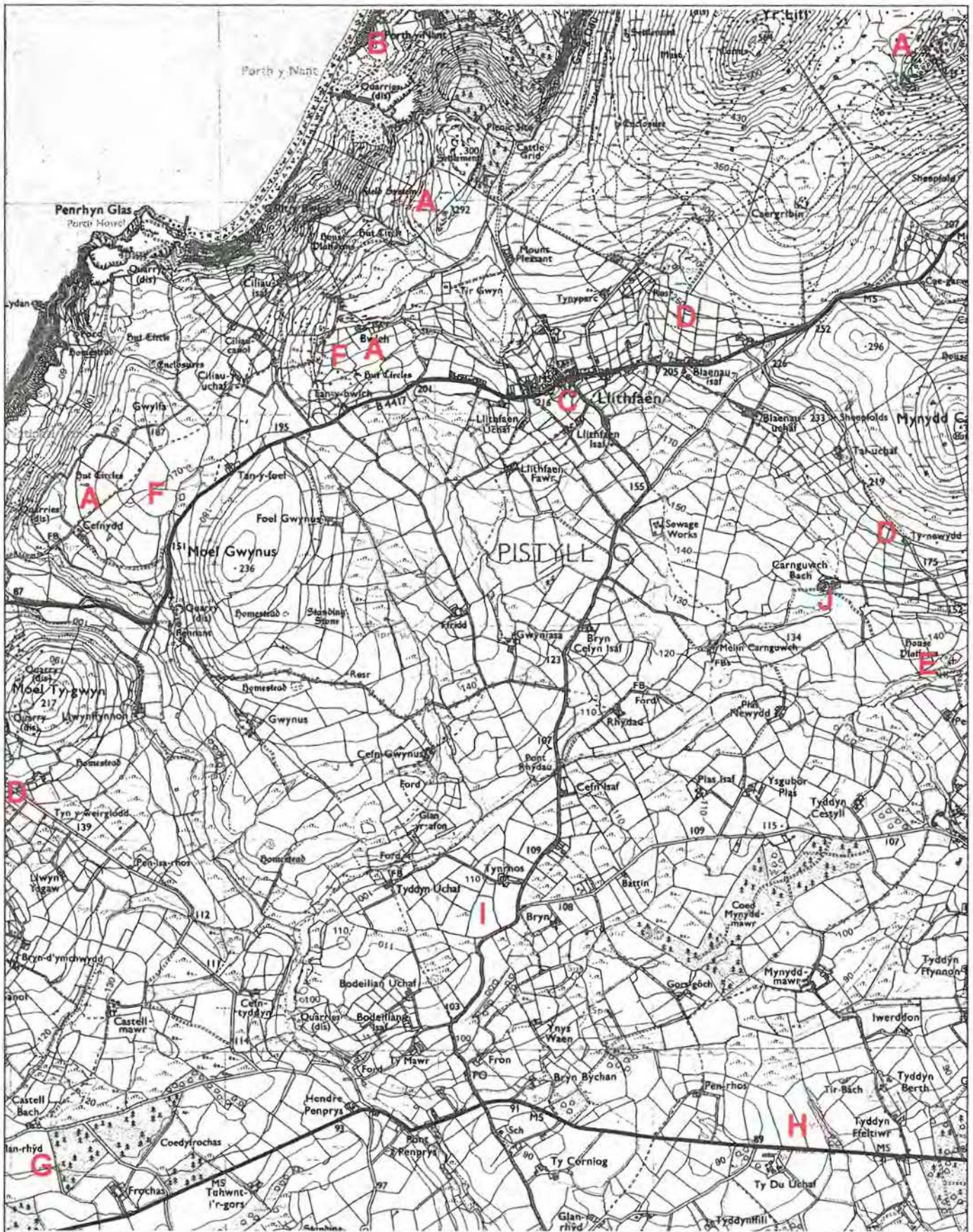
Map 1

MAP 1 shows

A the open moorland landscape within the Hills and Knolls type, demonstrating an abundance of relict archaeological remains including Tre'r Ceiri hillfort, and areas of prehistoric settlement and associated field system;

B a significant landscape of nineteenth-century industrial archaeological remains along the coast;

C the nucleated settlement of Llithfaen dating from the industrial last century in a bleak, isolated position;

D girdles of small, stone-built, rectangular fields between the open uplands and enclosed farming heartland, dating from the enclosure of common land at the beginning of the last century;

E an isolated church and relict earthwork remains of a deserted medieval rural settlement within the Moorland Basin;

F small surviving examples of aggregated field systems probably developed out of a prehistoric system;

G a recent planned lay-out of turnpike road, axial fields and woodland more typical of Sheltered Parkland type;

H a good example of nineteenth-century routeway carving a straight line across the landscape, in contrast to

I the winding lanes more typical of 'older' Llyn;

J a scattered settlement pattern of established farmsteads (some, for example Carnguwch, based on former townships).
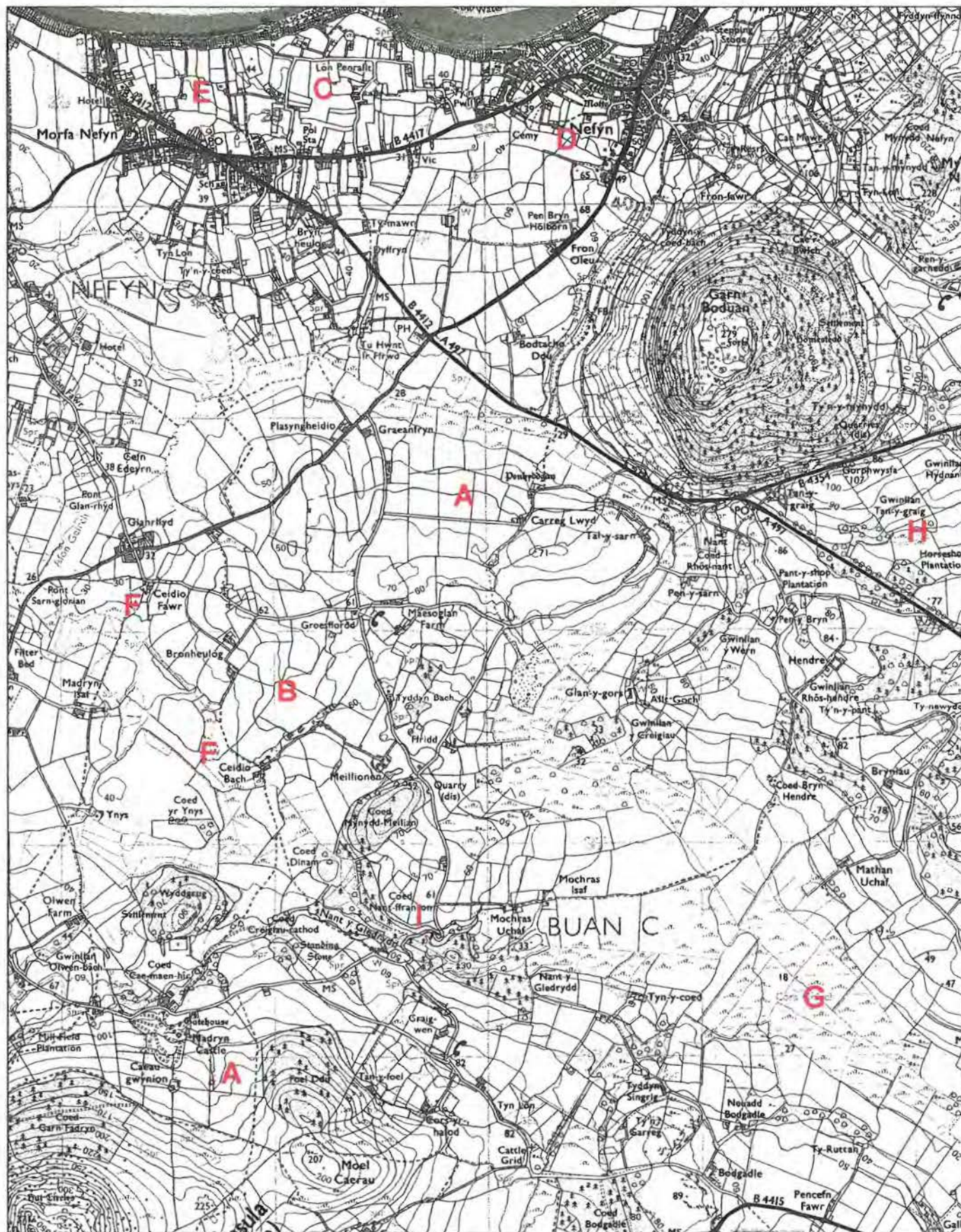
Map 2

MAP 2 shows

A   a recent, axial, planned field system laid out to a central trackway and a square pattern of boundaries on Madryn estate, contrasting with

B   an organic pattern of fields showing development over time in its curvilinear boundaries (an example of a type now much denuded in areas outside Hills and Knolls and Moorland Basin), and

C   remnant medieval strip fields fossilised below later boundaries (increasingly rare in Llyn);

D   the nucleated settlement of the medieval commotal centre of Nefyn and

E   around the medieval township of Morfa, contrasting with

F   a settlement pattern of scattered farms, many of which incorporate medieval township place-names (*e.g.* Ceidio), and

G   an absence of settlement on the Coastal and Valley Flats;

H   that Sheltered Parkland is characterised by straight, turnpike roads, woodland planting and axial field systems (here partly in designed parkland belonging to Plas Boduan), while

I   Rolling Upland Edge typically contains deeply-incised, winding lanes, native woodlands and organic field patterns.

Map 3

MAP 3 shows

A a largely-eroded field pattern typical of Hell's Mouth Plain, contrasting with

B dense pattern of small, regular fields created during nineteenth-enclosure of commons, typical of Hills and Knolls types, and

C an axial pattern of fields, reinforced by planted woodlands, created by improvements on Nanhoron estate;

D the densely-packed (largely modern and tourism-based) settlement of Abersoch, contrasting with

E the small-scale nucleation of Machros, a settlement created by nineteenth-century industrial workers,

F the widely-dispersed pattern of large farms, many of which are based on medieval township place-names, and

G Llangian, one of the few 'old' nucleated settlements, comprising several houses grouped around an early church and with a later amenity (post office);

H that relict archaeological sites are sporadic, but nevertheless exist within a variety of modern land-uses;

I that nineteenth-century roads are easily distinguished because of their single-minded straightness, contrasting with

J most routeways which appear to stagger in straight lines around former (medieval) field patterns;

K a series of industrial archaeological remains relating to former lead-mining which are clearly visible;

L that the Nanhoron estate has had a considerable effect on the landscape, with its designed gardens and parkland which have evolved over the past three hundred years;

M that to a lesser extent, the WW II RAF military bombing range has also left its mark.

Map 4

MAP 4 shows

A the eroded field patterns near the coast, some still showing signs of much earlier layouts, and

B the small-scale, regular patterns typical early nineteenth-century enclosure of wastes, both of which are in the Coastal Plateau;

C the regular, small-scale post-enclosure pattern on the margins of the uplands;

D the widely-scattered pattern of farmsteads on land which has long been farmed, contrasting with

E the loosely-nucleated settlements of the last century;

F relict archaeological sites which are relatively rare outside marginal areas, while

G cropmark sites revealing the existence of buried remains are increasing;

H most routeways are part of the evolving landscape and are closely tied in with (presumably) contemporary field patterns, while

I a few are more recent, and these can be recognised by their uncompromisingly straight lines;

J that the designed garden, woodlands and parklands of Cefnamwlch estate make a clear and distinct contribution to the overall complexity of the historic landscape.
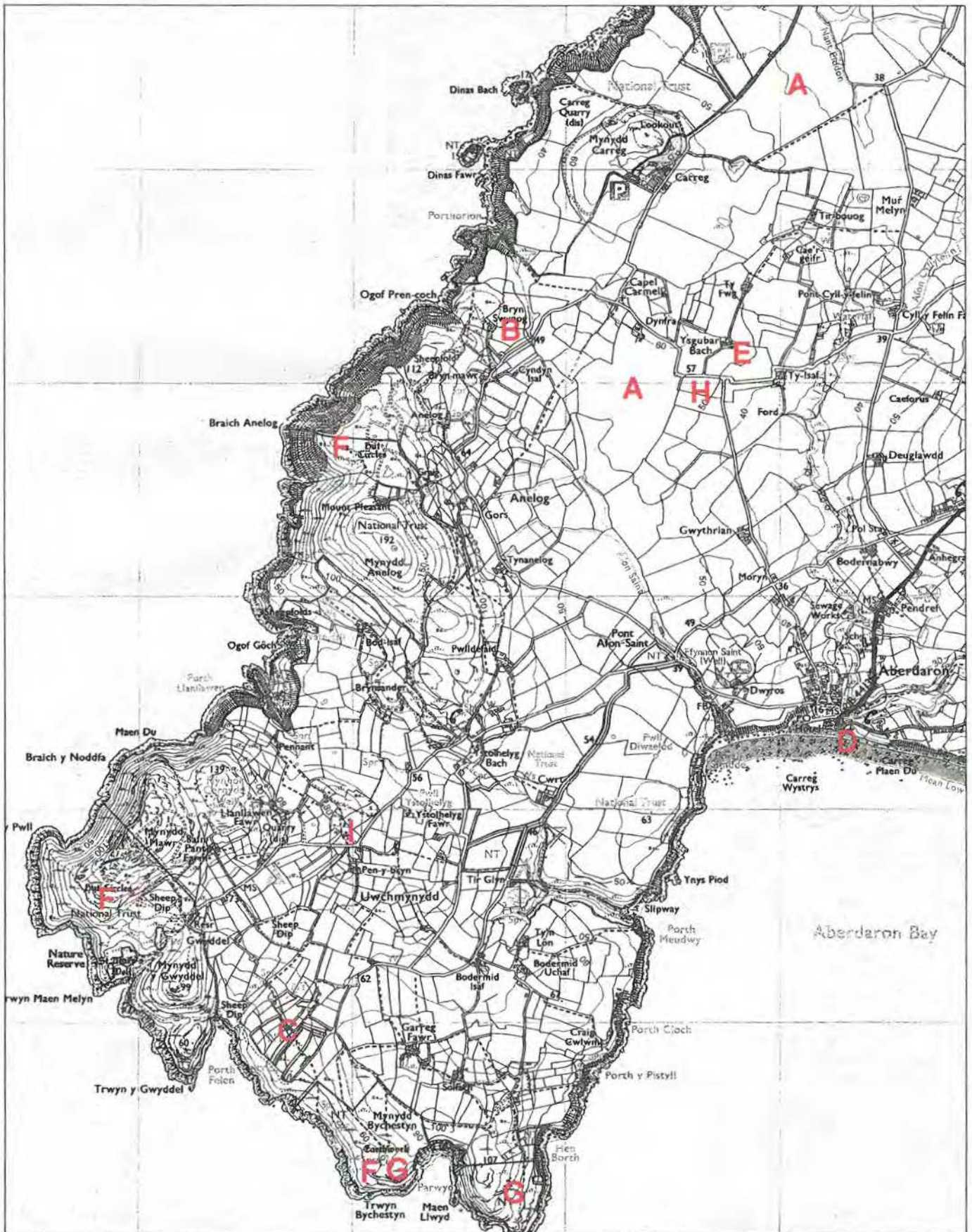
Map 5

MAP 5 shows

A the modern fields in the Coastal Plateau clearly demonstrating how they have lost much of their historical character and integrity, contrasting strongly with, nearby,

B one of the few intact examples of relict medieval strip fields in Llyn, preserved by later enclosure banks, outside

C Uwchmynydd, a unique expanse of important remnant medieval strip fields with a scattered settlement pattern of crouching houses;

D the nucleated settlement at Aberdaron, based originally on a religious centre and linked for centuries with Ynys Enlli, contrasting with

E a pattern of unevenly-dispersed farms fairly typical of Llyn;

F relict archaeological sites of prehistoric and medieval date concentrated on unimproved and marginal land, near coastal edges and hill tops;

G that, likewise, much of the evidence for the earliest human occupation of Llyn (in the form of mesolithic flints) is also to be found on these cliff edges;

H that many of the routeways still reveal their early origins despite the erosion of much of the surrounding patterning, while

I the small-scale, intricate network of footpaths on Uwchmynydd is interesting and, again, possibly unique in Llyn.

Map showing ESA Landscape Types, with sample description of - D Hills and knolls

Type D: Hills and Knolls

The appearance of stone walls, rather than *cloddiau*, announce that we have arrived in the uplands, above and beyond the agricultural heartland. Llyn contains several large-scale, rugged, exposed and open landscapes, very characteristic of Snowdonia uplands, almost all with a patchwork skirt of upland cultivation and the same sense of isolation. The largest area is centred on the hillfort of Tre'r Ceiri, while others are situated on Garn Fadryn (again dominated by a huge hillfort), another around Mynytho, and the last significant one on Mynydd Rhiw. These areas are palimpsests, characterised by acres of relict man-made features and displaying great historical depth and complexity: like all uplands, they retain high academic, educational and amenity value for the archaeologist. They rate high on survival/condition, period, rarity, fragility/vulnerability, potential and amenity.

Key historic landscape characteristics

This rugged and exposed landscape is dominated by unenclosed areas of semi-natural vegetation, with an absence of recent agricultural land improvement, but much evidence for earlier agricultural exploitation and land organisation. Immediately below is a swathe of small fields enclosed by stone wall boundaries largely created by last-century enclosure of the mountain *ffridd*. While some of the boundaries and smaller patterns are relatively recent (including some last-century enclosures of mountain land, some of which are now decaying), others, still in use, relate to farming practices which date back to the prehistoric period. The boundaries are typically stone walls (rather than *cloddiau*): earlier ones are often characterised by their meandering course, their wide, rubble-built and decaying appearance and the lynchets they lie on.

The prime importance from a historic landscape perspective is the array of relict archaeological sites from prehistoric through to post-medieval periods. Well-preserved and upstanding settlement sites of the prehistoric and medieval periods, often with acres of associated relict field systems, are the most numerous, but burial sites also exist. The whole is often dominated by huge stone-walled hillforts, some of the most visually-impressive sites in Britain.

These areas display a remoteness reflected in a complete lack of buildings on the mountain tops, with scattered, small upland farms set within the enclosed land below. Many of the latter are late holdings, single-storey, rendered, cottages with slate roofs, often originating in quarry-related encroachment. Nucleated settlements are few and those which exist along the north coast, like Llithfaen and Nant Gwrtheyrn, are nineteenth-century settlement based on quarrying.

The north coast is punctuated by a series of stepped stone quarries, with their systems of working galleries and inclines, and their associated settlements (such as Trefor, Nant Gwrtheyrn and Llithfaen), while Rhiw has the remains of a significant manganese mining industry.

In general the areas are characterised by a lack of communication routes. A single main road runs through the largest area, following the contour and switching from south-facing to north-facing slope probably following an earlier routeway: other (minor) roads here are probably last century, but there is also a significant network of footpaths. Rhiw has a similar contour-hugging route, while roads around Garn Fadryn and across Mynytho relate to the recent enclosures.

Conservation priorities

The hillfort of Tre'r Ceiri is one of the major hillforts of western Britain, and Garn Boduan (with its possible post-Roman refortification is hardly less important; there is an extensive group of relict remains which covers almost the whole of the area between the B4417 and the coast; series of nineteenth century enclosures exist to the north-east of Llithfaen and between Garn Boduan and Carreglefain; the slopes of Mynydd Nefyn also contain significant relict remains which are under threat from unsympathetic land use.

The retention of the relict archaeological landscape features and the nineteenth-century enclosure landscape with its small, stone-walled field pattern.

Example maps and descriptions from Landmap project

G/H/3

GH1

G/H/1

G/H/2

Uwchmynydd

Aberdaron

Aberdaron Bay
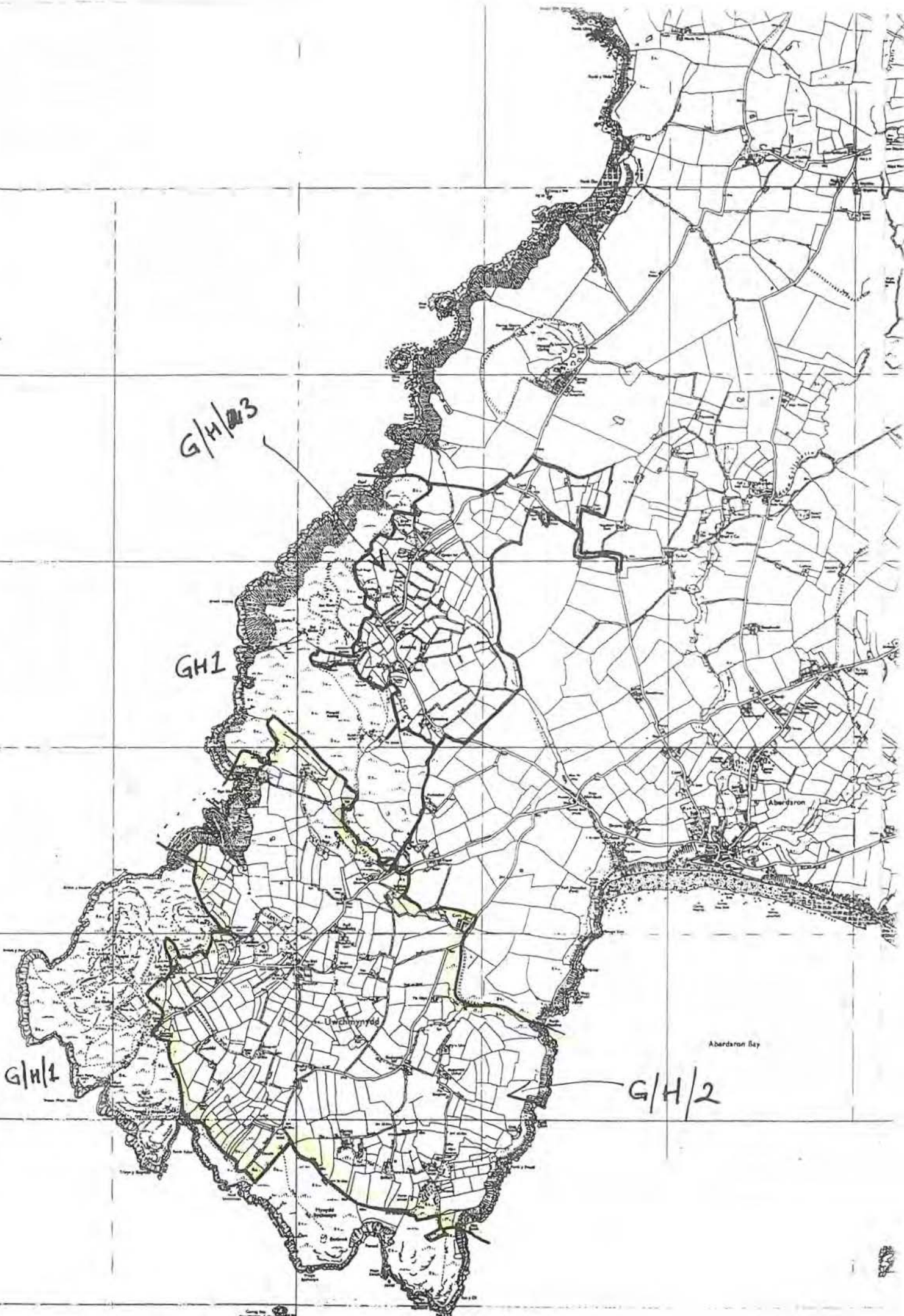
G/H/2 Uwchmynydd (central)
Primary

Description
- extensive area of medieval strip-fields (quillets) fossilised below later field boundaries

- scattered settlement pattern of small, squat farms with nineteenth-century chapels

- (reference GAT report, 261, p20)

Justification
- largest known area of survival of this type of landscape in north-west Wales

Tolerance to change
- cloddiau are already beginning to be replaced by wire fencing leading to loss of integrity and character

Management strategy
- refer to management section on agriculture (paragraph 5.12) and communications (paragraph 5.16) in accompanying document

- ESA management guidelines would be appropriate here

BOTWNNOG, C.

G/H/5

Porth Neigwl or Hell's Mouth
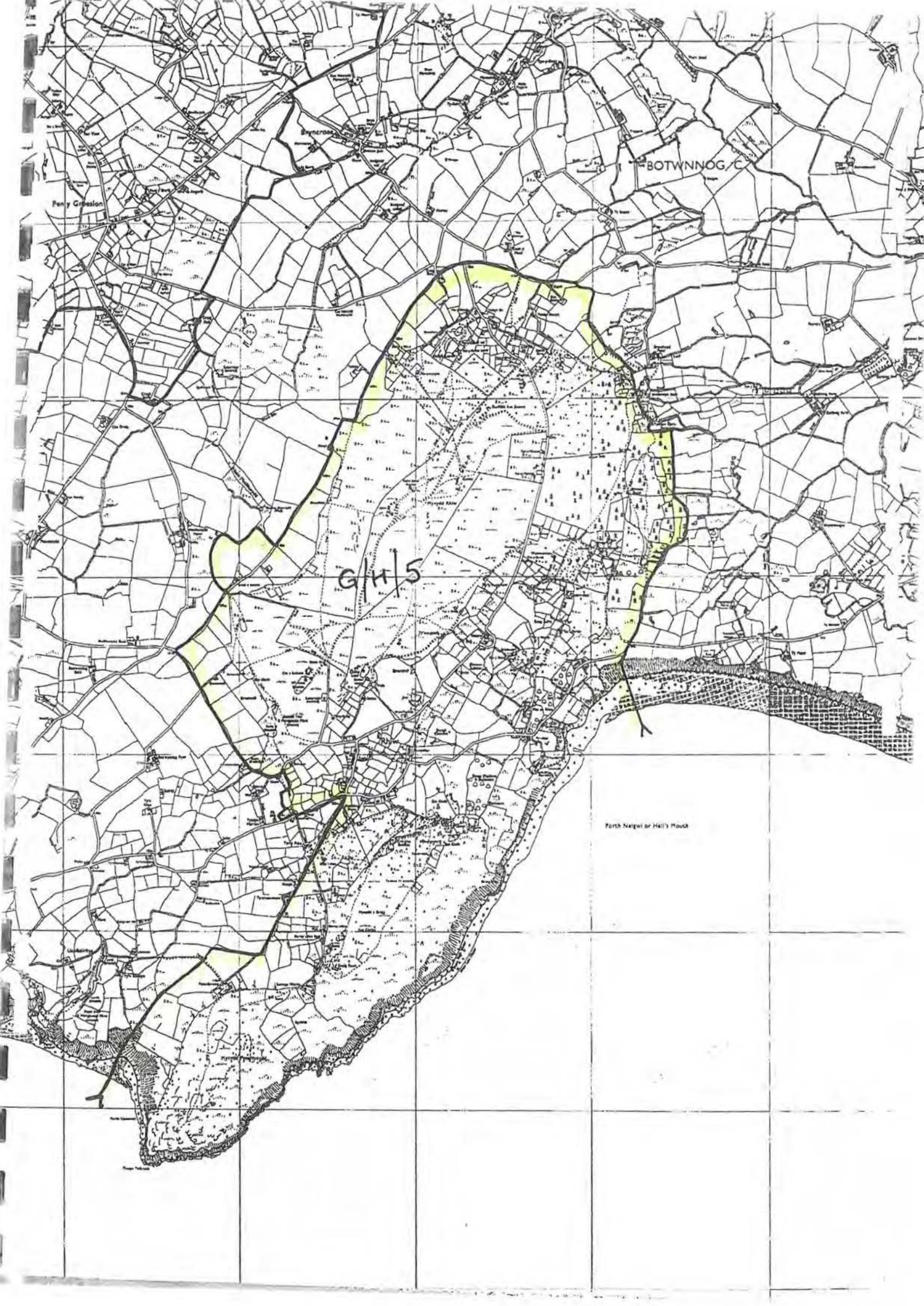
G/H/5 Mynydd Rhiw
Primary

Description

- the appearance of small, stone-walled fields announce our arrival in an upland area

- this area contains some of the finest yet subtle archaeological field monuments in north-west Wales: there is a whole palimpsest of earthworks and stone-built features which testify vocally to the long history of man's exploitation of Llyn, from neolithic burial chambers and axe factory, through later prehistoric defensive enclosures, a medieval landscape of settlements and fields, post-medieval dwellings to modern designed gardens and (unfortunately obtrusive) defensive works

Justification

- this is one of the finest palimpsests of historic sites and features in north-west Wales, where sites which are important in themselves can also be seen in their landscape contexts

- the potential of the area for explaining landscape evolution in visual terms is immense

Tolerance to change

- the area is marginal (which is why it has retained such a high number of relict archaeological sites) and is therefore vulnerable to slight changes in agricultural practices

- development is less of a threat here, but one which could not be tolerated

Management strategy

- much of the area is either owned by the National Trust or is land under ESA, both of which represent a structured way forward in ensuring preservation of this key landscape area

- refer to management section on agriculture (paragraph 5.12) and relict archaeology (paragraph 5.14) in accompanying document