



Complete Agenda

Democratic Service
Council Offices
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

LLŶN A.O.N.B JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Date and Time

4.30 pm, WEDNESDAY, 13TH JULY, 2016

Location

Meeting Room, Frondeg, Pwllheli, LL53 5RE.

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(DISTRIBUTED 5/7/16)

LLŶN A.O.N.B JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP

Gwynedd Councillors

Angela Ann Russell
W. Gareth Roberts
Gruffydd Williams
Owain Williams
R.H. Wyn Williams

Others

Aberdaron, Buan, Botwnnog, Clynnog, Llanbedrog, Llanaelhaearn, Llanengan, Nefyn, Pistyll and Tudweiliog Community Council nominees.

Nominees of the following agencies/institutions:

National Trust,
Natural Resources Wales,
Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum,
Cyfeillion Llŷn,
National Farmers Union,
Farmers Union of Wales,
Abersoch and Llŷn Tourism Partnership,
Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales,
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust.

A G E N D A

1. CHAIR

To elect a chair for 2016/17.

2. VICE-CHAIR

To elect a vice-chair for 2016/17.

3. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence.

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

5. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

6. MINUTES

4 - 7

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of this committee, held on 18 November 2015, be signed as a true record.

7. FUTURE LANDSCAPES WALES

8 - 9

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager.

8. ANGLESEY AND GWYNEDD JOINT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011-26

10 - 17

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager.

9. SOLAR DEVELOPMENTS

18 - 21

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager.

10. AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

22 - 46

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager.

LLŶN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 18/11/15

Present:

Councillor Gruffydd Williams (Chairman)
T. Victor Jones (Llanbedrog Community Council) (Vice-chairman)

Members: Councillors W. Gareth Roberts and Angela Russell (Gwynedd Council), Emily Bateman (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust), Noel Davey (Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales), John Gosling (Abersoch and Llŷn Partnership), Sian Parri (Tudweiliog Community Council), Alun Price (Natural Resources Wales) and Hedd Rhys (NFU Wales).

Officers: Bleddyn P. Jones (Llŷn AONB Service Manager), Elin Wyn Hughes (AONB Project Officer), Wyn Williams (Countryside and Access Manager), Alun Fôn Williams (Senior Tourism Development Officer - for item 5 on the agenda) and Bethan Adams (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

Also in attendance: Councillor Dafydd Meurig (Cabinet Member - Regulatory)

Apologies: Councillor R. H. Wyn Williams, Arfon Hughes (Nefyn Town Council), William I. Hughes (Farmers' Union of Wales) and John Eric Williams (Cyfeillion Llŷn).

1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

2. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee held on 24 June 2015, as a true record.

3. VISITOR CONTRIBUTIONS

A presentation was given by the Senior Tourism Development Officer on potential schemes to receive financial contributions from tourists in order to invest that in a specific area. He noted there were two types of potential schemes, namely a Visitor Tax Scheme and a Visitor Donation Scheme.

As it was not compulsory to contribute to a Visitor Donation Scheme, he noted that it was more attractive than the Visitor Tax Scheme. He reported that there were 25 similar schemes in operation in the United Kingdom which included a number of possible ways for visitors to contribute, such as:

- hotel bills;
- restaurant bills;
- car park tickets;
- attraction tickets;
- via i-beacons.

He noted that a visitor donation pilot scheme would commence in Llanberis in December 2015 for a period of a year and it was intended to disseminate the scheme across Gwynedd if it was successful.

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and the Senior Tourism Development Officer responded as follows:

- Schemes of this type had potential but a human resource would be required to contact companies as well as a basic budget in order to ensure success;
- A pilot scheme would have to be undertaken due to LEADER grant scheme rules;
- The contribution would be voluntary with an option to opt-in or opt-out;
- Such a scheme would include the promotion of the Welsh language and culture;
- There were different examples of administering such schemes such as through a social initiative, volunteers etc.;
- He was more than willing to contact Menter Môn which was conducting the pilot in Llanberis in relation to establishing a scheme in the AONB.

The Senior Tourism Development Officer was thanked for his presentation.

3. RECENT PROJECTS OF THE LLŶN AONB UNIT

Submitted – a report by the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer on the work of the AONB Unit. She gave a presentation on recent successful projects that had been partially funded by the Sustainable Development Fund. It was noted that over £400,000 in grants had been allocated to over 100 projects since 2010.

In response to an observation from a member regarding a scheme to install electricity cables underground in the AONB, the AONB Projects Officer noted that photographs/maps were available from the unit.

RESOLVED to accept the report.

4. PLANNING MATTERS

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager providing an update on relevant planning matters to the Llŷn area and the AONB.

The Chairman noted that he was eager to discuss the Joint Committee's viewpoint on solar farms considering the increasing number of applications, in order to reach a consensus on whether or not a statement on applications of this type should be adopted, as it had been done with planning applications for wind turbines.

During the ensuing discussion the following main points were noted:

- There was a need to consider the cumulative impact of applications of this type on the landscape;
- It would be valuable for the Joint Committee to provide observations on planning applications;
- As there was a possibility that the feed-in tariff would be abolished next year, perhaps there would not be so many planning applications;
- Most of the already approved applications had been sufficiently screened;
- It was not possible to screen solar developments during the Winter months;
- There was a need to impose a limit on the size of solar panel schemes;
- There was no Supplementary Planning Guidance to protect the AONB from overdevelopments of this type and none would be in place for some time after the Council would adopt the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan 2011-2026;
- A system should be put in place to be able to call a special meeting of the Joint Committee to specifically address individual planning applications that would harm the AONB;
- The situation in other areas of natural beauty should be explored;
- Gwynedd Archaeological Service had undertaken a basic study assessment for Wales in terms of capacity for developments of this type and the report would be sent to the AONB Unit.

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that he would formulate a comprehensive report in relation to solar developments for the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to accept the report;**
- (ii) to establish a system where the Chairman, in consultation with the Llŷn AONB Service Manager, can call a special meeting of the Joint Committee to specifically address individual planning applications that would harm the AONB;**
- (iii) the Llŷn AONB Service Manager will submit a report in relation to solar developments for the next meeting of the Joint Committee.**

5. AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager providing an update on the work of updating and reviewing the AONB Management Plan. Members were guided through Part 1 of the management plan which had been attached to the report. It was noted that it was aimed to bring Part 2 of the revised plan before the Joint Committee during Spring 2016.

Members were given an opportunity to provide observations, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager responded to the observations as follows:

- In terms of the impact of developments on the landscape, a specific reference would be made to developments such as wind turbines and solar panels in Part 2;
- National policies along with the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan (GUDP) would deal with planning matters but there would be a reference in Part 2 to new trends and policies that affected the AONB;
- A Landscape Conservation Area designation would create a type of buffer to protect the setting of the AONB together with the views into and out of the AONB. He added that the GUDP took the designation into account;
- There would be an emphasis in the plan on creating a living landscape and sustaining a society. It was noted that attention was given to matters such as the local community's needs, traditional industries, community well-being and sustainable developments.

RESOLVED to accept the report.

6. GWYNEDD CHALLENGE

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager detailing the Council's arrangements in relation to a consultation on service cuts. It was noted that abolishing the AONB Unit had been included as a potential cut. It was added that abolishing the unit would save £39,150 for the Council.

It was noted that correspondence had been sent to members of the Joint Committee and working partners of the AONB Unit to draw their attention to the threat facing the unit. Members were encouraged to complete the Gwynedd Challenge questionnaire and it was noted that the public consultation period had been extended to 30 November 2015.

The Cabinet Member - Regulatory noted that responses to the consultation were assessed on the totality of information rather than on the number of individuals who had chosen whichever option. He encouraged members to complete the questionnaire either online or by completing the hard copy questionnaire.

He added that the cuts were being enforced on the Council and there would be implications for a number of services. He noted that approximately 65 Councillors had

assessed the number of options in workshops before the Cabinet would decide on the list of cuts which was the subject of the consultation. It was noted that further workshops would be held with all councillors at the beginning of 2016 to discuss the responses before the Cabinet would consider the proposals, and then the Full Council would decide on the budget for 2015-16 on 3 March 2016.

During the ensuing discussion, members noted the following main points:

- The questionnaire was not positive;
- No alternative proposals could be submitted;
- The Review of Designated Landscapes supported the designation of the AONB and its national importance;
- The review noted that the AONB administration would continue to be part of the Council;
- There was a statutory requirement in terms of protecting the area of beauty;
- The questionnaire was difficult to complete and too complicated;
- An approximate number of 1,500 had completed the questionnaire thus far and that this was disappointing bearing in mind that Gwynedd's population was approximately 120,000;
- The amount had to be saved in full to be able to submit a response online, and therefore, individuals did not continue with the questionnaire which meant that good ideas from a cross-section of the community could not be submitted in the last box of the questionnaire where it was asked for any other comments;
- More discussions should be held with Community Councils and relevant groups;
- The unit administered the Sustainable Development Fund, therefore, what would be the implications in terms of allocating grants?

The Cabinet Member - Regulatory was thanked for attending the meeting.

It was suggested that the Chairman should send a letter in response to the consultation noting the need to save the AONB Unit in order to protect the designation.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to accept the report;**
- (ii) that the Chairman should send a letter in response to the consultation noting the need to save the AONB Unit in order to protect the designation.**

7. A REVIEW OF WELSH DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager setting the context of the Review of Welsh Designated Landscapes. It was noted that the final report that had been submitted to the Welsh Government included 69 recommendations.

It was reported that Carl Sargeant, the Minister for Natural Resources had published a statement on 29 October 2015 noting that he was establishing a working group, under the leadership of Lord Dafydd Ellis-Thomas, to consider the recommendations and submit their findings in a report next year.

It was noted that the Chairman and the Llŷn AONB Service Manager would attend the initial meeting of the working group on 20 November.

Members were guided through a summary of the final report and attention was drawn to specific recommendations.

During the ensuing discussion the following main observations were noted:

- Retaining the names of National Parks and AONB designations, with the main designation to be known as National Landscapes Wales, was to be supported as it would help to raise the status of the AONB;
- An act would have to be changed in order for the National Park and the AONB to be equal designations and that could take approximately four or five years;
- The report was supportive of the AONB designation and gave it authority and prominence;
- Establishing a working group would mean a delay in terms of implementing the recommendations;
- Caution was needed in terms of losing the Welsh element.

RESOLVED to accept the report.

The meeting commenced at 4.30pm and concluded at 7.20pm

CHAIRMAN

Agenda Item 7

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	13 July 2016
TITLE	Future Landscapes Wales
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Service manager
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the information.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report provides information on the situation regarding the Review of Designated Landscapes commissioned by the Welsh Government.

2.0 REVIEW OF DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES

2.1 A Panel of three people were appointed to conduct the Review of Designated Landscapes in 2014, namely Professor Terry Marsden, Dr Ruth Williams and Mr John Lloyd Jones.

2.2 Part 1 of the Review looked at the purpose of the designating landscapes and the pros and cons of categorising these landscapes under one designation. Part 2 of the Review considered how National Parks and AONB's are managed and governed.

2.3 Representations were made on the Review by the Welsh AONB's, National Parks and a variety of other public and private bodies, trusts and charities (including this JAC). In addition the Panel conducted a series of meetings with individuals and organisations.

3.0 THE REVIEW REPORT

3.1 The Final Report of the Review was handed over to Welsh Government in October 2015. It was a substantial document with a total of 69 detailed recommendations. Some of these were principles and procedural matters which could have been included in an Appendix.

3.2 After receiving the Final Report Welsh Government decided to develop a programme called **Future Landscapes Wales**. The purpose of this programme was to consider the report findings and other relevant matters, such as the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

4.0 FUTURE LANDSCAPES WALES

4.1 The Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas was appointed as Chair of this process and an initial meeting with stakeholders was held in Cardiff on November 2015. Following on from this a Development Group (mostly officers and members) and

a Working Group (mostly academics and interest groups) was established to look at 4 specific issues related to Welsh Designated Landscapes:

- **Vision**
- **Governance/ Management**
- **Resources**
- **Economy**

4.2 Following on from this a fairly detailed programme of training, developing ideas, discussing options and deciding on recommendations has entailed.

4.3 The climax of the Future Landscapes Wales was a Challenge Chamber meeting at Cardiff on June 20th. At this meeting all the members of the Programme agreed on a Vision for the Future Landscapes, see below:

Wales as a nation values its landscapes for what they provide for the people of Wales and elsewhere. The designated landscapes of Wales deliver both within and beyond their boundaries to enhance their social, economic, environmental and cultural resources and deliver the maximum well-being benefits for present and future generations whilst enhancing the very qualities that make them both distinctive and cherished.”

4.4 Also, a series of measures, under the 4 topic areas (Vision, Governance, Resources and Economy) were placed in order of priority – Short term, medium and long term. Sufficient resources for AONB’s was highlighted within this process.

4.5 Next, all the conclusions and recommendations of the Development Programme will be collated by the Chair and presented to the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths, for further consideration.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Accept the information.

Agenda Item 8

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	13 th of July 2016
TITLE	Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan 2011-26
PURPOSE	Inform members re the Independent Examination
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Service manager
RECOMMENDATION	Decide on how to proceed with comments.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Cyngor Gwynedd and Anglesey County Council have produced a Development Plan titled Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan. This Plan will eventually replace all existing Development Plans and will be operative until 2026.
- 1.2 The Plan has been prepared over a number of years in accordance with guidelines and advice issued by Welsh Government contained in various documents. The AONB Unit has contributed to the development of the Plan's strategy and has made comments on various draft sections of the Plan.

2.0 THE DEPOSIT PLAN

- 2.1 In accordance with the statutory regulations the Joint Policy Unit is undertaking a 6 week consultation period on the Deposit Plan. This consultation period began on February 16th and ended on 31st of March 2015.
- 2.2 A report on this matter was presented to the AONB Joint Advisory Committee in March 2015. The matter was discussed and it was decided to make a series of representations on the Deposit Plan. The comments related to issues within sections of the Plan dealing with the following:
 - Healthy, Distinctive and Active Communities
 - Sustainable Living
 - Economy and Regeneration
 - Supply and Quality of Housing
 - Natural and Built Environment
- 2.3 All the comments made on the Deposit Plan, including those by the JAC, were considered by the Joint Policy Unit. After considering each comment made the Joint Policy Unit's officers recommended one of four courses of action in relation to objections:
 - Agree to the comment and change an element of the Plan
 - Agree with the comment in part and change an element of the Plan
 - To not agree with the comment and not offer any change to the Plan

- 2.4 To follow on from this a series of Focussed Changes (which were changes the Policy Unit intended making as a result of the above). A period of consultation was undertaken on the Focussed Changes between February and April 2016.

3.0 THE COMMENTS MADE BY THE JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- 3.1 The Appendix contains information regarding the comments made by the JAC on various sections of the Deposit Plan (a total of 13). Also, the Appendix contains the comments and recommendations of the Joint Policy Unit's officers. Members can also see all the comments made on the Plan including the views of the Joint Policy Unit: <https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Strategies-and-policies/Environment-and-planning/Planning-policy/Joint-Local-Development-Plan/Independent--Examination.aspx>

4.0 INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION

- 4.1 The next stage of the Local Development Plan is the Independent Examination. All the information relating to the Examination, including background papers, minutes of meetings, documents etc can be seen on the Examination website.
- 4.2 As part of the Examination 2 Independent Inspectors will consider all the objections to the Plan which still stand (i.e have not been met by the Focussed Changes). These remaining objections will be considered by the written method or by hearing – dependent on what the objector desires.
- 4.3 The AONB Service Manager has recently attended a meeting with the Examination Inspectors – where the order of the Inquiry was explained, dates set out and any questions answered. At the meeting it was stressed that at a hearing objectors could expand on their case but not present new evidence.
- 4.4 In the case of the AONB Joint Advisory Committee therefore it has to be decided whether to let the Inspectors deal with the comments made by the written method or to attend the Inquiry to make the case at a hearing. If it is decided to present the case at a hearing it must be noted that the Chair will be responsible for this.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 Decide whether to let the Inspectors consider the JAC's representations through the written method or for the Chair to present the case at a hearing (during September/ October 2016).

AONB Joint Advisory Committee's comments on the Joint Local Development Plan (Deposit Draft)

Rep ID	Name	Section	Type	Summary of Representation/ Change(s) to plan	Comments and recommendations of officers
943	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	POLICY PCYFF2	Object	I believe there should be specific reference to standard design that corresponds to the context of the AONB.	<p>Not accepted</p> <p>The special landscape features of AONBs in the Plan Area are protected via Strategic Policy PS16 and national policies and legislation as outlined in table 23. Nonetheless it is considered that Policy CYFF3 would benefit from reference to reference to “or other detailed assessments adopted by the Local Planning Authority” to reflect the publication of an assessment of features that may be specific to the AONBs, which would be a material planning consideration.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>No change is required to Policy PCYFF2. Amend Policy PCYFF 3 as referred to above.</p> <p>Focussed Change NF31</p>
950	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	POLICY ADN1	Object	<p>I believe that the current policy of having no turbines in the AONB (C26) should be adhered to.</p> <p>Also, refuse turbines higher than 11m within visibility of the AONB.</p> <p>The term 'turbine' should be used, rather than 'mill' which is different.</p> <p>I believe that criterion 2 should refer to safeguarding the setting of the AONB.</p> <p>There is concern about the categories</p>	<p>Accepted in part - Accept that the reference to 'melinau' in the Welsh version should be amended to 'tyrbinau'.</p> <p>From reviewing the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment study it is clear that when referring to Landscape Protection the setting of the AONB and SLA is listed in addition to the setting of the National park and World Heritage Site. In light of this it is recommended that the wording</p>

				<p>and designating developments under 5MW as 'Small'.</p>	<p>within the policy is amended through including reference to the setting of the AONB and SLA in criterion 2 & 3. The evidence base to the Deposit Plan within the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (2014) study assesses the appropriateness of different types of turbine typology in different parts of the Plan's area. It concluded that proposals for domestic scale development (up to 15m to the blade tip) could be supported in the AONB and SLA provided criterion (i) to (vii) are satisfied. The height used within the policy is consistent with what is included in the 'Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment' Background Paper. An assessment is included in this topic paper about the suitability of different heights within the different landscape character areas. Therefore, the policy reflects the evidence base in the background paper and the different typology that could be considered within landscape character areas within the area of the Plan. Introducing different heights within the policy would mean that the Plan would not have a robust evidence base to justify limiting the size of developments within different sub-areas within the area of the Plan.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The term 'tyrbinau gwynt' replace 'melinau gwynt' in the Welsh version and that criterion 2 & 3 contain reference to the setting of the</p>
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					AONB and SLA. Focussed Change NF35, NF36 Minor Change NB5, NB6, NB7
944	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	POLICY ADN2	Object	Other Renewable Energy Technology. It is believed that this policy is too indefinite in terms of proposals outside development boundaries, and that it should be strengthened.	Not accepted - it is believed that the policy in its existing form strikes a balance by promoting developments within the development boundary whilst supporting other suitable developments where there is appropriate justification for these outside the development boundary. Recommendation Robust evidence was not received to justify amending the Deposit Plan in order to ensure the soundness of the Plan. No Change
782	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	POLICY TWR3	Support	This policy is supported as it is proposed to refuse new sites and extensions within the AONB and the SLA. We believe that priority should be given to monitoring compliance with planning permissions, planning conditions, landscaping conditions and conditions on occupancy.	Note the Support Recommendation No change
783	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	POLICY TWR4	Object	There was concern about allowing static caravan/chalet sites to remain open for 12 months a year. There are insufficient resources to be able to monitor the situation and people could live permanently in the units - without paying tax.	Not Accepted National policy guidance supports a year round holiday season. PolicyTWR4 contains robust criteria in order to ensure that the accommodation is being used solely for holiday purposes and does not become the occupant's main or sole place of residence. Recommendation No robust evidence was submitted which would justify amending the Deposit Plan to

					ensure the Plan's soundness. No Change
784	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	POLICY TWR5	Object	Members had noticed an increase in applications and considerable pressure from this type of development in the Llŷn area. We questioned whether there was a basis for the policy and had an analysis been made of the increase in units/the effect of new developments? We believe the policy should be more restrictive within and near the designated area. We believe that priority should be given to monitoring compliance with planning permissions, planning conditions, landscaping conditions and conditions on occupancy.	Not Accepted Touring caravan and camping sites, are considered more acceptable in land use planning terms as having less of an impact on the landscape than static caravan and chalet sites because, by their very nature, they have transient features which do not impose permanent, year round effects on the local landscape. The plan recognises that heavily pressured exist in many communities located on or near the coast, including extensive parts of both AONBs. The Councils will require strong evidence that proposals for further units of accommodation in such areas will not add to servicing problems or harm the character or natural resources of these areas. Recommendation This proposed change is not required to ensure the soundness of the plan. No Change
837	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	STRATEGIC POLICY PS15	Object	New housing. There was concern about the level of housing provision in the Llŷn area and the possible impact that could have on the community and the well-being of the Welsh language. There was specific concern about the provision for Botwnnog and Pwllheli, which seems excessive considering these settlements' size and character.	Not accepted - The distribution strategy was established in the first place during the process of developing the Preferred Strategy of the Plan on the basis of evidence and public participation. In spatial terms the strategy is to ensure that the detailed and strategic policies of the Plan promote developments that address the expectations of the Vision and Strategic Objectives of the Plan. It would also ensure that the Council

					<p>meets national expectations in promoting sustainable development. In this regard, PPW (Part 9.2) notes that the development plans need to provide a framework that will stimulate, guide and manage change towards a more sustainable pattern of development. Need to find a sustainable settlement network, which meets the requirements of the economy, the environment and health while respecting local diversity and protecting the character and cultural identity of the communities. The Deposit Plan identifies a Hierarchy of towns and villages with a specific role and function. A methodology has been developed and published to identify the settlements on the basis of their role, function, range and choice of facilities and services in Topic Paper 5 Developing the Settlement Strategy. The Welsh language has been a consideration in formulating the vision, objectives, strategies and policies of the Plan since its inception. The potential effects of the Plan on the Welsh language were considered during the Sustainability Assessment process (including the SEA), which was informed by a Language Impact Assessment. Attention should be given to the various policies of the Plan and topic documents, as well as the SPG for: planning obligations, maintaining and creating sustainable communities, affordable housing, the type and mix of housing, and development briefs.</p>
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					<p>The spatial strategy will ensure that development is directed to locations that are sustainable in terms of size, function, character, facilities, transport links, social and environmental inclusion. Therefore there will be a sustainable pattern of settlement with viable communities.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>There was no compelling evidence to justify amending the Deposit Plan in order to ensure the soundness of the Plan.</p> <p>No change</p>
805	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	STRATEGIC POLICY PS16	Object	AONB Management Plan - this is a statutory plan and it is believed that reference should be made to it in the relevant policies.	<p>Accepted – Paragraph 2.2.4 of PPW states that “National planning policy set out in Planning Policy Wales should not be repeated as policy in LDPs but plans should explain how it will apply to the local area, critically how national and local policy will work together. Furthermore, paragraph 2.2.5 of PPW notes that “Plans should not duplicate provisions in other legislative regimes.” The existing legislation and national policy and guidance in respect of AONB’s is outlined in Table 23 of the LDP. Nonetheless, it is considered that the Plan would benefit from amendments that draw attention to the need to consider the relevant AONB Management Plans at a planning application stage.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Amend paragraph 7.5.13 to refer to the AONB Management Plans. Also include an additional Policy to require consideration of</p>

					the Management Plans at the planning application stage. Focussed Change – NF 82 & NF 85
806	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	STRATEGIC POLICY PS16	Object	AONB - there is no specific policy in terms of maintaining and safeguarding the AONB. Rather, there are general policies and a reference to national legislation and policy. It is believed that a specific policy is required to maintain and retain the AONB, similar to Policy B8 in the current plan.	Not accepted – Criterion 2 of the Policy covers proposed development within the AONBs. Additionally, paragraph 2.2.4 of PPW states that “National planning policy set out in Planning Policy Wales should not be repeated as policy in LDPs but plans should explain how it will apply to the local area, critically how national and local policy will work together. Furthermore, paragraph 2.2.5 of PPW notes that “Plans should not duplicate provisions in other legislative regimes.” The existing legislation and national policy and guidance in respect of AONB’s is outlined in Table 23 of the LDP. Recommendation No robust evidence was received which would justify amending the Deposit Plan to ensure the Plan’s soundness. No Change
808	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	POLICY AMG1	Object	In some places, this area (Western Llŷn SLA) abuts the AONB and protects the setting of the AONB. However, some parts of the AONB are not protected in this way. Therefore, it is believed that reference should be made to safeguarding the setting of the AONB in the relevant policies.	Not accepted - Reference to issue is made in the last sentence in policy AMG2 which states that “Additional consideration will also be given to developments which directly affect the landscape character and setting of the AONBs or the National Park”. However, it is noted that there is an error in the Welsh version and that ‘yn uniongyrchol’ should be included after “effeithio” in the last sentence of policy AMG2 in order to be consistent with the English version. NB 18 (Welsh v only)

809	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	POLICY AMG2	Object	It is a praiseworthy but slightly complicated policy, and it is believed that it could be difficult to put into operation.	Not accepted - it is considered that the policy is sufficiently clear in meaning and capable of being implemented. Recommendation No robust evidence was received which would justify amending the Deposit Plan to ensure the Plan's soundness. No Change
810	AONB Joint Advisory Committee	POLICY AMG3	Object	The Heritage Coast is a local designation that largely follows the AONB's coastal boundary in Llŷn. It is believed that this policy should reflect the designation in a more positive manner through further conserving the HC.	Not accepted - it is considered that the importance of the Heritage Coast is adequately covered in policy AMG3 and paragraph 7.5.17. Recommendation No robust evidence was received which would justify amending the Deposit Plan to ensure the Plan's soundness. No Change

Agenda Item 9

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	13 th of July 2016
TITLE	Solar Developments
PURPOSE	Inform Members
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Service Manager
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the Information

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is presented following a request by the Members at the Joint Advisory Committee meeting held on November 18th 2015.
- 1.2 The Report contains general information about solar developments, information about planning applications in the Llŷn area and the latest about the payments for solar electricity production.

2.0 REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS

- 2.1 Regulations from the European Union, obliges the UK Government to reduce air pollution. One of the most effective means to do this is to close conventional energy generating stations (coal, oil, gas) and gain more energy by renewable sources such as hydro, wind, biomass and solar.
- 2.2 Solar panels use sun-rays to create renewable electricity. Even though there are no long periods of sunlight in the UK, the panels are effective and their prices have reduced as technology has improved, and the price of production has reduced.
- 2.3 To encourage people and companies to develop renewable energy, the Government established payment via a “Feed in Tariff” that offered payments for renewable energy over long periods of time (usually 20 years). There are similar schemes in many other countries around the world.
- 2.4 The plan came into effect in Britain in 2010 and was very popular. As a result, came an increase in specialist companies producing and installing renewable energy equipment, especially wind turbines and solar panels. There were also developments regarding other techniques such as air pumps, ground pumps, biomass etc.

3.0 SOLAR DEVELOPMENTS IN LLŷN

- 3.1 As in other parts of the UK, there was a great interest in renewable energy developments in Llŷn. Many planning applications were made for solar equipment in the AONB, and also near the boundary. In the early years, solar panels were mainly on houses or agricultural buildings but recently many applications have been made for solar farms on agricultural land.

- 3.2 These types of solar farms, that cover quite a large area of land, have the potential to have a significant impact on the area's landscape and environment.
- 3.3 The Appendix contains information about applications for solar energy developments in the Llŷn area over recent years.

4.0 CHANGES IN PAYMENTS

- 4.1 The grant schemes was highly popular and the scheme was at a significant cost to the Government.
- 4.2 As a result, the payments were reduced for renewable energy developments, including solar in August 2011, March 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016. The information below shows how the payments have reduced for solar developments (pence per kw):

	2010	2016
Solar PV on houses – 4kw or less	43.11p	12-5.73p
Solar PV with production capacity of more than 250kw	35.07p	5.73p

- 4.3 The FIT scheme came to an end in January 2016 and a new plan took effect. The new plan is different and offers payments that are considerably lower.

5.0 THE AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 5.1 Renewable energy developments have been recognised in the present Management Plan as one of the issues that could have a significant effect on the beauty of the landscape and coast.
- 5.2 For the Plan's review, Solar Energy has been recognised as one of the key issues in terms of the Landscape and Coast and a specific policy has been included on the matter. This policy can be considered as part of the discussion on the Management Plan.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 Accept the information.

Solar developments in Llŷn 2000-2016

	Reference Number	Location	Type	Status
1	C00D/0195/39/CR	St Tudwal Lighthouse *	6 panels on the building	Permitted with conditions
2	C03D/0130/42/LL	Bronwylfa, Lon Penrhos, Morfa Nefyn.	Solar panels on roof	Permitted with conditions
3	C08D/0197/30/LL	Ty Newydd Hotel, Aberdaron *	3 rows of solar panels on the roof	Permitted with conditions
4	C08D/0242/39/LL	Swm y Borth, Llanengan *	Solar panels on roof	Permitted with conditions
5	C08D/0373/30/LL	Cadwgan, Rhiw *	Solar panels on roof	Permitted with conditions
6	C10D/0279/39/LL	Plot 3&4, Cae Arfryn, Mynytho	Solar panels on roof	Permitted with conditions
7	C11/0884/42/LL	Bodtacho Ddu, Nefyn, Pwllheli	41 solar panels on shed roof	Permitted with conditions
8	C10D/0460/33/LL	Tancoed, Boduan, Pwllheli	Solar panels	Permitted with conditions
9	C11/0934/D5/LL	Ceka Works Ltd, Glandon	Solar panels on roof	Permitted with conditions
10	C11/0977/35/LL	Ynysygain Fawr, Cricieth	200 solar panels on agricultural shed	Permitted with conditions
11	C11/1091/38/LL	Fferm Crugan, Llanbedrog	Erect new shed with solar panels	Permitted with conditions
12	C12/0513/33/SS	Cwrt, Aberdaron *	Solar panels on shed roof	Permitted with conditions
13	C11/1122/39/LL	Hendy Farm, Abersoch *	Solar panels on roof	<i>Refused</i>
14	C12/0228/30/CR	Ysgubor Ty Bach/Ty Nesa, Ynys Enlli	12 solar panels on roof	<i>Refused</i>
15	C12/0720/42/LL	Ty Mawr, Lon Cae Glas, Edern *	Retain shed with solar panels on roof	Permitted with conditions
16	C12/1153/42/CR	Amgueddfa Forwrol Nefyn	Solar panels on shed roof	Permitted with conditions
17	C12/1241/42/R3	Ysgol Botwnnog, Botwnnog,	Solar panels on slate roof	<i>Refused</i>
18	C12/1555/30/CR	Ynys Enlli Lighthouse *	Solar Panels on land	Permitted with conditions
19	C13/0504/46/LL	1, Gallt y Felin, Llaniestyn *	Two rows of solar panels in the garden	Permitted with conditions
20	C13/0902/45/R3	Plas Y Don, Pwllheli	Solar Panels on building roof	Permitted with conditions
21	C13/0882/30/LL	Dwryd, Rhoshirwaun *	150kw solar farm on 0.4 ha of land	Permitted with conditions
22	C13/1018/39/LL	Castellmarch, Abersoch	Solar farm with 200 panels on 0.14 ha	Permitted with conditions
23	C14/0679/33/SC	Fferm Tyddyn Cae,	4.9 MW solar farm on	Permitted with

		Boduan	20.2 ha of land	conditions
24	C15/0660/30/LL	Dwryd, Rhoshirwaun *	Extention to solar farm. 150 kw, 0.2 ha	Permitted with conditions
25	C15/0755/41/LL	Tyddyn Gwyn, Llangybi	3.8 MW solar farm on 6.9 ha of land	Permitted with conditions
26	C15/0759/41/LL	Rhosgyll Fawr, Chwilog	5 MW solar farm on 9.05 ha of land	Permitted with conditions
27	C15/1075/34/LL	Erw Wen, Clynnog*	Row of solar panels	Permitted with conditions
28	C15/0793/32/LL	Nahoron Estate, Botwnnog,	4 MW solar farm on 12 ha of land	Permitted with conditions
29	C15/0810/40/LL	Llwyndyrus Farm, Y Ffor, Pwllheli	4.45 MW solar Farm on 11.6 ha of land	Permitted with conditions

- Within the AONB

Agenda Item 10

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	13 th July 2016
TITLE	AONB Management Plan
PURPOSE	For consideration
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Service manager
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the information

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is presented to members of the Joint Advisory Committee to provide an update on the work of revising and updating the AONB Management Plan.
- 1.2 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 there is a statutory obligation on Gwynedd Council, as a relevant Authority, to prepare a Management Plan for the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to review the Plan every 5 years.
- 1.3 The AONB Joint Advisory Committee also has an important role in assisting in the preparation of the Management Plan by providing comments and suggestions.

2.0 PART 1 OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 2.1 Part 1 of the revised Plan (for the period 2015-20) consists of the following sections, and have been presented to the Joint Advisory Committee for comments in 2015:
 - **Introduction**
 - **Context**
 - **The Ecosystem Approach**
 - **Llŷn's Special Qualities**
 - **Vision for the Future**

3.0 PART 2

- 3.1 Following on from this the AONB Service has been working on Part 2 of the Plan. As mentioned, the intention is to change the make-up of Part 2 for the revised Plan and have sections relating to specific features (rather than include them all together as in the existing Plan). Also, much of the background information is to be placed in a supplementary document so as to make the Plan easier to follow and understand.
- 3.2 All sections or chapters will include an introduction, identify special features, key issues and policies. Images will also be used to illustrate relevant matters.

- 3.3 Part 2 will also include the Action Plan which will identify specific actions that are to be implemented during the plan period.
- 3.4 Part 2 of the revised Plan is laid out in 8 chapters as follows:
- Landscape and coast
 - Purity and Tranquility
 - Wildlife
 - Language and Culture
 - People and Society
 - Produce and skills
 - Historic Environment
 - Access, Enjoyment and Participation
- 3.5 For this meeting draft chapter on the following issues are being presented: **Landscape and Coast, Access, Enjoyment and Participation** (See Appendix).
- 3.6 The chapters on the other sections of the Plan will be presented to the next meeting of the JAC to be held in the Autumn.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 To consider the draft chapters attached to this report.
- 4.2 To suggest changes or improvements.

Landscape and Coast

Introduction

Llŷn was judged as meriting recognition and special conservation as an AONB on the basis of the beautiful landscape formed by a wide variety of features combined to create its special character. The appearance of Llŷn's unique landscape has been created by a combination of geology, vegetation and human influence over centuries. It is often difficult to assess and measure the landscape and scenery because scenery is a visual picture of features and buildings in combination, which is why we use the Special Qualities as an indicator of the "health" of the landscape.

Geological and geomorphologic foundations of the Llŷn Peninsula are complex and diverse. There are exceptionally old rocks from the pre-Cambrian period, protruding volcanic rocks and a vast area of Ordovician rocks. Glacial activity had a noticeable impact on the area's landscape, creating boulder clay deposits, lakes, river terraces and water channels. The glaciation carried rocks from the Clyde (Alisa Craig) and the Lake District areas to Llŷn, which can be seen in the glacial drifts throughout the area.

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The coast contributes greatly to the natural beauty and character of the Llŷn area. It displays diverse and interesting natural features including high cliffs, caves, stacks and islands, points and sandy beaches with diverse and interesting names. Due to the island like character of the Llŷn Peninsula, the coast is an integral part of the landscape. The coast and the sea can be seen from almost every location and expressions such as "the sea's influence" and "nowhere far from the sea" are commonly used about the area. Ynys Enlli is also an essential part of the character and appearance of Llŷn.

Due to the area's beauty, and other special features Llŷn has developed into a popular tourist destination. This began in the nineteenth century when the train arrived at Pwllheli. Tourism developed and changed during the twentieth century and more come to the area by car, staying at homes let as holiday accommodation and bed and breakfast establishments. Also in the 1960s the trend towards touring caravan and tents began in earnest. By today tourism is an important industry which provides employment and income for the local economy. However there are side effects in the form of static and touring caravans, people pressure at some locations and heavy traffic.

The most important geological/geomorphologic sites have been designated as either Sites of Special Scientific Interest – which are sites of national importance, or *Regional Important Geological Sites* ("RIGS"). Designated sites include caves, quarries and landscape forms.

There are **12 Sites of Special Scientific Interest** based on geology or a combination of geology and other features, totaling a surface area of **1588.12 ha**. The condition of these sites were being assessed by CCW at the time of preparing this Plan (details available on the CCW website).

There are **3 Regionally Important Geological Sites** within the AONB, namely Trwyn y Tal (11.00ha), Mynydd Carreg (5.29ha) and Porthdinllaen (5.67ha). The state of these sites have been assessed; their condition is specified as "Excellent" by the Gwynedd and Anglesey RIGS Group.

In **LANDMAP 14** sites within the AONB have been identified as being "outstanding" (of international or national importance) and 4 sites as being "high" (regional/ county importance) in terms of Geology and Geomorphology. More information can be gained from the CCW website.

The LANDMAP assessment was used as a basis to create the Llŷn Landscape Partnership area which contains the whole AONB area to the west of the Eifl range. The remainder of the Gogledd Llŷn area can be clustered to form the Eifl Range – Bwlch Mawr or the Trefor-Aberdesach coastal plateau.

Parts of the coast have suffered natural erosion and coastal land has constantly been lost in the passing of time. Significant coastal conservation plans have been developed in Nefyn, Morfa Nefyn and Aberdaron. Shoreline Management Plans (Cardigan Bay and the Northern Coast) have been prepared in order to programme future erosion management work.

For the purpose of the plan review an assessment of the AONB's geological features was undertaken by Land Use Consultants. This work concluded that all sites were in a favourable condition. However, as far as future management was concerned there were some threats identified:

- New developments
- Dumping/ spreading of materials
- Removal/obscuring rock faces

Landscape character

Using a professional landscape assessment is important to assess and value natural beauty and detailed descriptive terms can be used to map the landscape in sensory terms. LANDMAP was established as a landscape assessment method in 1999. It is a process of assessing landscape which attempts to take into consideration all the relevant factors which contribute to the character of the landscape as well as assessing the impact of decisions. Also, information on land use, relevant strategies and public perceptions were assessed. The system was developed by the Welsh Landscape Partnership Group and the system is coordinated by the CCW.

The visual assessment took the following physical factors into consideration: Landscape, seascape, ground cover, land use pattern and settlement pattern. In terms of perception, consideration was given to scale, boundaries, material, colour, diversity, tranquillity, movement, safety, points of observation, untidiness, areas of visual influence. Following all the work, 10 Combined Aspect Areas were established in Gwynedd. The AONB is part of two of these areas, namely the Northern Llŷn Coast and Western Llŷn.

The Northern Coast area is a narrow strip stretching from Aberdesach to Nefyn and including the igneous intrusions of Bwlch Mawr, Gyrn Ddu, Gyrn Goch, Yr Eifl, Moel Tŷ Gwyn and Garn Boduan. Within the area are the town of Nefyn and the village of Trefor - two locations with quite different characters. The area contains a range of vegetation including grassland, coppices and acidic heathland.

The Western Llŷn area includes the part of the peninsula to the west of the A497. Naturally, the sea strongly influences the character of the area as well as traditional field patterns. The geology of the area has created a low plateau with igneous intrusions here and there, such as Garn Fadrun and Mynydd Rhiw. The remains of glaciations are also evident throughout the area. The diverse vegetation and geology have created important habitats such as heathland and wetland. Traces of human habitation are prominent on the landscape of Western Llŷn. Most prominent are the hill-forts on Garn Fadrun and Castell Odo and the prehistoric field patterns.

The LANDMAP analysis of the visual and the sensory identifies seven key features or qualities

found on the Llŷn Peninsula, namely:

- The shape of the peninsula – shaped like an elephant’s trunk with a coastline made up of a combination of sandy bays and beaches interspersed with rocky headlands;
- Small mountains – either rounded, rocky hills or insular steep slopes;
- The strong contrast between the various types of vegetation – rich pastures, heath and bracken, rough pastures, coniferous forests and marshy land;
- Patterns of small fields – surrounded by stone walls and /or soil banks;
- Scattered farmhouses and quarrying villages;
- Tranquillity – no noise or light pollution;
- Remains of quarries and mineral mines – waste tips and old structures from quarries and workings such as those found on Gyrn Ddu, Yr Eifl, Llanbedrog Point and Mynydd Rhiw.

The LANDMAP analysis of the Llŷn Peninsula confirms the area’s natural beauty and high quality landscape, especially the western part of the peninsula.

The coast creates a strong impact, the scattered settlements of Western Llŷn are important, that patterns created by traditional boundaries remain. Many sites have been noted as being of “outstanding” importance (International and national importance) or “high” (Regional or locally importance) in terms of the Visual and Sensory aspect. Also a report based on LANDMAP recommended extending the Llŷn AONB boundary to include the whole area to the west of the A497. More information regarding LANDMAP can be seen on the Natural Environment Wales website.

The relationship between the land and the sea

The need to review this relationship between the land and the sea has become more evident lately in the wake of the concern over climate change and the likely increased storminess of the sea. It is foreseen that climate change will lead to the ice in the Arctic regions thawing and a rise in sea level, leading to stormy weather and subsequent erosion in certain locations. This has contributed towards building a case for new legislation, namely the Marine and Coastal Access Act which came into force in 2009. The Act provides a new framework for planning and managing the marine and coastal environment which aims to create clean, safe, healthy, productive seas and oceans which sustain a wide variety of biodiversity.

In essence, Inter Coastal Management Zoning is a process of setting sustainability in action in coastal areas. It brings together everyone involved in planning, managing and using the coast in order to ensure that management of that coast is carried out in an integrated fashion based on information. The coast to the north of Bardsey Island is one section of the coastline which comes under the Llandudno Coastal Group area whilst the coastline to the south east forms part of the Cardigan Bay Coastal Group area. The clear advantages are listed below:

- a more integrated method of coastal management;
- a greater understanding of the coastline’s importance;
- a more effective contribution from various stakeholders to the decision making process;
- establishing more sustainable methods of economic and social development whilst protecting the environment.

Since 2007 the Welsh Assembly Government and other key stakeholders which belong to the

Wales Coastal and Marine Partnership have resolved to adopt an integrated management approach towards Wales' coast (Inter Coastal Management Zone - ICZM). On this basis a coastal strategy (ICZM) for Wales has been adopted: Making the most of Wales' Coast.

The vision for the Welsh coast, contained in the strategy is that the economic, cultural and environmental assets of the Welsh coast, and the services they provide, are maintained and improved for the benefit of people today and for future generations. Among the current priorities are ensuring that the principles established by ICMZ are accepted and recognised in policy making and in practice, that a better decision making system is established on matters appertaining to the land and the sea on both sides of the coastal boundary, that people are more conscious of the importance of the coastal assets and that a better system of gathering evidence is established for making decisions and monitoring progress.

As regards the management of the shoreline the Welsh coast has been divided into four "cells" or areas. The north coast of Llŷn, from Bardsey upwards is included within the Llandudno to Bardsey cell while the south-western coast is within the Cardigan bay coastal cell. Management plans have been prepared for these areas which concentrate on coastal defences, flood defence and coastal erosion. The process of reviewing these plans began in 2009.

Main Aim

SAFEGUARD AND SUSTAIN THE BEAUTY AND CHARACTER OF LLŷN'S LANDSCAPE AND COAST BY MAINTAINING AND RESTORING THE FEATURES WHICH MAKE THE AREA SPECIAL AND UNIQUE.

Special Qualities

A Peninsula of igneous intrusions

Llŷn is a peninsula extending out to sea and nowhere is far from the sea and coast here. The geology is complicated and included pre-cambrian rocks which are millions of years old which have formed mountains, hills, valleys and an unique coast.

It is the varied geology which provides the basis for the landscape's unique visual character. The peninsula is a broad plateau with a number of igneous mountains and hill breaking the surface - and these are a notable element in the landscape of Llŷn and the AONB. The main one along the north are Gyrn Goch, Gryn Ddu and Moel Penllechog, Yr Eifl, Gwylwyr, Mynydd Nefyn and Garn Boduan and then Anelog ac Uwchmynydd on the tip of the peninsula. Along the southern coast there is Mynydd Rhiw, Mynydd y Graig, Tir y Cwmwd, and Foel Gron wich Garn Fadrun being more inland. There are numerous other small hillocks such as Garn Saethon and Foel Gwynus.

Due to it's island like character and distance from major urban areas there has been relatively little development here in Llŷn - and as a consequence it is often referred to as an unspoilt area.

A stunning coastline

The coastline of Llŷn is rather special and is one of the area's main features. Large sections of the north coast is characterized by sheer cliffs and rocky shores with sedimentary infills. These sedimentary areas have been eroded over time creating a variety of bays and inlets - all

of which have historic Welsh names such as Porth Ysgaden, Porth Meudwy, Porth Gwylan and Porth Colmon. There are a variety of other coastal features as well - such as caves, stacks, small islets - again all with local Welsh names.

Although there are cliffs and rocks along the southern coast there are also wide sandy beaches which are popular with locals and tourists. Places such as Porth Neigwl, Porth Ceiriad and Abersoch beach. Due to the more sandy character of this coast a series of sand dunes can be found in the Abersoch area.

Due to the special character of the coast and because there has been very little development a large section of the Llŷn coast (55 miles / 88.3 km) was designated as a Heritage Coast in 1974. The Heritage Coast follows the AONB boundary from Aberdesach to Penrhyn Du on the southern coast however it does not include the section between Penrhyn Du and Carreg y Defaid (which is within the AONB) but it does include the coastline between Nefyn and Morfa Nefyn. Additionally Ynys Enlli and the Sant Tudwal islands are also. Although the HT is a local rather than a statutory designation it does place a responsibility on the Local Authority to limit coastal development.

Large sections of the coast have also been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and Special Areas of Conservation.

Vegetation

Vegetation provides colour to the landscape and creates a strong visual impact which varies from season to season.

Large parts of the areas is improved agricultural land, given to pasture. This provides a landscape of variable sized field including in some areas a historic field pattern. There are some areas of rough grazing - mainly on higher land, in wet low lying valleys and on coastal slopes. Some crops are grown, cereals mostly but there has been a significant decrease in the area over recent years to the detriment of visual variation and wildlife.

Heathlands are an important element of Llŷn's vegetation and there are areas of coastal, lowland and upland. Upland heath is especially colourful at the end of summer when the heather and gorse are in flower.

Fields and boundaries

Traditional field boundaries date back to the Stone Age in some parts of the area and are a combination of natural and man-made feature which contribute greatly to the beautiful landscape we see today.

Natural boundaries are evident on the landscape of Llŷn - (rivers, woodland, hills and small mountains) and also man-made boundaries. These consist of cloddiau and stone walls, some of which have been built centuries ago to separate the fields and roads; there are also some hedgerow boundaries. All these boundaries, as well as being notable landscape features, are important wildlife habitats.

The Granite Quarries

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries stone was a very important building material and was also used for road making. The igneous intrusions here in Llyn provided good quality granite and stone quarries were developed on many hills and mountains of the area - and the remains of these works can still be seen clearly today. The main quarries were Trefor, Nant Gwrtheyrn/ Carreg y Llam and Gwylwyr in Nefyn but there were a range of other smaller quarries as well in places such as Tir y Cwmwd, Gyrn Ddu and Trwyn Dwmi. The quarries themselves have left their mark on the area but there were other legacies as well - homes were developed and whole villages in Trefor, Pistyll and Nant Gwrtheyrn.

Small villages and scattered buildings

The most rural parts of Llyn is characterised by small cottages, farms and the odd chapel or church - and it can be said there is a resemblance to parts of south-west Ireland in that respect. This again gives the impression of an area not much changed over time and an unspoiled character which are descriptions commonly made regarding Llŷn.

Small rural villages, well assimilated into the landscape, are also a feature of the area. Due to being of concise form and most buildings built in traditional materials they blend well into the landscape and many small villages have retained their historical character well - such as Llanengan, Llangian, Y Rhiw, Clynnog and Aberdaron and add to the area's appeal.

Key Issues

Climate change

It is expected that climate change will place significant pressure on the Welsh coast in the future. Evidence of the effects of climate change suggest that the changes that can be expected as far as Wales is concerned will be an increase in temperature, more hot and dry summers and warmer winters with more rain which will be heavy at times¹.

These effects may lead to two main changes over time:

- An increase in sea level with more storms leading to increased pressure from coastal erosion and flooding in low level areas;
- Extending the growing season leading to a change in the use of agricultural land and pressure to make use of marginal agricultural land.

Coastal Erosion

Some sections of the coast is liable to natural erosion and coastal land has been lost steadily over time – places such as Porth Neigwl, Nefyn – Pistyll and the Trefor area for example. Coastal protection schemes have been developed at Nefyn, Morfa Nefyn and Aberdaron which have impacted on the natural character of the coastline but were needed to protect property and people. Shoreline Management Plans (Cardigan Bay and the North Coast) have been prepared so as to programme works in response to erosion in the future.

Erosion affects beaches and coastal slopes and can be extremely dangerous to property and

¹ Wales Environment Strategy (2008) op cit.

people. Also, sections of paths can be lost leading to the need for re-establishment. It's important to monitor patyhys and property, raise awarneness and take steops to prepare for erosion.

Changes in agriculture

Farming methods have changed significantly over the years and by today there are much less mixed farms in the area. Some of the associated changes in the farming industry which have had an effect on the landscape recently are:

- Erecting sheds, some large, to keep animals indoors over winter
- Specialising in one type of agriculture – sheep, beef or dairy
- Modern large machinery – wjich needs wide gateways and large field
- Diversification to create additional income e.g touring caravans, tents, renewable energy

It must also be acknowledged that valuable enviromnetal work has been carried on on many farms through agri-environment schemes such as re-establishment of cloddiau, repair and erection of stone walls, refurbishment of traditional outbuildings and planting hedgerows. Such schemes have benefited the local environment and landscape.

Static and touring caravans

There are a significant number of caravans on some areas along the southern coast in the Llŷn Peninsula, including the Sarn Bach and Bwlchtocyn areas and The Warren. Although these development have brough income into the area they have also had an detrimental effect on the natural beauty of the landscape and coast in this part of Llŷn.

Recent National and local planning policies have been more restrictive towards caravans, especially static caravans. No new sites are permitted and only small extensions are permitted as part of schemes to upgrade sites. There are also opportunities to lessen the impact of some existing static sites on the AONB through landscaping schemes.

Recently there has been an increase in applications for new sites touring caravans, and extensions to existing sites in the northern part of Llŷn. By now there is a considerable density of units in some areas e.g Aberdaron a Thudweiliog. Within the AONB small sites, in hidden locations can be acceptable but it is important to apply and enfore suitable landscaping conditions.

Wind Turbines

In essence wind turbines require open and windy locations in order to function effectively. Also, larger turbines are more efficient at creating electricity than smaller units. Because of this they are visible on the landscape and affect natural character and views. Also, there is very little opportunity to mitigate the effect by landscaping.

From 2010 grants were being offered by the Government for the supply of energy produced by renewable sources, including wind energy in the form of the "Feed-In Tariff". As a result there was a lot of interest in such schemes because they brought economic gain and lessen the use of conventional electricity. However, the scales of payment for renewable electricity,

through the Feed-in Tariff, has decreased significantly over the years and by 2016 is at a very low level.

When reviewing this Plan in 2015/6 very few wind turbines had been permitted on the Llŷn peninsula. The policies contained in the Unitary Development Plan and the Management Plan have been important in controlling developments in the area as has the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment by Gillespies. It is expected that the reduced payments via the Tariff will result in fewer applications for wind turbines in future.

Solar farms

Due to the Feed in Tariff introduced by the Government in 2010, there has also been an increase in applications for solar panels and solar farms. Panels have mostly been fitted on the roofs of homes, outbuildings and agricultural sheds fairly successfully although there has been some impact on historic buildings in some instances.

Solar farms on the other hand are a different proposition as they are on a much larger scale and cover an area of some hectares. The panels are fairly low-lying in the landscape and there are many locations where they can be sited without have much of an effect on the area's landscape. When reviewing the Plan there was 1 solar farm within the AONB itself (near Aberdaron) and 5 other solar farms of fairly significant size fairly near the boundary (at Boduan, Llangybi, Chwilog, Nanhoron and Llwyndyrus). Following the reduction in tariffs to be paid from 2016 onwards it is expected that applications will decrease significantly.

New housing

It's natural that some new homes will be built in the villages and countryside of Llŷn during the Plan period. Individual houses are built mostly but there have been examples of small estates being built recently – in villages such as Abersoch, Llanbedrog and Trefor.

New building though can impact upon the area's landscape and character if they are built in inappropriate locations and/or are of a size and design which is unsuitable. New buildings therefore need to be carefully located and blend into their surroundings – be it town, village or rural village.

In addition to location and design the correct choice of materials is also important. Stone, pebbledash and different forms of render are the most common finishes in Llŷn and slate roofs is a must. Traditionally doors and windows were timber but UPVC is widespread by today. Generally, traditional design and materials are more suitable within the AONB than modern ones.

Alterations to buildings

Unsuitable extensions and adaptations can have an impact upon the character of existing buildings and the general beauty of the area. It is the traditional buildings – cottages, farmhouses, agricultural buildings, churches, chapels etc which are most sensitive to changes and extensions and the aim should be to preserve and maintain their character. More attention is given to this matter in the section dealing with the Historic Environment.

Untidy sites and buildings

Untidy land and buildings have a negative effect on the landscape and the character of the area generally. Fortunately, here in Llŷn there aren't that many instances at present and indeed there have been quite a few improvements recently such as the demolition of the derelict former Plas Pistyll Hotel.

It is possible that other buildings or sites will deteriorate during the Plan period and if that happens the aim will be to improve or rectify the situation by contacting owner, informing relevant sections of the Council or other relevant bodies such as Natural Environment Wales.

Highway related matters

Historic roads are entwined into the landscape and naturally follow valleys, dips and turns while on the other hand newly developed roads are more direct, in accord with engineering principles, and tend to be wide and have large verges for good visibility. However because of this newer roads tend not to blend in well into the landscape.

Improvements to the A499 have had a significant effect on the AONB's landscape between Llanelhaearn ag Aberdesach. Although improvements were clearly needed to this road unfortunately wide carriageway, with long straight sections and wide verges was developed. Also, many historic features were lost such as narrow gateways, stone gate posts, steel gates and milk stands.

There is a case for improving some other roads within the AONB – most notable the A4417 between Nefyn and Llanaelhaearn. If finance can be secured to carry out these improvements it is important to give proper consideration to the AONB and develop a scheme that safeguards and restores historic features.

There is also concern regarding the proliferation of road signs which detract from the rural character of the area. A Study commissioned by the AONB Service in 2008 showed the effect of minor works and the gradual increase in road signs and recommendations on good practice were suggested.

Infrastructure and telecommunications

As in all areas a number of mobile phone masts have been erected in Llŷn and the service provided is important for local people, visitors and businesses. On the whole these have been fairly well assimilated into the landscape and have not had a significant effect on the landscape and coast. However it is possible that lack of signal and 4G technology might necessitate additional masts but no significant pressure is expected from this type of development.

There is a complex system of poles and cables associated with the telephone and electricity system in the area, however there are no 132KV high voltage within the designated area. There are opportunities for improvements as regards these systems and apparatus by sharing resources and undergrounding. The aim is to work with BT and SP Manweb to realise such schemes for the benefit of the AONB's landscape.

Felling conifer woodlands

Recently (2015/6) some areas of conifer trees within the AONB have been felled – notable examples are Garn Boduan and near Nant Gwrtheyrn. Although these trees are not native to the area they have become an established aspect of the landscape and there is significant change when they are felled. Some of these woodlands are being re-planted and it would be for the best if these could be indigenous trees.

Developments near the AONB boundary

The boundary for the AONB was established in the mid 1950s and followed a period of undertaking survey, expert opinion and consultation. The boundary follows natural features in some places and aimed to include the coast and the igneous intrusions, however a significant part of the peninsula was not included even though it was of high landscape value. There is a strong case for reviewing the AONB's boundary – on the basis of natural beauty, wildlife, historic environment and culture. It is also important to safeguard the area just beyond the boundary because developments here could have a negative effect on the area's setting and view into and out of the area.

Fires on Heathlands

Burning heather and gorse on heathlands is a traditional management practice to control overgrowth and promote new growth. However, burning must be done carefully, under control and at the correct times of the year to avoid unacceptable harm to wildlife and danger of the fire getting out of control. Efforts have been made to raise awareness of the correct time/ methods of burning through projects such as Cadw'r Lliw yn Llŷn and by Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru/ Natural Resources Wales.

On occasions there are unplanned fires on the heathlands – which have been started deliberately or by accident. These types of fires can have a marked effect because they are uncontrolled and can have a significant effect on the heathland and its wildlife.

Polcys

TP 1 SUSTAIN AND SAFEGUARD KEY GEOLOGICAL AND GEOMORPHOLOGICAL SITES WITHIN THE AONB AND RAISE AWARENESS OF THEIR IMPORTANCE.

There are a variety of different geological and geomorphological features on the Llŷn Peninsula. Many of these features can be seen in coastal locations or where rocks breach the surface on higher ground. The most important sites have been designated as SSSI's or Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS).

In the past some developments have had a negative effect on some sites and features – most notably the granite quarries and mineral mines however there is not much threat to these sites now. However efforts will be made to safeguard the sites and raise awareness.

TP 2 SUSTAIN THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF LLŷN'S LANDSCAPE BY WITHSTANDING DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WOULD BE PROMINENT ON THE LANDSCAPE AND WOULD HAVE AN IMPACT ON VIEWS INCLUDING THOSE THAT WOULD IMPACT ON VIEWS INTO AND OUT OF THE AREA.

The beauty on the landscape and coast and the associated views were the main reason for designating part of Llŷn as and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1957. It was only the 3rd such designation through the whole of the UK. It is therefore essential to protect the natural beauty which is the basis for the designation from any development which would be prominent of the landscape and have a negative impact on views.

TP 3 PROTECT THE SPECIAL COASTLINE OF LLŷN AND THE ASSOCIATED ISLANDS BY WITHSTANDING ANY SIGNIFICANT NEW DEVELOPMENTS.

Being a peninsula the influence of the sea is felt strongly in Llŷn. The coastline is mostly in its natural state with very little human intervention to be seen – only a few quarries, harbours and buildings. Again the coast was instrumental in the AONB designation, as well as the later Heritage Coast.

TP 4 SAFEGUARD AND RE-ENSTATE TRADITIONAL BOUNDARIES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER AND IDENTITY OF LLŷN - CLODDIAU, STONE WALLS AND HEDGEROWS.

Landscape character assessments including LANDMAP have confirmed that traditional boundaries contribute to the character and appearance of the Llŷn landscape. The AONB service and partners will therefore aim to protect and sustain these cloddiau, stone walls and hedgerows and re-estate boundaries which have deteriorated. This might be done by objecting to proposals to demolish boundaries, direct payments eg through Glastir and training on how to maintain features.

TP 5 PROMOTE IMPROVEMENTS AS REGARDS UNTIDY AND INTRUSIVE SITES AND BUILDINGS WITHIN AND ADJACENT TO THE AONB.

Presently there are only few untidy sites and buildings but these do have a negative effect on the landscape and all the better if they can be improved. When sites or buildings are identified Gwynedd Council and partners can act by discussing with owners, grants or enforcements to try and deal with the problem. There are also opportunities to landscape existing developments which are prominent on the landscape e.g caravan sites or electricity sub-stations.

TP 6 AIM TO ENSURE THAT NEW BUILDINGS ARE CAREFULLY LOCATED SO AS TO BLEND INTO THE AREA AND THAT ADAPTATIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS ARE IN-KEEPING WITH THE ORIGINAL.

New buildings of all types have an effect on the townscape or countryside dependent on their location and this is an especially important consideration in designated areas such as AONBs and National Parks. All applications for new buildings must go through the planning process and conform with national and local policies and the policies contained in this Plan will be a consideration. This policy does not aim to resist new buildings within the AONB, rather it aims to ensure they are in-keeping with the area and blend in through location, size, type and design.

TP 7 ENCOURAGE ELECTRICITY AND TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES TO SHARE FACILITIES AND UNDERGROUND CABLES WITHIN AND NEAR TO THE AONB.

Although the existing apparatus of electricity and telecommunication companies have been accepted to a large extent there are locations where poles, cables and phone masts do have a negative effect on the landscape. There are some examples of where cables have been placed underground (Porthdinllaen and near Nant Gwrtheyrn) which have proven successful and the AONB service and partners will work with relevant companies to try and get other undergrounding schemes and mast sharing projects underway.

TP 8 WITHSTAND WIND TURBINE AND SOLAR FARM DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WOULD HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE LANDSCAPE OR COAST OF THE AONB AND ITS SETTING.

In 2010 the Government introduced the Feed-in Tariff to encourage companies, establishments and the general public to supply renewable energy through various means including hydro, solar, wind and biomass. Solar and wind offered the best opportunities in this area and there has been an increasing interest in these technologies. However there has been a constant reduction in the grants available through the Tariff scheme with a significant reduction in early 2016.

At the beginning there were numerous applications for solar panels to be attached to buildings but more recently – from 2013 onwards there has been more interest in solar farm developments although only 1 scheme has been permitted within the AONB (nr Aberdaron). Solar farms cover a fairly large area of land and therefore care must be taken to limit sites to well screened sites where they will not impact upon the beauty of the landscape.

Numerous applications for wind turbines have been submitted due to the Feed-in Tariff. Due to a robust policy in the Unitary Development Plan no applications have been permitted within the AONB itself, however some applications near the boundary have been permitted while others have been refused (some at appeal). It must be accepted that some of these developments are intrusive on the landscape and great care is needed with this type of renewable energy.

TP 9 RESIST NEW CARAVAN DEVELOPMENTS AND EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING SITES ON SITES WHICH ARE PROMINENT ON THE LANDSCAPE OR COAST AND PROMOTE THE LANDSCAPING OF EXISTING SITES.

Caravan developments have indeed had an impact upon the landscape and coast of some areas within the AONB. Many of these sites are well-established and date back to the 1960s such as The Warren.

During the last twenty years there has been a constant increase in the number of new sites for touring caravans and there is also a tendency to leave the units on the site for the whole season, thereby increasing the visible impact. Of late there has been an increase in applications in the Aberdaron area and along the northern coast. New sites need to be constrained to well-hidden sites and if possible introduce landscaping to shelter existing sites which are prominent.

TP 10 RESIST HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS AND SIGNS WHICH WOULD HAVE A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER OF LLŷN'S RURAL ROADS AND SUPPORT THE RE-EINSTATEMENT OF HISTORIC FEATURES AND REMOVE SIGNS WHICH ARE NOT NEEDED.

Unimproved highways are historical routes which follow the lie of the land - there is character to the journey and interesting features to see along the way. There is a case for improvement in some locations, where the road is narrow or there are sharp bends, however improvement schemes within designated areas need to be sensitive. Road improvements can lead to negative impact on the character of historic routes by introducing modern elements such as wide carriageways, broad verges, roundabouts, lighting and new signage.

Rural lanes are also important. A study of Rural Lanes in Llŷn which was commissioned by the AONB Service in 2011 showed that rural lanes make an important contribution to the character of Llŷn and the AONB. They are narrow and twisty lanes set between often substantial coddiau, stone walls or hedgerows and signs, concrete kerbs and coloured road markings are intrusive

elements.

TP 11 RAISE AWARENESS OF THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF LLŶN'S LANDSCAPE AND COAST, PROMOTE A FEELING OF PROUDNESS IN THE AREA AND SUPPORT FOR IT'S CONSERVATION.

All the available support is needed towards the care of the area and the AONB and local people and tourists to the area can help. Therefore awareness needs to be raised regarding the area's special qualities and a feelings of being proud and support for conservation work need to be nurtured. The AONB Service and partners aim to provide opportunities to learn and understand the area better including opportunities to take part in training and voluntary work.

TP 12 SUPPORT AND PROMOTE MEASURES TO MANAGE THE LANDSCAPE AND THE COAST IN WAYS WHICH MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND HELP DEAL WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

Scientists are now fairly certain that climate change is happening as a result of an increase in CO₂ levels and ozone layer damage. The effects of climate change will be dramatic in some locations but even here in Llyn there will be side effects and climate change needs to be addressed. Therefore we need to be aware of the likely effects of climate change, the challenges facing us and what measures can be taken to limit the effect. This will involve research, raising awareness and sharing of good practice.

Access, Enjoyment and Participation

Introduction

The Llŷn Peninsula is an ideal place to roam in the countryside and along the coast whilst enjoying spectacular views. It is also a place to rest, keep fit and see wildlife, historical remains and buildings and various other interesting features. However, not much of what the area has to offer can be enjoyed unless you can access them - therefore, rights of way and lands that are open to the public are important.

Public rights of way (prow) include public footpaths, bridleways and roads and byways. Public footpaths are by far in the greatest number and many are open and in a good condition - but some problems exist and ensuring sufficient resources for maintenance is challenging. Also, there are many rural roads in the area - small country lanes - and these are also useful for travelling by car, bus, bicycle or on foot.

Common lands are another valuable resource in terms of access in Llŷn. Although these lands are in private ownership, access can be gained to substantial parts of them as Access Land. Many of these sites are uncultivated and unimproved lands and many are natural heathland which are a valuable habitat to a variety of wildlife.

In addition to the common land, restricted public access is available on other land, namely Access Land, which have come into existence as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The former Countryside Council for Wales led on this process and exercises were undertaken to raise awareness and consult as part of the registration. Information about Access Lands in the Llŷn AONB area can be seen on OS maps with a Scale of 1:25,000. Further information about Access Lands can be seen on Natural Resources Wales website.

Opportunities for public access is also available on land in the ownership of conservation organisations (access to some lands by prior arrangement). The two obvious ones in Llŷn are the National Trust which owns a number of sites, coastal lands and farms, including Llanbedrog and Porthdinllaen beaches and also the Bardsey Island Trust.

Gwynedd Council is responsible for rights of way as well as for leading the work on the Coast Path. Since 2005, many resources have been allocated to the development of the Coast Path, which form a section of the Wales Coast Path, with support from Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Government. Community Councils have an important role to play in terms of path maintenance in their areas whilst landowners also have a responsibility to keep statutory paths open.

The Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum has a role to play in terms of the supervision of rights of way and public access. Regular meetings of the Forum are held to discuss various access issues and the Forum can contribute to the implementation of some of the Management Plan's policies regarding access issues.

Opportunities to roam are important in order to enjoy the area, visit historical remains and habitats, see a variety of wildlife and birds and for health benefits and keeping fit. Also, it is a part of the tourism

resource that brings work and substantial income into Llŷn.

The Main Aim of the Management Plan in terms of Access and Enjoyment is:

<p>IMPROVE AND PROMOTE THE PROVISION OF RIGHTS OF WAY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCESS IN THE AREA TO ALL USERS AND RAISE AWARENESS AND IMPROVE APPRECIATION OF THE AREA'S SPECIAL FEATURES AND THE PUBLIC BENEFITS OFFERED BY THE ENVIRONMENT.</p>
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Special Qualities

Paths and Rights of Way

The paths and rights of way include footpaths, bridleways and byways. There is an extensive network of public footpaths in Llŷn although significant sections are not in regular use by now. Gwynedd Council retains the information about the route of paths which is shown on a series of maps and computer system.

Access to many historical sites and archaeological remains is obtained via rights of way. One can walk to the summit of many of the area's hills and see remains of the ancient forts such as Tre'r Ceiri or see monoliths and dolmens as well as the more recent artefacts of the minerals industry and granite quarries.

One can roam and see a variety of Llŷn's special wildlife by using rights of way and access rights. Walking along the coastal paths provides an excellent opportunity to see and study the marine birds and grey seals whilst hares, farm birds and smaller creatures are to be found more inland. Also one can visit various habitats including marshes, coastal grazing lands and various heathlands.

A detailed assessment of the public footpaths was undertaken as part of the preparation work for the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan in 2005. This work included surveying paths to see whether or not they were open, the condition of the furniture, signage and level of use. Based on the survey, the paths were placed in categories in order of priority in order to programme future maintenance work.

Some paths and roads are suitable for people with mobility problems or wheelchair users. Due to the lack of information about suitable areas and improvements that could be made, a survey was commissioned by the AONB Service to assess Access Opportunities in 2008. The Report concluded that facilities and access could be improved on a number of sites - including facilities for the disabled.

Few bridleways are to be found in the AONB and possibly the reason for this is that historically boats or small ships were used to move from place to place, rather than horses. The bridleways are an important resource and according to legislation, bridleways are also open to cyclists.

Permissible paths - used by the public but they are not public footpaths, e.g. leading to wells or beaches.

Unclassified roads - have developed over time and they were originally based on footpaths and cart paths and they developed into important access roads to the villages and areas of Llŷn. Byroads and other small lanes have rights of way and they also contribute to the access opportunities that exist - a total of 43 of them extending for just over 18 kilometres long. Any changes?

Wales Coast Path

Public footpaths are important in each area but here in Llŷn the Coast Path offers spectacular views. Over the recent years, Gwynedd Council, Natural Resources Wales and the North Wales Tourism Partnership have been working on developing the Coast Path in Llŷn which extends along the Peninsula. The path uses public footpaths, small lanes, permissive paths, beaches and open land. By now, the Coast Path runs almost entirely along the coast following the establishment of new coastal links. Also, work is ongoing, as part of the Coastal Access programme, to obtain additional sections along the coast.

A substantial number of people walk along the Coast Path in Llŷn and the area's businesses have benefited from this development. Until recently, estimates were being made regarding the number of ramblers, but nowadays digital devices count the exact number of ramblers. Unfortunately it is not possible to compare with the data in the previous plan. However, there is a baseline for future reviews.

In 2014, Nefyn Town Council received money from the Coastal Communities Fund to improve sections of the Coast Path between Nefyn and Morfa Nefyn so that it was made suitable for people with disabilities and young families. Also, the project will re-establish a historical 10 mile path between Nefyn and Llanbedrog.

Circular routes

Circular routes are popular because there is a variety of things to see along the way and there is no need to have a vehicle so that you can return to your starting point. Of course, it is possible to draw up circular routes by following maps but there is an element of risk that a path or road will be closed thus forcing the walker to turn back.

In 2015, Gwynedd Council and a number of partners managed to obtain a grant from the Coastal Communities Fund to develop new and convenient circular routes, with links to the Coast Path. A number of these paths are to be found in the AONB and they are an opportunity to visit a number of interesting historical and nature sites. The paths which form part of the new circular routes have been upgraded as a result of the project and they are way-marked. More information can be seen at www.visitsnowdonia.info

Access Lands

As noted, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 provided new access rights to the public (with restrictions) on:

- open land, namely land including heathland, moorlands or dunes;
- common land (registered under the Common Land Registration Act 1965);

- any other type of land designated as 'access land' by the owner.

In terms of Rights of Way, the Act will improve current legislation by promoting opening new accesses and removing uncertainties regarding existing rights. The Arfon and Dwyfor Local Access Forum contributed to the process of defining land with public access.

Common Land

Between 2004 and the present day, the changes in terms of the area of common land within the AONB was very minimal. The latest figure is 824.5 hectares. There are 30 common land sites in Llŷn and these are important in terms of public access and as a resource for informal recreation. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 gave access rights to registered common lands as well as to other open land. Common lands are also very important as a natural and semi-natural habitat and because of their nature value, many of the lands have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. A number of Llŷn's common lands are in the ownership of the National Trust. They vary in size and some units link together to create a substantial area, such as Yr Eifl. The other main common lands in Llŷn are Mynydd Tir y Cwmwd, Mynydd Rhiw, Y Foel Gron, Bardsey Island, Mynydd Cilan and Penarfynydd. Full details regarding ownership, size and grazing rights etc. can be found in the Common Land Register retained by Gwynedd Council.

Common lands are a very important access resource in the AONB and consequently, some of them are under considerable pressure from recreational activities. In the past, some common lands e.g. Rhiw, Mynytho have gone on fire during dry summers.

Trust Lands

The National Trust owns many sites and lands in the Llŷn Peninsula.
The main public areas are:

- Porthdinllaen village and beach, Morfa Nefyn
- Whistling Sands Beach, Aberdaron
- Porth Meudwy, Aberdaron
- Porth y Swnt, Aberdaron
- Llanbedrog Beach

Also, the Trust owns coastal land and farms in Llŷn, including Porth Gwylan, Mynydd y Graig and Penarfynydd. Public access can be gained to some of these lands by prior agreement.

Since 1979, Bardsey Island has been in the ownership of the Bardsey Island Trust. It is possible to cross the sea to the Island by arrangement with the crossing service that runs from Porth Meudwy. Bardsey Island is a very special place due to its historical links, religious background, wildlife and marine birds and its tranquil and remote nature. It is a place that offers a unique experience and an increasing number of people visit the island and stay there for periods of time to escape from modern life.

Oriel Glyn y Weddw - The Oriel purchased the Allt Goch woodland near the Plas a few years ago and

has worked to clear and manage trees and re-open former paths that are now open and link up with the Coast Path.

Beaches

Beaches where access can be gained to them are an important access and recreational resource for Llŷn. They contribute to the visual beauty of the area and provide an opportunity to enjoy and relax. There is a broad range of beaches to be found, some rocky and others with fine golden sand and dune systems can be found in some places. Sandy beaches such as Llanbedrog, Abersoch, Porth Ceiriad and Porthdinllaen are popular for sunbathing, relaxing, bathing and sports. On the other hand, some beaches are more rocky and wild and attract walkers, naturalists and fishermen.

The beaches or shores provide access to the sea. Local fishermen and residents keep boats on some beaches such as Trefor, Nefyn, Porth Ysgaden, Porth Meudwy and Abersoch. Many launch pleasure boats and personal water crafts from these beaches also and at times can be very busy and there is a risk of accidents. Some beaches are popular for special types of recreation - for example, surfing is very popular at Hell's Mouth whilst diving is popular in Porth Ysgaden.

A Place to Cycle

There are many rural lanes in Llŷn that are suitable for cyclists as there is not much traffic travelling along them. These lanes can be clearly followed with an OS Map to the Scale of 50,000 or 25,000. The Access Opportunities Study (AONB, 2008) has shown that facilities to park and lock bicycles are to be found near many of the area's beaches and that there are opportunities to improve the provision in some areas.

Until 2009, there was no specific cycle path in the AONB. As a result of the work of improving the A499 from Aberdesach to Llanaelhaearn, also a dedicated cycle path has been provided by using sections of the former road and the verge of the new road. Bridleways can be used by cyclists, however, these are few and far between in Llŷn. There may be an opportunity here to raise awareness and show that these facilities exist.

A network of cycle routes using local roads has been developed by Gwynedd Council, the Wales Tourist Board and the Welsh Development Agency. An information pack was published and signage was installed in 2004. Two of these routes travel through extensive sections of the AONB (Route 1 - Mynydd yr Ystum, Route B - Garn Fadrun), and another route travels through a section of the AONB (Route C - Garn Boduan). At the time of reviewing the Plan, not much promotional work was being undertaken on these routes and some signage was missing.

The National Trust promotes routes from Aberdaron to three nearby locations (Whistling Sands, Mynydd Mawr and Plas yn Rhiw). These routes are marketed on-line and in a leaflet has been produced.

Travelling to, and within, the area

The main roads leading to Llŷn are the A499 from the direction of Caernarfon and the A497 through

Porthmadog. Many use cars to travel around the area and visit various destinations, however, there are traffic problems in Pwllheli and in some of the villages during the busy holiday periods.

The Cambrian Coast Railway offers an opportunity to travel to and from the area by rail. The service follows the coastline to Dyfi Junction or Machynlleth and then connects to Aberystwyth or Shrewsbury and Birmingham. Rail is a more sustainable mode of travel that can assist in reducing vehicular traffic in the area. Full details regarding the service managed by ARRIVA can be found on the following website: www.cambrianline.co.uk.

The main Llŷn bus station is located at Pwllheli and buses travel to various different areas. A regular service runs between the main centres such as Porthmadog, Caernarfon, Nefyn and Abersoch and a semi-regular service between the villages along the main roads. Full details regarding the bus service can be found on Gwynedd Council's website or on: www.cymraeg.traveline-cymru.info.

Coastal Bus - The Coastal Bus is a new service in Llŷn that runs a regular service between Nefyn, Aberdaron and Abersoch on specific days. It offers a good opportunity to walk along sections of the Coast Path and then catch the bus back or forward to the next centre. More details can be found on the following website - www.bwsarfordirLlŷn.co.uk.

Key Issues

Footpath and Rights of Way maintenance in light of financial cuts

One of the main issues in terms of access is how to maintain public footpaths and other rights of way in light of substantial cuts in public spending. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan includes information about all rights of way in the area and places footpaths in different categories according to priority. Subsequently, emphasis was placed on maintaining the paths in categories 1, 2 and 3 in order to make the best of the restricted resources available. However, over the years, the budget has been reduced and further substantial cuts will be made in 2016-18.

Obstructions on paths and stock in fields where there are rights of way.

Unfortunately, obstructions on public footpaths in the AONB are quite common and disrupt people's ability to walk and enjoy. Such matters can be difficult to resolve. Wires or gates placed across paths are most commonplace but it was recently seen in some areas that increased use is being made of electric wires to control grazing and that they are located near or across public footpaths. In such cases, awareness needs to be raised and landowners need to be informed of their responsibilities in terms of paths.

In some cases problems arise where cattle are found on lands where paths are located. There is a need to raise walkers' awareness of the dangers and to work with farmers to encourage them to avoid placing cattle, calves and bulls in fields where public footpaths are located.

Erosion and weather

Coastal erosion has a substantial impact on the Coast Path in some places in Llŷn. A combination of

wet winters and storms causes erosion and instability in a number of places along the coast. The sedimentary parts of the land suffers most and during 2015 and 2016, substantial erosion has taken place near Llanbedrog, Hell's Mouth, Nefyn and Morfa Nefyn and in the Trefor area.

In some places, the Coast Path has collapsed into the sea or has been undermined to such a degree that it has had to be moved more inland. In order to do this, cooperation will be needed from landowners and resources will be required to pay for work and equipment such as gates, wires and signage.

Visitor pressure

Excessive use of sites or paths can be harmful as it leads to erosion and wear and tear. This is not currently a major problem in the AONB but it could develop as a result of increased use.

In some areas in the AONB, there are pressures however as a result of parking on road verges due to the volume of tourists visiting popular destinations. The most obvious examples of this can be found near the public car park for Hell's Mouth, Porth Ysgaden and on the roadside of the B4417 at the foot of Tre'r Ceiri.

Dogs on public footpaths

There is a responsibility on owners to keep their dogs under control when following rights of way. However, regular complaints are received by the Council regarding dogs running free and disrupting stock and gates being left open. This creates animosity and losses in some cases and it must be borne in mind that farmers are entitled to destroy any dogs that attack their stock.

Conflict between users on beaches and on the sea

The area's beaches are one of its main attractions and some of the beaches can be very busy during the summer. Various activities take place on beaches - sunbathing, playing games, fishing, boat launching, etc. At busy times, conflict between users is a problem, in particular between those who wish to launch boats - with vehicles or tractors - and other beach users.

Conflict can also develop between those who bathe and enjoy the beaches and those who use personal watercraft and speedboats. Gwynedd Council's Maritime Service is acting to control this by licensing and setting limits and monitoring the beaches, however, the noise of these watercrafts can disturb others. Recently, the Marine Ecosystems project, which has evolved from the work of Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau SAC has launched a new Marine Code to provide guidance on how to respect marine environment and wildlife and other users.

Lack of opportunities for some groups

Although there is a good provision of facilities to roam and enjoy the area, there is a lack of resources for some groups specifically:

- Horse riders
- Cyclists

- People with mobility disabilities

The Access Opportunities Study (2008) looked at issues such as how convenient the access was and whether or not disabled people could reach the beach. Also, attention was given to the provision for bicycles, car parks and the bus service. The report also suggests improvements to facilities in specific areas.

Traffic

During busy holiday periods, the traffic flow is heavy through the town of Pwllheli and the villages of Abersoch, Llanbedrog, Nefyn, Morfa Nefyn and Aberdaron. This disrupts the life and work of local people and the enjoyment of visitors and increases air pollution levels. It is believed that consideration needs to be given to measures to mitigate the situation - measures such as promoting alternative modes of travel, creating new cycle paths, looking to improve traffic flow through Pwllheli and parking management.

Lack of information regarding the designation and environmental benefits

Over the years a lot has been done in an attempt to raise awareness regarding the AONB's designation in general, the Llŷn AONB and the various characteristics of the area. The AONB Service has contributed articles to the local press, given talks and attended events, created a website and published an annual magazine.

Nevertheless, the impression one gets is that the levels of information amongst local people and visitors are relatively low - regarding the designation itself and also regarding the environmental benefits (ecosystem services) being provided. Certainly, there is room to improve this and attempt to get people to see the benefits of the designation and what is being provided by the natural environment. In addition, it is believed that there is an opportunity here for people to support and contribute more directly by means of practical work on projects from the AONB service.

Policies

MP 1. MAINTAIN, PROTECT AND PROMOTE KEY PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY IN THE AREA AND ENSURE THAT THEY ARE AVAILABLE FOR USE WITHOUT OBSTRUCTION.

Rights of way are an important resource for local people and visitors to the Llŷn area to roam, enjoy and keep healthy. The AONB Service will encourage and assist Gwynedd's Rights of Way Department, Community Councils, landowners and organisations such as the National Trust to maintain and retain rights of way in the area. It is realised that this will pose a greater challenge in the future as a result of the financial squeeze on Local Authorities.

Also, the AONB Service and partners will object to any proposal to close, or place obstructions, on any right of way. Cattle on lands with rights of way can cause concern to the public and there is room to work with farmers and the Unions in an attempt to raise awareness about this as well as educate people about closing gates and controlling their dogs.

MP 2. PROMOTE MAINTENANCE WORK ON THE COAST PATH IN THE AONB AND CREATE NEW COASTAL LINKS.

The Wales Coast Path was launched in 2012 and since then a number of new coastal sections have been added in Llŷn, such as the areas of Cim Abersoch and Bethlem, Llangwnnadr. Some sections (Pistyll, Trefor?) are yet to be done and the AONB service will support efforts made to include these additional sections. Also, support is offered towards the maintenance of the entire path and its promotion amongst local people and visitors.

As noted when discussing the hot topics, erosion along the sea-cliffs has disrupted the Coast Path in some areas. It must be accepted that this is inevitable as a result of the nature of the land, wet winters and storms. What will need to be done will be to monitor the Path closely, identify problems early and be prepared to alter the path / create new sections, if required.

MP 3. PROMOTE THE USE OF LOCAL ROUTES THAT ARE LINKED TO THE LLŷN COAST PATH.

In 2015/16, a number of local routes were developed as part of a Gwynedd Council project that received funding from the Coastal Communities Fund to create 18 routes that linked with the Wales Coast Path. A number of these routes are in Llŷn, and provide an opportunity to see interesting sites close to the coast. It is proposed to promote these routes as they provide an opportunity for local people and visitors to keep fit and see and learn about interesting natural and human features at the same time (www.visitsnowdonia.info).

MP 4. IMPROVE THE PROVISION FOR USERS, INCLUDING HORSE RIDERS, CYCLISTS AND THE DISABLED.

There is a good provision of rights of way and open access land in Pen Llŷn; however, there is a lack of access opportunities for horse riders, cyclists (specific cycle paths) and the disabled. Recently, a Nefyn Town Council project has improved facilities for the disabled by placing a hard surface on a path at the top of the hill between Nefyn and Morfa Nefyn. It is aimed to make other similar improvements, as well as improve opportunities for horse riders and cyclists.

MP 5. MANAGE TOURIST PRESSURES IN SOME SPECIFIC AREAS IN THE AONB BY MEANS OF MEASURES SUCH AS MANAGING NUMBERS, TIMING OF EVENTS, IMPROVING FACILITIES AND EDUCATING THE PUBLIC.

Excessive pressure from users and visitors can have a negative impact on sites and locations in the AONB. Currently, this is not a major problem in the AONB, but it does exist in some areas as noted earlier. By means of various measures, it is aimed to control and reduce the problem, or ensure that it does not develop into a problem.

MP 6. SUPPORT EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF BEACHES AND JETTIES IN THE AREA AND MAINTAIN THEM TO A HIGH STANDARD.

Some of the area's beaches are very popular during the school holidays and a large number of

people use them for different activities such as fishing, sunbathing, water-sports, etc. It is aimed to promote reasonable use of the beaches and avoid conflict between the various users. It is also important that the beaches are well maintained by preventing littering, dog control and preventing people from driving vehicles onto the beaches, apart from when they are launching boats under supervision.

MP 7 PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE MODES OF TRAVELLING TO THE AREA AND IN THE AREA.

Promoting sustainable modes of travelling to the area and around the vicinity can be beneficial in many ways. It can assist to reduce traffic congestion in Pwllheli and in some of the area's villages, a way for people to keep fit by walking or cycling and also a way of reducing air pollution. Therefore, the AONB Service will promote cycling, walking and using buses and the Cambrian Railway.

MP 8. RAISE AWARENESS AND INCREASE APPRECIATION OF THE AONB DESIGNATION, THE AREA'S SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE MAINTENANCE, PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE AONB.

Although a lot has been done to raise awareness of the designation since establishing the AONB service in Gwynedd Council in 2003, it is believed that there is more to be done. Often, local people and visitors do not know that Llŷn is one of only five AONBs throughout Wales and that this gives the area a special status that we need to be proud of. The designation can be a good opportunity for businesses to market their products or service. Also, in an attempt to nurture interest and ownership, it is aimed to provide more opportunities for people and children to contribute to the work of the AONB, including volunteer work such as working on environmental projects.

MP 9 RAISE AWARENESS OF THE BROAD RANGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE AONB AND THE INTERESTS OF THOSE SERVICES IN TERMS OF THE ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.

Increasing emphasis is being placed on the benefits that the natural environment is providing for society - another term for this is ecosystem services. These benefits are divided into four categories:

- Provisioning Services – products such as food, fibre and medicine
- Regulating Services – water purification, maintaining air standards and climate regulation
- Cultural Services – well-being by contact with nature and education
- Maintenance Services - processes that are required for other services such as soil formation and nutrient rotation.

In collaboration with others, the AONB Service will raise awareness of these benefits and their importance to society, the opportunities that exist and the need to maintain and protect them for the future.