Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

# World Heritage Site Management Plan 2018–28

Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd World Heritage Site

January 2018

Cadw

Cadw is the Welsh Government's historicenvironment service, working for an accessible and well-protected historic environment for Wales.

Cover: From top to bottom, these images of Beaumaris Castle, Caernarfon Castle, Conwy Castle and Harlech Castle were drawn by celebrated Welsh artist, Kyffin Williams, KBE, RA (1918–2006). They appeared on the covers of 'souvenir editions' of the guidebooks for the castles written by Alan Phillips and and produced by the Information Branch of the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works. These guidebooks were first published in the 1961 by HMSO.[1]

# World Heritage Site Management Plan 2018–28

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# Foreword

Wales's World Heritage Sites are cultural assets of which we are right to be proud. The Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd World Heritage Site is truly of international significance — images of these iconic places are recognised right across the globe.

The monuments have played an important part in our history for nearly a millennium and have earned their place in our national identity. They are architectural masterpieces and formed one of the biggest building projects of the Middle Ages. Throughout their rich and often conflicted history they have shaped the communities that surround them, and played a part on the wider stage of British and European history.

In more recent times, they have assumed a major economic and social role for their local communities and the wider region. Each year the World Heritage Site has over half a million visitors and contributes more than £30m to the Welsh economy. Significant investment over the last decade, such as the world-class visitor facilities at Harlech Castle, is helping to enhance these economic benefits.

But, above all, the World Heritage Site is about people. It is important to remember that behind the figures, many people are enjoying and understanding our heritage. There is good work being taken forward through several cultural heritage and lifelong learning programmes to engage with local communities and provide life-changing experiences for children, young people and families alike. The World Heritage Site also provides dynamic spaces for events, ranging from small community-led initiatives to major commemorative occasions, such as the poignant Weeping Window display of poppies at Caernarfon Castle which honoured those who gave their lives in the First World War.

Events and activities such as these help to challenge our perception of these iconic locations and promote Wales's modern identity through our distinctive Welsh language and culture. All of this puts the World Heritage Site at the heart of its communities.

The sustainable management of the World Heritage Site for future generations is therefore vital. The previous management plan served the site well. It has been well protected and conserved, and some important developments have been achieved over the last ten years. However, it is now time for a new plan that responds to new challenges and opportunities to ensure that this globally significant heritage asset can continue to realise its full economic and social potential.

The management plan is based firmly on a collaborative partnership approach, reflecting the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and our 'Prosperity for All' strategy. The management plan also sets out an ambitious way forward to protect and enhance the towns and communities that surround the monuments and which have such an important relationship with them.

I would like to thank all those involved in shaping and developing the management plan, including the many stakeholders and members of the public who participated in the various events held over the last few months, and the members of the steering group. I am also grateful for the formal commitment of the four main partners, who are joint signatories to this management plan, which clearly shows a new collaborative approach to the management of the World Heritage Site.

I am confident that the broader partnership that will exist between traditional partners, businesses and the community can make a real difference in delivering positive outcomes over the next five to ten years.

**Lord Elis-Thomas AM**
Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport

# Contents

*World Heritage Sites are 'places of Outstanding Universal Value to the whole of humanity'. The Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd World Heritage Site includes Conwy Castle (© Crown copyright (2017) Visit Wales).*

# 1  Introduction ¬

## 1.1  What is a World Heritage Site? ¬

The UNESCO World Heritage Committee defines World Heritage Sites as 'places of Outstanding Universal Value to the whole of humanity.[2] This means that their cultural and/or natural significance is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity.' There is no higher recognition of heritage value. The inscription of three World Heritage Sites in Wales (Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd, Blaenavon Industrial Landscape and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal) represent Wales's global importance in the history of medieval military architecture and the origins of industry. Welsh Government guidance emphasises that the protection and conservation of World Heritage Sites is fundamental to fostering better understanding of their history and what makes them internationally significant.[3]

*Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site (© Crown copyright (2017) Visit Wales).*

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is responsible for the UK's general compliance with the UNESCO World Heritage Convention for the portfolio of 31 World Heritage Sites within the UK. DCMS liaises with the Welsh Government on the nomination, conservation and protection of World Heritage Sites in Wales. The management of specific World Heritage Sites in Wales, however, is a devolved matter and the Welsh Ministers are responsible for ensuring compliance with the convention. These functions are discharged through the Welsh Government's Historic Environment Service (Cadw).

The Welsh Government's approach to the protection and sustainable management of World Heritage Sites is based on three principles:

- the statutory designation of specific historic assets within World Heritage Sites and associated mechanisms to manage and control works
- the collaborative creation and implementation of World Heritage Site management plans to ensure the effective and active involvement of all key stakeholders
- the use of the planning system to guide appropriate development.[4]

*Blaenavon Ironworks, which is part of the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site (© Crown copyright (2017) Visit Wales).*
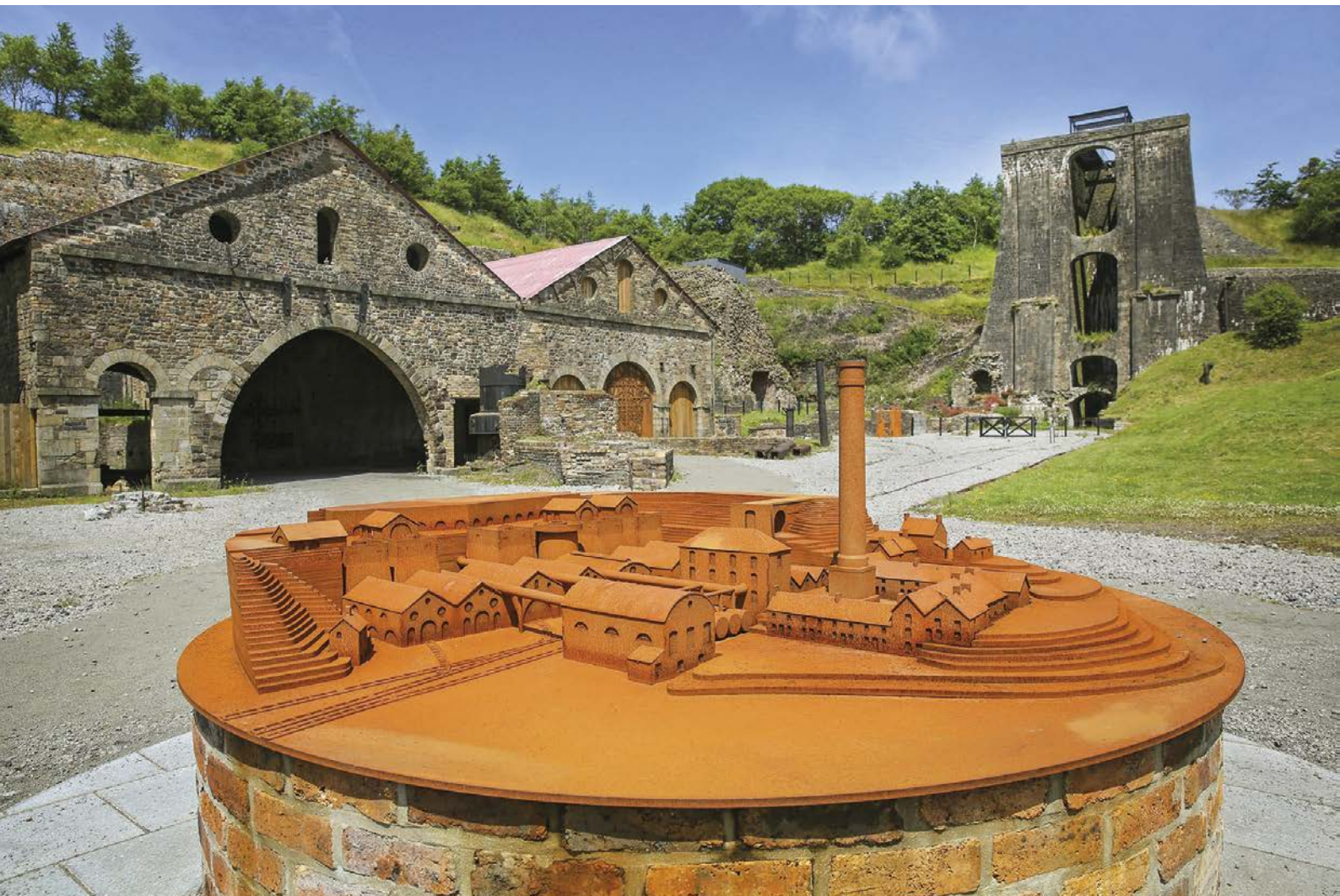
## 1.2   Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd ¬

The Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd was inscribed as a single site by UNESCO on the list of World Heritage Sites in 1986 as a cultural site of Outstanding Universal Value. The site comprises Beaumaris Castle, Caernarfon Castle and Town Walls, Conwy Castle and Town Walls, and Harlech Castle. It was amongst the first seven sites from the UK to be ascribed this level of international importance. The four locations are shown overleaf.

The decision of King Edward I of England (1272–1307), announced on 17 November 1276, to go against Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, prince of Gwynedd (d. 1282), 'as a rebel and a disturber of his peace'[5] had, as one of its consequences, the start of a programme of castle building in Wales on an unprecedented scale. During the next 20 years, eight new castles were begun by the king, some of which were accompanied by substantial fortified towns. During the same period, royal building of some consequence also took place at four of the native Welsh castles that had fallen into the hands of the Crown, as well as several of the existing border castles from which the English operations were launched.

*Harlech Castle is one of the four castles which make up the Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd World Heritage Site.*

Of the eight new castles, the finest were Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy and Harlech. Each was located on a coastal site in north-west Wales. Caernarfon and Conwy were equipped with new towns, each enclosed within massive walls built at the same time as the castles. Beaumaris was also accompanied by a new town, but this was not enclosed within stone walls until more than 100 years after the castle was built. Harlech also had a small new town, but this was never walled. All four castles were begun and substantially completed within the period 1283 to 1330.

Today, the World Heritage Site attracts well over half a million visitors each year and contributes some £8 million to the local economy (equivalent to over 450 jobs). The castles are well known both nationally and internationally, and contribute considerably to the appeal and interest of the area to visitors from around the world.

Appendix 1 summarises the existing mechanisms for safeguarding and protecting the World Heritage Site, including national legislation and local planning arrangements.

*Figure 1.1: Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd World Heritage Site.*
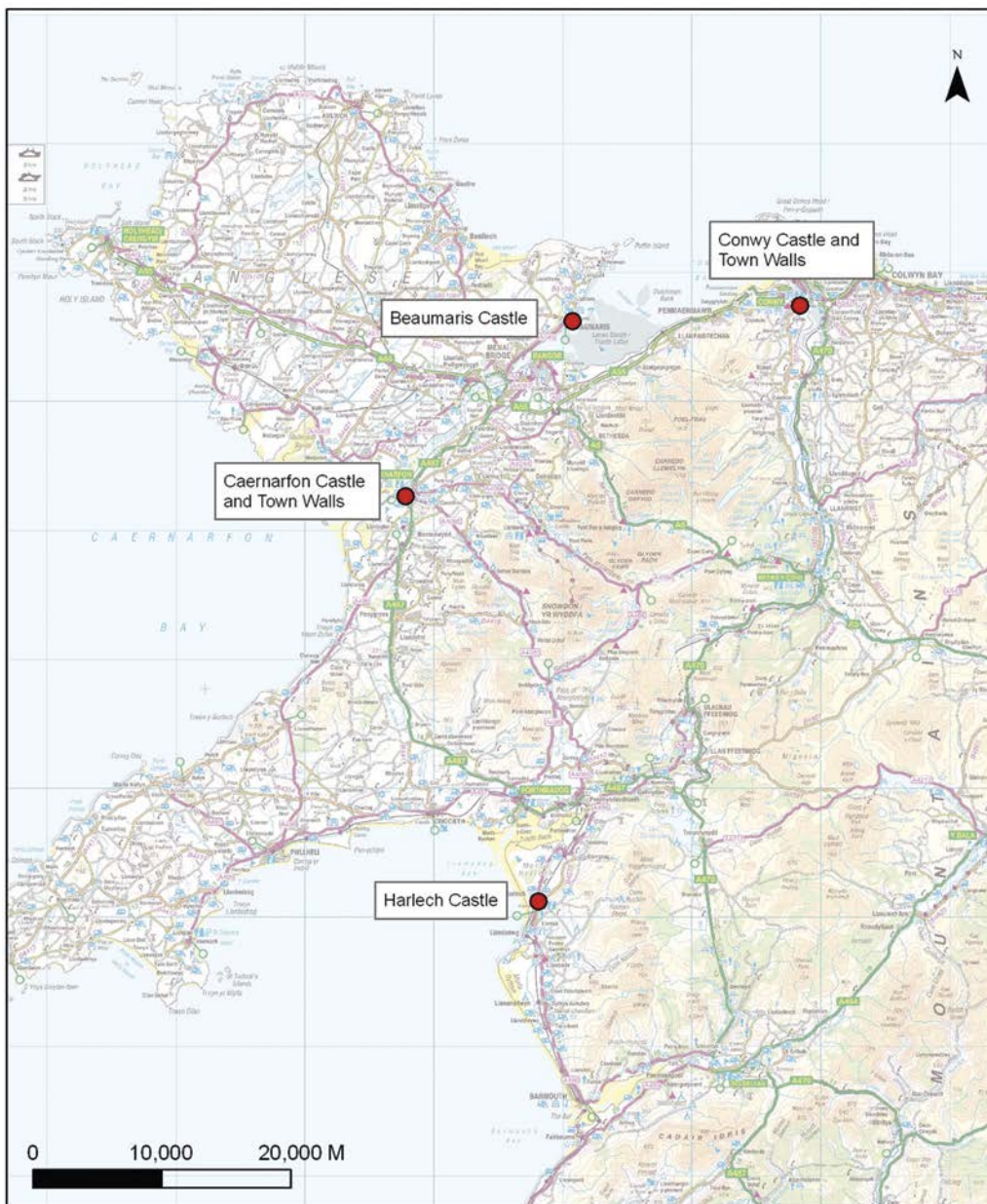


This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey of behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Welsh Government. Licence Number: 100017916 (2016).

## 1.3 The Role of the Management Plan ¬

UNESCO advocates the production of management plans for each World Heritage Site to bring together all responsible parties and enable a coordinated approach to site management.[6] The production, adoption and regular review of agreed management plans for each World Heritage Site is fundamental to the approach of Cadw, partners and local communities to the protection of these important sites in Wales.[7]

The content of a management plan is governed by the unique qualities of the individual World Heritage Site.[8] However, to meet UNESCO requirements, the management plan should provide an accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date description of the site and its setting, and explain how it is protected. The plan must present the Outstanding Universal Value and key attributes of the site. From this, the principal management needs of the site can be established.

World Heritage Site status is a material consideration when determining planning applications.[9] The management plan therefore provides an important link between the international requirements of UNESCO on the one hand, and the aspirations and requirements of local planning authorities and communities on the other.

*The quayside at Conwy, the redevelopment of which will be guided by the World Heritage Site management plan.*

The primary role of the management plan is to present policies and actions designed to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site is maintained, sustained and communicated. It can also:

- serve as a tool to help develop the identity of the World Heritage Site — what it means to communities and stakeholders today, as well as encouraging understanding of the past
- ensure a coherent approach to the management of the World Heritage Site across all four locations (and including the four local planning authorities of Conwy County Borough Council, Gwynedd Council, Isle of Anglesey County Council and the Snowdonia National Park Authority)
- form a focus for stakeholders and encourage the development of effective partnership working
- consider sustainable tourism and how this should be managed, encourage the economic and regenerative impacts that the World Heritage Site may have and play a particularly important role in culture and education.

The new management plan needs to take into account changes in national and local policy, and strategy in Wales, including the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016, the preparation of a Historic Environment Strategy for Wales and work on local development plans.[10]

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a core duty on public bodies (including the Welsh Ministers, local authorities and National Park authorities) to work to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Key to its success will be the delivery of seven well-being goals with direct relevance to the World Heritage Site, including a globally responsible Wales, a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language and a resilient Wales of cohesive communities. These objectives are recognised within the targets set for the management plan (see section 4.4).

*Caernarfon Castle and Town Walls are at the heart of a modern, busy town which needs to be managed sustainably now and in the future.*

## 1.4 Taking the Management Plan Forward ¬

Ownership and responsibility for implementation of the management plan sits with a multi-organisational steering group. The steering group comprises officials from Cadw and from the four local planning authorities. Wider interests include representation from Visit Wales, community councils, and the business and private sectors. A representative from ICOMOS-UK (International Council on Monuments and Sites UK) also sits on the steering group. Community representation is made primarily through elected officials and through the effective delivery of the community engagement strategy.

It is the responsibility of the steering group to establish and maintain a set of working principles. These should include open and transparent working and recognition of the value of effective engagement and participation in helping to deliver good outcomes. As well as having overall responsibility for implementing the management plan, the steering group is responsible for monitoring progress against the actions set out in the plan, and for the presentation of periodic reports to UNESCO.

Strategic direction is provided to the steering group by a World Heritage Site Board, which comprises senior Cadw and Welsh Government staff as well as local government representatives. The board meets on an annual basis. The steering group will establish a series of themed subgroups to take forward the delivery of specific actions and tasks set out in the management plan. Subgroups will include planning and conservation, and economy and regeneration. The subgroups will comprise representatives from stakeholder organisations.

The work of the steering group is further supported by the World Heritage Site coordinator. This is a key post, ensuring close collaboration with stakeholders, promoting the World Heritage Site as an area with a distinct identity and facilitating the delivery of the management plan. The management and governance structure is illustrated in Figure 1.2.

*Figure 1.2: The Management and Governance of the World Heritage Site.*
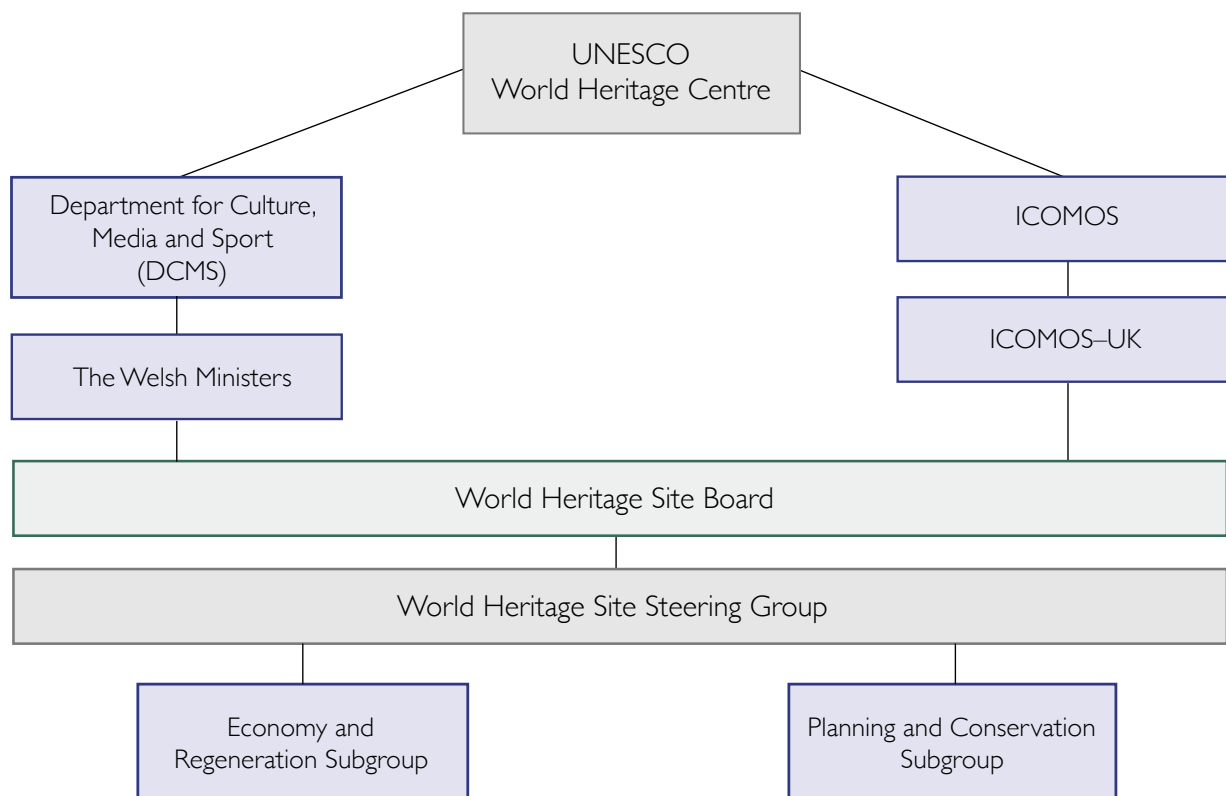
## 1.5   Stakeholder and Community Involvement ¬

The success of a World Heritage Site — in terms of protection, conservation and presentation — depends on the commitment of partners to a shared vision which is backed up by actions that are both achievable and deliverable.

A key priority for UNESCO and ICOMOS is to encourage the social benefit of World Heritage Sites through increasing public awareness, community participation and international cooperation. It is also important to transmit the significance of the World Heritage Site through a celebration of cultural distinctiveness. Developing civic pride in the unique communities that live and work within the World Heritage Site is a critical starting point to transform their social and economic circumstances, and to act as a driver for economic regeneration, sustainable tourism and social inclusion.

Community and stakeholder engagement is integral to the continued protection, sustainable development and management of the World Heritage Site. A stakeholder and community engagement strategy for the World Heritage Site will evolve over the course of the management plan period to ensure that efforts to improve engagement and understanding with local communities continue.

*A Fusion event held to encourage community involvement in Caernarfon Castle (see section 4.6.9).*

This management plan has been developed in a participatory way with local communities and stakeholders. A series of consultation events was held to raise awareness of the World Heritage Site, and to inform and involve people in the management plan process. Stakeholder forums and public exhibition events explored not only issues of core significance affecting the built structures of the castles and town walls, but also examined what links have been created between the monuments and communities to engender ownership and opportunity. Overarching themes to arise from the consultation and engagement process included the need for more dialogue with communities, the importance of a joined-up approach between partner organisations, the fostering of new partnerships (for example, with landowners or the private sector), as well as linking with other opportunities that exist in each of the four towns and the wider region.

Critically, the notion of stewardship of the World Heritage Site and of what the site means for the townspeople and wider communities needs reinforcement, both through the preparation of the management plan itself and in the wider delivery of projects and actions.

*One of the community events held at Caernarfon Castle as part of the 2012 Cultural Olympiad.*

## 1.6 Achievements of the Previous Management Plan ¬

Many of the actions and ambitions of the previous management plan, which has been in operation since 2004, have been achieved. A quinquennial inspection of Beaumaris Castle, Conwy Castle and Town Walls, Caernarfon Castle and Town Walls, and Harlech Castle was completed in March 2016. This used visual inspection and aerial drones to capture high-resolution images of out-of-reach areas. The inspection found the overall condition of the castles and town walls to be good, which is a positive reflection on the rolling campaigns of repair and conservation work that have been carried out. During the plan period, major conservation has been undertaken around the circuit of Caernarfon and Conwy town walls, Conwy Castle barbican and interior features within Harlech Castle towers. New railings and access have been installed in Conwy Castle and along the town walls.

The process of understanding the character of each of the four towns in more detail began with the urban character study for the Caernarfon Waterfront area in 2010.[11] This has continued with the preparation of brief character statements for all four towns as the basis for more detailed studies in future (see Appendix 3).

*Improved visitor facilities at Harlech include better access via a new bridge (left) and the refurbishment of the Castle Hotel to provide a visitor centre and holiday apartments (right).*

A conference was held in 2007 to mark the seventh centenary of the death of King Edward I which drew together recent research about the Edwardian castles and towns in Wales. The proceedings of the conference were subsequently published in 2010 as *The Impact of the Edwardian Castles in Wales*.[12] This marked the greatest recent step forward in research and thinking about the effect that the building of the castles had upon Wales in the past, present and future. The papers demonstrate a more holistic understanding of the Edwardian castles and their context, including their symbolism and impact on Welsh society and its princes.

New visitor facilities have included the refurbishment and reopening of the visitor centre at Conwy in 2012, the development of the former Castle Hotel at Harlech into a new visitor centre with cafe and holiday apartments in 2016, a new ticket entrance building to Caernarfon Castle in 2015 and public access to the majority of the town wall circuit in Conwy. Accessible and imaginatively designed entrance bridges have also been created at both Caernarfon and Harlech castles.

The completion of an interpretation plan for the World Heritage Site in 2010[13] informed new and visually stimulating interpretation. This has now been installed at each of the four castles, including at Beaumaris (2016) which uses computer-generated images to show how the castle might have looked if it had been completed. Research undertaken during the previous management plan period has also informed the preparation of new guidebooks for Conwy, Beaumaris and Harlech castles.[14]

*The new visitor entrance to Caernarfon Castle is designed to welcomwwe visitors but the building itself has minimal impact on the medieval fabric (left and right).*

Links with local communities have continued to be developed through a wide variety of events and projects. Notable successes have been the programmes of activities developed and implemented successfully as part of the Welsh Cultural Olympiad project during the four years leading up to the London Olympics in 2012. This included the 'Men of Harlech' rock opera, based on the life of Owain Glyndŵr at Harlech, and 'Cipio'r Castell', which featured works of art, music and theatre at Caernarfon Castle.

Protection of the setting of the monuments has generally been achieved successfully through planning development management and appropriate policy, despite pressures for development and change at each of the four locations to different degrees. However, the large-scale waterfront development at Victoria Dock has had an impact on the setting of Caernarfon Castle and Town Walls, which had previously dominated views across the Menai Strait from the southernmost corner of Anglesey. Although the original proposals for the development were scaled back significantly in terms of their height and massing in an attempt to reduce the impact on the setting of Caernarfon Castle, especially when viewed from the castle itself, this remains a controversial development. Whilst the economy of Caernarfon may have experienced a boost as a result of Victoria Dock — through cultural, retail and residential uses (and therefore employment and expenditure to the local economy) — the new buildings are seen by many to dominate the distant coastline and skyline when viewed from Anglesey.

*New interpretation to improve visitors' understanding of Beaumaris Castle includes a digital projection and soft play using medieval-style building blocks (left and right).*

UNESCO's World Heritage Committee has established a six-yearly periodic reporting cycle for the purpose of assessing the state of conservation of World Heritage Sites. This determines whether the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage Sites has been maintained over time, as well as sharing experiences and good practice. The periodic review for the Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd World Heritage Site was prepared for UNESCO in 2013[15] and identified a number of issues, including that:

- World Heritage status has benefitted education, information and awareness building activities, but there is room for further improvement
- increasing community awareness and understanding of the World Heritage Site at each of the four locations is important
- awareness of local residents/communities and landowners of the boundaries of the World Heritage Site should be improved
- the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site is adequately presented and interpreted, but improvements could be made.

*A massive wooden guard, which oversees the entrance to the inner ward at Conwy Castle, helps visitors to understand how the ruined buildings were once used.*

*Owain Glyndŵr brought to life as a celebrated rock star in one of the Welsh Cultural Olympiad projects of 2012.*

## 1.7   Structure of the Management Plan ¬

A wealth of information already exists about the castles and town walls of Caernarfon and Conwy and the castles of Beaumaris and Harlech in historical accounts, research and publications. It is unnecessary to replicate detailed background information here (for example, the history of the site or technical reports about its condition). Instead, the management plan sets out to describe simply and effectively:

- the attributes of the World Heritage Site that contribute to its Outstanding Universal Value and which must be protected in order to retain its significance
- issues and opportunities facing the future management of the World Heritage Site
- the policies and actions that will guide this process.

On this basis, the structure of the management plan follows this outline:

**Chapter 2** sets out the significance of the World Heritage Site, including the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, a summary of the key attributes of the World Heritage Site, the conditions of authenticity and integrity that need to be maintained, and the significance attached to the setting and views of the World Heritage Site.

**Chapter 3** provides interpretation of the key attributes of the World Heritage Site, including an outline history of each castle since its construction, the results of recent research that refine and contribute to the understanding of the World Heritage Site, a description of its recent history (passing into the care of Cadw on behalf of the Welsh Ministers), the conservation movement, the growth in tourism, the role of the castles in art, music and literature, and a summary of the social, economic and environmental context.

**Chapter 4** comprises the management plan and policy framework for the World Heritage Site, including the vision and overarching principles, issues facing the World Heritage Site and corresponding objectives and policies. The resulting action plan sets out the actions that will guide the management of the World Heritage Site over the next five years, including lead and partner organisations, and timescales (short, medium and long term).

**Chapter 5** describes monitoring arrangements.

_Caernarfon Castle from along the River Seiont._

*King Edward I, who ordered the building of the castles and town walls that make up the World Heritage Site, is shown in this late thirteenth-century manuscript with his senior churchmen (British Library, London, UK © British Library Board. All Rights Reserved/Bridgeman Images, Cotton Vitellius, Ms. AXIII, f. 6v).*

# 2  Statement of Significance ¬

## 2.1  Introduction ¬

This chapter summarises the value and significance of the four castles, two sets of town walls and their individual settings. It includes the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the World Heritage Site, the criteria by which it was inscribed and an analysis of how the site meets UNESCO requirements of integrity and authenticity.[16]

The castles of Beaumaris and Harlech, and the fortified complexes of Caernarfon and Conwy are located in the former principality of Gwynedd in north Wales. These extremely well-preserved monuments are examples of the colonisation and fortification works carried out throughout the reign of King Edward I and of the military architecture of the time.

The castles were not merely garrison strongholds, but also seats of government. They were symbols of power and, along with their walled towns, served as centres from which English influence was disseminated throughout Wales. The king was the driving force behind the castle-building campaign but the execution was the responsibility of a cadre of experts organised by James of St George (about1230–1309), master of the king's works, who came from Savoy. At the time of inscription, Master James was described by many historians as the greatest military architect of the time. Edward's meticulous building accounts have resulted in a collection of archives that reveal in unparalleled detail the huge administrative task of building these castles. They also provide a human dimension to illuminate the story preserved in stone — we know who worked on the castles, where they came from and what they were paid.

*The World Heritage Site is a masterpiece of human creative genius, which was directed by Master James of St George — master of the king's works in Wales. This manuscript illustration shows a king in discussion with his master mason while building work continues in the background (British Library, London, UK © British Library Board. All Rights Reserved/ Bridgeman Images, Cotton Nero Ms. DI, f. 23v).*

The castles and town walls represent the finest surviving collection of late thirteenth-century military architecture in Europe. By the nineteenth century they were valued as picturesque ruins and in the twentieth century they were taken into State care and conserved as monuments of national importance. They are now cared for by Cadw on behalf of the Welsh Ministers.

## 2.2   Statement of Outstanding Universal Value ¬

At the time of inscription, a statement of significance was produced for the World Heritage Site. Subsequently, in line with Article 1 of the UNESCO *Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage*,[17] all existing World Heritage Sites were asked to produce a Statement of Outstanding Universal Value. The retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd World Heritage Site was adopted by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in 2013.

### 2.2.1 Brief Synthesis ¬

The four castles of Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy, Harlech and the attendant fortified towns at Caernarfon and Conwy are the finest examples of late thirteenth-century and early fourteenth-century military architecture in Europe, as demonstrated through their completeness, pristine state, evidence for organised domestic space, and extraordinary repertory of their medieval form.

The castles as a stylistically coherent group are a supreme example of medieval military architecture designed and directed by James of St George, King Edward I of England's chief architect, and the greatest military architect of the age. The extensive and detailed contemporary technical, social and economic documentation of the castles, and the survival of adjacent fortified towns at Caernarfon and Conwy, make them one of the major references of medieval history.

The castles of Beaumaris and Harlech are unique artistic achievements for the way they combine characteristic thirteenth-century double-wall structures with a central plan, and for the beauty of their proportions and masonry.

*The documentary records for the building of the castles and town walls of the World Heritage Site provide a clear account of who was paid for what work, where and when. The document shown here refer to works at Beaumaris Castle (The National Archives: E 372/158).*
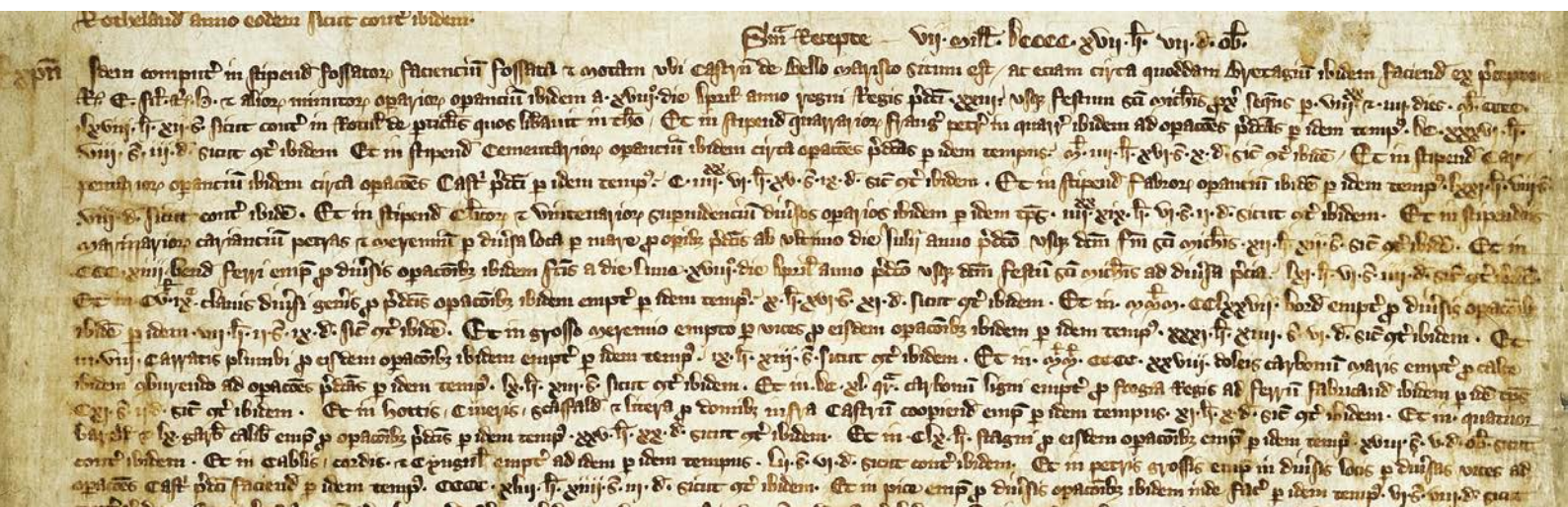
## 2.2.2 Criteria for Inscription ¬

### Criterion (i) to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius

Beaumaris and Harlech represent a unique achievement in that they combine the double-wall concentric structure, which is characteristic of late thirteenth-century military architecture, with a highly concerted central plan and in terms of the beauty of their proportions and masonry. These are masterpieces of James of St George who, in addition to being the king's chief architect, was constable of Harlech from 1290 to 1293.

### Criterion (ii) to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilisation which is living or which has disappeared

The royal castles of the ancient principality of Gwynedd bear a unique testimony to construction in the Middle Ages in so far as this royal commission is fully documented. The accounts by Taylor in Colvin (ed.), *The History of the King's Works*, London (1963),[18] specify the origins of the workmen, who were brought in from all regions of England, and describe the use of quarried stone on the site. They outline financing of the construction works and provide an understanding of the daily life of the workmen and population and thus constitute one of the major references of medieval history.

### Criterion (iv) to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history

The castles and fortifications of Gwynedd are the finest examples of late thirteenth-century and early fourteenth-century military architecture in Europe. Their construction, begun in 1283 and at times hindered by the Welsh uprisings of Madog ap Llewelyn in 1294, continued until 1330 in Caernarfon and 1331 in Beaumaris. They have only undergone minimal restoration and provide, in their pristine state, a veritable repertory of medieval architectural form: barbicans, drawbridges, fortified gates, chicanes, redoubts, dungeons, towers and curtain walls.

*The castles are the finest examples of late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century military architecture in Europe. This aerial view shows the walls-within-walls design of Harlech Castle, (Skyscan Balloon Photography for Cadw).*

## 2.2.3 Integrity ¬

The individual castles possess a high degree of integrity with the coherence of their planning, design and quality of construction being undiminished.

The four castles include all the medieval defensive structures within the property boundary, but not the planned settlements or waterfronts. All the defensive attributes are within the boundary of the World Heritage Site, but as the towns were an integral part of their defensive, administrative and economic arrangements, and their waterside position contributed to their defence and trade, the full range of attributes could be seen to extend beyond the narrow boundaries.

The essential relationship between each castle and their coastal landscape remains intact and in two cases the intimate interrelationship of castle and town remains a striking feature of the present-day urban landscape. Although there is no formal buffer zone, the value of the wider townscape, the essential setting and significant views from each castle are incorporated into the management plan.

Potential threats to the integrity of the site could come from unsympathetic development on the town/landward side of the castles, but also from coastal or off-shore development within the setting of the castles. There is a need to protect the setting of the castles to ensure their relationship with their hinterland and coast remains undiminished.

*The relationship of Beaumaris Castle with the Menai Strait was crucial to the supply and functioning of the castle and the town built alongside it (© Crown copyright: RCAHMW).*

## 2.2.4 Authenticity ¬

The authenticity of all four medieval castles and of the two town wall circuits has been maintained despite some reconstruction in the late nineteenth century at Caernarfon. During the last 100 years, the conservation of the castles and town walls has been undertaken following the philosophy of 'conserve as found', with minimal intervention or intrusive modification. The plans, form, materials and component features of the castles are largely unaltered from their medieval form. They clearly still display the wide repertory of medieval architectural forms, including barbicans, drawbridges, fortified gates, chicanes, redoubts, dungeons, towers and curtain walls.

The town walls at Caernarfon and Conwy remain largely unchanged and provide an exceptionally rare, almost complete, enclosure of their historic townscapes.

The overall setting of the four castles remains largely intact — with the exception of development on the Morfa at Harlech and some new development at Victoria Dock in Caernarfon — and thus they retain their ability to present very clearly their scale, defensive power and intimidating presence, as well as their beauty and prominence in the coastal landscape.

*The circuit of the town walls, as well as the castle at Conwy, is remarkably complete and unaltered (© Crown copyright (2017) Visit Wales).*

## 2.2.5 Protection and Management Requirements ¬

The UK Government protects World Heritage Sites by the statutory protection of individual sites and buildings and by spatial planning and guidance. The four castles and two town wall circuits are protected by statutory scheduling as monuments of national importance and by being in State care. As such, they are maintained by the relevant conservation body within government according to current conservation principles. All four are protected by local plans, planning guidance and their World Heritage management plan which is reviewed regularly. Harlech is within the Snowdonia National Park while all four are within conservation areas that cover the immediate setting of the castles and town walls. Their wider setting has been defined as 'essential settings' and key views are protected. Evaluation of boundaries will be undertaken as part of the management plan review process.

These measures combine to ensure that the castles are subject to rigorous controls over development that could potentially impact upon them or their setting. Shoreline Management Plans and the Environment Agency's[19] Flood Risk Assessments help protect the sites from coastal erosion or unsympathetic coastal development, thus keeping intact the important coastal views and sightlines.

Tourism and visitor management is directed by the Welsh Government's Historic Environment Strategy and implemented through the World Heritage Site management plan, which includes policies for promotion, access, interpretation and visitor management.

The World Heritage Site Steering Group, which includes the participation of site owners, local authorities, government and the general public, has responsibility for the implementation of the management plan that ensures that conservation, development control, educational use and public accessibility is maintained.

*Tourism management implemented through the World Heritage Site management plan ranges from the care of visitors on individual sites to coach travel arrangements (© Crown copyright (2017) Visit Wales).*

## 2.3   Key Attributes ¬

UNESCO recommends that all World Heritage Sites should identify the attributes which express the Outstanding Universal Value of the site. Attributes can include not only physical features such as the form and design, materials and substances, traditions and techniques, but also intangible elements such as use and function, language, spirit and feeling.[20] Whilst attributes such as spirit and feeling do not lend themselves easily to practical application, they are nevertheless important indicators of character and sense of place; for example, in communities maintaining tradition and cultural continuity. The key attributes of the Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd World Heritage Site are summarised below and described in more detail in Chapter 3. The attributes and their components are tabulated in Appendix 2.

The four castles of Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy and Harlech, and the attendant fortified towns at Caernarfon and Conwy are the finest examples of late thirteenth-century and early fourteenth-century military architecture in Europe.

As a stylistically coherent group, the castles are a supreme example of medieval military architecture designed and directed by James of St George, King Edward I of England's chief architect, and the greatest military architect of the age.

The relationships between the castles and their settings, including all four towns, and the coast.

The extensive and detailed contemporary technical, social and economic documentation of the castles is one of the major references of medieval history.

The castles of Beaumaris and Harlech are unique artistic achievements for the way they combine characteristic thirteenth-century concentric — walls-within-walls — structures with a central plan and for the beauty of their proportions and masonry.

The influence of the castles on Welsh culture, language and distinctiveness.

*One of the key attributes of the castles is their close relationship with the coast as shown by this view of Caernarfon from across the Menai Strait.*

## 2.4   Setting of the World Heritage Site ¬

Setting is the surroundings in which a historic asset is understood, experienced and appreciated, embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape.[21] It often extends beyond the property boundary and into the surrounding landscape or townscape. In *Managing Change in World Heritage Sites in Wales*, setting is described as more than simply the immediate surroundings of a site; it can also relate to how the site was intended to fit into the landscape, the views from it and how the site is seen from the surrounding area.[22]

Protecting the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site means defining and protecting its setting. In addition to the general consideration of setting that is applicable to all historic assets, the setting for the Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd World Heritage Site also includes three specific elements — essential setting, significant views into and out of the World Heritage Site, and a sense of arrival. These elements, as well as the broader interpretation of setting, are explained and described below.

The setting of historic assets combines physical and less tangible elements including functional, sensory perceptions or historical, artistic, literary and scenic associations. These can change through time as the historic asset and its surroundings change and develop. The setting of the World Heritage Site includes significant aspects of its landscape and townscape that add to the way in which the site is experienced and understood. This may include areas and places that form part of the essential setting (see section 2.4.1), but may also extend beyond it. It may, for example, include areas with a functional relationship to the World Heritage Site (such as the towns themselves, waterfronts and historic routes). It could include areas that serve as preparation for the experience of the World Heritage Site, or areas that emphasise the link between the site and other older or more recent historic sites (such as the Roman fort of Segontium in Caernarfon).

*The setting of Conwy Castle overlooking the Conwy estuary is important both historically and aesthetically.*

The setting of the four castles includes the towns of Caernarfon, Conwy, Harlech and Beaumaris. The relationship between the castles and the towns was not fully captured in the previous management plan; the towns have a historic character which reflects both their origins and their continued importance long after the roles of the castles had diminished. Outline character studies, undertaken as part of the preparation of this management plan, have identified those aspects of the four towns considered to be of particular relevance to the setting of the World Heritage Site to help guide development proposals and manage change within these areas. The outline character statements are set out in Appendix 3.

Not all aspects of setting can be mapped, as they include intangible elements and historical connections between places that may not be contiguous (for example, Llanbeblig, the location of Caernarfon's parish church, is an early medieval foundation at some distance from the castle and town).

## 2.4.1 Essential Setting ¬

World Heritage Sites nominated for inscription today are generally expected to include a buffer zone to provide effective protection for the site and its setting. No buffer zone for the World Heritage Site was included at the time of inscription requiring other measures to be implemented to ensure adequate protection. The last management plan established the principle of using 'essential setting' as a management tool to protect each of the four monuments. These are areas outside the World Heritage Site boundary, where inappropriate development or change could have an unacceptable impact on the Outstanding Universal Value, for example, by damaging or obscuring specific features or altering important views. This management plan maintains and enhances that approach as it has served its purpose well in place of a buffer zone.

The essential setting is a spatially defined area that can be mapped and used to inform the development management process. At each location, the essential setting is primarily restricted to areas immediately adjacent to the World Heritage Site boundary, within significant views or arcs of views, and considered to be most sensitive to development both visually and from the perspective of archaeological potential. The essential setting for the World Heritage Site is identified on Maps 2.1–2.4. Key features of the essential setting are described in Table 2.1. Note that the views shown in Table 2.1 are for illustrative purposes only.

## 2.4.2 Significant Views ¬

Views to and from the World Heritage Site are important for appreciating the site and its integrity and authenticity. Significant views are considered to be the most important views both into and out of each of the monuments in the World Heritage Site. These views generally extend beyond the areas of essential setting and can include visual relationships with key historic and natural features associated with the World Heritage Site. Due to the panoramic extent of some views, particularly those to and from the sea and mountains, some significant views have been depicted as 'arcs of view'. In these instances, the entire view enclosed within the 'arc' is considered to be significant.

Inappropriate development or change is considered to be that which would obstruct or interfere with or distract from these views. Significant views at each location are shown on Maps 2.1–2.4 and described briefly in Table 2.1. Note that the views shown in Table 2.1 are for illustrative purposes only.

Map 2.1 Beaumaris: Essential Setting and Significant Views

**Legend:**
- World Heritage Site
- Essential Setting
- Significant View
- Arc of View
- Conservation Area

BEAUMARIS

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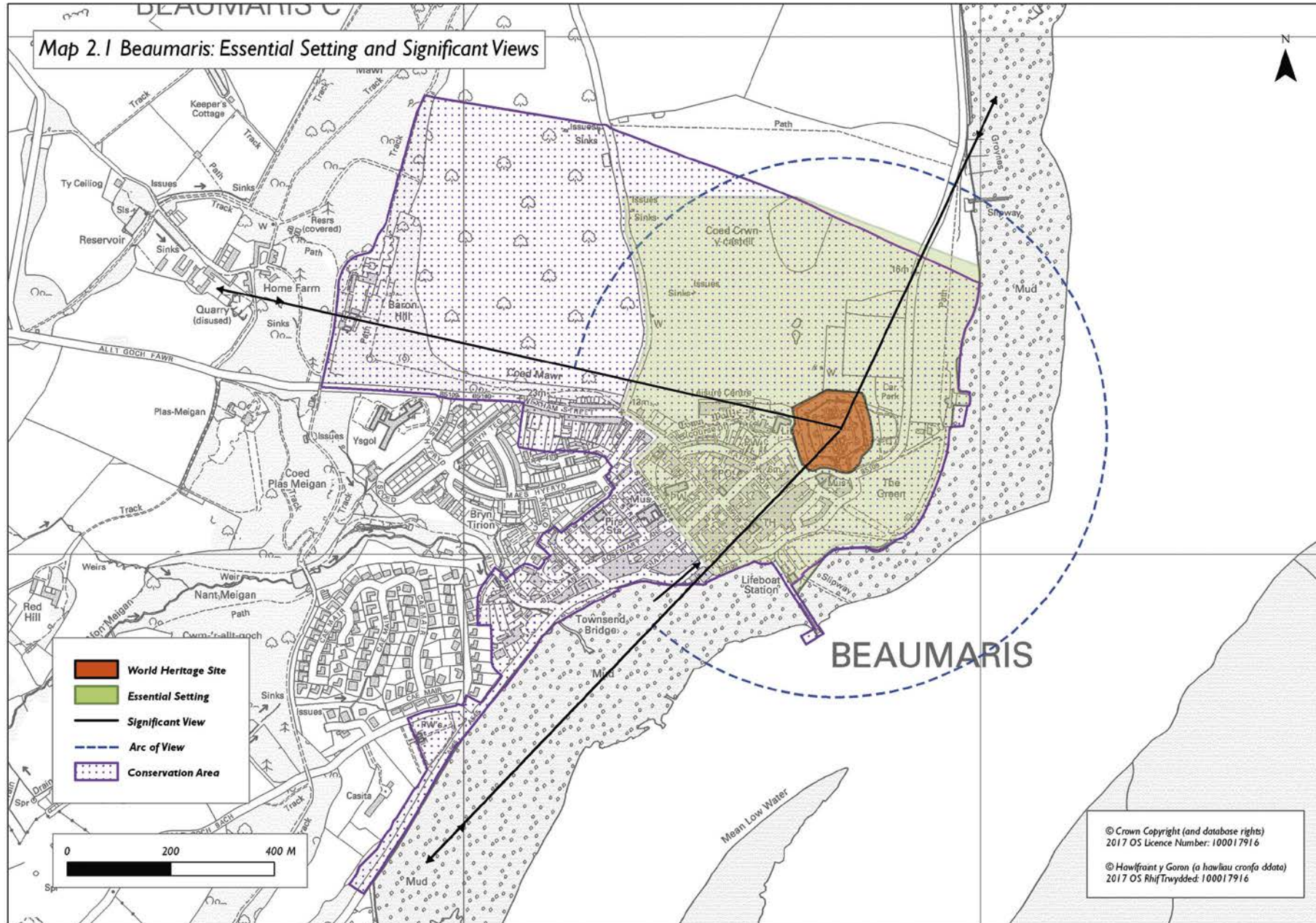
## Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

## Beaumaris



### Essential Setting

Despite changes since the castle was built, the rural and coastal landscape to the west, north and east maintains the historic setting. There is a historic link between the castle and the house and park known as Baron Hill. Both have been part of the Bulkeley estate for nearly 200 years; the park in particular reaches close to the castle moat.

The area of the medieval town shows the relationship between the castle and the borough. The essential setting includes the part of the town bounded by Steeple Lane. This also forms part of the Beaumaris Conservation Area, which extends beyond the essential setting of the World Heritage Site to the south and west of the town.

The castle has a close relationship with the sea, with the main entrance next to the castle's tidal dock. The waterside location would have given continued access to both supplies and defences.



*An aerial view of Beaumaris Castle showing part of the essential setting with open land on three sides and the historic town on the fourth (top).*

*The view down the main street of Beaumaris from the castle. The main street lies within the essential setting and Beaumaris Conservation Area (bottom).*

## Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

# Beaumaris



### Significant Views

**From the castle** — landward views of Baron Hill relate the castle to the rural landscape, but the most magnificent views are in an arc of more than 180 degrees from Puffin Island to the Menai Strait, taking in the Great Orme and Snowdonia.

**Into the castle** — because the walls and towers were not raised to their intended maximum height, the castle makes the greatest impression from distant viewpoints that are low on the coast or on the water. Closer views from Baron Hill, the streets of the historic town (particularly Castle Street) and The Green on the seafront are important.



*The view of the castle from Baron Hill looking across the Menai Strait towards Snowdonia (top).*

*The view from the castle wall-walk towards the Menai Strait with Snowdonia beyond (bottom).*

Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

## Beaumaris

*The parkland to the north of the castle, known as Baron Hill.*





*The low-lying nature of the castle is clear in the view from the Green.*

Map 2.2 Caernarfon: Essential Setting and Significant Views

CAERNARFON

Legend:
- World Heritage Site
- Essential Setting
- Significant View
- Arc of View
- Conservation Area

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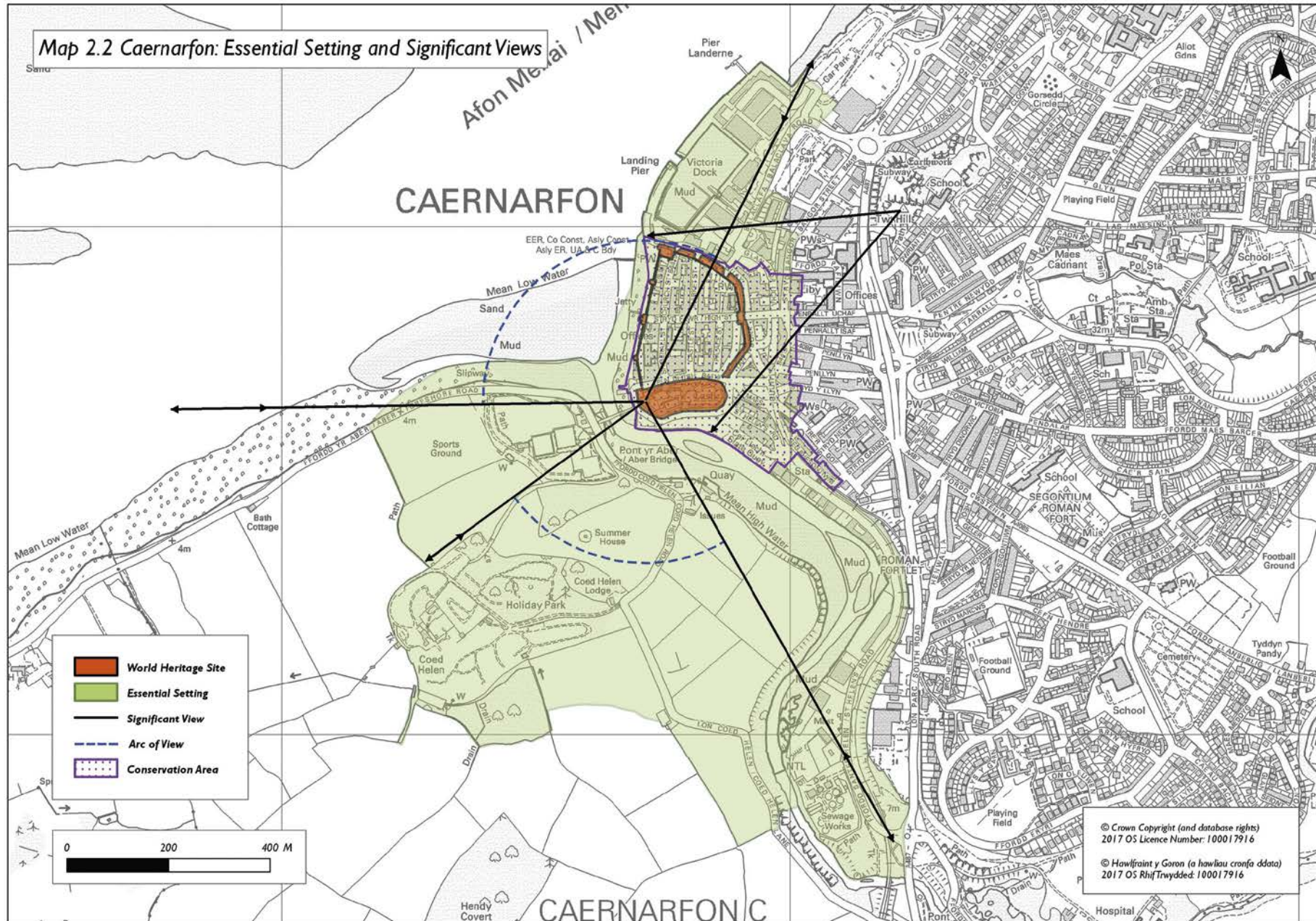
## Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

# Caernarfon



### Essential Setting

The entirety of the Caernarfon Conservation Area is included within the essential setting of the World Heritage Site. This includes the whole of the walled town, the Maes and part of the largely nineteenth-century urban development immediately outside the walls

St Helen's Road is an increasingly important access to the town and is an area where some regeneration/redevelopment has already taken place and where further redevelopment may be expected (for example, the Slate Quay area including the Welsh Highland Railway station).



*An aerial view of Caernarfon Castle and town at the confluence of the River Seiont and Menai Strait (top).*

*The Maes in front of Caernarfon Castle lies within the Caernarfon Conservation Area and is part of the essential setting (middle).*

*The whole of the walled town lies within the conservation area and the essential setting (bottom).*

## Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

# Caernarfon



Views up and down the Seiont are considered worthy of protection, as is the prominent area of Coed Helen.

Victoria Dock is included within the essential setting. It is now a thriving marina with hotels and restaurants at its northern end, as well as a cultural hub (Galeri). Regeneration of the dock area has proved to be an important addition to the economy of the town, but the design of the commercial development is somewhat out of character with the World Heritage Site. Further development may be expected here; proximity to the World Heritage Site and the historical significance of the dock in relation to the development of the town make this an especially sensitive area.





*Victoria Dock is now a thriving marina (top).*

*The promenade and town walls facing the Menai Strait (middle).*

*The essential setting reaches up the River Seiont for almost one kilometre inland (bottom).*

## Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

# Caernarfon



## Significant Views

**From the castle and town walls** — the whole arc of the marine view of the Menai Strait including the Anglesey coast, the view of Coed Helen and inland along the Seiont. Similar views are obtained from around the wall walks and towers of the castle, and from the town walls.

**Into the castle and town walls** — views from the Menai Strait and Anglesey, views from Coed Helen and along the Seiont (this was the view painted by J. M. W. Turner, 1775–1851); and the view from Twthill. Other views are framed by the streets of the town.





*The view from Twthill towards the castle and walled town (top).*

*The view from the castle towards Coed Helen (middle).*

*The view from the sea towards the town walls and castle (bottom) (© Crown copyright (2017) Visit Wales).*

Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

## Caernarfon

*J. M. W. Turner's watercolour of Caernarfon Castle painted around 1832 (British Museum, London, UK/Bridgeman Images).*





*J. M. W. Turner's view of the castle from the River Seiont is still a significant view.*

Map 2.3 Conwy: Essential Setting and Significant Views

Legend:
- World Heritage Site
- Essential Setting
- Significant View
- Arc of View
- Conservation Area

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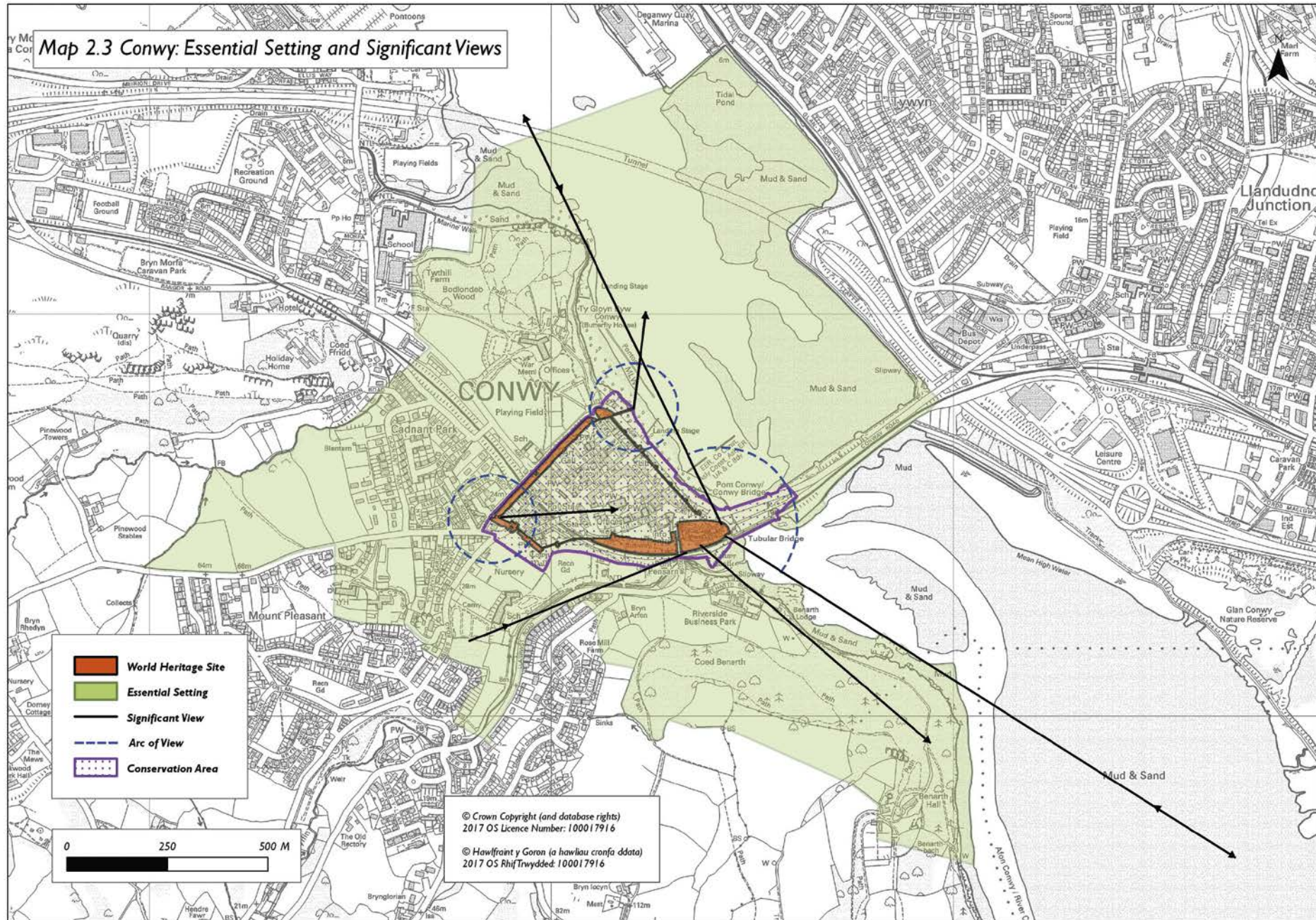
## Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

## Conwy



### Essential Setting

Whilst the setting of Conwy Castle has been transformed over time, the castle still dominates the site.

The entirety of the conservation area is included within the essential setting, taking in the walled town. Areas of the essential setting that fall outside the protection of the Conwy Conservation Area are:

- Bodlondeb Park and woods, and associated buildings, which provide a large public open space just outside the town walls. Differences in topography make this a sensitive area for new development that may affect views of and from the northern range of town walls



*This aerial view of Conwy shows how the castle dominates the town (top).*

*The walled town and castle lie within both the Conwy Conservation Area and the essential setting (bottom) (© Crown copyright (2017) Visit Wales).*
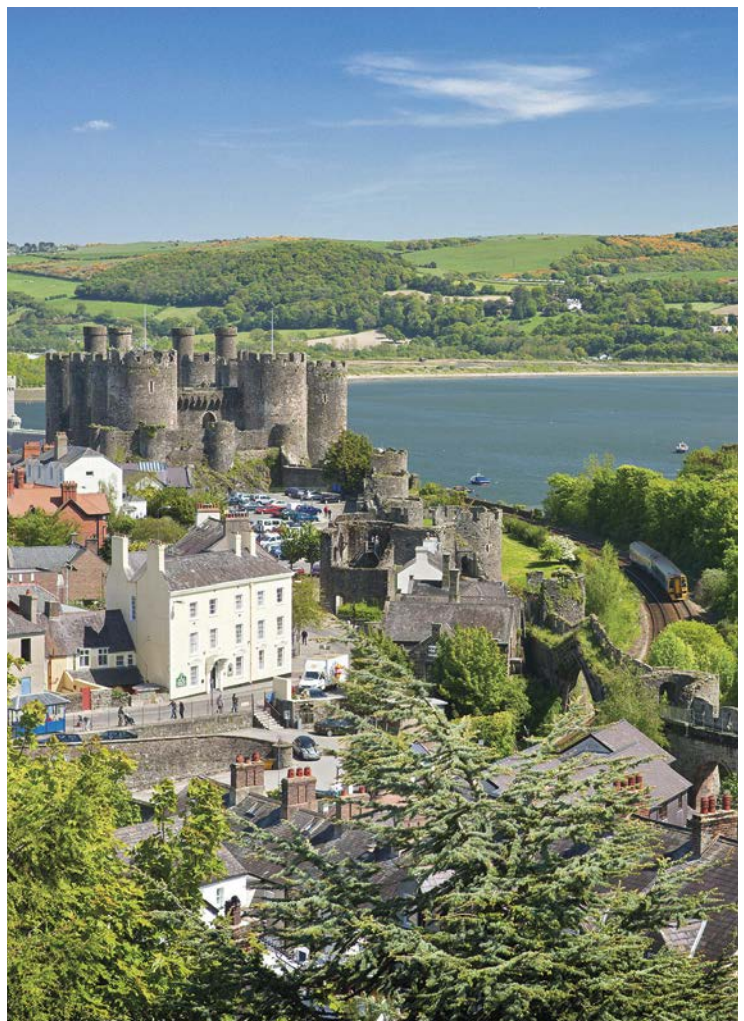
## Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

## Conwy



- the open areas of the Gyffin Valley to the south of the town walls — development here could adversely affect views of and to the southern range of town walls
- land uphill of the town wall watchtower (Tower 13) — the highest point of the World Heritage Site
- Coed Benarth, which frames the southern prospect from the castle and town walls
- three bridges cross the river, each of different date and design, and provide the principal approach to the castle and town.
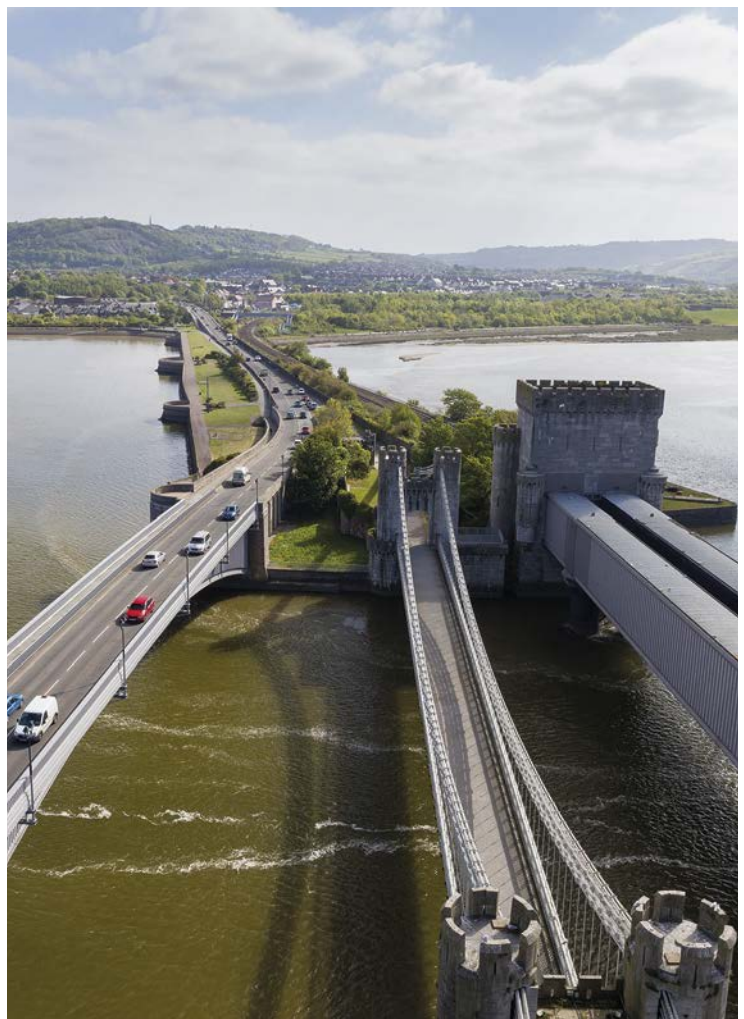


*The view from Bodlondeb wood which lies within the essential setting (top).*

*The three bridges that cross the River Conwy provide the principal approaches to the town and lie within the essential setting (bottom).*

Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

## Conwy



**Significant Views**

**From the castle and town walls** — the River Conwy, the bridges, the cob and Deganwy Castle, as well as the view towards the mountains to the west. The height of the castle towers and the extent of the town walls provide many viewpoints. Views from the westernmost tower of the town wall (the watchtower) are particularly extensive and provide 360 degree vistas.

**Into the castle and town walls** — many views from the River Conwy, Deganwy, including its castle and the mountains (J. M. W. Turner painted the view from the Benarth foreshore), a fine view down the Gyffin Valley (painted by Paul Sandby, 1731–1809) and a variety of views from within the walled town.

*One of the views from the castle along the River Conwy (top).*

*The view from the castle looking along and across the estuary towards the twin hills of Deganwy Castle (middle).*

*The view from Deganwy towards the walled town and castle (bottom).*

Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

## Conwy

*J. M. W. Turner's oil painting of Conwy Castle painted around 1803 (Private Collection/Bridgeman Images).*





*The viewpoint used by J. M. W. Turner to paint the castle across the mouth of the River Gyffin is still a significant view.*

Map 2.4 Harlech: Essential Setting and Significant Views

Legend:
- World Heritage Site
- Essential Setting
- Significant View
- Arc of View
- Conservation Area

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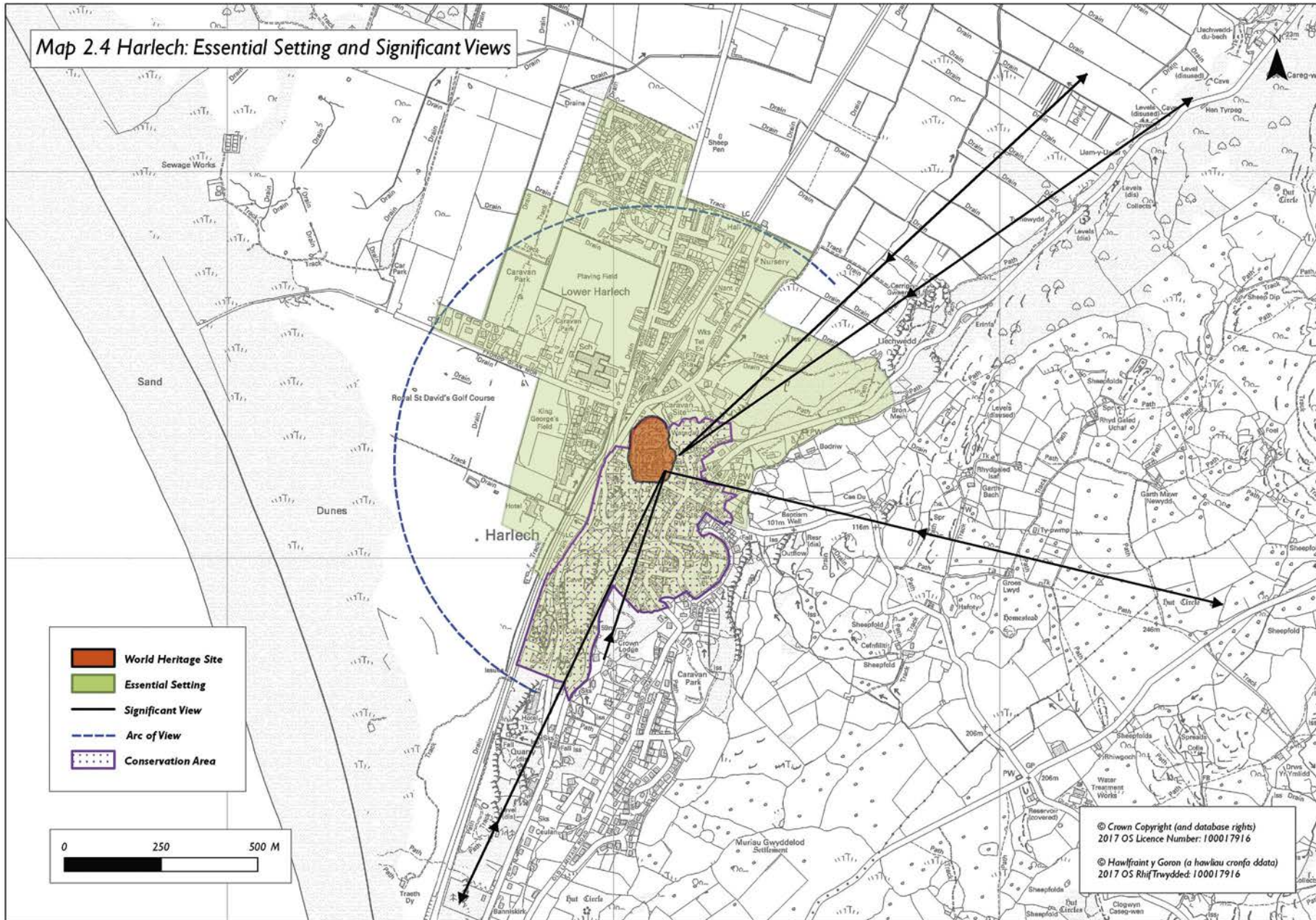
Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

# Harlech



### Essential Setting

Harlech Castle is visible for long distances in a seaward arc. At the foot of the castle, the area known as the Morfa has been developed over time for uses including pasture, caravan parks and urban development, but this has generally comprised low-level building.

Harlech Conservation Area encloses the historic town and its immediate surroundings and extends southwards to Coleg Harlech. Areas of the essential setting that are considered to be particularly sensitive are:

- the town on the rock, which provides the approach to the gatehouse of the castle
- the fringes of the town and the wooded cliffs extending to the north-east and the south
- the area on the Morfa at the foot of the rock provides the approach to the 'Way from the Sea'. This area is largely outside the Harlech Conservation Area.





*Harlech Castle from the air looking eastwards across the town (top).*

*The town to the east of the castle lies within the Harlech Conservation Area (middle).*

*A view looking southwards towards the wooded cliffs and Coleg Harlech (bottom).*

Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

## Harlech



**Significant Views**

**From the castle** — the whole arc of the view over the Morfa to the sea and to Snowdonia. The view from the castle to the east is important because it extends over the rural landscape of the Harlech Dome (a prominent geological feature).

**Into the castle** — there are two important distant views of the northerly aspect of the castle: the view painted by J. M. W. Turner and the view painted by John Varley (1778–1842), though their actual viewpoints may have been lost through changes in the landscape. From the south, the castle is only visible from certain distant points. Within the town, there are closer views from a number of directions, while the view from the former Castle Hotel across the ditch demonstrates the strength of the castle and its defences.



*Significant views from Harlech Castle across the Morfa (top) and across the town (bottom).*

## Table 2.1 Key Aspects of Essential Setting and Significant Views

# Harlech

*The significant view of the castle from the north-east, from approximately where J. M. W. Turner painted the castle, though the exact viewpoint no longer exists.*





Turner's Harlech Castle painted from Tygwyn Ferry, Summer's Evening Twlight, *painted around 1798–99 (Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection, USA/Bridgeman Images).*

### 2.4.3 Sense of Arrival ¬

A sense of arrival is a distinct element in the setting of the World Heritage Site. It can support its Outstanding Universal Value and contribute to a distinctive sense of place. A sense of arrival may be influenced by buildings, sites, landscape features or views. Features with a direct relationship to the Outstanding Universal Value of the site are particularly important, such as views of the castles and town walls, or those attributes of the settlements directly associated with the World Heritage Site. However, even features of the landscape or townscape that have no direct association with the Outstanding Universal Value of the site, such as the modern townscape on the approaches to the historic settlements, have the capacity to either enhance or detract from a sense of arrival.

Current major access routes to the site are particularly sensitive to development, but may also present opportunities for enhancement; for example, in streetscape and signage.

### 2.4.4 Setting in Summary ¬

The setting of the World Heritage Site therefore encompasses the relationship between the castles and their townscapes and landscapes, but also includes three specific elements:

- a mapped area of **essential setting** which refers to areas where inappropriate development would damage either the visual or historic setting of the World Heritage Site
- the identification of **significant views** at each location
- **a sense of arrival** at each location.

The key attributes associated with the setting of the World Heritage Site — the relationship with towns and the coast in particular — are described further in Chapter 3. The policy framework for the safeguarding of setting is described in Chapter 4.

*The sense of arrival can be influenced by many factors including modern townscapes, such as the twentieth-century development on the Morfa at Harlech (left), and streetscapes such as the main approach to Conwy Castle through the town (right).*

*Begun in 1295, Beaumaris Castle was the last and largest of King Edward I's castles in north Wales.*

*The castles are pre-eminent examples of medieval military architecture. In this fifteenth-century French manuscript illumination, a king is shown seated with his master mason providing a building report. The round tower under construction is decked with spiral scaffolding, evidence for which survives at a number of King Edward I's castles (British Library, London, UK © British Library Board. All Rights Reserved/Bridgeman Images, Royal Ms. 15 D III, f. 15v).*

## 3.1   One Site, Four Places ¬

The Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd is a World Heritage Site comprising four geographically separate parts with a common historical association and identity. Together, Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy and Harlech represent an extraordinary achievement in the construction of four castles and towns within a very short period of time and within what King Edward would have considered to be hostile territory. The project management of this building campaign, including the mobilisation of the workforce from all over England and further abroad, is well documented and of particular interest. The castles, together with their fortified towns, are pre-eminent examples of the peak of medieval military architecture and the circumstances in which they were constructed raises their significance to the international level. The combination of physical and written evidence that these castles and towns retain has a wide resonance telling us about monarchy and power struggles in the medieval period.

The castles and town walls were all constructed mainly between the period 1283 and 1330, though for the most part works were completed before 1300. Their design is recognised as being the work of a cadre of experts led by James of St George, master of the king's works, a highly regarded master mason and engineer brought to Wales from Savoy by King Edward I.

To understand their significance, the castles and town walls need to be seen as a group and as such are managed as one integrated World Heritage Site. They also need to be seen not just as garrison strongholds in the traditional sense of a castle, but also as seats of government.

Understanding the cultural identity of the four locations also involves recognising the significance of pre-existing settlements as well as later key historic events that have had an impact on the castles or their setting. For example, at Caernarfon there is an important Roman heritage which is celebrated at Segontium, as well as more recent industrial heritage relating to the export of slate. Beaumaris suffered badly during the Glyndŵr uprising but prospered again in the nineteenth century. Conwy was particularly affected by the arrival of the railway in the nineteenth century. Extensive land reclamation on the plain below Harlech in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries radically changed the relationship between the castle and the coast.

The four castles are all cared for by Cadw on behalf of the Welsh Ministers. They are open to the public on a fee-paying basis. The medieval town walls of Caernarfon and Conwy are also cared for by Cadw. The two walled towns of Caernarfon and Conwy are in multiple ownerships, mostly private, and change to the buildings within them is controlled by the local planning authority through adopted planning policy.

The four castles and the attendant fortified towns at Caernarfon and Conwy are the finest examples of late thirteenth-century and early fourteenth-century military architecture in Europe, demonstrated through their completeness, pristine state, evidence for organised domestic space and extraordinary repertory of medieval form. Administrative and domestic architectural features include suites of royal apartments (particularly at Conwy), multiple suites of domestic apartments to service administrative requirements and evidence for room function and service arrangements.

While the design and construction of the castles and town walls were the responsibility of the master of the king's works, the provision of funds and the control of expenditure were in the hands of the king's wardrobe, part of the king's household with responsibility for spending. This group travelled with the king and was based in Conwy throughout the years in which direct royal control was consolidated over Gwynedd. The wardrobe maintained detailed records of payments made for the works. Although some have been lost (notably those destroyed during the rebellion of 1294), the remainder are held in The National Archives at Kew in London and have been studied in detail by historians such as Arnold Taylor (1911–2002) in *The King's Works in Wales 1277–1330*.[23]

*The deep moat is the outermost line of defence at Beaumaris Castle.*

*The concentric — walls within walls — defences at Beaumaris Castle.*

The castles are all on prominent coastal sites in north-west Wales and were built as part of a single campaign. Beaumaris and Caernarfon both overlook the Menai Strait, Conwy is 25 miles (40km) east along the north Wales coast and Harlech is a similar distance south of the Lleyn peninsula. They are each adapted to suit their varying locations from the flat ground of Beaumaris to the steep rocky promontory of Harlech. Each was enclosed with high curtain walls, strengthened by a series of projecting towers and entered through a heavily defended gatehouse. Further out, a series of outer defences provided additional protection, such as the deep moat at Beaumaris and the rock-cut ditch at Harlech. Other military features at the castles include complex arrowloops (particularly elaborate at Caernarfon), the provision of concentric walls at Beaumaris and Harlech — combined with arrowloops designed to provide covering fields of fire — and defended water gates, drawbridges, chicanes, redoubts, dungeons and towers at all four locations. At Caernarfon and Conwy, walled towns were constructed alongside the castles with gatehouses at their principal entrance points.

At the time of inscription, based on the research of Arnold Taylor, it was considered that all four castles were designed by Master James of St George, who was regarded as the greatest military architect of his age. More recently, research has emphasised the important contribution made by a cadre of specialists who were led by Master James, as well as the influence of King Edward I. Savoyard architectural features at the four castles include doorways with semi-circular arches, distinctively wide windows with segmental arches and tracery, latrine shafts in shallow buttresses and corbelled out from walls, and the use of spiral and inclined scaffolding (as evidenced by putlog hole positions).

*Savoyard features can be recognised at a number of the castles. This corbelled out latrine at Harlech (right) bears a close resemblance to one at the Savoy castle of La Batiaz in modern-day Switzerland (left, Peter Humphries).*

Whilst the castles form a stylistically coherent group, the differences between them are as important as their similarities, with each castle designed according to its site and purpose. At Conwy, for example, the nature of the rock outcrop dictated a linear outline. The outward appearance of Caernarfon Castle differs from others of Edward I's strongholds in Wales. The towers are polygonal instead of round and the walls have a prominent patterning with bands of different coloured stone, designed to reflect the role of the castle as a new royal palace and a seat of government. Beaumaris Castle, constructed on flat ground, has been described as the ultimate concentric castle, built with almost geometric symmetry. The setting of Harlech Castle on a steep rocky outcrop emphasises its defensive potential and military strength, with a stepped access down to the sea. The relationship between design and site reflected the need to have strategic defences in Gwynedd against the indigenous Welsh population.

There are also differences in the physical relationships between the castles and the towns. Both Caernarfon and Conwy were designed as castle boroughs, where castle and town were planned as an integrated unit, as evidenced by the construction of the town walls. Town walls seemed to have been planned from the outset at Beaumaris, but were not constructed until more than 100 years later. Whilst a borough was also established along with the castle at Harlech, no traces of town walls survive. The siting of a castle on an existing settlement, as at Caernarfon or Conwy, transmitted a signal of conquest and recognised the significance of these places to the native communities. At Beaumaris, the location for the castle was directed by the desire to control the trade route operated by the Llanfaes ferry but required the nearby Welsh settlement to be relocated to the west of the island. The foundation of a castle borough implies investment and ambition, and acknowledges the economic and symbolic importance attributed to these locations.

*The windows in the gatehouse at Harlech (left), reconstructed (middle), were of similar design and size to the those at the Savoy castle of Chillon in modern-day Switzerland (right, Peter Humphries).*
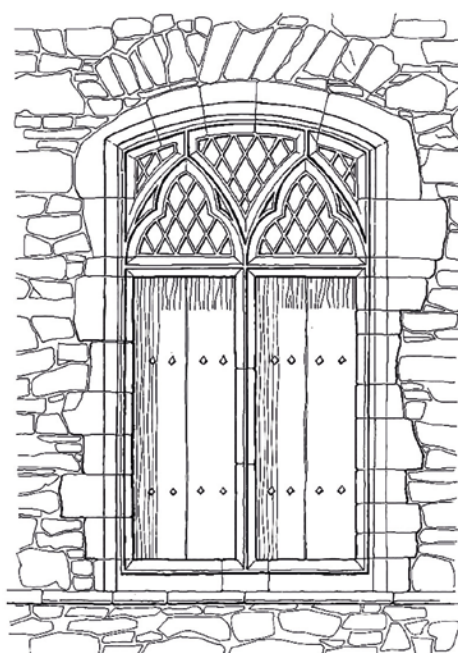
## 3.2    Historical Overview of the Four Sites ¬

### 3.2.1 Beaumaris ¬

The castle lies at the northern end of the town of Beaumaris on the Isle of Anglesey, approximately 150m from the sea. The castle was integral with a town, though this was not walled at the time of castle construction. However, a stub of wall adjacent to the castle dock indicates that a wall may have been intended at the start. The town retains much of its medieval grid street pattern. At the time that Beaumaris Castle was built, the nearby Welsh town of Llanfaes was the principal trading port on the island and reputedly the most prosperous and populous borough in native Wales. However, in order for the new borough of Beaumaris to thrive, the town of Llanfaes was deliberately depopulated by the Crown and its residents moved to Newborough on the other side of the island.

Beaumaris Castle, the last of these royal strongholds, was built between 1295 and 1330 and the structure is little changed. It was constructed on flat land described in contemporary documents as *Bellum Marsicum* in Latin and *Beaumarreis* in French — 'the beautiful marsh'. Its location — unencumbered by rising ground or existing settlements — allowed Master James to create the concentric plan with a degree of symmetry not achieved at Caernarfon, Conwy or even Harlech. The main courtyard of the castle is surrounded by a narrow enclosing ward, both of which were protected by a wide outer moat filled by tidal water. It is the combination of near-perfect symmetrical planning and its water defences that gives Beaumaris its most striking and remarkable characteristics.

*An imaginative reconstruction of Beaumaris Castle as it may have looked had it been completed (Illustration by Chris Jones-Jenkins, 2017).*
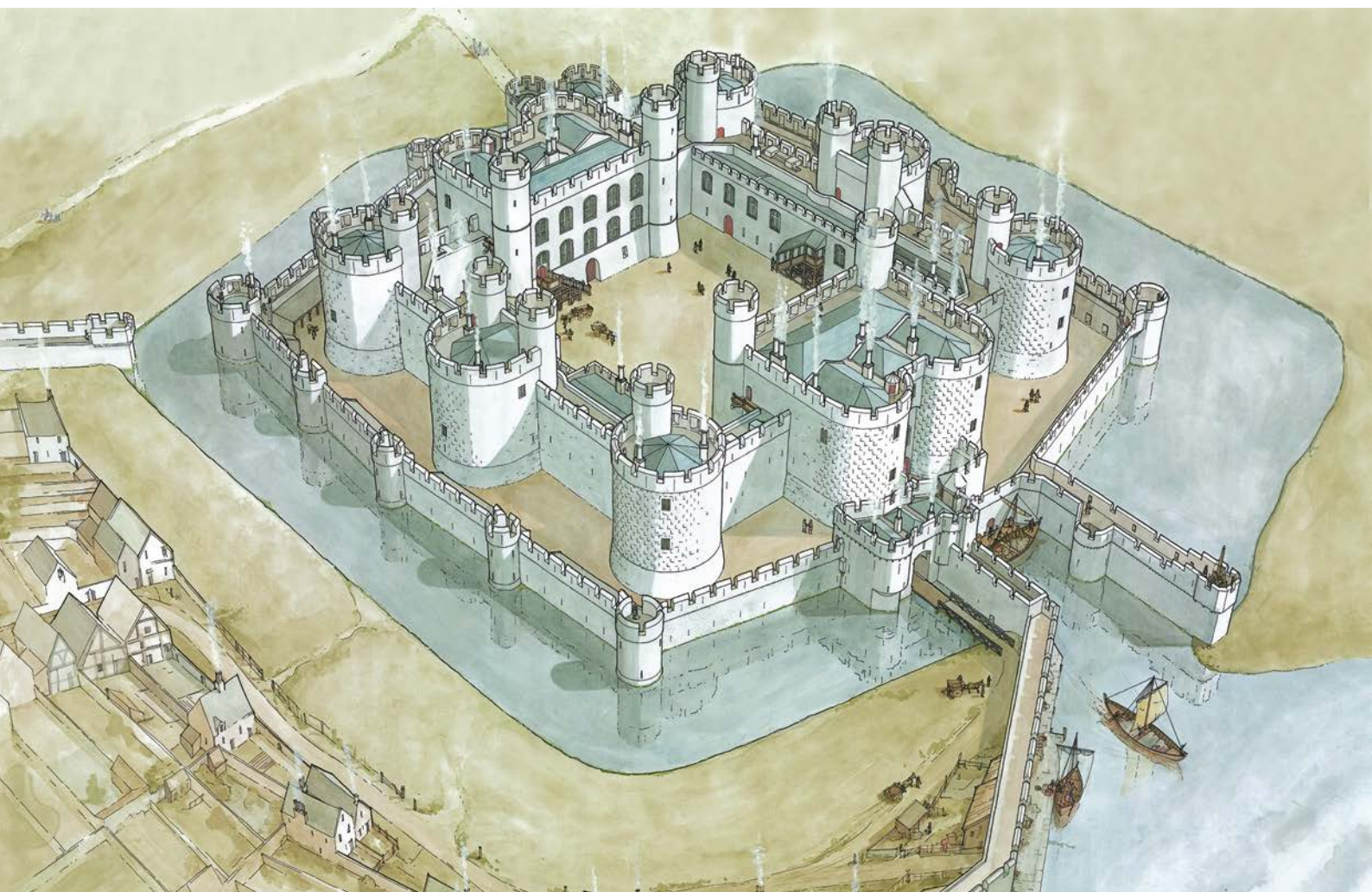
At first, no expense was spared in the construction of the castle and some £6,000 was spent in the period between April and September 1295, a third of which was for the carriage of materials alone. This was more than the recorded expenditure on this item at Caernarfon, Conwy or Harlech throughout the 1280s.

Works halted in 1298 when Edward's attention turned to Scotland and Master James of St George moved to new work there. He was back at Beaumaris in 1307 and succeeded by Master Nicholas de Derneford before 1309 by which time Master James had died. The inner towers and gatehouses never reached their intended height and the turrets were never begun by the time works finally ceased around 1330. Despite the cost of construction, the castle was not maintained, and a survey in 1343 records several areas as being 'dilapidated and ruinous', including chambers, towers and roofs.

The end of the fourteenth century saw mounting tension in Wales and in 1389 the chamberlain ordered 20 men to be placed in Beaumaris Castle 'because of enemies at sea'. In 1403, at the height of the Glyndŵr revolt, the castle was besieged and not recaptured until 1405. In the years following, there were periodic accounts of the poor condition of the castle including a letter from Sir Richard Bulkeley to Thomas Cromwell in 1539 expressing his concern. In 1609, the castle was described as 'utterlie decayed' but it was repaired early in the Civil War when it served as a Royalist base until Colonel Bulkeley was forced to surrender to Parliament in 1646. Contemporary accounts suggest that there was a programme of dismantling which is thought to have involved the removal of the courtyard buildings. Certainly, over successive centuries the castle was robbed for building stone as indicated by the appearance of the early nineteenth-century Beaumaris gaol.

In 1807 the castle passed into the ownership of the Bulkeley family of nearby Baron Hill. In 1925, the castle was placed into the guardianship of the State. Cadw, on behalf of the Welsh Ministers, now cares for the monument. Works carried out have included the re-establishment of the moat and the removal of the ivy that previously cloaked much of the castle.

*After Beaumaris was taken into care in 1925, the castle was soon cleared and consolidation began.*

### 3.2.2 Caernarfon ¬

Caernarfon Castle and the walled town are situated on a rocky outcrop between the mouths of the rivers Seiont and Cadnant on the shore of the Menai Strait. King Edward I established the castle and the town in 1283 to consolidate his conquest of Gwynedd and it became the seat of royal government for north Wales. Tradition holds that King Edward I's eleventh child, Edward (later crowned Edward II, 1307–27) was born here in 1284. In 1301, the young prince was invested as prince of Wales.

There was a pre-existing Norman fortification on this site and the Roman fort of Segontium lies a short distance from the castle. This was the military and administrative centre of north-west Wales throughout the Roman period and the remains of the fort can still be clearly seen. Edward I may have known that Segontium was associated with the emperor, Magnus Maximus, who, legend says, was based here as regional commander. Caernarfon's striking banded walls and polygonal towers, instead of the more usual rounded form, are widely believed to suggest that King Edward was inspired by imperial Roman architecture. Edward may also have known that Magnus Maximus appears as Maxen Wledig in Welsh mythological poetry, later recorded in *The Mabinogion*. In the 'Dream of the Emperor Maxen', the emperor journeys in his sleep and arrives eventually at a great castle, 'the fairest that anyone had ever seen'. Maxen sends out messengers to find the castle. First, they come to 'a great city at the mouth of the river, and a great castle in the city with great towers of different colours'. From here, they continue until they see the 'Island of Mon facing them … and they saw Aber Saint, and the castle at the mouth of the river.'[24] It is has been suggested that this may be another reason why Caernarfon, unlike the other castles, was given a prominent patterning of bands of different coloured stone.

*This artist's view of Caernarfon shows the borough, quay and castle as they may have appeared when building work at the castle stopped in the early fourteenth century (Illustration by Ivan Lapper, 1993).*

Although the site of the Norman motte and bailey, begun around1090, determined the shape of the thirteenth-century castle, very little is now visible (although subsurface evidence may still be present). Nor do the buildings erected by the princes of Gwynedd between 1115 and 1283 survive. The motte was incorporated into Edward's castle and the bailey survived as the area now known as the Maes (Castle Square). The first building phase, between 1283 and 1292, created the character of the castle we see today, albeit with some nineteenth- and early twentieth-century restoration. After the first phase of construction, Master James of St George was moved on to work elsewhere and subsequent construction was led by Master Walter of Hereford, later succeeded by Master Henry of Ellerton.

The layout of the town with its encircling walls was also begun in 1283 and is believed to have been largely finished by 1292. It comprises eight towers and two twin-towered gateways at intervals of approximately 64m. The town is laid out on a grid pattern much like Conwy but over a smaller area. The Menai waterfront was the first quay associated with the thirteenth-century castle and town, enabling vast quantities of building materials to be imported. It also ensured the safety of the castle's longer term supplies and underpinned the economy of the new town.

In 1294, a revolt led by Madog ap Llywelyn destroyed half the town walls and burnt the castle extensively. As soon as the revolt was quelled a second phase of building began in 1295. The town walls were repaired by Walter of Hereford and the northern defences of the castle were completed. By 1330, the castle had largely assumed its present appearance. The incomplete Queen's Gate and King's Gate suggest that further work had been intended. One major addition to the town walls was the early fourteenth-century chapel of St Mary (licensed in 1307), built into the north-west corner to provide a chapel for soldiers garrisoned at Caernarfon.

*The chapel of St Mary was added to the town walls in the early fourteenth century for soldiers garrisoned in Caernarfon.*

The castle successfully withstood sieges by Owain Glyndŵr and his French allies in 1403 and 1404. Reports of 1538 and 1620 showed that, although the masonry was sound, roofs and floors had decayed and, in some cases, collapsed. The castle was garrisoned during the Civil War and changed hands three times. In 1660 orders were given by the government to demolish the castle but, although this was welcomed by local authority, it was never carried out.

In successive centuries, as was typical, cottages were built up piecemeal against the walls. Later alterations to the walls included modifications to the East Gate, firstly to provide accommodation and then, in 1767, to incorporate the town hall which was built over it, though later removed in the mid-twentieth century. The need to cater for increased traffic has resulted in successive alterations to the town gates and the introduction of additional openings.

Sir Llewelyn Turner and others were responsible for a number of changes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Turner, who was deputy constable of the castle from 1870 to 1903, was responsible for a variety of repair and restoration work to the castle itself, and also the removal of piecemeal developments built up in the castle ditch and against the castle walls.

*The East Gate through the town walls at Caernarfon has been much modified since it was built in the late thirteenth century.*

*Under the direction of Sir Llewelyn Turner, who served as deputy constable of Caernarfon between 1870 and 1903, the castle began to be rescued from centuries of neglect.*
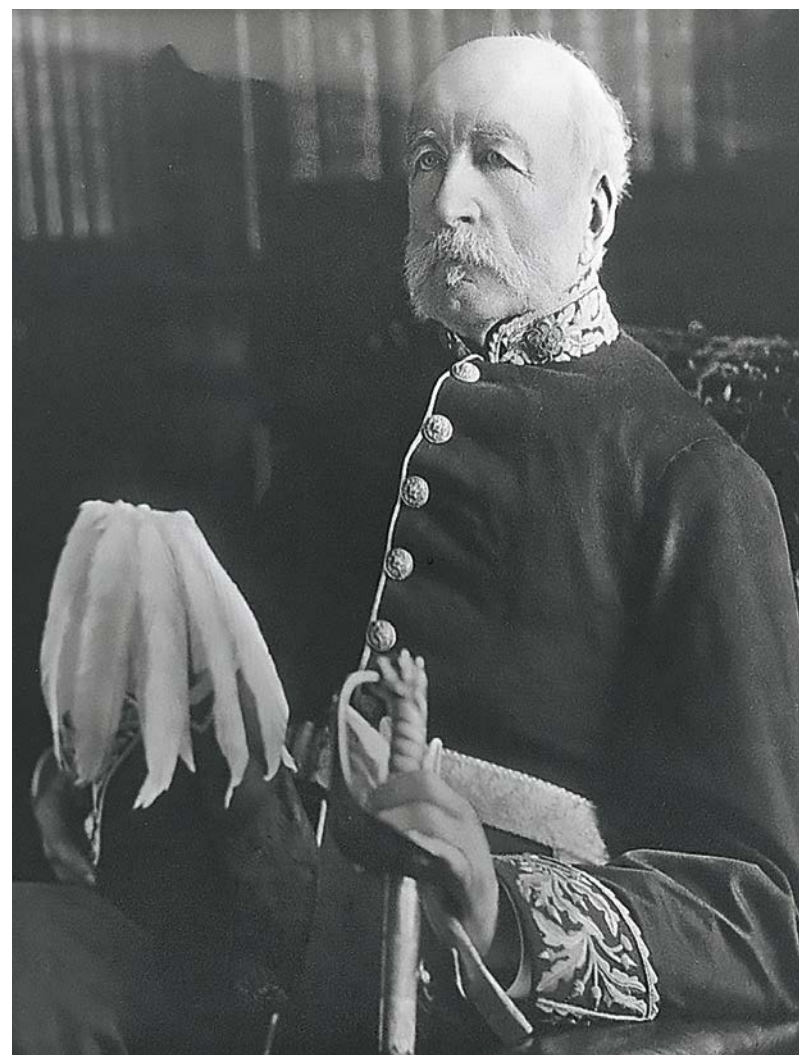
### 3.2.3 Conwy ¬

Before the building of Conwy, the site of the town was occupied by Aberconwy Abbey, a Cistercian monastery favoured by the Welsh princes, as well as buildings used by the Welsh princes. The location was also an important crossing point over the River Conwy that had been defended for many years. Conwy Castle was built on the west bank of the River Conwy and the town was King Edward I's first settlement in Gwynedd after the defeat of Llywelyn, prince of Wales.

The masonry of the castle seen today remains much as built between 1283 and 1287. The castle is exceptional for its completeness and for the grandeur of its towers and curtain walls. Although the buildings within the castle enclosure have been lost, sufficient remains of their foundations to give a reasonably clear idea of the layout of the castle accommodation. The great hall, chambers and kitchen can be seen in the outer ward. The royal chambers and a royal chapel survive in the inner ward. These are regarded as the most intact set of royal apartments left by a medieval monarch in either Wales or England and create a clear picture of how the castle would have functioned when the royal entourage was in residence. Fragmentary evidence of external lime plaster also shows that the castle would have looked very different in medieval times, rendered and whitened.

Lack of maintenance led to a report in the 1330s that Conwy, like the other north Wales castles, was no longer habitable. The great hall range was repaired in the 1340s, according to the register of Edward 'the Black Prince' (1330–76), the eldest son of Edward III (1327–77).

*An impression of Conwy as it may have appeared in the early fourteenth century (Illustration by Ivan Lapper, 1990).*

As at Caernarfon, King Edward I also established a walled town for incoming settlers. Creating the town involved moving Aberconwy Abbey to a new site at Maenan, but leaving the medieval abbey church of St Mary to serve the parish. The abbey was the burial place of Llywelyn ap Iorweth — the Great (d. 1240) — so this was another act of symbolism to appropriate a place so closely associated with the Gwynedd dynasty The town is enclosed by 1.3km of walls, with three twin-towered gates and 21 towers, enclosing an area of nearly 9 hectares. They represent one of the best-preserved and most impressive examples of medieval town walls in Europe.

King Edward I took refuge here at Conwy during the 1294–95 rebellion. A century later, the castle was the venue for tense discussions between King Richard II (1377–99) and the representatives of Henry of Bolingbroke, later Henry IV (1399–1415). The castle was captured briefly by Glyndŵr in 1401 and some repairs were carried out after.

Although the town was relatively thinly populated, according to contemporary accounts it attracted wealthy merchants, as illustrated by the early fifteenth-century Aberconwy House, and local gentry such as Robert Wynn (d. 1598) who built the fine Elizabethan town house, Plas Mawr, in the 1570s and 80s.

*This fine carved stone head is thought to represent Prince Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, who was buried at Aberconwy Abbey (National Museum of Wales).*

*St Mary's Church, Conwy, is the former abbey church that was retained for parish use.*

The castle passed out of royal ownership in 1627 and was purchased, evidently as a ruin, by the first Lord Conway (d. 1631). During the Civil War the castle was defended and repaired for the king by John Williams (d. 1650), archbishop of York, who was born in Conwy and returned here after his enthronement. Despite Williams's loyalty and the expense he incurred, the king brought in Sir John Owen (d. 1666) as governor of Conwy, which led to Williams defecting to the Parliamentarians. Conwy was one of the very last royal strongholds to surrender and it was deliberately ruined soon after. In time, however, the ruined castle was regarded as picturesque and drew travellers, antiquarians and artists from afar, including Thomas Pennant (d. 1798) and J. M. W. Turner.

Perhaps the most significant changes to the castle and town walls since their construction resulted from the coming of the roads and railways. Firstly, Thomas Telford's suspension bridge was constructed in 1826 — one of the first of its kind in the world. This led to the removal of the water gate and entrance ramp to create new roads into the town. The Chester to Holyhead railway and Robert Stephenson's railway bridge followed in 1849. The bridge was the first example of tubular construction in the country and cut close against the south side of the castle. A third bridge was added for road traffic in 1958. The Conwy road tunnel was built after the inscription of the World Heritage Site, in an effort to alleviate traffic congestion. The Conwy Suspension Bridge is now in the care of the National Trust.

*The imposing Elizabethan town house on Conwy's High Street, built by Robert Wynn in the 1570s and 80s.*

*Thomas Telford's suspension bridge, built in 1826.*

### 3.2.4 Harlech ¬

Harlech Castle sits high above the coast. Despite its constrained and lofty site it is one of the most perfectly symmetrical castles built by King Edward I, surpassed only by Beaumaris. It is separated from the land by a deep rock-cut ditch.

The castle is the product of three building campaigns. The first phase began in 1283 after King Edward I's defeat of Llywelyn, prince of Wales, and involved the enclosure of the castle. In the second phase, completed in 1289, the inner curtain wall was strengthened and the towers and gatehouse were completed. The outer defences were added in a third phase in 1295, after the Madog rebellion. As with the other three castles, Master James of St George oversaw building operations at Harlech. In 1290, he was appointed constable for three years and lived in the castle, probably in the gatehouse. There is no evidence here of town walls; indeed, the town seems to have received comparatively little attention compared with the castle.

*A reconstruction of Harlech Castle as it may have appeared about 1325. By this date, all of the main components of the castle were complete: the inner and outer defences, the encircling wall at the base of the castle rock and the bridge spanning the ditch (Illustration by Terry Ball, 1996).*
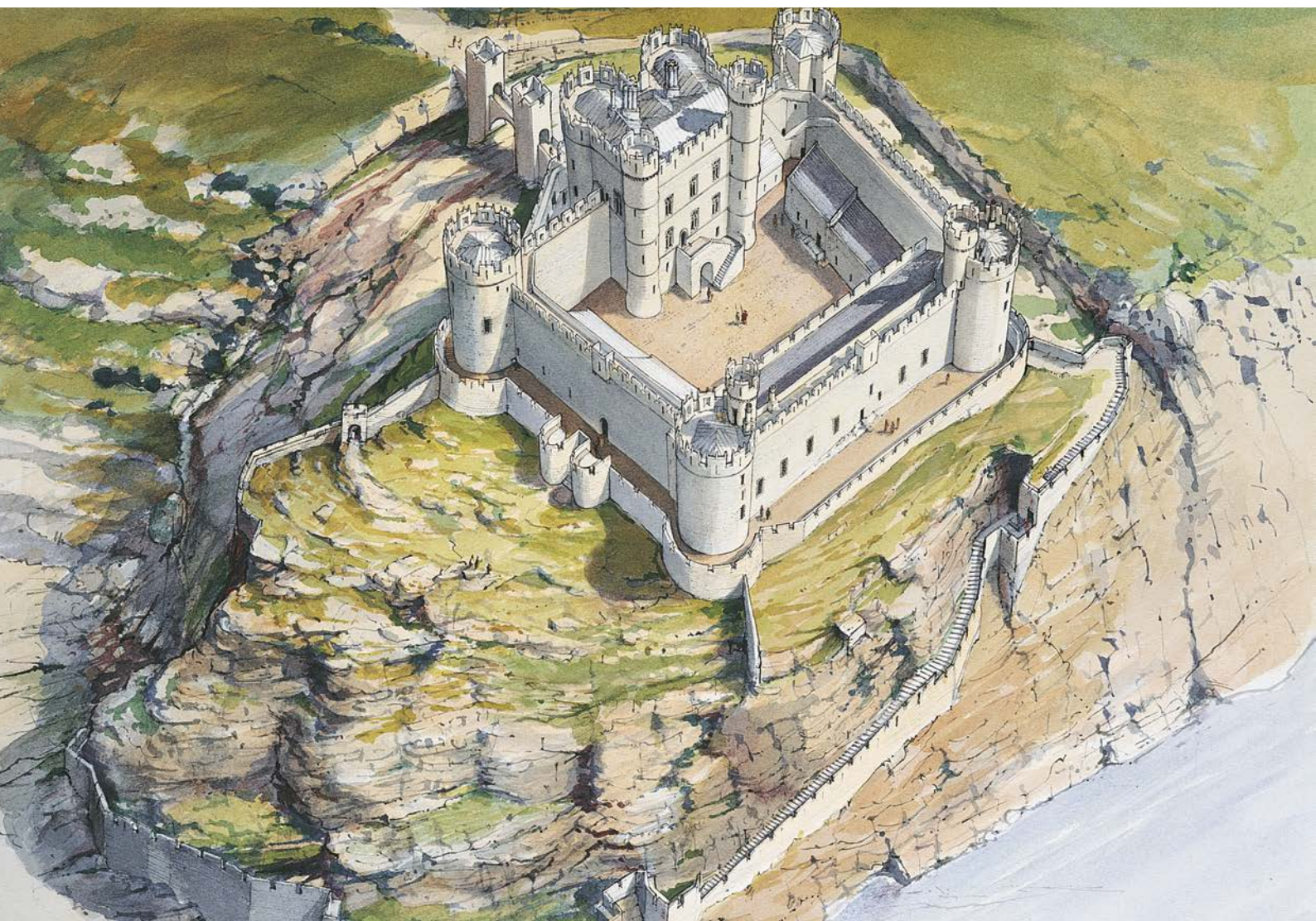
The bridge was reworked in the early fourteenth century under Edward II. In 1404, during the Glyndŵr rebellion, the castle's ill-equipped garrison had to surrender after a long siege. Owain Glyndŵr subsequently set up his court here and tradition has it that he was crowned prince of Wales in the castle. In 1409 the future King Henry V (1413–22) recaptured the castle, but it was again attacked in 1468 during the Wars of the Roses. Harlech continued in use during the sixteenth century as the home of the Merioneth Assizes, which no doubt resulted in the continued maintenance of the castle. Conceivably, it was partly because of this better condition that Harlech held out as the last Royalist stronghold to fall to Parliament during the Civil War. Despite an order to demolish the castle, it was not proceeded with and Harlech remained the property of the Crown.

The town at Harlech was not laid out to the same extent as Beaumaris, Caernarfon and Conwy. It has just one main street and no obvious market place. However, the town did receive its royal charter in 1284 and its customs and privileges were modelled on those of Conwy. It was one of two new towns founded by King Edward I in Merioneth, the other being the now lost town of Bere.

Harlech Castle played an interesting role in the training of commando troops during the Second World War. The No. 10 (Inter-Allied) Commando headquarters was temporarily located in London House in Harlech, commanded by Lt Col. Dudley Lister MC. The unit undertook training marches in the local area as well as scaling the walls of Harlech Castle in the dark.

*As a result of Owain Glyndŵr's siege most of the outer curtain wall along the east and south sides of Harlech Castle was destroyed.*

*Harlech Castle housed the court of Owain Glyndŵr following the successful Welsh siege in 1404. This harness mount — decorated with Glyndŵr's arms — was found at the castle in 1923 (National Museum of Wales).*

## 3.2.5 Research and Understanding ¬

The extensive and detailed technical, social and economic documentation of the castles make them one of the major reference points of medieval history. Built features that can be linked to documentation include evidence for constructional phasing linked with expenditure/events (for example, breaks between masonry lifts, wall strengthening/raising), the replacement of earlier timber trusses in Conwy great hall with stone arches in the 1340s and documentation relating to incomplete architectural elements (for example, King's Gate at Caernarfon and the upper floors of the gatehouses at Beaumaris).

*The Impact of the Edwardian Castles in Wales*[25] published the proceedings of the conference held in 2007 to mark the seventh centenary of the death of King Edward I. The conference, hosted in Gwynedd, drew together recent research and scholarship on all of the castles and towns built by Edward in north Wales. It provided the opportunity to rethink the effect that their building had upon Wales in the past, present and future. Papers presented at the conference illustrated a more holistic approach to understanding the Edwardian castles and their context, and their impact on Welsh society and its princes in the thirteenth century, notably Llywelyn ap Iorwerth (Fawr, the Great) and his grandson, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, prince of Wales. The symbolism and meaning of the castles through the words of Welsh poets were examined (Dylan Foster-Evans) alongside the symbolism that Edward may have employed at Caernarfon (Abigail Wheatley). The role of Welshmen in Edward I's armies was examined (Adam Chapman). The conference also considered the wider context, with papers on the Edwardian towns in Wales (Keith Lilley), the baronial castles in north Wales (John Goodall) and Edward I in Scotland and Gascony (Chris Tabraham and Marc Morris). Research into specific elements of castle building included an examination of the sources of stonework used in the Edwardian castles (Graham Lott).

*Delegates at the 2007 conference, 'The Impact of the Edwardian Castles in Wales', which examined recent research on the castles and their context.*

Research into ways of castle life considered food supply and preparation, including an evaluation of the kitchens at Caernarfon and Harlech (Peter Brears). 'The King's Accommodation at his Castles' (Jeremy Ashbee) presents the evidence to understand better the royal apartments at Conwy Castle and how they operated. The paper shows that although parts of royal apartments from this period survive at other castles in Wales and England, including Caernarfon, Harlech, Leeds (Kent) and the Tower of London, the buildings at Conwy are by far the 'most complete set of royal apartments left by the medieval English monarchy anywhere'. Despite being without roofs and floors they are otherwise little altered from their original design. Ashbee's research also provides a review of royal gatehouses, comparing the layout and works at Harlech and Beaumaris. The paper discusses the use of rooms within the gatehouse at Harlech and reviews the ideas around whether or not the gatehouse was used for high-status living accommodation.

Another key piece of research, carried out at Queen's University Belfast, has looked at the planning and design of Edward's new towns, including those in the World Heritage Site. It was published in 2005 by Keith Lilley, Chris Lloyd and Steve Trick in *Mapping the Medieval Townscape: A Digital Atlas of the New Towns of Edward I.* The atlas notes that by 1295 Caernarfon was a successful walled town, with a quayside for ships, a borough charter and around 60 burgages. At the time, the town was about half the size of Conwy and Beaumaris. The walls were laid out in a way that spoiled the symmetry of the street pattern, leading researchers to ask the question whether the walls and the layout of the town were laid out by different people. The atlas reasserts Taylor's views and notes that Caernarfon Castle was 'the most impressive and enduring symbol of Edward's conquest and settlement of north Wales, imbued with an imperial iconography that connected him and his empire with that of ancient Rome and its emperors.'[26]

*The royal apartments in the inner ward of Conwy Castle are the best-preserved suite of medieval private royal chambers in England and Wales.*

*This imaginative illustration depicts a meeting between King Edward I and the archbishop of Canterbury in the royal apartments at Conwy in February 1295 (Illustration by Peter Visscher, 2007).*

The atlas notes that Conwy was a larger town than Caernarfon, citing a survey from 1295 which recorded 112 burgages occupied by a total of 99 burgesses. Many of the names show that they moved to the area from southern and eastern England. In 1312 there were 124 burgages, making Conwy second in size only to Beaumaris. The atlas notes the close similarity between the layout of Conwy and Beaumaris; both have a T-shaped plan with the castle at one end of the street that runs parallel to the shore. It also points out the unity of design between the town and castle at these two locations.[27] By contrast, the number of burgages in Harlech was small and inhabitants complained to the king in 1329 that their location was disadvantaging them.

Finally, archaeological work at Beaumaris has shown that an earlier and larger defensive town circuit is discernible, which — if accepted — would have encompassed the entire town beyond the fifteenth-century defences. Lilley et al. conclude 'the evidence at Beaumaris, then, is for a castle and town closely connected in their layout, and seemingly laid out to one overall plan'. The atlas also notes key similarities between Beaumaris and Conwy not found in the other towns of King Edward I in north Wales, in particular, in the form of their main streets, where one is parallel to the quayside and a second runs at right angles up from the waterfront. This could be attributable to Master James of St George, who worked at both places. Therefore, Beaumaris might be a rare case in medieval urban planning where it is possible 'to pinpoint the author of a town plan.'[28]

*Maps of the Edwardian towns prepared for Mapping the Medieval Townscape: A Digital Atlas of the New Towns of Edward I by Keith Lilley, Chris Lloyd, Steve Trick (2005), York: Archaeology Data Service. https://doi. org/10.5284/1000022. 'Mapping the Medieval Urban Landscape' research project was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (2003–05).*
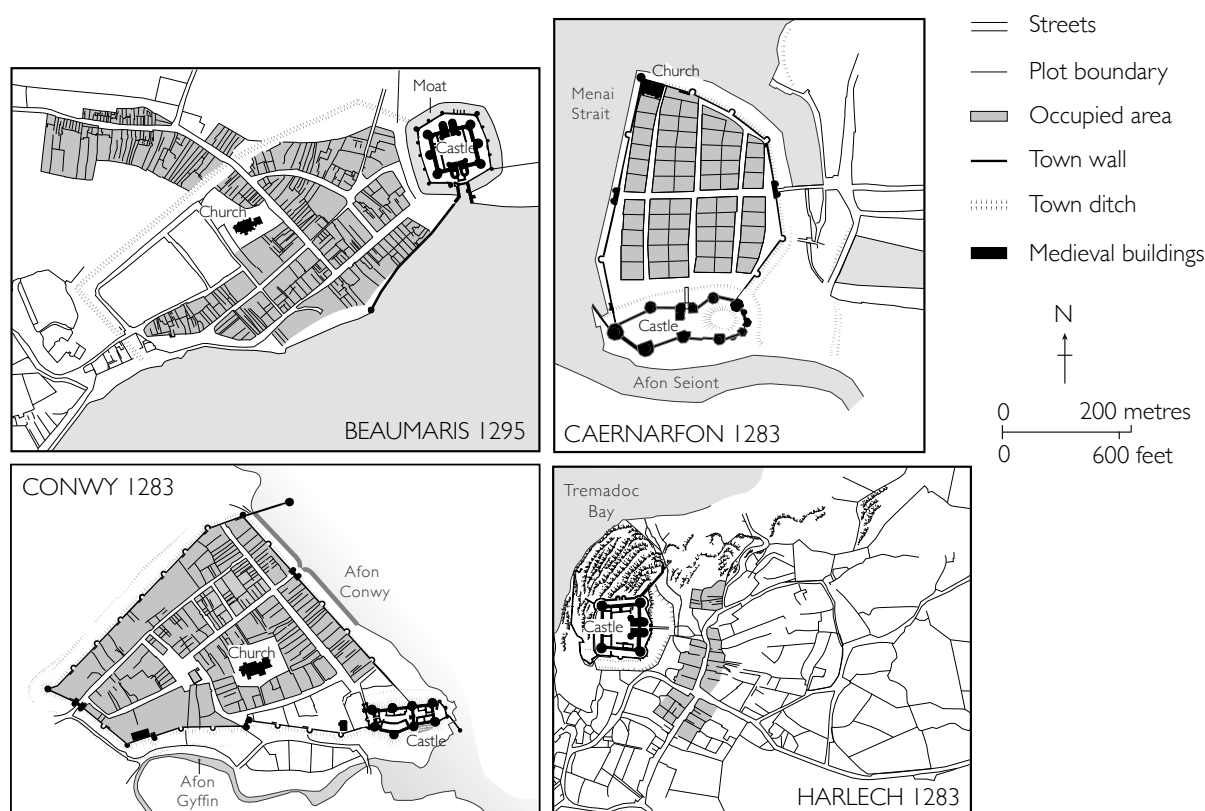
In 2010, Cadw published *Caernarfon Waterfront: Understanding Urban Character* to inform the regeneration of the Caernarfon waterfront area, which is recognised as a critical part of the setting of the World Heritage Site.[29] The study focuses on the Menai and Seiont waterfronts, together with the immediately adjacent urban areas, and provides a baseline for strategic planning.

Recent excavations associated with the construction of the new visitor centre in Harlech have yet to be published, but resulted in the exposure of a series of building foundations and basements, some believed to date back to the fourteenth century, and a cemetery. Further analysis will provide new information on the form and development of the early town associated with the castle.

*The Caernarfon waterfront is a critical part of the essential setting of the World Heritage Site and contributes to the historic character of the town. This lithograph shows the Slate Quay around 1830 (By permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru — National Library of Wales).*
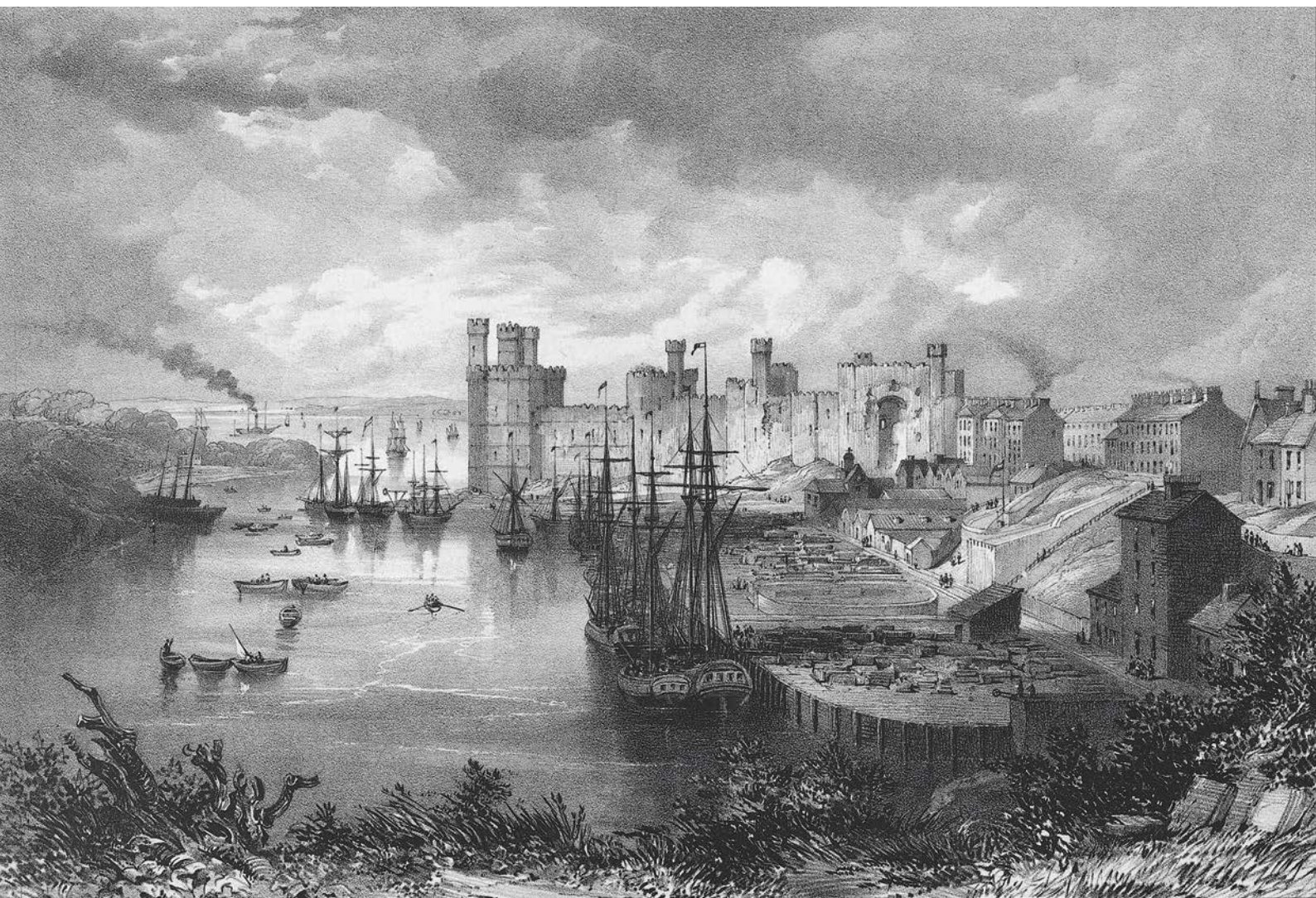


Drawn from Nature by H. Hughes.                                                                                              On Stone by G. Childs

CARNARVON  CASTLE  AND  TOWN.

## 3.3   The Setting of the Castles ¬

There are three distinct elements to the setting of the castles:

- the relationship that each castle has with its town
- the relationship between each castle and the coast
- the relationship between each castle and the natural environment.

### 3.3.1 The Relationship between the Castles and their Towns ¬

The symbiotic relationship between the castles and their towns provided economic and political benefit, and was used by Edward I to establish English settlement. In all four cases, the towns were sited on the most vulnerable sides of the castles and, where built, their walled defences provided additional support for the castle defences. Key elements of all four modern towns include the survival of a medieval street pattern and a plot structure based on medieval burgages. In some cases, post-medieval buildings were constructed of masonry robbed from the ruins of the castles.

In both Conwy and Caernarfon, the original relationship between the castles and their towns is demonstrated by surviving town wall circuits with defensive features such as wall-walks, defended gateways, arrowloops and open-backed D-shaped mural towers, which allow sections of wall to be isolated when under attack. There is also a relationship between the castles and medieval churches within the towns (St Mary's Church in Caernarfon and St Mary's Church in Conwy). For the most part, the walls did not incorporate contemporary buildings, with the exception of Llywelyn's Hall at Conwy.

At Beaumaris, the original town was not walled from the outset (though it may have had earthwork defences). After the Glyndŵr rebellion, permission was given to build town walls of which only fragmentary remains survive. The less dominant visual appearance of the castle is due both to its low-lying location and because it was never completed. With late Georgian development close to the castle, from certain viewpoints it is partially hidden by taller buildings, for example, Bulkeley Terrace. However, when viewed from across the Menai Strait, Beaumaris Castle is a striking site which inspired artists such as J. M. W. Turner. The views from and towards the castle, both from the sea and from land, are of particular importance to the protection of the World Heritage Site.

*Caernarfon Castle is the focus of both the medieval town and the modern town that grew up outside the town walls. This view shows the Maes, the medieval market place outside the walled town transformed into a formal urban square in the nineteenth century.*

In medieval times, the town of Caernarfon was smaller than either Beaumaris or Conwy, but it has grown substantially over the centuries. The castle's environment has been much changed over time by gradual rebuilding within the walls and especially by the development of the town as a port for the slate industry in the nineteenth century. Suburban expansion in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the creation of a bypass and the recent development at Victoria Dock have all contributed to the changes around the castle. Within the town walls, medieval burgages were adapted by the building of larger town houses. In terms of civic buildings, the construction of Pencadlys (Gwynedd Council headquarters) in the 1980s involved the redevelopment of a large plot in the town centre — integrated with the historic townscape to some extent by its fragmented plan. The Maes is outside the town walls, but was the original market place and has always been an important civic space.

In Conwy, development was largely contained within the town walls until the late nineteenth century; it was based on the medieval street pattern and the incomplete survival of a burgage plot structure. The greatest impact on the setting of the castle, more so than at any of the other three castles, came from transport engineering with the construction of Telford's suspension bridge in 1826, the Chester to Holyhead railway in 1849 and Stephenson's railway bridge. Increasing car traffic resulted in the need for a new road bridge in 1958 and, as a result of severe traffic problems, the Conwy tunnel was built in 1991 — the first immersed tube tunnel in Britain.

The town of Harlech was founded at the same time that the castle was constructed and received its charter in 1284. It was the smallest of Edward I's planned boroughs, with only 12 taxpayers listed in 1292–93 and 291/4 rented burgages in 1312. Following Glyndŵr's occupation of the castle, the borough remained largely dormant until the improvement in communication brought about by the railways in the mid-nineteenth century and the rise in popularity of the town as a tourist resort. Some alterations to the castle's immediate setting were made in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to improve road access up the hill to the town.

*Conwy Castle and town walls were designed as one from the outset as this view from the watchtower – the highest point on the town walls – demonstrates (© Crown copyright (2017) Visit Wales).*

## 3.3.2 The Relationship with the Coast ¬

As noted earlier, the relationship between the castles and the sea has played an integral and important role in the early growth of settlements, seaborne trade and commerce. All four castles were located at points along the Welsh coast where they could be supplied from the sea. There are water gates at all four sites, designed for direct access from the coast. In Caernarfon, the Menai quayside was part of the original building campaign, which enabled large quantities of building material to be imported and underpinned the economy of the new town. The dock at Beaumaris is more elaborate than those at Conwy and Caernarfon, perhaps the result of the experience of the 1294 uprising and the need for Edward I to retain a naval force in the Menai Strait to safeguard the continued delivery of stone, timber and other supplies necessary to build the castle.[30] The towns very quickly became sophisticated settlements with international trading relationships.

In Harlech, it was no longer possible to reach the water gate by boat by the sixteenth century. The relationship between Harlech Castle and the sea changed completely with coastal erosion, sand accretion and land reclamation. Harlech Marsh, which would have occupied a large area including that currently occupied by the lower car park at the castle, was reclaimed following the Enclosure Award of 1806.

*The coastal position of the castles was vital for their defence, building and supply. The Menai quayside at Caernarfon, seen in the foreground of this aerial view, was part of the original building campaign.*

*The dock at Beaumaris Castle allowed ships safe and direct access for unloading supplies necessary for the construction and defence of the castle.*

The post-medieval period saw a steady increase in coastal activity and a commensurate growth in port and harbour facilities. For example the growth in mercantile trade is illustrated by the presence of wealthy merchants' houses in the town of Conwy; coastal trade between Beaumaris and Chester regularly carried fish, wool and cloth. During the Industrial Revolution, the harbour at Caernarfon was further developed to service the busy slate industry, with the Slate Quay developed formally in the early nineteenth century.

The relationship of the four towns with the sea continues to change, with present-day challenges and opportunities focusing on the potential of former harbours and quays for regeneration (including marinas, commercial and residential development), leisure and renewable energy.

*The castle at Harlech is no longer accessible from the sea, but originally boats could sail up to its water gate.*





*The quayside at Conwy was important to the construction and development of both the town and castle.*

### 3.3.3 The Relationship with the Natural Environment ¬

The site chosen for Beaumaris may have lacked natural defences, but instead it had direct and level access to the sea, and no physical features to constrain its design. In landscape terms, the Menai Strait is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) because of its important marine and intertidal plants, and animals. Immediately to the north-east of the castle, there is an area designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its intertidal and geomorphological features. The adjacent parkland at Baron Hill to the north of the castle is another SSSI. It is designated on account of its lichens. Beaumaris Castle also lies within the Penmon area on the register of landscapes of outstanding historic interest in Wales.

Caernarfon Castle is sited prominently on the shore of the Menai Strait and between the mouths of the rivers Seiont and Cadnant. The Menai Strait and Conwy Bay Special Area of Conservation is designated under the European Habitats Directive for its range of marine habitats. The Afon Seiont is designated as an SSSI, for its geological interest. Trees within the wooded bank of the River Seiont are subject to Tree Preservation Orders. The area is known to be a habitat for protected species including bats, otters, lampreys, Atlantic salmon and sea trout.

*Much of the Baron Hill parkland between Beaumaris Castle and Llanfaes is a Site of Special Scientific Interest on account of its lichens (© Gwynedd Archaeological Trust).*

Conwy is built on a ridge of Silurian grits or sandstones at the mouth of the Conwy estuary. The Conwy estuary is an SSSI and an important habitat for otters. The Cadnant SSSI adjoins the town walls to the north and is of particular geological interest. Conwy lies within the Creuddyn and Conwy registered landscape of outstanding historic interest in Wales and Benarth Wood, overlooking the castle to the south, is within the parkland included in the register of historic parks and gardens of special historic interest in Wales.

Harlech Castle lies on a rocky outcrop overlooking an area of marsh and dunes, extending out to Tremadog Bay. In medieval times, the sea was much closer to the castle. Land reclamation at Harlech has altered the medieval setting of the castle significantly. Important wildlife habitats and species have been identified in the area. Lime-loving plants found here are believed to flourish on lime that has leached out from the mortar of the castle over the centuries. The town and castle lie within the Ardudwy area on the register of landscapes of outstanding historic interest in Wales, which is rich in archaeological remains indicating human occupation well before the castle was built.

*The Conwy estuary is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and an important habitat for otters.*

## 3.4   Social and Cultural Context ¬

This section explores elements of more recent history that are of relevance to the four castles and walled towns, including:

- their role in the conservation movement
- their passage into the care of Cadw on behalf of the Welsh Ministers
- the commemorative role of Caernarfon Castle
- the role of the castles in the twentieth century
- Welsh nationalism and cultural identity
- the rise of modern tourism.

### 3.4.1 The Conservation Movement ¬

The repair and restoration of Caernarfon Castle began at about the same time as the beginnings of the wider preservation movement elsewhere in the UK. Research work by Richard Avent[31] identified the formative influence of the early conservation work at Caernarfon in developing the conservation philosophy of 'conserve as found'. Although consideration was given to selling the castle in the early part of the nineteenth century, it was decided that it should remain in Crown ownership. In 1845, Anthony Salvin, a leading Victorian architect, was asked to report on the condition of the castle. However, the restoration of the castle mainly took place as a result of the vision of Sir Llewelyn Turner, who was deputy constable of the castle from 1870 to 1903. Turner undertook a significant restoration programme at the castle, innovatively funded through a four pence entrance fee charged to visitors. The impact of Turner's work remains apparent in the castle as it appears today, not least in terms of its crenellated wall tops, largely restored under his direction. Fortunately, his use of contrasting stonework identifies the modern restoration.

At Conwy, attempts were made to protect the appearance of the castle during the construction of Stephenson's railway bridge in 1849, by incorporating a mock-Gothic archway into the town wall. Further substantial interventions were undertaken in 1876 to the 'high tower' in the medieval

*Many of Caernarfon Castle's crenellated battlements were restored by Sir Llewylyn Turner.*

town wall. Shortly after, the large breach in the Bakehouse Tower was repaired; this was probably a result of deliberate slighting following the final surrender of the castle to Royalist forces during the Civil War. The repair of the latter by the London and North Western Railway Company was during the course of a significant landscaping exercise to install railway sidings alongside the castle. In the middle of the twentieth century, buildings that had grown up against the town walls were removed in an effort to improve the appearance of the walled circuit and a nineteenth-century gateway designed by Telford was demolished in 1958.

The castles passed into State care at various times during the twentieth century. In 1908, Caernarfon Castle passed into the care of the Office of Works, which took on responsibility for its conservation according to the prevailing principle of 'conserve as found'. Harlech Castle has been maintained as an ancient monument since 1914 and Beaumaris Castle since 1925, when the Commissioners of Works carried out a large-scale conservation programme that included stripping back vegetation, digging out the moat and repairing stonework. In 1953, Conwy Castle and Town Walls were leased from the Conway Corporation (now Conwy County Borough Council) on a 99-year lease. Today, all four castles and the town walls are cared for by Cadw on behalf of the Welsh Ministers according to *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales*.[32]

*Restoration work at Caernarfon at the beginning of the twentieth century. Here, a massive oak beam is being brought into the castle from the quay echoing centuries of building practice.*

*The repair to the Bakehouse Tower in Conwy Castle, made by the London and North Western Railway Company, is clearly visible as different coloured stonework in the middle tower.*

## 3.4.2 Commemorative Role ¬

The tradition of holding the investiture of recent princes of Wales at Caernarfon Castle began in 1911, on the recommendation of David Lloyd George, then Chancellor of the Exchequer. To date there have been two ceremonies: Prince Edward (later King Edward VIII) in 1911 and Prince Charles, the current prince of Wales, in 1969.

The two investitures were viewed by the Welsh people in very different ways, as summarised by Alun Ffred Jones, then Minister for Heritage in his paper 'King Edward I's Castles in North Wales — Now and Tomorrow.'[33] The 1911 investiture attempted to celebrate the medieval conflicts of its origin, with journalists depicting Caernarfon Castle both as a 'means of subjugating Wales, but also a tribute to the tenacity of the Welsh.'[34] A Welsh journalist at the time wrote that 'the old castle of the oppressor is in its ruins: the national spirit is stronger than ever it was before' and Caernarfon Castle was seen as testament to the strength of medieval Welsh resistance and also as the scene of reconciliation.[35]

The 1969 investiture took place in a different political climate, at a time when there were concerns about the political future of Wales and the survival of the Welsh language. Although the investiture was popular amongst many, Caernarfon Castle was also the scene of several protests and the focus of an anti-investiture campaign.

The castles have also been used as a focus for commemorative events; for example, lighting has been used on the castle walls at Caernarfon to remember soldiers who died in the First World War and the 'Weeping Window' poppy sculpture, by artist Paul Cummins and designer Tom Piper, was on display here during autumn 2016. A beacon was lit at Beaumaris Castle to commemorate VE Day. In 2011, Harlech Castle was selected as one of 26 iconic UK landmarks to appear on a set of commemorative stamps produced by the Royal Mail.

*Owain Glyndŵr's flag flying at Caernarfon Castle on 16 September 2008 to mark the day of his proclamation as prince of Wales in 1400.*

*The 'Weeping Window' poppy sculpture on display at Caernarfon Castle in 2016 to remember soldiers who died in the First World War, 1914–18.*

### 3.4.3 Welsh Nationalism and Cultural Identity ¬

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Wales became increasingly conscious of its national identity. The 1997 devolution referendum and the subsequent Government of Wales Act 1998 devolved powers from Parliament to the National Assembly for Wales.

History has bequeathed two sets of cultural values to the castles and town walls of King Edward I in Gwynedd. On the one hand, they are admired for their grandeur and for their quality as works of architecture; on the other, they are seen as symbols of oppression and alienation. Both sets of cultural values contribute to the importance of the World Heritage Site.

The paper by Alun Ffred Jones describes the feelings of pride, admiration and resentment that 'jostle closely together' in relation to King Edward's castles, with feelings being 'naturally strongest in Gwynedd, and most marked in the case of Caernarfon, where one of the most strongly Welsh-speaking towns is watched over by the grandest and most symbolic of King Edward's castles.'[36]

Recent cultural events celebrating Welsh distinctiveness and identity have included the Urdd National Eisteddfod, held in Gwynedd in 2012, with a parade through the town and proclamation ceremony held at Caernarfon Castle attended by more than 6,000 people in 2011.

The Welsh language is central to the cultural distinctiveness of Wales and has been the main carrier of Welsh identity for centuries. The presence of the Welsh language in north-west Wales is particularly strong. 2011 census data identified the percentage of Welsh speakers in Gwynedd and Anglesey as 65.4 per cent and 57.2 per cent of the population respectively (the average across Wales is some 19 per cent). At ward level, this figure can be as high as 86 per cent in Caernarfon. The presence of Welsh speakers in Conwy, further to the east, is much lower (27.4 per cent for the county borough in the 2011 census). This is a result of factors similar to those experienced elsewhere in Wales, such as in-migration from England, out-migration of Welsh speakers, educational factors and a decline in the way the Welsh language has been passed from one generation to the next. There is, however, recognition of the need to safeguard and nurture the position of the Welsh language in the community.

*The proclamation of the 2012 Urdd Eisteddfod was held in Caernarfon Castle in 2011 (left) (© Urdd Gobaith Cymru). A silent disco was held in Caernarfon Castle in 2017 (right) (© Gwynedd Council).*
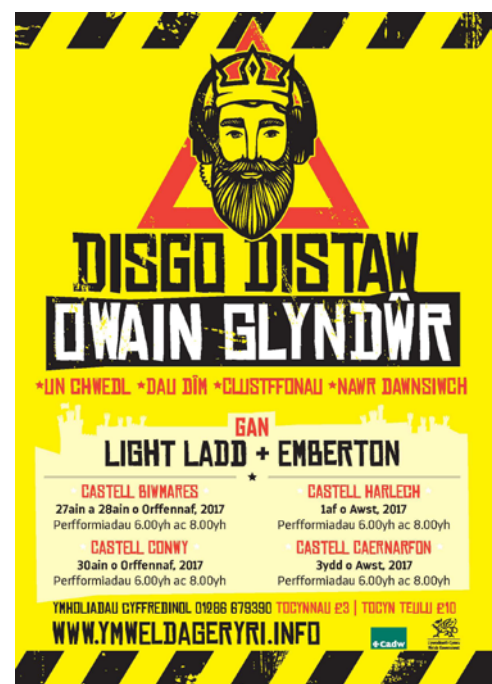
### 3.4.4 The Growth of Tourism ¬

For much of recorded history, travel was difficult, uncomfortable, expensive and frequently dangerous. It is only since the mid-nineteenth century that travel for pleasure has become more affordable, safer and less difficult (first with the introduction of the railways, then cars and the increasing availability of international travel). Increases in the standard of living, the introduction of annual holidays and an increasing desire for travel have all fuelled the rapid and massive growth in modern tourism seen towards the end of the twentieth century.

The four castles have long been destinations for visitors to north Wales. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, they were a magnet for poets and painters, who were unable to travel to mainland Europe as a result of the Napoleonic wars. In the mid-nineteenth century, the arrival in north Wales of the railway made the area more accessible for tourists. For example, the arrival of the railway in Harlech in 1867 heralded an increase in the number of visitors to the town in the summer months. In the middle of the twentieth century, tourism fast became an important element of the economic fabric of Wales with the north Wales coast, Snowdonia and the castles proving particular draws. The 1960s and 70s saw a high point in visitor numbers and tourism growth: in 1976, over one million visits were made to the four castles. Since this time, changes in the holiday market have included cheaper flights and competition from destinations abroad. The previous management plan identified that between 1986 and 2004, visitor numbers to the castles declined by some 15 per cent. There has also been a change in visitor habits, with increases in short breaks and day trips rather than formal holidays. This change in visitor behaviour has continued and visitor numbers have also increased in recent years.

*The arrival of the railway in north Wales heralded a steady increase in visitors encouraged by advertising such as this poster promoting Harlech Castle (left) (National Railway Museum/Science and Society Photographic Library). The annual Conwy Gwledd Feast, which celebrates food, music and art, encourages more visitors to the walled town and quayside (right) (Photograph courtesy of Conwy Gwledd Feast).*
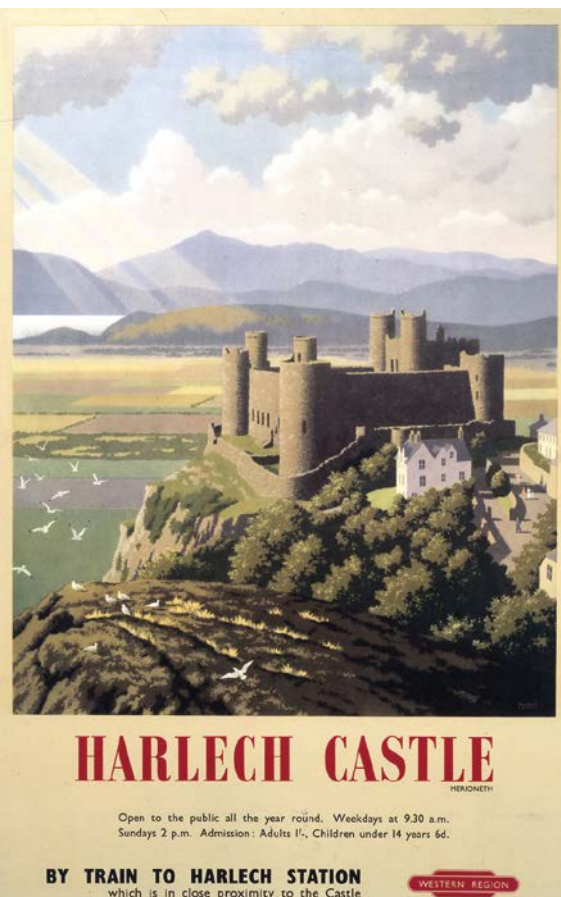
### 3.4.5 The Castles in Art, Music and Literature ¬

As monuments in the Welsh landscape, the castles have inspired artists throughout their long history. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they were subjects for topographical artists. Examples of this genre include John Boydell's engraving *A North West View of Caernarfon Castle* (1749) and engravings by the brothers Samuel and Nathaniel Buck, who illustrated all four castles in 1742.

With the beginning of the Romantic movement, artists were inspired to paint the castles in naturalistic landscapes to show their relationship with their settings. For example, Paul Sandby painted both Conwy and Harlech in 1776. When the Romantic artists were unable to travel to mainland Europe during the Napoleonic Wars, they discovered other parts of Britain, including Snowdonia. All four castles were painted on many occasions by artists who used them to express

*John Boydell's 1749 engraving,* **A North West View of Caernarfon Castle** *(top) (By permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru — National Library of Wales). Paul Sandby's 1777 watercolour of Harlech Castle (bottom) (Leeds Museums and Galleries (Leeds Art Gallery), UK/Bridgeman Images).*
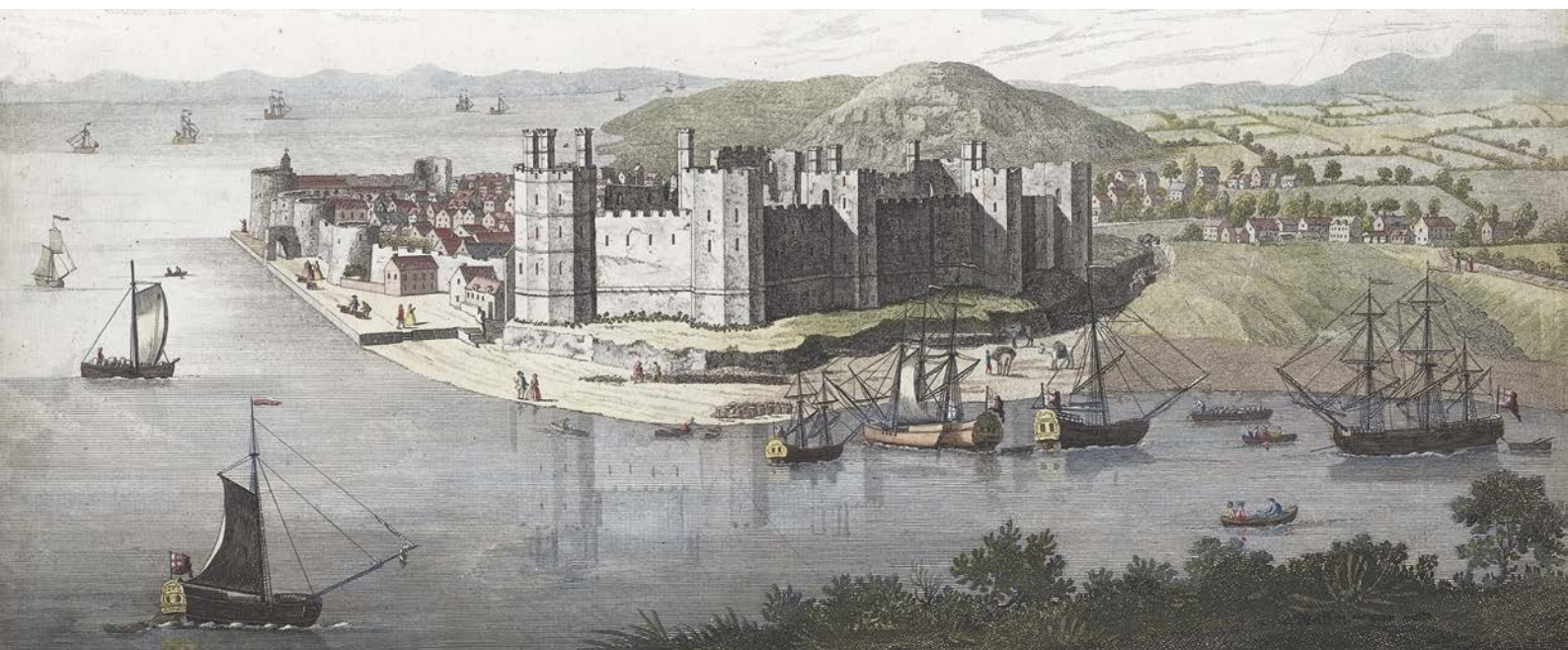
*Julius Caesar Ibbetson's* **Conway Castle, Moonlight at the Ferry** *(1794) (top) (© Victoria and Albert Museum, London). J. M. W. Turner's watercolour* **Beaumaris Castle Isle of Anglesey**, *painted about 1835 (bottom) (© Courtesy of the Huntington Art Collections, San Marino, California).*

their own visions of Romantic landscapes. Examples include *Conway Castle, Moonlight at the Ferry* (1794) by Julius Caesar Ibbetson (1759–1817) and, perhaps most famously, a series of paintings by J. M. W. Turner.

Turner discovered north Wales in two tours in 1798–99, returning with a series of sketchbooks which became the basis for a number of his finest finished paintings, including *Harlech Castle from Tygwyn Ferry, Summer's Evening Twilight* (around 1798–99), *Caernarvon Castle, North Wales* (1799–1800) and *Conway Castle* (about 1803). Two later paintings followed; *Caernarvon Castle, Wales* around 1832 and *Beaumaris Castle, Isle of Anglesey* around 1835.

More recently, twentieth-century artists have sought to recreate historical scenes in the light of current knowledge. Examples include Alan Sorrell (1904–74), whose painting of Harlech Castle shows clearly how it could have been supplied from the sea; Terry Ball (1931–2011) and John Banbury (1938–97), who produced 'bird's-eye' views of all four castles; Ivan Lapper (1939–), whose paintings illustrate the walled towns and particular events in their history, and Chris Jones-Jenkins (1954–), who specialises in cutaway reconstruction illustrations.

Links between the castles and literature are primarily related to *The Mabinogion*, a collection of eleven tales of Celtic medieval mythology. References are made both to Caernarfon in 'The Dream of the Emperor Maxen' and to Harlech in *The Mabinogion*.

Maxen Wledig was emperor of Rome. One day he went hunting with his retinue and around midday fell asleep in the sun. He had a dream which saw him travelling along a river valley until he reached the highest mountain he had ever seen and beyond it were the 'fairest plains that anyone had ever seen'. He travelled on to the mouth of a great river, and saw 'a great city at the mouth of the river, and a great wall around the city with many great towers of different colours'. He travelled further until he reached more mountains. 'From there he saw an island in the sea … From that mountain he saw a river crossing the land, making for the sea, and at the mouth of the river he saw a great castle, the fairest anyone had ever seen'. The dream led him to the castle gate which he found open and inside he found a hall with a roof of gold tiles and walls lined in sparkling stones and gold paved floors. He sat down in a golden chair with a beautiful maiden and had his

*Ivan Lapper's imaginative reconstruction of the Welsh attack on Caernarfon in September 1294, painted in 1993.*

*Chris Jones-Jenkins's reconstruction of the outer gate at Beaumaris Castle (2010).*
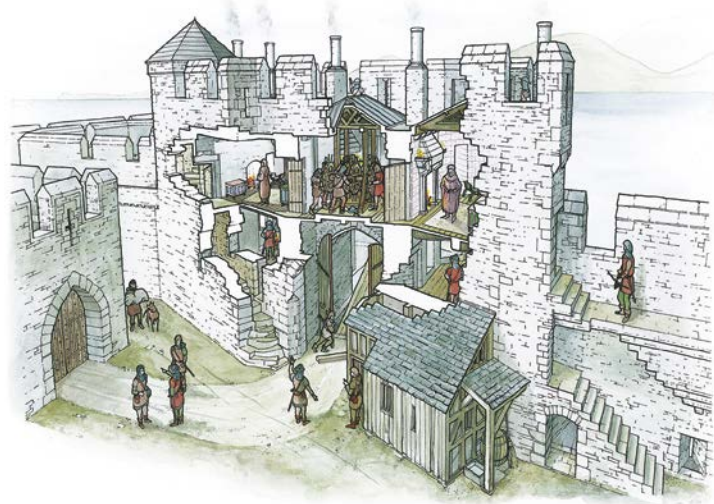
arms around her. At that point he awoke from his dream and was determined to find this maiden. He sent messengers travelling the world looking for her to no avail until one group reached the island of Britain and found Eryri, realising that this was the land that their lord had seen and finally located the maiden seated in a gold chair at the castle.[37]

Harlech is particularly associated with Bendigeidfran, who was king of the island of Britain and brother to Branwen. Sitting on the rock above the sea at Harlech with his brothers, they saw a fleet of 13 ships coming from Ireland. The ships brought Matholwch, the king of Ireland, who came to ask for the hand of Branwen in marriage. A great feast was arranged, but Bendigeidfran's brother, Efnysien, was displeased and took revenge by maiming the king's horses, causing Matholwch to leave in anger. Although Bendigeidfran persuaded him back and compensated him, back in Ireland there was disquiet at how the king had been treated in Wales; Branwen was forced into servitude. When word reached Bendigeidfran in Wales he vowed to go to Ireland and take revenge. The legend suggests that he was such a big man that he waded across the sea while his army went by ship. His mission failed, ending in bloodshed and remorse; seven men journeyed back to Harlech with the still living head of Bendigeidfran, where they then feasted for seven years. Eventually, Bendigeidfran's head was buried in London, facing France, to ward against invasion from the sea. A sculpture of Bendigeidfran by the sculptor Ivor Roberts-Jones (1913–96) sits outside Harlech Castle.

In terms of musical history, although no music relates specifically to the era of King Edward I, the Welsh folk song 'Men of Harlech' is believed to have been inspired by the siege of Harlech Castle in 1468 during the Wars of the Roses. The symbolism and meaning of the castles through the words of Welsh poets have been examined by Dylan Foster Evans.[38]

*Ivor Robert-Jones's sculpture, The Two Kings, outside Harlech Castle, depicts a scene from the story of Branwen in* **The Mabinogion** *with Bendigeidfran returning with the body of his nephew, Gwern.*

*The story of Branwen re-told in comic-book format aims to engage with new and young readers.*
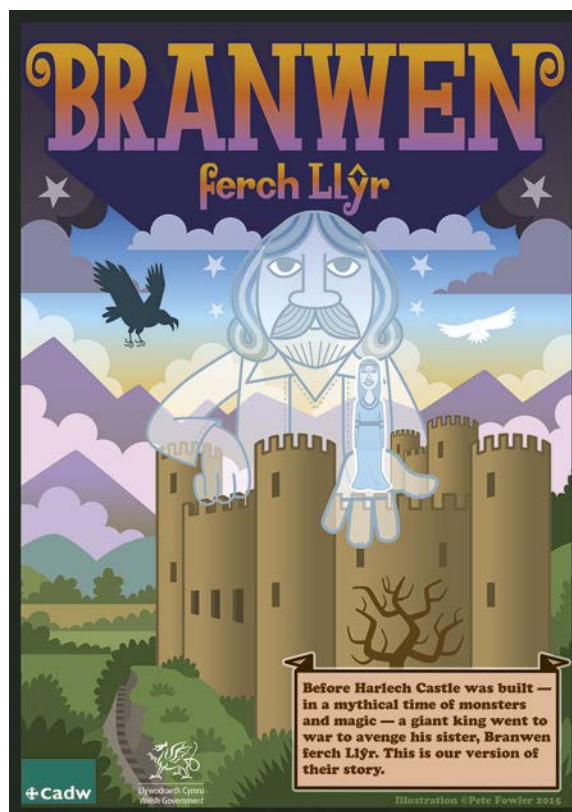
## 3.5   The World Heritage Site Communities Today ¬

Today, the four castles are at the heart of four different communities. Caernarfon, the county town of Gwynedd is the largest with a population of over 9,000 (9,615 in 2011 census). It has a busy infrastructure and includes both Welsh Government and local authority administrative centres, national hotel and supermarket chains as well as regional businesses and trades. Conwy has a population of over 4,000 (4,065 in 2011 census) and lies alongside the mainline railway and the A55 coast road. A greater proportion of this community is employed in tourism or at the council offices. Beaumaris and Harlech are almost identical in size and much smaller with a population of around 2,000 each (in the 2011 census, Beaumaris was recorded with 1,938 residents and Harlech with 1,997). Beaumaris's geographical location makes it less accessible than Conwy, for example, and as a result is perhaps a more closely knit community, but its focus on tourism is equally strong.

The town of Beaumaris has developed as a visitor destination and today is a picturesque resort. The town has retained much of its medieval street pattern and the high street is home to a high proportion of independent retailers. The castle attracted 82,103 visitors in 2016/17. Investment from projects, such as the Anglesey Coastal Environment project, has improved facilities in the town, including the refurbished pier. Based on an independent study in 2014[39] it is estimated that the World Heritage Site in Beaumaris contributed £1.2million to the local economy (equivalent to 60–70 jobs). Although the town and surrounding rural areas are generally considered affluent, there remain pockets of relative deprivation and unemployment.

*Beaumaris is a small, closely knit community on the island of Anglesey, with a strong focus on tourism.*

*Harlech has a vibrant and active community keen to identify potential opportunities for the town.*

Caernarfon Castle attracted 301,567 visitors during 2016/17. The 2014 study identified that the castle contributed £2.6 million to the local economy (equivalent to 142 jobs).[40] The castle continues to be a focus for regeneration investment, delivered through a multi-agency partnership, which includes Gwynedd Council and Cadw. Recent and future projects include the continued regeneration of Caernarfon Waterfront (focusing on the historic Island Site at Slate Quay), as well as improving visitor facilities such as the Welsh Highland Railway terminus in the town. Caernarfon also remains home to areas of significant deprivation. The wards of Peblig and Cadnant, for example, are recognised as being areas with above average levels of poverty and unemployment.

Conwy Castle attracted 203,122 visitors in 2016/17. The 2014 study[41] identified that the castle contributed around £3.1 million to the local economy (equivalent to 178 jobs). Visitor attractions include not only the castle and town walls (much of which are accessible to visitors), but also Plas Mawr Elizabethan town house. Conwy has a vibrant retail core with independent retailers and traders.

Finally, the town of Harlech has also seen recent investment in the area around the castle, with a new bridge to improve access and a new visitor centre and cafe. As a result, visitor numbers to Harlech rose dramatically from 77,000 in 2014/2015 to 102,198 in 2016/17. The castle contributed some £1.15 million to the local economy in 2014 with the expectation that this figure will grow in line with visitor numbers.[42] Whilst the new bridge and visitor centre have already had a very positive impact on the town and appear to have influenced the re-opening of a number of businesses, the town remains vulnerable. Harlech has a vibrant and active community, with local groups coming together to identify potential opportunities for the future of the town. These may include improvements to the town centre where there are high vacancy rates and a number of buildings in need of environmental improvement.

*Caernarfon is the county town of Gwynedd and the largest of the four towns. Local facilities include the marina at Victoria Dock (© Crown copyright (2017) Visit Wales)*

*Conwy is a busy town on the main routes (A55 and railway) across north Wales making it accessible and attractive for tourists.*

*This iconic view of Harlech Castle captures the majesty of the medieval fortress. The overarching principles set out in this plan will help guide the management of the World Heritage Site.*

# 4  Management Needs and Policy Framework¬

## 4.1  Introduction ¬

The previous chapters of this management plan have set out the significance and value of the World Heritage Site. This chapter identifies the vision and overarching principles, and objectives and policies that will guide the continued management of the World Heritage Site, addressing specific management needs and opportunities.

## 4.2  Vision and Overarching Principles for the World Heritage Site ¬

> **The vision for the World Heritage Site is:**
>
> **To celebrate and protect the distinctiveness of the World Heritage Site and its surrounding communities so that it brings social and economic benefits now and in the future.**

*Tourism brings vital economic benefits to the World Heritage Site. Here, tourists are enjoying their visit to Conwy Castle.*

## 4.3 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015[43] ¬

The continued management of the World Heritage Site reflects the distinctive and forward thinking legislative context within Wales. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the 2015 Act) sets seven well-being goals that together provide a shared vision for the future of Wales. Policies developed to manage the World Heritage Site will each contribute to one or more of these goals, which have the principle of sustainable development at their core.

The 2015 Act requires public bodies in Wales to work towards the seven goals.

*The seven goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.*
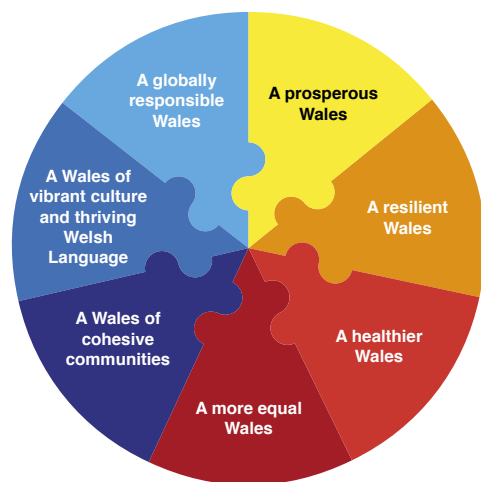


**A prosperous Wales (Goal 1)** — an innovative, productive and low-carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately; and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

**A resilient Wales (Goal 2)** — a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosytems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example, climate change).

**A healthier Wales (Goal 3)** — a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

**A more equal Wales (Goal 4)** — a society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances.

**A Wales of cohesive communities (Goal 5)** — attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

**A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language (Goal 6)** — a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

**A globally responsive Wales (Goal 7)** — a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

Through its links with resident and visitor communities, and the local and national economy, the World Heritage Site can help public bodies to achieve these goals.

## 4.4   Underlying Principles ¬

The following four themes cut across all activity undertaken as part of the management plan and are crucial to its successful delivery.

- Protecting Outstanding Universal Value
- Shared responsibility
- Community engagement
- Welsh language and culture

### 4.4.1   Protecting Outstanding Universal Value ¬

The Statement of Outstanding Universal Value and the key attributes which contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site are described in Chapter 2. ICOMOS advises that 'World Heritage Sites need to be seen as single entities that manifest Outstanding Universal Value'. Outstanding Universal Value is expressed in a range of attributes and it is these that need to be protected in order to sustain Outstanding Universal Value.[44] Decision makers will therefore need to assess the impact of proposals within the World Heritage Site on its key attributes, both individually and collectively. Where appropriate, local planning authorities can ask for information, which may include a heritage impact assessment from developers, for proposals likely to have an impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.

A further safeguarding measure relates to the requirements set out in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*.[45] Paragraph 172 states that development proposals that may have an impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site may need to be notified (via DCMS) to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee Secretariat, so that the committee can advise on appropriate safeguarding measures.

*The new access bridge to Harlech Castle was designed to minimise the impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.*

## 4.4.2  Shared Responsibility ¬

World Heritage Sites are recognised globally as places of exceptional importance. Excellence in conservation practice is therefore required to safeguard their future. To achieve this, there needs to be a widespread understanding and awareness amongst different types of organisation (public, private and voluntary sectors) of the special values of the Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd World Heritage Site and acceptance of a common responsibility to protect these values. The starting point is the inclusion of relevant management considerations associated with the World Heritage Site in plans and strategies. These should include (but are not limited to) local development plans, destination management plans, local economic strategies, local transport plans, place plans, site development briefs, flood risk assessments, shoreline management plans, and the plans and strategies of highways departments and utilities companies.

Public sector money is used in a variety of ways to deliver projects either directly or indirectly within the World Heritage Site and its surroundings. Direct purposes may include local authority and Snowdonia National Park Authority spending on regeneration projects, highways and townscape improvements. Spend may also take place indirectly through the provision of grant funding to private sector or voluntary sector organisations (for example, grants to improve listed buildings, grants to charities or to local businesses). Where public sector money is being used for projects located within the World Heritage Site, or its essential setting, it is important that there is adherence to the wider policies and objectives contained in this management plan to ensure that best conservation practice can be achieved.

*The site of the new Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railway Station, which is a joint project with multiple stakeholders that will benefit the World Heritage Site.*

### 4.4.3  Community Engagement ¬

UNESCO strongly encourages World Heritage Sites to recognise that local communities who are either in, part of or adjacent to a World Heritage Site need to play a more important role in the long-term sustainable development and management of these internationally important places. Additionally, within the Welsh public sector there has been growing recognition of the benefits to services and the public when positive, transparent and constructive engagement approaches are established.

In simple terms community engagement is 'a planned and systematic process with the specific purpose of working with identified and diverse groups of people, whether they are connected by geographic location, special interest, or affiliation or identify to address issues affecting their well-being.'[46] Community engagement can take many forms ranging from informing the community of policy directions of the government through to empowering the community to make decisions and to implement and manage change themselves.

*Locally based Ardudwy Knights regularly re-enact thirteenth-century life at Harlech and Caernarfon castles to encourage tourism and raise funds for local charities.*

### 4.4.4  Welsh Language and Culture ¬

The Welsh language contributes to the sense of place of an area and is an essential part of the communities within the World Heritage Site. The proportion of Welsh speakers in wards of Caernarfon, such as Seiont and Menai, is in the region of 86 per cent. Although there is concern that the proportion of Welsh speakers has declined marginally in the 10 years between the 2001 and 2011 censuses, the safeguarding and promotion of the Welsh language is a strategic requirement for Welsh Government, local authorities and National Park authorities through the Welsh Language Measure 2011, which requires compliance with a number of approved standards.[47] There is recognition of the contribution that the Welsh language makes to both cultural distinctiveness and, in turn, the development of the economy (for example, as an attribute that sets north-west Wales apart from other areas).

World Heritage Site status can be used to help promote the use of the Welsh language and help maintain its important day-to-day role in the cultural role of the surrounding communities. In order to help retain what is special about the area, the promotion of the Welsh language should be incorporated into all management plan objectives and policies within the action plan. For example, this would apply to proposals for new signage and interpretation through to proposals for new development within the four towns of Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy and Harlech. There will also be a commitment to work with the three 'Menter Iaith' (language schemes) initiatives across the three local authority areas to take forward specific projects or collaborative arrangements.

*The promenade at Caernarfon was resurfaced and made more attractive through the installation of historic artefacts from the local area as part of a heritage-led regeneration scheme.*

*The World Heritage Site emblem appears in Welsh, as well as French and English, to remind visitors from far and near that Welsh is a thriving language.*
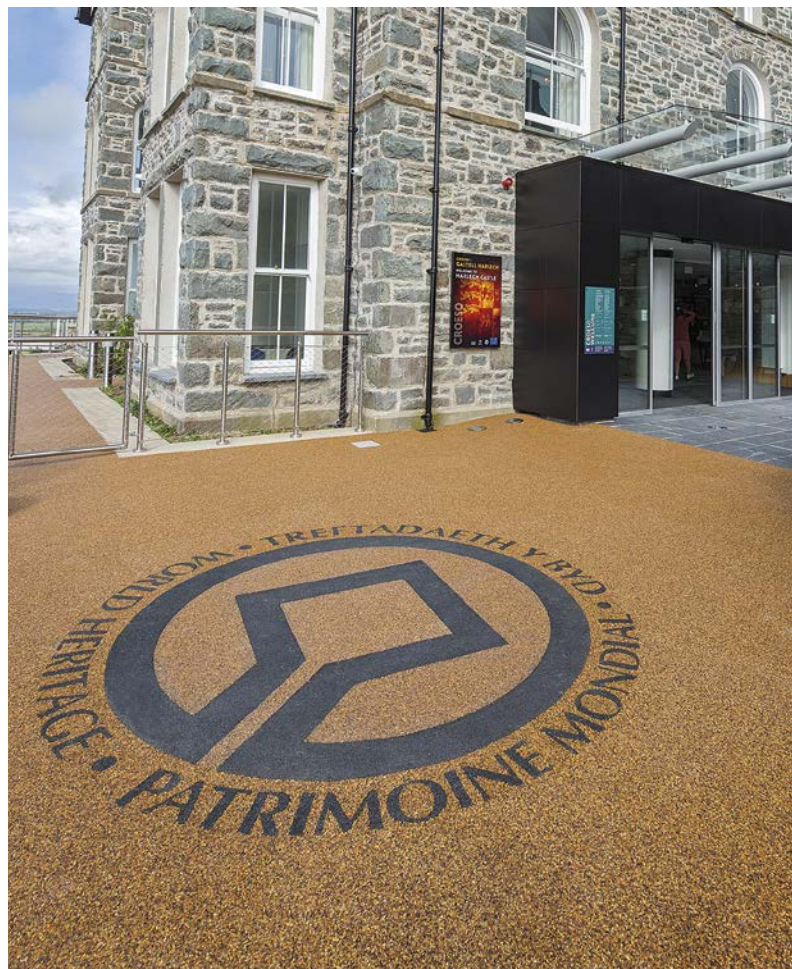
## 4.5   Policy Framework ¬

Underpinned by the general principles described in section 4.4, this management plan sets out a series of objectives supported by a suite of specific policies which have been developed in response to analysis of issues and opportunities identified in the course of preparing the plan. Maintaining and conserving the fabric of the World Heritage Site to the highest standards will always be paramount, but there are several other recurring themes which this policy framework is also designed to address.

The World Heritage Site is a single site with four separate locations, and it has a distinctive relationship with its setting in each of the four towns. Stronger promotion of the site as a single entity must be balanced with recognition of the distinctive character of each of its component parts. At the same time, protecting the setting is vital, not only to safeguard the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site, but also to make the most of the opportunities that the site presents. This plan therefore places particular emphasis on the protection and management of change in the setting, and also on maintaining and enhancing a sense of place.

The role of heritage as an economic driver is now well attested. There are clear opportunities to realise the economic potential of the World Heritage Site more fully, in the process tackling a continuing need for regeneration and resilience in the local and regional economic mix. The plan therefore includes specific objectives and policies focused on the local economy and regeneration. It also recognises that there are opportunities to improve and enhance the visitor experience, and to strengthen the way that the site and its setting are marketed and promoted.

Another important issue relates to the need to realise social benefits from the World Heritage Site and to develop a strong relationship with its local communities to overcome barriers to access. This is the focus of policies for education and lifelong learning, but it is also an important element of the management process itself, which is committed to an inclusive and collaborative approach.

Broader international and environmental issues such as Brexit and climate change present some important risks for every World Heritage Site, but highlight the need for proactive risk management and good governance arrangements.

Effective performance in all these thematic areas requires a strong collaborative model, based on trust, partnership and clear communication.

## 4.6   Objectives ¬

Following extensive consultation and analysis during the development of the management plan, 12 themes have been identified to provide the framework for delivery during the 2018–28 period.

| | |
|---|---|
| **1** | Safeguarding the World Heritage Site: conservation of the historic fabric |
| **2** | Safeguarding the World Heritage Site: archaeological heritage |
| **3** | Safeguarding the setting of the World Heritage Site |
| **4** | Sense of place |
| **5** | Local economy and regeneration |
| **6** | The visitor experience |
| **7** | Marketing and promotion |
| **8** | Sustainable travel |
| **9** | Education and lifelong learning |
| **10** | Research and understanding |
| **11** | Risk management |
| **12** | Management process |

*Maintaining the historic fabric of the World Heritage Site to the highest national and international conservation standards is essential.*

## 4.6.1 Safeguarding the World Heritage Site: Conservation of the Historic Fabric¬

The castles and town walls need regular maintenance carried out to the highest standard using appropriate materials and techniques. Notwithstanding financial pressures, it is essential that the conservation and maintenance of the World Heritage Site is treated as the highest priority. Stakeholders will be encouraged to regard the proper conservation of the immediate environs of the castles and town walls as being equally deserving of the highest standard of care in line with current best practice.

The findings of the 2016 Welsh Government's quinquennial inspection to review the condition of the site identified the current state of the World Heritage Site as good, with relatively few category 1 and 2 works necessary. Category 1 works have the highest priority and need immediate attention; category 2 works should ideally be carried out within one year. This is a positive reflection on the rolling conservation programme that has been put in place. Works that have been identified in the inspection will form part of the future conservation programme for the castles and town walls. Conservation work is carried out both by Cadwraeth Cymru (Cadw's in-house team of craftspeople) and by specialist contractors.

### Beaumaris Castle

The works identified at Beaumaris Castle include minor maintenance repairs to some elements of stonework, including stitching corbels and pointing up cracks. Other recommended repairs are the replacement of decayed timber treads to some of the stairs, the prevention of water ingress to the Chapel Tower and the removal of vegetation to prevent ingress of water into historic fabric. Work is currently underway to resolve the Chapel Tower roof and improve presentation of the chapel.
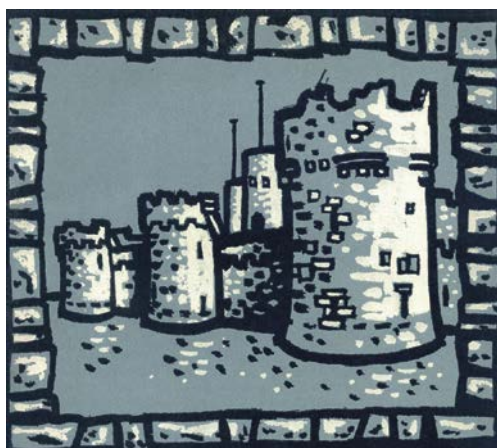
### Caernarfon Castle and Town Walls

At Caernarfon Castle, the highest priority works were identified as repairs to the Granary Tower and central chamber of the North-East Tower where water ingress is causing timber decay at lower levels. Missing bird mesh in the North-East Tower also allows pigeons to enter resulting in a build-up of guano.

The town walls at Caernarfon were found to be largely in good condition with the exception of the East Gatehouse (Porth Mawr) and West Gatehouse (Porth yr Aur), a short section of walling west of Porth Mawr and the rear section of wall running between Porth yr Aur and the castle. Conservation projects are currently underway at both gatehouses led respectively by Cadw and the Royal Welsh Yacht Club.




*Illustrations of Beaumaris Castle (top) and Caernarfon Castle (bottom) by Kyffin Williams, KBE, RA.*

## Conwy Castle and Town Walls

The priority works at Conwy Castle were noted as fractures to stones and open cracks in multiple locations across the monument, the removal of plant growth and unblocking of some very high-level rainwater chutes which, if left unchecked, would cause deterioration to the adjacent stonework.

The town walls require very similar work as the castle, with only limited areas of excessive vegetation build-up in the more inaccessible locations.

## Harlech Castle

The castle fabric was reported to be in a generally good state of repair; only vegetation removal and associated re-pointing were identified for action. There is also a need to improve accessibility around the castle, including works to handrails.

As well as conserving the historic fabric, it is important to maintain high-quality visitor amenities, facilities and interpretation in good condition. The recent significant improvements at all four sites have shown how sensitive installations can improve access and advance visitor understanding and appreciation of the monuments. Cadw has a crucial role to play in ensuring that conservation and visitor improvement initiatives apply best practice and meet all relevant statutory and guidance requirements. This includes taking advice from partners and international heritage organisations as appropriate.



*Illustrations of Conwy Castle (top) and Harlech Castle (bottom) by Kyffin Williams, KBE, RA.*

| Objective 1: | Maintain the castles and town walls to the highest national and international conservation standards. |
|---|---|
| **Policy 1A** | All works to the castles and town walls will be carried out according to best-practice guidance, including adherence to Cadw's *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales*.[48] |
| **Policy 1B** | Repairs identified in the quinquennial inspection will be prioritised, funded and implemented within the necessary time period. |
| **Policy 1C** | Visitor facilities will be designed to enhance the World Heritage Site and its setting to avoid adverse impact on the Outstanding Universal Value or on the setting of any other adjacent historic asset. |

## 4.6.2 Safeguarding the World Heritage Site: Archaeological Heritage ¬

Since the preparation of the last management plan there have been several archaeological discoveries that have enhanced our understanding of the World Heritage Site. Archaeological excavations during and in advance of construction projects have brought new knowledge of the castles and historical periods within each of the four towns. Examples of discoveries within the World Heritage Site include the contents of a midden, lead pistol and musket balls from the seventeenth century, and a fragment of Roman pottery at Caernarfon Castle during the recent works to construct the new ticket entrance. Archaeological assessments in relation to potential flood alleviation infrastructure in Beaumaris have highlighted a potentially sensitive archaeological area immediately to the north of the castle, including evidence for the castle moat.

Archaeological discoveries within the towns have also contributed to a broader understanding of the context and setting of the World Heritage Site. Recent archaeological excavations at Harlech, in advance of construction works at the visitor centre, recovered the remains of a building thought to be a church, as well as human remains buried in a Christian east–west orientation.

While it is important to control and limit archaeological disturbance wherever possible, redevelopment proposals within the towns may offer opportunities to develop further understanding and appreciation of, for example, living conditions and construction processes within the medieval

*The marine historic environment is important to help understand the relationship between the World Heritage Site and the sea. This cannon comes from the wreck of the* **Bronze Bell** *which lies off the beach at Harlech (Crown copyright: RCAHMW).*

*Excavations at Harlech Castle in advance of the construction of the new access bridge revealed new evidence about the area immediately outside the castle walls (Archaeology Wales).*

period. These opportunities may also offer better understanding of the historical depth of the area before or after the construction of the castles and towns. The outline characterisation work undertaken as part of the preparation of the management plan, together with more detailed characterisation work that is proposed during the lifetime of the plan, will help contribute further to our understanding and appreciation of the World Heritage Site and its setting.

The relationship between the four castles and the sea is defined in Chapter 3. Marine archaeological remains may include evidence of trading routes and shipping; for example, a substantial early eighteenth-century armed merchant ship, *Bronze Bell*, lies off the beach at Harlech. Evidence of the construction and provisioning of the castles may be recoverable; for example, the means of entry into the castle dock at Beaumaris is not clear. Research has identified the possible presence of a channel (either natural or artificial) linking the sea to the moat.

| Objective 2: | Conserve, promote and interpret the archaeological heritage for the benefit of current and future generations. |
|---|---|
| **Policy 2A** | All projects with potential for impact on buried archaeological heritage within the World Heritage Site, or its essential setting, will be subject to archaeological evaluation to inform decision making. |
| **Policy 2B** | There will be a presumption against developments that would result in the loss of significant archaeological remains. Mitigation options will be proportionate to significance and where appropriate will include retention of significant deposits and remains *in situ*. |
| **Policy 2C** | Marine historic assets will be assessed, recorded and protected according to their significance; there will be a presumption against proposals that would disturb significant historic assets. |
| **Policy 2D** | There will be active dissemination of the outcomes of all archaeological work undertaken within the World Heritage Site and its setting. |

*The preliminary character studies of all four towns will improve understanding and appreciation of the World Heritage Site and its setting. This view of Beaumaris captures the medieval church as well as nineteenth-century town houses.*

### 4.6.3 Safeguarding the Setting of the World Heritage Site ¬

Setting describes the relationship of a historic asset to the surrounding landscape or townscape. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of a historic asset.

Chapters 2 and 3 have described the importance of the setting of the World Heritage Site and the key attributes of the setting. The setting of the World Heritage Site includes the relationships between the castles, towns and coast, and is informed by an understanding of their historic character. It also includes three specific elements:

- the mapped **essential setting** at each of the four towns in the World Heritage Site, referring to areas outside the inscribed World Heritage Site boundary where inappropriate development would damage the visual, sensory or historic setting of the site. The boundaries of the essential settings have been reviewed in light of developments and land-use changes that have happened since the last management plan was prepared (see Table 2.1 and Maps 2.1–2.4).
- identification and protection of **significant views** at each location
- **sense of arrival** at each location.

*Beaumaris from Baron Hill showing the setting of the castle and town on flat ground alongside the Menai Strait (Crown copyright: RCAHMW).*

The setting of the World Heritage Site is highly vulnerable to change and its protection relies on the use of all available planning and heritage protection tools. Rigorous planning controls must be in place to protect it, and there should also be a rigorous process of assessment for any development proposals, however small, to ensure that their potential impact is fully understood before any works are approved.

Consideration of setting in the development management process is likely to include factors such as:

- functional and physical relationships with other structures/historic assets and how these have changed over time; for example, the historic waterfronts
- topographical features that have influenced the location of the castles
- physical character of the surrounding landscape or townscape, including any formal design or land use; for example, the formal planning of the medieval towns
- the original layout of the castle/town walls and how this has changed
- archaeological features and the potential for buried features surrounding the castles and town walls
- historical, artistic, literary, place name, cultural or scenic associations
- views to, from and across the castles and town walls, including any planned vistas
- the prominence of the castles and town walls in views throughout the surrounding area
- views associated with aesthetic, functional or ceremonial purposes
- other sensory elements, such as noise or smell.

*Caernarfon from the air showing the prominent setting of the castle and town walls between the Menai Strait and River Seiont.*

Change over time has been a feature of the four towns in which the World Heritage Site is located. Growing populations, changing technologies and increasing leisure time have all been important factors in how the towns have developed. Current development pressures that may have an impact on the setting of the World Heritage Site include:

- the pressure of housing growth to the west of Conwy

- sites within the essential or wider setting of the World Heritage Site that may come forward for redevelopment; examples may include the Victorian baths site in Beaumaris, the Coleg Harlech and St David's Hotel sites in Harlech, proposals for redevelopment along St Helen's Road in Caernarfon — specifically between the Caernarfon Harbour Trust buoy shed and southwards along St Helen's Road — and the quayside development in Conwy)

- the growth in renewable technologies, which could have a cumulative impact on setting in particular. For example, changes to permitted development rights introduced by the Welsh Government in 2012 have made it easier to install domestic microgeneration equipment, including solar panels on roofs or walls and single standalone wind turbines; permitted development is conditional on the amenity of the area and visual impact of the proposal.

*In this aerial view of Conwy, the setting of the castle on a rocky outcrop overlooking the estuary and integrated with the town walls is clearly visible.*

Heritage impact assessments are advocated by ICOMOS[49] as a means of assessing the potential impact of new development on World Heritage Sites and their settings. For particularly sensitive sites, the preparation of development briefs should also be considered. The purpose of a development brief is to provide information about the constraints and opportunities that may be presented by a specific site, and to set out clearly the type and design of development that may be expected or encouraged. Development briefs can be material considerations when determining planning applications.

Other World Heritage Sites in the UK have adopted supplementary planning guidance as a means of providing a rigorous planning framework for the development, regeneration and conservation of World Heritage Sites and their settings. *Managing Change in World Heritage Sites in Wales* advocates that local planning authorities adopt the management plan as support for supplementary planning guidance to ensure that World Heritage Site policies are part of the evidence base used to assess applications and proposals.[50]

*This distant view of Harlech shows the setting of the castle high above the Morfa and now cut off from the sea (Crown copyright: RCAHMW).*

Article 4 Directions are made by local planning authorities to restrict the scope of permitted development rights in a particular spatial area, so that full planning applications are required. They can be used to control works that could threaten the character of an area (for example, a conservation area) and to assist with the protection of historic assets and their settings.[51] The designation of a conservation area does not in itself automatically lead to the creation of an Article 4 Direction. At present, only those conservation areas in Beaumaris and Conwy in the World Heritage Site have Article 4 Directions in place. Consultation with stakeholders, as part of the preparation of the new management plan, has identified that there would be benefits in having a consistent approach to the protection of the built environment in all four locations, including the use of Article 4 Directions in the conservation areas at Caernarfon and Harlech.

Aspects of setting have a particular value when they help to create a sense of arrival to the World Heritage Site. The quality of buildings, sites or landscape features associated with the major road and rail, or water access routes to the World Heritage Site can contribute to a sense of arrival for visitors, helping to prepare the visitor's response and assist in the interpretation of the World Heritage Site and its Outstanding Universal Value. For example, driving towards Conwy there are views of the physical environment in which the World Heritage Site was constructed, the monumental architecture of the walled town and castle is revealed and the road passes alongside historic assets with links to the World Heritage Site. Route appraisal may reveal opportunities to open up views of the World Heritage Site, buildings or features, assist in determining good development design or provide inspiration for appropriate materials.

*There are several approaches to Caernarfon, each of which influences the visitors' sense of arrival. The roads from the west (left) and the south-east (right) emphasise the scale and location of the castle, as well as the challenge of improving the sense of arrival.*

*The sense of arrival at Beaumaris begins with the road sweeping along the bay past Gallows Point (top) before reaching Castle Street (bottom), which is the main shopping area.*

*Conwy can be approached from a number of local roads (top) but the most impressive first view is gained from the bridge across the estuary (bottom).*

*Whether arriving at Harlech from the Morfa (top) or along the top road (bottom), the castle is imposing perched on its rock outcrop.*

Development proposals along the major tourist access routes will need to take sense of arrival into account and consider how they can contribute positively to it.

Minor development (householder, change of use) along the main access routes could have more limited impact. In these circumstances, high-quality design and landscaping, and signage in keeping with the locality will be required. The use of Article 4 Directions to support the protection of the World Heritage Site and its setting will be of further assistance.

A further issue relates to the quality of the townscape; for example, where there are listed buildings in poor condition which detract from the quality of the townscape and setting of the World Heritage Site. Buildings considered to be of special local interest (those that do not necessarily meet the criteria for listing but which nevertheless may be valued by local communities) may also have a role to play as part of the setting of the World Heritage Site. Funding opportunities should be sought to help fund listed buildings at risk within the essential or wider setting of the World Heritage Site. For example, there is an opportunity to consider and explore a strategic scheme across the four communities to ensure a consistent approach to help improve the built environment and provide traditional building skill opportunities for local people.

*High Street, Conwy, is one of the two principal roads through the town.*

*Beaumaris townscapes outside the castle (top) and amongst the mid-nineteenth-century townhouses of Alma Street (bottom).*

*Palace Street (top) and Castle Ditch Street (bottom) within the walled town at Caernarfon.*

Protecting the setting of the World Heritage Site relies not just on making full use of all available planning tools and on sound development management processes, but also on collaborative working to ensure consistency, exchange of good practice and to make the most effective use of resources. Civic societies and other local interest groups have an important role to play, not only through involvement in the planning process, but also in wider activity to protect, conserve and present the World Heritage Site and its setting.

| Objective 3: | Safeguard the setting of the World Heritage Site for the benefit of future generations. |
|---|---|
| **Policy 3A** | World Heritage Site partners will work together to make full use of available planning tools to protect and enhance the setting of the World Heritage Site. |
| **Policy 3B** | The performance of the existing mechanism of essential setting and significant views as a means of protecting the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity of the World Heritage Site will be monitored during the lifetime of the management plan. |
| **Policy 3C** | New development is to be of appropriate design, scale and massing so that it preserves and enhances the setting of the World Heritage Site, respects significant views and reinforces a sense of arrival. |
| **Policy 3D** | Action will be taken to improve the condition of listed buildings and monuments at risk within the World Heritage Site boundary and its essential setting. |
| **Policy 3E** | Cadw, local authorities, the Snowdonia National Park Authority and other stakeholders will work together to safeguard the setting of the World Heritage Site. |

*Harlech townscapes.*

## 4.6.4 Sense of Place ¬

The term 'sense of place' conveys the unique feel of an area, all the things that combine to make a place special and different from other places. Welsh language and culture contribute to a sense of place, as do environmental factors such as how a place looks. The more that people recognise that where they live has a distinctive sense of place, the more civic pride is generated.[52]

The local distinctiveness of the four towns of Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy, and Harlech is promoted through physical factors, such as unique street patterns and the quality of the built environment, as well as through types of local businesses and services, and products offered. Protecting these elements is central to protecting the sense of place that they provide. Local communities need to be aware of what it is that makes the place in which they live special and to embrace this distinctiveness.

*Each of the four towns has its own distinctive sense of place created by many factors including history, layout and architecture — Beaumaris (top), Caernarfon (bottom).*

Townscape issues that can detract from sense of place include high proportions of vacant shop units and poor-quality shop frontages. Approximately 16 per cent of retail floorspace in Caernarfon is vacant (twice the GB average), with vacant properties concentrated along High Street in the old part of the town, which detracts from an area of otherwise high architectural and environmental value. The Gwynedd–Anglesey Retail Study (2013)[53] identified that Caernarfon could develop a niche in the retail hierarchy through the attraction of better-quality independent retailers, thereby tapping into available tourist expenditure. Harlech too has suffered from relatively high numbers of empty shop units in recent years, though it is hoped that the new bridge, visitor centre and cafe opposite the castle may go some way towards regenerating the town.

*Each of the four towns has its own distinctive sense of place created by many factors including history, layout and architecture — Conwy (top) and Harlech (bottom).*

Other recent research has included the study of the historic character of the Caernarfon Waterfront.[54] The research has helped inform proposals for the regeneration of this area, focusing on the Menai and Seiont waterfronts, and immediately adjacent urban areas. The study identified not only distinct character areas (the Promenade, Bank Quay/Victoria Dock, the Slate Quay, the Maes, Segontium Terrace and Tre'r Gof, and Coed Helen), but also described design parameters for redevelopment.

Following on from the Caernarfon Waterfront historic character study, further character work in the three other castle towns that make up the World Heritage Site would provide baseline evidence to inform future initiatives. Character studies could also engage and involve local communities, using for instance Civic Trust Cymru's toolkit, *Exploring your Town*.[55] Some interest in this has already been expressed in Harlech.

The World Heritage Site spans four local planning authority areas, each with different funding priorities and plans. This means that a strategic funding plan would benefit the World Heritage Site, its setting and inhabitants to avoid piecemeal townscape improvements. One example could be to take a strategic approach to discussions with the Heritage Lottery Fund about specific opportunities to aid townscape improvements or through opportunities that may arise with the growing support for Business Improvement Districts.

| Objective 4: | Support and promote local distinctiveness within the World Heritage Site, recognising the characteristics and diversity of each of the four towns. |
|---|---|
| **Policy 4A** | The legibility of the plot pattern in the four towns will be protected. |
| **Policy 4B** | Historic character will be used to better understand the four towns and inform future development helping enhance their distinctiveness and safeguarding the World Heritage Site. |
| **Policy 4C** | The individual character and appearance of the four town centres will be protected and enhanced. Proposals for changes to the appearance of buildings within each of the town centres, for example, to shopfronts, will be assessed against available guidance, such as conservation area standards or local design guides. |
| **Policy 4D** | Enterprises that derive social or economic benefit from the World Heritage Site and which enhance local distinctiveness will be fostered. |

## 4.6.5 Local Economy and Regeneration ¬

The policies contained within this management plan aim to foster partnerships between different stakeholders that will embrace heritage and enhance the World Heritage Site in the future, on the basis that this will also be good for the economic life of north Wales.

There is good evidence to demonstrate that heritage is an economic driver and that heritage-led regeneration can be highly beneficial. A report published by UK National Commission for UNESCO in February 2016 valued the financial benefits of World Heritage Sites to the UK at £85 million in 2014/15 alone. It also recognised the impact of investment at World Heritage Sites across the country in terms of supporting jobs and communities. In addition to the impact on the tourism economy, there are potential beneficial impacts for local businesses and residents in terms of:

- stimulation of new products and markets; for example, through the development of the World Heritage Site brand/identity which may bring footfall to businesses within World Heritage Site destinations

- contribution both to regional development and local regeneration; examples might include how the World Heritage Site identity can be used as a way to 'sell' the benefits of an area. Other World Heritage Sites in the UK have identified how the designation has attracted new business to an area (particularly in the fields of visual arts and design) and how the identity can raise aspirations about the quality of an area.

- attracting inward investment; for example, through the creation of partnerships, or through engaging businesses and communities with the aims of the project.

*Valuing the Welsh Historic Environment*[56] identified that the historic environment is a highly significant contributor to the Welsh economy, supporting over 30,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs in Wales and contributing approximately £840 million to Wales's national gross value added (GVA) (equivalent to 1.9 per cent of Wales's total GVA). The Welsh historic environment contributes to the economic well-being of people and communities through support for wider regeneration activities, acts as a catalyst for investment and enhances skills for jobs.

*The heritage-led regeneration of Caernarfon Waterfront, including the promenade, complements the World Heritage Site and enhances its tourism potential and economic prospects.*

The E4G report, *The Economic Impact of the Heritage Tourism Environment for Growth (E4G) Project* (2014),[57] shows that the castles of the World Heritage Site attract more than 500,000 visitors each year. Conwy Castle alone has a GVA directly attributable to the site of just over £3 million per annum and supports nearly 180 FTE jobs. Equivalent figures for Caernarfon Castle and Harlech Castle are £2.7 million per annum (142 FTE jobs) and £1.1 million (63 FTE jobs) respectively. This level of economic activity is a major driver both for Wales, north Wales and the local economy. The policies in this management plan aim to enable this to be harnessed to its maximum potential at the same time as passionately protecting the Outstanding Universal Value which is the *raison d'être* of the World Heritage Site.

Heritage-led regeneration can be a positive catalyst to achieve economic change in an area, creating jobs, initiating wider improvements and furthering the development of community pride and identity. This is of particular relevance for areas within the World Heritage Site that may suffer from relatively high levels of deprivation; for example, certain wards and communities within Caernarfon. Heritage-led regeneration opportunities, which may come forward during the lifetime of the management plan, include the redevelopment of both the Slate Quay area and Porth Mawr in Caernarfon (the latter potentially providing access to a section of the town walls), the quayside area in Conwy and the St David's Hotel and Coleg Harlech sites in Harlech. These proposals may help create commercial opportunities and provide employment as well as create a sense of place and use heritage to invigorate communities.

*A demonstration of traditional woodworking skills at Beaumaris Castle. Traditional skills training can boost local employment opportunities.*

Throughout the consultation period there were strong views on the need to have effective partnership arrangements in the four communities. Three of the towns specifically highlighted the need to explore the establishment of forums that could identify and drive forwards such opportunities. Using the *Solving our own problems!* event template, which has been developed effectively by the Irish Walled Town Network,[58] could be one approach to build interest and community-led action.

The World Heritage family has global coverage and aims to promote cultural and educational ties. Evolving relationships with other countries and regions on heritage regeneration matters may therefore help to provide further best practice on improving approaches and strategies taken in the World Heritage Site. Links have already been developed with the Irish Walled Town Network, helping to provide a range of ideas and experiences in delivering change across a broad network of towns across Ireland. Broadening and improving collaborative opportunities with other important UNESCO designations may also provide similar outcomes. Work has already begun on improving the relationship with Geomon, the geopark designation for the Isle of Anglesey.

The importance of heritage to the economy and communities of north-west Wales is further emphasised by the nomination of the cultural landscape associated with the slate industry in Gwynedd as a new World Heritage Site and the opportunities this may present for joint marketing and community regeneration proposals. On a similar vein, such opportunities should also be explored during the development of the new management plan for the Snowdonia National Park Authority.

Repair and maintenance works to historic buildings (those constructed pre-1919) comprise an important element of the historic environment economy. In Gwynedd, heritage construction supports 350 jobs, generates a turnover of £32 million and a GVA of £16 million.[59]
The conservation work programme required for the World Heritage Site encourages the development and continuation of traditional skills through contracting with specialist local and regional companies, engaging with the education and training sectors, and partnering with appropriate social enterprises such as CAIS.

| Objective 5: | Use World Heritage Site status to support sustainable economic diversity and growth in the local and regional economy. |
|---|---|
| **Policy 5A** | Regeneration opportunities that complement or enhance the World Heritage Site will be supported. |
| **Policy 5B** | The conservation work programme will be used as a catalyst to encourage the development and continuation of traditional skills and specialist conservation work. |
| **Policy 5C** | Improved understanding of the World Heritage Site will aid partnership working and investment opportunities. |
| **Policy 5D** | There will be collaborative working with other relevant initiatives to build and enhance economic conditions (the nomination of the Slate Industry of North Wales for World Heritage Site status, the development of the Snowdonia National Park Authority management plan and the Geomon geopark). |

### 4.6.6 The Visitor Experience ¬

The four castles are all major visitor attractions. Visitors to each of the castles vary: Conwy and Caernarfon have the highest visitor numbers per annum (203,122 and 310,567 respectively in 2016/17). This is due mainly to their accessible locations, links with coach tours and their international reputations. Visitor numbers to Harlech and Beaumaris are lower, which reflects their more 'off the beaten track' locations. Beaumaris attracted 82,103 visitors in 2016/17 and Harlech attracted 102,198, which still makes them some of the most visited attractions in north Wales. Caernarfon and Harlech castles have each seen a significant growth in visitor numbers between 2015/16 and 2016/17 on account of the 'Weeping Window' exhibition at Caernarfon and the opening of the new visitor centre and bridge at Harlech.

Cadw's latest comprehensive visitor surveys undertaken in 2015 show some important insights and trends:[60]

- three in four (75 per cent) peak season visitors are from outside Wales, compared to a lower proportion (57 per cent) in the shoulder season
- the proportion of overseas visitors to Cadw sites is particularly high
- the majority (69 per cent) of visitors to Cadw sites had visited the site for the first time
- Cadw sites attract many families with children — not far short of half of all visiting parties (44 per cent).

Trip Advisor ratings are also used as part of a range of different measures to assess and evaluate the experience across the Cadw estate. The findings for the four monuments provide positive confirmation of their high-quality offer; over 90 per cent of visits are consistently rated as 'very good' or 'excellent'.

*The touring dragons proved to be a popular visitor attraction at Harlech Castle.*

Research into 2016 tourism trends in Wales identified that castles and historic sites are still one of the most common reasons for visiting Wales for both domestic visitors (UK) and those from overseas.

For UK day visitors this was the second highest response at 22 per cent after general sightseeing, which had the top response at 25 per cent. It was the third most popular activity for UK visitors staying overnight (38 per cent) and the most popular response for important and growing overseas visitors (43 per cent).[61]

In 2015, Cadw sites received a higher than average proportion of overseas visitors (19 per cent),[62] which is reflected in the visitor make-up to the World Heritage Site. The high proportion of international visitors is facilitated both by the development of Holyhead and Liverpool as destinations for cruise ships (bringing visitors on day trips by coach), but also by the high level of awareness of World Heritage in other countries (for example, Japan).

The Welsh Government strategy for tourism 2013–20[63] focuses on five key areas:

- promoting the brand
- product development
- people development
- profitable performance
- place building.

There is an emphasis on an iconic and high-quality tourism product, with both heritage and

*New interpretation has improved the visitor experience at Harlech.*

*Redecoration, including modern stained glass windows, in the chapel at Beaumaris has helped visitors to understand the castle better — one of the aims of the Pan-Wales Heritage Interpretation Plan.*

distinctive cultural experiences playing an important role. The destination management plans that have been prepared by the three local authorities (Conwy County Borough Council, Gwynedd Council and Isle of Anglesey County Council) are concerned with all aspects of the visitor experience and reiterate the importance of managing and developing this part of north Wales as a first-class, integrated, quality visitor destination.

The World Heritage Site offers a spectacular built environment for visitors and residents alike to appreciate and experience. However, the north Wales tourism market is characterised by factors such as seasonality and a lack of high-quality visitor accommodation and services compared with other visitor destinations. Key issues identified in the destination management plans that should be addressed to improve the visitor experience in north Wales include the need for better visitor facilities, parking provision, more tourist friendly engagement, and improved shops and shopping opportunities.

The visitor experience relates to many things, including how easy a place is to find, availability of information, the sense of arrival and quality of accommodation; even the quality of the public toilets can have an impact on how satisfied visitors are with a destination and whether or not they might return in the future. Improving the visitor experience therefore is not the remit of any single authority or organisation, but instead requires a collaborative approach between those responsible for visitor attractions, infrastructure, visitor accommodation, local businesses and community representatives. For example, there could be opportunities for volunteer wayfinders to be posted in the castle car parks, not only to improve visitor experiences but also to engage the community.

UNESCO has developed a World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Toolkit, a 'how to' guide which brings best-practice knowledge to the full World Heritage community, so that site managers, tourism professionals, conservation professionals and communities around the world understand the possibilities of sustainable tourism and what key issues have already been addressed.[64] Such resources can be a valuable asset to site managers in particular, assisting with managing and maximising tourism benefits, whilst minimising potentially negative impacts. The series of guides range from understanding tourism and adding value through products, experiences and services, through to managing visitor behaviour and engaging local communities and businesses.

*Innovative interpretation at Caernarfon Castle explains the roles of historic figures and their power struggles through the medium of a game of chess.*

## Interpretation

The Pan-Wales Heritage Interpretation Plan is an overarching plan which aims to inspire both visitors and the people of Wales by interpreting the country's unique stories and bringing them to life.[65] The countrywide approach is unique to Wales and one which aims to provide a framework for interpretation through a national overarching narrative. Story strands include the castles and princes of medieval Wales. An interpretation plan for the castles and town walls of King Edward I was prepared for Cadw in 2010, which set out the links between these sites and other story strands, identified target audiences and outlined the context for interpretation.[66] The interpretation plan identified strengths and weaknesses associated with the four sites and existing interpretation, and provided the basis for new interpretation that has been delivered. Whilst a number of the short-term actions have been completed at the individual castles, the interpretation plan also includes an action plan for medium- and long- term projects that could be implemented.

*One of the story strands of the Pan-Wales Heritage Interpretation Plan encourages links between sites connected with King Edward I and the Welsh princes. Here, visitors are being shown around Deganwy Castle (top), built by both English and Welsh rulers. Conwy Castle can be seen in the distance. The recent growth in outdoor activity tourism in north Wales — such as Zip Velocity Wales (bottom) — also offers the potential to attract new audiences to the World Heritage Site (© Crown copyright (2017) Visit Wales).*

**Visitor Opportunities**

There are many opportunities to develop new visitor experiences and encourage new audiences. For example, there has been a growth in activity tourism over recent years which has seen increasing numbers of visitors to Snowdonia and other parts of north Wales to pursue the wealth of outdoor activities that are available. The recent opening of Surf Snowdonia has proved a unique selling point for the area as a destination. There is potential cross-over between activity and cultural tourism: collaboration between local authority tourism teams, Cadw and other providers could help provide a joined-up tourism offer. Examples might include identifying activities that could be based in and around the castles, and how the castle 'experience' can be developed and sold as part of the destination management planning for each local authority. Working collaboratively with businesses and stakeholders will also help link the tourism offers of the towns, castles and other attractions in the area. Of particular interest would be the creation and maintenance of links with other sites that are relevant to the values of the World Heritage Site (for example, castles built during Edward I's first campaign in Wales, in particular, Flint and Rhuddlan; Deganwy Castle and other castles associated with the Welsh princes of Gwynedd (Dolbadarn and Dolwyddelan) and the Roman fort of Segontium).

Other potential visitor opportunities include opening up wider access to the town walls in Caernarfon. Although there is enthusiasm for the provision of wider access, which could include virtual technologies, there are significant constraints relating mainly to ownership issues. Although the majority of the town walls are in Cadw ownership, there are sections which belong to private owners including The Church in Wales, Landmark Trust, and the Royal Welsh Yacht Club, and sections that form the boundaries of back gardens to private houses, hotels and guesthouses.

| Objective 6: | Provide a visitor experience that is unique and of the highest quality. |
|---|---|
| **Policy 6A** | Signage on the approaches to the World Heritage Site, within the castles and in the public realm around them will be of high quality and consistent design, and will contribute to a sense of arrival and a high-quality visitor experience. |
| **Policy 6B** | Physical and virtual public access to the town walls in Conwy and Caernarfon will be maximised. |
| **Policy 6C** | Visitor facilities within each of the four towns will be of a high standard of design and quality, reflecting the world-class nature of the World Heritage Site. |
| **Policy 6D** | Consistent high-quality, world-class interpretation will be provided throughout the World Heritage Site and the four towns, guided by the overarching interpretation plan. |
| **Policy 6E** | A partnership approach with other providers of visitor facilities in each town will be employed to create a unique cultural experience at each location. |

## 4.6.7 Marketing and Promotion ¬

Research into ways that other World Heritage Sites have maximised the potential economic impact of their historic assets has included the development of a powerful and effective heritage identity and brand, which has been used to communicate the Outstanding Universal Value to different audiences. One World Heritage Site that has been particularly successful at doing this is the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site in south Wales. The development of a unique brand identity that effectively links together and promotes the four castles and towns in a unified way could have considerable power. This could be accompanied by guidance on how the brand can be used by different commercial and public sector organisations.

Building on this, one of the main objectives of Cadw's marketing efforts is to widen access to culture and heritage, and encourage greater participation. There is increasing emphasis on digital marketing using website, social media and electronic newsletters as a means of promoting the World Heritage Site. The four towns within the World Heritage Site are also marketed as destinations by the local authority tourism teams.

Working together through aligned strategic priorities, shared research and combined efforts can only further the promotion and awareness of the World Heritage Site to the widest range of audiences, both at home and abroad. Consultation with stakeholders and members of the public as part of the preparation of the management plan has identified that more could be done in terms of marketing the four castles and towns as a single World Heritage Site. In so doing, this would raise awareness of their collective importance as well as encourage visits to all four places.

Connectivity between the monuments can also be further promoted by the regular interaction between the four head custodians to enable greater synergy between the tourism and community offer, and through the exploration of joint events and attractions.

There also needs to be greater collaboration between local authorities, Snowdonia National Park Authority and Cadw in planning and marketing events at the castles. There are clear benefits from a more joined-up approach. Greater partnership working can assist in developing new ideas and approaches for commercial activity at the castles.

*Clearly branded and high-quality signage is needed within the World Heritage Site.*

Visit Wales will be developing a 'routes' approach similar to the successful examples operating in other countries such as Ireland and the USA. There will be opportunities to explore and feed into this evolving programme over the 10-year programme which aims to improve or enhance signage or branding along the A55, the A478 and the A470.

Building on this, further work will also need to be undertaken to improve and develop an all-Wales marketing approach for the current World Heritage Site.

| Objective 7: | Market and promote the four locations of Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy and Harlech as a single World Heritage Site to ensure a coherent and integrated approach. |
|---|---|
| **Policy 7A** | There will be collective approaches to publicise the four locations and the promotion of the World Heritage Site. |
| **Policy 7B** | Partners will look actively to improve the identity and brand recognition of the World Heritage Site. |
| **Policy 7C** | Cadw, local authorities, Snowdonia National Park Authority and key public and private sector partners will work together to deliver a coherent annual programme of events. |
| **Policy 7D** | Cadw and partners will work with Visit Wales to explore relevant marketing opportunities. |

*Themed souvenirs can help create connections between the four sites and improve visitors' understanding of the World Heritage Site as a whole.*

*Interpretation panels using the thematic icons from the Pan-Wales Heritage Interpretation Plan help join up the stories between sites.*

### 4.6.8 Sustainable Travel ¬

Parking and traffic congestion have been identified as issues to varying degrees in each of the four towns, particularly during the peak tourist season.

There is a fine balance to be achieved between parking to support visitor numbers and economic growth, and using parking policy as an effective demand management tool to encourage the use of sustainable travel alternatives. The exploration of more innovative ways to provide either car parking — for example, through sharing currently underused parking areas — or the use of park-and-ride schemes during the summer months could promote responsible sustainable tourism.

In Beaumaris, parking is available at a number of locations, including the formal car park to the north of the castle, the area of The Green (owned by the town council) during the summer months and a further overflow area to the rear of the castle. However, the volume of traffic accessing these areas can cause congestion through the town centre and detract from the amenity of the castle setting.

In Harlech, parking is divided between the town and the Morfa area; visitors parking at the latter have a steep climb to the castle entrance. The car park outside the new visitor centre in Harlech is relatively small, with visitors relying on on-street parking elsewhere in the town centre.

*Trains stop at the station within the walled town of Conwy and provide a spectacular approach to the town and castle. Limited car parking and coach drop-off points can make train travel a more sustainable option.*

In Conwy, the volume of coaches visiting the town combined with the restrictions imposed by the narrow gateways and archways has meant that further consideration is needed for dedicated coach-parking facilities. The number of coaches visiting Conwy is particularly high as a result of the town's location in relation to the A55 and coach trade from cruise ships visiting Holyhead and Liverpool. Whilst Conwy has tried to be coach friendly — through the location of suitable coach-parking facilities, pick-up and drop-off points — it has been recognised that a new dedicated coach-parking area is needed and this is identified as a priority for the next five years in the North Wales Local Transport Plan. Although no funding has yet been identified for a dedicated coach-parking area, Conwy will be looking to provide improved coach drop-off facilities.

The North Wales Local Transport Plan has been jointly produced by all six north Wales local authorities. Key outcomes of the plan include connections between key destinations and markets, increased levels of walking and cycling, and minimised impacts on the environment. There are opportunities at each of the four towns to make either better links with existing transport infrastructure (and thereby encourage greater use of public transport, walking and cycling as a means of travel) or to create new ways of accessing the four sites so that they form part of a distinctive visitor experience. Examples of the former may include the creation of better links with the railway station at Harlech or the establishment of a sponsored minibus link from the Morfa car park to the town centre. Examples of the latter may include the opportunity to use maritime cruises, tours and links as a way of accessing Beaumaris, Caernarfon and Conwy.

Ensuring better links with the walking and cycling networks may provide a further opportunity to encourage sustainable travel; for example, ensuring that the World Heritage Site is signposted from the Wales Coastal Path and national cycle routes.

In order to improve and promote sustainable travel, there is clearly a need for continued investment in supporting infrastructure; for example, in Conwy a weight limit has recently been imposed on one of the access bridges to Morfa Bach, which will have implications for modes of travel.

| Objective 8: | Encourage greater use of sustainable modes of travel as a means of visiting each of the destinations within the World Heritage Site without detriment to the qualities that demonstrate the uniqueness of the World Heritage Site on an international level. |
|---|---|
| Policy 8A | The use of sustainable methods of travel to visit the castles and towns of the World Heritage Site will be encouraged. |
| Policy 8B | Innovative ways to manage car parking during the peak visitor season to alleviate congestion will be explored, including park-and-ride, coach drop-off facilities and shared parking arrangements. |

### 4.6.9 Education and Lifelong Learning ¬

One of the key priorities for UNESCO and ICOMOS is to encourage the social benefit of World Heritage Sites. Social benefit is defined as:

- public awareness
- community participation
- international cooperation — including cultural tourism.

The Welsh Government's published vision for education and lifelong learning seeks to create 'a system where the learner is the main focus of everything we do, and to ensure they benefit from excellent teaching and learning'. The World Heritage Site can add value to this because it provides opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to learn and be educated. Through education and lifelong learning we can enable future generations to grow up understanding the World Heritage Site and its Outstanding Universal Value, and to want to continue caring for it.

The World Heritage Site hosts around 23,000 education visits (2015/16) a year and is used as a source of learning experiences for primary, secondary, further and higher education. Facilitated activities led by costumed interpreters explain aspects of the history and significance of the sites. At two locations there are dedicated education rooms and all four locations are increasing and developing their learning resources for family activities. Special projects include creating digital resources for schoolchildren which will be housed in i-beacons on site. Caernarfon Castle will be a topic for examination by AQA GCSE from 2019.

*One of the Fusion events at Caernarfon Castle which encourage young people to engage with and learn about the castle.*

The World Heritage Site offers a broad range of learning themes, including monarchy and government, architecture and building skills, the development of commerce and trade in Wales, urban planning, tourism, conservation and other aspects of cultural value. Visitors from other parts of the UK and abroad will find resonances in some of these themes which they can apply to where they live and will make the learning they derive from the World Heritage Site feel relevant to their lives.

Since 2015, 'Preserving World Heritage Sites' has been one of the Global Citizenship Challenges approved by the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) for the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification. The purpose of the Global Citizenship Challenge is to develop learners' skills, whilst providing opportunities to understand and respond appropriately to global issues.

Cadw is also working with partners as part of the Fusion Pioneer Area Programme of which the World Heritage Site forms an essential part. The Fusion programme supports local authorities to find new and exciting opportunities for people to enjoy and take part in cultural activities which can boost skills, engagement, self-esteem and aspiration.

UNESCO's Young People's World Heritage Education Programme seeks to encourage and enable the decision makers of tomorrow to participate in heritage conservation and respond to threats facing World Heritage. It will be important to explore ways in which young people, in particular, can be engaged; examples from elsewhere include the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site which, with grant funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, has established World Heritage Youth Ambassadors. This is a volunteer group dedicated to empowering young people to have a voice, learn about World Heritage and contribute to the management of the World Heritage Site.

*The children's trail at Harlech Castle helps children to explore the castle and understand how the now-empty buildings were used.*

Volunteering provides people with opportunities to learn new skills, meet people and strengthen communities, gain experience for future employment, as well as gain confidence and have fun. It can be supported in various ways, including through time-banking programmes, which enable volunteers to be rewarded through access to benefits. Conwy County Borough Council, for example, aims to identify volunteering opportunities within tourism through the network of attractions and tourist-related businesses.

Delivery mechanisms that may assist with community engagement include the LEADER programme (the European Union initiative which supports rural development projects at the local level and is used to revitalise rural areas), utilising partnership working between the LEADER groups in Anglesey, Conwy and Gwynedd.

| Objective 9: | Raise awareness and promote understanding of World Heritage amongst a range of audiences, including local communities, engendering pride in their unique culture and heritage. |
|---|---|
| **Policy 9A** | Active programmes of engagement will be delivered to raise awareness and provide learning opportunities. |
| **Policy 9B** | Learning and skill development opportunities through volunteering will be encouraged. |
| **Policy 9C** | A clear lifelong learning approach to improve understanding and enjoyment of the World Heritage Site will be adopted. |
| **Policy 9D** | Collaborative opportunities for learning will be established through links with other World Heritage Sites (especially in Wales) and World Heritage UK. |

*Costumed interpreters can help explain all aspects of history.*

## 4.6.10 Research and Understanding ¬

Understanding of the World Heritage Site and its surroundings can be enhanced through new research. This has been illustrated by the conference held in 2007 and subsequent papers published in 2010 (see section 3.2.5), which led to a reconsideration of the role of the castles and their place in the past, present and future of Wales.[67] Research by building historian Jeremy Ashbee has contributed to understanding the royal apartments and high-status accommodation within the castles at Beaumaris, Conwy and Harlech.[68] Other recent research has contributed to knowledge about the four towns of Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy, and Harlech (Lilley et al.).[69] This research is valuable because it enabled greater visualisation of areas of significance in the World Heritage Site through the use of geographic information systems (GIS) and has helped to provide more effective comparison between the four towns.

Greater archaeological understanding of the towns and recognising/mapping areas of high archaeological potential should be prioritised within a new research programme. Specific areas of research could include the proper mapping of medieval basements and fabric in existing buildings. All archaeological work undertaken within the World Heritage Site and its setting should be properly recorded and reported.

*New research into the archaeology of the towns could include the proper mapping of medieval basements and medieval fabric in existing buildings. Some earlier fabric has already been identified in buildings within Caernarfon (left) and Conwy (right).*
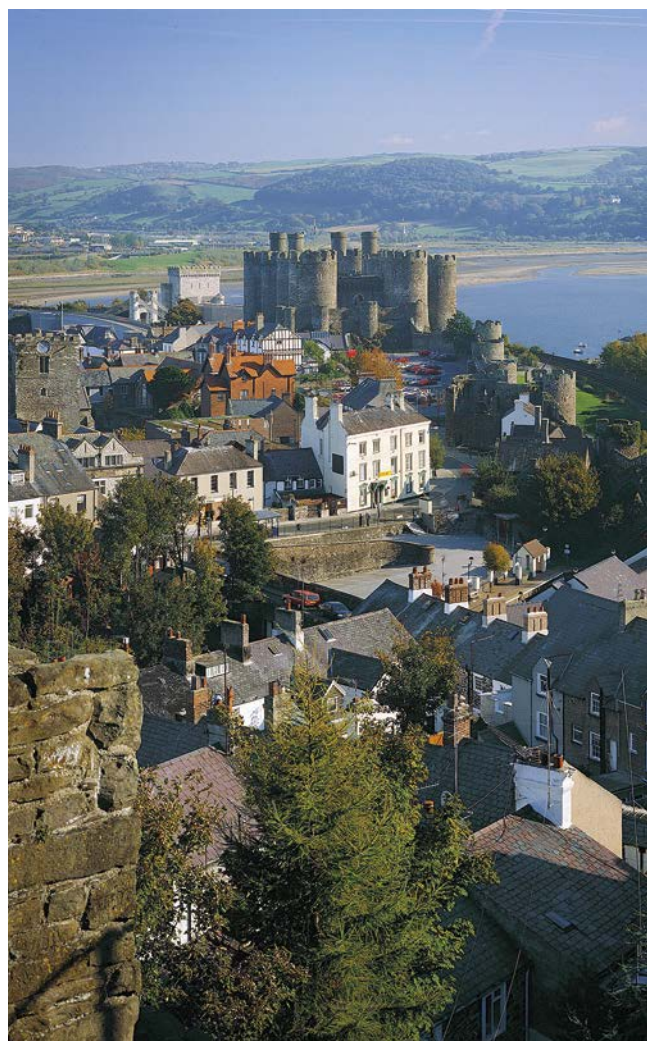
The documentary records about the construction of the castles comprise one of the great historical records of the medieval period and should be subject to ongoing research to increase knowledge and understanding of the construction of the World Heritage Site.

Attracting funding for major research projects is a competitive process and organisations such as Cadw that may have funded research programmes in the past may no longer be able to do so. However, alternative means of undertaking research may be viable and establishing links with academic establishments and departments within appropriate organisations will be of benefit.

A conference on the towns associated with the castles could be helpful as part of a wider research agenda. This could focus more widely on the role of the towns than the 2007 conference was able to. Attendees could include historians, archaeologists, urban geographers, planners, sociologists and tourism specialists.

| Objective 10: | To develop improved understanding of the World Heritage Site and help better inform its future management. |
|---|---|
| **Policy 10A** | A programme of broad research will be prepared for the World Heritage Site. |
| **Policy 10B** | Cadw will work closely with relevant institutions and organisations (for example, the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, universities and civic societies) to share knowledge and research findings. |

*Documentary research into the towns could improve understanding of the World Heritage Site. These maps of Caernarfon and Harlech were drawn by John Speed around 1610 and show the layout of the towns at that time (By permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru — National Library of Wales).*

## 4.6.11 Risk Management ¬

UNESCO recommends that potential risks that may present a threat to the World Heritage Site are identified and monitored within the management plan, together with contingency plans and mitigation measures for dealing with them. Key strategic risks to the World Heritage Site include not only physical risks to the monuments themselves, such as damage, vandalism, visitor pressure or as a result of climate change, but also organisational risks such as poor management, loss of key staff or changes to funding regimes.

The climate change model developed by the UK Met Office (UKCP09) predicts a rapid rise in global temperatures in the coming years, with higher mean temperatures throughout the year, hotter drier summers or wetter summer conditions, warmer wetter winters and more frequent extreme weather; for example, flooding or droughts). As a result, the vulnerability of the coastal and low-lying parts of the World Heritage Site such as Beaumaris has become more pronounced.

The potential impacts of climate change during the lifetime of the management plan and beyond will need to be monitored and assessed so that appropriate policy response and actions can be put in place. Impacts on the World Heritage Site may include accelerated erosion and deterioration of building fabric, structural problems and thermal movement of materials as a result of more frequent or intense rainfall events and temperature extremes.

In 2011 Welsh Government produced a national strategy for flood and coastal erosion risk management in Wales[70] which identifies the importance of working with Cadw to ensure that risks to historic and culturally significant landscapes are managed.

A further report prepared for the Historic Environment Group in 2012[71] considered the need for a strategic approach to assessing and addressing the potential impact of climate change on the historic environment of Wales and work is continuing to help develop plans for managing future change. Mitigation measures, such as sea defences, can damage or affect the character of the historic assets they are designed to protect so the importance of collaboration between agencies to identify appropriate measures will continue to be necessary.

Identifying and monitoring risks is the first step in the effective management of them; establishing a risk management strategy and accompanying risk register which sets out risks to the World Heritage Site will therefore be developed as a matter of priority during the first two years of the management plan period.

| Objective 11: | Identify, remove and/or mitigate risks to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site. |
|---|---|
| **Policy 11A** | Comprehensive risk management will be fully integrated into management arrangements. |
| **Policy 11B** | The likely future impact of climate change on the World Heritage Site will be reviewed and assessed regularly. |

## 4.6.12 Management Process ¬

A better-managed World Heritage Site is more sustainable and more likely to protect the Outstanding Universal Value. The Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd presents particular management issues because it consists of four separate sites forming one World Heritage Site. There are some common management issues and others that are site specific so this management plan takes both a holistic approach as well as one that answers local needs. It supports those who care for the World Heritage Site in aiming to achieve national and international best practice in its management.

The site will continue to be managed by a range of partnerships involving local authorities, councils, Snowdonia National Park Authority and local stakeholders as well as national agencies, in particular, Cadw. The following policies aim to focus the partnership objectives on those that benefit the World Heritage Site as a whole and to enable a long-term strategy for its management.

The continued role of the World Heritage Site coordinator, accompanied by a representative and active steering group are essential components of the management and safeguarding of the World Heritage Site. In order to function effectively, the steering group will hold structured meetings on a regular basis, with task and finish groups set up as necessary for specific issues. The work of the World Heritage Site coordinator will be guided by the objectives and policies set out in this plan and implementation will be monitored and reviewed by the steering group.

Regular engagement with representatives from the other two World Heritage Sites (and tentative site) in Wales will also aid in improving management processes and collaborative opportunities.

*Delegates at the 2016 World Heritage UK conference in Caernarfon, which encouraged collaboration between World Heritage Sites in the UK (Chris Mahon, World Heritage UK).*

| Objective 12: | Recognise the importance of nurturing existing partnerships and the development of new partnerships, as appropriate, to support the continued management of the World Heritage Site. |
|---|---|
| **Policy 12A** | The effectiveness of the World Heritage Site management structure and membership representation will be reviewed regularly. |
| **Policy 12B** | Appropriate and effective monitoring and review of the management plan will take place to supplement the UNESCO periodic review programme. |

## 4.7 Action Plan ¬

The action plan for the future management of the World Heritage Site is set out in an accompanying document. It identifies relevant actions for each policy, the organisations responsible for those actions and the timescale for their implementation.

*Sunset at Harlech Castle.*

*Monitoring the implementation of the management plan includes the Cadw annual and quinqunennial inspections of the six ancient monuments. Various repair works to Caernarfon Castle were identified as necessary in the 2016 inspection.*

# 5   Monitoring ⌐

In accordance with Article 29 of the World Heritage Convention, periodic reports must be prepared for a World Heritage Site every six years. Key indicators for measuring the state of the World Heritage Site qualitatively and quantitatively are set out below, and will be undertaken to inform the six-yearly periodic reporting process.

Responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the management plan, together with the submission of periodic reports to UNESCO lies with the steering group.

The quinquennial inspection of the World Heritage Site took place in 2016 using both visual inspection and aerial drones to capture high-resolution images of out-of-reach areas. In general terms, the current condition of the World Heritage Site was found to be good, given the relatively low numbers of category 1 and 2 works (highest priority) noted in the inspection. This should be seen as a positive reflection on the rolling campaigns of conservation that have been carried out. Specific conservation priorities have been identified for each of the four locations within the World Heritage Site.

| Indicator | Actions |
|---|---|
| **Safeguarding and Protecting the World Heritage Site** | |
| Condition of the six scheduled ancient monuments. | Cadw annual and quinquennial inspections. |
| Number and condition of listed buildings and scheduled monuments in the World Heritage Site, and the essential setting, at each location. To include specifically the number and condition of buildings at risk and monuments at risk. | Baseline data collected for 2017. Annual review undertaken by Cadw/ local planning authorities. |
| Enhancement or maintenance of significant views from and into the World Heritage Site. | Fixed point photography locations established. Biennial monitoring by Cadw. |
| Number of planning applications within the wider and essential setting of the World Heritage Site. Data to include number of applications where the World Heritage Site has been identified as a material consideration and outcomes. | Data collected by local planning authorities. Include data for number of applications commented on by Cadw. |
| Expenditure on conservation and refurbishment of the World Heritage Site. | Annual review of financial plan. |

| Local Economy and Regeneration | |
|---|---|
| Number and value of grants attracted to the World Heritage Site and adjoining towns. | Collated from various sources on an annual basis (for example, Cadw, local planning authorities, Welsh Government). |
| **Awareness Raising** | |
| Number of visits to each of the World Heritage Site locations per annum. | Recorded by Cadw at each of the four locations. |
| Annual visitor survey at each World Heritage Site location. | Qualitative assessment to identify visitor satisfaction and awareness of World Heritage Site. |
| Number and type of community events held at each of the four castles per annum. | Community awareness of World Heritage Site/ transmission of values. |
| Number of publications/published articles produced per annum. | Recorded by Cadw. |
| **Education and Lifelong Learning** | |
| Number and range of topics of formal education events held at each of the four castles per annum. | Recorded by Cadw. |
| Summary of feedback from questionnaires from attendees/organisers of education events. | Recorded by Cadw. |
| Number of volunteers supported at each of the four castles. | Recorded by Cadw. |
| **Management Plan Process** | |
| Annual review of the action plan by the World Heritage Site steering group. | Completion of actions noted; creation of new actions to implement policies/ achieve objectives. |

# Appendix 1

# Mechanisms for Safeguarding and Protecting the World Heritage Site

# Appendix 1: Mechanisms for Safeguarding and Protecting the World Heritage Site ¬

National and local mechanisms currently in place to safeguard and protect the World Heritage Site, including national legislation and local planning arrangements, are summarised in this appendix.

## A1.1 National Legislation ¬

All the monuments within the World Heritage Site are scheduled monuments. The 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (the 1979 Act)[72] provides the legislative framework for the protection of ancient monuments in Wales, including properties in the direct care of the Welsh Ministers which are managed by Cadw. The 1979 Act makes provision for the regular inspection of scheduled monuments, lays down penalties for damaging a monument and empowers the Welsh Ministers to make grants to owners for their repair.

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (the 2016 Act[73] is part of a suite of legislation, policy, advice and guidance that makes important contributions to the existing systems for the protection and sustainable management of the Welsh historic environment. Planning guidance on World Heritage Sites is currently provided in paragraphs 6.4.5 and 6.5.2–6.5.4 of *Planning Policy Wales* (edition 9, 2016) and in *Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment*.[74] Guidance currently states that development plan policies must reflect that World Heritage Sites have been inscribed by UNESCO because of their Outstanding Universal Value. Further, World Heritage Sites and their settings are a material consideration to be taken into account by local planning authorities in the determination of planning applications and by the Welsh Ministers when determining cases on appeal or following call-in. The impact of development proposals on both the sites and their settings should be carefully considered.

*Managing Change in World Heritage Sites in Wales* supplements the relevant sections of *Planning Policy Wales* (Edition 9), Chapter 6: The Historic Environment and *Technical Advice Note 24: Historic Environment*.[75] This sets out general principles for managing World Heritage Sites in Wales and provides guidance for their conservation, protection and presentation through the planning system.

## A1.2 Local Planning System ¬

The protection of the World Heritage Site is also assured through the town and country planning system. Local planning authorities (Conwy County Borough Council, Gwynedd Council, Isle of Anglesey County Council and Snowdonia National Park Authority) are each required to prepare a local development plan for their area, which sets out appropriate policies to manage new development.

Gwynedd Council and Isle of Anglesey County Council have prepared a joint local development plan for the Gwynedd and Anglesey local planning authority areas, which was adopted in July 2017. The plan contains policies which afford protection to the World Heritage Site of the Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd, notably Policy PS17: Preserving and Enhancing Heritage Assets and Policy AT1: Conservation Areas. World Heritage Sites and Registered Historic Landscape, Parks and Gardens.

Conwy County Borough Council's local development plan has been adopted and affords protection to cultural heritage. Conwy County Borough Council is keen to ensure that heritage assets are protected from inappropriate development and will take the opportunity to enhance the historic areas and buildings where this is needed. Relevant policies include Strategic Policy CTH/1: Cultural Heritage, Policy CTH/2 — Development Affecting Heritage Assets, Policy CTH/3: Buildings and Structures of Local Importance and Policy CTH/4: Enabling Development. In addition, Conwy County Borough Council has a number of supplementary planning guidance documents which support local development plan policies. The Conwy Conservation Area Management Plan supplementary planning guidance, which was adopted in July 2015, is of particular relevance. It includes actions and measures that replicate for Conwy Castle and Town Walls some of the wider policies for the World Heritage Site as a whole; for example, the need for coordination across council services, the approach to development management and actions promoting education and awareness of the World Heritage Site.

The Eryri local development plan was adopted by the Snowdonia National Park Authority in 2011. The local development plan includes Strategic Policy Ff: Historic Environment, which states that development will not be permitted that will adversely affect in any way heritage assets, including World Heritage Sites. The plan is currently being reviewed, with a draft deposit due in 2017.

Two of the castles are in areas protected for their environmental quality and value — Harlech Castle, located in the Snowdonia National Park, and Beaumaris Castle, located in the Isle of Anglesey Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Policy CCC 2.1 of the Isle of Anglesey AONB Management Plan (2015–20) is to 'identify, protect and actively conserve the historic, archaeological and cultural resources of the AONB with relevant agencies'.

Further protection to the essential setting of the World Heritage Site is afforded by designated conservation areas. Conservation areas are defined as areas 'the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'; quality of place therefore is one of the prime considerations in their identification. Conservation areas designated in each of the four castle towns are as follows:

**Beaumaris Conservation Area** (designated 1968; adopted character appraisal 2006)

**Caernarfon Conservation Area** (designated 1968) encloses the walled town and castle, and extends to cover the principal town centre street frontages and Segontium Terrace. The conservation area excludes Victoria Dock and St Helen's Quay.

**Conwy Conservation Area** covers the whole of the walled town and areas immediately adjoining the town wall (designated 1975; adopted character appraisal).

**Harlech Conservation Area** encloses the historic town and extends southwards to include Coleg Harlech.

Article 4 Directions can provide additional planning controls on development within conservation areas and are currently extant in both Conwy and Beaumaris conservation areas. The aim of these Article 4 Directions is to encourage the retention of high-quality architectural features on buildings and to preserve and enhance the conservation area of which they are part. 'Like for like' repairs and reinstatement of architectural features are encouraged, along with the removal of previously unsympathetic changes to buildings.

# Appendix 2

# Attributes

# Appendix 2: Attributes ¬

UNESCO recommends that all World Heritage Sites should identify the attributes which contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the site. These should be used as a key tool for management purposes and therefore need to be clearly understandable.

Depending on the type of cultural heritage, and its cultural context, sites may be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural values (as recognised in the nomination criteria proposed) are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes including:

- form and design
- materials and substance
- use and function
- traditions, techniques and management systems
- location and setting
- language, and other forms of intangible heritage
- spirit and feeling
- other internal and external factors.

Attributes such as spirit and feeling do not lend themselves easily to practical applications of the conditions of authenticity, but nevertheless are important indicators of character and sense of place, for example, in communities maintaining tradition and cultural continuity.[76]

The following table describes the attributes of the Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd World Heritage Site and the components which demonstrate those attributes.

Castles and Town Wall of King Edward in Gwynedd

| Attributes | Components |
|---|---|
| The four castles of Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy, Harlech and the attendant fortified towns at Caernarfon and Conwy are the finest examples of late thirteenth-century and early fourteenth-century military architecture in Europe. | Demonstrated through their completeness, pristine state, evidence for organised domestic space, and extraordinary repertory of their medieval form.<br><br>**Castles display administrative and domestic architectural features:**<br>• good survival of domestic infrastructure including internal features in kitchens (for example, ovens, hearths and plumbing linking to Well Tower at Caernarfon)<br>• water supply (wells within two towers in Caernarfon, external wells at Conwy and Harlech)<br>• suites of royal apartments (Conwy and Caernarfon) with chapels, bedchambers, halls and domestic facilities, for example, latrines<br>• multiple suites of domestic apartments to service large-scale administrative requirements<br>• evidence for room function and domestic service arrangements (fireplaces, latrines, rooms with varying levels of privacy and access)<br>• great halls (best preserved at Conwy).<br><br>**Symbolic architectural features:**<br>• angled towers, patterned masonry and eagle statues reminiscent of imperial Roman architecture (Caernarfon)<br>• royal statuary (Caernarfon)<br>• remains of original external white render finishes (Conwy and Harlech). |

| Attributes | Components |
|---|---|
| The castles as a stylistically coherent group are a supreme example of medieval military architecture designed and directed by James of St George, King Edward I of England's chief architect, and the greatest military architect of the age. | **Castle design reflects strengths and limitations of location:**<br>• multiple concentric defences at Harlech and Beaumaris<br>• single circuit of tall/strong defences on the restricted sites at Conwy and Caernarfon.<br>**Military features include:**<br>• large, strongly defended and imposing gatehouses<br>• barbicans (Conwy and Beaumaris)<br>• rock-cut ditches (Caernarfon, Conwy, Harlech)<br>• water-filled moat (Beaumaris)<br>• complex arrowloop positions (particularly elaborate at Caernarfon)<br>• multi-level concentric defences combined with arrowloop positions designed to provide comprehensive fields of fire (Beaumaris and Harlech)<br>• ability to isolate towers for defence (best evidenced at Caernarfon)<br>• strongly defended watergates, drawbridges, chicanes, redoubts, dungeons, towers, and curtain walls (all four castles).<br>**Savoyard architectural features:**<br>• doorways with semi-circular arches<br>• distinctively wide windows with segmental arches and tracery<br>• latrine shafts corbelled out from walls<br>• spiralling and inclined scaffolding (as evidenced by putlog hole positions). |
| The extensive and detailed contemporary technical, social and economic documentation of the castles, and the survival of adjacent fortified towns at Caernarfon and Conwy, make them one of the major references of medieval history. | Surviving records and associated scholarship. Key accounts include:<br>A. J. Taylor in R. A. Brown, H. M. Colvin and A. J. Taylor, *The History of the King's Works*, London, 1963.<br>**Constructional features linked to documentation:**<br>• evidence for constructional phasing linked with expenditure/events (for example, breaks between masonry lifts, wall strengthening/raising)<br>• spiralling and inclined putlog holes<br>• design changes (for example, stone arches replace earlier timber trusses in Conwy great hall in the 1340s)<br>• unfinished architectural elements (for example, Caernarfon King's Gate, Beaumaris gatehouses). |

| Attributes | Components |
|---|---|
| The castles of Beaumaris and Harlech are unique artistic achievements for the way they combine characteristic thirteenth-century double-wall structures with a central plan, and for the beauty of their proportions and masonry. | • concentric layout with multiple lines of defence (inner ward, outer ward, curtain wall, ditch/moat)<br>• different wall heights for inner and outer ward defences combined with arrowloop positions provided strong fields of fire (Beaumaris and Harlech)<br>• complex, defended gatehouses with accommodation on more than one level (one gatehouse at Harlech, two planned but never completed at Beaumaris)<br>• decorative architectural features (window and doorway mouldings)<br>• decorative chapels (vaulted masonry at Beaumaris; painted decoration at Harlech). |
| Relationship with the coast. | • all four castles built in coastal locations (Beaumaris, Caernarfon and Conwy still apparent; Harlech now inland due to nineteenth-century land reclamation but original coastline evident in topography)<br>• watergates at all four sites designed for direct access from the sea/river<br>• all four castles visible from sea. |
| Relationship between castles and planned walled towns (Conwy and Caernarfon). | • surviving town wall circuits with defensive features including wallwalks, defended gateways, arrowloops, open-backed D-shaped mural towers allowing sections of wall to be isolated when under attack, high parapets to exterior and low parapets towards town (Conwy and Caernarfon)<br>• designed urban plans with main streets linking main roads with town gates<br>• intimate relationship between castle and town — wall connections and use of castle to complete circuit (Caernarfon and Conwy)<br>• relationship between castle and medieval churches within towns (St Mary's Church (1303) in Caernarfon; St Mary's Church (foundation pre-1283) in Conwy)<br>• architectural evidence for medieval buildings incorporated within town circuit (Llywelyn's Hall and Mill/Exchequer Gate at Conwy; St Mary's Church at Caernarfon). |

# Appendix 3

# Outline Character Statements

# Appendix 3: Outline Character Statements ¬

## A3.1 Beaumaris ¬

### A3.1.1 Historical Background ¬

Beaumaris was the last of Edward I's castle towns. Work on the castle began in 1295, following the Welsh revolt of 1294, in which the nearby Welsh port and settlement of Llanfaes was severely damaged. The inhabitants of Llanfaes were removed to Newborough and the new town of Beaumaris received its charter in 1296. It quickly became one of the largest of Edward's new towns. The town was laid out according to a definite plan and, although it was not provided with walls from the outset, it may have been contained by earthwork defences. There is more definite evidence of a ditch and stone wall built in 1407–14 following the Glyndŵr revolt during which the town and castle suffered.

Beaumaris was a successful urban foundation and thrived as the island's main port and administrative centre throughout the later Middle Ages. It was still the principal town of Anglesey in the seventeenth century, but began to decline as a trading centre during the eighteenth century. The town once had charge of an important ferry crossing of the Menai Strait, but, in the nineteenth century, it was bypassed by new road and railway links, and its role as a port was eventually eclipsed by Holyhead. Its administrative functions (symbolised especially by the gaol of 1828) were transferred to Llangefni by the end of the nineteenth century.

*The inhabitants of the older Welsh settlement of Llanfaes (top right) were removed to Newborough when Beaumaris Castle (bottom left) was built on a new site (© Gwynedd Archaeological Trust).*

During the nineteenth century, the town found a new lease of life as a genteel coastal resort, promoted both by the town council and the Bulkeley family of Baron Hill (established as the family seat in 1612), who had purchased the castle in 1807, and owned many properties in the town. This dual patronage contributed significantly to the development of the town during the nineteenth century, not only in major new building projects such as Green Edge, Victoria Terrace and The Bulkeley Hotel, but also for infrastructure such as the shore road, which was built by Viscount Bukeley in 1804. Meanwhile, land to the north-east of the castle formed part of the parkland of Baron Hill and was never developed. Beaumaris enjoyed a new-found prosperity as a result of this investment, but did not expand far beyond its medieval limits until the twentieth century, when a mixture of public and private development established an arc of suburbs to the north-west and south-west of the historic town.

*John Speed's 1610 map of Beaumaris shows the main elements of the layout of the town and castle (By permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru — National Library of Wales).*
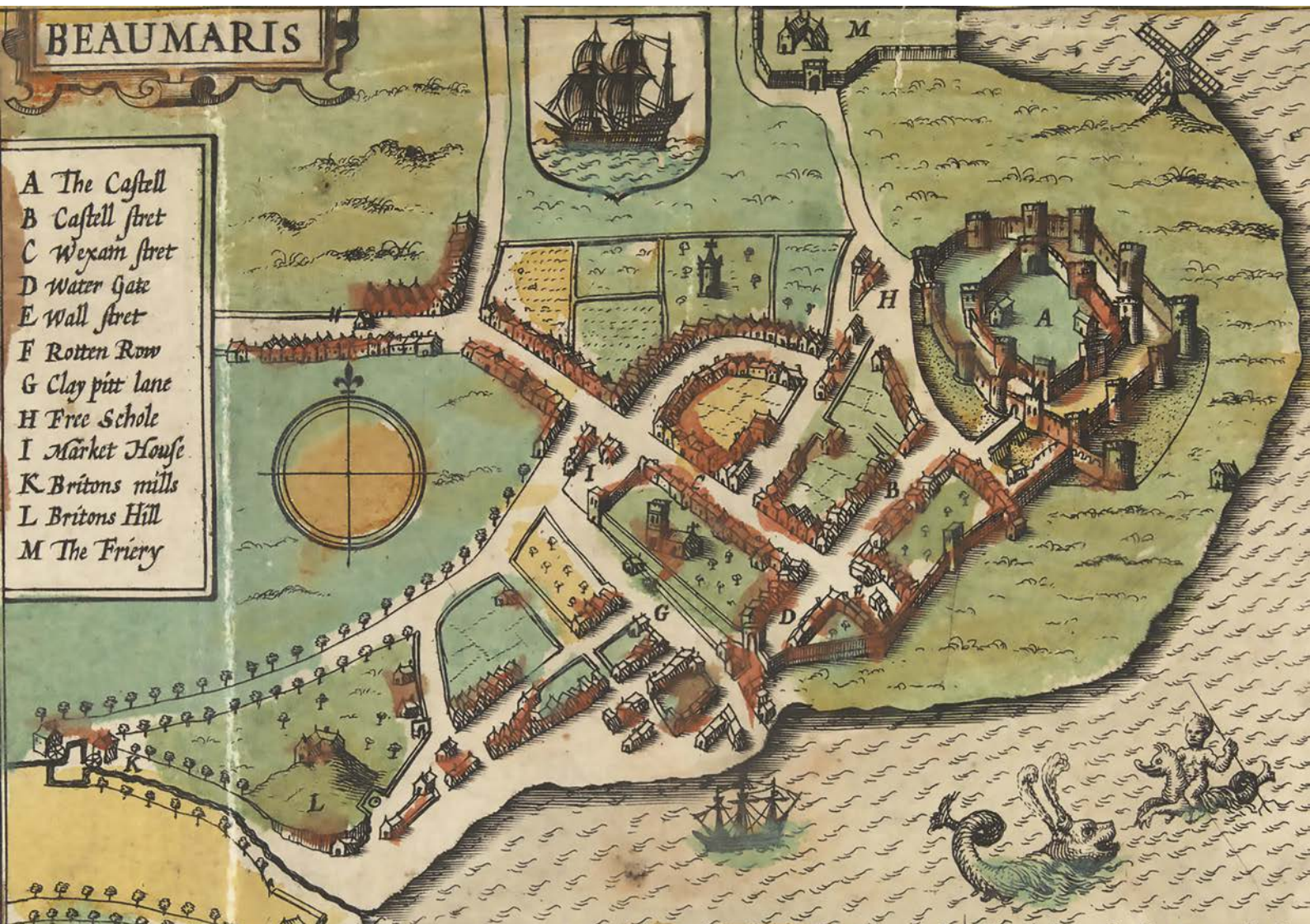
## A3.1.2 Historical Topography ¬

The original layout of the medieval town comprised two main streets at right angles to each other (Castle Street and Church Street), but the original full extent and layout is open to debate. The two main streets and the area closest to the castle and the quay may represent the extent of the original built-up area, but there is some evidence that either from the outset, or very shortly afterwards, the town extended westwards. The line of New Street could mark the outer limits of an early defensive enclosure for which fragmentary evidence has been retrieved. What is more certain is that in the early fifteenth century a stone wall and ditch were built, delineating a smaller area, bounded to the west by what is now Steeple Lane (New Street area). There may also have been a mesh of subsidiary lanes, represented in the modern streetscape by Rosemary Lane, Chapel Street, Margaret Street and Little Lane. One anomaly in an otherwise regular street pattern is Ratings Row, which is interpreted as a possible survivor from an earlier land use such as a monastic site boundary.

Unlike the other Edwardian towns, there is no clear evidence for the location of an early market place, which, by the early seventeenth century, occupied a piece of ground to the north-west of the church. From 1785, the market was housed under the town hall and from 1826 it was on Church Street. Nor is there precise evidence for the medieval quay.

*The modern layout of the town preserves the medieval arrangement. The main street is aligned on the south gatehouse of the castle (© Crown copyright: RCAHMW).*

Within this street pattern, there was a precisely laid-out pattern of plots, many of which survive in the modern townscape. These plots continued to determine the pattern of building, giving a characteristic variety, except where amalgamated plots provided opportunities for larger building projects. A similar development pattern characterised early suburban development along Wexham Street, which may itself be medieval in origin. To the west of the town, the grander scale of suburban development (in existence by the seventeenth century) suggests the higher status and importance of the waterfront.

A new shoreline was established as part of nineteenth-century improvements, which included draining The Green (1823) and building a sea wall (1832). This enabled new building projects to the south-east, outside the medieval limit of the town. Green Edge and Victoria Terrace were followed by Raglan Street, Bulkeley Terrace and Alma Street.

*Map of Beaumaris.*



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## A3.1.3 The Character of Building ¬

With the exception of the church, there are no known medieval buildings within the assumed medieval limits of the town, but the steady prosperity of Beaumaris has bequeathed a long chronology of building within these urban limits, through from the early fifteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. The earliest surviving domestic buildings are timber framed, the high quality of which suggests a sophisticated local building tradition and a prosperous society. By the eighteenth century, however, stone was the dominant material. This was rendered until the fine Penmon stone was used for prestigious building projects associated with the architects Hansom and Welch in the 1830s. Locally made bricks were also used in some individual buildings from the late eighteenth century, but they were showcased especially in Stanley Street in the 1850s and in the development of Margaret Street in the late nineteenth century.

Beaumaris displays a marvellous variety of domestic architecture, ranging from the highly sophisticated Victoria Terrace to the humble single-storey cottages of Wexham Street. The town has a strong and coherent Georgian character, shown in both the polite classicism of Victoria Terrace and in the vernacular of the cottages. This architectural harmony is punctuated by a series of fine public buildings, including the town hall, The Bulkeley Hotel and the gaol.

Outside the early limits of the town, Beaumaris is also notable for the quality of public housing development. The Maes Hyfryd estate of 1950 exemplifies the best principles of such development, well composed and harmonious in its detail.

*The parish church of St Mary and St Nicholas dates from the fourteenth century and is the only medieval building to have survived in Beaumaris aside from the castle (© Crown copyright: RCAHMW).*

*As a rare survivor, 32 Castle Street is a reminder that timber framing was typical of late-medieval domestic building in Beaumaris.*

## A3.1.4 Statement of Significance ¬

Beaumaris was an important medieval town. Its historic core retains the essential elements of its thirteenth-century structure in a distinctive pattern of streets and plots. The steady prosperity of the town is reflected in a long history of building, including some important early survivals and some fine examples of Georgian vernacular building. The reinvention of the town as a coastal resort in the early nineteenth century bequeathed some exceptional examples of urban domestic architecture. The patronage and control exercised both by the town council and the major land owner, together with the relative isolation of the town thereafter limited later development, giving the town a remarkable architectural harmony and integrity on a small scale.

*Victoria Terrace is a fine stone-built terrace designed by the architects Hansom and Welch and completed in 1833 (top) (© Crown copyright: RCAHMW). Gaol Street is typical of the vernacular cottages in Beaumaris (bottom).*

# A3.2 Caernarfon ¬

## A3.2.1 Historical Background ¬

The castle and walled town of Caernarfon was conceived and planned as part of Edward I's campaign of building after the fall of Llwyelyn ap Gruffydd in 1282. It was laid out according to a definite plan, and completed despite the setback caused by the revolt of Madog ap Llywelyn in 1294. The legacy of the medieval town endures, not only in the survival of its walls, but also in the pattern of streets and building plots that they enclose.

Although the town was a new foundation, it had been preceded by Roman and Welsh settlements in the vicinity. To its east lay Segontium, established by the Romans as an auxiliary fort in about AD 77. Adjacent to the fort, the church of Llanbeblig was founded in the fifth century (the present church dates from the fourteenth century and after). A brief Norman occupation bequeathed a motte-and-bailey castle which was probably used as the nucleus for a Welsh settlement in the twelfth century. The motte was incorporated into the Edwardian castle and the bailey was the precursor of the town's market place (the Maes).

*The Roman fort of Segontium, in the foreground of this aerial view of Caernarfon, preceded the building of the town and castle on a site closer to the coast (Skyscan Balloon Photography for Cadw).*

The market was just one aspect of the medieval town's economic life. Maritime trade was important from the start: one of the two town gates led directly on to the quay and the River Cadnant was the site of the town's mills, as well as a small early harbour.

The later history of these sites reflects the development of the town's economy and culture in the nineteenth century as it acquired a new function as a major slate-exporting port and a renewed role as a regional cultural, administrative and commercial centre. From the early nineteenth century, the old quay was a promenade between the Slate Quay on the River Seiont and the docks at the mouth of the Cadnant (the river itself was largely culverted and built over). The market place was an impressive urban square flanked by high-status commercial and residential buildings. In this period, most of the buildings within the walls were built or rebuilt and the town outgrew the enclosed area decisively in a wave of suburban expansion.

Although the town continued to expand in the twentieth century, it lost its role as an industrial and port town, and the waterfront areas fell into a decline which has been arrested by recent regeneration activity.

*The development of Caernarfon in the nineteenth century was shaped by the slate industry. This postcard shows the Slate Quay with the harbour office and slates stacked up ready for shipment (Gwynedd Archives Service).*

## A3.2.2 Historical Topography ¬

The original layout of the medieval foundation survives remarkably intact within the area of the walls. The street pattern, the building lines and the plots have been retained, particularly in the northern half of the medieval grid plan. It is only in the south-west quadrant that there has been significant interruption to this essentially medieval pattern — associated with the shire hall in the nineteenth century and the county council offices in the twentieth.

One of the consequences of a thriving economy in the early nineteenth century was rapid urban expansion. By the seventeenth century, there had already been significant suburban development clustered around the main east gate to the town and along some of the roads that led to it, but in the early nineteenth century, a more systematic approach to urban growth was instigated. The Maes became a major urban square and a planned suburb (Tre'r Gof) was developed from 1824. This initiated a long period of urban growth as the town expanded with both linear development along the main roads and blocks laid out on former agricultural land.

In the nineteenth century, new gates and breaches in the town walls created physical links between the enclosed town and developments outside it. The suburbs themselves retained their integrity until the construction of the inner relief road in 1970, which drove a damaging wedge through them and severed connections with the walled town.

*Map of Caernarfon.*

*The Maes had become a major urban square by the nineteenth century, as shown in this 1850 view by W. Wood (top) (By permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru — National Library of Wales). Tre'r Gof was one of a number of planned suburbs developed in the nineteenth century (bottom left) (© Crown copyright: RCAHMW). This aerial view shows how the walled town of Caernarfon has retained its medieval grid plan (bottom right) (© Crown copyright: RCAHMW).*

## A3.2.3 The Character of Building ¬

With the exception of the church of St Mary, there are no known early buildings within the town walls, but at least one late medieval house survives (6 Palace Street) and it is possible that more early fabric could be discovered within apparently later buildings.

Much of the built character of the walled town reflects its growing prosperity in the nineteenth century. There are some important civic and administrative buildings (such as the former shire hall), as well as a fine series of commercial buildings, including the market hall, The Castle Vaults public house and shops on Eastgate and Bangor Street. The status of the town as a social centre from the later eighteenth century is also attested in some fine residential buildings, such as Castle House (1768), Tower House (early nineteenth century) and 10–12 Castle Street (later nineteenth-century). The continued vitality of the town in the late nineteenth century is shown by the quality of many of its buildings (see, for example, Bridge Street and Bangor Street).

Building in the suburbs was diverse in character, ranging from the villas of a prosperous middle class to the houses of artisans, from shops and hotels to schools and other institutions, particularly chapels.

*The Castle Hotel and its associated terrace present a formal frontage onto the Maes (© Crown copyright: RCAHMW).*





*The varied pattern of building on the Slate Quay reflects the many enterprises that operated here. The harbour office, built in finely finished stone, is in the foreground (© Crown copyright: RCAHMW).*

The earliest surviving buildings — castle, town walls and churches — are stone, which was a high-status material probably not available to domestic builders at first. The earliest domestic buildings in the town are sixteenth and seventeenth century, and were originally timber framed. By the later eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century, stone was widely used in building, but was only rarely exposed: render was the favoured finish, with a variety of decorative treatments. It is easily the most dominant building material in the town. Finely finished stone used for display denoted wealth and status (for example, the harbour office, the former county hall and Plas Bowman). Rougher rubble was associated with functional buildings (warehouses and other working buildings on the quays and docks), or with the backs of buildings that were not intended to be seen. From the later nineteenth century, under the influence of the Gothic Revival, stone was also used to denote structural honesty and integrity (for example, the shire hall extensions and the town council offices). By the end of the nineteenth century, improved transport by rail and water enabled manufactured and exotic materials to be introduced — significant patrons of such imported materials included banks and chapels.

Building in the historic core of Caernarfon (the walled town and its immediate suburbs) has a relatively short development history. Most results from nineteenth-century building or rebuilding and much conforms broadly to Georgian classical principles, with simple geometry and minimal decoration.

## A3.2.4 Statement of Significance ¬

Caernarfon is a major medieval town and its historic core retains many of the spatial characteristics of its late thirteenth-century foundation. Although there are minor elements of building surviving from successive centuries, it is developments in the nineteenth century which have had the most decisive influence on the form and detail of the town. Many of the buildings within the walls were built or rebuilt in the decades after about 1800, as Caernarfon came into its own again as a regional economic, social and cultural capital. In this period too, the town outgrew its walls in a series of suburban developments, which also reflect the diverse economy and society of a town at the heart of the industrial revolution in north Wales. As a result, the town has a strong and coherent urban architectural character, both within the walls and without.

*Segontium Terrace, overlooking the Slate Quay, is a formal development of large town houses. Rendered to the front (left), the rubble and brick backs were not intended to be seen so they were left exposed (right) (© Crown copyright: RCAHMW).*

## A3.3 Conwy ¬

### A3.3.1 Historical Background ¬

The castle and town walls of Conwy were developed in tandem in 1283 and the borough received its charter in 1284. By the end of 1285, the town's strong defences were virtually complete. Within ten years, there were 112 burgages and 99 burgesses — an immigrant population drawn from many parts of England. The town was laid out to a definite plan, which established an enduring framework that survived centuries of change, including substantial damage during the revolt of Owain Glyndŵr (1401).

Like other new towns of this period, the Edwardian borough was not the first settlement on the site. A Cistercian abbey was built here in 1192 and used as a burial place by the Welsh princes in the thirteenth century. They also had their own residence here, which was retained and incorporated into the town walls. The monastery was moved to Maenan, but the abbey church was retained for the town.

Advantageously sited near the mouth of the River Conwy and provided with a quay from the outset, the borough became an important place of trade. It prospered for a time as an economic and social centre, though its importance had begun to diminish by the seventeenth century, which led to a contraction of the built-up area within the walls. As late as the 1830s, it was said that 'a very considerable proportion of the area within the walls is occupied as garden ground, and the houses are comparatively few and in detached situations'. By this time, however, the basis of improvement and expansion was already being laid. The replacement of the former ferry

*The layout of the castle and town that were planned and built together between 1283 and 1287 are clear in this aerial view of Conwy.*

by Telford's new suspension bridge, built in 1826 as part of the development of the London to Holyhead Road, inaugurated a new period of economic activity, which was boosted by the arrival of the railway some twenty years later. The town began to fill with buildings, though it was largely contained within its walls until the end of the nineteenth century.

Outside the walls, industrialists and others built substantial holiday villas, forming small-scale estates, in the late nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, suburban development of a different character — mostly comprising small-scale and low density development — spread north from the Gyffin Valley towards Conwy mountain.

## A3.3.2 Historical Topography ⌐

Conwy is situated at the confluence of the Conwy and Gyffin rivers, on a dramatic, steeply rising site. Within the walls, the original layout of the town has survived well: it comprised two principal streets forming a T-shape. The axis of Castle Street/Berry Street ran in parallel to the quay; High Street effectively ran uphill from the lower gate on the quay to the market place around Lancaster Square. From the upper gate, a narrow street led downhill to Berry Street, parallel to High Street. A third gate led towards the town's mill on the Gyffin. Burgages were presumably laid out along these streets, which structured the pattern of building thereafter and perhaps influenced the position of later streets, particularly in the area to the north-west of High Street.

*Map of Conwy.*

The town's market occupied the area of Lancaster Square, extending as far as the lines of York Place and Church Street, before later infill took place.

From the outset, development in the southern quadrant of the town was constrained by the position of the church and its precinct, inherited from the former abbey. Adjacent to the southern section of the town wall, the land around Llywelyn's Hall was probably never developed. At Rosehill Street, a distinct area that probably housed judicial and administrative buildings until the town was attacked by Owain Glyndŵr in 1401 remained undeveloped until the nineteenth century.

*Produced by an unknown artist, this magnificent 'bird's-eye view' of Conwy shows the layout of the castle and town in about 1600 (By permission of the marquess of Salisbury, Hatfield House, CPM 1/62).*

*Mill Gate is one of Conwy's three medieval gates and led out to the town's mill on the River Gyffin.*
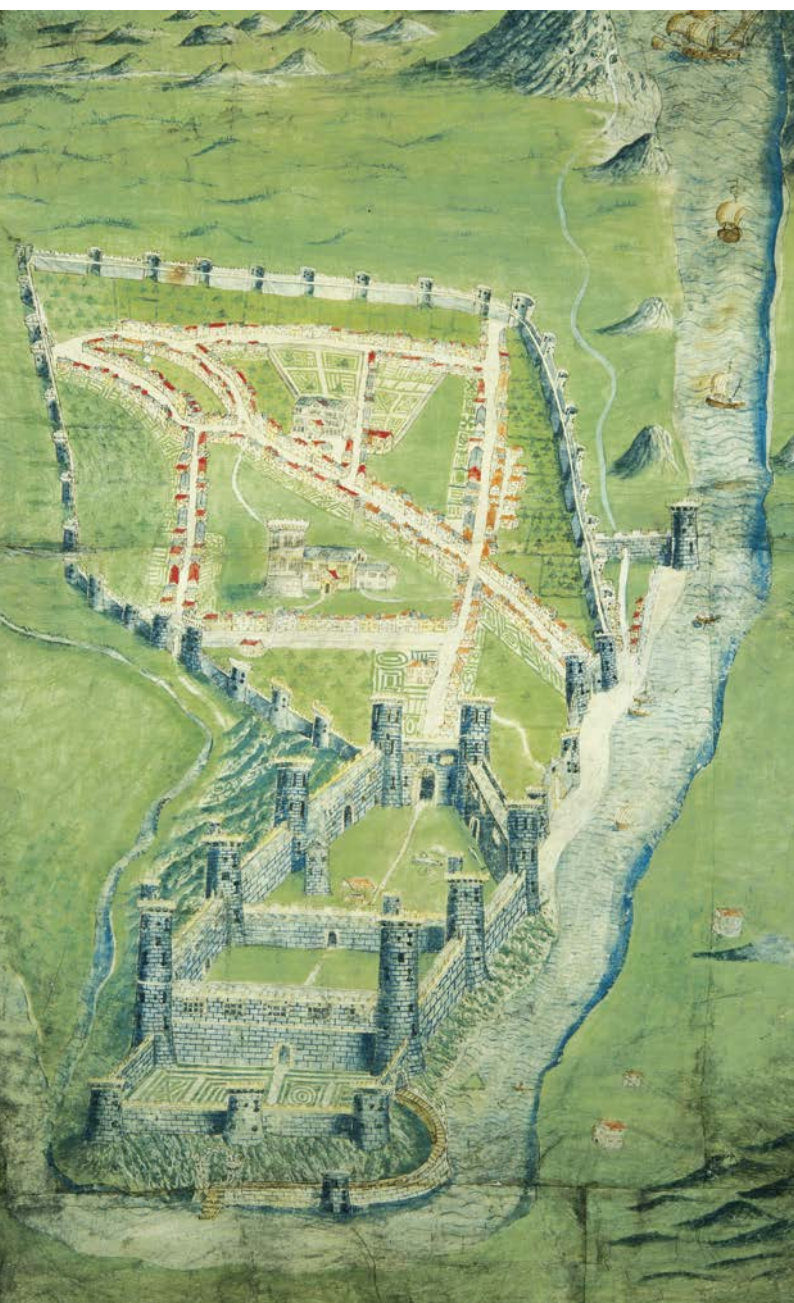
The area between Chapel Street/Upper Gate Street and the north-western length of town wall had probably become gardens and open ground by the nineteenth century. Here, a characteristic development pattern of small streets of terraced houses is suggestive of an earlier linear pattern, though it may not reflect it literally.

Developments in transport had a radical impact on the shape and character of the town. In the 1820s, Telford engineered a new route through it, with an entrance immediately north of the castle, a new gateway through the walls beyond Lancaster Square and a new road beyond (Bangor Street). In the 1840s, the railway cut a swathe through the town, breaching the walls west of the castle, and tunnelling under Upper Gate Street. Later still, the creation of Porth yr Aden/Town Ditch Street provided another route for through traffic.

Development outside the walls was never extensive, though by the end of the thirteenth century there were properties on the quay and at Twthill to the north of the town. By the end of the nineteenth century, the fields which had hitherto surrounded the town were beginning to shape suburban development. This ranged from small-scale gentlemen's estates, such as Bodlondeb and Bryn Corach, through to villas and workers' terraces. In the twentieth century, this field pattern formed the basis for piecemeal expansion, initially with individual houses, then small housing estates.

*Lancaster Square is on the site of the medieval market place (© Crown copyright (2017) Visit Wales).*

*Medieval latrines projecting out over the town wall probably served the offices of medieval administrators located in a building on a site close to Rosehill Street.*

*The remains of Llywyelyn's Hall —— the only surviving medieval building in Conwy apart from the castle and church — are marked by the three small windows in the town wall.*





*Aberconwy House, a storeyed house with roof timbers dating from about 1420, was probably the home of a wealthy merchant.*

### A3.3.3 The Character of Building ¬

With the exception of the castle, the church and the remains of Llywelyn's Hall, there are no medieval buildings in Conwy. However, the survival of Aberconwy House (about 1420) gives a rare flavour of the accommodation of a late medieval merchant. Plas Mawr is a symbol of the town's status in the late sixteenth century and the wealth and ambition of its patron, Robert Wynn. There are remnants of other sixteenth- and seventeenth-century buildings in the town centre, and more fragments may yet come to light.

The town's fortunes ebbed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Most of the town centre buildings date from the nineteenth century as the town began to revive. They range from substantial civic and commercial developments, such as the guild hall and the Castle Hotel, to rows of modest terraced cottages, such as Erskine Terrace and Seaview Terrace. The terraced houses that occupy much of the north-west part of the town are a distinctive feature of Conwy's urban character and contrast with the predominantly commercial character of development along the two principal streets.

Early houses probably combined timber with stone (as in Aberconwy House), but stone quickly became the main building material. Most of it was sourced locally, but when exposed stone became fashionable from the mid–late nineteenth century, imported stone was sometimes also used. The use of exposed stone remained the exception, however, and render (which replaced limewash from the early nineteenth century) is widespread. There are subtle distinctions in its use — from simple finishes for small domestic buildings to more elaborate decorative schemes for commercial buildings. In the early twentieth century, smooth renders were often combined with pebbledash in a variety of decorative treatments. Twentieth-century suburban developments often took their cue from these traditions, with the result that render is also a dominant material.

*Plas Mawr is a magnificent Elizabethan town house which reflects the wealth and status of its owner Robert Wynn.*

*Rendered houses, such as these in Berry Street, became widespread in the nineteenth century.*

## A3.3.4 Statement of Significance ¬

Conwy was defended by its formidable castle and town walls. The almost complete survival of the walls gives the historic town an exceptional sense of enclosure to this day. There is a sharp distinction between the density of development within the walls and the more expansive suburban layouts outside. Inside the walls, the town retains all the main elements of its medieval layout — street pattern, church precinct and market. With some notable exceptions, most of the buildings on the main streets have a nineteenth-century character, but their variety reflects the survival of a plot pattern inherited from the first days of the town. The space within the walls also accommodated the first phases of urban growth in the nineteenth century and rows of terraced cottages running up to the walls are a distinctive feature of the town centre.

Conwy's suburban development includes some elements of nineteenth-century expansion, but it is dominated by twentieth-century housing, including some distinctive examples of vernacular revival styles and a characteristically open layout.

*Modest nineteenth-century terraced cottages in Erskine Terrace (top) and Watkin Street (below) (© Copyright Conwy Borough Council).*

# A3.4 Harlech ¬

## A3.4.1 Historical Background ¬

The town of Harlech received its charter as a free borough in 1284, while works to the castle were still in progress. It was a small town, with a recorded population of only 11 men, 12 women and 21 children in 1294. In 1312, it had 29¼ burgages. The town occupied an unlikely and challenging position 'situated on a rock' and, although it had a market and two annual fairs, did not thrive because of its inconvenient site for trade and industry. It suffered further during the Glyndŵr revolt and by the early seventeenth century, it was 'a very poore towne … having no trade or traphicke nor other means to live.'

The medieval borough had a market and some administrative functions (it was the county town of Merioneth before that role was taken on by Dolgellau), but, according to Richard Fenton writing in the early nineteenth century, it seemed 'the most forlorn, beggarly place imaginable.'

Harlech's fortunes began to revive during the nineteenth century, inspired primarily by tourism and supported to some extent by industry. Landed families who had been renting borough lands began to invest in improvements. In the 1830s, the Vaughans of Nannau provided a coaching inn (possibly by remodelling their former town house) and gave land for a church, and, in the 1840s, the Ormsby-Gores built shops and housing. One of the principal benefactors of the town in the later nineteenth century was Samuel Holland, a quarry owner from Blaenau Ffestiniog, who built and improved many properties, including the Castle Hotel, as well as other hotels, boarding houses and villas.

*The medieval town plan can still be discerned in this aerial view of Harlech (© Crown copyright: RCAHMW).*

*The former Castle Hotel, built by quarry owner Samuel Holland, is the prominent building in the foreground overlooking Harlech Castle. Beyond, the small town is dominated by nineteenth-century buildings.*



*Wern Fawr was built in 1908 to designs by the Scottish Arts and Crafts architect George Walton. It became Coleg Harlech in 1927. The theatre, to the right of this picture, was added in 1973 (© Gwynedd Archaeological Trust).*

These developments were accompanied by a series of transport improvements: new roads made access to and through the town easier, and the arrival of the railway in 1867 heralded a dramatic upturn in the fortunes of the town.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Harlech had become a seaside and golfing resort. It had also begun to acquire a cachet as a cultural and intellectual centre around a new generation of visitors and residents. Their imprint includes a lovely series of Arts and Crafts houses as the nucleus of suburban development.

One of the most remarkable products of this period was Wern Fawr, built in 1907 as the private home of George Davison, patron of the arts, businessman and political radical, but which became Coleg Harlech in 1927.

During the twentieth century, the settlement spread gradually across the hillsides around the medieval borough. After around 1960, land on the Morfa was also developed for housing.

*Housing development on the Morfa dates from the 1960s and later.*

## A3.4.2 Historical Topography ¬

The medieval borough was never walled, but notwithstanding its awkward location and small scale, it was equipped with many of the elements of a planted town: a planned layout of streets and plots, and a market. These features are not always readily discernable in the modern townscape, either because they were never consolidated by generations of occupation and development, or because they were modified by nineteenth-century changes to the layout of the town.

The original town had a grid plan, albeit of a small scale, with the main axis provided by High Street and Penllech, and a cross-street by Pendref and Maesgwyn. The staggered cross where these streets met may have been a market area, but a more likely site is the land immediately east of the castle, where the former guild hall was sited. Burgages were few in number and very few have survived, but there are traces of the medieval plot structure to the west of High Street and to the east of Penllech.

*Map of Harlech.*



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Outside the limits of the borough, a small settlement at Pentre'r efail was in existence by the seventeenth century, separated from the town by a steep break of slope. The town did not otherwise expand significantly beyond its medieval limits until the end of the nineteenth century, when development along new roads and on former farmland began to take place in earnest. This development was characteristically spacious and away from the immediate town centre; Harlech is a very green and leafy town.

Changes in transport had a profound impact on the shape and character of the town. By 1840, an improved road across the marsh (now the A496), a new approach to the town from the south (Ffordd Isaf) and a new road to the north of the town centre (the continuation of High Street) avoided the steep gradients of earlier routes, which created opportunities for new development. After 1867, the railway provided a small nucleus for settlement near the station, and stimulated the development and expansion of the town as a resort.

To the west, although there may have been direct access to the castle water gate by sea for a time, the presence of field systems belonging to the early burgesses suggest that the Morfa was never completely flooded. The marsh was drained after the Enclosure Act of 1806.

*The modern road and railway links, together with twentieth-century development, occupy the low-lying land of the Morfa. The mediaeval town is confined to the rocky hillside close to the castle, which still dominates the landscape.*
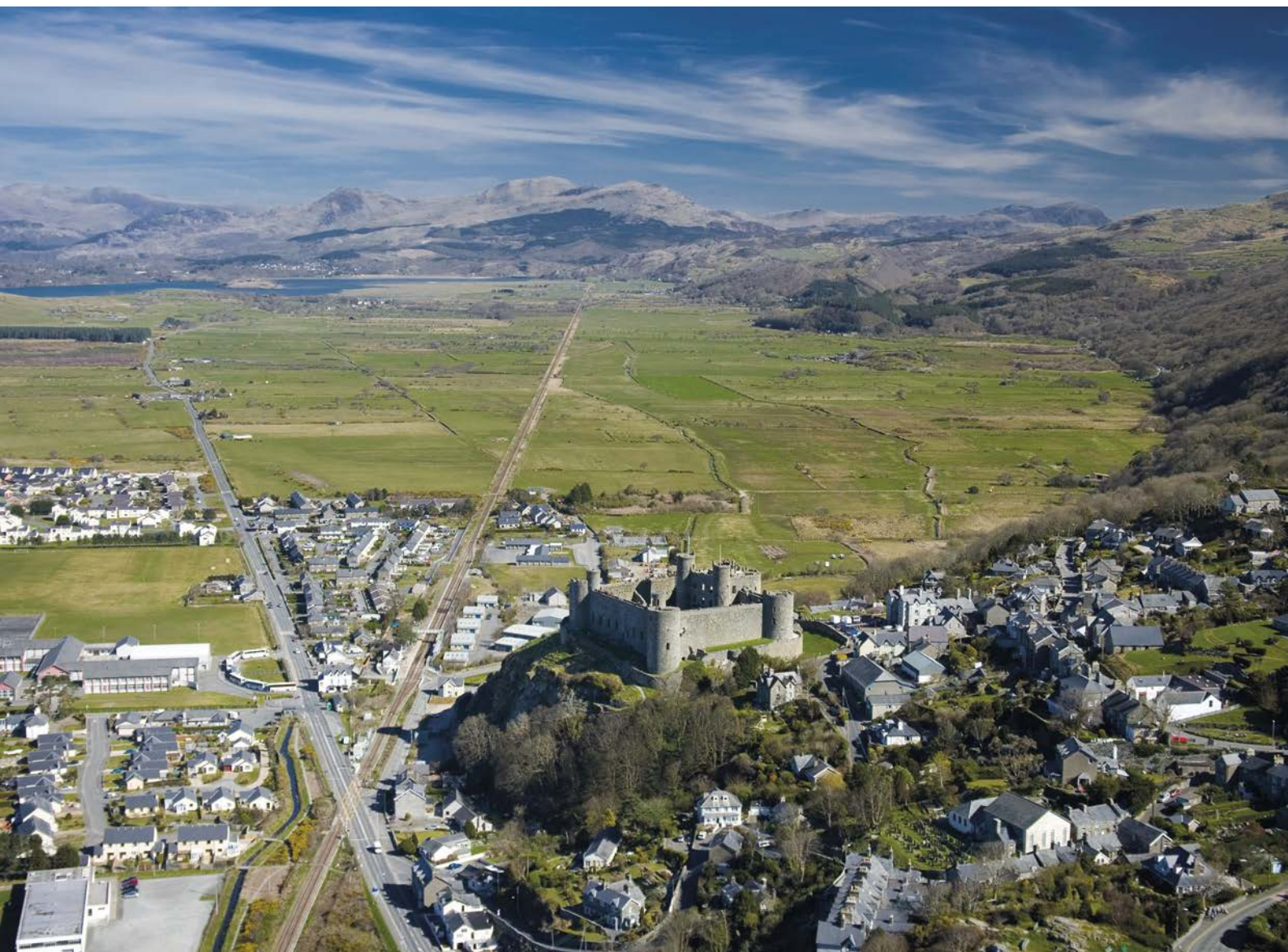
## A3.4.3 The Character of Building ¬

Like its contemporary medieval boroughs, the character of building in Harlech reflects more recent history; exceptions include Ty Eiddew, a house of about 1500 and several houses of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century date. These earlier buildings have a vernacular character in their use of materials and layout, and were built singly.

Investment in the town in the nineteenth century had a major impact on its architectural character. Planned development introduced terraced housing (quarrymen's cottages as well as boarding houses) and distinctive building styles, such as those associated with the patronage of Samuel Holland. By contrast, development in the early twentieth century favoured individual houses, some of which were architect designed.

The built character of the town is overwhelmingly domestic: almost all its commercial buildings take a domestic form and both the church and the several chapels are relatively small scale. There are no major public buildings.

Stone is the dominant building material, sourced from quarries in the immediate vicinity of the town. It was probably limewashed on earlier buildings, but, from the mid-nineteenth century, the taste for exposed stone took hold. In the twentieth century, too, a rugged finish was favoured by Arts and Crafts inspired architects and builders.

*Ty Eiddew dates from about 1500 and is a rare example of earlier vernacular building in Harlech (© Gwynedd Archaeological Trust).*

*Nineteenth-century terraced housing set on the wooded cliff to the south of the castle.*





*Crown Lodge, also designed by George Walton, has a rugged finish favoured by Arts and Crafts architects (© Copyright: Crown Lodge, Harlech).*

## A3.4.4 Statement of Significance ¬

Harlech is the smallest of the medieval boroughs connected with the World Heritage Site. The town derives much of its character from its dramatic position on a rocky terrace between the former sea marsh and the uplands. Its medieval origins have bequeathed elements of a street and plot pattern which can still be traced and, from its long history, some buildings survive from the late medieval period.

Much of its built character, however, is the product of its nineteenth- and twentieth-century history, with three distinct periods of investment linked to the re-creation of a previously ailing town as a picturesque resort. Landowning families, an industrialist and cultural patrons each contributed distinctive architectural features to the town. The urban core is a varied mixture of small-scale vernacular buildings alongside the urbane villas and terraces of the nineteenth century. It is surrounded by the spacious developments of the early twentieth century, which include some remarkable examples of Arts and Crafts architecture.

# Appendix 4

# Maps and Plans of the Castles and Town Walls

## A4.1 Beaumaris Castle ¬

N

Moat

Llanfaes
Gate

North-West
Tower

North-East
Tower

? Kitchen

Oven

North Gatehouse

Outer Ward

Site of Moat

Moat

Hall and Chamber (over)

Inner Ward

w

Middle
Tower

? Stables

Chapel
Tower

Outer Ward

South Gatehouse

South-West
Tower

South-East
Tower

Gate Next
the Sea

Barbican

Moat

Mill

Gunners Walk
(over)

Site of
Town Wall

Castle
Dock

? Line of Moat Revetment

Upstanding Walls/Visible Foundations

Buried/Lost Walls

Begun 1295

Begun in or after 1306

? After 1343

| 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 Metres |
| 0 | 25 | 50 | 75 | 100 Feet |

w = Closing wall here prior to completion of outer curtain

## A4.2 Caernarfon Castle ¬



N

Town Wall

Ditch

Well
Tower

Modern Bridge
on Site of Drawbridge

King's
Gate

Granary
Tower

Ditch

Town Wall

North-East
Tower

Kitchens

Site of
Water Gate

Lower Ward

Upper Ward

Watch Tower

Eagle
Tower

Great Hall

Queen's
Tower

Chamberlain
Tower

Queen's
Gate

Cistern Tower

Black
Tower

Upstanding Walls/Visible Foundations

Buried/Lost Walls

Mainly 1283–92
(Top floor and turrets of Eagle Tower
added after 1300)

Mainly 1295–1323

0    10    20    30 Metres

0    25    50    75    100 Feet

## A4.3 Caernarfon Town Walls ¬

## A4.4 Conwy Castle ¬

N

Stockhouse
Tower

Chapel
Tower

1

King's
Tower

3    2

Bakehouse
Tower

**Names of Inner Ward Rooms
Derived from 1627 Survey**
*(Public Record Office, SP 16/89/25)*

1  The Great Chamber

2  The Presence Chamber

3  The Privy Chamber

4  A Large Arched Roome used for a Cellar

5  A Like Large Roome used for a Kitchen

6  A Faire Lowe Parlor

7  A Litle Roome used as a Buttery (?)

Site of Ramp

Site of Ditch

Site of
Drawbridge

Town Wall

Modern Path

North-West Tower

Kitchen
Tower

Stockhouse
Tower

Chapel
Tower

West
Barbican

Gate-passage

Site of Kitchen and Stables

Site of
Drawbridge

Site of
Granary

4

Stairs to
Water Gate

Well

Inner
Ward

7?

East Barbican

Outer Ward

Porch

6    5

King's
Tower

Town Wall

Lesser
Hall

Ante-room

Great Hall

Passage

Chapel

South-West
Tower

Bakehouse
Tower

Prison
Tower

Upstanding Walls/Visible Foundations

Buried/Lost Walls

0      10      20      30 Metres

0    25    50    75    100 Feet

## A4.5 Conwy Town Walls ¬

## A4.6 Harlech Castle ¬



Upper Gate

'Way from the Sea'

Water Gate

'Artillery' Platform

'Artillery' Platform

South-West Tower

Outer Ward

North-West Tower

Kitchen

Buttery and Pantry

Entry

Screens

Great Hall

Pentise

Pentise

Site of Stairs

Chapel

Outer Ward

Castle Rock

Ditch

Outer Ward

Ystumgwern Hall

Inner Ward

Granary

Bakehouse

Gatehouse

Guard-room

Guard-room

South-East Tower

North-East Tower

Ditch

Ditch

**Legend:**

Upstanding Walls/Visible Foundations

Buried/Lost Walls

First Work, begun 1283

Second Work, finished 1289

About 1295

1323–24

**Scale:**

0  10  20  30 Metres

0  25  50  75  100 Feet

# Appendix 5

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## Sources of General Historical Information

**Archives Wales** — an online catalogue that allows you to search information in more than 7,000 collections of historical records in the holdings of 21 archives in Wales.
https://www.archives.wales/

**Archwilio** — provides online public access to the historic environment records for each local authority area in Wales. Archwilio is maintained and supported with further information held by the Welsh archaeological trusts.
www.archwilio.org.uk

**Cof Cymru** — Cadw's online record of the national historic assets of Wales, which includes listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, World Heritage Sites and registered historic landscapes. Registered historic parks and gardens will be added to Cof Cymru during 2018.
http://cadw.gov.wales/historicenvironment/recordsv1/cof-cymru/?lang=en

**Coflein** — the online catalogue for the National Monuments Record of Wales, the national collection of information about the historic environment of Wales.
http://www.coflein.gov.uk/

**Historic Wales** — an online gateway to national and regional historic environment records.
www.historicwales.gov.uk

**List of Historic Place Names of Wales** — records the various forms and spellings used for the names of topographical features, communities, thoroughfares, structures and other aspects of the landscape recorded in sources that predate the First World War.
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Diane M. Williams and John R. Kenyon (eds), *The Impact of the Edwardian Castles in Wales* (Oxford, 2010).

## World Heritage Sites in Wales

Blaenavon Industrial Landscape
http://www.visitblaenavon.co.uk/en/Homepage.aspx

Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd
http://cadw.gov.wales/historicenvironment/protection/worldheritage/cstlsedward1/?lang=en

Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal
http://www.pontcysyllte-aqueduct.co.uk/

## A5.3 Contacts ¬

**Welsh Government**
Historic Environment Service (Cadw)
Plas Carew
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Parc Nantgarw
Cardiff
CF15 7QQ
Tel. 03000 256000

**Cadw World Heritage Policy Team**
cadw@gov.wales
www.gov.wales/cadw

**Local Planning Authorities**
Local planning authorities' conservation and planning officers can be contacted via the relevant local authority website.

**Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport**
https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-culture-media-sport

**ICCROM**
http://www.iccrom.org/

**ICOMOS-UK**
http://www.icomos-uk.org/world-heritage/

**ICOMOS**
http://www.icomos.org/en/

**IUCN**
http://www.iucn.org/

**UK National Commission for UNESCO**
http://www.unesco.org.uk/

**UNESCO World Heritage Centre**
http://whc.unesco.org/

**World Heritage UK**
https://worldheritageuk.org/

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