

Elan Links Landscape Character Assessment



Report by: Trysor

For: The Elan Valley Trust

December 2016



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By

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Trysor

Trysor Project No. 2016/541

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Cover photograph: An early 20th century concrete boundary post marking the limits of the Elan Valley Estate. The BC stamp stands for Birmingham Corporation

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Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan bartneriad Trysor. Mae wedi ei gael yn gywir ac yn derbyn ein sêl bendith.

This report was prepared by the Trysor partners. It has been checked and received our approval.

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Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. The Landscape of the Elan Links: An Overview	4
3. Landscape Characterisation	7
4. Characterisation of the Elan Links Area: Thematic Overview	11
5. Bibliography	26
6. Appendix 1: Elan Links Landscape Characterisation Assessment	29

1. Introduction

1.1 Trysor was commissioned in 2015 by the Elenydd Landscape Partnership to undertake a Landscape Character Assessment to support an application for Heritage Lottery Funding.

1.2 The existing landscape characterisations, including LANDMAP, the Register of Historic Landscapes and county-based Landscape Character Assessments were reviewed in order to determine a suitable boundary to undertake a more detailed landscape characterisation focused on the Elan Valley.

1.3 This process led to the selection of the present holding boundary of the Elan Valley Estate to define the Elan Links area on the grounds that;

1.3.1 The estate is an historic entity which was defined for a specific purpose i.e. to include the entire watershed of the Elan Valley to feed the reservoir system which had been proposed in the late 19th century. Some additions to the estate have been made through land acquisitions during the 20th century, but the estate boundary has remained largely stable to the present day.

1.3.2 The estate has been under consistent management for over a century. This is what makes its landscape special and stand out from adjacent landscapes. It is by far the most robust boundary available for consideration, as both the Historic Landscape and LANDMAP boundaries may be reviewed in future.

1.4 The boundary has reviewed in 2016 following consultation.

1.4.1 The boundary has been revised to include the line of concrete boundary watersheds posts where these lay outside the current Elan Valley estate boundary. This has slightly changed the western and southern boundaries. At the northwest of the area this amendment now brings in a small area of coniferous forestry. This is a different element but it was felt that having the complete watershed boundary included was important.

1.4.2 A small area of woodland on the western slopes of Carn Gafallt has been added. This is owned by the RSPB and was included for additional value whilst not deviating from landscape character already identified.

1.4 Having established the Elan Links boundary for the Landscape Character Assessment, Landscape Character Areas were created within the defined area, details of which are included in Appendix 1 of this report.



Figure 1: Location of the Elan Links project area in mid Wales.



Plate 1: A view of the Craig Goch dam at the heart of the Elan Valley.



Plate 2: A peat bog at the heart of the Elenydd upland plateau.

2. The Landscape of the Elan Valley Estate: An Overview

2.1 The Elan Valley Estate was created in 1892 by an Act of Parliament. Its boundaries were defined to encompass the watersheds of the Elan and Claerwen rivers. This secured the water supply for a series of reservoirs in the heart of the Cambrian Mountains in order to provide the city of Birmingham with fresh, clean water.

2.2 The estate includes a significant portion of the Elenydd uplands as well as five reservoirs in the Elan and Claerwen valleys. The juxtaposition of the wild, open spaces of Elenydd against the designed, engineered landscapes of the valleys is quite unique in a Welsh context. The reservoirs are today a major attraction, annually drawing tens of thousands of visitors into the Elan Valley.

2.3 The distinctive upland plateau of Elenydd is underlain by early Silurian sandstones and turbidites and dissected by valleys, carved by glacial and fluvial action. Boulder clay deposited at the end of the last Ice Age masks much of the area and was responsible for turning the river Ystwyth to the west and creating the Elan. Acidic soils and poor drainage have led to the development of blanket bogs across parts of the landscape, some of which have considerable palaeoenvironmental importance. Peat cut from bogs was the main source of domestic fuel in the district for much of the post-medieval period.

2.4 The estate includes nationally and internationally recognised habitats, especially for breeding birds, which are reflected in the 80% of the landscape here which is protected as a SSSI or a SPA and 32% as a SAC. The upland plateaus and the Claerwen valley are a mixture of wet heathland, dry heaths and blanket bog whilst the Elan Valley is a mosaic of enclosed pasture fields, broad-leaved woodlands and conifer plantations.

2.5 In an upland area which is otherwise devoid of modern settlement, 28 farms are maintained by the estate, their boundaries largely based on traditional sheepwalks which estate records show to have been in existence by the 1870s. Despite the low population in modern times, this is an archaeologically diverse landscape, with evidence of human settlement, industry and burial extending back over some 5,000 years. This includes nationally important remains from the Bronze Age, medieval activity related to its use as a grange by the monks of Strata Florida, as well as the extraction of metalliferous ores during the 19th century.



Figure 2: A map of the Elan Links area

2.6 In later post-medieval and modern times, sheep-farming has dominated the management of the uplands. The remains of cottages, huts and folds of shepherds dot the area. Today, the spread of purple-moor grass, *Molinia Caerula*, now presents a particular challenge for the management of upland habitats, with invasive species such as gorse and bracken also established and spreading on some valley slopes.

2.7 Culturally, the Elenydd uplands have great significance. Gerald of Wales visiting Strata Florida abbey in Ceredigion mentioned the “lofty mountains” of Elenydd in 1188. John Leland, the English antiquarian, crossed the western part of the area when sent by Henry VIII to assess Strata Florida in 1538. His itinerary records encounters with herdsmen on these wild and remote hills and documents their world. The Abbey controlled Elenydd throughout the Medieval period and divided it into a series of upland granges from which it drew much of its wealth.

2.8 The Elan valley also has important cultural associations. It was once at the heart of the Cwm Elan Estate, the forerunner of the modern Elan Valley Estate. In the early 19th century the poet Percy Bysshe-Shelley visited his cousins, the Grove family of Cwm Elan, on a number of occasions. He fell in love with the valley and intended to lease a local farm. At the eastern side of the area lies Elan Village, a maintenance workers’ settlement built in the Arts and Crafts style, completed in 1909.



Plate 4: The Nant y Gro Dam, built to supply water for the workers’ settlement at Elan Village was breached by experiments with bouncing bombs carried out by Barnes Wallace in 1942.

3. Landscape Characterisation

3.1 The landscapes of Wales have been characterised through various projects over the past two decades or so. The process started with the identification of particular landscapes that were seen as being historically important - Historic Landscapes. These were broken down into smaller character areas. LANDMAP followed with a grand plan to characterise the whole of Wales according to five themes or aspects: Geological, Historical, Cultural, Visual & Sensory and Landscape Habitat. Since then characterisation has been seen as a useful tool and other projects have been carried out at a local authority level often using the 5 aspect areas of LANDMAP to develop a single layer characterisation.

3.2 Historic Landscapes

3.2.1 In the late 1990s Cadw, CCW and ICOMOS started to draw up a Register of landscapes which were considered to be the best examples of different types of historic landscapes across Wales. This led to the publication of two volumes describing 58 separate landscapes. The first volume describes 36 Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest (Cadw, 1998) and the second volume 22 Landscapes of Special Historic Interest (Cadw, 2001)

3.2.2 Following publication of the Registers, Cadw grant-aided the four Welsh Archaeological Trusts to undertake a characterisation programme, looking at each of the 58 areas and subdividing them into smaller areas, looking more at the patterns in the landscape rather than the finer detail.

3.2.3 The Elan Links area impressively lies within two different Historic Landscapes. The core of the estate lies within the Elan Valley Historic Landscape, characterised by Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust

<http://www.cpat.org.uk/projects/longer/histland/histland.htm>

The western edge lies within Upland Ceredigion Historic Landscape, characterised by Dyfed Archaeological Trust,

<http://www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk/>

3.2.4 The Historic Landscapes Register is non-statutory and advisory.

3.3 LANDMAP

LANDMAP is a formally adopted methodology for characterisation of the whole landscape according to five themes or aspects. It was developed by CCW, now NRW, and involved specialists in five aspects, Geological, Historical, Landscape Habitats, Cultural and Visual & Sensory. Each aspect was assessed on a county by county basis and the resulting character areas given a unique number based on the pre 1974 county they were in. This means in some areas such as Elan Valley where the three counties of Cardiganshire, Radnorshire and Breconshire meet what is actually one area will be represented by three aspect areas, one for each county.

3.4 Powys LCA

The Powys Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken between 2007 and 2008 by John Campion Associates for Powys County Council. The aim was to distinguish areas of common character across the county, excluding Brecon Beacons National Park. Seventy six areas were identified subdivided between Breconshire, Radnorshire and Montgomeryshire. The five LANDMAP aspect layers were used to inform the Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). Initially the LANDMAP Visual and Sensory aspect was used. This was then refined by looking at the LANDMAP Landscape Habitat and Geological aspects and finally by looking at the LANDMAP Historical and Cultural aspects.

3.5 Ceredigion SLA

In Ceredigion Special Landscape Areas were reviewed in 2010 followed the methodology outlined in a LANDMAP practice guidance note 1 (CCW, 2008). This guidance note has since been updated.

3.6 Having established and reviewed the boundary for this Landscape Character Assessment, all the previous Landscape Characterisation work of relevance was considered to arrive at a more detailed breakdown of the Elan Links Landscape. This was informed by LANDMAP, Historic Landscape Characterisation and the county-based characterisation assessments, as well as archaeological fieldwork and habitat studies within the estate since the 1990s.

3.6.1 Since the LANDMAP surveys were undertaken, there has been a significant amount of archaeological field work within the Elan Links area, chiefly undertaken as part of the Uplands Initiative, a pan-Wales survey of all uplands of Wales, co-ordinated by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments. These surveys have significantly increased the numbers of recorded archaeological sites within

the estate and have some bearing of the understanding of the landscape history of the area as well.

3.7 Consultation was undertaken with NRW, Elan Links partners and the public of the appropriateness of the boundaries and amendments made accordingly.

3.8 This process resulted in the definition of 13 Landscape Character Areas (see Figure 3 below). The details of these areas, and the justification for their selection, are included in Appendix 1.

3.9 The following section (Section 4), provides an overview of the the Elan Links area, following the five aspects or themes used in LANDMAP, namely Geological, Landscape Habitat, Historic, Visual & Sensory and Cultural.

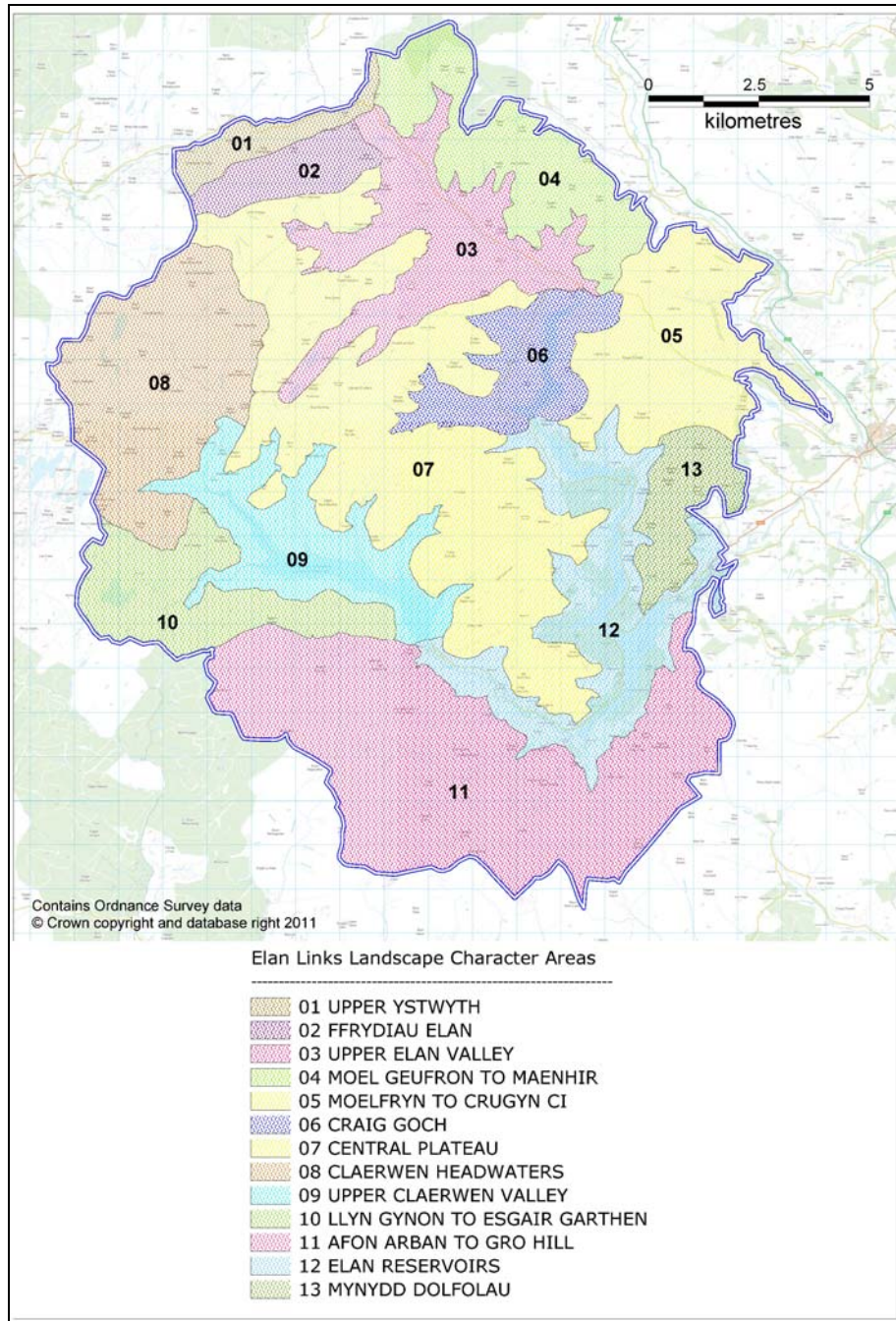


Figure 3: The Landscape Character Areas of the Elan Valley Estate

4. Characterisation of the Elan Links area: Thematic Overview

4.1 Geological Aspect

4.1.1 The geology of the Elan Valley is dominated by sedimentary rocks of Lower Silurian age, including mudstones, shales, sandstones and conglomerates, which form the upland dissected plateau which gives the area its character. The Rhiwnant Anticline is a major geological feature at the southeastern corner of the Elan Valley Estate. The core of the anticline is composed of Upper Ordovician sedimentary rocks and the mineralisation of faults along the anticline has led to the formation of metal ores which were mined in the 19th century at Cwm Elan, Dalrhiw and Nant y Carw.

4.1.2 Much of the landscape is masked by deposits of glacial till and peat bogs, including a number of significant areas of blanket bog which have palaeoenvironmental importance.

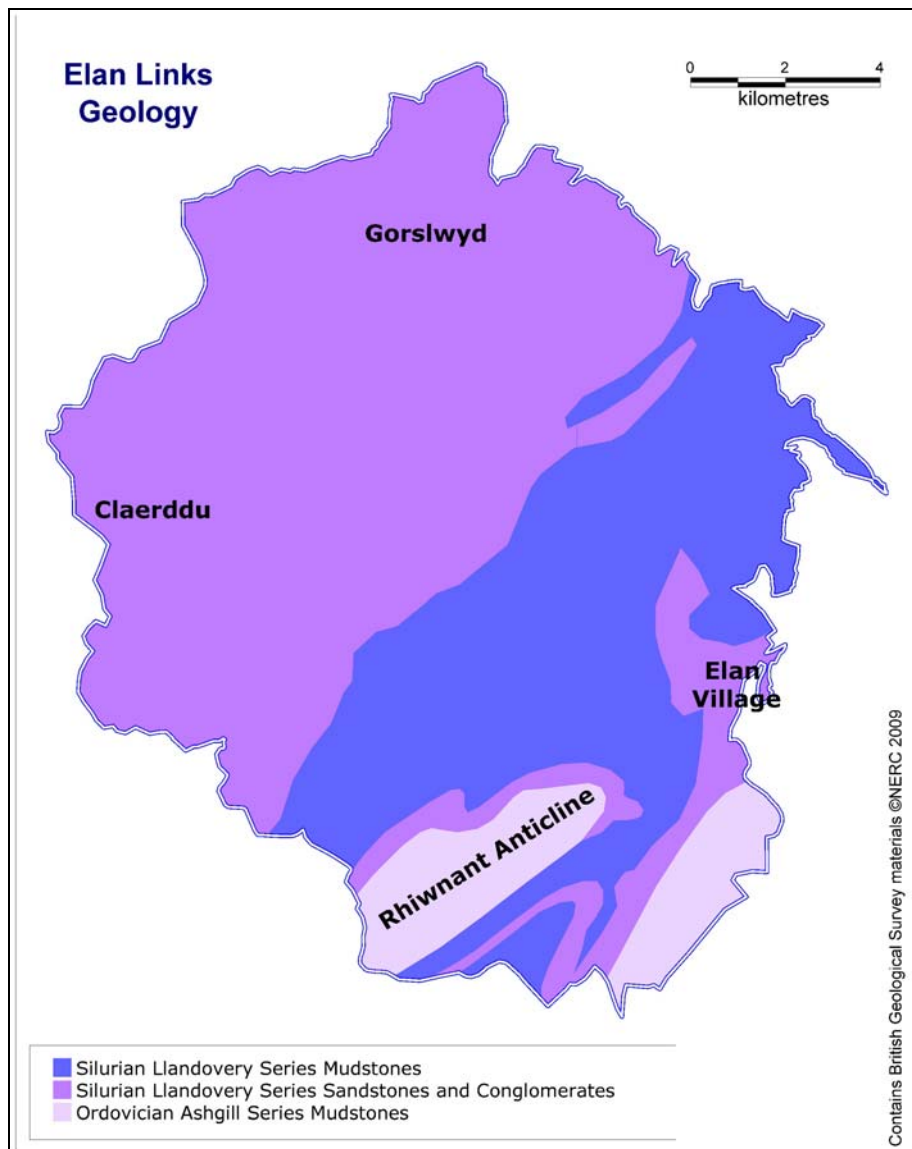


Figure 4: A map of the solid geology of the Elan Links area



Plate 5: Rocks dumped by glacial action at the end of the last Ice Age. Llyn Cerrigllwydion Isaf.



Plate 6: A view north-eastwards down the Gwngu valley towards the Elan.

4.2 Historical Aspect

4.2.1 The landscape of the Elan Links area includes the physical evidence of at least 4,500 years of human occupation and activity.

4.2.2 There is no archaeological evidence of human activity within the Elan Valley during early prehistoric times, although palaeoenvironmental evidence from the peat bog at Gors Lwyd, in the upper Elan Valley, suggests that the clearance of woodland had already begun by the Neolithic period and that by the Bronze Age the hills of the area were already characterised by an open environment. Archaeologically, the Elan Valley includes a significant group of monuments dating to the Bronze Age (2500BC-750BC), mostly funerary cairns, which occur on summits on the high ground surrounding the Elan and Claerwen valleys, but also in some lower positions on terraces along the valley sides. There are also a number of standing stones recorded within the area as well as a small stone circle at Crugian Bach, near Gro Hill. Their positioning seems to imply that the area was exploited by Bronze Age communities which used the east-west valleys as communication routes through the Elenydd hills. The location of Bronze Age settlements is not known but is presumed to have been in the sheltered valleys of the wider district. The peat bogs and mires which have developed across large parts of the Elenydd uplands since the late prehistory may well mask many features associated with the Bronze Age or earlier activity.

4.2.3 There is no evidence of Iron Age activity within the Elan Valley Estate (750BC to AD43). Roman activity (AD43 to AD410) at the end of the Iron Age is evidenced by the presence of a Roman Marching Camp on Esgair Perfedd, east of the Elan Valley. This fort probably dates to around AD75 and would have given temporary shelter to a large Roman force on military campaign during the conquest period.

4.2.4 There is no known archaeological evidence in Elan Links associated with the period between the Roman conquest and the Norman conquest of mid-Wales, in the late 11th century, a gap of some 1,000 years. During the 12th century however the rise of Strata Florida abbey in Ceredigion was to prove highly influential. The abbey was founded by Rhys ap Gruffudd, prince of Deheubarth and granted extensive estates or granges in Ceredigion and Powys. These estates included much of the central Cambrian Mountain range, where control over the vast areas of wild mountain pasture became an important element in the abbey's development. The wealth of the abbey came to depend largely on the rearing of sheep and the export of wool, as well as the mining and smelting of the lead and other metal ores found in several of the granges, most

notably the Cwmystwyth grange, part of which falls within the boundaries of the modern Elan Valley Estate. The home grange of the abbey extended up the Mwyro valley to the upland plateau around Llyn Gynon. Other granges included Cwmdeuddwr, which included the upper Elan Valley and extended eastwards, and the abbey also had land at Rhayader and Llangurig, as well as a daughter abbey at Abbey Cwmhir, Radnorshire. Communications routes ran across the Elenydd uplands and along the Elan and Claerwen valleys, connecting Strata Florida with these possessions.

4.2.5 Notable visitors to the abbey included Gerald of Wales in 1188 and John Leland in 1538, both of whom had the opportunity to set eyes of the wilderness of Elenydd and provide us with early descriptions of the landscape which now forms the core of the Elan Valley Estate. Both of these medieval figures were impressed by the scale and wilderness of Elenydd, a characteristic which continues to impress visitors to the present day. Gerald of Wales noted Elenydd as the "lofty mountains of Moruge called Elenydd in Welsh." Leland visited a number of known locations within the area, including Carreg Naw Llyn, Llyn y Fign and the Cerrigllwydion lakes and also spoke to herdsman who lived in "summer houses" or "hafotai" near Claerddu. During medieval times the uplands would have been settled only during the summer months, from May until October, by herdsman who would have occupied huts which allowed them to remain close to their animals. This system of transhumant, pastoral farming is known as the "hafod/hendre" system. Cattle and sheep would have been milked on the hafods and butter and cheese produced. These perishable foods would possibly have been stored in underground chambers, known as "sunken shelters" to modern archaeologists, examples of which are found dotted across the hills of the area.

4.2.6 Shortly after John Leland visited Strata Florida, the abbey was closed and its estates broken up under the Dissolution of the Monasteries, enacted by Henry VIII, the king who had sent Leland to examine the abbey and its properties. Other changes to the economy and administration of the country soon brought the "hafod" tradition of medieval Wales to an end during the 16th century.



Plate 7: Carn Nant y Ffald, a Bronze Age cairn to the north of the Elan Valley.



Plate 8: A medieval or early post medieval deserted settlement site (foreground), with the modern Aberglanhirin farm in the distance.

4.2.7 However, the shepherding tradition which dominated the hills of the area under the stewardship of Strata Florida continued in a modified form throughout post-medieval times. Gradually the practice of herdsmen moving to the "hafod" for the summer grazing season to stay with their animals, returning to the lowlands during the winter months, gave way to the "lluest" tradition, by which shepherds lived permanently on the hills to manage their flocks. Clear evidence of this change was recorded by Lewis Morris, Deputy Steward of the Crown Manor of Perfedd, which lies just to the north of the assessment area. In 1744, Morris mapped the "lluestau" (shepherding cottages) and farmsteads of the Pumlumon uplands and spoke to some of the shepherds who tended flocks on the hills. He recorded that "lluestau" were occupied all year round, but that it was known among the shepherds that "before the memory of man" these places were only occupied during the summer months. The Pumlumon landscape and the Elan Links landscape are similar in their form and history and there is no doubt that the same process of change occurred here between the mid-16th century and the 18th century.

4.2.8 Like John Leland, Lewis Morris recorded a system of pastoral farming which was close to disappearing. Within 50 years most of the "lluestau" of Pumlumon had been abandoned and settlement focused on a smaller number of farmsteads and smallholdings. This is likely to have happened in the Elan Links area also. By the time the first maps of the district were produced in the early 19th century there were very few occupied settlements in the area, yet abandoned cottage sites dot the hills, a situation directly comparable with the Pumlumon area.

4.2.9 Farmsteads on the modern Elan Valley Estate, such as Claerddu, Claerwen, Henfron, Hirnant, Aberglanhirin and Botalog were already in existence by the start of the 19th century, although their roots evidently lay in much earlier times, possibly even as "hafod" settlements. Higher status settlements, such as the now lost mansion of Cwm Elan, grew out of the break up of the monastic granges, when the Crown sold these lands into private hands to form the estates of a new class of rural gentry. Cwm Elan had its own estate which included a large part of the former Cwmdeuddwr Grange for example, whilst some of the great estates in Ceredigion, such as Trawsgoed and Hafod, bought former grange-lands on the western side of Elenydd.

4.2.10 The character and history of this district was of course changed dramatically in the 1890s when the Birmingham Corporation purchased the much of the Cwm Elan Estate for the purpose of creating the Elan Valley reservoir system to supply their

city with water. This change led directly to the creation of the Elan Valley Estate, now managed by Welsh Water. Prior to this event, there was some industry in the district, with a small number of lead mines being worked at Cwm Elan, Dalrhiw and Nant y Carw, the ruins of which add to the built heritage of the district.

4.2.11 The dam builders brought many hundreds of navvies, labourers, craftsmen, engineers and architects to this remote area and transformed it completely. The physical impact of the reservoir building was most felt within the Elan and Claerwen valleys, which were dammed and flooded, causing some loss of farmland and settlement. But the landscape also gained the striking stone dams and their towers, carefully engineered and designed to be aesthetically pleasing. These features are popular landmarks along the Elan Valley today and draw in many thousands of visitors annually, making the valley one of the most popular visitor attractions in Wales. Another addition to the local landscape was the Arts & Craft style maintenance workers settlement at Elan Village, which still remains in occupation and houses the present Elan Valley Estate Office.

4.2.12 A less obvious consequence of the creation of the Elan Valley Estate, is the continued use and occupation of the tenanted, upland farmsteads of the area. These have been maintained by the estate throughout the past 120 years and remain in occupation. Many similar upland areas have lost their most remote settlements during the 20th century, creating abandoned landscapes, bereft of people. The Elan Valley Estate remains a populated landscape, however, which adds to its special qualities and ensures that the tradition of human occupation on these remote hills and valleys has a future, as well as a rich history.



Plate 9: Llest y Gadair, the ruins of a post-medieval shepherd's cottage and outbuilding, north of the Claerwen valley.

4.3 Habitat Aspect

4.3.1 The landscape of Elan Links has high ecological value and much of the area is protected as a result, with large areas designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.

4.3.2 Habitats across large parts of the Elan Links landscape were surveyed mapped during the 1980s and 1990s. These surveys have informed the definition of the Habitat aspect areas in LANDMAP and, to some degree, are reflected in the Landscape Character Areas for Elan Links proposed in this report.

4.3.3 The map reproduced in Figure 5 shows clearly that extensive areas of peat bog are found across the upland plateau which forms the bulk of the estate. For this reason many of the Landscape Character Areas defined here are characterised by blanket bog or wet or dry modified bog. Some areas show more variation however;

- Dry and wet dwarf shrub heath is concentrated mainly to the eastern side of the estate, which gives Landscape Character Area 5 its distinctive habitat.
- Landscape Character Area 11 is chiefly characterised by acid grassland, as is Area 9, which includes the waters of Claerwen Reservoir which is chiefly surrounded by a strip of acid grassland.
- Broad leaved woodlands, including sessile oak, are restricted to the sheltered Elan Valley and lower Claerwen valley, providing an important element defining Landscape Character Area 12.

Much of the landscape here is also classed as unimproved or semi-improved acid grassland. These areas appear to have been left blank in the map reproduced in Figure 5 below.

4.4 Terminology

4.4.1 The Joint Nature Conservancy Council (2007) define the habitats described in this section as;

Blanket bog Comprises *Sphagnum-rich* vegetation on deep peat (more than 0.5 metres thick) forming a blanket over both concave and convex surfaces, on level to moderately sloping grounds in the uplands. Blanket bog includes watershed mires, saddle mire, terrace bog and valley side mire. The water table lies at or just below the surface and there is no input of water from the surrounding land.

Dry modified bog is dominated by *Calluna vulgaris* and other ericoids or by *Eriophorum vaginatum*, on peat more than 0.5 metres deep. *Sphagnum* is notably absent, but under the dwarf shrubs there may be a carpet of hypnoid mosses, with lichens such as *Cladonia portentosa* and *Cladonia arbuscula*.

Wet modified bog has little or no *Sphagnum*, often with bare peat and patches of *Trichophorum cespitosum* and/or *Molinia caerulea*. Ericoids may be abundant, sparse or absent and it is distinguished by having a peat depth greater than 0.5 metres.

Dry dwarf shrub heath is found generally on well-drained acid soils on peat less than 0.5 metres thick, with little or no *Sphagnum*. The vegetation has greater than 25% cover of ericoids or small gorse species in relatively dry situations."

Wet dwarf shrub heath is found generally on well-drained acid soils on peat less than 0.5 metres thick and has more than 25% cover of ericoids and/or small *Ulex* (gorse) species. However, it differs from (Dry dwarf shrub heath) in that *Molinia caerulea* is often abundant and it generally contains some *Sphagnum companctum* or *Sphagnum tenellum*.

Acid grassland is often unenclosed as on hill grazing land and occurs on a range of acid soils with a pH of less than 5.5. It is generally species poor and often grades into wet or dry dwarf shrub heath, although it has less than 25% dwarf shrub cover.

Broad leaved woodlands are defined as woodland which has less than 10% conifers in the canopy.

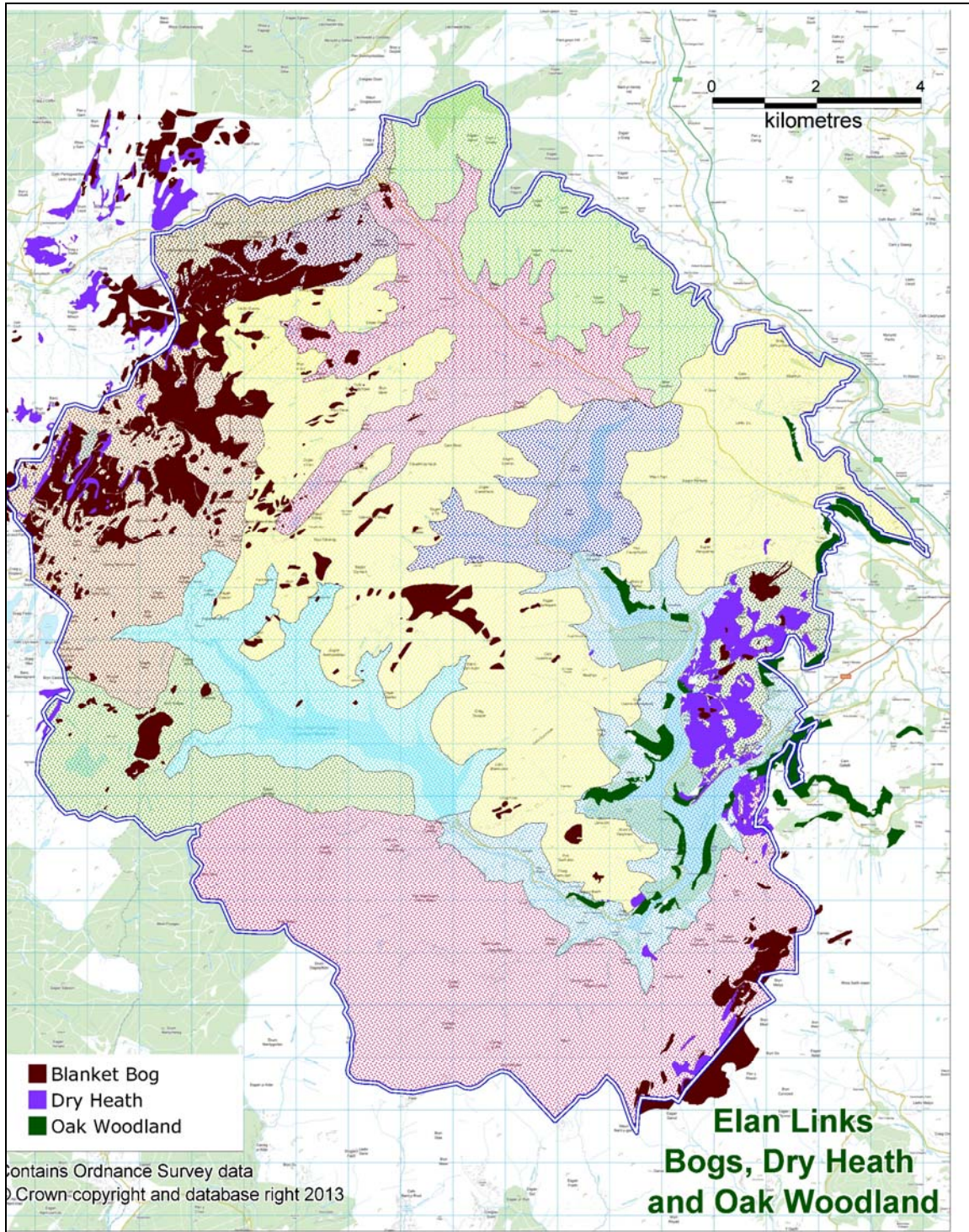


Figure 5: Distribution of oak woodland, dry heath, and blanket bog in the Phase 1 dataset (1979-1997) on Elan Valley Trust owned land, courtesy of NRW, contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2013.

4.5 Visual and Sensory Aspect

4.5.1 The landscape across large parts of the Elan Links area is dominated by an open and extensive upland plateau. This is generally a smooth and rounded landscape, the product of glaciation, with relatively little outcropping rock. Much of the high ground of the plateau is characterised blanket bog and modified bog and large areas are covered with *Molinia* vegetation. These remote hills are very tranquil areas where only occasional hill-walkers are encountered. They can be both inspiring and intimidating because of their openness and scale, with weather and light conditions often affecting dramatic changes in their appearance.

4.5.2 The plateau is dissected by numerous streams, which feed into the main river valleys of the Elan and Claerwen. These valleys are also generally rounded and smooth in appearance, with their floors and sides masked with glacial deposits and peat bogs. Many of the valleys are relatively deeply-incised, and wind through the upland plateau. Although they are mostly treeless and unencumbered by development, this often restricts views to within the confines of sections of each valley.

4.5.3 There are limited areas which are more craggy and dramatic in appearance. This is particularly true along the eastern edge of the area, where a rocky escarpment forms the eastern limit of the Elenydd upland plateau. Further south, the deeply-incised valleys of Rhiwnant and Nant y Carw also have a rocky character, enhanced by the presence of 19th century mine workings which exploited the exposure of the bedrock in the search for metal ores. At the heart of the upland plateau, at the Cerrigllwydion lakes, a discrete area of outcropping gritstones provides an unexpected variation in colour and texture in an area which is otherwise dominated by an expanse of rolling, *Molinia*-covered moorland.

4.5.4 The appearance of the Elan and Claerwen valleys is of course heavily influenced by the presence of the reservoirs which have been constructed within them. The Claerwen reservoir is located in an open, broad valley, along which long views are possible. Its concrete dam forms an impressive barrier to the upper valley and draws many visitors.

4.5.5 The Elan reservoirs sit in a much more restricted valley, which has a much more intimate feel and markedly more sheltered than the treeless valleys further to the west. This part of the Elan Valley comprises of a mosaic of enclosed fields, deciduous woodland, coniferous plantations and some unimproved pasture along the sides of the reservoirs and the lower parts of the valley slopes which rise above them. These reservoirs influence the landscape

with their impressive stone-built dams and the scenic, engineered landscape surrounding them. This is the only part of the Elan Links area where there is a significant population, found in the scattered farms and cottages along the valley, as well as at Elan Village. Large numbers of visitors also come to the valley throughout the year, drawn by its beauty and accessibility. The visitor centre near Elan Village, car parks at key locations and promoted walks along the valley, as well as access to the lakes for anglers, mean that the area can often be quite busy and does not always share the tranquility which can be found on the surrounding hills.



Plate 10: Glanhirin farm and its field enclosures sit within the vast expanse of unimproved moorland which characterises much of the Elenydd upland plateau.

4.6 Cultural Aspect

4.6.1 The chief cultural characteristic of most of the landscape of the Elan Links relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. The abbey's granges were sold off by the Crown after the Dissolution of the Monasteries and formed the estates of rural gentry during post-medieval times. The sale of the Cwm Elan estate to the Birmingham Corporation was the foundation of the land-holding which has now passed into the management of Dwr Cymru's Elan Valley Estate. Despite these changes of ownership, the pastoral base of the local community and economy has been maintained and shepherding and farming has remained important to the present day.

4.6.2 The ruined huts and cottages of herdsmen and shepherds dot the hills, but modern settlement is sparse and focused on the sheltered valleys of the area, particularly the Elan Valley, where farms, cottages and the small settlement at Elan Village are found. Only scattered upland farms are present along the upper reaches of the Elan and Claerwen valleys.

4.6.3 Industry has made some impact on the area. The water industry has had a particularly significant impact as the central section of the Elan Valley was flooded by the Birmingham Corporation in the 1890s to create the famous chain of Elan Valley reservoirs. The surrounding scenic landscape and the structures associated with the reservoirs are very popular with tourists. Road access to the reservoirs is good and car parks are provided at the Elan Valley Visitor Centre, the Claerwen Dam and the southern end of Caban Coch reservoir. Road access from the west, at the Teifi Pools, and to the north, via the Rhayader to Cwmystwyth road, also brings visitors into the area. Across the remoter uplands of the estate there is little leisure activity, with only occasional hill-walkers frequenting the few paths which cross the area.

4.6.4 There are has some important cultural associations. These include the early mention of Elenydd by Gerald of Wales, in 1188 and the more detailed observation of John Leland c.1538. More recently, in the early 19th century the poet Percy Bysshe-Shelley visited his cousins, the Grove family of Cwm Elan, on a number of occasions. He fell in love with the valley and intended to lease a local farm. Another cultural theme of note was the artistic record made by Eustace Tickell, Chief Engineer on the construction of the Penygarrreg Dam, who spent time sketching scenes along the Elan Valley before it was transformed by the reservoir. He published his work in a volume known as "The Vale of Nantgwilt".



Plate 11: 'Prometheus Unbound', a sculpture commemorating the link between Shelley and the Elan Valley, stands at the Visitor Centre.

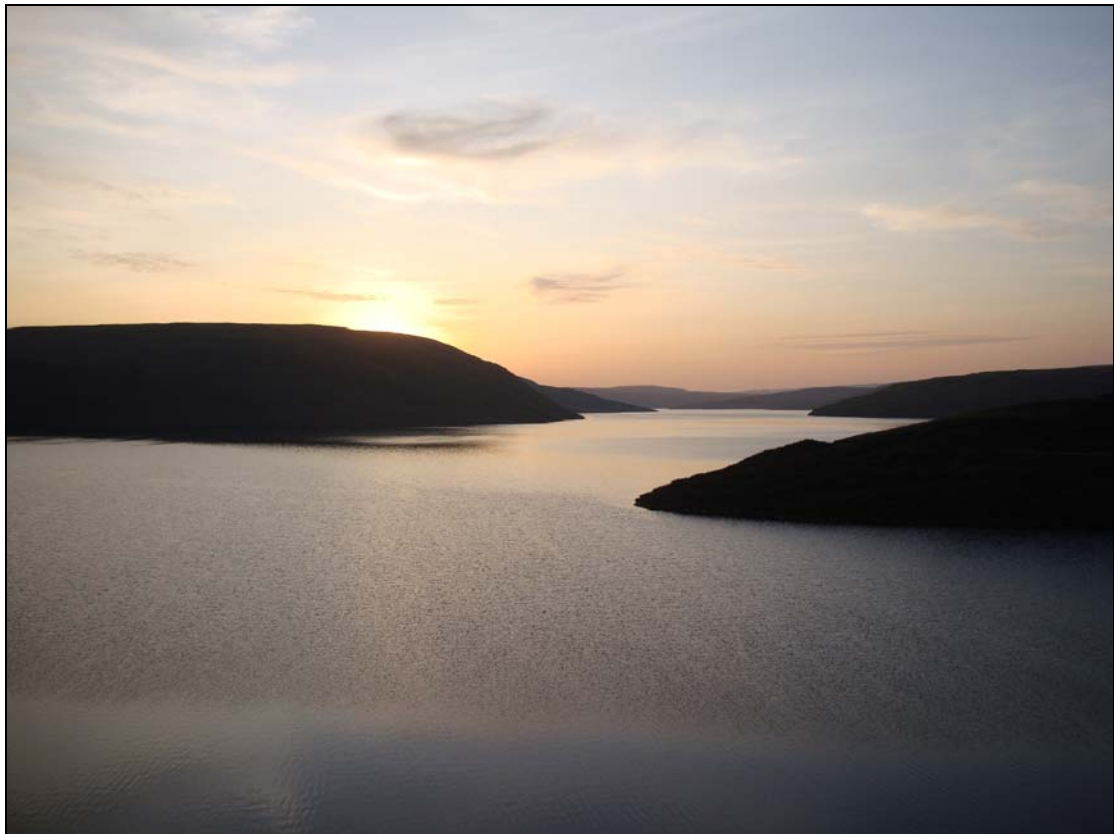


Plate 12: Claerwen at sunset typifies the beauty of the Elan Links scenery which draws so many visitors to the area.

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APPENDIX 1
ELAN LINKS
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT
GAZETTEER

Introduction

- i) This appendix includes the details of each of the Elan Links Landscape Character Areas defined for this report.
- ii) The boundaries of the 13 Landscape Character Areas defined by this assessment were originally informed by the Visual & Sensory boundaries adopted by LANDMAP.
- iii) Some of the LANDMAP Visual & Sensory aspect areas were divided into smaller units based on field observation, and also with reference to other LANDMAP aspect boundaries (i.e. Geological, Landscape Habitat, Historical and Cultural aspects) where relevant.
- iv) Those areas separated by political (county) boundaries for LANDMAP have been amalgamated for the purposes of this assessment.
- v) Further refinement has now been carried out using contour and habitat data.
- vi) For each of the Landscape Character Areas, the following gazetteer provides;
- a location map
 - a summary of the key points
 - a justification of the selection of the area
 - a description of the area according to the five themes or aspects used for LANDMAP i.e. Geological, Historical, Landscape Habitat, Visual & Sensory and Cultural.
 - management comments
- vi) Also included for each area is reference to associations with;
- The Register of Historic Landscapes
 - Powys Landscape Character Areas
 - Ceredigion Special Landscape Areas
 - LANDMAP Geological, Historical, Landscape Habitat, Visual & Sensory and Cultural aspects
 - Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - Special Protection Areas (SPA)
 - Special Areas of Conservations (SAC)
 - Ancient & Semi-natural Woodland (ASNW)
 - Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIG)
 - National Nature Reserves (NNR)

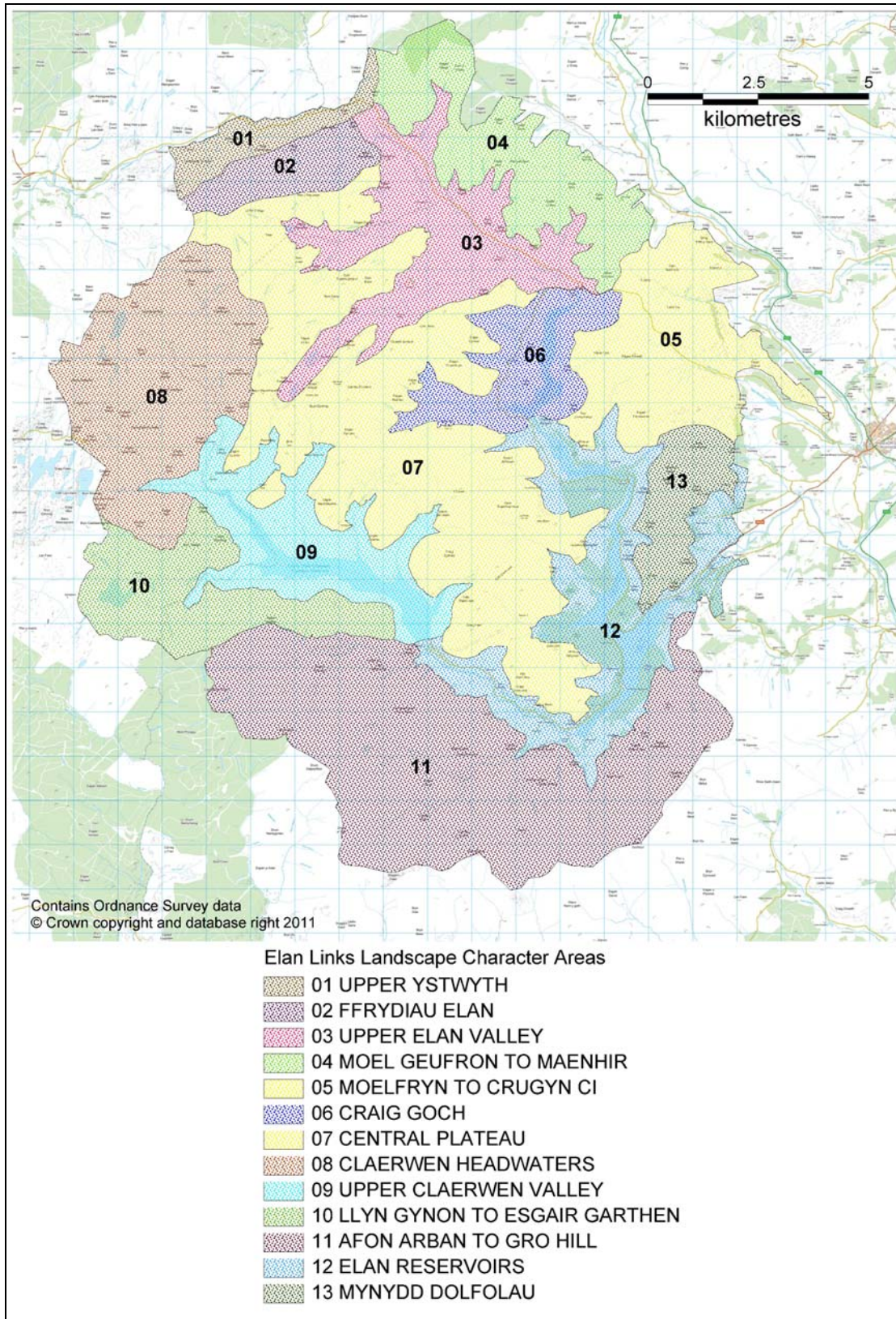


Figure 6: The 13 Landscape Character Areas of Elan Links

1 UPPER YSTWYTH

Summary

This small landscape area is distinctive as it lies within the Ystwyth valley, outside the Elan watershed, although is still part of the Elan Valley estate.

The steep and high north-facing valley slopes of the valley, cut through Lower Silurian sandstone by glacial action, dominate the area. There are some significant glacial features, such as a nivation cirque below Craig Cwmtinwen.

The landscape is characterised by unimproved acid grassland. The area falls within the Elenydd SSSI.

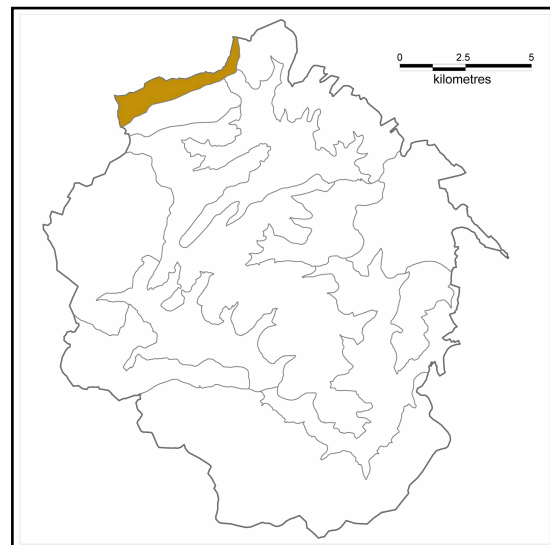
The Rhayader to Cwmystwyth road passes through the area and is popular with touring visitors. This rugged upland valley environment is rather tamed by the presence of the road and its ease of access.

The landscape has been historically used for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times the pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands.

There is evidence of medieval or early post-medieval settlement in the form of a number of earthwork house platforms on the valley slope.

Justification

This small landscape area is distinctive as it lies within the Ystwyth watershed not the Elan although still part of the Elan Valley estate. Its northern boundary is the Ystwyth river, which is also the estate area boundary here. The estate boundary is also used to the west whilst the southern boundary is marked by the line of concrete boundary posts put up in 1913 for the Birmingham Corporation to mark the extent of the Elan watershed. The 425m contour to the east of the uppermost section of the Ystwyth defines the eastern boundary of this landscape area.



1 UPPER YSTWYTH

Geological Characteristics

The steep and high north-facing valley slopes of the upper Ystwyth, cut into Lower Silurian sandstone by glacial action, dominate this landscape area. The Ystwyth flows through the base of the valley, with Quaternary and Pleistocene glacial clays infilling the base of the uppermost part of the valley. There are some significant glacial features, such as a nivation cique below Craig Cwmtinwen.

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

This area is visually dominated by the steep valley slope on the southern side of the upper Ystwyth valley, with the attractive, cascading Afon Ystwyth at the base of the slope. The Rhayader to Cwmystwyth road passes through the area and is popular with touring visitors. There are good, open views across and along the Ystwyth valley, although are largely restricted within the valley to its steep sides. This is quite a rugged upland valley environment, rather tamed by the presence of the road and its ease of access. Extensive forestry plantations and the Cefn Croes windfarm lay to the northern side of the valley and are highly visible from the higher slopes.

Historic Characteristics

During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands within the abbey's Cwmystwyth grange. There is evidence of medieval or early post medieval settlement in the form of a number of earthwork platforms on the mid-valley slope. These are the foundations of timber framed houses which would have been built when sufficient timber was available locally. When John Leland walked through the upper Ystwyth valley in 1538 he noted that, by that time, poor management had already stripped the district of woodland. Leland evidently followed a well-used route out of the top of the valley when he left the area to travel to Llangurig, but by the late 17th century we know that a road ran from the Ystwyth into the Elan valley, for the route is shown on John Ogilby's Road Map on 1684. This early road was turned into a turnpike road by the early 19th century. A turnpike tollhouse stood at the head of the Ystwyth valley. This was known as the Blaenycwm tollgate and in 1843 it was subject to an attack by Rebecca Rioters,

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

This area falls within the extensive area defined as the Ponterwyd Upland Grassland Mosaic, which follows the upper Rheidol and Ystwyth valleys. Much of the area is improved pasture, but the landscape of the upper Ystwyth is characterised by unimproved acid grassland. The area lays within the Elenydd SSSI.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. The Elizabethan monk John Leland passed through here and described the area in about 1538 in his "Itinerary through Wales".



1 UPPER YSTWYTH

protesting at the iniquitous tolls which were levied on road users by the Turnpike Trusts responsible for their upkeep. By the 19th century the upper Ystwyth was affected by the growth of the lead mining industry further down the valley. Although there are no metal ores on the southern side of the valley, the small mining settlement of Blaenycwm developed within this landscape area, which included a row of terraced houses and its own Methodist chapel, neither of which now survive. The importance of shepherding to the area is reflected in an unusual post-medieval carving of a sheep's head on a natural rock slab close to the Ystwyth river.

Historic Landscape	Historic Landscape Character Area	Powys Landscape Character Area	Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
Upland Ceredigion	DAT Cambrian Mountains; DAT Upper Ystwyth Valley; CPAT Elenydd	Not applicable	SLA12 North Ceredigion Uplands
LANDMAP Geology Aspect		LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect	
CRDGNGL278 Cwmystwyth (N); CRDGNGL279 Afon Ystwyth (Cwmystwyth); CRDGNGL80 Upper Cwmystwyth; CRDGNGL224 Ystwyth cwm (S); MNTGMGL109 Llechwedd Llwyd		CRDGNLH038 Ponterwyd Upland Grassland Mosaic; CRDGNLH061 Teifi pools upland mosaic	
LANDMAP Cultural Aspect		LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect	
CRDGNCL028 Upland Ceredigion		CRDGNVS331 Upper Ystwyth Valley	
LANDMAP Historical Aspect		ASNW	RIGS
CRDGNHL101 Cambrian Mountains; CRDGNHL155 Upper Ystwyth Valley		No	Blaenycwm
SSSI	SPA	SAC	NNR
Elenydd	Elenydd-Mallaen	Elenydd	None

1 UPPER YSTWYTH

Management Comments

ELHAR ID Number 941 - Consider returning the Maen Hir stone to its original location and discussing re-erecting it as a standing stone, as local tradition maintains it once stood above the road, north of its present location.

An interpretation consideration: If Maen Hir is re-erected, its story is worth learning about.

The area contains breeding records for merlin and has the potential for management of moorland edge habitat to improve feeding and breeding success. Merlin action area.

The area has small numbers of traditionally managed enclosed fields running along the River Ystwyth that should be surveyed for botanical interest and included in the Elan Links in-by field management plan.

Summary

This landscape area includes the source and the upper reaches of the Afon Elan, focused on the valley through which the first stage of the river flows.

The area forms part of the Elenydd upland plateau. The river has cut through the Lower Silurian bedrock and several rocky outcrops occur along the upper section of the river.

There are large areas of blanket bog as well as modified bog covered in thick *Molinia* or purple moor-grass. The higher ridges either side of the river are characterised by unimproved acid grassland.

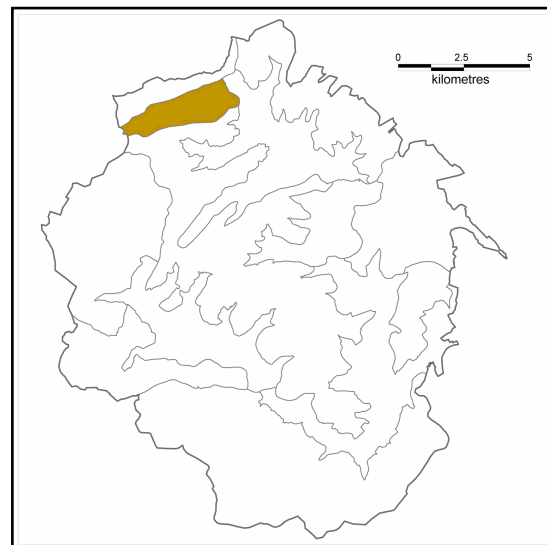
Views are restricted within the valley, with views over the wider landscape mainly gained from the higher ground either side of the river. This is a very tranquil area where few hillwalkers venture.

During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands.

There is evidence of prehistoric activity within this area, with two probable Bronze Age cairns recorded at Bryn Glas. There is also evidence of medieval or early post medieval settlement along the river valley. More recent activity includes post-medieval peat cutting.

Justification

This landscape area has been defined to include the source and the upper reaches of the Afon Elan, focused on the rocky valley through which the first stage of the river flows. There has been no land enclosure or improvement in this area. The northern boundary of this landscape area is defined by the line of concrete boundary posts put up in 1913 for the Birmingham Corporation to mark the extent of the Elan watershed. The modern Elan Valley estate boundary forms the western side of the area. The southern boundary of the area runs along the crest of the ridge between Grafiau Elan, to the west, and Banc Cerrig Gwynion, to the east. The eastern boundary is marked by the western edge of Gorslwyd peat bog, across the Elan to Banc Cerrig Gwynion.



2 FFRYDIAU ELAN

Geological Characteristics

This landscape area forms part of the large, dissected, upland plateau of Elenydd. The upper Afon Elan has cut through the Lower Silurian sandstone and gritstone bedrock and several rocky outcrops occur along the upper section of the river. There are some areas of peat bog, the Afon Elan rising in one such bog, and there is blanket bog along the southern side of the river valley.

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

The character of this landscape area is dominated by large areas of blanket bog and wet modified bog, with significant parts of the landscape covered with Molinia vegetation. Over much of the area, views are restricted within the upper Elan valley, with views over the wider landscape mainly gained from the higher ground at the top of the valley slopes either side of the river. This is a very tranquil area where few hillwalkers venture. It is a treeless environment.

Historic Characteristics

There is some evidence of prehistoric activity within this area, with two probable Bronze Age cairns recorded at Bryn Glas, at the northeastern end of the area. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands by the abbey. There is some evidence of medieval or early post medieval settlement in the form of a small number of long huts along the river valley. More recent activity is limited to a few areas of post-medieval peat cutting and the erection of a series of concrete boundary posts in the early 20th century to define the limits of the Elan watershed.

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

This landscape area lies within the extensive area defined by LANDMAP as the Teifi Pools Upland Mosaic. It includes a large proportion of blanket bog and modified bog, the latter covered in thick Molinia vegetation. The higher, drier ridges to the north and south of the Afon Elan are characterised by unimproved acid grassland.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands.



Historic Landscape
Upland Ceredigion

Historic Landscape Character Area
CPAT Elenydd; DAT Cambrian Mountains

Powys Landscape Character Area
Not applicable

Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
SLA12 North Ceredigion Uplands

LANDMAP Geology Aspect
CRDGNGL220 Llanddu Fawr; CRDGNGL281 Claerdduewn-Corsyddalfa; CRDGNGL222 Banc Cerrig Gwynion

LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect
CRDGNLH061 Teifi Pools Upland Mosaic; CRDGNLH038 Ponterwyd upland grassland mosaic

LANDMAP Cultural Aspect
CRDGNCL028 Upland Ceredigion

LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect
CRDGNVS313 Cambrian Mountains (South)

LANDMAP Historical Aspect
CRDGNHL101 Cambrian Mountains

ASNW	RIGS
No	None

SSSI
Elenydd

SPA
Elenydd-Mallaen

SAC
Elenydd

NNR
None

Management Comments

The area contains breeding records for merlin and there is the potential to improve moorland management to increase breeding success. Merlin action area.

The area contains breeding records for red grouse and there is the potential to improve moorland management to increase breeding success. Red grouse action area

An overgrowth of Molinia on deep peat soils needs tackling through improved grazing management.

Tranquility may be lessened if more use of the area encouraged.

3 UPPER ELAN VALLEY

Summary

This area includes a section of the upper Elan valley and its tributary valleys of the Nant Hirin and Afon Gwngu.

These valleys were created by glacial action and the Lower Silurian bedrock is masked by glacial till. There are some areas of peat. The glacial lakes of Llyncerrigllwydion Uchaf and Isaf and Llyn Gwngu are found within this area.

This area includes areas of blanket bog and acid grassland and is of international importance for breeding birds. *Molinia* is common across the whole of the landscape area. The peat bog of Gorslwyd has significant palaeoenvironmental value, with deposits dating from the Neolithic to the present day within the bog.

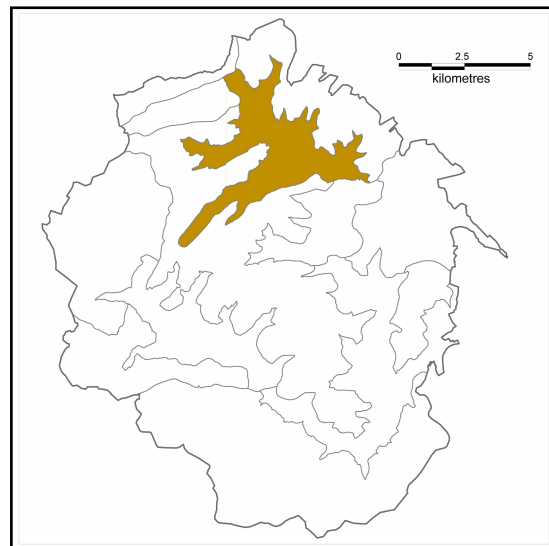
The river valleys are generally broad and open. The Afon Elan is a highly visible feature along the main part of the Elan Valley. The steep valley slopes block long range views out of the area in all directions. The tranquility of this area is lowered by the traffic on the road which runs along the valley floor, which is popular with visitors.

The Tudor antiquarian John Leland described the lakes at Llyn Cerrigllwydion in about 1538. The whole area was associated with the Cwm Elan estate up until its purchase by the Birmingham Corporation in the 1890s.

The upper Elan valley is an important southeast-northwest route through the Elenydd hills, with the modern road following the line of an 18th century turnpike road, which itself followed an earlier road line with possible medieval origins. A number of working post-medieval farmsteads are found within the area, some of which may have origins as holdings on the medieval monastic grange of Cwmdeuddwr.

Justification

This landscape area includes the section of the Afon Elan valley between Gorslwyd and Pont ar Elan, and the main tributary valleys of the Nant Hirin and Afon Gwngu. This area includes some improved and semi-improved farmland and scattered settlement in the form of upland farm holdings. Unlike the lower parts of the Elan valley it is a treeless environment, apart from small plantations at settlement sites, with purple moor grass dominating areas of modified bog along parts of the valley floor. The landscape area boundary is defined by the 425m contour to the northern side of the valley. The 450m contour is used as the boundary to the south, extended southwards onto higher ground to include the Cerrigllwydion lakes. To the northwest the boundary is a line from Banc Cerrig Gwynion northeastwards to Gorslwyd bog. The southeast boundary runs northeast from Esgair Rhiwlan, along the modern road to Pont ar Elan and then northwards to the 425m contour.



Geological Characteristics

This area includes a section of the upper Elan valley, the lower valley slopes and the main tributary valleys of the Hirin and the Gwngu. The valley were created by glacial action. The solid geology is of Lower Silurian age, including mudstones, grits and sandstone, which are masked by glacial till, with the river and stream valleys filled with glacial clays as well as the narrow channels and fluvial alluviums of the main watercourses. There are some areas of peat along the valley floors, which have been cut for domestic fuel in the past. The peat bog of Gorslwyd also lies at the northwestern end of the area and has significant palaeoenvironmental value, with peat deposits from the Neolithic to the present day within the bog. The ogliotrophic lakes of Llyncerrigllwydion Uchaf and Isaf and Llyn Gwngu also lay within this area.

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

The upper Elan Valley and its tributaries, the Nant Hirin and the Gwngu, are upland river valleys which have been cut by glacial and river action into the Elenydd plateau. The valleys are generally broad and open, with some steep slopes. There is some enclosed and improved land associated with the small number of farmsteads in these valleys, but most of the land is unimproved upland pasture. Rocky outcrops are rare here, creating the effect of a fairly rounded and gentle landscape on the whole. The Afon Elan is a highly visible feature along the main part of the Elan Valley and the valley slopes which rise to either side of the rivers of the area block long range views out of the area in all directions. The tranquility of this area is lowered by the traffic on the single road which runs along the valley floor from Pont ar Elan to the Ystwyth valley, which is popular with tourists and daytrippers.

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

The western part of this landscape area lies within an area defined by LANDMAP (RDNRLD001) as a wet terrestrial habitat, chiefly characterised by wet modified bog and blanket bog, including the ogliotrophic lakes of Llyn Cerrigllwydion Bach and Llyn Cerrigllwydion Mawr. This area is of international importance for breeding birds. Most of the area is defined as being a relatively dry terrestrial habitat (LANDMAP RDNRLD002), with a higher percentage of unimproved acid grassland and marshy grassland along the upper Elan valley. The northern edge of the area falls within the extensive area defined by LANDMAP as the Teifi Pools Upland Mosaic (CRDGNLH061), which includes a large proportion of blanket bog and modified bog. *Molinia* is common across the whole of the landscape area.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. The Elizabethan monk John Leland passed through here and described the lakes at Llyn Cerrigllwydion in his "Itinerary through Wales" about 1538, following a visit to Strata Florida. In post-medieval times the valleys here retained a human population and several upland farms have continued in occupation to the present day, namely Abergwngu, Botalog, Aberglanhirin and Glanhirin. The whole area was associated with the Cwm Elan estate up until its purchase by the Birmingham Corporation in the 1890s. In modern times the Elan Valley Trust has managed the landscape on a 999 year lease from Welsh Water. The road between Rhayader and Cwmystwyth runs through this area and is a popular route with visitors, especially during the summer months.

Historic Characteristics

This landscape area is focused on a section of the upper Elan valley which forms an important southeast-northwest communication route through the Elenydd hills, connecting the Ystwyth and Elan valleys. The modern road between Rhayader and Cwmystwyth follows the line of an 18th century turnpike road, which itself followed an earlier road line, which is likely to have had antecedents in a medieval route connecting the granges of Strata Florida abbey at Cwmystwyth and Cwmdeuddwr. A number of post-medieval farmsteads are found within the area, some of which, such as Aberglanhirin, may well have been holdings on the medieval grange of Cwmdeuddwr. There is also evidence of deserted settlement at Aberhenllan, where the earthwork remains of cultivation and rabbit warrens point to medieval or early post-medieval farming.



Historic Landscape	Historic Landscape Character Area
Upland Ceredigion (part of)	CPAT Elenydd; DAT Cambrian Mountains

Powys Landscape Character Area	Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
R15 Elenydd Uplands (part of); B13 (part of)	SLA12 North Ceredigion Uplands (part of)

LANDMAP Geology Aspect
RDNRGL971 Gwar y ty; RDNRGL709 Trumau; RDNRGL113 Claerwen-Elan; RDNRGL998; RDNRGL939 Grafiau; CRDGNGL222 Banc Cerrig Gwynion; CRDGNGL351; CRDGNGL351; CRDGNGL342 Afon Elan

LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect
CRDGNLH061 Teifi Pools Upland Mosaic; RDNRLD002; RDNRLD001

LANDMAP Cultural Aspect
CRDGNCL028 Upland Ceredigion; RDNRCL001 Elan Valley Estate

LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect
CRDGNVS313 Cambrian Mountains (South); RDNRVS104 Cambrian Mountain Open Valley; RDNRVS101 Cambrian Mountain Plateau Tops

LANDMAP Historical Aspect
CRDGNHL101 Cambrian Mountains; RDNRHL412 Elenydd

ASNW	RIGS
No	None

SSSI	SPA
Elenydd	Elenydd-Mallaen (part of)

SAC	NNR
Elenydd (part of)	Claerwen NNR (part of)

Management Comments

ELHAR ID Number 941 Mytalog Long Hut - At the north northeastern end, the eastern corner of the structure has been eroded by the Mytalog Fawr stream, suggesting a long term threat to the integrity of the site. Could be excavated in advance of further damage by the stream.

ELHAR ID Number 862 Esgair y Ty Platform - Road widening would destroy what remains of this platform. Excavate the remaining parts of the platform in advance.

There is bracken at Esgair y Ty and on the northeast facing slopes. Bracken is cut at Esgair y Ty - care should be taken to avoid damaging pillow mounds. Areas of bracken should be included in a wider bracken survey and bracken management plan.

The area has historic curlew breeding records. There is potential to improve habitat management and other management to encourage curlew breeding and to expand the current curlew breeding range. Curlew action area.

The area contains a number of farmsteads surrounded by enclosed fields. These fields should be surveyed for botanical interest and included in the Elan Links in-by field management plan. Many of the fields have the potential to provide better feeding habitat for golden plover and curlew (worm-rich pastures).

An overgrowth of Molinia needs tackling through improved grazing management or cutting with benefits for curlew.

The Monk's Trod crosses a number of the character zones. Recreational use of the Monk's Trod (both legal and illegal), requires a strategy. The difficulties in managing damage to routes and sites caused illegal off-road vehicles, can be helped through a concerted and coordinated efforts to report and record incidents. In addition, it's important to ensure the temporary restriction on the Monk's Trod does not lapse and people made aware of the status. Some general education about the rules would speak to those genuinely using the route aware of their error.

Summary

This area includes the high ground to the north of the Afon Elan and the northeast-facing slopes of the Nant Dernel valley at the northern edge of the Elan Valley Estate. It is underlain by Lower Silurian sandstones and gritstones, and is largely covered with glacial till.

It is a largely treeless environment, with some rough pasture, areas of peat bog and also extensive wet modified bog with *Molinia* vegetation. There are views over the adjacent Wye, Elan and Nant y Dernel valleys and, from the western end of the area, also down the Ystwyth valley into Ceredigion.

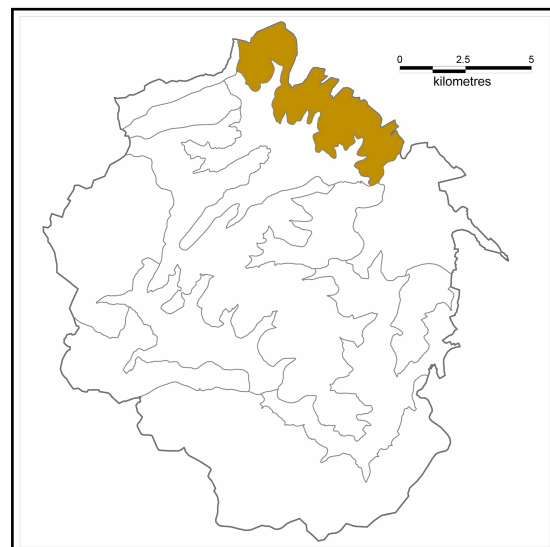
The landscape is unimproved and mostly unenclosed, with few rocky outcrops, being generally rounded and gentle in character, with occasional steep valley sides along the minor stream valleys. The northern edge of the area, facing Nant y Dernel, falls away steeply and has grassland and bracken cover, with some scattered trees, giving it a rather different appearance to the higher pastures.

During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey's Cwmdeuddwr grange and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. In post-medieval times the northern third of this landscape area actually fell within the historic county of Montgomeryshire and the land owned by the Wynnstay Estate. A boundary change in the later 19th century put the whole area into Radnorshire

The archaeology of this landscape area includes a group of Bronze Age funerary cairns which mostly overlook the upper Elan valley, although cairns at the western and eastern ends of this upland block also overlook the upper Ystwyth and the Wye valleys.

Justification

This area includes the high ground to the north of the Afon Elan and the northeast-facing slopes of the Nant Dernel valley at the northern edge of the Elan Valley Estate. It is a largely treeless environment, characterised by some rough pasture, areas of peat bog and also extensive wet modified bog with *Molinia* vegetation. The northern boundary of this area is defined by the project area boundary, which follows the edge of the unenclosed land on the south side of the Nant y Dernel valley. The 425m contour forms the northwestern boundary and the southern boundary of the area. The southeastern boundary crosses from Moel Geufron north-northeastwards to the head of the Nant Ty Mawr valley, excluding the head of Nant y Sarn valley.



Geological Characteristics

This area forms part of the dissected plateau, underlain by Lower Silurian sandstones and gritstones, which defines much of the landscape of the Elan Valley Estate. Much of this area is covered with glacial till and modified bog with smaller areas of blanket bog also present.

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

This area lays almost wholly within an area defined by LANDMAP as a relatively dry terrestrial habitat (RDNRLD002), with a high percentage of unimproved acid grassland and marshy grassland, as well as extensive areas of wet modified bog and some blanket bog. *Molinia* is common across the higher parts of the area. Scrub trees grow on the lower parts of the northeast facing slopes. An area of coniferous forestry is also included as the watershed boundary defined by concrete posts runs through this area.

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

This landscape area lies at the northern edge of the Elan Valley Estate and forms part of the extensive Elenydd upland plateau. There are views over the adjacent Wye, Elan and Nant y Dernol valleys and, from the western end of the area, also down the Ystwyth valley into Ceredigion. This area is mostly bleak and treeless in appearance, particularly in winter and spring when the large areas of *Molinia* vegetation turn white. The landscape is unimproved and mostly unenclosed, with few rocky outcrops, being generally rounded and gentle in character, with occasional steep valley sides along the minor stream valleys which cut into the plateau. The northern edge of the area, facing Nant y Dernol, does fall away steeply however and has grassland and bracken cover, with some scattered trees, giving it a rather different appearance to the higher pastures.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey's Cwmdeuddwr grange and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. In post-medieval times the northern third of this landscape area actually fell within the historic county of Montgomeryshire and the lands owned by the Wynnstay Estate. A boundary change in the later 19th century put the whole area into Radnorshire. A line of boundary stones marked WWW denote this boundary and refer to Watkin Williams Wynn, the 19th century squire of the Wynnstay estate.

Historic Characteristics

The archaeology of this landscape area includes a notable group of Bronze Age funerary cairns which mostly overlook the upper Elan valley, although cairns at the western and eastern ends of this upland block also overlook the upper Ystwyth and the Wye valleys. In medieval times these hills would have formed part of the upland grange of Cwmdeuddwr, which was in the hands of Strata Florida abbey.



Historic Landscape	Historic Landscape Character Area
Elan Valley (part of)	CPAT Elenydd; DAT Cambrian Mountains

Powys Landscape Character Area	Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
R15 Elenydd Uplands	Not Applicable

LANDMAP Geology Aspect
RDNRGL971 Gwar y ty; RDNRGL113 Claerwen-Elan

LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect
RDNRLD002; RDNRLD005:MNTGMLH072

LANDMAP Cultural Aspect
RDNRCL001 Elan Valley Estate

LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect
RDNRVS101 Cambrian Mountain Plateau Tops; RDNRVS105 Cambrian Mountain Edge

LANDMAP Historical Aspect
RDNRHL412 Elenydd

ASNW	RIGS
No	None

SSSI	SPA
Elenydd (part of)	Elenydd-Mallaen (part of)

SAC	NNR
Not Applicable	None

Management Comments

An overgrowth of Molinia on deep peat soils would benefit from improved grazing management or cutting with potential benefits for golden plover and red grouse.

Summary

A block of high ground at the eastern edge of the Elenydd upland plateau, where the landscape often has a more craggy character than that seen to the west, particularly around Nannerth at the northeastern corner of the area. There are views over the adjacent Wye, Elan and Nant y Dernol valleys.

This area is underlain by Lower Silurian mudstones. Parts of the area are quite craggy and steep sided but most of the landscape is covered in glacial till and there are pockets of peat from where it has been cut as a fuel source in the past. This area is mostly bleak and treeless in appearance. The northern and eastern edge of the area, facing the Wye valley, falls away steeply and is rocky in appearance, with some woodland.

There is a high percentage of unimproved acid grassland and marshy grassland. There are limited areas of bracken on drier valley slopes. Molinia is common across the higher parts of the area.

During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey's Cwmdeuddwr grange and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. The area has remained in use for upland grazing.

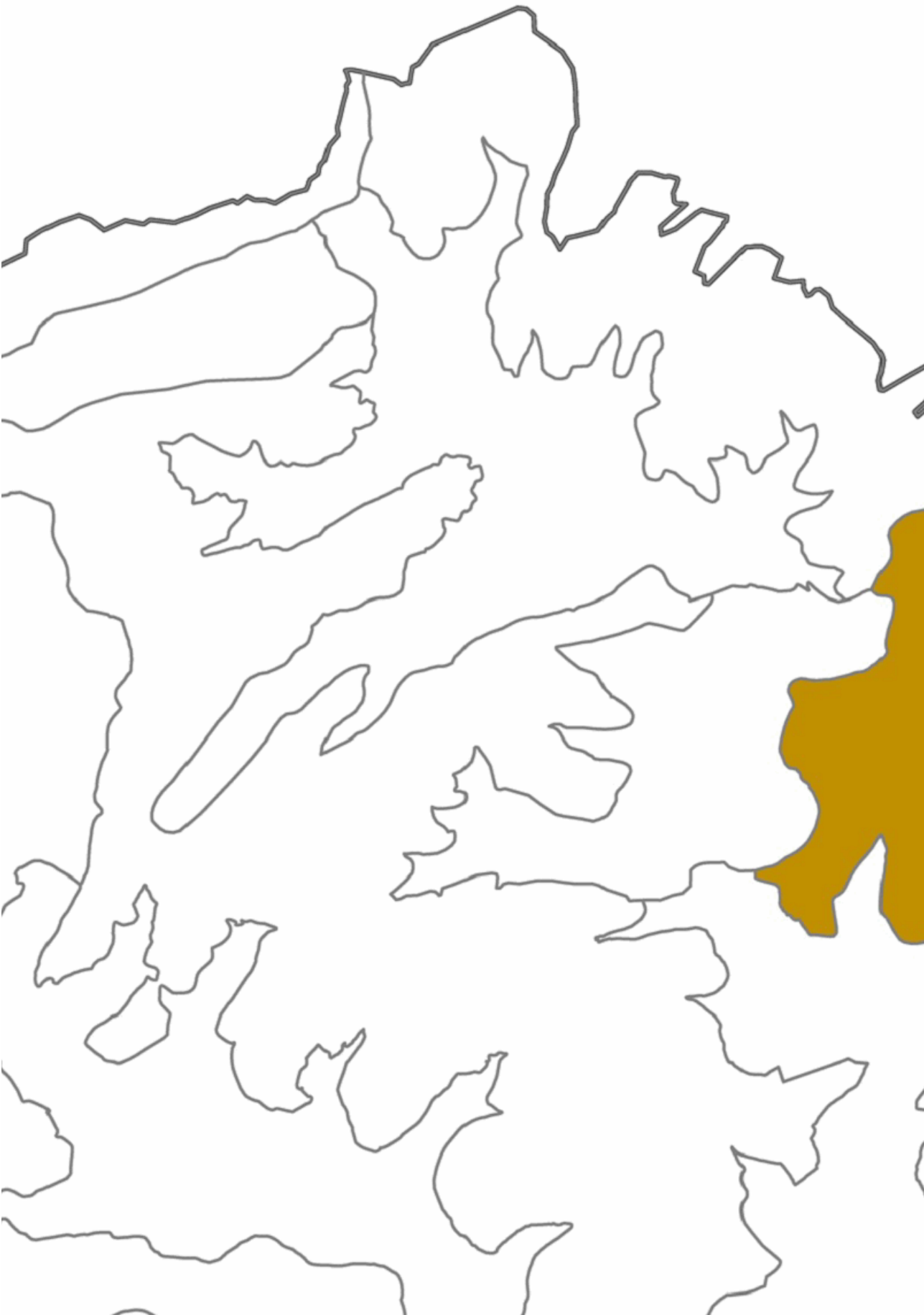
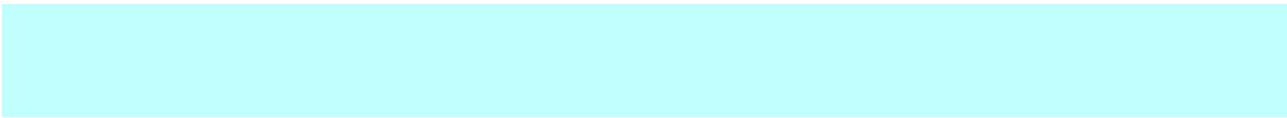
A number of Bronze Age funerary monuments are known within the area and it also includes the only known Roman site within the Elan Valley Estate, namely the Roman marching camp on Esgair Perfedd. Some of the early homesteads on the grange, such as Nannerth, lay outside the area.

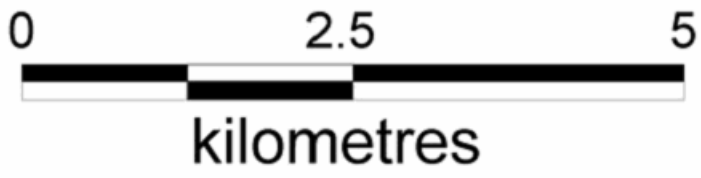
5 MOELFRYN TO CRUGYN CI

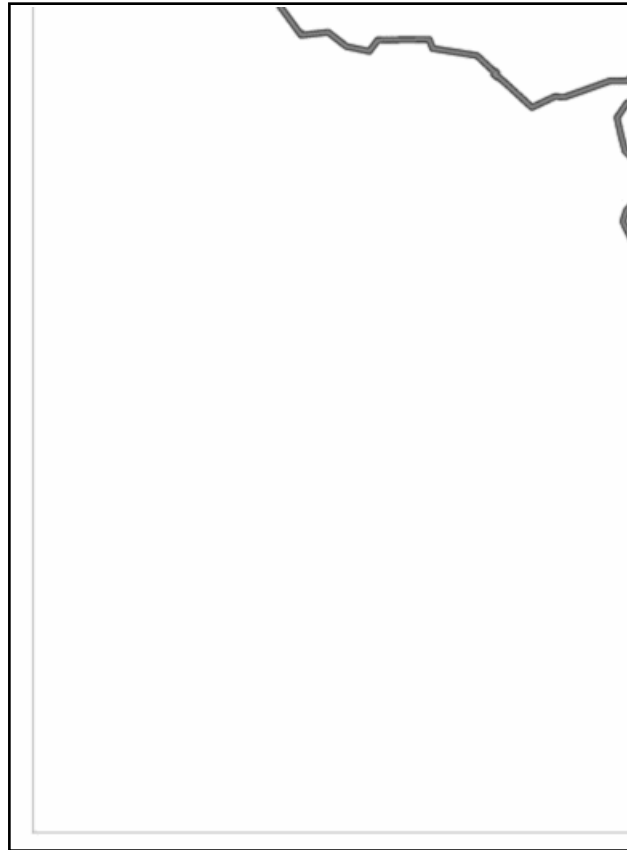
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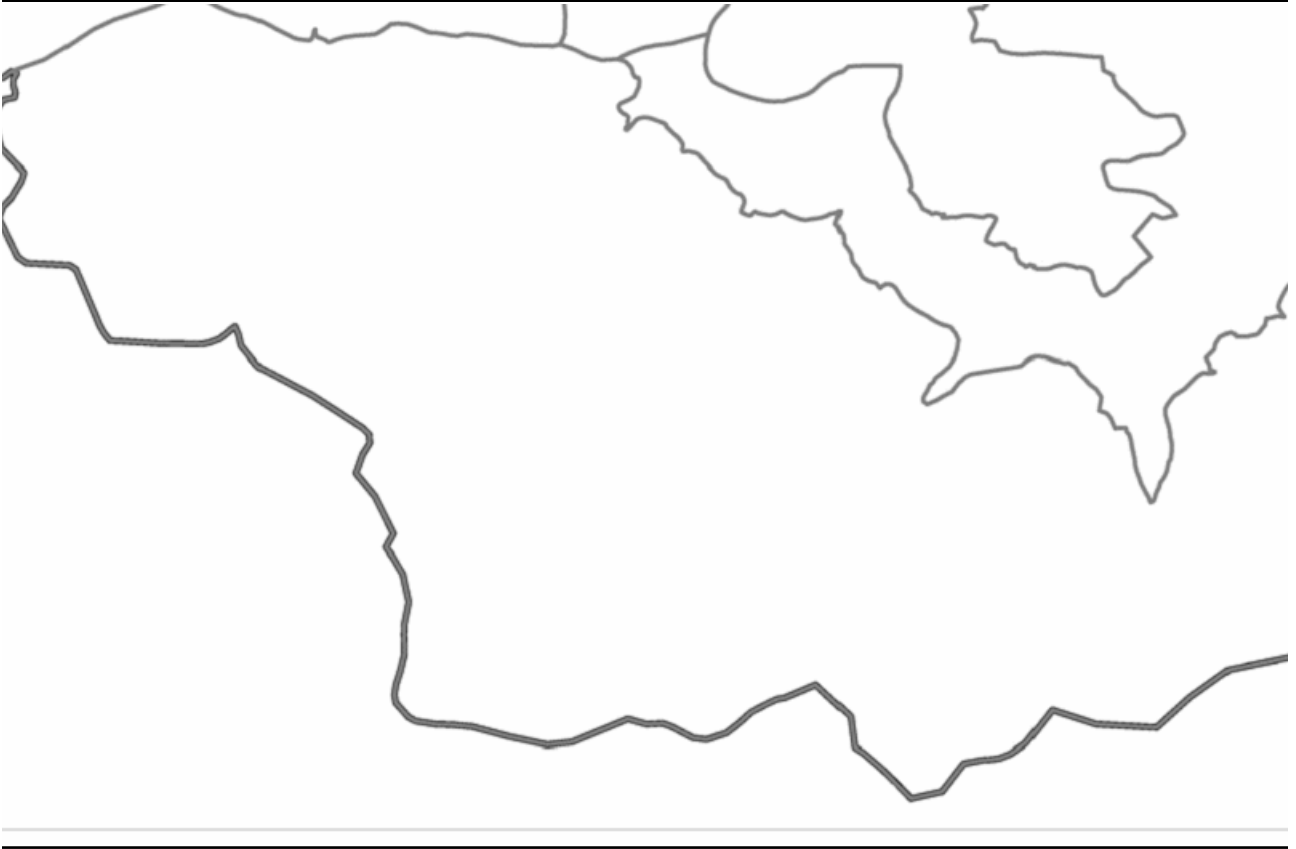
A block of high ground at the eastern edge of the Elenydd upland plateau, where the landscape often has a more craggy character than that seen to the west, particularly around Nannerth to the north. It lies between the Elan and Wye valleys but predominantly faces the Wye. Its main tributary valleys run eastwards towards the Wye, steep slopes face the Elan. The northern and eastern boundaries of this landscape area are defined by the Elan Valley estate boundary. The Nant y Blymbren stream forms part of the southern boundary, which then crosses the watershed to the Nant Gorwen stream. The western boundary of the area follows the 425m contour along the eastern side of the Elan valley.

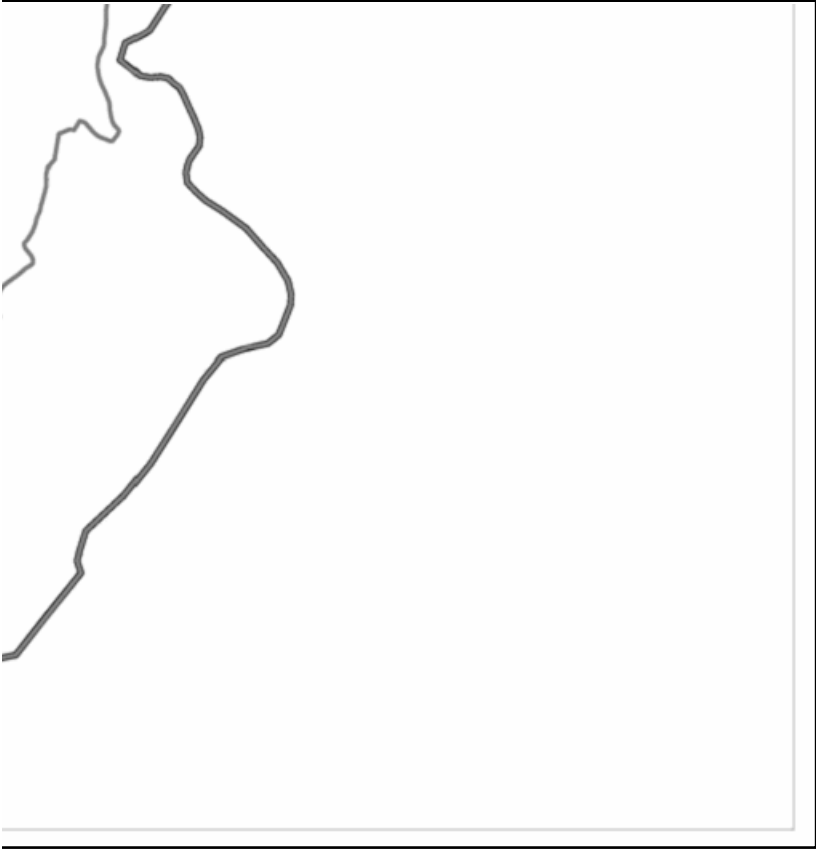












Geological Characteristics

This area forms part of the dissected plateau, underlain by Lower Silurian mudstones, which defines much of the landscape of the Elan Valley Estate. Parts of the area are quite craggy and steep sided, particularly on east facing slopes and valleys. These include outcrops of the Rhayader Pale Shales. Most of the landscape is covered in glacial till and there are small pockets of blanket bog within the area, some of which have been exploited as a fuel source.

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

The western side of this landscape area lies within an area defined by LANDMAP as a relatively dry terrestrial habitat (RDNRLD002), with a high percentage of unimproved acid grassland and marshy grassland. There are limited areas of bracken on drier valley slopes. *Molinia* is common across the higher parts of the area. The eastern part of the area is also described as relatively dry terrestrial habitat (RDNRLD003) but is an upland heath, characterised by a much higher proportion of dry acid heath (39%) and bracken cover (21%).

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

This landscape area lies at the eastern edge of the Elan Valley Estate and forms part of the extensive Elenydd upland plateau. There are views over the adjacent Wye, Elan and Nant y Dernol valleys. This area is mostly bleak and treeless in appearance. The landscape is unimproved and mostly unenclosed. The northern and eastern edge of the area, facing the Wye valley, falls away steeply and is rockier in appearance than most of the higher ground, with some sparse woodland, giving it a very different appearance in comparison to the higher pastures.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey's Cwmdeuddwr grange and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. In post-medieval times the area has remained in use for upland grazing. The area was associated with the Cwm Elan estate up until its purchase by the Birmingham Corporation in the 1890s. In modern times the Elan Valley Trust has managed the landscape on a 999 year lease from Welsh Water.

Historic Characteristics

This landscape area has considerable archaeological and historical interest. A number of Bronze Age funerary monuments are known within the area and it also includes the only known Roman site within the Elan Valley Estate, namely the Roman marching camp on Esgair Perfedd. In medieval times these hills would have formed the northeastern part of the upland grange of Cwmdeuddwr, which was in the hands of Strata Florida abbey. Some of the early homesteads on the grange, such as Nannerth, lie just outside the area. There is evidence of post-medieval peat cutting in a number of turbaries indicating that it was once an important source of domestic fuel for the local population.



Historic Landscape	Historic Landscape Character Area
Elan Valley (part of)	CPAT Elenydd; DAT Cambrian Mountains

Powys Landscape Character Area	Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
R15 Elenydd Uplands	Not Applicable

LANDMAP Geology Aspect
RDNRGL932 Crugan-Ci; RDNRGL971 Gwar y ty

LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect
RDNRLD002; RDNRLD003; RDNRLD004; RDNRLH005

LANDMAP Cultural Aspect
RDNRCL001 Elan Valley Estate

LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect
RDNRVS101 Cambrian Mountain Plateau Tops; RDNRVS105 Cambrian Mountain Edge

LANDMAP Historical Aspect
RDNRHL412 Elenydd; Small area of RDNRHL264 Upper Wye Valley; Small area of RDNRHL426 Cwmdeuddwr

ASNW	RIGS
Yes	None

SSSI	SPA
Elenydd (part of); Cerrig Gwalch (part of); Cwm Gwynllyn (part of)	Elenydd-Mallaen

SAC	NNR
Coetiroedd Cwm Elan/Elan Valley Woodlands	None

Management Comments

ELHAR ID Number 1265 - Visitor and sheep trampling around the base of the stone have eroded the land surface slightly. Resurface the area immediately around the stone base.

ELHAR ID Number 181 - This feature would be easily lost if vegetation increased around it, particularly *Molinia* (purple moor grass). Control bilberry growth and manage spread of heather or purple moor grass in the immediate vicinity.

Part of the area has not been subject to Uplands style archaeological field survey and there is potential for a substantial increase in recorded historic assets if such as survey was carried out.

Part of the area was subject to an Uplands archaeological field survey but issues have led to a low confidence in the resulting data, resurvey is suggested.

In areas, an overgrowth of *Molinia* on deep peat soils would benefit from improved grazing management or cutting to encourage heather growth with potential benefits for red grouse and curlew.

Tick infestations in sheep likely to be crossing over into red grouse reducing breeding success. Promoting the use of prophylactic anti-tick medication by farmers on their sheep would assist this issue. Action area for red grouse.

The area contains a resource of rocky outcrops and ffridd habitat around the moorland edge. In areas the ffridd is being overtaken by bracken. The area should be included in a bracken survey and management plan. Better management of the ffridd could improve feeding and breeding success for merlin. Merlin action area could be extended into the edges of this area

This is a current promoted walk:

<http://www.elanvalley.org.uk/crwydro/walking/maen-serth-and-crugyn-ci>. A popular walk regardless of this promotion, the Roman Camp and Maen Serth will also feature as part of the 2017 Walking Festival guided walks.

Maen Serth is near a By-way. Illegal off-road activity (straying) often occurs along this route, within fairly close proximity to the standing stone.

The Roman Camp has a bridleway running through it (East-West). Ariel photographs show some damage to the camp, this is unlikely to be by foot or bicycle, but more likely vehicles. The area is also near a popular mountain biking route, however, bike riders (most walkers and horse riders too) tend to opt to use a slightly deviated route which skirts the Roman Camp boundary. Adding the deviated route to the Estate's list of permissive routes, and promoting it, might protect the camp further (providing boggy sections or the route are improved to reduce straying).

The Monk's Trod crosses a number of the character zones. Recreational use of the Monk's Trod (both legal and illegal), requires a strategy. The difficulties in managing damage to routes and sites caused illegal off-road vehicles, can be helped through a concerted and coordinated efforts to report and record incidents. In addition, it's important to ensure the temporary restriction on the Monk's Trod does not lapse and people made aware of the status. Some general education about the rules would speak to those genuinely using the route aware of their error.

Summary

This part of the central Elan Valley is quite broad and open, but dominated by the Craig Goch reservoir. There is little woodland and only a small number of farmsteads along the lower valley slopes.

This section of the valley was carved out by glacial action during the last Ice Age. Alluvial deposits are present along the valley floor, with glacial till deposited on the valley slopes. The bedrock is composed of Lower Silurian mudstones, sandstones and shales.

The reservoir is largely surrounded by relatively dry terrestrial habitat, which includes a high percentage of unimproved acid grassland and marshy grassland, as well as areas of wet modified bog. There are areas of bracken on drier valley slopes and *Molinia* is common.

The tranquility of this area is lowered by the traffic on the road which runs along the valley. Pont ar Elan, at the northern edge of the area is a popular parking place for visitors. Valley slopes block long range views out of the area in all directions.

During medieval times these upland pastures were part of Strata Florida abbey's Cwmdeuddwr grange and managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. In post-medieval times the area has remained in use for upland grazing, with little land enclosure. Hirnant farm is the only occupied dwelling and is known to have been in existence by the 17th century.

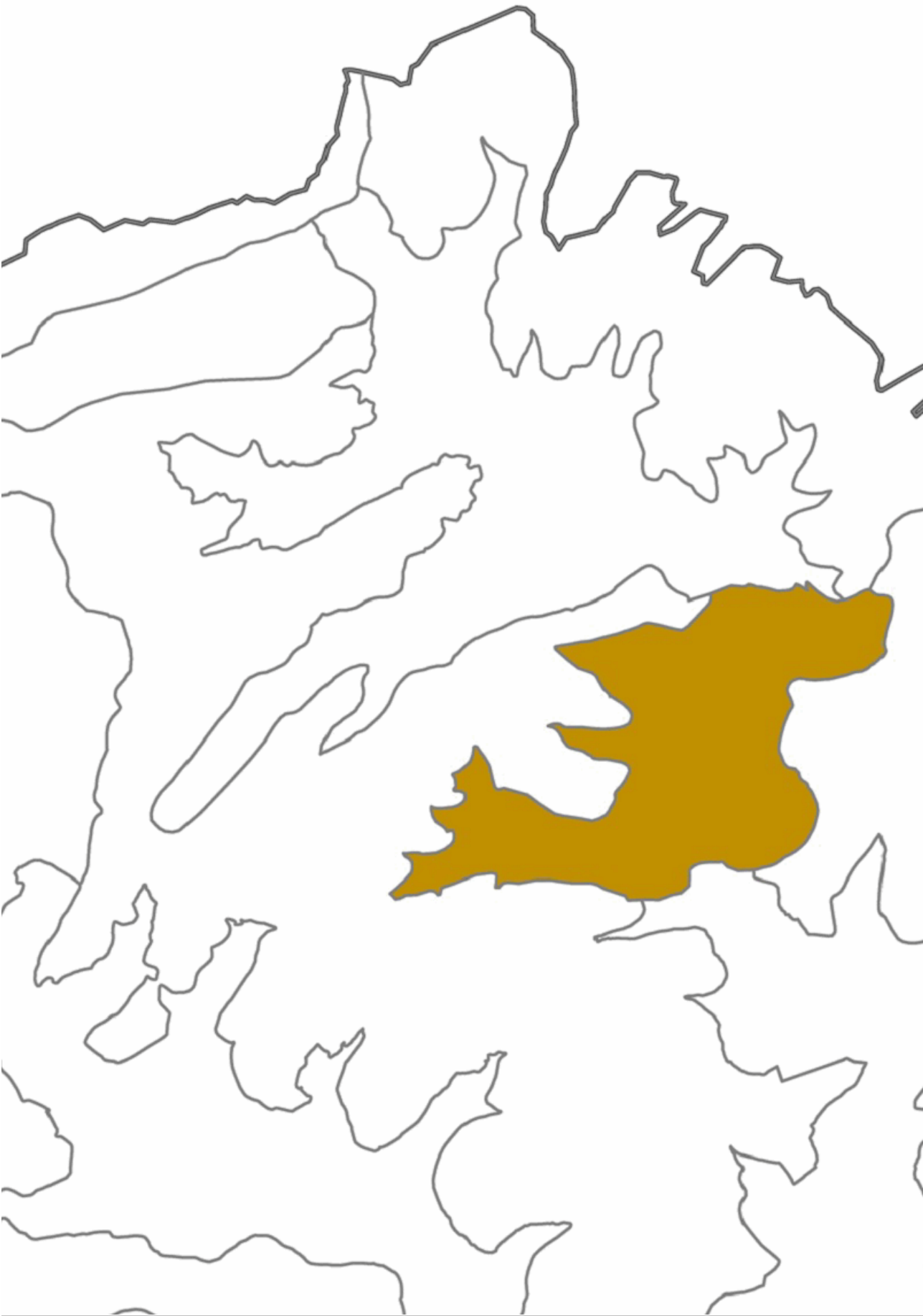
The area has small number of Bronze Age cairns and two flint flakes found near Pont ar Elan may be evidence of earlier prehistoric activity. There are several deserted settlement sites which may date to the medieval period, such as the longhouses on Esgair Gris and Esgair Rhiwlan.

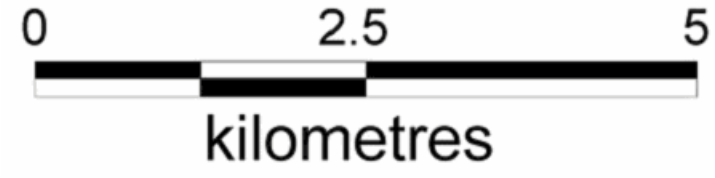
6 GRAIG GOCH

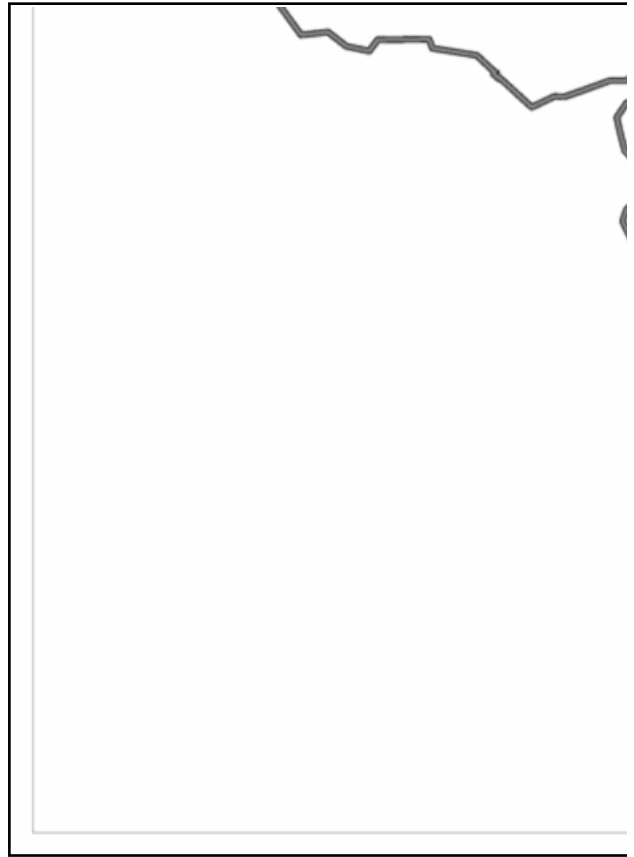
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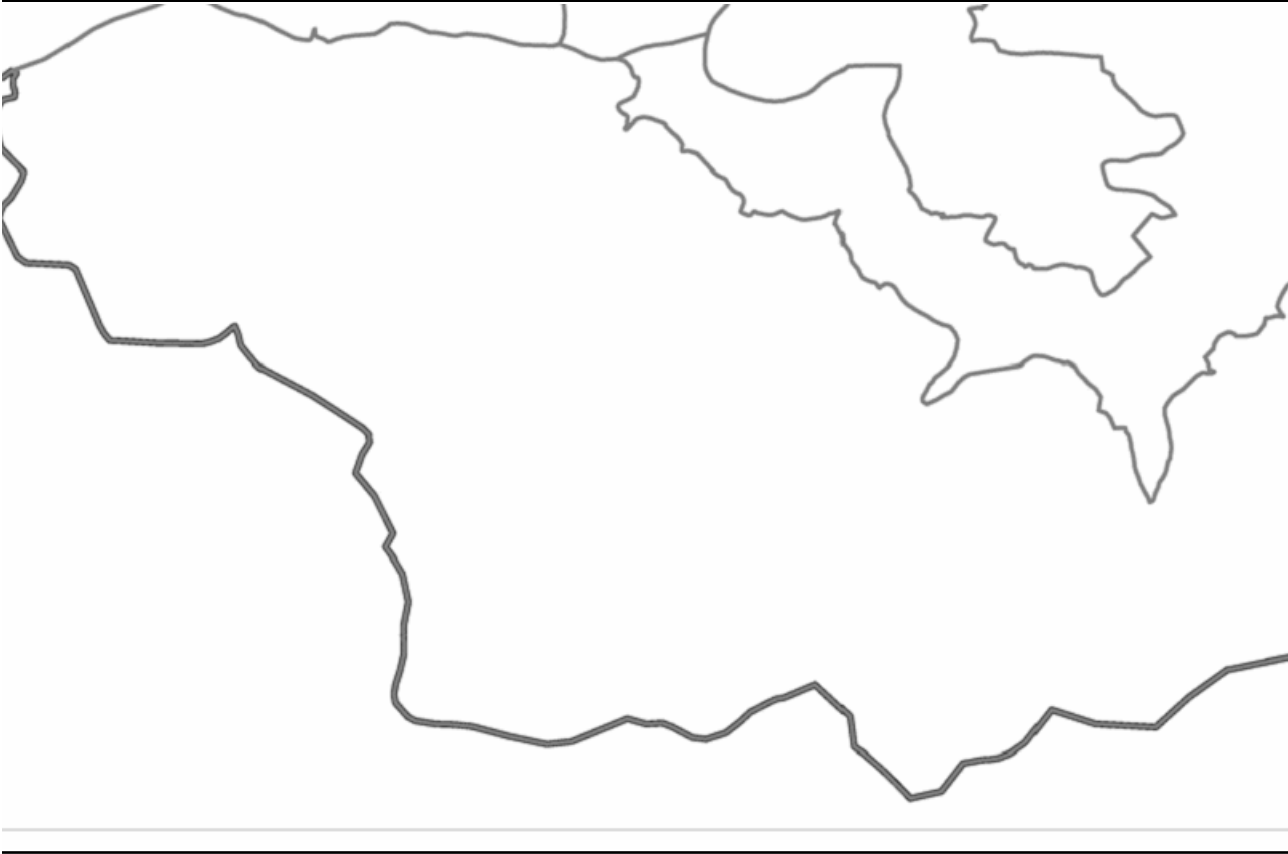
A simple valley landscape south of Pont ar Elan which includes the Craig Goch Reservoir, which differentiates it from the Upper Elan Valley, although its eastern side is much steeper than the valley further upstream. There are a small number of farmsteads and field systems along the lower valley slopes. The eastern and western boundaries of this landscape area follow the 425m contour line. The northern boundary follows the line of the modern road to Pont ar Elan and the southern boundary is defined by the Graig Goch dam.

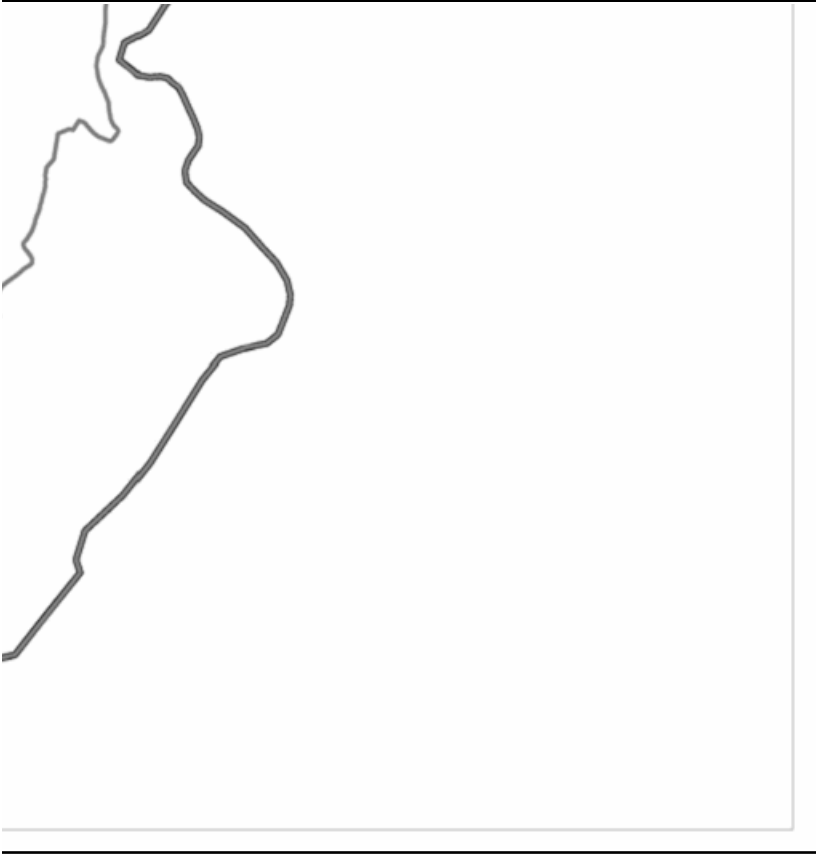












Geological Characteristics

This section of the Elan valley was carved out by glacial action during the last Ice Age. The valley floor is now mostly flooded by the Graig Goch reservoir, but alluvial deposits are present along the course of the Afon Elan river, with glacial till deposited on the terraces and slopes either side of the valley. The underlying bedrock is composed of Lower Silurian sedimentary rocks, including mudstones, sandstones and shales.

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

The Graig Goch reservoir forms the core of this landscape area. The reservoir is bordered by some improved grassland but is largely surrounded by an area of relatively dry terrestrial habitat (LANDMAP RDNRLD002), which includes a high percentage of unimproved acid grassland and marshy grassland, as well as areas of wet modified bog. There are limited areas of bracken on drier valley slopes and *Molinia* is common.

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

This part of the central Elan Valley is an upland river valley, cut by glacial and river action into the Elenydd plateau. This part of the valley is steep-sided, particularly to its eastern side, but is quite broad and open, with few trees present. There is some enclosed and improved land associated with the small number of occupied and deserted settlements in the valley. Rocky outcrops are rare, creating the effect of a fairly rounded and gentle landscape. The Graig Goch reservoir is a highly visible feature in the valley bottom and the valley slopes which rise to either side of the reservoir block long range views out of the area in all directions. The tranquility of this area is lowered by the traffic on the single road which runs along the valley floor from Elan Village to Pont ar Elan, which is popular with tourists and daytrippers.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey's Cwmdeuddwr grange and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. In post-medieval times the area has remained in use for upland grazing, with little land enclosure. There is now only a single occupied dwelling within the area, Hirnant farm, which lies in the shelter of the Elan valley. The area was associated with the Cwm Elan estate up until its purchase by the Birmingham Corporation in the 1890s, after which the valley was flooded to create the Graig Goch reservoir. In modern times the Elan Valley Trust has managed the landscape on a 999 lease from Welsh Water. The road along the Elan Valley runs through this area and is a popular route with visitors, especially during the summer months. Pont ar Elan, at the northern edge of the area is also a popular parking place for those touring the valley.

Historic Characteristics

In many respects this area is similar to the valley between Pont ar Elan and Gorslwyd (Area 03). The archaeological record includes a small number of Bronze Age cairns, including two close to the western side of the Graig Goch reservoir at Cefn Gwair. Two flint flakes found near Pont ar Elan and now kept in the National Museum of Wales may be evidence of earlier prehistoric activity in the valley. In medieval times, this area fell within the Grange of Cwmdeuddwr, a possession of Strata Florida abbey and there are several deserted settlement sites which may date to the medieval period, such as the longhouses at Esgair Gris and Esgair Rhiwlan. There have been a small number of post-medieval



settlements and only one working farm, Hirnant, remains occupied here. Hirnant is known to have been in existence during the 17th century and may have origins as a holding on the medieval grange of Cwmdeuddwr. The Graig Goch reservoir, created in the 1890s, now dominates this section of the valley.

Historic Landscape	Historic Landscape Character Area
Elan Valley	CPAT Elenydd; DAT Cambrian Mountains; CPAT Elan Valley Reservoirs

Powys Landscape Character Area	Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
B13 Claerwen Valley Reservoirs (part of)	Not Applicable

LANDMAP Geology Aspect
RDNRGL709 Trumau; RDNRGL113 Claerwen-Elan; RDNRGL140 Craig Dyfnant; RDNRGL932 Crugan-Ci;

LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect
RDNRLD002; RDNRLD004

LANDMAP Cultural Aspect
RDNRCL001 Elan Valley Estate

LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect
RDNRVS104 Cambrian Mountain Open Valley; RDNRVS100 Elan Valley Reservoirs

LANDMAP Historical Aspect
RDNRHL412 Elenydd; RDNRHL532 Elan Valley

ASNW	RIGS
No	None

SSSI	SPA
Elenydd (part of); Caeau Hirnant;	Elenydd-Mallaen (part of)

SAC	NNR
Not Applicable	None

Management Comments

ELHAR ID Number 257 Lluest Abercaethon Ring Cairn - Although currently damaged this feature would be susceptible to any future vehicular activity or farming activity in view of its proximity to a trackway. Geophysical survey to clarify its true purpose.

Part of the area was subject to an Uplands archaeological field survey but issues have led to a low confidence in the resulting data, resurvey is suggested.

The area contains very recent curlew breeding records. While some of the area is currently providing good breeding habitat there is other management that could be put in place to improve curlew breeding success. In other areas improved habitat management and other management could expand the current curlew breeding range.

Curlew action area.

Control of Molinia overgrowth on deep peat soils through better grazing and / or cutting management could diversify botanical interest and provide benefits for curlew. Historic names suggest the area has been used to cut for rhos hay in the past, potential to reintroduce this practice with benefits for curlew and habitat.

The area contains a single farmstead surrounded by enclosed fields some of which are SSSI hay meadows. These fields should be surveyed for botanical interest and included in the Elan Links in-by field management plan.

Areas of bracken on moorland slopes should be included in a wider bracken survey and bracken management plan.

Summary

This area is a large expanse of undulating upland terrain at the heart of the Elan Valley Estate. Much of the area is modified bog, covered with *Molinia*. There are also large areas of blanket bog, some of which are of palaeoenvironmental importance and the area is of international importance for breeding birds.

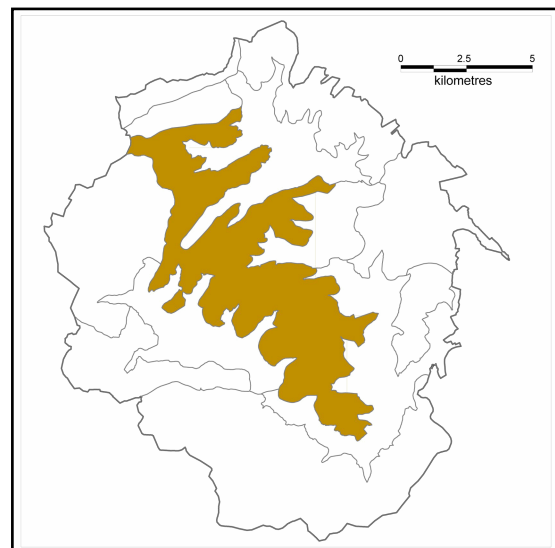
The area is mostly underlain by Lower Silurian sedimentary rocks. At Pengarnddu, in the southeastern corner of this area, Ordovician slates are exposed at the core of the Rhiwnant Anticline.

There has been no settlement within the area since early post-medieval times and this is one of the most remote and wild parts of the Elenydd hills. This is a very tranquil area, with no roads. The "Monks' Trod", which was a droving route in the 17th century, is used at a low level by hill-walkers, but the area is otherwise unaffected by the tourism generated by the popularity of the nearby Elan Valley. Long-range views are gained in all directions from local summits rising from the plateau.

The area has relatively few archaeological sites, although some Bronze Age funerary monuments are known. There are some long huts associated with medieval pastoral farming, when the mountain pastures were managed by Strata Florida abbey as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. There is some evidence of industrial activity here. In the 19th century, a leat carried water from the lakes at Cerrig Llwydion to the Cwm Elan Lead Mine, over 7km to the southeast. Many peat cutting areas are also found, which date to the 18th and 19th centuries.

Justification

A large expanse of undulating upland terrain on a dissected plateau at the heart of the Elan Valley Estate, mostly characterised by gentle hills and valleys. Much of this area is modified bog, covered with *Molinia*. There are also areas of peat bog, some of which are of palaeoenvironmental importance. The 450m and 425m contour lines have been used to define the boundary of this area.



Geological Characteristics

This area forms a large part of the dissected plateau, underlain by Lower Silurian sedimentary rocks, which defines much of the landscape of the Elan Valley Estate. The area is mostly covered by peat bog, including large areas of blanket bog of palaeoenvironmental importance. At Pengarnddu, in the southeastern corner of this area, Ordovician slates are exposed at the core of the Rhiwnant Anticline.

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

The central part of this landscape area lies within an area defined by LANDMAP (RDNRLD001) as a wet terrestrial habitat, chiefly characterised by wet modified bog and blanket bog. This area is of international importance for breeding birds. The southern and eastern parts of the area are defined as being a relatively dry terrestrial habitat (LANDMAP RDNRLD002), with a higher percentage of unimproved acid grassland and marshy grassland. The northern edge of the area falls within the extensive area defined by LANDMAP as the Teifi Pools Upland Mosaic (CRDGNLH061), which includes a large proportion of blanket bog and modified bog. *Molinia* is common across the whole of the landscape area.

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

This landscape area forms the heart of the Elan Valley Estate and part of the more extensive Elenydd upland plateau. The character of this remote and wild area is dominated by large areas of blanket bog and wet modified bog, with significant parts of the landscape covered with *Molinia* vegetation. Long-range views are gained in all directions from local summits rising from the plateau. This is a very tranquil area with no roads, where few hillwalkers venture.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. The area was purchased by the Birmingham Corporation in the 1890s. In modern times the Elan Valley Trust has managed the landscape on a 999 year lease from Welsh Water. There has been no settlement within the area since early post-medieval times and this is one of the most remote and wild parts of the Elenydd hills. The so-called "Monks' Trod" trackway crosses this area and is used at a low level by hill-walkers, but the area is otherwise unaffected by the tourism generated by the popularity of the nearby Elan Valley.

Historic Characteristics

This expansive area of upland plateau has relatively few archaeological sites, although some Bronze Age funerary monuments are known, as well as long huts and structures associated with pastoral farming during medieval and early post medieval times. The whole area was used by the monks of Strata Florida during the medieval period as pasturelands, associated with their upland granges in Elenydd. The trackway known as the "Monks Trod" crosses the heart of this area. It is not known what the origin of this routeway through the hills is, but it was certainly in use as a droving route between Pont ar Elan and Ffair Rhos, Ceredigion, by



the late 17th century, when it was shown on John Ogilby's road map of 1684. Another impressive linear feature is the post-medieval leat which carried water from the lakes at Cerrig Llwydion to the Cwm Elan Lead Mine, over 7km to the southeast. A number of post-medieval peat cutting areas of turbaries are also found within this area.

Historic Landscape	Historic Landscape Character Area	Powys Landscape Character Area	Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
Elan Valley; Upland Ceredigion (part of)	CPAT Elenydd; DAT Cambrian Mountains	R15 Elenydd Uplands	SLA12 North Ceredigion Uplands (part of)
LANDMAP Geology Aspect		LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect	
RDNRGL709 Trumau; RDNRGL140 Craig Dyfnant; RDNRGL979 Pengarnddu; RDNRGL939 Grafiau; CRDGNGL351; CRDGNGL222 Banc Cerrig Gwynion; CRDGNGL281 Claerdduewn-Corsyddalfa; CRDGNGL220 Llanddu Fawr		RDNRLD002; RDNRLD001; RDNRLD001; CRDGNLH061 Teifi Pools Upland Mosaic	
LANDMAP Cultural Aspect		LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect	
RDNRCL001 Elan Valley Estate; CRDGNC028 Upland Ceredigion		RDNRVS101 Cambrian Mountain Plateau Tops; CRDGNVS313 Cambrian Mountains (South)	
LANDMAP Historical Aspect		ASNW	RIGS
RDNRHL412 Elenydd		No	None
SSSI	SPA	SAC	NNR
Elenydd	Elenydd-Mallaen	Elenydd (part of)	Claerwen NNR (part of)

Management Comments

ELHAR ID Number 132 Carn Ricet - Surface evidence for the cairn is now slight but it may still have archaeological potential. This cairn needs to be better understood. Geophysical survey may help reveal its character and identify any surviving features of archaeological interest, potentially followed by archaeological evaluation. Restoring the cairn as a landmark and rerouting the footpath around the monument would also improve matters.

Part of the area was subject to an Uplands archaeological field survey but issues have led to a low confidence in the resulting data, resurvey is suggested.

This LCA contains a significant blanket bog resource. In areas, patches of eroded blanket bog have the potential for rewetting with benefits for blanket bog habitat and golden plover. Healthy bogs action area. Golden plover and red grouse action area.

In areas of the LCA underlain by deep peat, Molinia overgrowth is frequently an issue.

Changes to grazing management and / or cutting has the potential to improve moorland habitat in these areas with benefits for golden plover and other upland birds.

In some areas along the moorland boundary patches have been traditionally cut for rhos hay and reintroduction of the practice would increase habitat diversity.

Tranquillity may be lessened if more use of the area encouraged.

Summary

This area is a large area of heath, modified bog and blanket bog which includes the tributaries and upper reaches of the Claerwen. The area is of international importance for breeding birds.

The land here is generally of open, exposed moorland, comprised of gentle rolling slopes and shallow valleys. *Molinia* is common across the whole of the landscape area.

The area is underlain by Lower Silurian bedrock and masked by extensive peat bogs. The upper Claerwen valley is infilled by glacial clay with some alluvial deposits along the stream valleys. At the southwestern edge of the area the terrain changes considerably, becoming much rockier around Cripiau Bach and Craig Fawr.

The road between Ffair Rhos and the Claerwen valley passes through the southern part of this area. and brings visitors to the area around the Teifi Pools, diminishing the tranquility of the area to some extent.

This landscape area has some evidence of Bronze Age activity in the form of a small number of funerary cairns, but is most notable for a significant group of medieval or early post-medieval long huts concentrated on the area around Claerddu. These may well date back to medieval times when upland pastures were managed by Strata Florida abbey as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. The Tudor antiquarian John Leland came here around 1538 and provides rare evidence that some of the long huts near Claerddu were in use as "hafotai" at that time.

There has been little post-medieval settlement here. The farmstead of Claerddu was abandoned during the 20th century and is now used as a bothy by hill walkers.

Justification

A large area of heath, modified bog and peat bog which includes the tributaries and upper reaches of the Claerwen. The landscape is more varied than the Central Plateau to the east. Significant evidence of medieval and later pastoral activity is found on drier ridges and terraces, including settlements and folds. The western boundary of this area is defined by the estate boundary marked out with concrete posts in 1913 by the Birmingham Corporation. The northern and eastern boundaries have been drawn to across an area of open moorland to include the Claerwen watershed. The southern boundary has been drawn across open moorland to include the watershed of the Nant Esgair Wen.



Geological Characteristics

The topography of this area is characterised by undulating upland terrain, underlain by Lower Silurian bedrock and masked by extensive peat bogs, much of which is blanket bog. The upper Claerwen valley is infilled by glacial clay with some alluvial deposits along the stream valleys. At the southwestern edge of the area, near Claerddu, the terrain changes considerably, becoming much rockier with Silurian bedrock outcropping around Cripiau Bach and Craig Fawr.

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

This landscape area forms part of the exposed upland plateau which characterises much of the Elan Valley Estate and Elenydd hills. The land here is generally an open, exposed moorland, comprised of gentle rolling slopes and shallow valleys. There are large areas of blanket bog and modified bog which are often covered with *Molinia*, which gives the area a very bleak appearance, especially during the winter and early spring. There are panoramic views over the Elenydd district from higher summits, such as at Carreg Naw Llyn, which is one of the best locations to appreciate the remote and wild character of the wider landscape. The road which runs from Ffair Rhos in Ceredigion to the Claerwen valley passes through the southern edge of this area. It is a popular route which brings visitors to the area around the Teifi Pools and Claerddu, diminishing the tranquility of the area to some extent, although relatively few people venture far from the road.

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

Most of this landscape area falls within the extensive area defined by LANDMAP as the Teifi Pools Upland Mosaic (CRDGNLH061), which includes a large proportion of blanket bog and modified bog. The eastern part of this landscape area lies within an area defined by LANDMAP (RDNRLD001) as a wet terrestrial habitat, chiefly characterised by wet modified bog and blanket bog. *Molinia* is common across the whole of the landscape area. The area is of international importance for breeding birds.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. The Elizabethan monk John Leland passed through here and described the lake at Llyn y Fign in his "Itinerary through Wales" about 1538, following a visit to Strata Florida. The area was purchased by the Birmingham Corporation in the 1890s. In modern times the Elan Valley Trust has managed the landscape on a 999 year lease from Welsh Water. There has been little settlement in this area in recent centuries, with only the upland farmstead of Claerddu remaining in use in the 20th century, although it was abandoned by the second-half of the century. Access is possible by road from the Ceredigion side of the Elenydd Hills, but the metalled road ends at the Teifi Pools and only a rough trackway continues into Powys. The so-called "Monks' Trod" trackway crosses this area and is used at a low level by hill-walkers. Claerddu is now used as a bothy and the area is more frequented by visitors than the hills in the interior of the Elan Valley Estate to the east.

8 CLAERWEN HEADWATERS

Historic Characteristics

This landscape area has some evidence of Bronze Age activity in the form of a small number of funerary cairns, but is most notable for a significant group of medieval or early post-medieval long huts concentrated on the area around Claerddu and along the valley of the Nant Melyn, which runs between Claerddu and Claerwen. The land here was controlled by Strata Florida abbey during medieval times and many of the deserted settlements are suspected to be the hafotai which were used by herdsmen who accompanied stock animals on the upland pastures during the summer months. There is rare and important eyewitness evidence from the 1530s that some of the long huts near Claerddu were in use as hafotai at that time. The monk John Leland crossed the Claerddu during a journey from Strata Florida to Cwmystwyth and recorded his encounter with the inhabitants of two of the hafotai immediately after crossing the river. Two clearly significant trackways run through the southern part of this area. The "Monk's Trod" crosses the Claerwen and Nant Melyn streams as it runs southwestwards towards the Teifi Pools. Another old trackway can be followed from Llyn Egnant towards Claerwen, which may well have carried on down the Claerwen valley in the direction of Rhayader. Both trackways may have originally served to link Strata Florida with its estates to the east, such as Llangurig and Rhayader, which were both in the possession of the abbey in medieval times. One of the most impressive archaeological features found in this area is the mine leat which ran for over 10km from Llyn Fyrddon Fawr to supply the Glog Fawr Lead Mine near Ysbyty Ystwyth.



Historic Landscape	Historic Landscape Character Area
Upland Ceredigion; Elan Valley (part of)	CPAT Elenydd; DAT Cambrian Mountains

Powys Landscape Character Area	Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
R15 Elenydd Uplands	SLA12 North Ceredigion Uplands

LANDMAP Geology Aspect
CRDGNGL220 Llanddu Fawr; CRDGNGL351; CRDGNGL222 Craig Wen (Llyn Teifi); CRDGNGL340 Afon Claerwen-Claerddu; CRDGNGL180 Carn Gron-Penybwllch; RDNRGL939 Grafiau

LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect
CRDGNLH061 Teifi Pools Upland Mosaic; RDNRLD001

LANDMAP Cultural Aspect
RDNRCL001 Elan Valley Estate; CRDGNCL028 Upland Ceredigion

LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect
CRDGNVS313 Cambrian Mountains (South); RDNRVS101 Cambrian Mountain Plateau Tops

LANDMAP Historical Aspect
CRDGNHL101 Cambrian Mountains

ASNW	RIGS
No	None

SSSI
Elenydd

SPA
Elenydd-Mallaen

SAC
Elenydd

NNR
Claerwen NNR (part of)

Management Comments

This LCA contains a significant blanket bog resource. In areas, patches of eroded blanket bog have the potential for rewetting with benefits for blanket bog habitat and golden plover. Healthy bogs action area. Golden plover and red grouse action area.

The Monk's Trod crosses a number of the character zones. Recreational use of the Monk's Trod (both legal and illegal), requires a strategy. The difficulties in managing damage to routes and sites caused illegal off-road vehicles, can be helped through a concerted and coordinated efforts to report and record incidents. In addition, it's important to ensure the temporary restriction on the Monk's Trod does not lapse and people made aware of the status. Some general education about the rules would speak to those genuinely using the route aware of their error.

General issues within this LCA include Molinia.

Summary

This landscape area includes the upper Claerwen valley, which is dominated by the Claerwen Reservoir and its impressive dam, which were created in the 1960s.

This part of the Claerwen valley developed along a geological fault and was cut through the Lower Silurian sandstones and mudstones by glacial action during the last Ice Age. The valley floor, now flooded by the Claerwen reservoir, is infilled by glacial clay with some alluvial deposits also present.

The reservoir is bordered to the north by steep slopes and an area of relatively dry terrestrial habitat. The southern and western banks of the reservoir lay within an area of wet terrestrial habitat, which has a higher proportion of wet modified bog. *Molinia* is common across the area.

There is limited evidence of Bronze Age funerary monuments in the area. During medieval times these upland pastures were managed by Strata Florida abbey as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. The valley itself was also an important communications route between Strata Florida and its lands to the east at Rhayader.

A small number of medieval or early-post medieval settlements are hidden in the sheltered valleys to the north of the reservoir. Three of these, Claerwen, Nantybeddau and Cerrigcwplau have remained in occupation to the present day.

A rough trackway runs the entire length of the valley along this side, giving access to the farms. The Claerwen dam, at the eastern end of the valley, draws many visitors and detracts from the tranquility of what is otherwise a remote and quiet valley.

Justification

This landscape area includes the upper Claerwen valley, which is dominated by the Claerwen Reservoir and its impressive dam. Archaeologically, it has medieval and later settlement evidence in the tributary valleys along its northern side, and some Bronze Age funerary cairns are known. Farmsteads such as Nantybeddau, Craig Cwpla and Claerwen and their associated field systems lie within the sheltered valleys of this area. The Claerwen Dam forms the southeastern boundary of this landscape area, with the 450m and 425m contour lines used to define the boundary along the northern side of the valley and the 425m contour used as a boundary along the southern side of the valley.



Geological Characteristics

This part of the Claerwen valley developed along a geological fault but was further cut through the Lower Silurian sandstones and mudstones by glacial action during the last Ice Age. The valley floor, now flooded by the Claerwen reservoir, is infilled by glacial clay with some alluvial deposits also present.

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

The Claerwen reservoir forms the core of this landscape area. The reservoir is bordered to the north by an area of relatively dry terrestrial habitat (LANDMAP RDNRLD002), which includes a high percentage of unimproved acid grassland and marshy grassland, as well as areas of wet modified bog. The southern banks of the reservoir lay within an area of wet terrestrial habitat (LANDMAP BRCKNLH909), which has a high proportion of wet modified bog and blanket bog. Further west, across the Ceredigion border, this gives way to an area defined by LANDMAP as the Teifi Pools Upland Mosaic (CRDGNLH061), which also includes a large proportion of blanket bog and modified bog. *Molinia* is common across the area to the south and west of the reservoir.

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

The upper Claerwen valley is dominated by the large reservoir which was created here when the valley was dammed in the 1940s-1950s. To the southern side of the reservoir the land appears a bleak and unenclosed moorland, with the land bordering onto the lake dominated by *Molinia*. The valley sides rise relatively steeply at the northern side of the reservoir, although a roughly metalled road runs the entire length of the valley along this side, giving access to Claerwen farm and continuing westwards into Ceredigion. At the eastern end of the valley the large Claerwen dam is a visually dominant feature which draws many visitors and detracts from the tranquility of what is otherwise a remote and quiet valley.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. The Claerwen valley itself would undoubtedly have been an important communications route between Strata Florida and its lands to the east at Rhayader during medieval times. This remains a sparsely populated landscape as there were a number of farmsteads and smallholdings along the valley and its tributaries during post-medieval times, though only three dwellings are now occupied, at Claerwen, Nant y Beddau and Craig Cwpla. The area was purchased by the Birmingham Corporation in the 1890s. In modern times the Elan Valley Trust has managed the landscape on a 999 year lease from Welsh Water. The valley bottom was flooded in the 1950s to create the Claerwen Reservoir and the large dam at the eastern end of the reservoir draws quite a number of visitors to the lower part of the valley, though few venture up the valley or onto the adjoining hills. The valley has achieved recognition outside the area as one of the Elan Valley lakes and is interpreted at the Elan Valley Visitor Centre.

Historic Characteristics

The upper Claerwen valley was flooded in the 1960s to create the Claerwen Reservoir. The reservoir and its impressive dam now dominate the valley and are the focus of this landscape area. The land immediately adjacent to the reservoir includes evidence of Bronze Age funerary monuments and a small number of medieval or early-post medieval settlements hidden in the sheltered valleys to the north of the reservoir. Three of these, Claerwen, Nantybeddau and Cerrigcwplau have remained in occupation to the present day. A roughly metalled roadway, which connects the Elan Valley with Ffair Rhos, Ceredigion runs along the northern side of the reservoir and is still in use, although rarely travelled by motor vehicles. It is probable that the valley was an important east-west route through the Elenydd hills in earlier times, including during the medieval period when travellers between Strata Florida abbey and its lands at Rhayader would undoubtedly have used this route to cross the uplands.



Historic Landscape	Historic Landscape Character Area
Elan Valley	CPAT Elenydd; DAT Cambrian Mountains; CPAT Claerwen

Powys Landscape Character Area	Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
B13 Claerwen Valley Reservoirs	Not Applicable

LANDMAP Geology Aspect
RDNRGL709 Trumau; RDNRGL113 Claerwen-Elan; RDNRGL140 Craig Dyfnant; BRCKNGL973; BRCKNGL986 Esgair Irfon; BRCKNGL634 Esgair Garthen; CRDGNGGL180 Carn Gron-Penybwllch;

LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect
RDNRLD001; RDNRLD002; RDNRLD004; BRCKNLH897 Claerwen Reservoir; BRCKNLH909 Elan south; CRDGNLH061 Teifi Pools Upland Mosaic

LANDMAP Cultural Aspect
RDNRCL001 Elan Valley Estate; RDNRCL002 Elan Valley Reservoirs; BRCKNCL293 Elan Valley; BRCKNCL312 Brecknockshire Uplands

LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect
RDNRVS104 Cambrian Mountain Open Valley; RDNRVS100 Elan Valley Reservoirs; BRCKNVS618 Claerwen Reservoir; BRCKNVS999 Brynglas and Brynmoel Uplands

LANDMAP Historical Aspect
CRDGNHL101 Cambrian Mountains; RDNRHL412 Elenydd; RDNRHL656 Claerwen; BRCKNHL494 Claerwen Reservoir; BRCKNHL316 Carnau

ASNW	RIGS
No	Claerwen Dam

SSSI
Elenydd

SPA
Elenydd-Mallaen (part of)

SAC
Elenydd (part of)

NNR
Claerwen NNR (part of)

Management Comments

ELHAR ID Number 1015 Hirnant Claerwen Shelter - Purple moor grass tussocks are starting to break up the structure. Clear vegetation and potentially excavate.

ELHAR ID Number 1145 Hirnant Claerwen Sunken Shelter - Reeds have invaded this site and it is close to the edge of the stream and may be eroded in future. Clear vegetation carefully.

The area contains a number of farmsteads surrounded by enclosed fields. These fields should be surveyed for botanical interest and included in the Elan Links in-by field management plan. Many of the fields have the potential to provide better feeding habitat for golden plover and curlew (worm-rich pastures).

An overgrowth of Molinia on deep peat soils would benefit from improved grazing management or cutting.

Summary

A large area of wetland and peat bog to the south of the Claerwen valley. Large parts of this area are dominated by peat bog and modified bog, which is covered with *Molinia*. There is some variation to the southwest, where Crug Gynon rises and creates a more rugged landscape.

The Lower Silurian bedrock underlying this area is masked by extensive areas of peat bog and glacial till. The glacial lake of Llyn Gynon sits at the western edge of the area. An important pollen sequence also contained a tephra layer, volcanic ash deposited over 6000 years ago.

This is a particularly exposed and bleak environment, especially during the winter months. It is a remote and tranquil area with a low-level of leisure activity, with hill-walkers infrequently passing through.

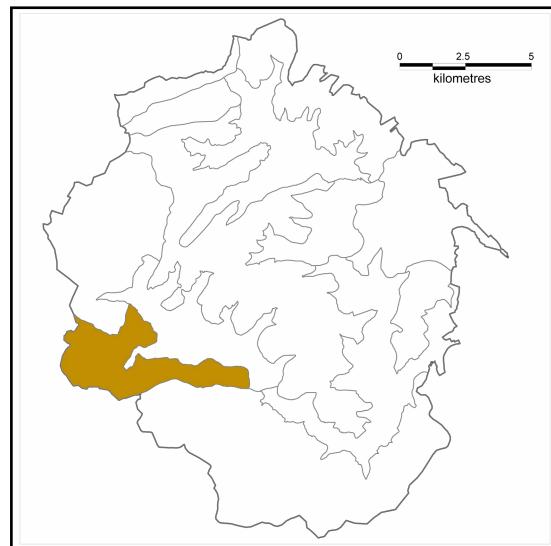
During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. The "home grange" of the abbey extended up into these hills and there are several deserted medieval settlement sites, such as at Esgair Wen and Llyn Gynon, which may be associated with the grange.

A disused trackway runs east to west across this area. This may be the line of one of the medieval routes connecting Strata Florida with its possessions to the east, such as Rhayader.

There is also evidence that peat was cut in the area for use as a domestic fuel on the farms and cottages of the surrounding districts. There are now no occupied dwellings in this area, with only the ruined Pantybeddau cottage representing settlement in the area in the past 200 years.

Justification

A large area of wetland and peat bog to the south of the Claerwen valley. Large parts of this area are dominated by peat bog and modified bog, which is covered with *Molinia*. There is some variation to the west, where Crug Gynon rises and creates a more rugged landscape. Llyn Gynon and its tributaries form a lower, wetter area along the Ceredigion-Powys country boundary. Limited medieval or later settlement evidence is found on drier ridges. The northwestern boundary of this area has been drawn to include the watershed of Nant Brwynog and Llyn Gynon, excluding the Nant Esgairwen watershed. The northeastern boundary follows the 425m contour line and in the south the boundary turns west to follow the 450m contour and then crosses to the 500m contour on the Elan estate boundary. The estate boundary forms the western limit of the landscape area.



Geological Characteristics

The Lower Silurian bedrock, consisting of rocks of the Minor Rhuddnant Grit Formation, underlying this area in masked by extensive areas of peat bog and glacial till. The area forms part of the dissected upland plateau which defines most of the Elan Valley Estate. The glacial lake of Llyn Gynon sits at the western edge of the area, within a natural depression in the landscape.

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

This landscape area lies to the west and south of the Claerwen reservoir. Its southern portion is characterised by a wet terrestrial habitat (LANDMAP BRCKNLH909), which has a high proportion of wet modified bog and blanket bog. To the north the area falls within the Teifi Pools Upland Mosaic (CRDGNLH061), which includes a large proportion of blanket bog and modified bog. *Molinia* is common across the whole landscape area.

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

This block of upland moorland to the southern side of the Claerwen reservoir is a particularly exposed and bleak environment, especially during the winter months, with a thick *Molinia* sward overlying extensive areas of peat bog. This is a remote and tranquil area from which good views are possible over the Claerwen valley and also, from higher ground, over the wider Elenydd upland plateau to the north.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. The home grange of the abbey extended up Cwm Mwyro into these hills. There are no post-medieval settlements within this wild and remote landscape. The area was purchased by the Birmingham Corporation in the 1890s and in modern times the Elan Valley Trust has managed the landscape on a 999 year lease from Welsh Water. There is a low-level of leisure activity here, with hill-walkers infrequently passing through the area.

Historic Characteristics

This landscape area has extensive areas of peat bog and modified bog and therefore has relatively little recorded archaeology. There are several deserted settlement sites, such as at Esgair Wen and Llyn Gynon, which may date to medieval times when the area fell within the upland granges of Strata Florida abbey. At that time these hills would have been used for summer grazing for the abbey's sheep, cattle and horses, and herdsman would have spent the summer months living on the mountain pastures. A disused trackway runs east to west across this area, from Cwm Mwyro towards the southern side of the Claerwen valley. This may be the line of one of the medieval routes connecting the abbey of Strata Florida with its possessions to the east, such as Rhayader. At one point this trackway is cut across by the level of a post-medieval trial mine, indicating that the route was no longer in use by the time an attempt was made in the 18th or 19th century to find metal ores here. There is also



some evidence within this area that peat was cut for use as a domestic fuel on the farms and cottages of the surrounding districts. There are now no occupied dwellings in this area, with only the ruined Pantybeddau cottage representing an attempt to settle the area in the past 200 years. This cottage is associated with a rather dark tale, for it was built in 1867, as an encroachment on the common land to the south of the Claerwen valley. A gang of commoners opposed to such encroachments pulled down the house the following year, despite the presence of a family living there at the time, and thereafter the house was left abandoned.

Historic Landscape	Historic Landscape Character Area
Upland Ceredigion (part of); Elan Valley (part of)	CPAT Elenydd; DAT Cambrian Mountains

Powys Landscape Character Area	Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
B12 Bryn Glas Uplands	SLA12 North Ceredigion Uplands (part of)

LANDMAP Geology Aspect
BRCKNGL634 Esgair Garthen; BRCKNGL986 Esgair Irfon; CRDGNG185 Llyn Du-Llyn Gorast; CRDGNG180 Carn Gron-Penybwloch; CRDGNG1340 Afon Claerwen-Claerddu

LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect
BRCKNLH909 Elan South; CRDGNLH061 Teifi Pools Upland Mosaic

LANDMAP Cultural Aspect
CRDGNCL028 Upland Ceredigion; BRCKNCL312 Brecknockshire Uplands

LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect
CRDGNVS313 Cambrian Mountains (South); BRCKNVS999 Brynglas and Brynmoel Uplands

LANDMAP Historical Aspect
CRDGNHL101 Cambrian Mountains; BRCKNHL316 Carnau

ASNW	RIGS
No	Bryniau Pica

SSSI	SPA
Elenydd	Elenydd-Mallaen

SAC	NNR
Elenydd (part of)	None

Management Comments

This LCA contains a significant blanket bog resource. In some areas, patches of eroded blanket bog have the potential for rewetting with benefits for blanket bog habitat. Healthy bogs action area.

An overgrowth of Molinia on deep peat soils would benefit from improved grazing management or cutting to encourage dwarf shrub establishment with potential benefits for merlin. Merlin action area.

Summary

A large and high upland block forming the southern edge of the Elan Valley Estate. The area includes a number of tributary streams which flow northwards to the Claerwen. These valleys and some of the higher summits are often rocky and rugged.

Ordovician mudstones outcrop at the heart of this area, which are cut by the Rhiwnant valley, which follows a geological fault line. Lead ore veins along the fault were mined during the 19th century. To the east and west of this lay rocks of Lower Silurian age.

The landscape is masked by glacial till with large areas of peat, and blanket bog in the east, and some acid grassland and heathland. Slopes above the valley floor to the east have some dry heath and bracken.

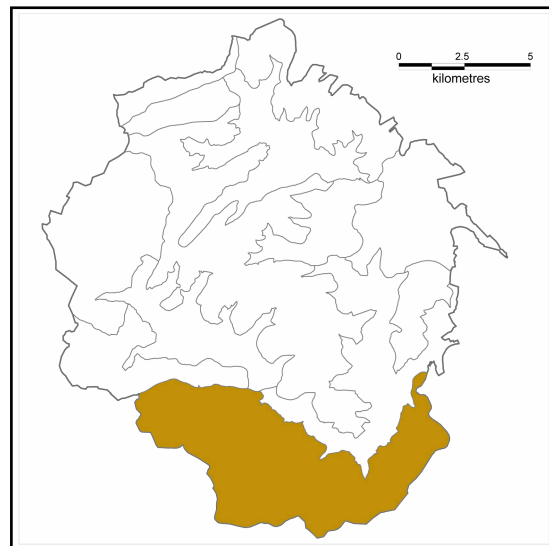
This is one of the more accessible parts of Elenydd, via the road to the Claerwen reservoir, allowing hillwalkers easy access. Good views are possible across the Elenydd uplands and the Claerwen valley from higher ground.

There are many Bronze Age funerary cairns within this area and rare examples of Bronze Age hut circles. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. There are a significant number of ruined dwellings, huts, enclosures and sheepfolds here, some of which may have medieval origins. There are no later post-medieval settlements within this wild and remote landscape.

As well as lead mining sites in the Rhiwnant valley and along Nant y Carw, there is also evidence of peat cutting in the area, another important industry during post-medieval times when peat was the main source of domestic fuel.

Justification

A large and high upland block, rising to 579m, forming the southern edge of the Elan Valley Estate. The area includes a number of tributary streams which flow northwards to the Claerwen. The tributary valleys and some of the local summits within the area are often rocky and rugged, providing a very different character to the wetlands to the west and north. There are a significant number of Bronze Age funerary monuments within this landscape. There has also been some lead mining in post medieval times and industrial remains are evident along the Rhiwnant Valley. The Elan Valley estate boundary defines the southern, eastern and western boundaries of this landscape area, and a combination of the limit of enclosed farmland and the 350m contour defining the northern boundary.



Geological Characteristics

At the core of this upland plateau lies a northeast to southwest anticline which brings Ordovician turbidite mudstones to the surface. These rocks are deeply cut by the Rhiwnant valley, within which mineralisation along faults in the rock has caused the development of metal ore bodies, mined during the 19th century. To the east and west of the core of the anticline lay rocks of Lower Silurian age. Further Ordovician sedimentary rocks underlie Gro Hill, at the eastern edge of the areas. The land surface is masked by extensive areas of glacial till with large areas of peat bog and some acid grassland and heathland. The area forms part of the dissected upland plateau which defines most of the Elan Valley Estate.

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

This block of upland moorland to the southern side of the Claerwen valley is an exposed and bleak moorland environment, which is often steep and, in places, craggy. Rock outcrops and screes are found along some of the deeply-incised valleys that break up the area giving the landscape some texture and variation. Good views are possible over the Claerwen valley and also, from higher ground, over the wider Elenydd upland plateau. This is one of the more accessible parts of the Elenydd plateau, via the road to the Claerwen reservoir, which is provided with car parking facilities from where promoted walking trails allow hillwalkers easy access.

Historic Characteristics

There are a significant number of Bronze Age funerary monuments within this landscape area, which include round cairns, ring cairns and exposed cists. There are also possible examples of Bronze Age hut circles recorded at sites such as Cerrig Llysiau, which may be a rare example of Bronze Age settlement in the upland district. The use of the mountain pastures for summer grazing under the hafod/hendre system in medieval times, as well as on a more permanent basis by shepherds during post-medieval times, is also evidenced in the presence of a significant number of ruined dwellings, huts, enclosures and sheepfolds, many of which are found in the shelter of the tributary valleys of the Claerwen which run down off this upland

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

This landscape area lies to the south of the Claerwen valley and chiefly consists of an area of wet terrestrial habitat (LANDMAP BRCKNLH909), which has a high proportion of wet modified bog and blanket bog particularly in the east of the area. Along the margins of the Caban Coch reservoir at the northeastern end of the landscape area, some dry heath, dry scrub and bracken give a greater variety of habitat.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. There are no post-medieval settlements within this wild and remote landscape. The area was purchased by the Birmingham Corporation in the 1890s and in modern times the Elan Valley Trust has managed the landscape on a 999 year lease from Welsh Water. There is a moderate-level of leisure activity here, with hill-walkers gaining access to the hills via trails originating at the car parks at the Elan Valley Visitor Centre, the Claerwen Dam and the southern end of Caban Coch reservoir.



block. There is also evidence of post-medieval mining activity, with metal mines found in the Rhiwnant valley and its tributary valley, Nant y Carw. There is also evidence of peat cutting in the area, which became another important industry during post-medieval times as peat became the chief source of domestic fuel for the growing local population as timber became scarce as local woodlands declined.

Historic Landscape	Historic Landscape Character Area
Elan Valley (part of)	CPAT Elenydd; DAT Cambrian Mountains; CPAT Dalrhiw; CPAT Elan Valley Reservoirs

Powys Landscape Character Area	Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
B12 Bryn Glas Uplands	Not Applicable

LANDMAP Geology Aspect
BRCKNGL634 Esgair Garthen; BRCKNGL986 Esgair Irfon; BRCKNGL394 Caban Coch; BRCKNGL493 Drum yr Eira; BRCKNGL123 Waun Sarn

LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect
BRCKNLH909 Elan South; BRCKNLH633 Llanerch Cawr; BRCKNLH430 Cnwc;

LANDMAP Cultural Aspect
BRCKNCL312 Brecknockshire Uplands

LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect
BRCKNVS999 Brynglas and Brynmoel Uplands

LANDMAP Historical Aspect
BRCKNHL316 Carnau; Small area of BRCKNHL151 Llanerch Cawr

ASNW	RIGS
No	None

SSSI	SPA
Elenydd	Elenydd-Mallaen

SAC	NNR
Elenydd (part of)	None

Management Comments

ELHAR ID Number 760 Cerrig Llwydian Deserted Rural Settlement - Bracken and other invasive species cover parts of the area. Bracken roots can damage archaeological features. Targeted removal of bracken from archaeological features. Resurvey.

ELHAR ID Number 821 Marchnant Hafod II - The adjacent stream has already eroded the northern corner of the building. Excavate this long hut to retrieve any data before the stream causes more damage.

Part of the area was subject to an Uplands archaeological field survey but issues have led to a low confidence in the resulting data, resurvey is suggested.

This LCA contains a significant blanket bog resource. In some areas, patches of eroded blanket bog have the potential for rewetting with benefits for blanket bog habitat and golden plover. Healthy bogs action area. Golden plover action area.

An overgrowth of Molinia on deep peat soils would benefit from improved grazing management or cutting with potential benefits for golden plover, red grouse and merlin. Golden plover, red grouse and merlin action area.

The area contains a resource of rocky outcrops and ffridd habitat around the moorland edge. In areas the ffridd and moorland edge is being overtaken by bracken.

The area should be included in a bracken survey and management plan. Better management of the ffridd and moorland edge could improve feeding and breeding success for merlin and ring ouzel. Merlin and Ring ouzel action area..

In some areas along the moorland boundary patches have been traditionally cut for rhos hay and reintroduction of the practice would increase habitat diversity.

12 ELAN RESERVOIRS

Summary

This area is focused on the floors of the Elan and lower Claerwen valleys, which were carved out by glacial action during the last Ice Age. The area is underlain by Ordovician and Lower Silurian mudstones, sandstones and shales, which are masked by glacial till deposited on the slopes either side of the valley.

The valley floors are now mostly flooded by the Garreg Ddu, Penygarreg and Caban Coch reservoirs. Their impressive stone-built dams and the scenic landscape surrounding them dominate this sheltered valley. The valley is very distinctive, compared to the surrounding exposed and bleak hills of Elenydd. This is a varied landscape, with deciduous woodland cloaking the valley sides, as well as coniferous plantations and some improved grassland.

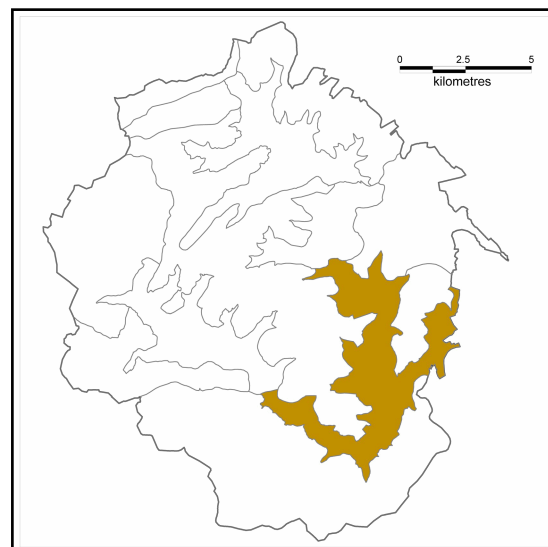
This is also the only part of the Elan Valley Estate where there is a significant population, found in the scattered farms and cottages along the valley, as well as at Elan Village. Large numbers of visitors also come to the valley throughout the year, drawn by its beauty.

These sheltered valleys were under the control of Strata Florida abbey in medieval times, as part of the abbey's upland granges. During post-medieval times a number of cottages, farms and country houses developed, but many of these were lost beneath the waters of the reservoirs by the start of the 20th century.

This area has an important association with the 19th century poet Percy Bysshe-Shelley, who often visited his cousins at Plas Cwm Elan and fell in love with the valley.

Justification

This is a complex valley landscape, focused on the Caban Coch, Garreg Ddu and Penygarreg Reservoirs. The land surrounding the reservoirs is characterised by deciduous woodland, coniferous plantations and field systems, along with a number of farms and cottages and the small settlement at Elan Village. The Elan Valley Visitor Centre is found near Elan Village at the eastern edge of the area. The western side of the valley, a combination of the limit of enclosed land and the 400m contour line define the landscape area boundary. The 425m contour defines the boundary to the east of the valley, dropping down to the 400m contour as it runs southwards. The Graig Goch Dam forms the northern boundary.



12 ELAN RESERVOIRS

Geological Characteristics

The Elan valley was carved out by glacial action during the last Ice Age. The valley floor is now mostly flooded by the Garreg Ddu, Penygareg and Caban Coch reservoirs. with glacial till deposited on the terraces and slopes either side of the valley. Along the western side of the valley, Ordovician rocks at the core of the Rhiwnant Anticline extend northeastwards from the Claerwen valley, flanked to either side by Lower Silurian sedimentary rocks, including mudstones, sandstones and shales.

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

The Elan valley lakes, their impressive stone-built dams and the scenic, engineered landscape surrounding them visually dominate this sheltered valley. The valley is also very distinctive, in comparison to the steep, exposed and often bleak surrounding hills and it comprises of a mosaic of enclosed fields, deciduous woodland, coniferous plantations and some unimproved pasture along the sides of the reservoirs and the lower parts of the valley slopes which rise above them. This is also the only part of the Elan Valley Estate where there is a significant population, found in the scattered farms and cottages along the valley, as well as at Elan Village. Large numbers of visitors also come to the valley throughout the year, drawn by its beauty and accessibility. The visitor centre near Elan Village, car parks at key locations and promoted walks along the valley, as well as access to the lakes for anglers, mean that the area can often be quite busy. The steep-sided, twisting nature of the valley mean that there are no views out of this area, again contrasting with the largely open landscape of Elenydd which characterises most of the Elan Valley Estate.

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

This landscape area is focused on the Elan valley and is dominated by an area of wet terrestrial habitat, approximately one third of which is now flooded by the Caban Coch, Penygareg and Carreg Ddu reservoirs. Surrounding the reservoirs are landscapes which have a much more varied habitat that most of the Elan Valley Estate, for deciduous woodland, coniferous plantations and improved grassland are all found within the area.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic associated with the Cwmdeuddwr Grange of Strata Florida abbey. This sheltered valley included a number of farms and country houses, as well as a chapel-of-ease to Llansantffraid Cwmdeuddwr parish, which were lost when it was flooded in the 1890s to create the famous chain of Elan Valley reservoirs. Amongst the properties lost at that time was the mansion of Cwm Elan, which formerly controlled the Cwm Elan Estate, purchased by the Birmingham Corporation to create the reservoir system in order to supply their distant city. The surrounding landscape, managed by the Elan Valley Estate and the structures associated with the reservoirs, managed by the Welsh Water, are aesthetically valued today and very popular with tourists. This is the one area of the Elan Valley Estate with which visitors interact in significant numbers. There is a popular visitor centre, car parks, trails and interpretation. There are also farmsteads and cottages found along the valley, as well as the settlement at Elan Village, which makes this the only part of the Elan Valley Estate which has a significant population.

In the early 19th century the poet Percy Bysshe-Shelley visited his cousins, the Grove family of Cwm Elan, on a number of occasions. He fell in love with the valley and intended to lease a local farm. Another cultural theme of note was the artistic record made by Eustace Tickell, Chief Engineer on the construction of the Penygareg Dam, who spent time sketching scenes along the Elan Valley before it was transformed by the reservoir. He published his work in a volume known as "The Vale of Nantgwilt"

12 ELAN RESERVOIRS

Historic Characteristics

This landscape area is dominated by the Caban Coch, Garreg Ddu and Penygarreg Reservoirs, all constructed during the 1890s by the Birmingham Corporation to supply water to their city. The waters of the reservoirs hide many historic sites and features, not least of which is the site of Cwm Elan mansion, the focus of the Cwm Elan estate, which was the forerunner of the present Elan Valley Estate owned by Welsh Water. Cwm Elan estate itself was a successor to Strata Florida abbey's Cwmdeuddwr grange and included the heart of the Elan Valley and the hills which bound it. A chapel of ease to Llansantffraid Cwmdeuddwr parish was also drowned when the valley was flooded and a replacement church built on the lakeshore at Nantgwyllt. The land around the reservoirs provides a much more varied landscape than most of the Elan Valley Estate, characterised by deciduous woodland, coniferous plantations and enclosed field systems, along with a number of farms and cottages. There is even a small settlement at Elan Village, built in the Arts and Crafts style in the early 20th century to house those employed to manage and maintain the reservoir complex. The reservoirs sit in a designed, engineered landscape which was created with the intention of making it an attractive and interesting landscape. Today the Elan Valley reservoirs are one of the most popular tourist destinations in Wales and the road which runs along the valley is popular with day trippers throughout the year. Consequently, the leisure industry has a considerable influence on the valley and today the popular Elan Valley Visitor Centre stands near Elan Village.



Historic Landscape	Historic Landscape Character Area
Elan Valley	CPAT Elenydd; DAT Cambrian Mountains; CPAT Elan Valley Reservoirs; CPAT Deuddwr; CPAT Dalrhiw;

Powys Landscape Character Area	Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
B13 Claerwen Valley Reservoirs	Not Applicable

LANDMAP Geology Aspect
RDNRGL140 Craig Dyfnant; RDNRGL113 Claerwen-Elan; RDNRGL932 Crugan-Ci; RDNRGL534 Caban Coch; RDNRGL979 Pengarnddu; BRCKNGL493 Drum yr Eira; BRCKNGL394 Caban Coch;

LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect
RDNRDL004; RDNRDL002; RDNRDL003; RDNRDL005; BRCKNLH621 Caban Coch Reservoir; BRCKNLH633 Llanerch Cawr; BRCKNLH909 Elan South; BRCKNLH442 Caban Coch Plantation; BRCKNLH850 Carn

LANDMAP Cultural Aspect
RDNRCL001 Elan Valley Estate; RDNRCL002 Elan Valley Reservoirs; RDNRCL003 Elan Valley Visitor Centre; RDNRCL004 Elan Village; BRCKNCL293 Elan Valley; BRCKNCL312 Breckn Uplands

LANDMAP Historical Aspect
RDNRHL412 Elenydd; RDNRHL532 Elan Valley; BRCKNHL400 Caban Coch Reservoir; BRCKNHL316 Carnau; BRCKNHL151 Llanerch Cawr

Gafallt Woodlands; BRCKNLH430 Cnwc;

LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect
RDNRVS103 Cambrian Mountain Valley with forestry; RDNRVS100 Elan Valley Reservoirs; BRCKNVS114 Caban Coch Reservoir; BRCKNVS824 Claerwen Valley

ASNW
Yes

RIGS
None

SSSI
Elenydd; Coed yr Allt Goch; Rhos yr Hafod; Caeau Troedrhiwdrain; Gweunydd Ty'n y Llidiart; Coedydd Glannau a Cwm Coel; Cae Henfron; Caban Lakeside Woodland; Carn Gafallt; Caeau Penglaneinon

SPA
Elenydd-Mallaen (part of)

SAC
Coetiroedd Cwm Elan/Elan Valley Woodlands

NNR
None

Management Comments

ELHAR ID Number 399 Coed y Foel Pillbox III - The pillbox is affected by vegetation. A picnic site alongside the pillboxes will potentially increase visitor footfall. Interpretation could help develop an understanding of the importance of these pillboxes and their scheduled status. Vegetation could be cleared.

ELHAR ID Number 464 Coed y Foel Pillbox II - The pillbox is affected by vegetation. A picnic site alongside the pillboxes will potentially increase visitor footfall. Interpretation could help develop an understanding of the importance of these pillboxes and their scheduled status. Vegetation could be cleared.

ELHAR ID Number 430 Coed y Foel Pillbox I - The pillbox is affected by vegetation. A picnic site alongside the pillboxes will potentially increase visitor footfall. Interpretation could help develop an understanding of the importance of these pillboxes and their scheduled status. Vegetation could be cleared.

Specifications for extent of vegetation removal and line of sight to other pillboxes will be required, as will a specification for the gate to prevent access inside the Pillbox. Through promoting the pillboxes and clearing vegetation, we're increasing access, however reducing access through preventing access inside. Therefore, interpretation becomes more important in this case. Interpretation which aims to investigate the wider defences across the Estate is worth considering.

Part of this LCA was subject to Uplands archaeological field survey but issues have led to a low confidence in the resulting data, resurvey to aid management, understanding and interpretation.

This LCA contains the main woodland resource for the Elan Links area. Components of the SAC woodland such as at Coedydd Glannau, Cwmcoel, Penygarreg, Carnafallt and Neuaddfach would benefit from the reintroduction of grazing and other actions to open up the woodland understorey with benefits for the lower plant assemblage and woodland bird species such as pied flycatcher.

Isolated pockets of rhododendron and extensive beech regeneration need removing to prevent further invasion.

Invasion by self-seeding conifers on some steep-sided slopes is causing a reduction in landscape and habitat quality and should be removed.

Areas of dry heath are being invaded by self-seeding conifers that need removing; leave broadleaved trees and scots.

The age profile of the heather in some area of dry heath is becoming restricted.

The LCA has a significant ffridd and moorland edge resource some of which is being overgrown with bracken. The area should be included in the bracken survey and management plan. There is the potential to improve management of the ffridd and moorland edge to increase feeding opportunities for ring ouzel and merlin.

The area contains a number of farmsteads surrounded by enclosed fields some of which are SSSI hay meadows. These fields should be surveyed for botanical interest and included in the Elan Links in-by field management plan and hay meadow project. Many of the fields have the potential to have their botanical diversity restored. Many of the fields have the potential to provide better feeding habitat for curlew and ring ouzel (worm-rich pastures).

In some areas along the moorland boundary patches have been traditionally cut for rhos

hay and reintroduction of the practice would increase habitat diversity.

Nant y Gro dam requires some vegetation removal to reveal the remains (and a plan to continue this annually or biannually). The dam has an interpretation panel but this might require review – there is opportunity to link (at least signpost) this to the pillbox story, and WWI & WWII Estate links overall. The dam sits opposite the Elan Valley Trail which is accessible to most people. In pursuit of inclusivity, there is an opportunity to place fixed interpretation opposite the dam on the trail.

This LCA contains most of the "honeypot" locations, including the Visitor Centre and the dams. It also includes most of the road access in the Elan Links area

Summary

This area forms part of the dissected plateau which defines much of the landscape of the Elan Valley Estate. This landscape area lies at the eastern edge of the Elan Valley Estate and forms part of the extensive Elenydd upland plateau. There are views over the adjacent Wye and Elan valleys.

Parts of the area are quite craggy and steep sided. The area is underlain by Lower Silurian bedrock which includes outcrops of Llandovery series conglomerates. Most of the landscape is covered in glacial till and there are pockets of peat bog within the area, some of which have been exploited as a fuel source. This landscape area is defined as a relatively dry terrestrial habitat, with a high percentage of dry dwarf shrub heath.

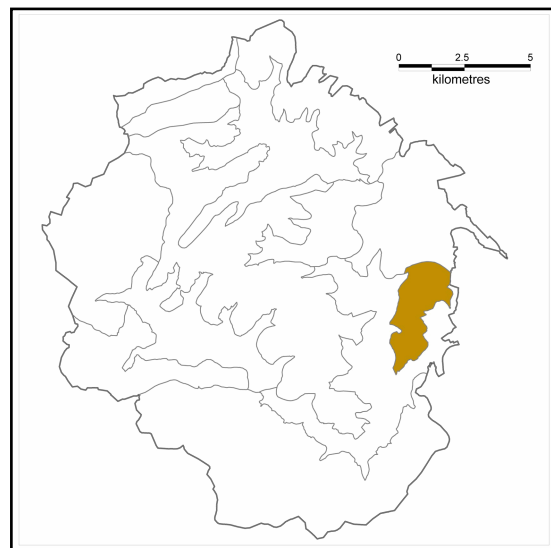
An extensive carpet of heather dominates the landscape.

There are a small number of Bronze Age funerary monuments known within the area, but most of the archaeological evidence relates to more recent periods. In medieval times these hills would have formed the eastern part of the upland grange of Cwmdeuddwr, which was in the hands of Strata Florida abbey, when the upland pastures would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands.

Aerial photographs show that there is evidence of cultivation and settlement, as yet unrecorded, along the southeastern side of this landscape area. There is evidence of post-medieval peat cutting in a number of turbaries at the heart of the area, indicating that it was once an important source of domestic fuel for the local population.

Justification

The northern boundary of this landscape area follows the Nant y Blymbren stream, crossing eastwards to the Nant Gorwen stream. The 400m contour defines the western, southern and most of the eastern boundaries. Where woodland, and dwellings, lie above the 400 metre contour the boundary has been taken up above them.



Geological Characteristics

This area forms part of the dissected plateau, underlain by Lower Silurian mudstones, which defines much of the landscape of the Elan Valley Estate. Parts of the area are quite craggy and steep sided. These include outcrops of Llandovery series mudstones and conglomerates. Most of the landscape is covered in glacial till and there are small pockets of blanket bog within the area, some of which have been exploited as a fuel source.

Visual & Sensory Characteristics

This landscape area lies at the eastern edge of the Elan Valley Estate and forms part of the extensive Elenydd upland plateau. There are views over the adjacent Wye and Elan valleys. This area is mostly treeless but the carpet of heather than covers much of the landscape area darkens the landscape and makes it very distinctive when compared with adjacent parts of the upland plateau, where grassland dominates. The landscape is unimproved and unenclosed. The western, southern and eastern edges of the area, facing the Elan and Wye valleys, fall away steeply and are often rocky in appearance. There is sparse tree cover along the eastern margin of the area.

Historic Characteristics

This landscape area has an under-recorded archaeological and historical resource, with a significant area not previously surveyed. There are a small number of Bronze Age funerary monuments within the area. In medieval times these hills would have formed the eastern part of the upland grange of Cwmdeuddwr, which was in the hands of Strata Florida abbey. Aerial photographs show that there is evidence of cultivation and settlement, as yet unrecorded, along the southeastern side of this landscape area. There is evidence of post-medieval peat cutting in a number of turbaries at the heart of the area, indicating that it was once an important source of domestic fuel for the local population.

Landscape Habitat Characteristics

This landscape area is defined by LANDMAP as a relatively dry terrestrial habitat (RDNRLD002), with a high percentage of dry dwarf shrub heath, with an extensive carpet of heather dominating the landscape. There is also some modified bog, most notably on Cefn Rhydoldog.

Cultural Characteristics

The chief cultural characteristic of this area relates to its historic use for upland pastoral farming. During medieval times these upland pastures were controlled by Strata Florida abbey's Cwmdeuddwr grange and would have been managed as seasonally grazed "hafod" lands. In post-medieval times the area has remained in use for upland grazing. There is only a single occupied dwelling within the area, Troedrhwiwfen, in the southeast. The area was associated with the Cwm Elan estate up until its purchase by the Birmingham Corporation in the 1890s. In modern times the Elan Valley Trust has managed the landscape on a 999 year lease from Welsh Water.



Historic Landscape	Historic Landscape Character Area	Powys Landscape Character Area	Ceredigion Special Landscape Area
Elan Valley	CPAT Elenydd; DAT Cambrian Mountains	R15 Elenydd Uplands	Not Applicable
LANDMAP Geology Aspect		LANDMAP Landscape Habitat Aspect	
RDNRGL932 Crugan-Ci; RDNRGL534 Caban Coch		RDNRLD003;RDNRLD005	
LANDMAP Cultural Aspect		LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Aspect	
RDNRCL001 Elan Valley Estate		RDNRVS101 Cambrian Mountain Plateau Tops; RDNRVS105 Cambrian Mountain Edge	
LANDMAP Historical Aspect		ASNW	RIGS
RDNRHL412 Elenydd; Small area of RDNRHL426 Cwmdeuddwr		No	None
SSSI	SPA	SAC	NNR
Elenydd	Elenydd-Mallaen	Coetiroedd Cwm Elan/Elan Valley Woodlands	None

Management Comments

ELHAR ID Number 338 - Cadw report that the barrow is heavily bracken-covered. Careful removal of bracken.

Part of the area has not been subject to Uplands style field survey and there is potential for a substantial increase in recorded historic assets if such a survey was carried out.

Part of the area was subject to an Uplands archaeological field survey but issues have led to a low confidence in the resulting data, resurvey is suggested in order to aid management, understanding and interpretation.

The area contains a significant resource of dry heath. Active management of heather would reduce the risk of significant damage from heather beetle and would benefit red grouse and potentially curlew. Tick infestations in sheep likely to be crossing over into red grouse reducing breeding success. Promoting the use of prophylactic anti-tick medication by farmers on their sheep would tackle this issue. Areas of dry heath are invaded by self-seeding conifers that need removing. Action area for dry heath and red grouse. Care needs to be taken to avoid actions in hen harrier nesting site.

In areas of the LCA bracken is invading reducing habitat diversity and encroaching on dry heath. The area needs including in the bracken survey and management plan and management actions are needed to reduce bracken encroachment.

The area contains a resource of rocky outcrops and ffridd habitat around the moorland edge. In areas the ffridd is being overtaken by bracken. The area should be included in a bracken survey and management plan. Better management of the ffridd could improve feeding and breeding success for merlin and ring ouzel. Merlin action area could be extended into the edges of this area. Ring ouzel action area.
