

To: Members of the Communities  
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 20 April 2015

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **9.30 am** on **THURSDAY, 23 APRIL 2015** in **CONFERENCE ROOM 1A, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN.**

Yours sincerely

G. Williams  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

## **AGENDA**

### **1 APOLOGIES**

### **2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at this meeting.

### **3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **4 MINUTES (Pages 3 - 14)**

To receive the minutes of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on the 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2015 (copy enclosed).

### **5 RATIONALISATION OF PRECAUTIONARY GRITTING ROUTES (Pages 15 - 54)**

To consider a joint report by the Network Manager and the Head of Highways and Environmental Services (copy enclosed) seeking the Committee to consider and comment on the route changes that have been developed with a view to reducing the cost of precautionary gritting.

### **Comfort break**

#### **6 BETTER REGULATION OF CARAVAN SITES (Pages 55 - 64)**

To consider a report by the Development Manager (Planning and Public Protection) (copy enclosed) on the progress made to date with developing a caravan sites strategy for the County, and on effective enforcement through negotiation with caravan site owners.

#### **7 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 65 - 82)**

To consider a report by the Scrutiny Coordinator (copy enclosed) seeking a review of the committee's forward work programme and updating members on relevant issues.

#### **8 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

To receive any updates from Committee representatives on various Council Boards and Groups

### **MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Councillors**

Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts  
(Chair)

Councillor Win Mullen-James (Vice-Chair)

Peter Evans  
Carys Guy  
Rhys Hughes  
Bob Murray

Joe Welch  
Cefyn Williams  
Cheryl Williams

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## **COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held in Conference Room 1A, County Hall, Ruthin on Thursday, 12 March 2015 at 9.30 am.

### **PRESENT**

Councillors Peter Evans, Huw Hilditch-Roberts (Chair), Win Mullen-James (Vice-Chair), Bob Murray and Cefyn Williams.

Co-opted Members: - D. Houghton, Dr D. Marjoram and G. Williams.

Lead Members Councillors Hugh Evans, David Smith and Eryl Williams attended at the Committee's request.

Councillors Stuart Davies, Bobby Feeley, Martyn Holland, Huw Jones, Gwyneth Kensler attended as observers.

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Corporate Director: Economic and Community Ambition (RM), Head of Highways and Environmental Services (SP), Head of Education (KE), Senior Engineer, Flood Risk Management (WH), Scrutiny Coordinator (RE) and Administrative Officer (CW).

### **1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors James Davies, Gill Greenland, Carys Guy, Rhys Hughes, Joe Welch and Cheryl Williams.

### **2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillor H. Hilditch-Roberts declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 5 "Language Categorisation of all Denbighshire Schools" because his partner was an employee of the Council, and Councillor Martyn Holland declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 5 "Language Categorisation of all Denbighshire Schools" because he was a School Governor.

### **3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

No items were raised which in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972.

### **4 MINUTES**

The Minutes of a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2015 were submitted.

Matters arising:-

In response to a question from Councillor W.M. Mullen-James, the Scrutiny Coordinator agreed to liaise with the Head of Highways and Environmental Services regarding whether the possible provision of a discount for green waste collection for senior citizens had been considered as part of the budget setting process.

**RESOLVED** – *that, subject to the above, the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.*

## **5 LANGUAGE CATEGORISATION OF ALL DENBIGHSHIRE SCHOOLS**

A report by the Head of Education (HE), which sought the Committee to consider the findings of Welsh in Education Strategic Group's review of the language categorisation of the County's schools, was circulated with the papers for the meeting.

It had been resolved by Cabinet on the 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2014 to request that the Welsh in Education Strategic Group review the language categorisation of all schools during the autumn term and report to Scrutiny in early spring 2015.

The context and criteria of categorisation, included in the report, was summarised by the HE, who also outlined the categorisation and results of the questionnaire in Appendix 2. A breakdown of responses had been included in Appendix 3 with the responses having been checked against current educational outcomes.

The HE and Lead Member for Education informed Members that:-

- the Welsh Government's (WG) 'Defining schools according to Welsh Medium provision (2007)' document was a guidance which set out descriptions and school categories based on the amount of Welsh used in teaching and learning, and the day to day running of schools. This guidance, which had no basis in legislation, was used by education authorities across Wales when developing information for parents on the language medium of their schools;
- in response to a Cabinet decision in September 2014 the Welsh in Education Strategic Group (WESG) had undertaken a review of all the county's schools, both primary and secondary (apart from the special schools), to assess whether all schools were delivering their curriculum within the defined criteria for their current categorisation;
- the results of this assessment had identified anomalies between the current language categorisation and curriculum delivery medium at four of the county's schools - 3 primary schools and 1 secondary school. Whilst one of the primary schools was a dual stream (Category 2) school none of its pupils had been assessed through the medium of Welsh in recent years, but two were expected to be assessed through Welsh this year. Another primary school, which delivered its curriculum mainly in English, but with significant use of Welsh (Category 4), had indicated it was a dual stream school with sufficient capacity to deliver through the medium of Welsh, and that some pupils had actually been assessed via the

medium of Welsh in recent years. The third primary school had acknowledged that it no longer had sufficient capacity to deliver education through the medium of Welsh to permit it to continue with its current Category 4 categorisation. It should therefore be a Category 5 (English medium) school. Of the County's two bilingual secondary schools, currently categorised as Category 2B - 80% minimum education delivery through the medium of Welsh, one had indicated that it should now probably be in Category 2C - between 50% and 79% of its curriculum delivered through the medium of Welsh;

- in the past 7 years the County had recorded an increase in the number of pupils being educated through the medium of Welsh from 17% to 23%, this was encouraging. However there was a long journey yet to be travelled if the Council was to realise its long-term ambition of seeing all the county's children and young people being fully confident and competent in both Welsh and English when they left school:
- the WESG and School Governors had an important role to play in monitoring and supporting schools to meet and deliver the curriculum in line with its language categorisation, and if a school decided that it could no longer deliver in line with its current categorisation a statutory process would have to followed in order to change the categorisation of the school.

The following points were raised by Members:-

- whilst school language categorisation was a complex subject, there was a need to examine the anomalies at all four schools in greater depth in order to gain a better understanding of the contributory factors which had given rise to the anomalies and identify any support that could be made available to them;
- it would also be useful to examine in detail the progress made by all schools along the language continuum, in particular those schools already identified under the Modernising Education Programme as ones who wanted to increase their Welsh medium delivery;
- all school re-organisation action plans should be examined to ensure that the identified actions relating to language categorisation, including the necessary support required to assist the schools with the delivery of education through the specified language, had been actioned and met;
- it would be useful for the purpose of undertaking the above exercise to have two or three Scrutiny Members to serve on the Welsh in Education Strategic Group. Dr D Marjoram indicated her interest in being a member of the WESG for this purpose.

Following further discussion, it was:-

**RESOLVED** – *that subject to the above observations the Committee:-*

*(a) notes the findings of the review of the County's schools' delivery of education in relation to their language categorisation,*

*(b) recommends that the Welsh in Education Strategic Group undertake a further review to establish the reasons for the anomalies in the four schools identified in the report, identifying any support that may be available to them to support them going forward,*

*(c) requests that the WESG also examine the progress made by all county schools along the language continuum, particularly those identified under the Modernising Education Programme as ones who wanted to increase their Welsh medium delivery, and*

*(d) requests that the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group be asked to appoint two or three scrutiny Members to serve on the WESG for the purpose of this further review.*

## **6 RHYL COASTAL DEFENCE ASSESSMENT**

A copy of a joint report by the Head of Highways and Environmental Services (HHES) and the Senior Engineer, which presented Members with the draft Rhyl Coastal Defence Assessment report commissioned by the Council after the December, 2013 coastal floods, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Committee had considered Denbighshire's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy in December, 2014 and had expressed a wish to view the Rhyl Coastal Defence Assessment; to understand the Welsh Government (WG) and National Resource Wales (NRW) responses to it, and to consider the implications in terms of any works that might be required, and the availability of potential funding streams.

The HHES introduced the report which outlined the nature of the Rhyl Coastal Defence Assessment, the main conclusions, subsequent discussions with NRW, property flooding rates, schemes to mitigate risk and funding details.

The Lead Member for Public Realm and the HHES referred to the report and the consultant's report on the Rhyl Coastal Defence Assessment, emphasising that the report by its nature was a very technical report. The report had been commissioned in the wake of the December, 2013 coastal flooding incident to assess the likely inundation caused by a 1 in 200 year event and the likely recurrence of such a severe weather event. It was explained that first reading the consultant's report may cause alarm, however its assessments had been based on a combination of weather, marine and astronomical events all happening at the same time, which would be an extremely rare occurrence.

In responding to Members' questions the officers:-

- detailed the flood alleviation and coastal defence works carried out to date since the 2013 flooding event and the proposed work to be commenced before the end of the current calendar year, all of which had been well received by local residents. All these works would reduce the risk profile for severe coastal flooding in the area, nevertheless the risk could never be completely eradicated;

- provided an overview of how the proposed scheme would work, under which the golf course would be used as a flood water containment site during times of severe flooding. It was emphasised that the scheme had been developed in consultation with the Golf Club and due to the reasons why water would need to be contained there during an emergency, there should not be any recourse by the Club for recompense for damage to the greens during an extraordinary weather event;
- the proposed North Wales Tidal Energy lagoon, if constructed, would further reduce the risk of sea water overtopping the coastal defences as it would reduce the size and power of the waves that hit the shoreline. However, this would not be built in the near future therefore other measures had to be taken to reduce the risk from the sea for the short to medium term;
- explained the various funding schemes accessed by the Council to finance emergency flood response and alleviation work in the past;
- outlined the work undertaken to advise residents on how to protect their properties in the event of small scale flooding and to reassure them of the work underway to reduce the risk of major floods in future;
- confirmed that there were Flood Wardens already in place in the Rhyl area but more work needed to be undertaken with them to assist them to raise residents' awareness of what to do in the event of a flood;
- verified that the Council was also working with insurance companies etc. to explain the likely risk of flooding in the area and therefore assist residents to access affordable house and contents insurance;

During the ensuing discussion Members suggested that in future it may be useful if more use was made of the media/social media for alerting people of imminent flooding. It was also felt that it would be worthwhile to communicate, in conjunction with other stakeholders, a positive message to residents highlighting how in austere times the Council was investing heavily in flood alleviation measures in a bid to protect vulnerable people and highlighting the good partnership working that was taking place between all stakeholders to deliver this work.

**RESOLVED** – *that the Committee:-*

- (a) receive and note the contents of the report.*
- (b) notes, for clarity purposes, that the overtopping frequencies quoted in the report were not synonymous with the "property flooding frequency" figures, typically used in Welsh Government assessments of risk, and*
- (c) endorses the development of the flood risk mitigation schemes currently being progressed by the County Council.*

## **7 THE REMOVAL OF UNAUTHORISED SIGNS FROM HIGHWAY LAND**

A copy of a report by the Head of Highways and Environmental Services (HHES), on the Council's policy position in relation to the removal of unauthorised signs from

highway land and how the policy was being implemented, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The issue of unauthorised signs had been debated by the Committee on the 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2014, and details of the outcome had been included in the report. The latest guidance for officers had been included as Appendix 1, with the Council making a distinction between commercial, and non-commercial/community event signs. Appendix 2 provided a list of examples, in order to illustrate how that distinction had been interpreted in practice. It was felt that as the policy specifically referred to types of unauthorised sign which would be tolerated, it would be incorrect to refer to a “zero tolerance” policy. Appendix 3 provided photographs of examples to assist Members.

In presenting the report the Lead Member for Public Realm emphasised the need for effective partnership working between several Council departments with a view to ensuring fair and equitable treatment for local businesses, to assist community groups, and protect residents' safety when dealing with unauthorised signs placed on highways land.

Members expressed the following views and opinions during the ensuing discussion:-

- the policy had worked well in Prestatyn, where the problem had virtually been eradicated. A feasibility study had recently been commissioned by Prestatyn Town Council to examine whether it would be viable to offer businesses advertising space on boards erected in Town Council owned bus shelters, for which a fee would be charged;

- there had been concerns in other towns about the policy's implementation, particularly the perceived lack of a consistent approach in its implementation, and there was a need for a clear definition of various categories of events e.g. community events;

- in straightforward cases, the policy could be implemented directly by officers. However, in cases where difficulties were likely to occur, the local member should be given the opportunity to contact the event organiser or business regarding the signs. This should be done as early as possible in the process.

- unless highway safety was compromised, the first stage of the process would be to contact the owners of the signs and/or the organisers of the event, in order to try and resolve the situation. If the situation could not be resolved, the local member should be alerted immediately;

- it would be useful for tourist information signs to be included on existing road signs i.e. emblems to denote the facilities available at a village/town, and

- for the findings of the Planning, Economic Development and Highways Services working group's work to be presented to scrutiny in due course to ensure that it supported the Council's vision and delivery of its Corporate Plan;



The Leader registered his concerns about the need to strike an appropriate balance between the Council's rights and duties with respect to highway safety enforcement action and its economic development role. The Council needed to be seen to be nurturing and supporting business in the county.

Responding to Members' questions the Head of Service and Lead Member:-

- stressed that officers would willingly apply whichever policy members deemed appropriate in relation to this problem, as long as it did not compromise highway users' safety;
- emphasised that the policy was not a zero-tolerance policy, it had been drawn up in response to members' concerns with respect to the proliferation of unauthorised signs across the County, particular reference being made at a previous meeting to the highway through Lôn Parcwr, Ruthin;
- drew Members' attention to the definition of community events, charity events etc. as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report;
- explained the differences between public highways enforcement action and planning laws;
- acknowledged that mistakes had been made in 2014 when signs, advertising community events already included in the County's Events Strategy, had been taken down as part of the implementation of this policy. Assurances were provided that this would not happen again this year as officers had now been issued with guidance and definitions on these types of events. It would be useful if Members could ask event organisers to contact the Highways Service to advise them of when and where promotional signs for community events were going to be erected, as the Service could then advise on the suitability of the location on safety grounds;
- The Corporate Director: Economic and Community Ambition had commissioned a piece of work to look at how Highways, Economic and Business Development, and the Planning Services could work better together for the purpose of developing the local economy, striking an appropriate balance between enforcement and business support activity, and supporting local businesses. Part of this work would include the compilation of a 'welcome pack' for new businesses which would detail what they could and could not do with respect to advertising their businesses. Until this work had been completed the current policy would be applied, but officers would be advised to have regards to the definition of various types of events as per Appendix 2 to the report;
- confirmed that 'A' Boards were permitted immediately outside businesses as long as there was sufficient thoroughfare to ensure pedestrians' safety;

At the conclusion of the discussion the Committee emphasised that a common sense approach to the policy's application was required, with local Members being made aware of any problems within their areas as soon as they came to light. Business people and community groups needed to be engaged and involved with the process from an early stage in a bid to support them to achieve their aspirations

and the Council to deliver its economic development and clean and tidy streets corporate priorities, whilst also upholding its community safety duties. It was:-

**RESOLVED** – *that subject to the above observations -*

- (a) to support the principles outlined in the guidance, its continued application and the development of a 'business welcome pack' to assist and support new businesses to establish themselves and promote their services within permitted practices;*
- (b) express support for Denbighshire officers who have to implement the policy, sometimes in difficult circumstances;*
- (c) that the policy guidance should be amended to incorporate the involvement of local members in the process;*
- (d) to support the principle of claiming back costs from any serial offenders who choose to ignore written warnings, and/or any requests from local members, and continue to place signs illegally;*
- (e) support the separate initiatives that are being developed in relation to properly authorised signs and advertisements, especially tourism signs and neighbourhood signs (in areas where several businesses coexist); and*
- (f) request that the findings of the Highways, Economic Development and Planning Services' working group work be presented to scrutiny upon completion to ensure that it supports the Council's vision and the delivery of its Corporate Plan.*

## **8 RESTRUCTURE OF THE ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICE**

A copy of a report by the Corporate Director; Economic and Community Ambition (CDECA), which set out the context and aims of the review of Economic and Business Development function of the Council, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The report detailed how the review would support the Council's Corporate Plan priority for developing the local economy and the vision set out in the Economic and Community Ambition Strategy. The Council faced a budget reduction target of £17M over the next 2 years with savings totalling £11m having been identified, leaving a balance of £6m with there being little prospect of improved financial settlements in the foreseeable future. The current budget reductions were on top of over £20m cuts made since 2009, and the scale of challenge meant that Council services faced significant changes. The review of the Council's Economic and Business Development function had been undertaken within this context and principles applied had been included in the report.

Presenting the report on the restructure of the Service the Leader and the CDECA emphasised that the Council had developed a very ambitious Corporate Plan and set itself extremely challenging targets in its Economic and Community Ambition Strategy, some of which were to be delivered by 2017. In recent months the Council had given an undertaking that it would strive to deliver the Plan and Strategy despite being faced with unprecedented cuts to its budget for the foreseeable future. As a result of these severe financial cuts services had to be tailored to deliver the expected outcomes in the most effective and efficient way,

hence the reason for the restructure of the Economic and Business Development Service. Both the Leader and CDECA reassured Members that the new cross county management and delivery structure was aimed at delivering the three headline targets in the Economic and Community Ambition Strategy's Delivery Plan - more people in work, higher household incomes, and more and healthier local businesses. The roles of the posts within the structure, along with the additional post in the Business Improvement and Modernisation Service, were outlined. Responding to Members' questions the CDECA and Leader confirmed that:-

- the responsibility for delivering both the corporate priority relating to economic development and the Economic and Community Ambition Strategy were not the sole responsibility of the Economic and Business Development Service, all Council services had a stake in them and a role to play with their delivery;
- Town and Area Plans would in future become focussed delivery Plans. The Town Champion's role would be reviewed with a view to strengthening it and Heads of Service would be allocated actions or aspects of Town and Area Plans to be delivered within specific deadlines. They would be held accountable for delivering these projects as they would feature in their Service Plans;
- the Town Champions and the Economic and Community Ambition Board had been consulted on the restructure proposals;
- certain aspects of the economic development corporate priority were being progressed at different levels e.g. educational/employer skills development, electrification of the North Wales railway network, promoting the region as an area for business were being progressed regionally via the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, whilst other more local aspects such as promoting Denbighshire as a good location for business were taking place at county level.
- WG was not always taking heed of local authorities or regional bodies' advice on what would deliver the best economic outcomes for the area. At times this compounded local authorities' efforts to drive forward economic development, therefore local authorities had to be creative and innovative in their approach;
- in future European funding would be administered on a regional, North Wales, basis. Confirmation was still awaited on where the European funding team would be located and on when community funding from large infrastructure projects such as wind farms would be available. As the Council was no longer in a position where it could employ staff until funding streams had been confirmed or became available it had to work with what was currently available to it, hence the restructure of the Service which had been undertaken on the basis of what was currently available and known future availability;
- a separate report on potential future community funding, including wind farm and European monies, was due to be presented to Partnerships Scrutiny Committee on 19 March 2015. Whilst the administration of European funding would move to a regional base it was not anticipated that Denbighshire would lose out on any money as it was one of the areas identified to benefit from EU Structural Funds for the period 2014-2020. However, going forward, the Council and communities would

need to refine their practices, and work more closely together, when developing projects in order to maximise the benefits from available funds;

- the Service restructure was underway and should be completed by May, 2015. The reduced number of posts was in no way an adverse reflection on present postholders' capabilities. The basis of its establishment was the 'good enough' concept within financial means to facilitate the delivery of the Council's vision and intended outcomes;

The following views and opinions were expressed by Members:-

- whilst supporting the aims of the Economic and Community Ambition Strategy they questioned whether the Council was setting itself targets which were too ambitious, particularly with respect to the digital infrastructure, as such matters were not within the Council's control;

- whilst acknowledging that the Service's management structure was an operational decision, expressed reservations on the pace of the process and the extent of staffing cuts, and whether the governance structure was right;

- emphasised that whilst a lot of activity had taken place during the last three years, the number of projects delivered to date seemed low. Therefore, going forward, there needed to be much more emphasis on delivering tangible outcomes, all of which would need to be evidenced;

- raised concerns about the perceived incremental regionalisation of administration, governance and funding of economic development matters and the potential impact on economic development locally.

- questioned whether the new structure would have sufficient resources to effectively deliver the Economic and Community Ambition Strategy and corporate priority to a 'good enough' standard;

- emphasised the need to strengthen the role of the town champions with respect to delivering the town and area plans;

- registered concerns on whether the Council was realising a return on investment from all regional economic development organisations with which it was involved, and whether all major developments in the region, despite being marketed as opportunities/projects for Wales, were actually nothing more than projects in Wales with the majority of the staff transferring in from outside the region.

It was confirmed that the impact of the Service's restructure in delivering outcomes would be measured by the 'Cutting Our Cloth' Task and Finish Group through its work on the impact of the budget cuts on the deliverability of the Corporate Plan.

Following an in-depth discussion it was:-

**RESOLVED** – that, subject to the above observations, to support the rationale for, and the expected outcomes arising from, the review of the Council's Economic and Business Development function.

## **9 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

A copy of a report by the Scrutiny Coordinator, which requested the Committee to review and agree its forward work programme and which provided an update on relevant issues, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

In response to a question from Councillor R.M. Murray, the Scrutiny Coordinator outlined the process to be followed if Members wished to invite the Police Commissioner to attend a meeting, and confirmed that assistance in completing forms would be available if required.

The Committee considered its draft Forward Work Programme for future meetings, Appendix 1, and it was agreed that the Lead Member, Councillor D.I. Smith, be invited to attend the meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2015 for consideration of the two business items.

The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) had met on the 19th February and appointed representatives to serve on the Cross-Scrutiny Task and Finish Group established to evaluate the impact of the budget cuts. The Committee's representatives would be Councillors H. Hilditch-Roberts and T.R. Hughes, with Councillors W. Mullen-James and J. Welch being the substitute Members. Substitute Members would be called upon to participate in the Group's work as it progressed.

The Group had discussed the arrangements for reporting on the Scrutiny Committees' work during 2014/15 to Annual Council in May, and as part of that process had decided to undertake an evaluation exercise of the scrutiny function's work. All Members and Senior Managers had been issued with a short questionnaire, to be returned by the 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2015, seeking them to evaluate scrutiny's effectiveness from their perspective. A summary of the findings would be reported as part of the item on the Annual Report at the Annual Council meeting in May.

An item discussed at length at the SCVCG meeting was the WG's recent White Paper, Devolution, Democracy and Delivery – Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People. Chapter 8 of the White Paper, 'Strengthening the Role of Review', set out WG's proposals for scrutiny. The SCVCG's views on the consultation questions relating to chapter 8 would be fed into the Council's overall consultation response to the WG.

In reply to concerns raised regarding the inclusion of Declaration of Interest Forms with agenda packs, the Scrutiny Coordinator agreed to convey Members concerns to the relevant officers.

The Scrutiny Coordinator referred to the Information Pack circulated prior to the meeting which included a progress report on the Rhyll Going Forward Programme.

She also confirmed that the information requested on car park income had also been circulated to Members that morning.

**RESOLVED** – *that, subject to the above amendments and agreements, the Work Programme as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.*

## **10 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

Councillor W.M. Mullen-James attended a Corporate Parenting meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2015, and provided copies of two presentations received at the meeting to be circulated to Members of the Committee. Councillor Mullen-James referred to concerns raised relating to accommodation provision for young persons.

Councillor C.H. Williams attended the Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group, whose business would be concluding soon, and a report would be presented to Cabinet in the near future.

Councillor H. Hilditch-Roberts attended the HR Service Challenge meeting and noted significant improvements in service delivery, particular reference being made to the impact made by the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services since his appointment as Head of HR.

**RESOLVED** – *that the Committee receive and note the above reports.*

Meeting ended at 1.20 p.m.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Communities Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>23 April 2015</b>
<b>Lead Member/Officer:</b>	<b>Lead Member for Public Realm/ Head of Highways and Environmental Services</b>
<b>Report Authors:</b>	<b>Network Manager/ Head of Highways and Environmental Services</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Rationalisation of Precautionary Gritting Routes (Freedoms &amp; Flexibilities outcome)</b>

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**1. What is the report about?**

The report describes how Highways & Environmental Services intend to deliver the reductions in precautionary salting mileages that were endorsed by members as part of the Council's Freedoms & Flexibilities (F&F) process.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

To enable the Communities Scrutiny Committee to satisfy itself that the required reductions in route mileage have been developed in a logical and rational manner, and that they will deliver the required savings.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

That the Committee considers, comments and endorses the route changes that have been developed.

**4. Report details.**

- a) It is important to note that the proposed reductions affect precautionary gritting only. No changes are being proposed to the gritting routes that would be used in snow conditions.
- b) The purpose of the salting is to maintain a strategic route network in times of adverse weather, including links into villages. In line with most authorities, Denbighshire has traditionally salted all A and B class roads, together with a small proportion of the remainder of the network. In all the Council currently treats around 28% of the highway network (slightly below the national average).
- c) Each salting run involves 9 vehicles driving a total of 850 kilometres of which 570 kilometres is salted. These figures include Trunk Roads salting, which is paid for directly by Welsh Government, and therefore outside the scope of this report.

- d) The need for change is financially driven. As part of the F&F process, the Council has already endorsed a proposed reduction of £250,000 in the highways maintenance budget (for 2015-16). The figure of £250k included a proposed reduction in spend on precautionary salting of around £60k, which needs to be delivered next winter.
- e) Gritting costs are generated by a number of factors, including; the weather, forecasting accuracy, national guidance, the levels of risk that officers decide to accept when making their decisions, the efficiency of the routes that we employ in the delivery of the service, the cost-effectiveness of our fleet arrangements and our staffing arrangements,
- f) Some of these factors are external, but those that are under the control of the Council are reviewed and amended each year, with the aim of optimising our cost effectiveness. The Council then produces an Adverse Weather Plan (previously known as the Winter Maintenance Plan), which identifies which routes are to be salted.
- g) The optimisations that took place prior to the 2014/15 season did lead to some complaints from members of the public, so it is very clear that the reasons behind the changes in this report will have to be communicated in a planned and coordinated manner. This will include the use of the Council's web site, and publishing/publicising the 2015/16 Adverse Weather Plan. Advisory signs will also be displayed on the affected routes, on a risk assessed basis.
- h) In order to achieve the level of saving specified in the F&F process, it was estimated that a route reduction of around 10% (on our non-trunk roads) would be required. Obviously; the weather is different every year, so this is an estimated figure, based on an average year. Under these proposals; the length of the network that will no longer receive precautionary salting is 43.9 km. The saving produced will be around £10k in salt and £50k in operative and vehicle costs.
- i) The selection of routes is based largely on the availability of suitable alternative routes, and/or other reasonable mitigation factors. As indicated in 4a) above – in the event of snow the Council will treat these roads in the same way that they are treated now, i.e. until they are clear of snow and ice. For clarity; the proposed reductions apply to precautionary salting only.

## **5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

The Council's F&F process was designed to deliver the necessary savings in a way that minimised the impact on corporate priorities.

## **6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

The changes will produce a typical net saving of around £60k p.a.



**7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?**

The likely effects are on the drivers of vehicles only. It is not considered likely that there will be any disproportionate impact on any groups with protected characteristics. See Appendix 2.

**8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

The proposals contained within this report are also being shared with each of the relevant Member Area Groups

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

Not obtained. (the basic decision has already been taken, as part of the F&F process).

**10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

- a) Risk of public disquiet about the reduction in service levels (see 4g above for mitigation).
- b) A marginal increase in the risk of accidents on the proportion of our roads that will remain untreated in frosty conditions (see 4g and the notes in Appendix 1 for mitigation).
- c) If the proposed reductions are *not* delivered, there is the risk of an *increase* in spend, because an extra route in the north might be required.

**11. Power to make the Decision**

Article 6.3.3 of the Council's Constitution sets out Scrutiny's powers with respect to policy development and review.

**Contact Officers:**

Network Manager

Tel. 01824 706875

Head of Highways and Environmental Services

Tel: 01824 706801

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**Schedules of changes & comments**

**The 2014/15 amendments were as follows:-**

**A Meifod, Saron (1.40 km)**

This route had been undertaken for a number of years but essentially only served one farm and a couple of houses.

**B Galltegf, Llanfwrog (0.65)**

This route has been undertaken for a few years following a request by the local Member. The road serves a number of properties but is a steep hill leading on to a junction with a major road. To mitigate this we have installed some salt heaps and a salt bin.

**C Erw Fawr, Ruthin (0.8)**

Removing this through route raised a lot of complaints however the road is fairly level and the nature of it is no different to many other unsalted urban roads throughout the county.

**Proposed changes (reductions) for 2015/16 are:**

**1 Fforddisa, Prestatyn (1.22)**

A level urban road that runs close to a number of schools in the area.

**2 Bryniau, Meliden (1.75)**

A rural link road with some steep sections. Note that half of this length is within Flintshire and we salt it on their behalf (a not uncommon practice)

**3 Bryn Cwnin, Rhyl (1.70)**

An important but level through route around Rhyl

**4 Pedyffryn Road and Grosvenor Ave., Rhyl (0.5 + 0.42)**

Level urban link roads close to schools

**5 Ffordd Derwen, Rhyl (1.31)**

An important but level through route around Rhyl

**6 Ty Hwch Road, Cwm (2.80)**

A fairly level, little used rural link road with a suitably close alternative route

**7 Farmers Arms Road, Waen (2.60)**

A fairly level, but well used, rural link road to the A55 but with a suitably close alternative route.

**8 Thatched Cottage Road, Trefnant (1.00)**

A fairly level, little used rural link road with a suitably close alternative route

**9 Pont y Cambwll Road (linking Tremeirchion to Denbigh Green) (4.70).**

A rural link road with some steep sections though a suitable alternative is not too far away.

**10 The Nantglyn Road (4.70)**

This is the most level of the roads serving the village and we would ensure that the other viable routes in the vicinity are adequately treated.

**11 Llandyrnog to Llanbedr plus the link from Hendrerwydd to Llangynhafal (9.89)**

This is a fairly level rural link route. At the Llanbedr end it does serve the school but local arrangements can be made to salt the short section up to the school from the adjacent B5429 through route.

**12 Llanynys to Rhewl (2.14)**

This route was only introduced in 2014/15 following both a history of requests for it to be done and our own operational advantage in doing so as it made it easy for us when returning to the depot. The road is level but susceptible to frost.

**13 Graigfechan to Gatehouse Lodge (4.09)**

This is a steep rural link road that is quite well used but runs almost parallel to the nearby Nant y Garth Pass.

**14 Graianrhyd to the A5104 (2.24)**

This is a well-used and winding road that slopes but is close to a gritted alternative route. Again almost half of this route lies within Flintshire.

*FOR PLANS SHOWING EACH OF THE ABOVE SECTIONS OF ROAD – TOGETHER WITH ALTERNATIVE ROUTES – PLEASE SEE SEPARATE APPENDICES*

## Appendix 2

# Reduction in length of Denbighshire's roads that will be treated with salt (precautionary salting only)

Equality Impact Assessment

# Denbighshire's Performance on Flytipping Issues

**Contact:** S.Parker, Head of Service

**Updated:** 09/04/2015

**1. What type of proposal is being assessed?**

A service review or re-organisation proposal

**2. Please describe the purpose of this proposal**

To save money by reducing the proportion of Denbighshire's roads that receive precautionary salting in freezing conditions.

**3. Does this proposal require a full equality impact assessment?**  
*(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit above for guidance)*

No

The change in policy will only affect drivers of vehicles. As such there is unlikely to be any disproportionate impact on any of the groups with protected characteristics.

**4. Please provide a summary of the steps taken, and the information used, to carry out this assessment, including any engagement undertaken**  
*(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for guidance)*

Knowledge of the groups affected

**5. Will this proposal have a positive impact on any of the protected characteristics?**  
*(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for a description of the protected characteristics)*

No

**6. Will this proposal have a disproportionate negative impact on any of the protected characteristics?**

No

**7. Has the proposal been amended to eliminate or reduce any potential negative impact?**

<Please Select>	n/a
-----------------	-----

**8. Have you identified any further actions to address and / or monitor any potential negative impact(s)?**

<Please Select>	N/a
-----------------	-----

Action(s)	Owner	Date
<Please describe>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>
<For additional actions, insert row below>	<Enter Name>	<DD.MM.YY>

**9. Declaration**

Every reasonable effort has been made to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate impact on people sharing protected characteristics. The actual impact of the proposal will be reviewed at the appropriate stage.

Review Date:	09/04/2015
--------------	------------

Name of Lead Officer for Equality Impact Assessment	Date
S.Parker	09/04/2015

**Please note you will be required to publish the outcome of the equality impact assessment if you identify a substantial likely impact.**

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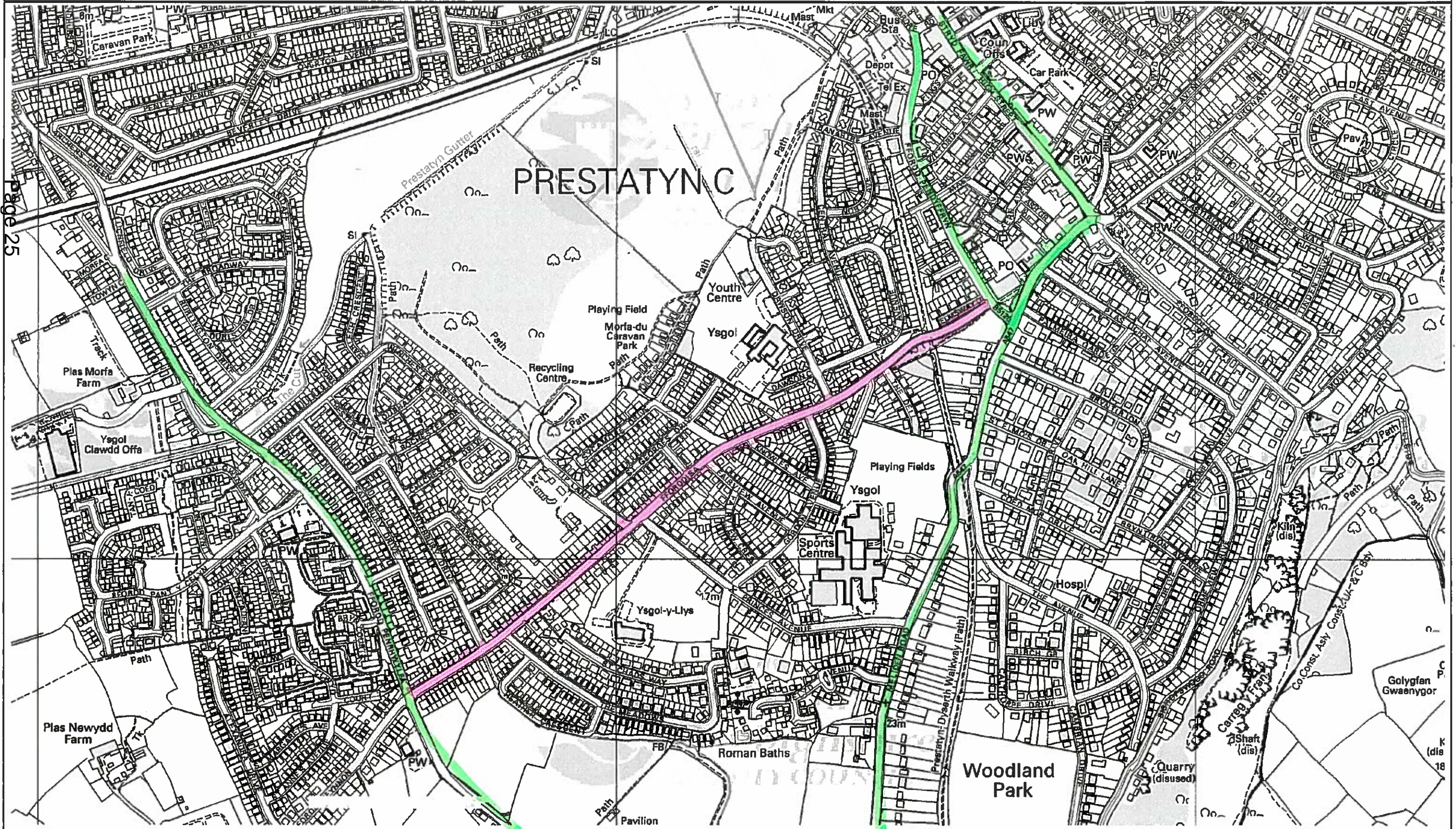


CYNGOR  
Sir Ddinbych  
Denbighshire  
COUNTY COUNCIL

Date 4/3/2015

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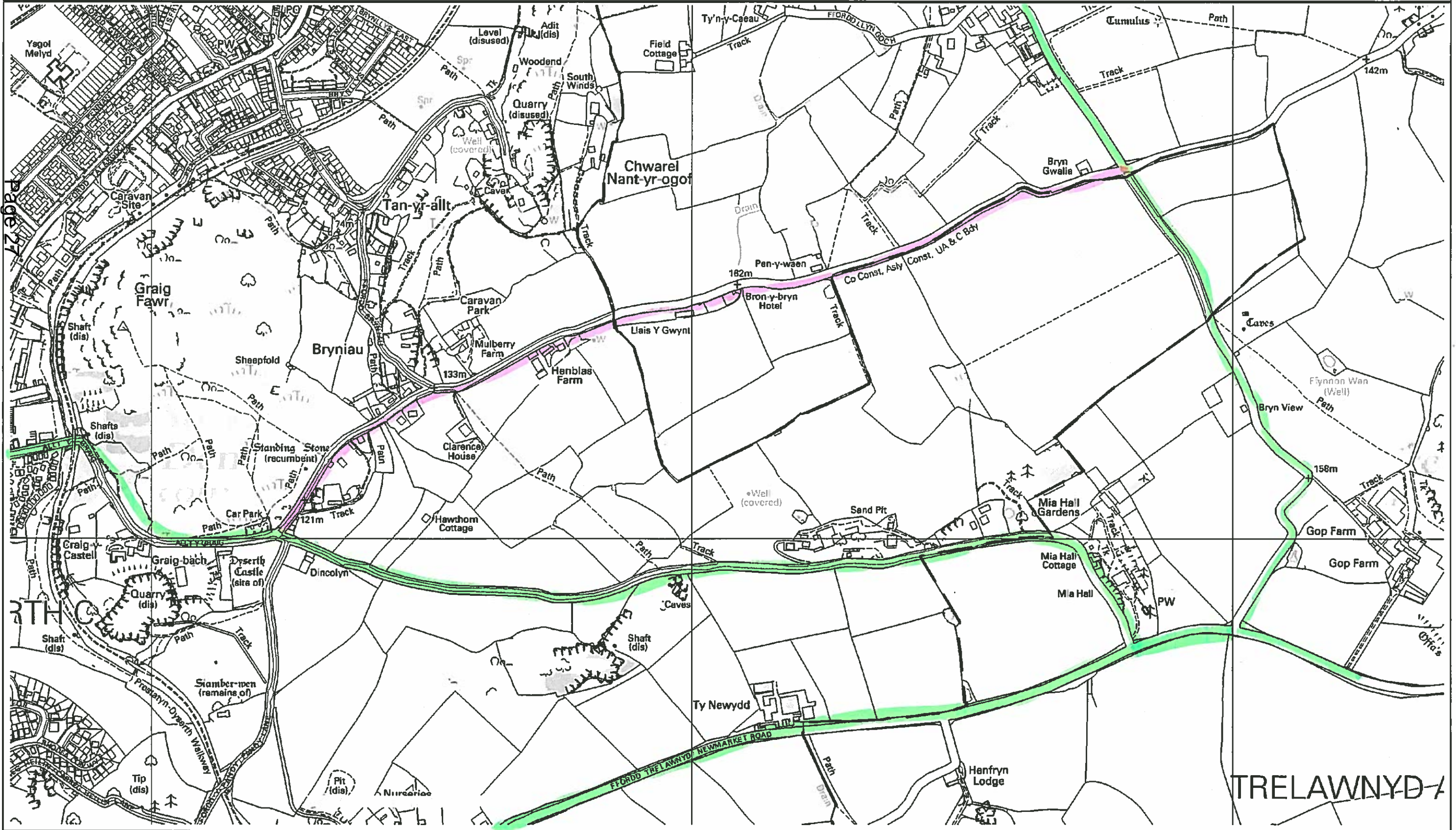
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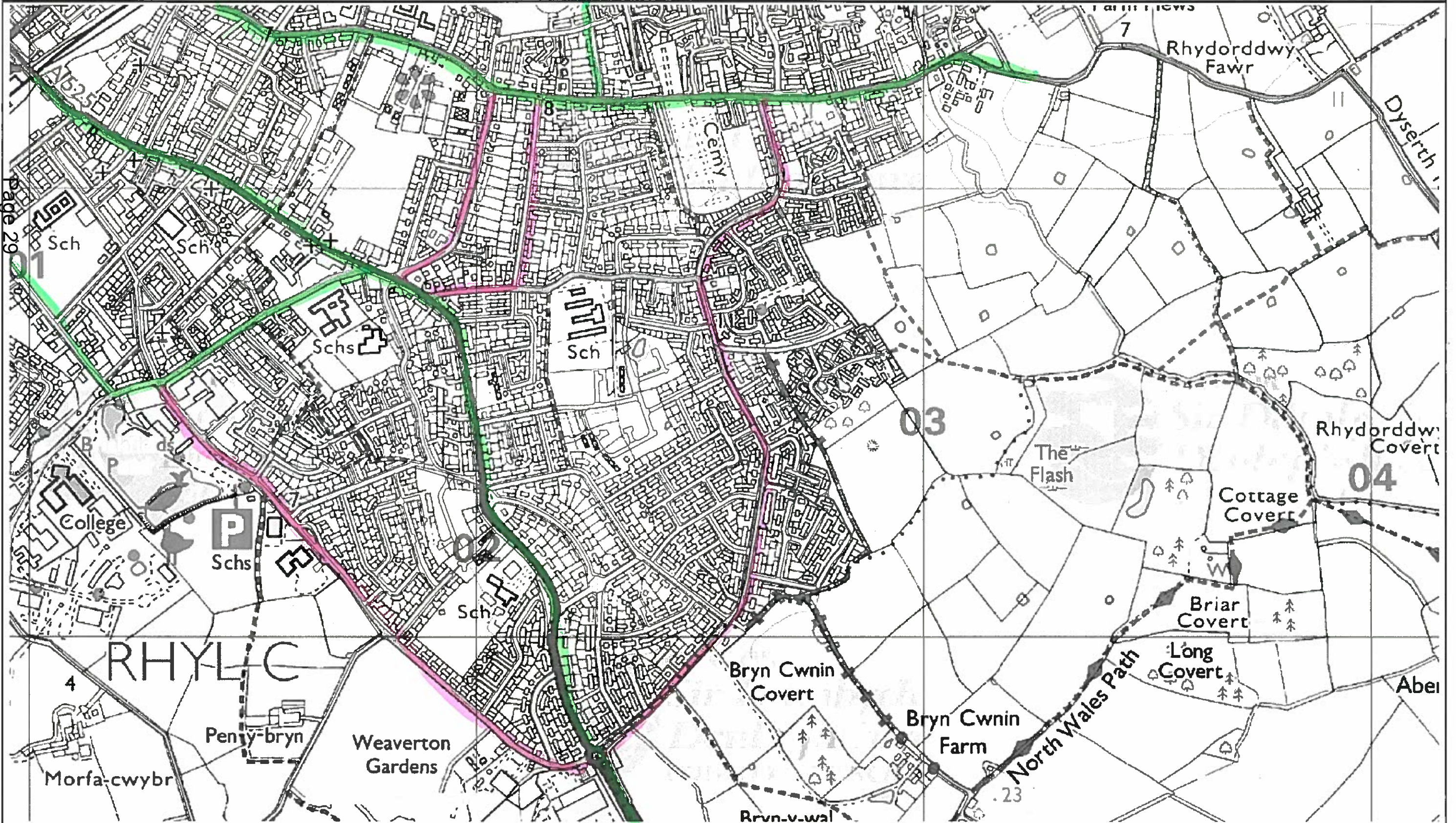
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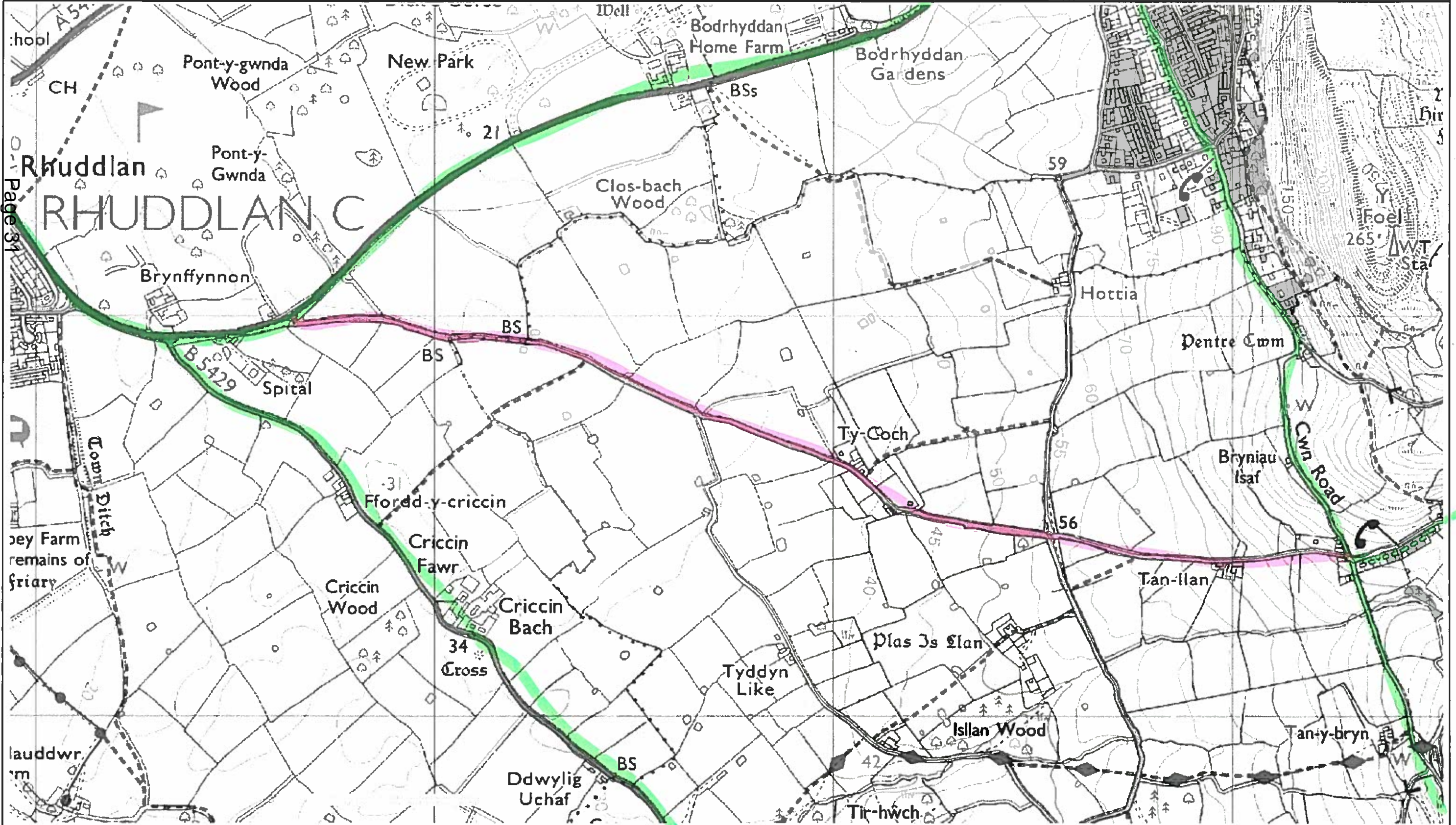
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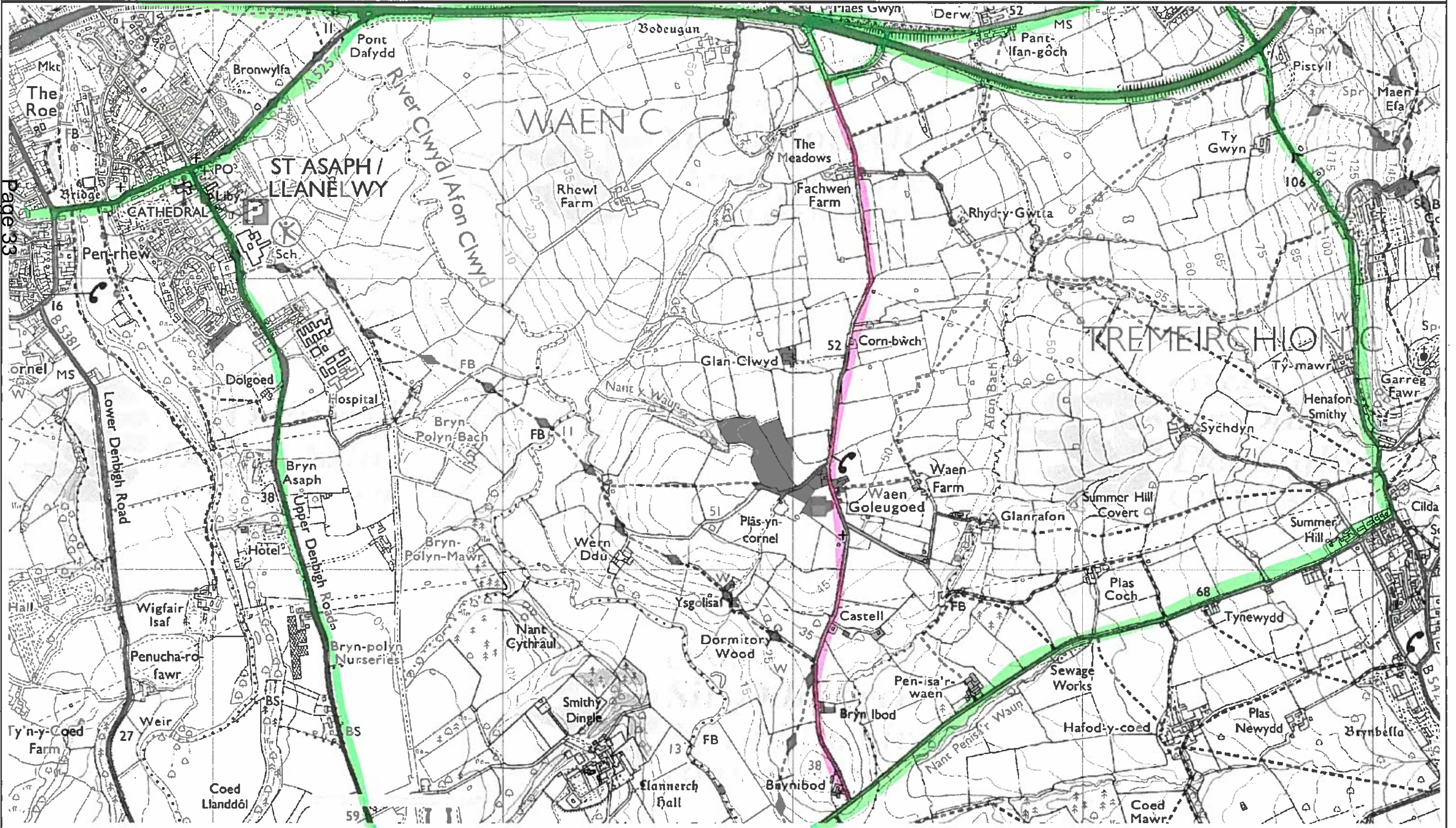




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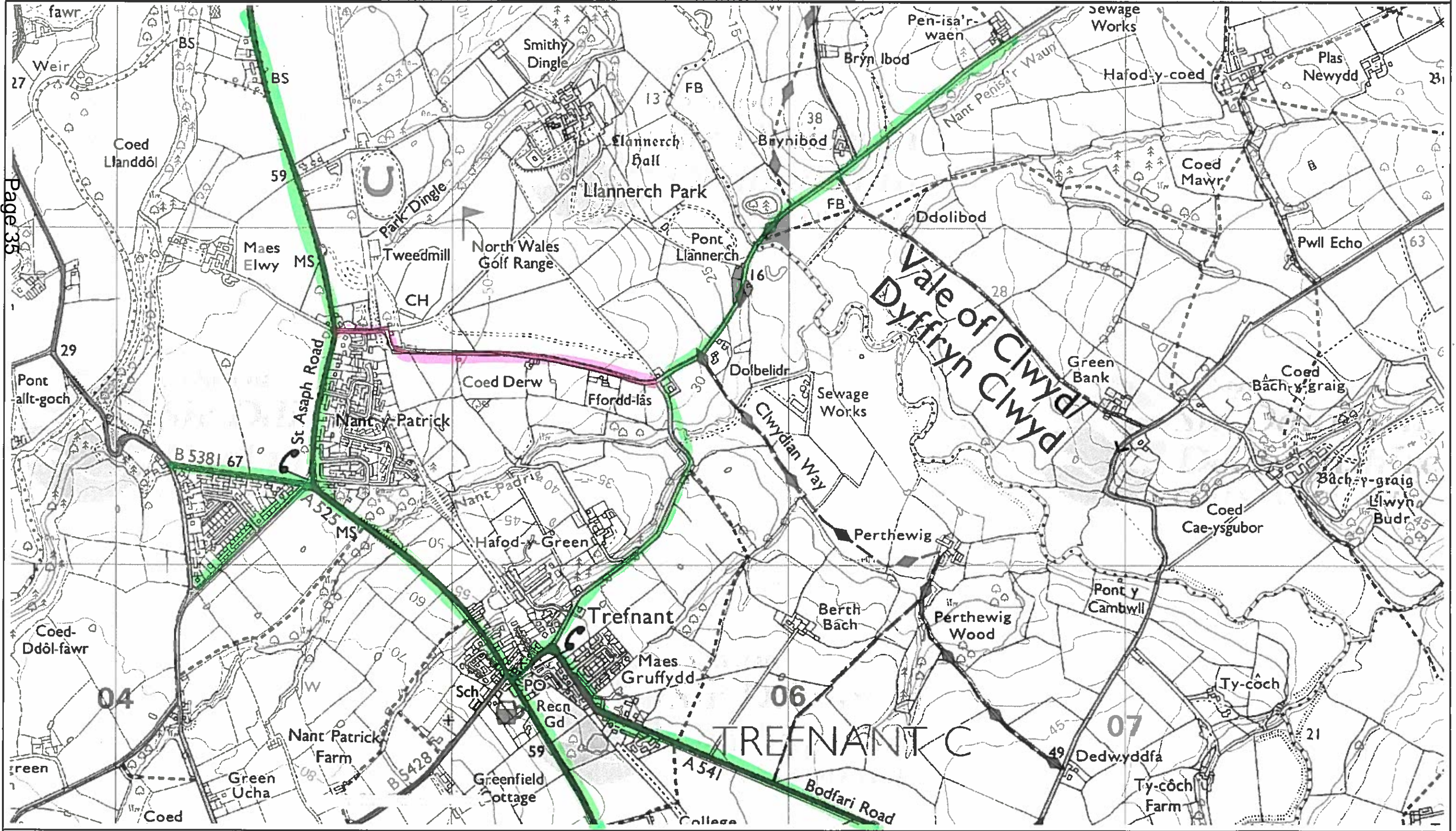
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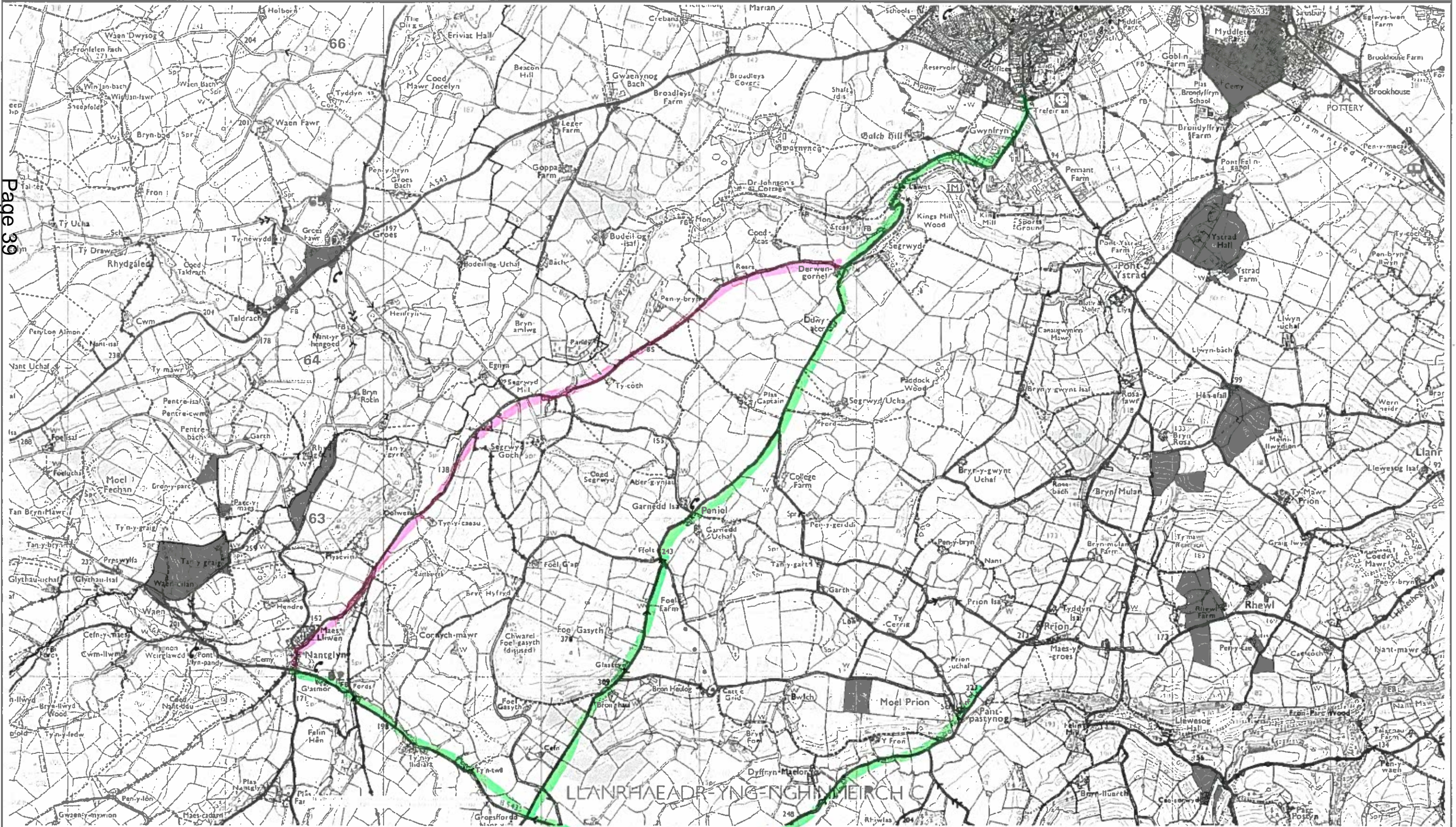


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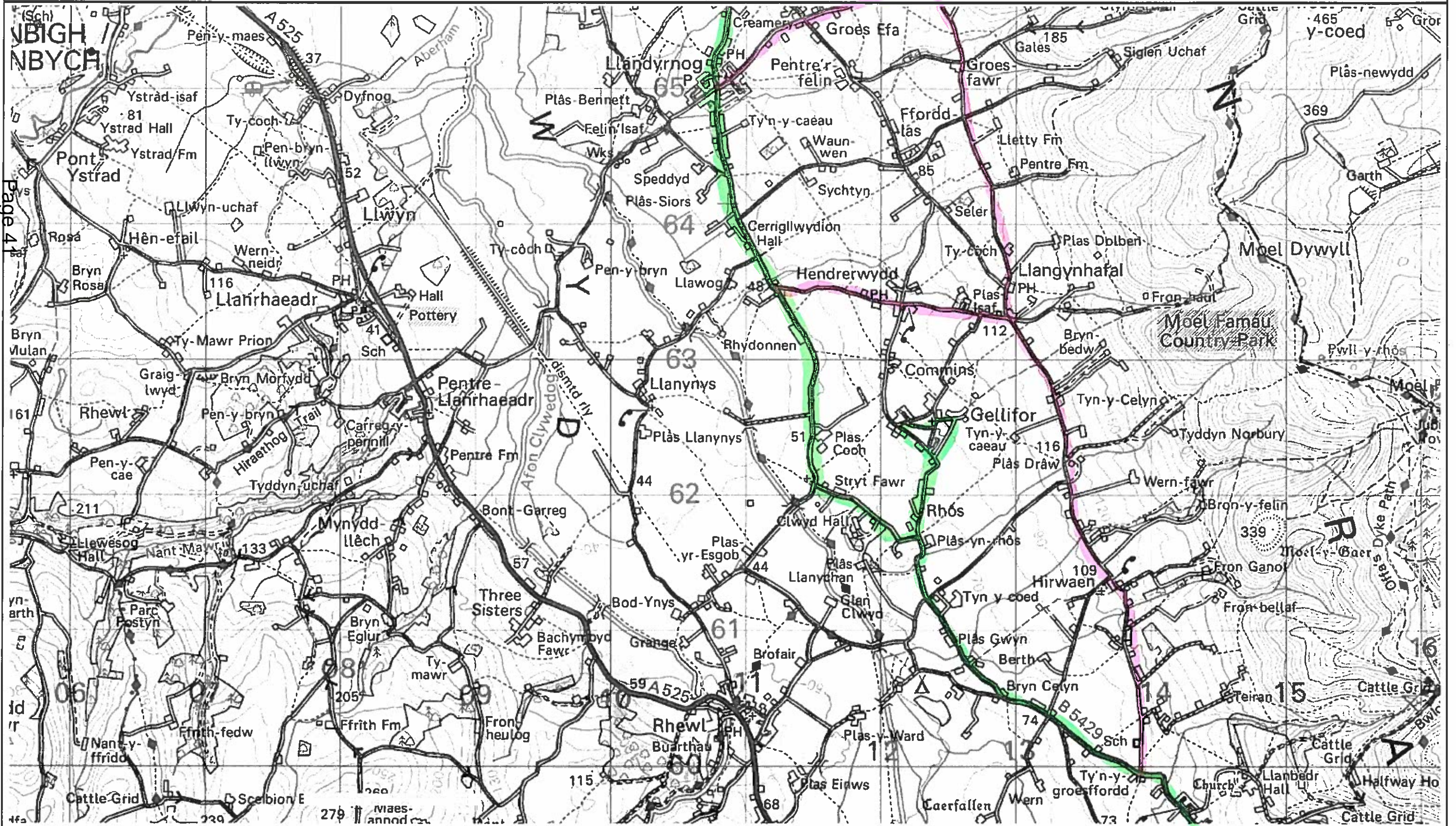




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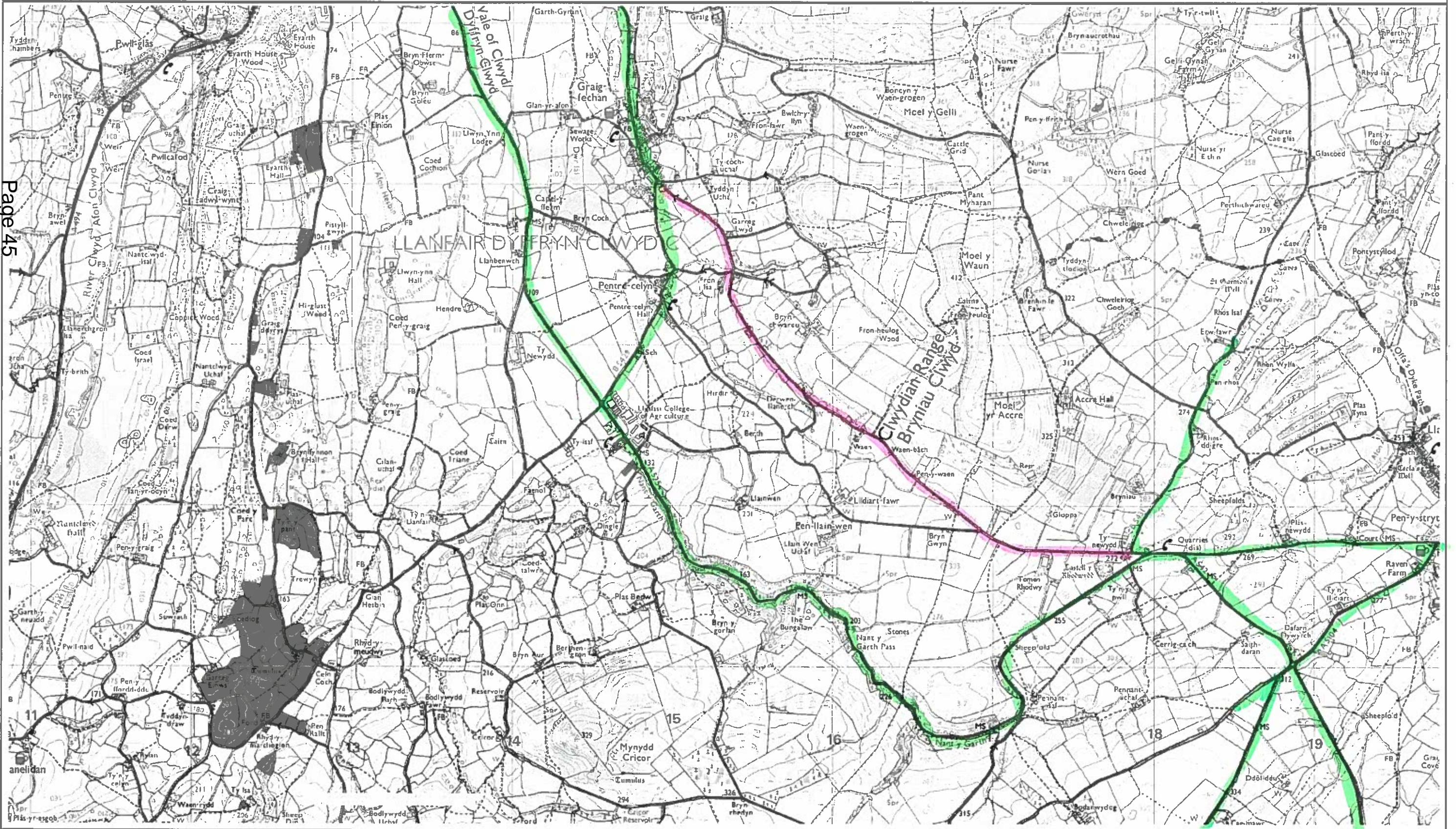


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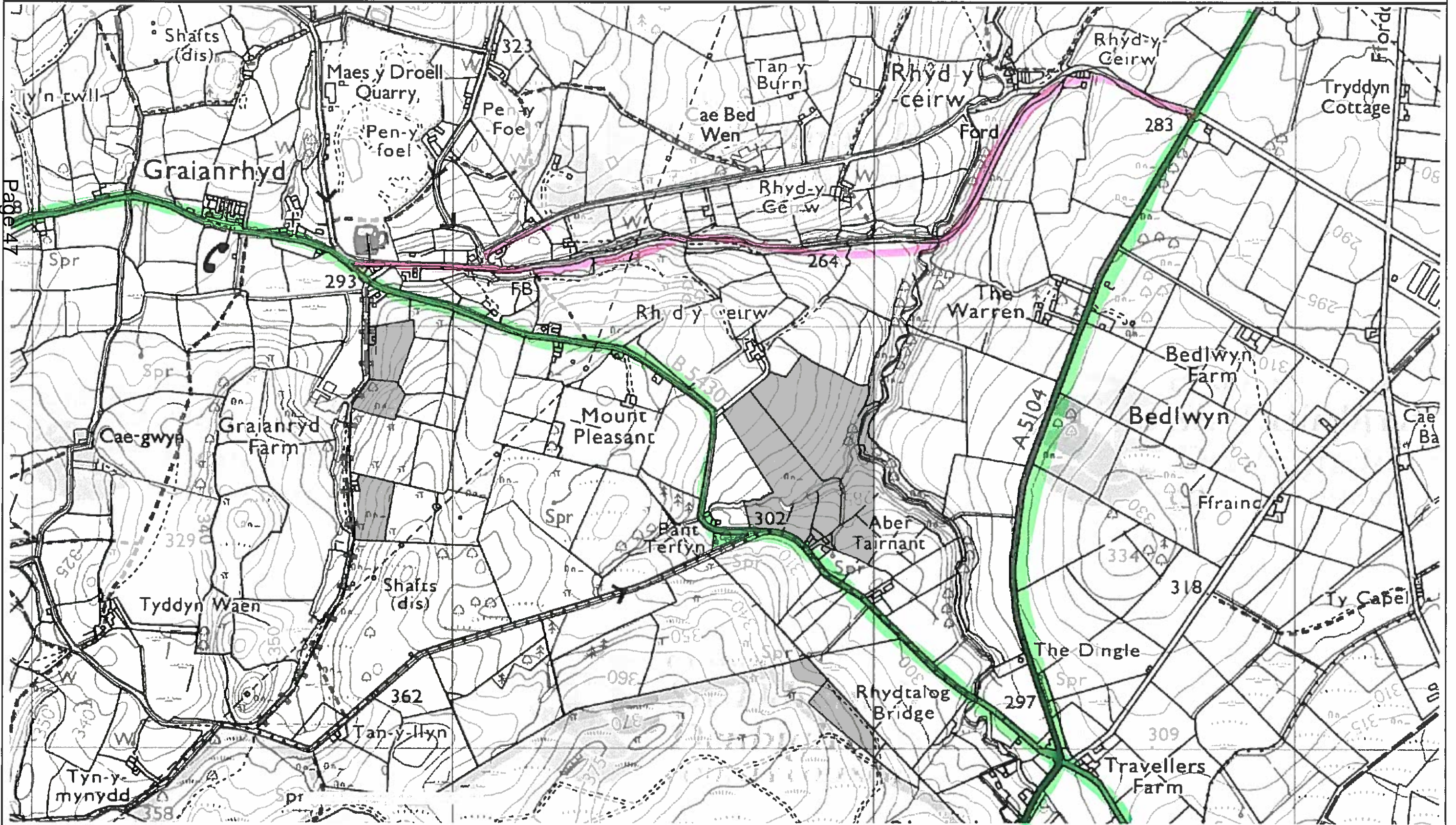
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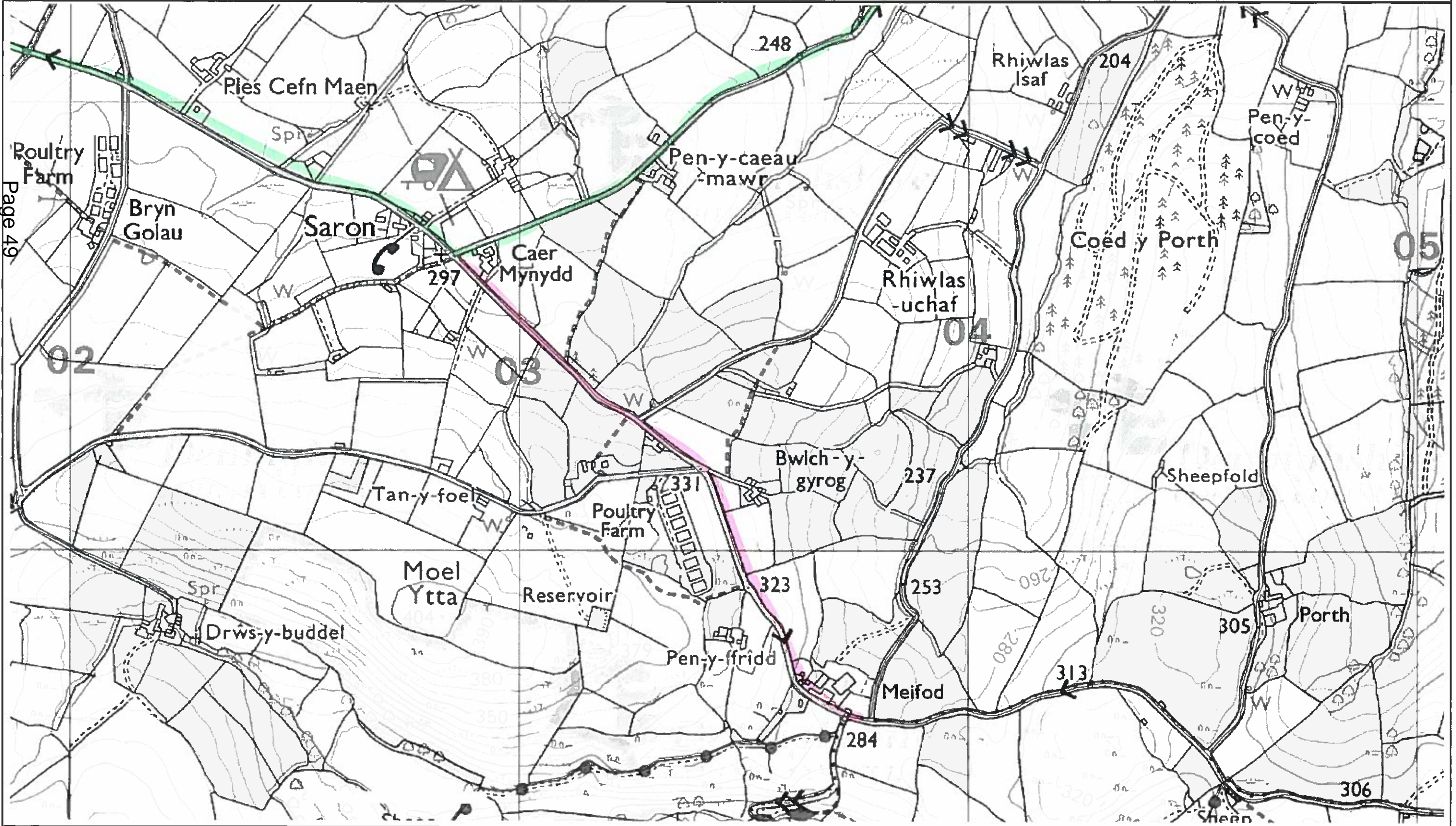




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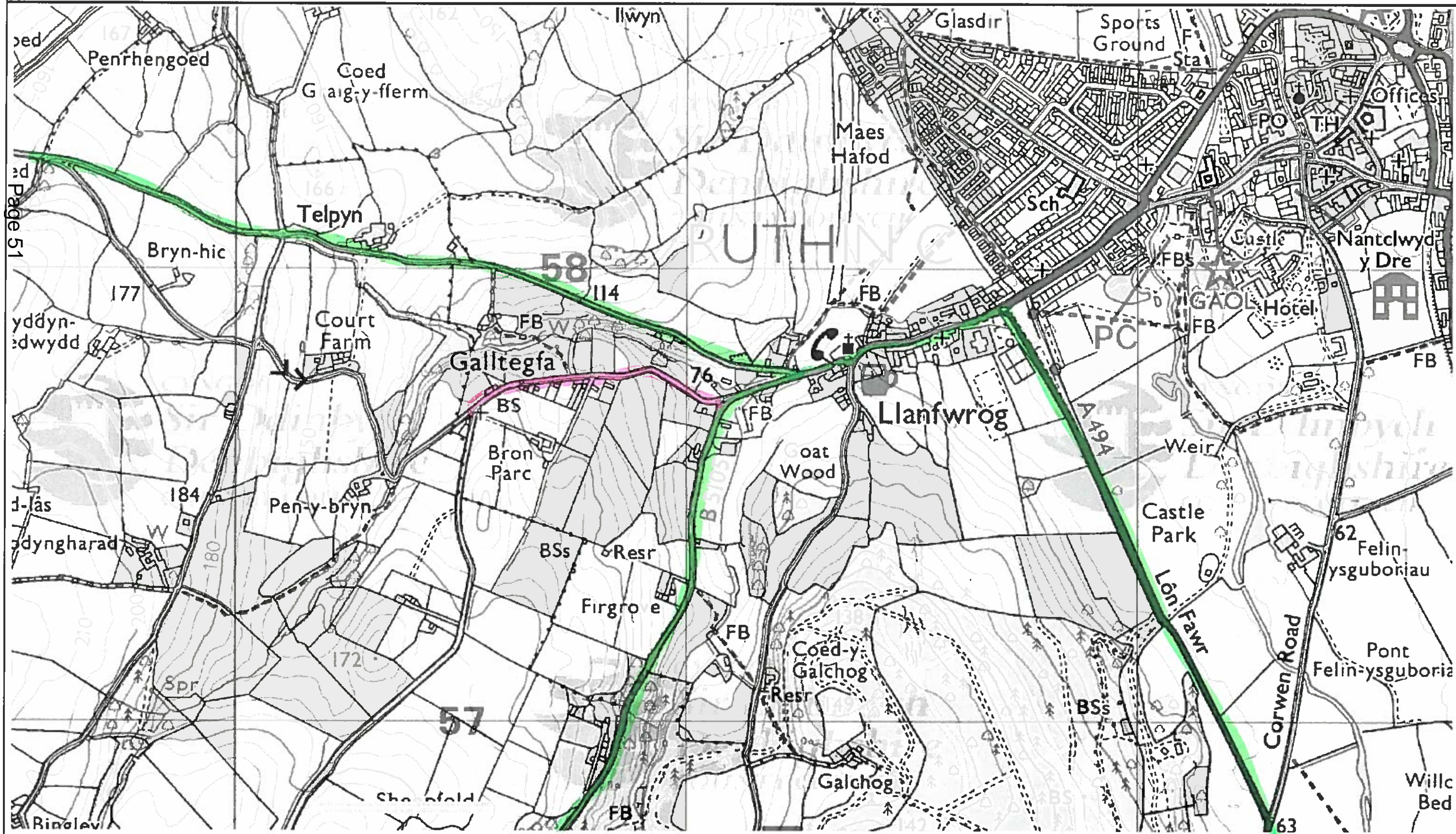


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Site C



CYNGOR  
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Denbighshire  
COUNTY COUNCIL

Date 4/3/2015  
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**Report to:** Communities Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015

**Lead Member / Officer:** Lead Member for Public Realm/  
Head of Planning and Public Protection

**Report Author:** Development Manager (Planning and Public Protection)

**Title:** Better Regulation of Caravan Sites

---

**1. What is the report about?**

1.1 The report is a follow up to the one presented to Communities Scrutiny Committee in December 2014. It will outline the work undertaken on the project since that time.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

2.1 The report has been prepared as a result of a Scrutiny Committee request for an update on the progress with the caravan sites strategy, the development of a post to drive the project forward and any progress made on the effective enforcement of sites through specific action and negotiation with owners.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

3.1 That Committee considers the information and comments on the progress of the project to date.

**4. Report details.**

4.1 There are a large number of caravan sites in Denbighshire. These sites vary in size and in how they operate. The majority were created for holiday and tourist purposes. Planning and licensing controls exist on most of these sites, however, records are often inconsistent and have not kept pace with changes to both holiday patterns and the sites themselves.

4.2 Elected members and others have expressed concerns about the proliferation of caravan sites in the county and how they may be being used. The concerns relate, in the main, to the perception that individuals are using holiday caravans as their main or sole residence avoiding Council Tax and using local services such as schools and doctors surgeries. Caravans can generally be considered to provide sub-standard accommodation for permanent usage. The Police have also raised concerns about the increasing numbers of crimes being reported from caravans and caravan parks. As such, Officers have

acknowledged that this is a major issue for the County which requires cross-service co-ordination.

- 4.3 A review of the caravan parks in the county and the development of a strategy for their future management have been identified as a Service priority within the Planning and Public Protection Service. The priority is being addressed using the Council's project management methodology and is led by a steering group of senior officers from across the service.

### **Update**

- 4.4 Since the December 2014 meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee the following further work has been undertaken:
- Wider research work into persons providing caravans as their address when accessing services.
  - Meetings with caravan site owners and colleagues in Conwy CBC.
  - The engagement of the Business Improvement and Modernisation Service of the Council to co-ordinate the project.
- 4.5 Members may recall that an initial trawl of a pilot group of 5 holiday caravan sites took place. This was to enable the project to commence, to ascertain the potential scale of the problem and to guide a proposed strategy. The initial findings are contained within **Document 1 (Appendix 1)** attached to this report. This document is exempt from public disclosure by virtue of paragraphs 13 and 18 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 4.6 In undertaking the initial work it became clear that the Council would hold a variety of records from people accessing Council and other services who have given a caravan in the County as their address. These persons may be perfectly entitled to access and receive these services, however, in doing so they may be providing us with tangible evidence that they are not using the caravan for the holiday use it was originally designed for.
- 4.7 Officers within the Council responsible for managing back office systems for a variety of services are currently undertaking research into how many people accessing services have provided a caravan as their address. At the time of writing this report further data has not been compiled, however, we have discovered at least 5 licensed taxi drivers have given caravans as their address in the north of the County.
- 4.8 Officers are seeking information on blue badge holders, those seeking adult/children's services, education services, housing services and other services. Officers have also spoken with colleagues in Legal Services about the legal requirements on the Council to offer certain services to persons residing in caravans.



- 4.9 On 9<sup>th</sup> January 2015 an Officer met a major caravan park owner on site. The purpose of this visit was for the Officer to explain the nature of the Council project. The visit also provided an opportunity for the owner to explain the nature of his business in the context of potential evidence of residential occupation of holiday caravans. A summary of the meeting is attached as **Document 2 (Appendix 2)**.
- 4.10 On 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015 an Officer met with colleagues in Conwy CBC. The purpose of the visit was to explain the nature of the Council project. In addition, the visit was an opportunity to discuss the scale of the problem in the neighbouring county and how officers there are trying to deal with it. Discussions took place about the potential for collaborative work on a "Site Monitoring" protocol.
- 4.11 On 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015 Officers from the Planning and Public Protection Service attended CET. The purpose of this was to discuss the project and how to allocate necessary resources to drive it forward. In the first instance it was agreed to engage the Business Improvement and Modernisation Service of the Council in the project. From there it is hoped that an Officer could be allocated to move the project forward by:
- Establishing clear outcomes i.e. what does the Council hope to achieve by tackling residential use of caravans.
  - Establishing a robust evidence base from the numerous back office systems.
  - Establishing a finished strategy document which captures the above.

## **5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

- 5.1 Controlling the way caravan parks are used contributes towards Council priorities:-
- Developing the local economy
  - Vulnerable people are protected and are able to live as independently as possible
  - Ensuring access to good quality housing

## **6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

- 6.1 The project may have resource implications should it be decided that a post be created to manage the project. The project may impact upon other services in terms of the information they keep, the procedures they follow and ultimately the services they provide to persons found to be residing in caravans.

**7. What are the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.**

7.1 An EqIA will be undertaken for the further development of the Strategy document and prior to its formal adoption.

**8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

8.1 None.

**9 Chief Finance Officer Statement**

9.1 N/A

**10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

10.1 There are no perceived risks associated with the recommendations in this report.

**11. Power to make the Decision**

11.1 Article 6.3.3 of the Council's Constitution outlines scrutiny's policy development functions.

**Contact Officer:**  
Development Manager  
Tel: 01824 706712

By virtue of paragraph(s) 13, 18 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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## DOCUMENT 2

### Summary notes of meeting with caravan site owners

I met with the owners of a major caravan park on Friday 9th January 2015.

The purpose of the meeting was to ascertain some of their management practices with regards checking occupants of their caravans. I explained the Council project we are undertaking and that we have begun to establish evidence, from various sources, which appears to suggest that people may not be holidaying on their site(s).

The owners responded as follows:

- They operate a system whereby anyone buying or renting a caravan on their sites must provide them with details of their permanent address.
- They are long established holiday caravan site owners and would not allow permanent residential occupation of their caravans. The reason they cited was that this does not accord with their business model. They explained that a person living permanently on one of their sites would not spend the same amount of money that someone holidaying on the site would i.e. a person permanently on site would go to the local supermarket and would not use their on-site facilities. It is not in their financial interests to have people on site for long periods. They want a turnover of persons as people on holiday spend more money.
- They have invested millions in on-site holiday facilities to ensure their holiday offer is continuously updated.
- They check electricity and gas usage to ensure people are not on-site permanently.
- They rigorously police their shut-down period between Jan-March.
- They accepted that they have a lot of caravan pitches on many sites and that perhaps their checks are not as rigorous as they could be.

I asked if they would allow me to access their records and to spend a day analysing a handful of caravans on their sites to see who was occupying them. I explained that we have a lot of evidence of people giving caravans, on their sites, as permanent addresses in order to access Council and other services. They seemed surprised by this but also got quite defensive.

In conclusion they were very keen to work with me and to allow me to access records they hold.

I am now arranging to spend a day at the site in March (when the site "opens up" again) to access records and to speak to some caravan occupants.

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**Report to:** Communities Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 23 April 2015

**Report Author:** Scrutiny Coordinator

**Title:** Scrutiny Work Programme

---

**1. What is the report about?**

The report presents Communities Scrutiny Committee with its draft forward work programme for members' consideration.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

To seek the Committee to review and agree on its programme of future work, and to update members on relevant issues.

**3. What are the recommendations?**

That the Committee considers the information provided and approves, revises or amends its forward work programme as it deems appropriate.

**4. Report details.**

- 4.1 Article 6 of Denbighshire County Council's Constitution sets out each Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference, functions and membership, whilst the rules of procedure for scrutiny committees are laid out in Part 4 of the Constitution.
- 4.2 The Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. By reviewing and prioritising issues, members are able to ensure that the work programme delivers a member-led agenda.
- 4.3 For a number of years it has been an adopted practice in Denbighshire for scrutiny committees to limit the number of reports considered at any one meeting to a maximum of four plus the Committee's own work programme report. The aim of this approach is to facilitate detailed and effective debate on each topic.
- 4.4 In recent years the Welsh Government (WG) and the Wales Audit Office (WAO) have highlighted the need to strengthen scrutiny's role across local government and public services in Wales, including utilising scrutiny as a means of engaging with residents and service-users. Going forward scrutiny will be expected to engage better and more frequently with the public with a view to securing better decisions which ultimately lead to better outcomes for citizens. In future the

WAO will measure scrutiny's effectiveness in fulfilling these expectations.

4.5 Having regard to the national vision for scrutiny whilst at the same time focussing on local priorities, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) has recommended that the Council's scrutiny committees should, when deciding on their work programmes, focus on the following key areas:

- budget savings;
- achievement of the Corporate Plan objectives (with particular emphasis on their deliverability during a period of financial austerity);
- any other items agreed by the Scrutiny Committee (or the SCVCG) as high priority (based on the PAPER test criteria – see reverse side of the 'Member Proposal Form' at Appendix 2) and;
- Urgent, unforeseen or high priority issues

#### 4.6 Scrutiny Proposal Forms

As mentioned in paragraph 4.2 above the Council's Constitution requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. To assist the process of prioritising reports, if officers are of the view that a subject merits time for discussion on the Committee's business agenda they have to formally request the Committee to consider receiving a report on that topic. This is done via the submission of a 'proposal form' which clarifies the purpose, importance and potential outcomes of suggested subjects. No officer proposal forms have been received for consideration at the current meeting.

4.7 With a view to making better use of scrutiny's time by focussing committees' resources on detailed examination of subjects, adding value through the decision-making process and securing better outcomes for residents, the SCVCG recently decided that members, as well as officers, should complete 'scrutiny proposal forms' outlining the reasons why they think a particular subject would benefit from scrutiny's input. A copy of the 'member's proposal form' can be seen at Appendix 2. The reverse side of this form contains a flowchart listing questions which members should consider when proposing an item for scrutiny, and which committees should ask when determining a topic's suitability for inclusion on a scrutiny forward work programme. If, having followed this process, a topic is not deemed suitable for formal examination by a scrutiny committee, alternative channels for sharing the information or examining the matter can be considered e.g. the provision of an 'information report', or if the matter is of a very local nature examination by the relevant Member Area Group (MAG). In future no items will be included on a forward work programme without a 'scrutiny proposal form' being completed and accepted for inclusion by the Committee or the SCVCG. Assistance with their completion will be available from the Scrutiny Co-ordinator.

#### Cabinet Forward Work Programme

- 4.8 When determining their programme of future work it is useful for scrutiny committees to have regard to Cabinet's scheduled programme of work. For this purpose a copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 3.

#### Progress on Committee Resolutions

- 4.9 A table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising members on progress with their implementation is attached at Appendix 4 to this report.

### **5. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group**

- 5.1 Under the Council's scrutiny arrangements the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) performs the role of a coordinating committee. The Group met on 2 April. At that meeting it considered a request made at the County Council meeting on 24 February 2015 that the impact of late notification and allocation of central government grant funding on local government financial planning and management be examined in detail. The SCVCG was of the view that this was an important area which could benefit from scrutiny and the Group have asked this Committee to examine it at its July 2015 meeting. Members also suggested that the Welsh Government Minister be invited to attend the meeting to discuss how the timing of grant allocation and notification can be improved for the benefit of all parties. See Appendix 1.
- 5.2 The Group also discussed whether one of the Council's scrutiny committees should consider the results of the Youth Service Review, and the progress made with the community mapping exercise on services available for children and young people. It was decided that Communities Scrutiny Committee should consider these at its meeting in September 2015 – see Appendix 1

### **6. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

Effective scrutiny will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities in line with community needs and residents' wishes. Continual development and review of a coordinated work programme will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities, improve outcomes for residents whilst also managing austere budget cuts.

### **7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.**

No Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the purpose of this report as consideration of the Committee's forward work



programme is not deemed to have an adverse or unfair impact on people who share protected characteristics.

**8. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

Services may need to allocate officer time to assist the Committee with the activities identified in the forward work programme, and with any actions that may result following consideration of those items.

**9. What consultations have been carried out?**

None required for this report. However, the report itself and the consideration of the forward work programme represent a consultation process with the Committee with respect to its programme of future work.

**10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

No risks have been identified with respect to the consideration of the Committee's forward work programme. However, by regularly reviewing its forward work programme the Committee can ensure that areas of risk are considered and examined as and when they are identified, and recommendations are made with a view to addressing those risks.

**11. Power to make the decision**

Article 6.3.7 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work.

**Contact Officer:** Scrutiny Coordinator Tel no: (01824) 712554  
Email: [dcc\\_admin@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:dcc_admin@denbighshire.gov.uk)

## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

**Note: Items entered in italics have not been approved for submission by the Committee. Such reports are listed here for information, pending formal approval.**

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
28 May	<b>Cllrs. David Smith and Julian Thompson-Hill</b>	1. Food Safety, Standards and Procurement	To detail the progress made with food hygiene and food standards compliance across the County, and with procurement and contract management of County food contracts	To mitigate the risk to the health of the County's resident from dangerous/contaminated food and to ensure that the products they buy are as labelled. In addition to safeguard that the Council's procurement and contract management procedures ensure that food served in Council establishments is safe and of high quality.	Graham Boase/Emlyn Jones/Stuart Andrews	June 2014
9 July WG Minister to be invited to attend	<b>Cllr. Julian Thompson-Hill</b>	1. Impact of Late Notification of Allocation of Central Government Grant Funding on Local Government Financial Planning and Management	To outline the difficulties caused by central governments' late allocation of specific grant funding on the local authority's budget setting process, the planning and management of its financial affairs, project management and	Earlier notification of available grant funding to ensure better planning and management of specific projects. This would assist the Council with its financial planning and management.	Paul McGrady/Richard Weigh	By SCVCG April 2015 in response to a request via County Council in February 2015

## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
				the impact on staff and on communities			
10 September	<b>Cllr. Bobby Feeley</b>	1.	Supported Independent Living Service	To monitor the effectiveness of the new Supporting Independent Living Service	(i) an evaluation of the effectiveness of the new service in assisting and supporting vulnerable people to live independently in the community; and (ii) Examination of the proposed procurement model for purchasing future SIL services	Phil Gilroy/Katie Newe/John Sweeney	May 2014 (rescheduled January 2015)
	<b>Cllr. David Smith</b>	2.	Car Parking Charges Policy	To consider the findings of the study into varying car parking charges across the County	The formulation of recommendations for submission to Cabinet with respect to the future car parking charges across the County with a view to developing the economy and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the County's town centres	Steve Parker/Mike Jones	January 2015
	<b>Councillor Huw LI Jones</b>	3	Denbighshire's Youth Service <b>[Education]</b>	To outline the results of the Youth Service Review and the progress with the community mapping process, highlighting key issues and themes which have arisen from the activity	(i) To help develop a fuller understanding of the community groups across the county that work with Children and Young People in order to maximise partnership working in helping children and young people achieve their potential; and (ii) identification of any challenges and potential solutions to the delivery of the above	Liz Grieve/Jamie Groves/Roger Ellerton	By SCVCG April 2015



## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
5 November						
17 December						
4 February 2016						
24 March						
12 May						
30 June						
8 September						
27 Oct 2016	<b>Cllr. Eryl Williams</b>	1 Review of the Home to School Transport Policy <b>[Education]</b>	To consider the findings of a review of the impact of the implementation of the school transport policy	An assessment of the impact of the policy's implementation will assist the Authority to determine if learners' needs are being appropriately met and identify any anomalies or areas of concern which require addressing	Jackie Walley	Cabinet September 2014
15 December						

**Future Issues**

Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
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## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	To outline the proposals for implementing the CIL in Denbighshire	The development of an appropriate and effective CIL scheme for the County	Graham Boase/Angela Loftus	February 2013

**For future years**


**Information/Consultation Reports**

Information / Consultation	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Author	Date Entered
<b>Quarterly Information (Sept/Dec/Mar/June)</b>	Rhyl Going Forward	To brief the Committee on the progress in delivering the Programme and its associated workstreams and projects, and to highlight to members areas of concern or slippages	Mark Dixon	May 2014
<b>Information Report (June 2015)</b>	Reablement Service	To detail to the Committee the: (i) effectiveness of the Reablement Service in delivering the Council's corporate priority of protecting vulnerable people and helping them to live as independently as possible; (ii) efficiencies realised following the introduction of the Service. The report to include all (positive and negative) feedback from service users	Phil Gilroy/Anne Hughes-Jones	June 2014

**Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines**

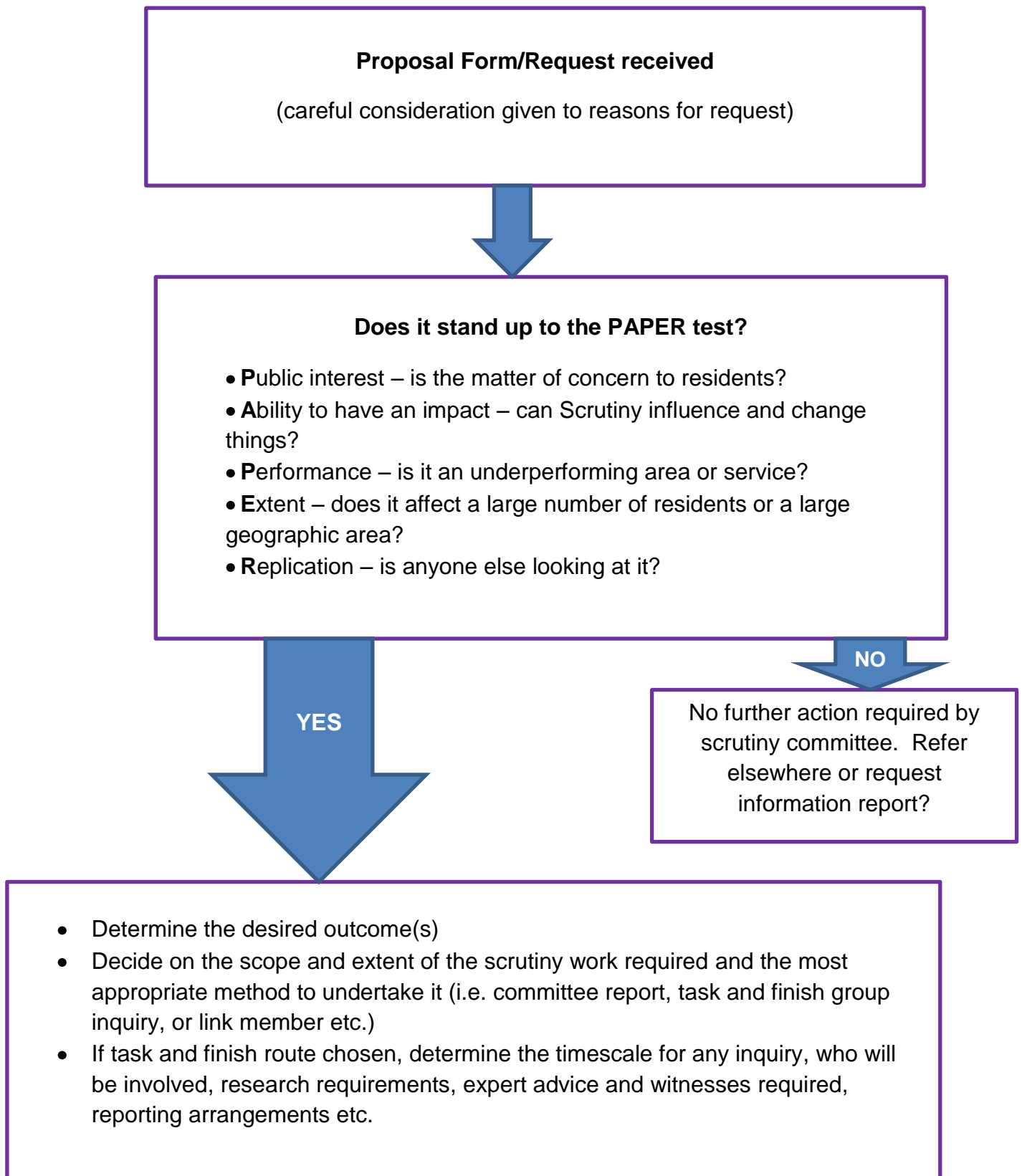
Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
28 May	<b>14 May</b>	9 July	<b>25 June</b>	10 September	<b>27 August</b>

Communities Scrutiny Work Programme.doc  
11/04/15 RhE

<b>Member Proposal Form for Scrutiny Forward Work Programme</b>	
<b>NAME OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>TIMESCALE FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	
<b>TOPIC</b>	
<b>What needs to be scrutinised (and why)?</b>	
<b>Is the matter one of concern to residents/local businesses?</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>Can Scrutiny influence and change things?</b> (if 'yes' please state how you think scrutiny can influence or change things)	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>Does the matter relate to an underperforming service or area?</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>Does the matter affect a large number of residents or a large geographical area of the County</b> (if 'yes' please give an indication of the size of the affected group or area)	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>Is the matter linked to the Council's Corporate priorities</b> (if 'yes' please state which priority/priorities)	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>To your knowledge is anyone else looking at this matter?</b> (If 'yes', please say who is looking at it)	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>If the topic is accepted for scrutiny who would you want to invite to attend e.g. Lead Member, officers, external experts, service-users?</b>	
<b>Name of Councillor/Co-opted Member</b>	
<b>Date</b>	



## Consideration of a topic's suitability for scrutiny



Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Appendix 3

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
2 June	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Ruthin Primary Proposals	To consider the formal consultation reports following the publication of proposals for the amalgamation of Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn and the closure of Ysgol Rhewl and to consider whether to publish the relevant statutory notices.	Yes	Councillor Eryl Williams / Jackie Walley
	3	Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group	To report the key findings and recommendations of the Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group	Yes	Cllr David Smith / Angela Loftus / Sue Lewis
	4	Business Rates Write Offs	To seek approval for uncollectible Business Rates Debts to be written off	Yes	Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Rod Urquhart
	5	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
<b>30 June</b>	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Final Outturn Report	To consider the final revenue outturn position for 2014/15	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	3	Corporate Plan Performance Report 2014/15 Q4	To consider progress against the Corporate Plan	Tbc	Cllr Barbara Smith / Liz Grieve
	4	Town & Area Plans	To consider the allocation of funding for priority projects	Yes	Cllr Hugh Evans / Tom Booty
	5	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>28 July</b>	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	The Future of In-house Care Services	To consider the results of the consultation with existing users of in-house care services	Yes	Councillor Bobby Feeley / Phil Gilroy
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator



Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting		Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
<b>29 September</b>	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Corporate Plan Performance Report 2015/16 Q1	To consider progress against the Corporate Plan	Tbc	Cllr Barbara Smith / Liz Grieve
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>27 October</b>	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>24 November</b>	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>15 December</b>	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the	Tbc	Councillor Julian

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
		current financial position of the Council		Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady
	2 Corporate Plan Performance Report 2015/16 Q2	To consider progress against the Corporate Plan	Tbc	Cllr Barbara Smith / Liz Grieve
	3 Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator

Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>2 June</i>	<i>19 May</i>	<i>30 June</i>	<i>16 June</i>	<i>28 July</i>	<i>14 July</i>

Updated 17/04/15 - KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

## Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
12 March 2015	5. Language Categorisation of All Denbighshire Schools	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> – that subject to the above observations the Committee:-</p> <p>(a) notes the findings of the review of the County's schools' delivery of education in relation to their language categorisation,</p> <p>(b) recommends that the Welsh in Education Strategic Group undertake a further review to establish the reasons for the anomalies in the four schools identified in the report, identifying any support that may be available to them to support them going forward,</p> <p>(c) requests that the WESG also examine the progress made by all county schools along the language continuum, particularly those identified under the Modernising Education Programme as ones who wanted to increase their Welsh medium delivery, and</p> <p>(d) requests that the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group be asked to appoint two or three scrutiny Members to serve on the WESG for the purpose of this further review.</p>	<p>Recommendations communicated to Lead Member and relevant officers</p> <p>The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group at its meeting on 2 April appointed Councillors Huw Hilditch-Roberts and Arwel Roberts to serve on the WESG</p>
	6. Rhyl Coastal	<b>RESOLVED</b> – that the Committee:-	



	<b>Defence Assessment</b>	<p><i>(a) receive and note the contents of the report.</i></p> <p><i>(b) notes, for clarity purposes, that the overtopping frequencies quoted in the report were not synonymous with the "property flooding frequency" figures, typically used in Welsh Government assessments of risk, and</i></p> <p><i>(c) endorses the development of the flood risk mitigation schemes currently being progressed by the County Council.</i></p>	Lead Member and officers advised of the recommendations
	<b>7. The Removal of Unauthorised Signs from Highway Land</b>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> – <i>that subject to the above observations -</i></p> <p><i>(a) to support the principles outlined in the guidance, its continued application and the development of a 'business welcome pack' to assist and support new businesses to establish themselves and promote their services within permitted practices;</i></p> <p><i>(b) express support for Denbighshire officers who have to implement the policy, sometimes in difficult circumstances;</i></p> <p><i>(c) that the policy guidance should be amended to incorporate the involvement of local members in the process;</i></p> <p><i>(d) to support the principle of claiming back costs from any serial offenders who choose to ignore written warnings, and/or any requests from local members, and continue to place signs illegally;</i></p> <p><i>(e) support the separate initiatives that are</i></p>	Recommendations communicated to the Lead member and relevant officers.

		<p><i>being developed in relation to properly authorised signs and advertisements, especially tourism signs and neighbourhood signs (in areas where several businesses coexist); and</i></p> <p><i>(f) request that the findings of the Highways, Economic Development and Planning Services' working group work be presented to scrutiny upon completion to ensure that it supports the Council's vision and the delivery of its Corporate Plan.</i></p>	<p>The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group discussed recommendation (f) at its meeting on 2 April and decided that the findings initially be presented to them for the Group to deem if any further scrutiny is merited</p>
	<p><b>8. Restructure of the Economic and Business Development Service</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> – <i>that, subject to the above observations, to support the rationale for, and the expected outcomes arising from, the review of the Council's Economic and Business Development function.</i></p>	<p>Lead Member and officers advised of the recommendations</p>

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