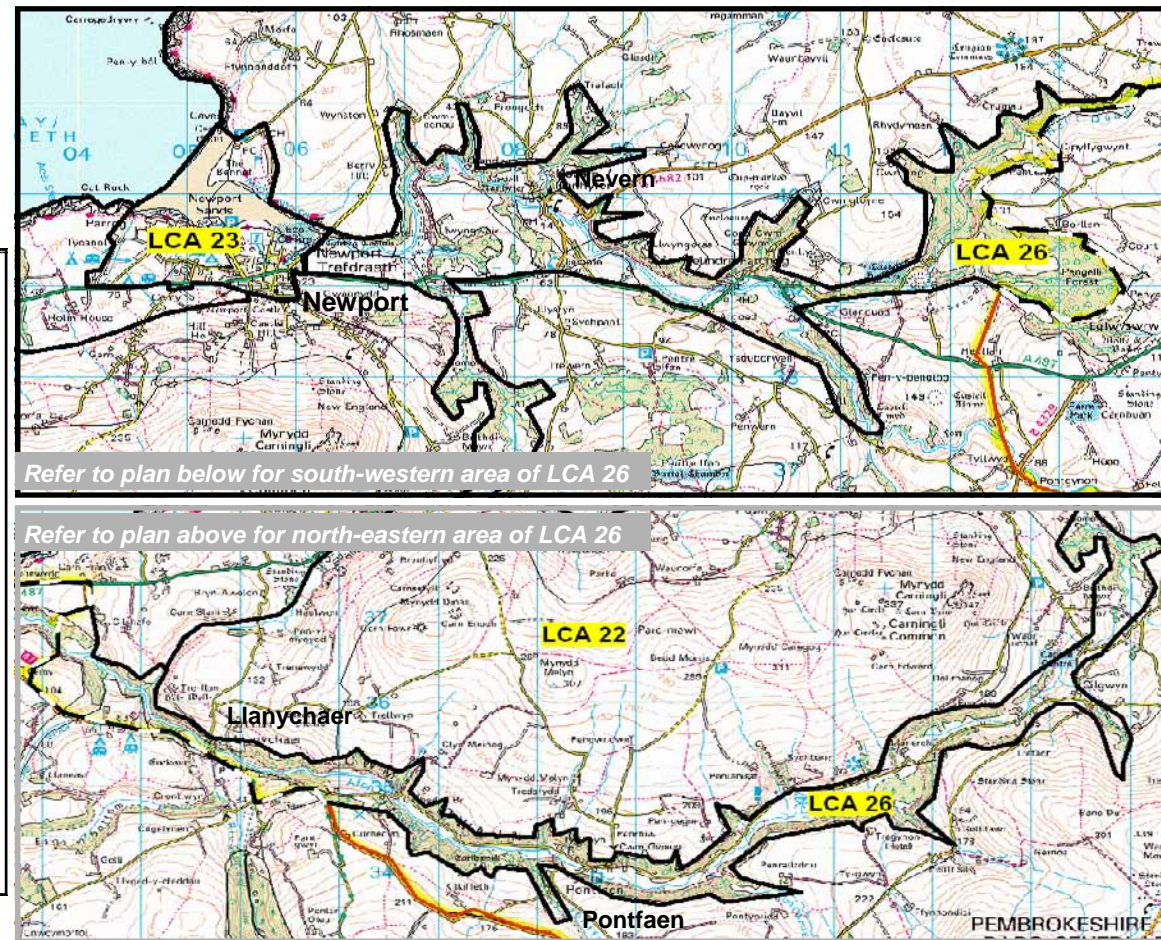
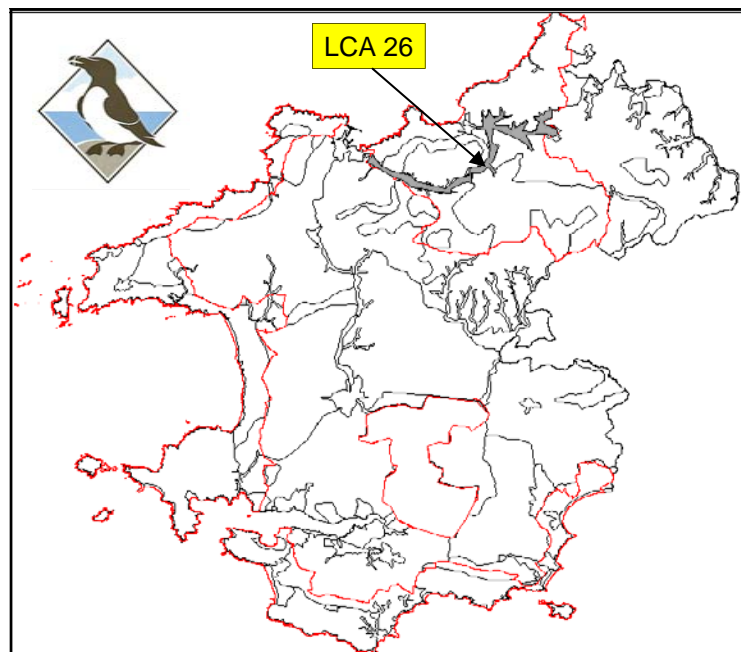


Pembrokeshire Coast National Park
LCA 26 -
CWM GWAUN/AFON NYFER



Location, Context and Physical Characteristics

This extensive wooded lowland valley system of the two rivers running inland from Fishguard and Newport lies at an elevation of between c.10 and c.100m AOD. The valleys of the Afon Gwaun (Gwaun Valley) and the Afon Nyfer (Nevein Valley) are the dividing feature between the two similar but distinctive upland areas of Mynydd Preseli and Mynydd Carningli. Its narrow, enclosed and rather intimate valley landscape is in marked contrast to the bare and rocky hills adjacent. There are frequent views out onto the hills, the form and presence of which accentuate the incised nature of the Gwaun river valley in particular.

Visual and Sensory Characteristics

A series of narrow enclosed and sheltered wooded valleys, overlooked by the Preseli hills, which provide a strong sense of place and accentuate the incised nature of these valleys. They are densely wooded valleys with small agricultural fields, often bounded by overgrown hedges, and there is rough grazing land on the upper valley fringes. The woodland blocks are composed of deciduous and mixed deciduous/coniferous species.

Vegetation and Habitat Characteristics

Two examples of glacial melt-water channels and now dominated by the Afon Nyfer and the Afon Gwaun. Both valleys are essentially wooded in character with grazed pasture and purple moor-grass and rough pastures in the bottoms of the valleys. Mature trees line the rivers and riparian habitats include wet (alder and willow) woodland.





Geological Characteristics

The drift-infilled base/floodplain of the Afon Nyfer includes a broad middle section upstream of Nevein, which narrows and is incised downstream towards the estuary. The level to gently-sloping floor of Cwm Gwaun includes the course and floodplain of the Afon Gwaun and a broad area south west of Llanerch. The incised course of the Afon Nyfer forms the floor of a major glacial melt-water channel with a minor modern stream/river system now in place (Quaternary: Pleistocene-Holocene).

Historic and Cultural Characteristics

This LCA includes a very small part of the Preseli Registered Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales. In addition, a small part of the LCA lies within the Newport and Carningli Landscape of Special Historic Interest in Wales, notably for the presence of Neolithic tombs in the vicinity of Nevein. There are Iron Age forts, Medieval and post-Medieval buildings and structures of national significance. The valley supports a traditional Welsh-speaking community, and there is a real sense of community amongst local families that have lived in the valley for many generations and have retained aspects of Welsh rural life which date back centuries.

Map Notation:

-  National Park Boundary
-  Boundary
-  LCA Boundary
-  LCA Boundary defined by the National Park Boundary



Evaluation & Recommendations

LCA No.	Character Area	Visual & Sensory Aspect Areas	Geological Landscape Aspect Areas	Landscape Habitats Aspect Areas	Historic Landscape Aspect Areas	Cultural Landscape Aspect Areas
26	Cwm Gwaun/ Afon Nyfer	12 - High 20 - High	19 - Moderate 46 - Moderate	53 - Outstanding 315 - Moderate 426 - Outstanding 596 - Low 920 - High	42258 - Outstanding 42264 - Outstanding 46198 - Outstanding 46216 - Outstanding 46217-Outstanding 46232-High	O01 - High 129-Moderate 328 - High

LANDMAP Aspect Evaluation Terms:

Outstanding:	Of International or National Importance
High:	Of Regional or County Importance
Moderate:	Of Local Importance
Low:	Of Little or No Importance

(The reference numbers in the table refer to the discrete Aspect Areas identified)

Special Qualities (Key Landscape Characteristics)

- There is a pervading sense of shelter resulting in these valleys from a combination of landform, woodland and the dense mature hedgerow network bounding most of the fields
- There is a strong sense of enclosure and intimacy imparted by the above characteristics, resulting in a patchwork of small fields punctuated by woodland blocks, giving the landscape a rich texture. This contrasts strongly with the open moorland of the nearby Preseli Hills, with attractive broad views
- The scattered sparse settlement pattern is dominated by traditional building types, in intimate association with the ubiquitous landscape elements of mature hedgerows enclosing small fields. These factors contribute positively to the feeling of the valleys as being a landscape which is substantially unspoilt by recent built development or changes in agricultural management
- Between 30% and 40% of the Cwm Gwaun valley has national or internationally designated sites for nature conservation interest, covering purple moor-grass meadows, western acidic oak woodland and alder woodland on floodplains
- Part of the Afon Nyfer has internationally important habitats of dry heaths and wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, in addition to purple moor-grass meadows and western acidic oak woodland
- Oak and alder woodland habitats are of local priority importance for nature conservation, and the connectivity between woodland blocks through the hedgerow network is an important supporting factor
- Registered Landscapes of both Outstanding and Special Historic Interest in Wales are present in small parts of this LCA. There is a string of Iron Age forts and enclosures which perch on almost every available outcrop along these valleys.
- A traditional Welsh-speaking community survives here and the Gwaun Valley, at present, is not experiencing the same degree of cultural change that has occurred in nearby coastal areas

Discernible Landscape Trends

- Conifer planting is gradually displacing broadleaved woodland sites by encroachment
- Local degradation of traditional field boundaries and woodland is resulting from inconsistent or inappropriate management methods
- Modern agricultural buildings are being erected which have forms, materials and finishes which are discordant with the local vernacular.

Management Guidance

- Consider the appropriateness of conifer plantations in a broadleaved woodland and hedgerow landscape, and support clearance and re-planting with broadleaved woodland
- Ensure that recreational pursuits are monitored to allow continued sport but also minimise the disturbance and ensure the long term survival of local priority habitats and associated species.
- Encourage landowners to participate in agri-environmental schemes; in particular, leave overgrown areas around the margins of arable fields for the benefit of wildlife
- Rehabilitate traditional field boundary features and reinstate traditional field boundary management practices, applied with consistency throughout the length of the valleys, especially at key visual locations
- Ensure that as far as possible no significant geological or geomorphological features are lost or damaged
- Conserve the important archaeological sites, and the areas designated as Registered Historic Landscapes especially from the effects of forestry, so as to retain their integrity and their visual *context*
- Conserve nature conservation value of the designated sites through appropriate management secured by agreement where practicable
- Seek to promote a viable and sustainable rural economy within the Gwaun Valley without losing its long-established cultural identity.
- Ensure that as far as possible ancient monuments and remains are not lost or damaged.
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