

# DEINIOLEN

A character study



Richard Hayman

for

Gwynedd Council

March 2017



**Llechi Cymru**  
**Wales Slate**

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## Crynodeb

Paratowyd astudiaeth o nodweddion trefol Deiniolen yn 2017 i ategu'r enwebiad am statws Safle Treftadaeth Byd i Ddiwydiant Llechi Cymru sydd i'w gyflwyno i Gorff Addysgol, Gwyddonol, a Diwylliannol y Cenhedloedd Unedig (UNESCO). Pentref ar dir uchel yng Ngwynedd yw Deiniolen, a godwyd i gartrefu chwarelwyr Chwarel Dinorwig ger Llyn Peris, un o chwareli llechi mwyaf y Gogledd tua diwedd y bedwaredd ganrif ar bymtheg.

Mae'r adroddiad yn amlinellu hanes y gwaith chwarela yn yr ardal a datblygiad Deiniolen a threfgordd gyfagos Clwt-y-bont. Mae'r astudiaeth nodweddion yn edrych ar y patrwm anheddu a'i berthynas â seilwaith y ffyrdd a pherchnogaeth y tir. Gan hoelio sylw ar dai diwydiannol yn bennaf, ond gan gynnwys adeiladau masnachol, diwylliannol a chrefyddol hefyd, mae'n trafod dylanwad yr economi lleol, dyheadau diwylliannol, adeiledd y gymdeithas a defnydd deunyddiau adeiladu, bob un ohonynt wedi cyfrannu at gymeriad arbennig treftadaeth adeiledig y dref. Tanlinellir amrywiaeth cymeriad hanesyddol y dref drwy nodi ardaloedd sydd â chymeriad gwahanol.

Dechreuodd yr aneddiadau yn Neiniolen a Chlwt-y-bont yn y 1820au ar hyd llinell ffordd a rheilffordd chwarel yn y drefn honno, lle roedd y rheiny'n croesi ystadau tirfeddianwyr mentrus a brydlesodd leiniau tir ar gyfer adeiladu. Ystâd y Faenol, o eiddo teulu Assheton Smith, oedd prif dirfeddiannwr yr ardal a pherchennog Dinorwig, ond cafodd Deiniolen a Chlwt-y-bont eu codi ar leiniau tir y tu allan i reolaeth yr ystâd. Mae gan y ddau anheddiad amrywiaeth o stoc dai, o fythynnod unllawr cynnar yn y traddodiad gwledig, i derasau o dai dau-lawr, gan gynnwys rhai o'r tai teras cynharaf yn ardal chwareli'r Gogledd. Mae capeli, eglwys ac ysgolion yn dangos datblygiad Deiniolen a Chlwt-y-bont fel cymunedau cyflawn. Mae pensaernïaeth y capeli yn arbennig yn datgelu uchelgais diwylliannol a ffyniant economaidd y gymuned yn ail hanner y bedwaredd ganrif ar bymtheg. Mae'r deunyddiau adeiladu'n cyfrannu llawer at gymeriad y ddau anheddiad, o safbwynt defnydd meini o'r maes, meini nadd ar gyfer adeiladau o statws fel capeli ac eglwys, a thoeon llechi.

Tynnir y themâu amrywiol at ei gilydd i ddangos bod Deiniolen wedi cadw cymeriad cryf a neilltuol sy'n deillio o'r bedwaredd ganrif ar bymtheg a hynny ar sail cyfuniad unigryw o dopograffi, hanes economaidd a chymdeithasol, a'r adnoddau naturiol lleol y codwyd ei adeiladau ohonyn nhw. Mae'r adroddiad yn gorffen gydag argymhellion ar ragoriaethau dynodi Ardal Gadwraeth.

## Summary

An urban-character study of Deiniolen was prepared in 2017 in support of the Wales Slate World Heritage Nomination to be submitted to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Deiniolen is an upland village in Gwynedd, built to house quarrymen who worked at the Dinorwig Quarry near Llyn Peris, one of the largest slate quarries in North Wales in the nineteenth century.

The report outlines the history of quarrying in the locality and the development of Deiniolen and the adjoining township of Clwt-y-bont. The character study examines the pattern of settlement and its relationship to its existing infrastructure of roads and land ownership. Focussing mainly on industrial housing, but also encompassing commercial, cultural and religious buildings, it discusses the influence of the local economy, cultural aspirations, social structure and the use of building materials, all of which have contributed to the special character of the village's built heritage. The variety of historic character within the village is highlighted by the identification of separate character areas.

Settlement at Deiniolen and Clwt-y-bont began in the 1820s on the line of a quarry road and railway respectively, where they crossed the estates of opportunistic land owners who leased plots for building. The Vaynol Estate of the Assheton Smith family was the dominant landowner in the area, and owner of Dinorwig, but Deiniolen and Clwt-y-bont were built on pockets of land beyond its control. Both settlements contain a variety of housing stock, from early single-storey cottages of rural tradition, to terraces of two-storey houses, including some of the earliest terraced housing in the North Wales slate-quarrying district. The emergence of Deiniolen and Clwt-y-bont as fully-formed communities is marked by the chapels, church and schools. The architecture of the chapels in particular reveals the cultural aspiration and economic prosperity of the community in the second half of the nineteenth century. Building materials contribute much to the character of both settlements, in their use of field stones, quarried stones for the buildings of status such as chapels and church, and slate roofs.

The various themes are drawn together to show that Deiniolen retains a strong and distinctive nineteenth-century character based on its unique combination of topography, economic and social history, and the local natural resources with which its buildings were constructed. The report concludes with recommendations on the merits of designation of Conservation Area status.

DEINIOLEN  
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## Contents

### Summaries

1	Aims of the study	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Historical background	2
4	Character of building	5
	4.1 Building type and style	5
	4.2 Building materials	13
5	Character areas	17
5.1	Parish church and environs	17
	5.2 Village centre	18
	5.3 Hafod Oleu and Pentre Helen	20
	5.4 Ffordd Deiniol	21
	5.5 Clwt-y-bont (north side)	23
	5.6 Dinorwig Railway	26
	5.7 Clwt-y-bont (south side)	26
	5.8 Former Glandinorwig writing-slate mill	28
6	Statement of significance	28
7	Conservation Area status	29
8	References	32
	Appendix I: Listed buildings in Deiniolen	33

### List of illustrations

- Fig 1 Location map
- Fig 2 Detail of Llanddeiniolen Tithe map, 1838
- Fig 3 Deiniolen on the 1889 Ordnance Survey
- Fig 4 Clwt-y-bont on the 1889 Ordnance Survey
- Fig 5 Deiniolen on the 1953 Ordnance Survey map
- Fig 6 Siop y Gornel
- Fig 7 Rhes Fawr on New Street
- Fig 8 Back New Street
- Fig 9 Rhes Marian
- Fig 10 Rhes Faenol (Vaynol Terrace)
- Fig 11 Ffordd Deiniol
- Fig 12 Bro Dawel, Ffordd Deiniol
- Fig 13 Eglwys Crist
- Fig 14 Cefn y Waen chapel
- Fig 15 Capel Ebenezer
- Fig 16 The former non-denominational school
- Fig 17 Cynfi
- Fig 18 houses in Tabernacle Street

- Fig 19 house behind Green Terrace
- Fig 20 sawn slate gate piers
- Fig 21 Slate garden fences
- Fig 22 Boundary wall of Glan Dinorwig mill
- Fig 23 Carnegie Library
- Fig 24 Parish church character area
- Fig 25 Boundary wall of Cefn y Waen chapel
- Fig 26 Village centre and Hafod Oleu & Pentre Helen character areas
- Fig 27 High Street
- Fig 28 North Street
- Fig 29 Hafod Oleu
- Fig 30 Ffordd Deiniol and Clwt-y-bont character areas
- Fig 31 former British School
- Fig 32 Deiniolen burial ground
- Fig 33 Capel Libanus
- Fig 34 narrow pathway in Clwt-y-bont
- Fig 35 Plas Eryr
- Fig 36 Houses along the line of the Dinorwig Railway
- Fig 37 Clwt-y-bont
- Fig 38 Tai Glyndwr
- Fig 39 Glandinorwig writing-slate mill
- Fig 40 Culverts at Glandinorwig writing-slate mill
- Fig 41 boundary of a possible Deiniolen Conservation Area
- Fig 42 boundary of a possible Clwt-y-bont Conservation Area
- Fig 43 Listed buildings in Deiniolen

## **Acknowledgements**

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## I Aims of the study

Historic character confers identity, creates a sense of belonging and contributes to the quality of the places where we live, work and visit. It can also be an asset for economic vitality and regeneration. Protecting and sustaining local character effectively requires a sound evidence base that can inform regeneration activity, conservation, planning and design, and support decisions about conservation, management and the accommodation of change.

Developing character studies for settlements helps provide a robust evidence-base for local planning policies and will provide a key element of support for managing these proposed settlements for the future.

The immediate purpose of this study is to provide supporting evidence for one aspect of the forthcoming Wales Slate World Heritage Site nomination. The nomination will seek to convey the important value that settlements play in the outstanding universal value of the site. Deiniolen is one of the settlements selected for study, because it has its own distinctive character that reveals specific aspects of the development of the slate industry and the economy, society and culture that it produced.

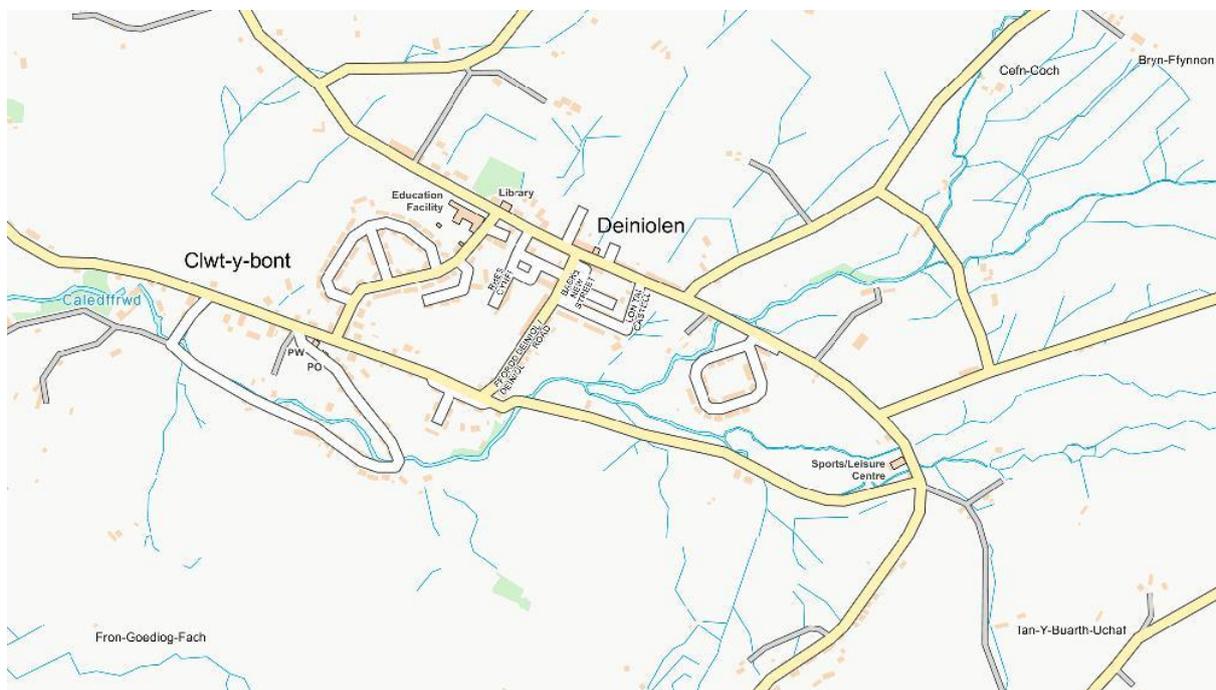


Fig 1 Location map.

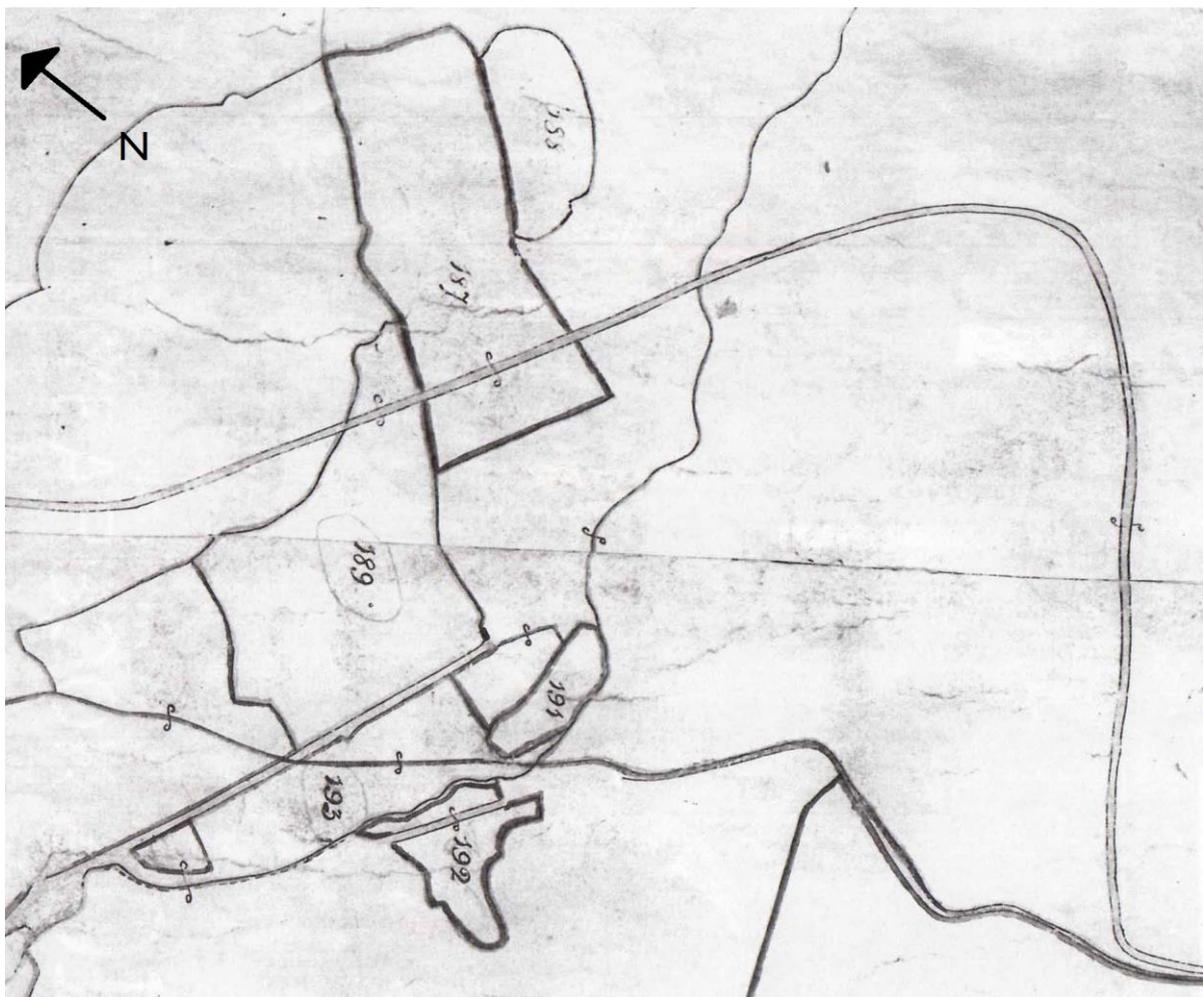
## 2 Introduction

Deiniolen, with an outlying township of Clwt-y-bont on its south side, is an upland village in Snowdonia, Gwynedd, standing just over 200 metres above sea level (fig 1). Both settlements are within the Dinorwig Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. Deiniolen is set amid the moorland slopes on the north side of Llyn Padarn and, unusually for a slate-industry settlement, has no visual relationship with the Dinorwig Quarry where its inhabitants mainly worked. The former quarry is approximately 1.8 miles (3 kilometres) to the south east, close to Llyn Padarn. Around the edges of the village is a landscape of small

fields, with some scattered roadside settlement, and a backdrop of rocky moorland to the south. Afon Caledfrwd forms an approximate eastern boundary of Deiniolen, whereas Clwt-y-Bont is built on both banks of the river. The land slopes roughly north-south, meaning that mountain views in the direction of Snowdon to the south are possible from most parts of the village.

### 3 Historical background

Deiniolen and Clwt y Bont were established by and for quarrymen at Dinorwig. However, the land on which the settlements were built was uninhabited upland pasture before enclosure of Llanddeiniolen parish in 1808. At this time several estates had land on the uplands, mainly the Vaynol Estate of the Assheton Smith family, but there were also small estates such, as Coed Helen and Caeau Uchaf, which would become the nucleus of quarrying settlements from the 1820s.



*Fig 2 Detail of Llanddeiniolen Tithe map, 1838. The quarry road passes through plot 187, which is the Caeau Uchaf Estate and became the nucleus of Deiniolen. The Dinorwig railway passes through plot 193, the Coed Helen Estate. Clwt-y-bont was built largely on the existing roads in plots 193 and 192.*

The Dinorwig Slate Quarry was established in 1787 by Thomas Assheton Smith of Vaynol, on the north side of Llyn Padarn. Previous quarrying at Dinorwig had been on a small scale, but Assheton Smith invested in transport infrastructure as well as the quarries, allowing a

significant increase in production, and therefore employment. In 1810 a road nearly 8 miles (12.5 kilometres) long was completed from the quarry, over the high ground of Llanddeiniolen, to a quay at Felinheli on the Menai Strait. The road was superseded in 1824-5 by a horse-drawn railway, the Dinorwig Railway, which traversed the same high ground.

The quarry road passed through the estate of Caeau Uchaf, owned by Robert William Griffith, who had started leasing land for building by the 1820s (fig 2). One of the earliest buildings was Capel Ebenezer, which was established by the road in 1823. The nucleus of Deiniolen was formed along this road, and two new streets at right angles to it – New Street and North Street. Two of the houses in High Street are dated, one 1834 and the other 1836. These early houses were built either singly, in pairs or in short rows of three or four, probably by local men, including quarrymen themselves. As a settlement took root it encouraged speculative builders to build on a more ambitious scale. An example of this is Rhes Fawr, a terrace of fourteen houses built on New Street, and a parallel row of thirteen immediately behind it called Back New Street. They were built in the period 1832-38, a speculative development by David Griffith of Caernarfon, who was building a similar row of quarrymen's houses in Penygroes at the same time.

The Dinorwig Railway passed through the Coed Helen estate owned by Thomas Rice (fig 2), where trackside dwellings were also built. By bridging the river the two banks were made accessible to each other and cottages and houses began to appear on existing farm roads on either bank. A mill was built in 1840 beside the Caledffrwd for producing school slates (although a tablet on the building claims the date was 1835), with raw material supplied by the railway.

In 1842 a new railway, the Padarn Railway, superseded the Dinorwig Railway and the settlements of Deiniolen and Clwt-y-bont became more isolated. However, development continued in both settlements in the nineteenth century, evidence for which is provided by the Ordnance Survey maps of 1889. In Deiniolen a grid of streets was laid out on the lower end of the Caeau Uchaf estate – Tai Caradog, Rhes Marian, Tabernacle Street, Glyn Terrace and Green Terrace (fig 3). Development in Clwt-y-Bont included short terraces on the existing roads on both sides of the Caledffrwd (fig 4).

With a growing population came a social and cultural infrastructure in the form of chapels and schools. Ebenezer, an Independent chapel, was the first, and was the name by which Deiniolen was known in the nineteenth century. Cefn y Waen stands outside the village and was founded as a Calvinistic Methodist chapel in 1838. In Deiniolen were Capel Tabernacl (Wesleyan Methodist, 1860) and Capel Disgwylfa (Calvinistic Methodist, 1864), while in Clwt-y-Bont were Libanus (Baptist, 1877) and Capel Maes-y-dref (Independent, 1879). Eglwys Crist (Christ Church), an Anglican church built in 1857 at the expense of Thomas Assheton Smith for the benefit of the Dinorwig quarrymen, was also built outside of Deiniolen.

There was a British School in Deiniolen by 1854, and later a non-denominational school on the old quarry road, close to the church. Quarrymen are said to have raised £900 for the building of the nonconformists' British school, about half of its cost.

It was in the second half of the nineteenth century that Deiniolen expanded beyond the confines of the Caeau Estate, on land owned by the Vaynol Estate. New Street was extended south to form Deiniol Road, on which the British School, Disgwylfa and

Tabernacle Chapels were built. Vaynol Terrace (now Rhes Faenol) was built immediately east (fig 3), and in the last decade of the nineteenth century Victoria Terrace was added to the west of High Street, on the original quarry road.

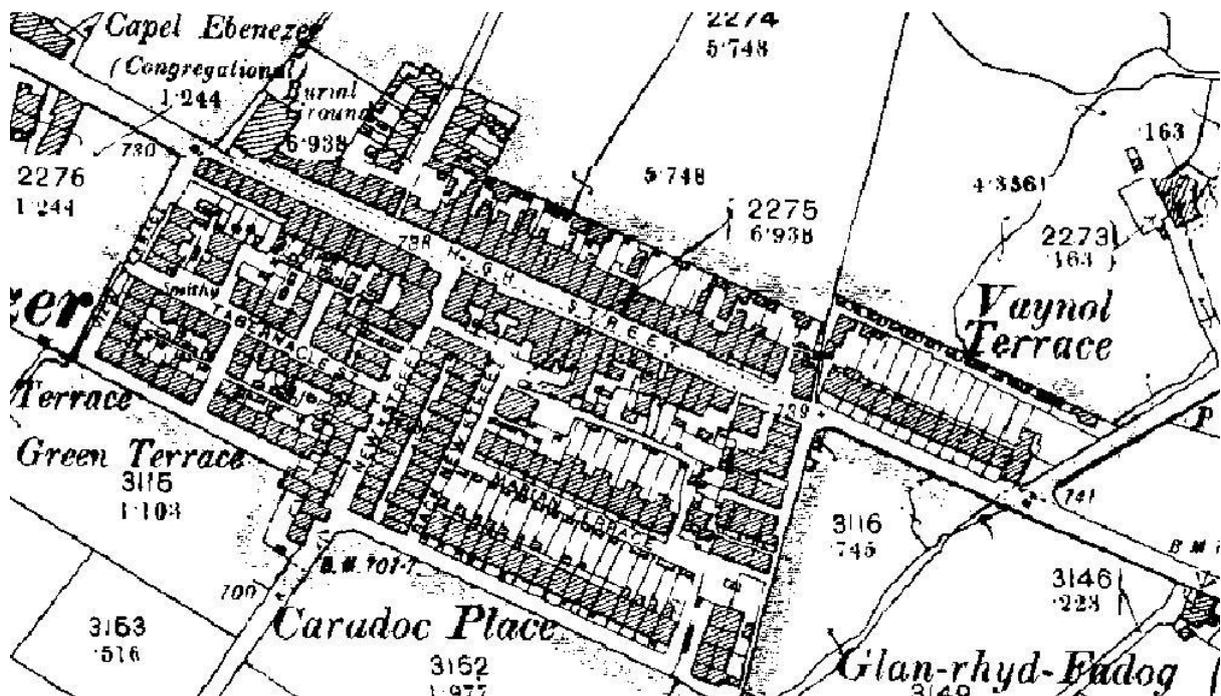


Fig 3 Deiniolen in 1889, showing the grid of streets south of High Street that was laid after New Street.

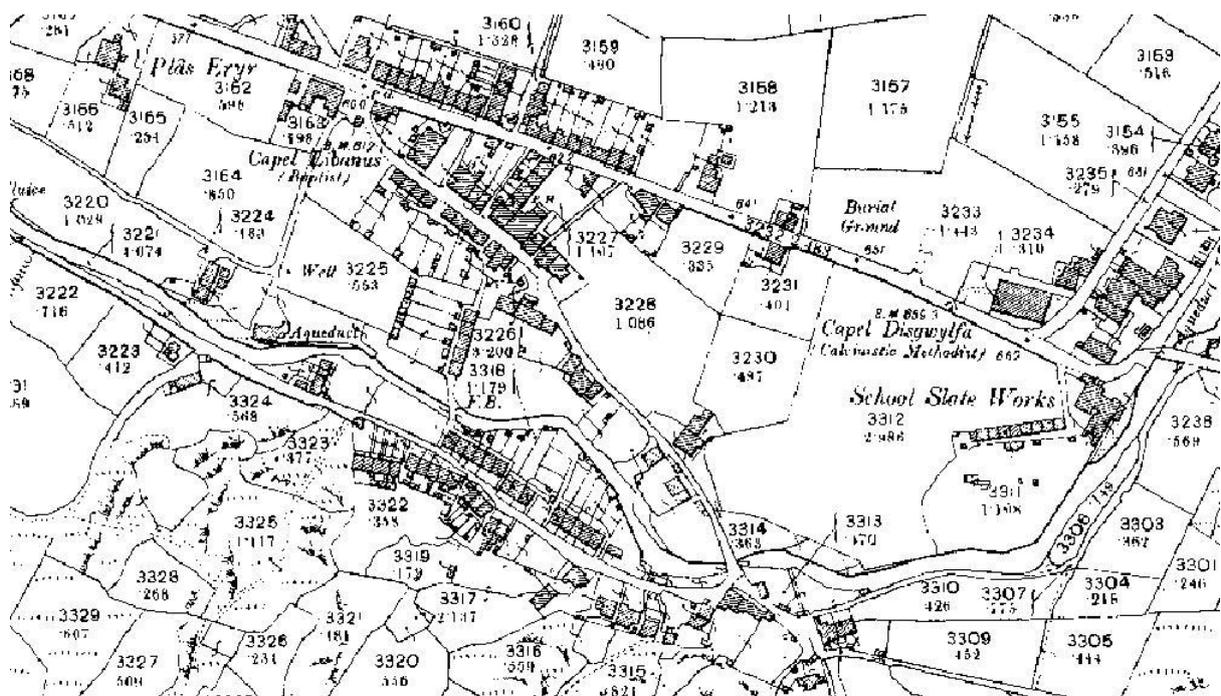


Fig 4 Settlement at Clwt-y-bont in 1889. The former Dinorwig railway runs diagonally lower right to upper left.

The Glandinorwig Mill for producing school slates was established on the edge of Clwt-y-bont, probably in 1879, the date on its waterwheel. But there was little further economic growth in the district. The Dinorwig Quarry reached its peak of production in the 1890s

and, although it did not close until 1969, there was little new building in Deiniolen until the 1920s. The Carnegie Library was built in 1913, and the war memorial was subsequently erected in its forecourt. On the opposite side of the road, Ysgol Gwaun Gynfi opened in 1927. A large development of social housing – Hafod Oleu and Pentre Helen – was built in the 1940s (fig 5). Since 1945 there have been small developments in the village itself, including on the site of former allotments, and others on greenfield sites. The largest is Rhydfadog Estate, situated between the main village and the church.



Fig 5 Deiniolen on the 1953 Ordnance Survey map, showing the layout of Hafod Oleu and Pentre Helen on the west side of the village.

## 4 Character of building

### 4.1 Building type and style

Local style is best displayed in the village's housing stock. The earliest type of house in Deiniolen and Clwt-y-Bont is the single-storey two-room house, occasionally set at right angles to the road. These include Tan-y-ffynnon, and Tyn-y-Clwt, both squatter cottages by the quarry road but on the Vaynol Estate. The former Siop y Gornel on High Street, dated 1834, is the only example of a house at right angles to the road in the centre of the village (fig 6). Other examples facing the road are in Clwt-y-bont. These houses are clearly derived from the rural vernacular tradition.

However the single-storey cottage soon fell out of favour. The single-fronted two-storey house, in which one room is placed on top of another, instead of side-by-side, allowed a greater density of houses to be built along the roadside. Rhes Fawr on New Street is an early example of this kind of development and is a consciously industrial row with urban character (fig 7). Apart from a larger house at the upper end, the houses are of uniform size

with regular openings and under a single sloping roof line – an early example of a distinguishing characteristic of industrial housing in both north and South Wales. Ordnance Survey maps show that behind New Street was a similar row of houses on Back New Street, only one of which survives, and in mere shell form (fig 8). Therefore neither New Street nor Back New Street had gardens.



*Fig 6 Siop y Gornel in High Street, a former cottage dated 1834.*



*Fig 7 Rhes Fawr in New Street, fourteen two-room houses built between 1832 and 1838 on a sloping site.*



*Fig 8 The shell survives on one of the houses that made up Back New Street.*



*Fig 9 Rhes Marian, two-window houses built in the second half of the nineteenth century, setback from the street behind garden walls.*

The range of nineteenth-century houses in Deiniolen and Clwt-y-bont reveals improvements in quarrymen's houses through the nineteenth century, most obviously in the size of houses, which progressively have more floor space and room height. Houses built in the 1830s, and

often later, open directly on to the street. After the mid-century some of these no longer face the street directly, but are set back behind small front gardens with garden walls – such as Tai Caradog, Rhos Marian and Rhos Faenol (fig 9, 10). A higher standard of houses is represented by Victoria Terrace, at the west end of the High Street and set apart from the village centre, and Ffordd Deiniol (fig 11). These terraces incorporate relatively large bay windows in the lower storey, and have rear wings.



*Fig 10 Vaynol Terrace (now Rhos Faenol), built beside the former quarry road, but on the Vaynol Estate.*



*Fig 11 Ffordd Deiniol, built in the last decade of the nineteenth century. It has pebble-dashed walls with smooth-rendered architraves, bay windows and brick stacks, all of which distinguish it from earlier housing*

Since most of Deiniolen's houses were built for quarrymen there is little social differentiation in its housing. However, as the quality of houses improved in the nineteenth century subtle social hierarchies developed, and perhaps the differential quality of housing helped to create them.

As Deiniolen emerged and gradually took on the functions of an urban settlement it attracted local professionals. There was evidently only a small middle class in Deiniolen, such as schoolteachers and ministers, with no real evidence that the managerial or supervisory class of quarry employees were living in Deiniolen. There are detached houses in Deiniol Road (fig 12). In Clwt-y-Bont there are also individually built houses, such as Plas Eryr, perhaps for the managers and supervisory staff of the original School Slate Works and the later Glandinorwig writing-slate mill.



*Fig 12 Bro Dawel, an individually built house in Ffordd Deiniol, of sneaked quarried stone, with light-grey granite dressings and quoins.*

Hafod Oleu and Pentre Helen is a mid-twentieth century council-house development, well spaced out in a garden-village style, its curved roads a deliberate contrast to the straight nineteenth-century terraces. The houses are built in blocks of two-four, with large garden areas, a contrast to the high-density of some of the older nineteenth-century houses. The houses introduced a new architectural vocabulary to Deiniolen, in the form of hipped roofs, cross-gabled bays, and simple bold detail such as concrete canopies over doorways.

The most prominent buildings in Deiniolen are public buildings – the church, chapels, library and schools. Neither of them are built in a local style and they were designed by architects from outside of the immediate area. The church was built in Decorated style by the diocesan architect, Henry Kennedy. Its tall, asymmetrical spire is visible from various parts of the settlement, including Clwt-y-bont, despite being detached from the village (fig 13). It conveys the kind of authority that its patron, Thomas Assheton Smith, wanted. With a large

churchyard and adjoining vicarage, it is self-consciously rural in its setting, as if it existed before the village was built.



*Fig 13 Eglwys Crist is set in a large churchyard, and in a self-consciously rural setting.*



*Fig 14 Cefn y Waen Chapel, 1868. Its gable-end front is built of snecked, rock-faced stones with freestone dressings.*

Close to it is Cefn-y-Waen Calvinistic Methodist chapel. Proximity of church and chapel gives a superficial impression that they are in competition, but when the church was built the chapel was only a modest building. It was rebuilt in 1868 by Richard Davies of Bangor. It has a Romanesque gable-end façade, and architecturally is the finest of the surviving local chapels (fig 14). Its rebuilding marks the rising prosperity, as well as the increasing confidence and sophistication of the nonconformist community. Other chapels are less distinguished architecturally, but still characteristic of the period. The Reverend Thomas Thomas of Landore, Swansea, rebuilt Ebenezer in 1858, a relatively simple classical building with pilasters and round-headed windows (fig 15). Libanus, built by Richard Owens of Liverpool in 1877, also has round-headed windows, but is more distinguished by its use of materials and by the steep roof pitch. Each of these chapels reflects the prevailing nonconformist fashion for gable-end façades with round-headed windows.



*Fig 15 Capel Ebenezer, 1858, an early work of the Reverend Thomas Thomas of Landore, Swansea.*

Educational and cultural buildings are also prominent. The Carnegie library of 1913 stands in a key location in High Street opposite the junction with Hafod Oleu. The non-denominational school is an ambitious building, testament to the importance placed on education by industrial communities (fig 16), and, with the former British School and Ysgol Gwaun Cynfi, schools make a significant contribution to the character of the village.

The economic infrastructure of Deiniolen is poorly represented as there are few nineteenth-century commercial buildings. Ordnance Survey maps do not show a public house in either Deiniolen or Clwt-y-bont as late as 1914. Siop y Gornel was a shop by the early twentieth century, but was adapted from a cottage. Another former shop was Cynfi,

outside of the village next to the non-denominational school, although its shop window has been infilled (fig 17).



*Fig 16 The former non-denominational school, with distinctive tall round-headed windows.*



*Fig 17 Cynfi, formerly a shop, but set outside of the village close to the non-denominational school.*

#### 4.2 Building materials

Building materials make an important contribution to the character of Deiniolen and Clwt – y-bont. Rubble stone is the most commonly-used building material in the village, especially for houses. In most cases it is quarried, and used either as random rubble or cut into roughly rectangular-faced blocks (fig 18). Field stone was used in garden and other boundary walls, while for buildings it is less common, although sometimes used on the back walls rather than the front (fig 19). Buildings are roofed in locally quarried slate.



*Fig 18 Houses in Tabernacle Street. The house on the right is built of random rubble stone, the later houses further left of quarried stone roughly shaped into blocks. All openings are under lintels of slate blocks. The snecked-stone garden walls are later. Originally the houses opened directly on to the street.*



*Fig 19 The poorest-quality materials are often to the side or rear, as seen here in a house behind Green Terrace, built of field stone.*

For houses, the stone was often used in large blocks, with stone lintels rather than arches over the openings. However, most of the houses have subsequently been pebble-dashed, and the use of local materials is now best displayed in garden walls. Sawn slate slabs are used as copings to dwarf walls with railings, and as gate piers (fig 20). Use of slate gate piers is particularly distinctive in long terraces such as Rhes Faenol, Tai Caradog and Rhes Marian (in the latter case the garden walls have been rebuilt in slate but the original gate piers have been retained) (see fig 9). Divisions between garden walls are in places by means of 'slate fences', or *crawiau*, i.e. slabs laid on end and held together with wire (fig 21). This is derived from the rural tradition of field walls and is characteristic of the slate regions of North Wales.



*Fig 20 Rubble-stone garden walls with sawn slate used for gate piers and coping courses.*



*Fig 21 Slate fences dividing gardens in Clwt-y-bont.*

For buildings erected in the second half of the nineteenth century, many of which are buildings of status, various forms of dressed stone are used, at least for the façade. Rock-faced stone laid in regular courses is seen in Eglwys Crist and the façade of Glandinorwig writing-slate mill (above a lower storey of random rubble). Snecked, rock-faced stone was used for the façade of Cefn-y-Waen chapel, which, like the church, has sandstone dressings.

From the 1870s use of greenish igneous rock broken into pieces and carefully laid to give a 'crazy-paving' pattern to the walls, was used in various contexts, such as Capel Libanus, but also boundary walls of the village burial ground and Glandinorwig writing-slate mill (fig 22). This treatment is a characteristic feature of North-west Wales in the late nineteenth century and can be seen in towns such as Caernarfon and Conwy.



*Fig 22 The boundary wall of Glandinorwig writing-slate mill has randomly shaped quarried stones pieced together in a crazed pattern, with slate blocks for the coping course.*



*Fig 23 The Carnegie Library, with pebble-dashed front and smooth-rendered pilasters.*

Brick is rarely seen in Deiniolen. It is used mainly for chimney stacks and window dressings in buildings of the late nineteenth century. Roughcast and pebble-dashed walls are part of the local character, especially in Deiniolen. Capel Ebenezer and its vestry are both mainly roughcast, which is typical of chapels of the late nineteenth century. Pebble-dash, often used in combination with roughcast, became a signature feature of Deiniolen in the twentieth century, applied to older terraced houses, but also public buildings such as the library and Ysgol Gwaun Cynfi, and the social housing in Hafod Oleu and Pentre Helen.

Since the late twentieth century slate blocks have been used for building, mainly boundary walls, evidence of the continuing importance of slate to local identity (see fig 9).

## 5 Character Areas

### 5.1 Parish church and environs

Important public buildings stand outside the east end of the village, on both sides of the former quarry road, but are inextricably part of the village (fig 24). The buildings here all have an upland rural setting, in a landscape of fields with drystone walls.

The church of Eglwys Crist is the most visually dominant building in the surrounding landscape on account of its tall spire (see fig 13). It is set in a large churchyard, and the effect of its spire is literally heightened by its position on rising ground as seen from the road to the south. Behind it is the altered vicarage. The character of the churchyard is enhanced by the proliferation of slate gravestones, a distinctive regional form.

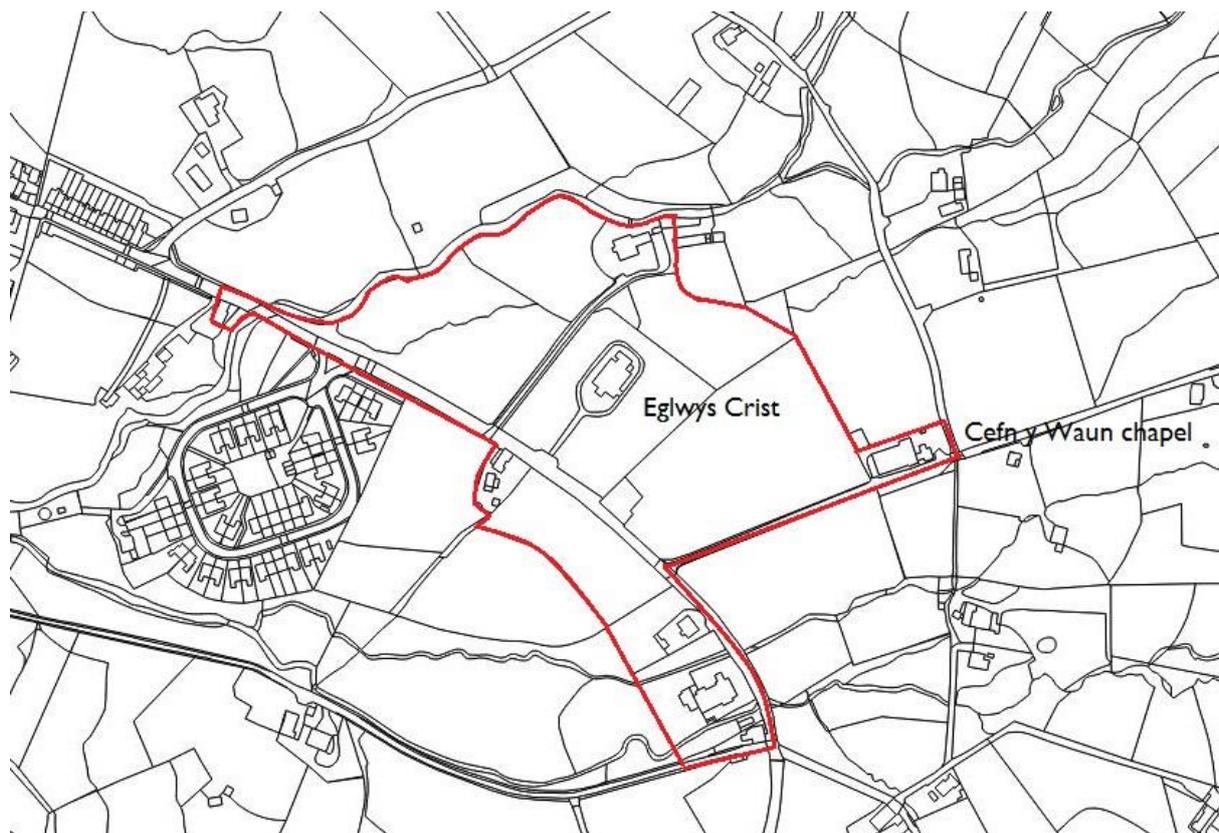


Fig 24

Parish church and environs character area.

Cefn y Waen chapel, to the north-east of the church, is less prominent in its rural setting, but has a well-detailed Romanesque façade. Its faintly polychrome boundary wall of non-local quarried stone provides a stark contrast with the adjoining field walls (fig 25).

On the south side of the road is the former non-denominational school, set at right angles to the road, close to which is Cynfi, a late-nineteenth century house and shop. Further west toward the village is Tyn-y-Clwt, a single-storey squatter cottage set at right angles to the road.

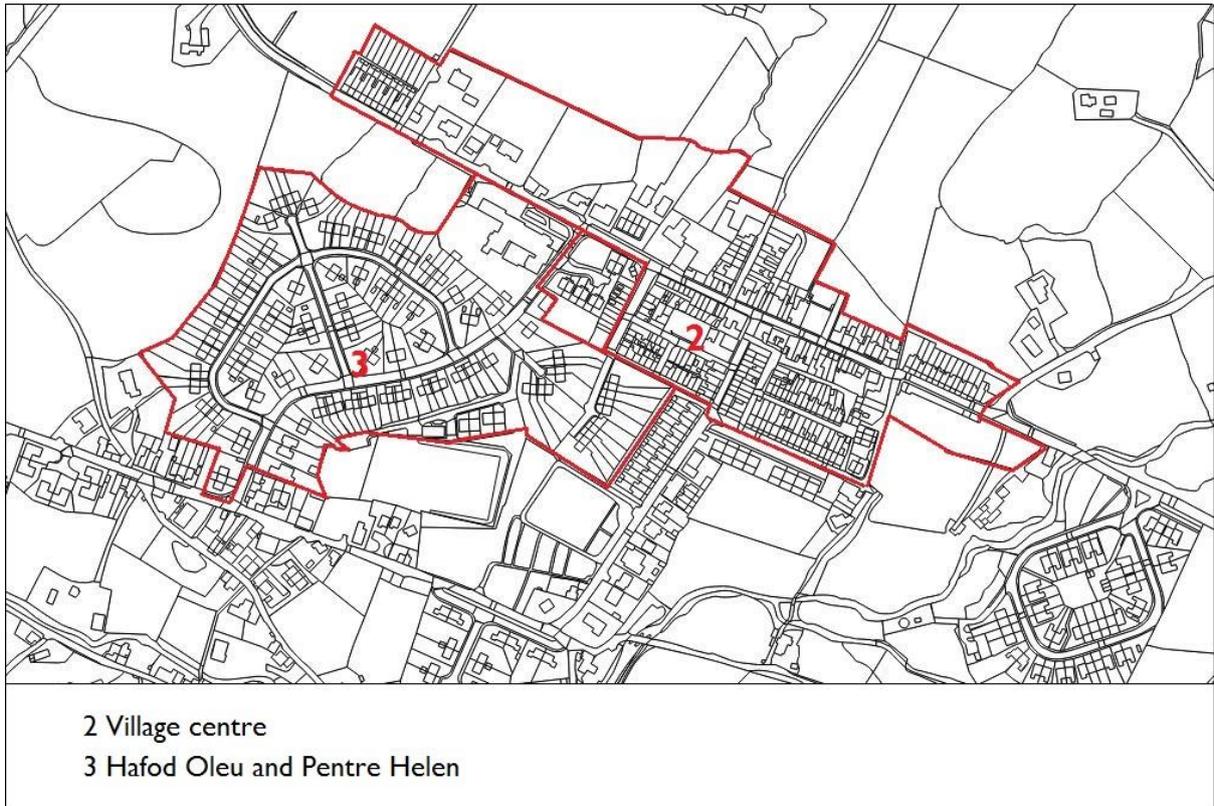


*Fig 25 Cefn y Waen chapel. The boundary wall of snecked, quarried stone.*

## 5.2 Village centre

High Street, New Street and North Street form the nucleus of Deiniolen, and stand on the former Caeau Uchaf estate (fig 26). Buildings started in the 1820s along the quarry road, small-scale developments by quarrymen and speculative builders. Capel Ebenezer is contemporary with the early development.

On High Street the heights of the buildings vary, indicating that the street is an amalgam of different building programmes and builders who built short rows, pairs or sometimes even single houses (fig 27). One of the houses is dated 1836, but other houses are taller and clearly belong to the second half of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless High Street retains the character of a piecemeal, unplanned settlement that came into being by the roadside. This theme is continued on North Street (fig 28), whereas on New Street Rhes Fawr provides the earliest example of a street built in a single development (see fig 7).



*Fig 26 Village centre and Hafod Oleu & Pentre Helen character areas.*



*Fig 27 High Street, with houses from the 1830s to taller houses of the later nineteenth century. Some of the smaller earlier houses have been combined to form larger dwellings, as on the right.*



*Fig 28 North Street has houses of different dates from the 1830s onwards, only two of which retain original stone fronts. Garden walls are later additions.*

A second phase of development was building rows on the existing alignment, creating a grid of streets on the south side of the High Street. Finally, further rows extended beyond the original limits of the settlement, namely Victoria Terrace and Rhes Faenol.

The houses are constructed of rubble stone, sometimes with pronounced boulders and with large lintels over the windows and doors, under slate roofs (see fig 18). Most of the exteriors have been rendered or pebble-dashed in the twentieth century, and there has been much window and door replacement, often with unsympathetic modern materials such as uPVC. Some pairs of small houses have been combined into a single dwelling.

The early houses open directly on to the street. Later they are set back behind garden walls. The exposed rubble stone, or modern slate garden walls, many with railings, are important to the character of the streets and in the story of progress in working-class housing in the nineteenth century (figs 9, 20). Slate gate piers are prevalent here.

### *5.3 Hafod Oleu and Pentre Helen*

Hafod Oleu and Pentre Helen is an estate of social housing laid out in the 1940s in a garden suburb style, with pronounced curving streets and houses in blocks of two-four (figs 26, 29). Ysgol Gwaun Gynfi stands at the upper end.

Houses and school are pebble-dashed, which is a signature characteristic of the region in the twentieth century. The pebble-dash is consistent across the estate and, although original

windows and doors have been replaced, this area retains much of its original character and is evidence of progress made in housing standards in the first half of the twentieth century.

Hafod Oleu follows the line of an earlier lane, although now much widened, but both sides of the road are lined with field-stone walls, a conscious decision to incorporate an element of its rural setting in the new housing estate.



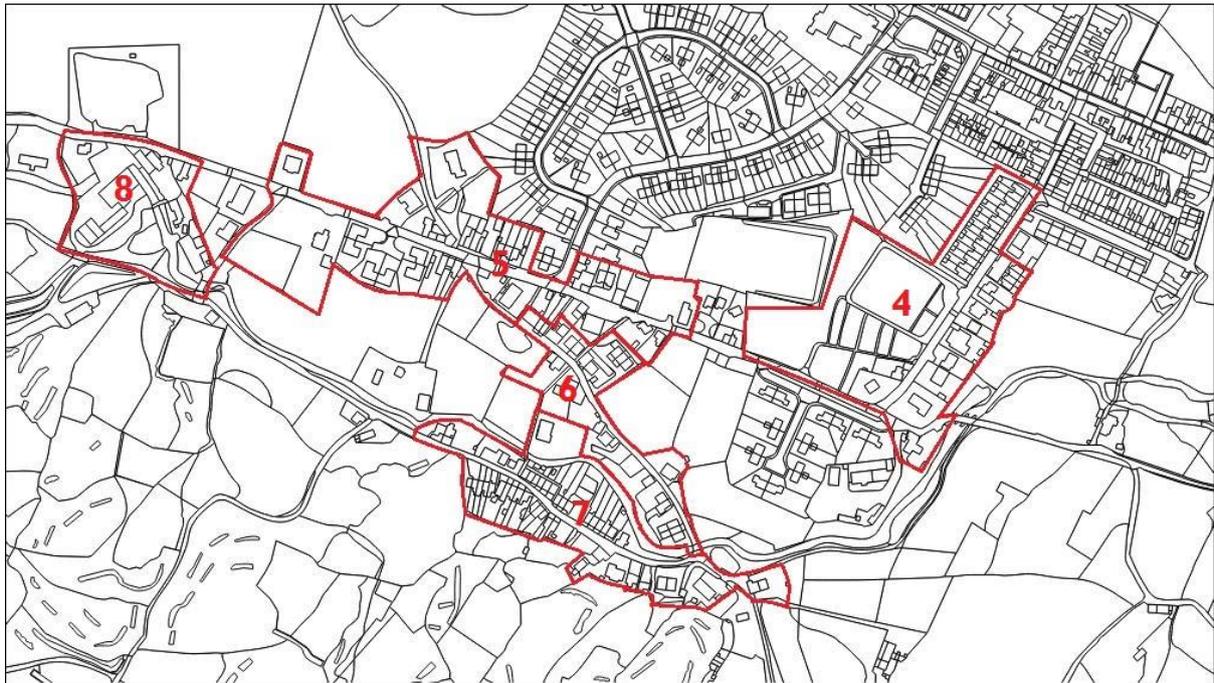
*Fig 29 Hafod Oleu, seen here with houses in blocks of two and four, with a field-stone front wall on the line of a former field wall.*

#### *5.4 Ffordd Deiniol (Deiniol Road)*

Development of the south end of Deiniolen was along Ffordd Deiniol, which is a continuation of New Street but on Vaynol Estate land (fig 30). The street developed from the mid nineteenth century, one of the earliest buildings being the British School. There were two chapels on this street, both of which have now been demolished, the site of each being redeveloped for modern housing.

Ffordd Deiniol nevertheless retains historic character, with cultural and residential buildings. On the west side is a superior terrace of houses, set back behind garden walls, and featuring shallow bay windows and brick details. Near opposite are detached houses designed for the emerging professional class, and the former British School, with roughcast walls characteristic of the late nineteenth century (fig 31). At the bottom of the road is the former School Slate Works of 1840, much altered.

There is a large burial ground, originally the burial ground of Capel Disgwylfa, which has boundary walls of field stone (in effect an old field wall) and entrance gates with curved flanking walls of snecked, quarried stone. In the burial ground itself are mainly sawn-slate head stones with engravings and relief carving of varying richness (fig 32).



- 4 Ffordd Deiniol / Deiniol Road
- 5 Clwt-y-bont (N side)
- 6 Dinorwig Railway
- 7 Clwt-y-bont (S side)
- 8 Glandinorwig writing-slate mill (Felin Sarn)

Fig 30 Ffordd Deiniol and Clwt-y-bont character areas.



Fig 31 The former British School on Ffordd Deiniol, with later roughcast walls.



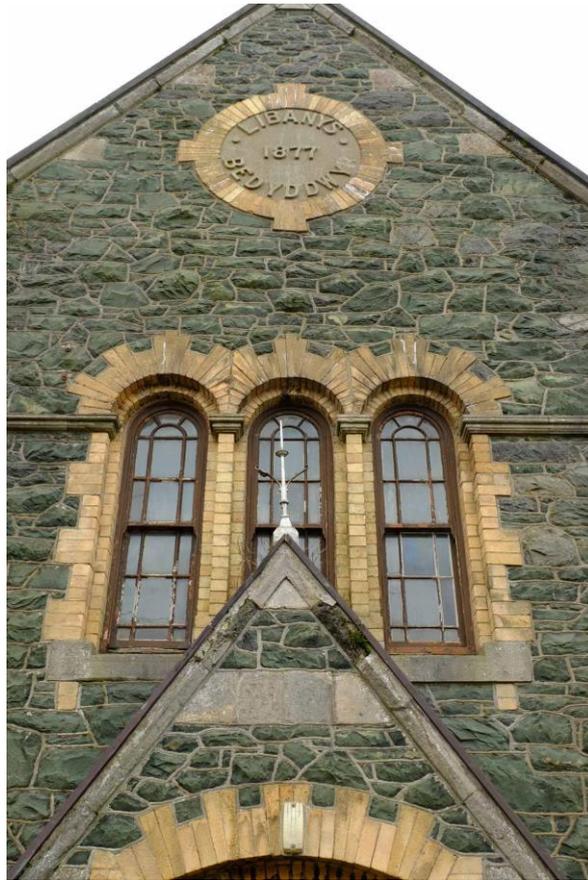
*Fig 32 Slate gravestones add to the distinct regional character of Deiniolen's built heritage.*

### *5.5 Clwt-y-Bont (north side)*

The north side of Clwt-y-Bont is a road running approximately east-west from the cemetery at the foot of Ffordd Deiniol in the east to Plas Eyr in the west (fig 30). It is crossed diagonally by the line of the Dinorwig Railway.

The long road that forms the north side of Clwt-y-bont has buildings built at different times in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This east-west road is the area with the weakest historical character, in spite of the fact that the former Capel Libanus is a prominent building (fig 33). Two rows of nineteenth-century houses, on the north side of the road opposite Capel Libanus, have been mostly demolished, as has a second chapel, Maes y Dref. However, on the south side of the road there are narrow pathways that link to houses that faced the Dinorwig railway and preserve an important element in the pattern of original settlement (fig 34).

There are single-storey and two-storey nineteenth-century houses along this road, albeit all of them more or less altered, and at the west end is Plas Eyr, probably built for the manager of the Glandinorwig mill (fig 35). Interspersed with these nineteenth-century houses are small twentieth-century estates such as Maes Gwylfa and Stad Macpela. These filled in previously undeveloped roadside plots and in that sense continue with the piecemeal linear development that began in the nineteenth century.



*Fig 33 Detail of Capel Libanus, faced in random quarried blocks pieced together in a crazed style, and with brick window dressings.*



*Fig 34 Narrow pathways between houses are a distinguishing characteristic of Clwt-y-bont.*



*Fig 35 Plas Eryr, a large house set in its own grounds, probably for the manager of the nearby Glandinorwig writing-slate mill, in which the hierarchy of the workplace is reflected in the village.*



*Fig 36 The line of the Dinorwig Railway has two-storey houses on both sides, and the rear of Capel Libanus in the background.*

## 5.6 Dinorwig Railway

The line of the Dinorwig Railway runs in a south-east to north-west direction through Clwt y Bont (fig 30). It was built in 1824 but is now a road, with an altered bridge at the south-east end. There is less development on this road than on the other roads in Clwt-y-bont, but it does demonstrate how settlement was attracted by transport infrastructure, even a horse-drawn railway (fig 36).

## 5.7 Clwt-y-bont (south side)

On the south side of the street is a linear development of nineteenth-century housing, built individually or in short rows (fig 30). The lane was in existence as a farm track by the time of the 1838 Tithe survey, which developed into a linear settlement in the mid-late nineteenth century, with access across the river provided by the Dinorwig Railway bridge at the east end. By the time of the 1889 Ordnance Survey the settlement had reached its current extent.

The essential character of this area is the variety of housing resulting from piecemeal development (fig 37). Two-storey, mainly single-fronted, houses stand to different heights, some opening on to the street, others behind low garden walls. Tai Glyndwr are notable for having a basement storey (the row perhaps originally comprised two-storey houses with one-storey houses beneath them) (fig 38), and the village is terminated at its west end by Pen yr Olchfa, a short row set at right angles to the road. There are also single-storey houses and larger individual houses.



*Fig 37 Min Afon, the road leading through the south side of Clwt-y-bont, is a road with short terraces of two-storey houses built on both sides.*

The houses are built of rubble field stone, with stone lintels, and are under slate roofs, although most have now been rendered. Garden walls are likewise of rubble stone, but most have been rendered. Some slate fences survive, dividing front gardens, and are visible from the street.



*Fig 38 Tai Glyndwr, with basement storey.*



*Fig 39 The two-storey Glandinorwig writing-slate mill, a grade II\* listed building under its modern name Felin Sarn. The upper storey is faced in rock-faced stone, above the random rubble of the lower storey.*

### 5.8 Former Glandinorwig writing-slate mill (now Felin Sarn)

Felin Sarn, on the south side of the road at the west end of Cwt-y-Bont (fig 30), was formerly the Glandinorwig writing-slate mill, built c1879 for processing raw materials into slates for school use. Originally it had buildings on both sides of the road, but those on the north side have been demolished. The mill was built between two earlier dwellings, a small farmstead and a cottage, Dorland Goch.

This area is essentially of an industrial character. The main two-storey mill building dominates Felin Sarn, where there are also outbuildings in various states of preservation, and a former farm building adapted for industrial use. The main mill is built of snecked quarried rubble and its upper storey in rock-faced quarried stone, all with brick dressings under a slate roof (fig 39). A tunnel-vaulted double culvert runs beneath the forecourt of the main building (fig 40). Facing the road is a boundary wall of broken pieces of quarried stone arranged in a random pattern, and with a castellated parapet formed of slate blocks on edge (see fig 25).



*Fig 40 Stone-built culverts beneath the yard of Glandinorwig writing-slate mill.*

## 6 Statement of significance

Deiniolen and Clwt-y-bont are nineteenth-century settlements built initially for quarrymen at Dinorwig slate quarry, but on land beyond the control of the quarry owner. Originally named Ebenezer, Deiniolen was one of a number of self-created settlements by quarrymen in the slate region of North Wales that were named after the earliest chapel, including Bethesda, Saron, Carmel and Bethel.

The pattern of settlement was structured by land ownership and a quarry road and railway. The nucleus of Deiniolen is High Street, North Street and New Street, built on a small upland estate, to which later streets were added in a grid pattern, before settlement spilled beyond its original confines, mainly in a linear fashion along existing roads. Clwt-y-bont developed in a linear fashion along existing farm roads, access between which was made possible by a railway bridge over Afon Caledffrwd.

Deiniolen and Clwt-y-bont retain houses of various types that chart both rural vernacular and urban traditions. They demonstrate improvements in the quality of workmen's housing as the nineteenth century progressed, and the social subtle hierarchies they reveal are an important component of character. There are single-storey cottages characteristic of the poorer smallholdings of rural Caernarfonshire, but it was the single-fronted two-storey house that proved most suitable for urban development, and is the most common form in both settlements. In Rhes Fawr on New Street is a rare surviving industrial row of the 1830s. These two-room houses, with no gardens, represent the beginning of a chronology of nineteenth-century housing development that includes rows with small front and rear gardens (Rhes Marian, Tai Caradog), then a gradual increase in the size and the number of rooms, culminating at the end of the nineteenth century with larger houses that have rear wings and bay windows (Ffordd Deiniol, Victoria Terrace).

Chapels, church and schools remain prominent buildings, a defining characteristic of Welsh industrial settlements. Ebenezer stands on High Street at the heart of the village, whereas the finest of the buildings, in architectural terms, is Cefn y Waen, demonstrating the increasing confidence and aesthetic sophistication of nonconformist Welsh congregations toward the end of the nineteenth century. Two of Deiniolen's schools pre-date compulsory education and embody the importance placed on education in industrial communities.

Building materials make an important contribution to the character of Deiniolen and Clwt – y-bont. Locally-quarried or field stone is used for the majority of the buildings, but imported quarried stone is used for status buildings such as the parish church and Cefn-y-Waen chapel. Ingenious use is made of slate, in the form of slate garden fences, or *crawiau*, which survive in Clwt-y-bont, and for sawn-slate gate piers, which are common throughout the settlement.

## **7 Conservation Area status**

The historic nucleus of Deiniolen is an area of special architectural and historic interest that could qualify for Conservation Area status. It is compact and well-defined, without significant post-industrial intrusions, and is equivalent to the village centre character area (fig 41). Despite alterations to windows, doors and wall surfaces, it retains an informal, piecemeal character and is a valuable historical survival of an industrial-settlement pattern that rarely survives.

Clwt-y-bont remains of considerable historical interest as a settlement that grew up around the Dinorwig Railway. Clwt-y-bont is much better preserved on the south side of the river than on the north side, retaining the informal character of a piecemeal development. Taken together with the line of the Dinorwig Railway, and with Capel Libanus, a landmark building in the settlement, it could be considered for Conservation Area status (fig 42).

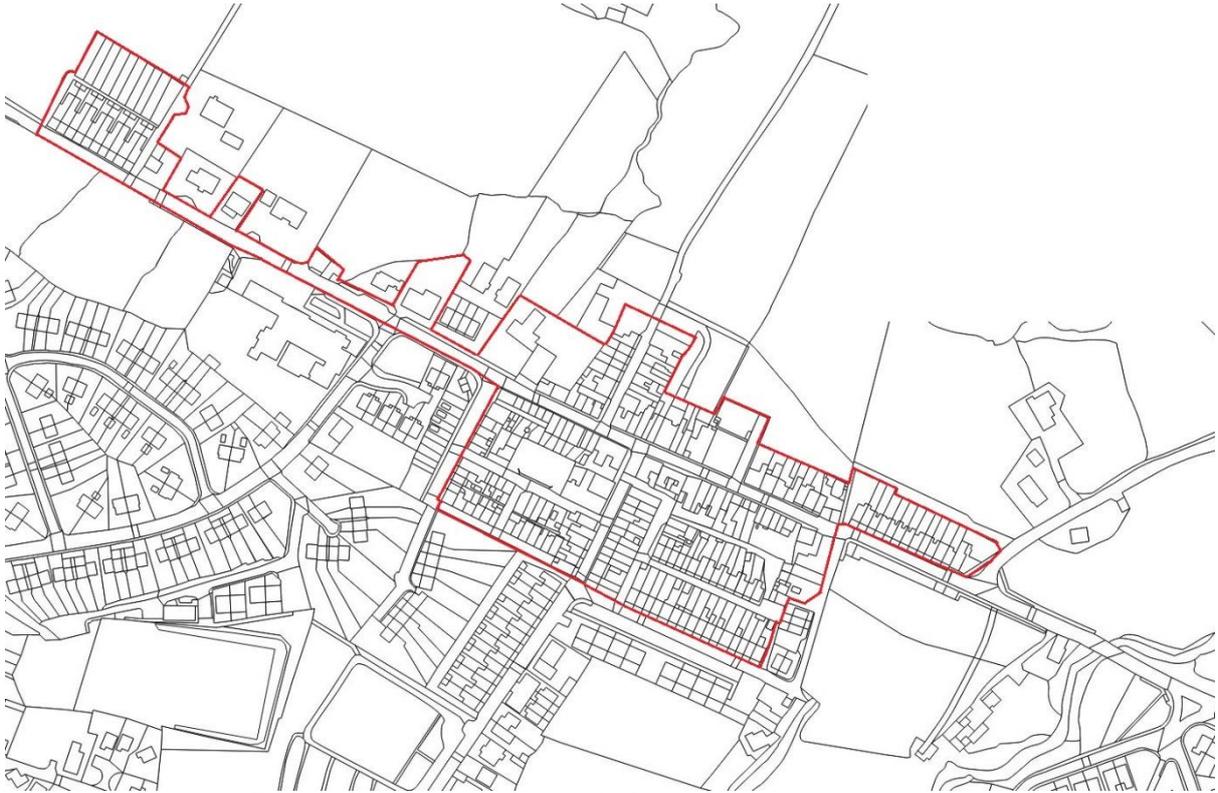


Fig 41 Boundary of a possible Deiniolen Conservation Area.

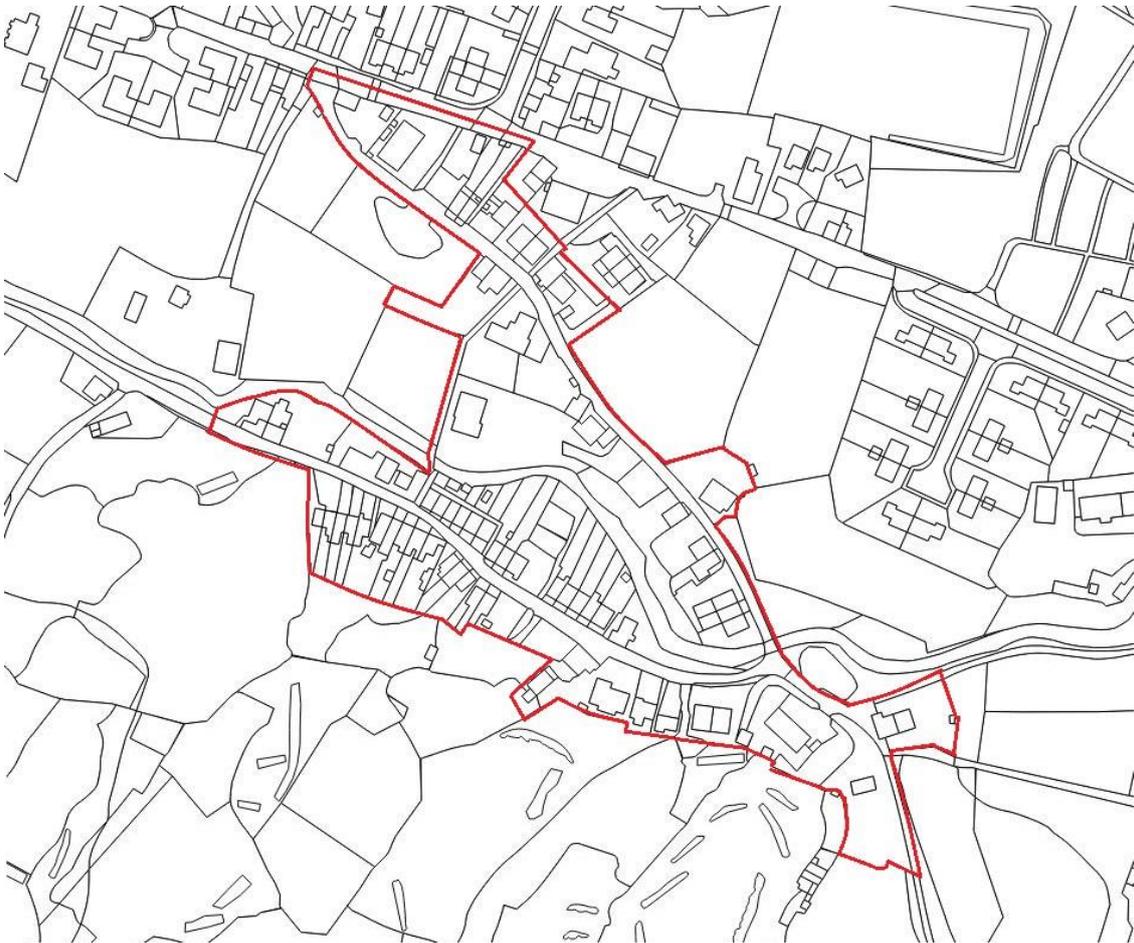


Fig 42 Boundary of a possible Clwt-y-bont Conservation Area.

To include a larger area in Deiniolen would be problematic. There have been significant losses, in particular Tabernacl and Disgwylfa chapels. There has also been considerable new development which, although generally not large, reduces the historic coherence of the settlements as a whole. This is particularly noticeable on the north side of Clwt-y-bont, where there have been small developments and some loss of nineteenth-century houses, as well as the loss of Capel Maes y Tref.

There are some other negative factors that diminish the historic integrity of the built heritage, although Conservation Area status might begin to address some of them. Most of the houses have been rendered, a trend that began at the end of the nineteenth century and has continued to the Arbed scheme established by the Welsh Government in 2009. While not always a negative factor, in many of the terraces the variety of finishes and colours has eroded the essential uniformity of this type of housing. Windows and doors have been replaced, mainly with unsympathetic modern materials such as uPVC, although in the long term these changes are reversible.

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National Monuments Record, RCAHM Wales, online at <http://coflein.gov.uk/>

## Appendix I: Listed buildings in Deiniolen

Listed buildings	Listed building reference number	Grade
Cefn-y-Waen Chapel including vestry/schoolroom and forecourt walls	19954	II
Eglwys Crist (Christ Church)	22659	II
Felin Sarn [formerly Glandinorwig writing-slate mill]	80871	II*

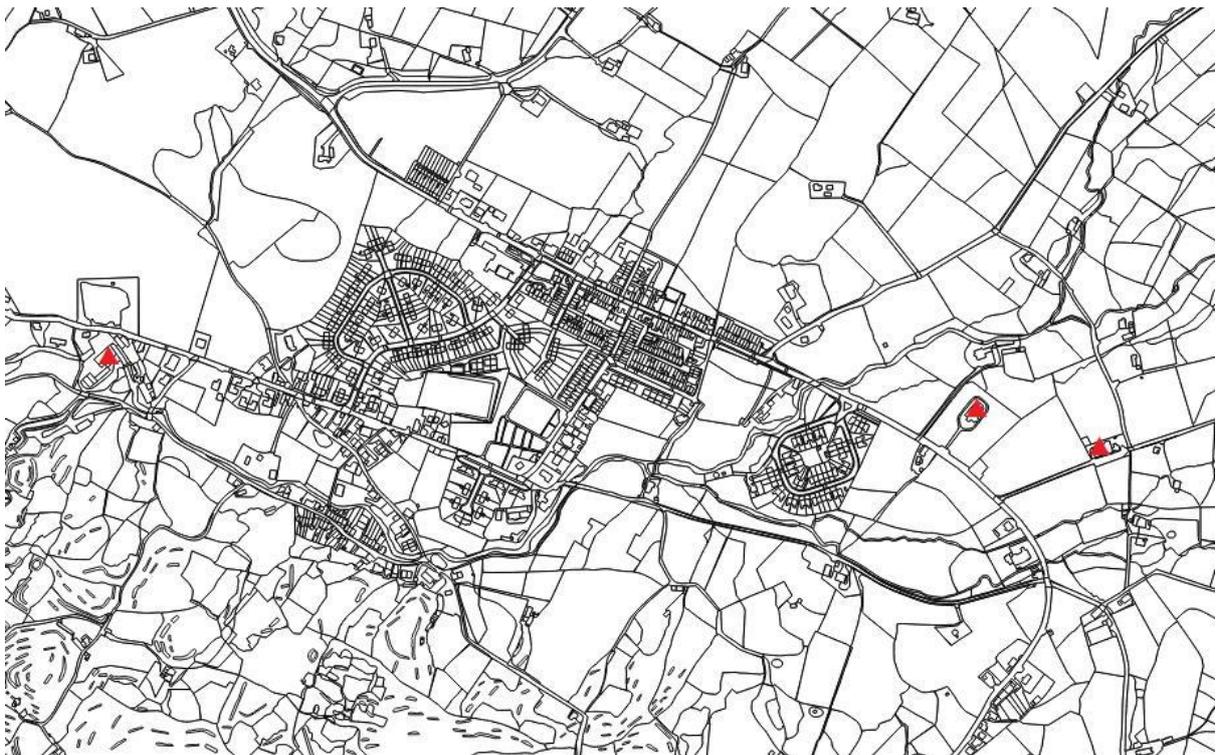


Fig 43 Listed buildings in Deiniolen