

# Executive Summary

## State Party

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

## State, Province or Region

County of Gwynedd (Wales)

## Name of Property

The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales

## Geographical Coordinates to the Nearest Second

### Component Part 1

**Penrhyn Slate Quarry and Bethesda, and the Ogwen Valley to Port Penrhyn**

Coordinates of central point: N 53°10'34" W 04°04'25"

### Component Part 2

**Dinorwig Slate Quarry Mountain Landscape**

Coordinates of central point: N 53°07'15" W 04°06'54"

### Component Part 3

**Nantlle Valley Slate Quarry Landscape**

Coordinates of central point: N 53°03'24" W 04°14'10"

### Component Part 4

**Gorseddau and Prince of Wales Slate Quarries, Railways and Mill**

Coordinates of central point: N 52°59'12" W 04°08'45"

### Component Part 5

**Ffestiniog: its Slate Mines and Quarries, 'city of slates' and Railway to Porthmadog**

Coordinates of central point: N 52°59'42" W 03°56'27"

### Component Part 6

**Bryneglwyns Slate Quarry, Abergynolwyn Village and the Talylyn Railway**

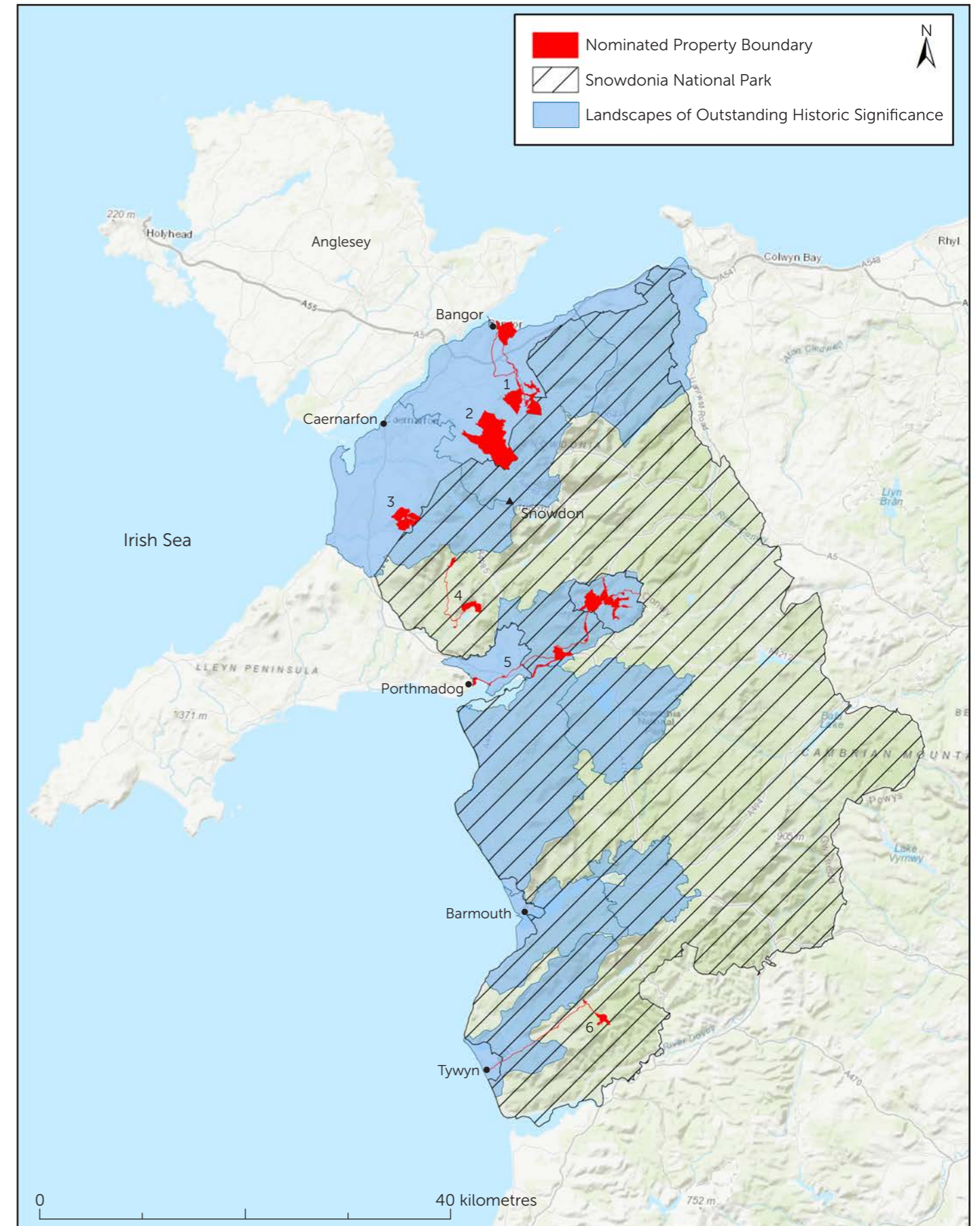
Coordinates of central point: N 52°38'18" W 03°57'57"

## Textual description of the boundaries of the Nominated Property

The Nominated Property comprises six separate Component Parts within the County of Gwynedd, Wales. The boundaries in each case have been drawn to include all the attributes which form tangible expressions of proposed Outstanding Universal Value, including quarries and mines, settlements in which quarrymen and their families lived, the road and railway systems which connected quarries and mines with the sea and with the national railway network, and quays and harbours where slate was transferred to boats and ships. The area of the Nominated Property is 3259.01 hectares.

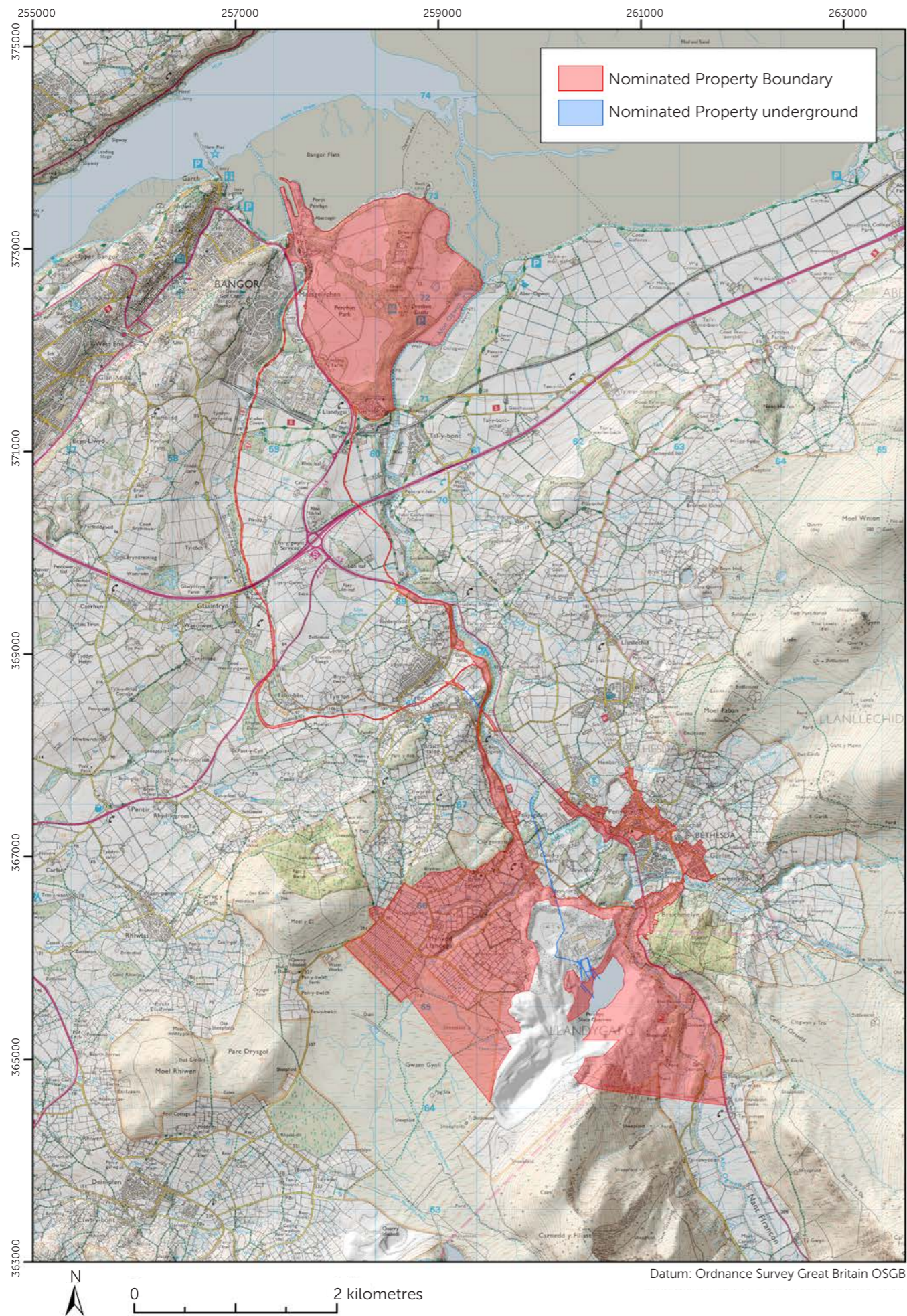
A wider protected area serves the purpose of a Buffer Zone. It comprises the Snowdonia National Park and contiguous and immediately adjacent Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Significance in Wales. This area comprises 250,400 hectares and takes in all significant views within, towards and out of the Nominated Property.

## Maps of the Nominated Property

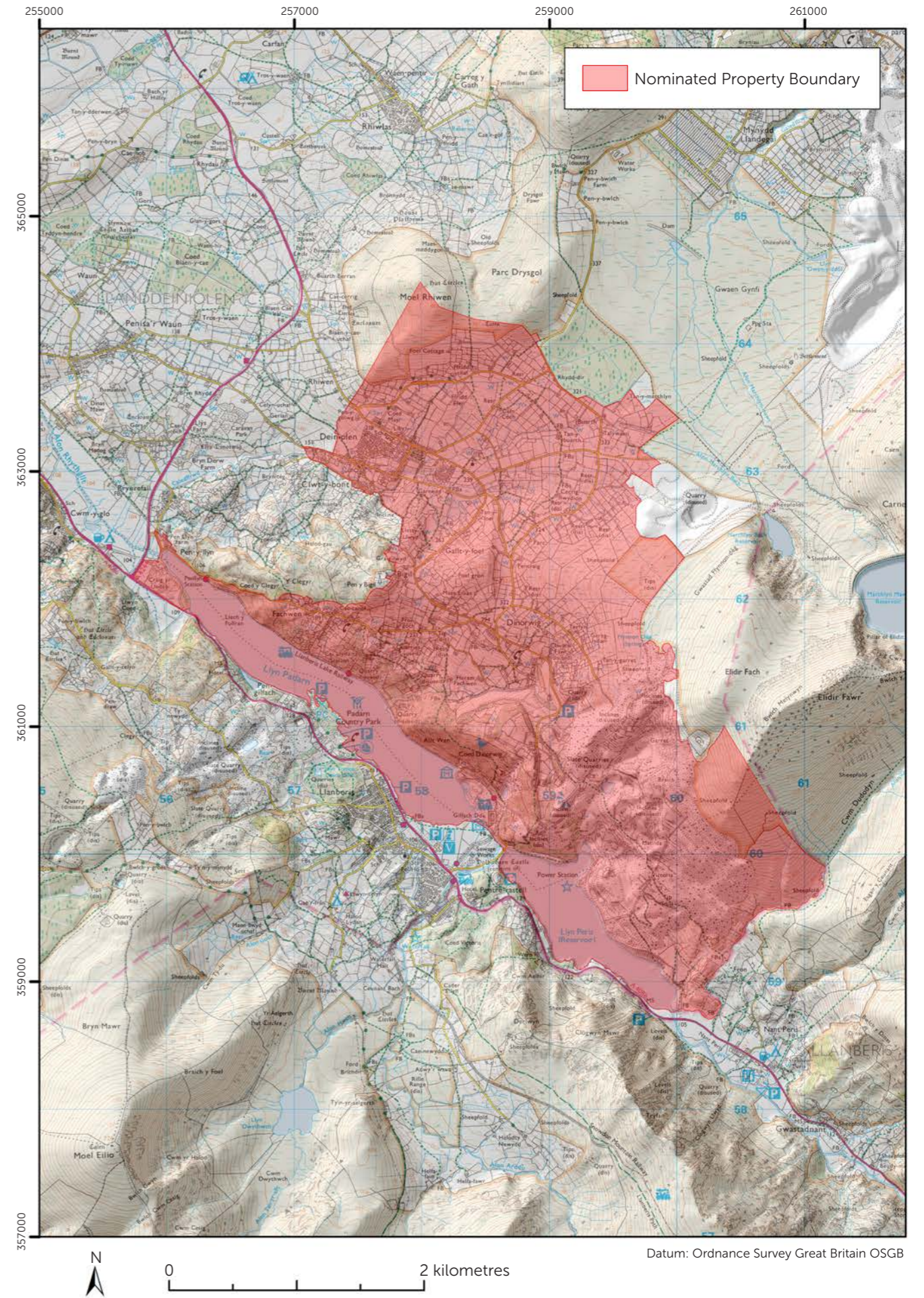


**Map E1. Map showing the boundaries of the Nominated Property in Northwest Wales, the wider protected area of the Snowdonia National Park and Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Significance which serve the purpose of a Buffer Zone for the Nominated Property (Scale 1:500,000).**



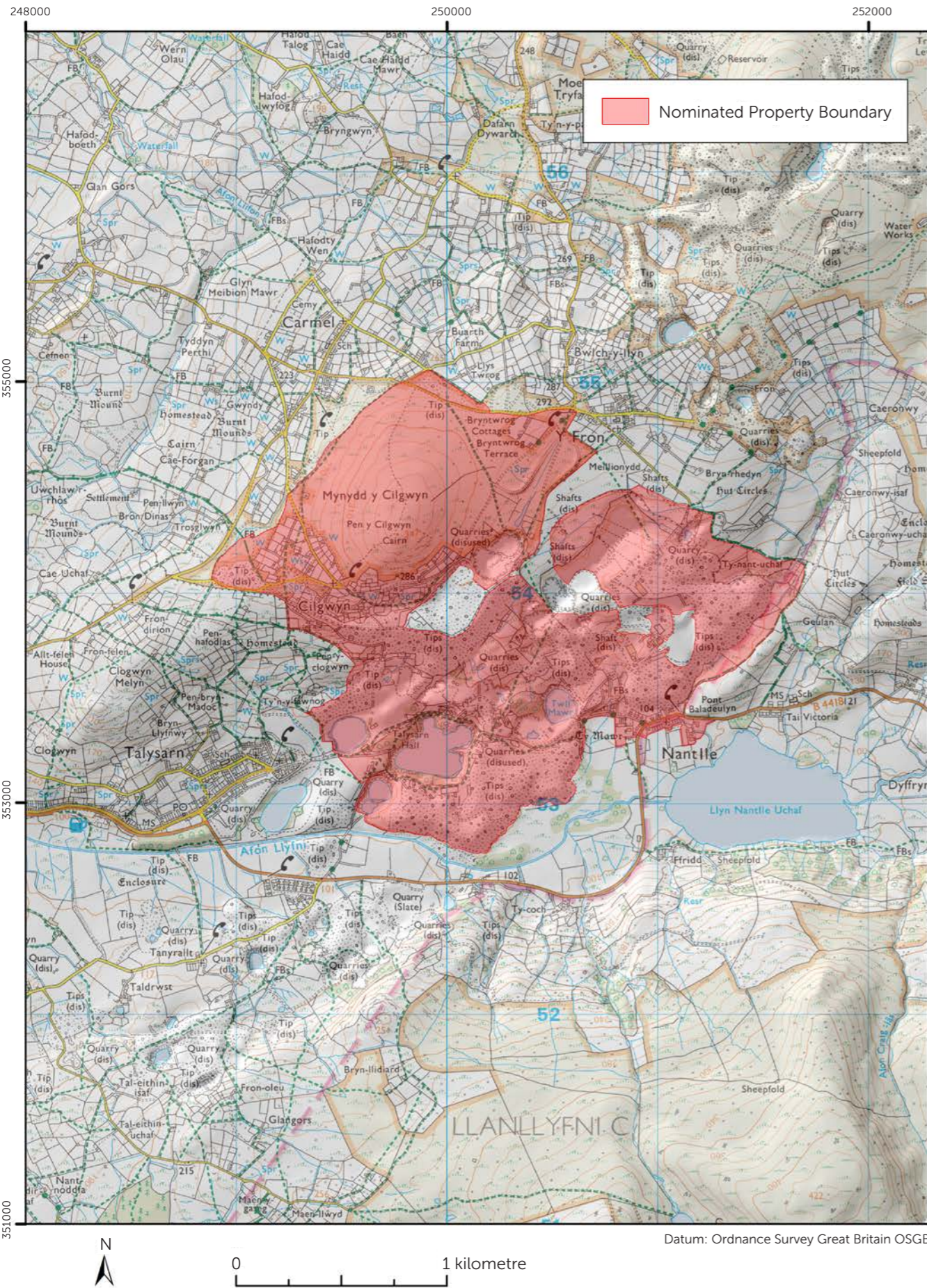


**Map E2. Map showing the boundaries of Component Part 1: Penrhyn Slate Quarry and Bethesda, and the Ogwen Valley to Port Penrhyn (Scale 1:50,000).**

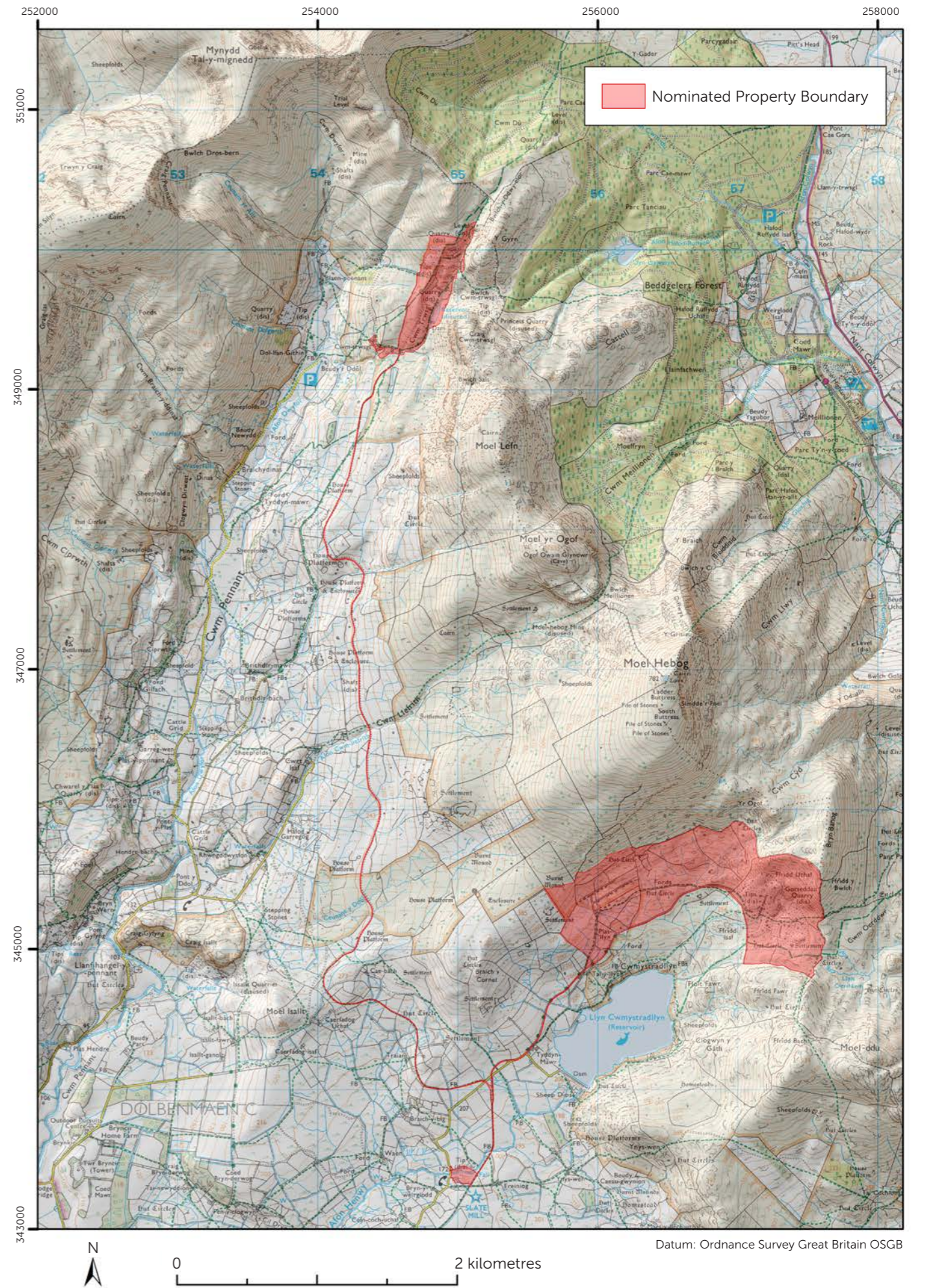


**Map E3. Map showing the boundaries of Component Part 2: Dinorwig Slate Quarry Mountain Landscape (Scale 1:40,000).**



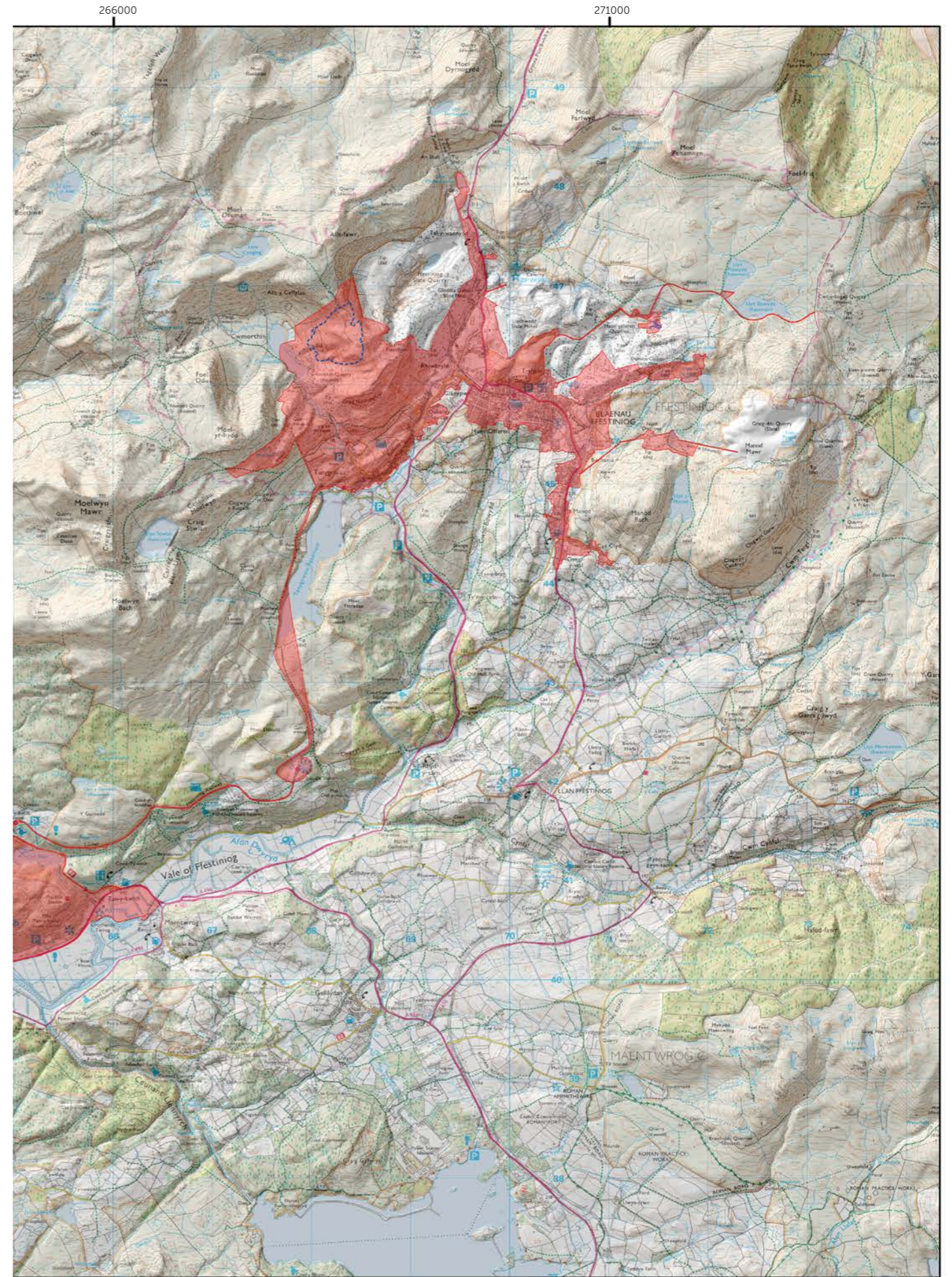
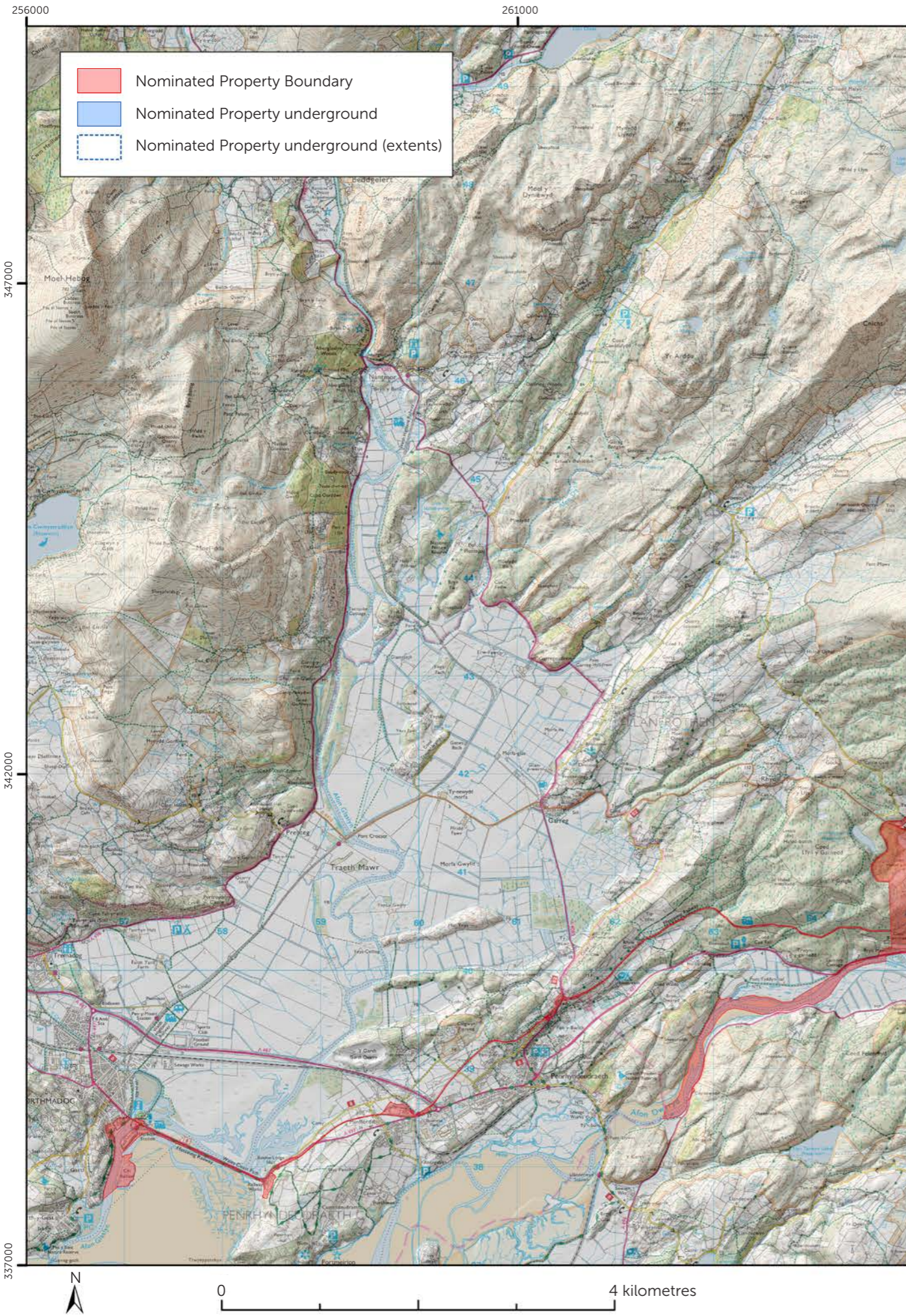


Map E4. Map showing the boundaries of Component Part 3: Nantlle Valley Slate Quarry Landscape (Scale 1:25,000).



Map E5. Map showing the boundaries of Component Part 4: Gorseddau and Prince of Wales Slate Quarries, Railways and Mill (Scale 1:35,000).

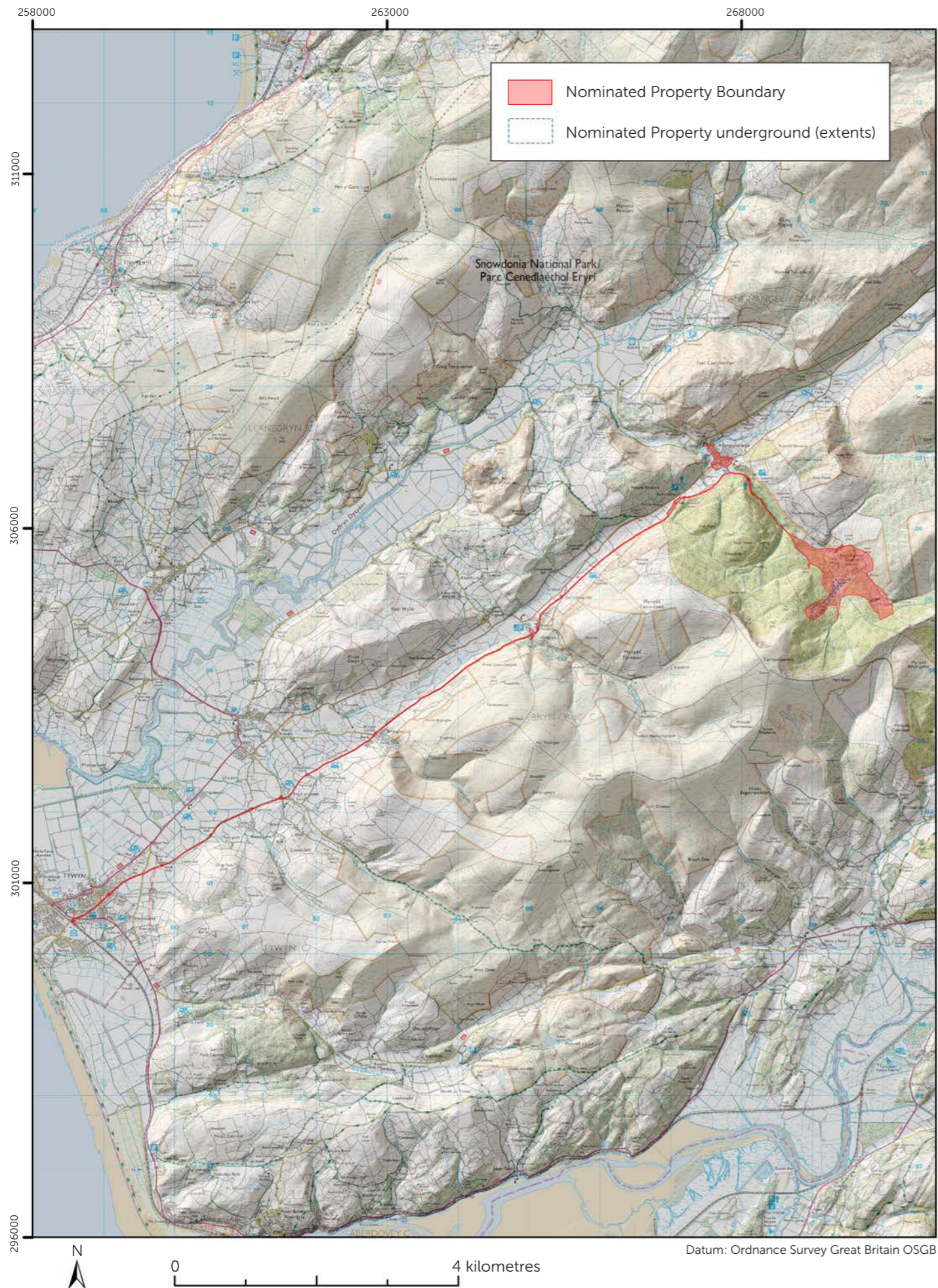




**Map E6. Map showing the boundaries of Component Part 5: Ffestiniog: its Slate Mines and Quarries, 'city of slates' and Railway to Porthmadog (Scale 1:50,000).**

Datum: Ordnance Survey Great Britain OSGB





**Map E7. Map showing the boundaries of Component Part 6: Bryneglwys Slate Quarry, Abergynolwyn Village and the Tallylyn Railway (Scale 1:70,000).**

**Criteria under which Property is Nominated**

(ii) exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design.

**Criterion (ii) – *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales* exhibits an important interchange of human values, particularly in the period from 1780 to 1940, on developments in architecture and technology.**

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

**Criterion (iv) – *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales* is an outstanding example of a type of landscape which illustrates, in a dramatic way, the ‘combined works of nature and of man’ through the large-scale exploitation of natural resources.**

(v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change.

**Criterion (v) – *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales* is an outstanding example of the industrial transformation of a traditional human settlement and marginal agrarian land-use pattern; it also exemplifies how a remarkably homogeneous minority culture adapted to modernity in the industrial era yet retained many of its traditional attributes.**

**Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value**

a) Brief Synthesis

*The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales* is located in the United Kingdom, in the mountains of Snowdonia. Six areas together represent an exceptional example of an industrial landscape which was profoundly shaped by quarrying and mining slate, and transporting it for national and international markets. From 1780 to 1940 this industry dominated world production of roofing slates, transforming both the environment and the communities who lived and worked here.

The quarries and mines are monumental in scale, comprising stepped hillside workings, deep pits and cavernous underground chambers, massive cascading tips, ingenious water systems, and a range of industrial buildings. Outstanding technical equipment and major engineering features survive.

This mountainous landscape is close to the sea. Innovative transport systems linked quarries and processing sites with purpose-built coastal export harbours and with main-line railways.

Grand country houses and estates built by leading industrialists contrast with workers’ vernacular settlements, with their characteristic chapels and churches, band-rooms, schools, libraries and meeting-places.



Slate from Northwest Wales is light, long-lasting and impermeable. By the late nineteenth century the region produced about a third of world output of roofing slates and architectural slabs. Its use in terraced houses, factories, warehouses and elite architecture contributed to rapid global urbanisation. It influenced building styles, encouraging the shallow-pitched roofs of the Georgian order.

Technologies that were innovated, adopted and adapted in *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales* include the ingenious application of waterpower, the development of bulk handling systems and the first known application of the circular saw for cutting stone. These were diffused by specialists and by emigration of skilled Welsh quarrymen to the developing slate industries of the USA, continental Europe and Ireland.

Snowdonia's narrow-gauge railway systems gained global influence as their suitability for challenging mountain environments, and for moving compact loads and minerals, meant that they were adopted from Asia and America to Africa and Australasia.

#### b) Justification for Criteria

**Criterion (ii) – *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales* exhibits an important interchange of human values, particularly in the period from 1780 to 1940, on developments in architecture and technology.**

Slate has been quarried in the mountains of Northwest Wales since Roman times, but sustained large-scale production from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries dominated the global market as a roofing element. This led to major transcontinental developments in building and architecture.

Technology transfer from *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales* was fundamental to the development of the slate industry of continental Europe and the USA. Moreover, its narrow-gauge railways – which remain in operation under steam today – served as the model for successive systems which contributed substantially to the social and economic development of regions in many other parts of the world.

**Criterion (iv) – *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales* is an outstanding example of a type of landscape which illustrates, in a dramatic way, the 'combined works of nature and of man' through the large-scale exploitation of natural resources.**

Massive deposits of high-quality slate defined the principal geological resource of the challenging mountainous terrain of the Snowdonia massif. Their dispersed locations represent concentrated nodes of exploitation and settlement, of sustainable power generated by prolific volumes of water that was harnessed in ingenious ways, and brought into being several innovative and technically advanced railways that made their way to new coastal ports built to serve this transcontinental export trade.

The Property comprises the most exceptional discrete landscapes that, together, illustrate the diverse heritage of a much wider landscape that was created during the profound era of British industrialisation that changed the world.

**Criterion (v) – *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales* is an outstanding example of the industrial transformation of a traditional human settlement and marginal agrarian land-use pattern; it also exemplifies how a remarkably homogeneous minority culture adapted to modernity in the industrial era yet retained many of its traditional attributes.**

The monumentality of the quarry landscapes is compelling; huge stepped working benches carved from the mountainsides, deep pits and vast tips, and extensive cavernous underground workings. These also indicate the relentless persistence of generations of workers who used their hard-won skill and innovative technology to exploit slate for a global market. Their settlements, created by the industrialists, the workers and their families, retained multiple aspects of the traditional way of life and its strong minority language. They remain a palpable 'living' testimony, just like the diminished but proud slate-working tradition, and the railways that once hauled the slate.

#### c) Statement of Integrity

The Property contains all of the essential elements that convey attributes of Outstanding Universal Value. Its boundaries capture the principal slate-producing areas in Northwest Wales, together with their associated industrial heritage that includes the most significant processing facilities, settlements and transport routes.

*Wholeness:* all the necessary attributes are within the Nominated Property.

*Intactness:* all the necessary attributes are present – none are lost or have been significantly damaged or have decayed.

*Absence of threats:* none of the attributes are threatened by development, deterioration or neglect.

#### d) Statement of Authenticity

*The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales* is an exceptionally well-preserved cultural landscape that retains an unusually high level of authenticity, and has experienced remarkably little intervention since the main period of industrial operation. Attributes of proposed Outstanding Universal Value are conveyed by physical property that is clearly identified and understood in terms of date, spatial distribution, use and function (including living communities and operational railways), form and design, materials and substance, and their interrelationships including connectivity and overall functional and compositional integrity of the series. The Nominated Property further embodies a vibrant cultural tradition, including slate-working skills and the continued widespread use of the Welsh language. Key attributes are reflected in landscape qualities and features of quarrying including the relict working areas, tips and transport routes, together with associated settlements and social infrastructure.



### e) Protection and Management

The Welsh Government's approach to the protection and sustainable management of World Heritage sites is set out in *Managing Change in World Heritage Sites in Wales (2017)*. The Nominated Property and its setting will be afforded the highest levels of protection through the implementation of existing legislation: *The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979*, *The Town and Country Planning Act 1990*, *The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, *The Historic Environment Act (Wales) 2016* and through implementation of policies within the Gwynedd & Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan and Snowdonia National Park Authority Local Development Plan.

Attributes of proposed Outstanding Universal Value have been defined and articulated in *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales Property Management Plan* which establishes the over-arching strategies and mechanisms by which the proposed World Heritage Site will be managed. This is complemented at local level by a series of Local Management Plans, developed in collaboration with landowners, which include site-specific information and practical recommendations. Responsibility for the implementation of *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales Property Management Plan* will sit with a multi-organisational Partnership Steering Group established by the lead organisation, to which an appointed Property Coordinator will report.

All of the Component Parts of the Nominated Property lie within areas of Wales that are already subject to strong levels of landscape protection through designation as a National Park and registration as Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest. These will serve the purpose of a Buffer Zone protecting the setting and key views into and out of the proposed World Heritage Site.

There is no active quarrying or mining within the Nominated Property (no active mineral permissions are included); mineral activity takes place in the wider protected area outside the boundary of the Nominated Property. The application of existing statutory management procedures will ensure this does not negatively impact upon the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the Property.

#### Name and Contact Information of Official Local Institution / Agency

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Figure E.2. The Prince of Wales Quarry in Cwm Pennant (Component Part 4) clings to the mountain-side.