



THE GOWER SOCIETY

Reg. Charity No. 25872

The Chief Executive
Countryside Council for Wales
Plas Penrhos
Ffordd Penrhos
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 2LQ

01 March 2005

Dear Sir,

Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

As you are aware, it is almost fifty years since the designation of part of Gower as the first Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the United Kingdom.

The Gower Society, which pre-dates that designation by almost a decade, feels that the time is now appropriate to re-consider the boundaries of the area originally designated for inclusion. Since 1956, pressures on the countryside have increased considerably and will, no doubt, continue to do so in the future. Ideas of what landscapes are worthy of and would benefit from AONB status have also developed over this period.

I enclose a map which indicates the additional areas that we think should be considered for AONB status. Area 1 extends the current boundary to include more of the northeast of peninsular Gower. This links with Area 2, which includes the Loughor Conservation Area, while Area 3 covers much of Upland Gower, using the M4 as the southern boundary.

These additions, if accepted, would have the effect of linking Gower Anglicana with Gower Wallicana Subboscus and Gower Wallicana Supraboscus, all within the seigniority

www.gowersociety.welshnet.co.uk

of Gower. It is the Gower Society's view that these areas are worthy of AONB designation.

The Gower Society requests the Countryside Council for Wales to begin the processes necessary to move towards an order designating these areas as extensions of the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Yours faithfully,

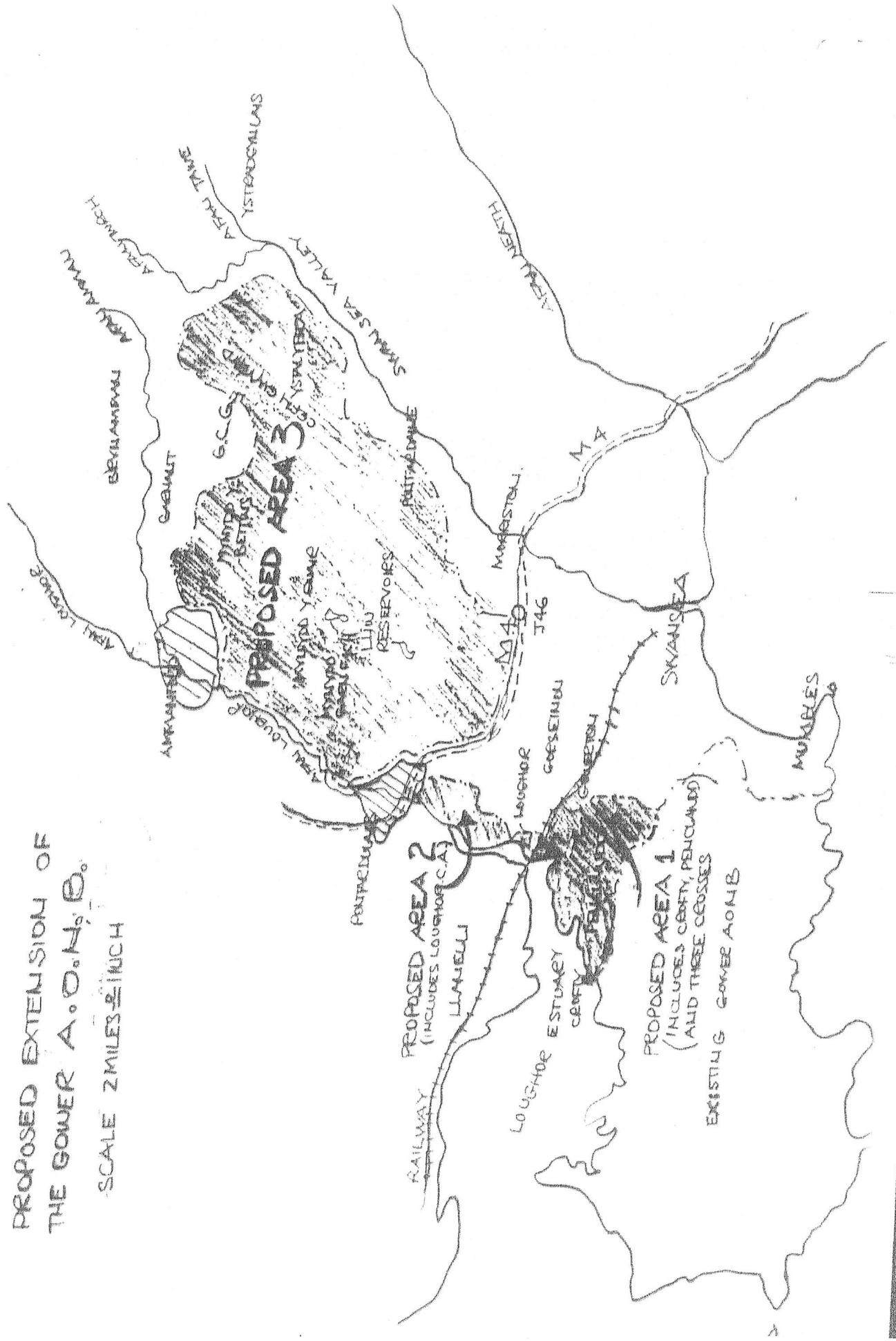
Malcolm Ridge
Chairman

Enc: Map of proposed areas

*Cc: CCW Swansea
Chief Executive Swansea City and County
County Councillor Hague, Cabinet Member for Environment
Mr Martin Caton MP
Mrs Edwina Hart AM*

PROPOSED EXTENSION OF
THE GOWER A.O.N.B.

SCALE 2 MILES TO AN INCH





CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES

CADEIRYDD/CHAIRMAN: JOHN LLOYD JONES OBE • PRIF WEITHREDWR/CHIEF EXECUTIVE: ROGER THOMAS

Anfonwch eich ateb at/Please reply to: Roger Thomas, Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive
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Llinell Union/Direct Dial: (01248) 385568; Ffacs/Fax: (01248) 385506
Ebst/Email: n.sanpher@ccw.gov.uk

Mr Malcolm Ridge
Chairman
The Gower Society
The Orchard
Perriswood
Penmaen
SWANSEA
SA3 2HN

29 March 2005

Dear Mr Ridge

GOWER AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

Further to my earlier response to your letter dated 1 March, Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) staff have now given thorough consideration to The Gower Society's proposals regarding extensions to Gower AONB.

As you may be aware the legal procedure for designating an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is both lengthy and resource-intensive. The AONB designation is now seen as not merely a measure to prevent unsuitable development from taking place but as a positive mechanism to enhance our finest countryside, contributing to social and economic well-being. Although CCW is the designating authority we would need support from the Welsh Assembly Government, and evidence of community support and backing from both the lead local authority, in this case Swansea City and County Council, and any others affected.

There are currently a number of other areas of Wales which are being put forward as potential AONBs. CCW needs to consider these proposals from a strategic, national perspective, and ensure that we approach each case in an objective way. Therefore we can try to ensure that resources are efficiently targeted and the landscape is managed in the most appropriate and sustainable way.

CCW is presently working with Denbighshire County Council to work up a process that will inform any decisions on whether a tract of land should be put forward as a proposal for AONB designation. It is intended that the resultant process will be entirely transferable to any other area in Wales.



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

CORFF NODDEDIG / SPONSORED BODY

Gofalu am natur Cymru - ar y tir ac yn y môr
Caring for our natural heritage - on land and in the sea

Prif Swyddfa/Headquarters

MAFS-Y-FFYNNON, PENRHOSGARNEDD, BANGOR, GWYNEDD LL57 2DW FFÔN/TEL: 01248 385500 FFACS/FAX: 01248 355782

The first stage of the process, piloted with Denbighshire CC, is the presentation of a convincing case, supported with compelling evidence that the landscape is truly outstanding in a national context. This stage is likely to utilise, amongst other things, the results of the local *LANDMAP* evaluation. The following stages will concentrate on an assessment of whether the AONB designation is an appropriate tool for managing those pressures that are impacting on the area. In particular those pressures impacting on the qualities that make the area special and are recognised as nationally important. It is likely that this pilot will be complete by March 2006.

Therefore once CCW has completed the pilot exercise with Denbighshire, we will then be in a position to transfer this methodology to other areas and subsequently advise the Assembly Government on any priorities for future designation or whether there are other mechanisms that provide viable solutions to managing these landscapes. Your proposal has been given careful consideration and will be retained on file to inform future discussions.

Yours sincerely

A.W. Sanpher

RT **Roger Thomas**
Chief Executive



THE GOWER SOCIETY

Reg. Charity No. 25872

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Mr Roger Thomas,
Chief Executive,
Countryside Council for Wales,
Maes-Y-Ffynnon,
Penrhosgarnedd,
Bangor,
Gwynedd
LL57 2DW

28.04.05

Dear Mr Thomas,

Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Thank you for your letter of 29 March in response to ours of 1 March.

We were disappointed to learn that a consideration of the proposed extension of the Gower AONB is not likely to begin until March 2006, but we recognise the sense in establishing appropriate processes for such consideration that will be transferable across Wales.

We also accept that the AONB designation should be '*a positive mechanism to enhance our finest countryside*', but would contend that '*merely*' (your word) preventing '*unsuitable development*' is, in fact, an essential and integral part of this process.

The CRoW Act, for example, talks of the need both to 'protect' and 'enhance' AONBs, and the Hobhouse Report was quite clear in its position when it stated that it is '*urgent to ensure that some at least of the areas of beautiful and wild country in England and Wales are specially protected... and that their aesthetic and educational values are recognised by Statute and carry due weight in the inevitable competition with more utilitarian, and sometimes more powerful claims to the use and development of land. Fine country... is daily endangered by the accelerated processes of modern building and industrial development.*'

In our view, it is not possible to have '*a mechanism to enhance our finest countryside*' without, at the same, having measures '*to prevent unsuitable development from taking place*'. Indeed, unless unsuitable development were prevented, there would be little finest countryside to enhance.

While our case for the extension of the Gower AONB might be made more urgent by the possible threat of unsuitable development, it is based on a recognition of the high landscape value of the area.

After writing to you on 1 March, we received a number of letters of support. These were unsolicited and, indeed, unexpected, since at that time very few people had been told of The Gower Society's decision to approach you. I enclose these letters for your file, together with a set of photographs that were sent to us as an illustration of the landscape value of Upland Gower (please note that copyright for these is held by Diana Fritsche Photography).

Yours sincerely,

Malcolm Ridge
Chairman

Enc. 42 letters of support
13 photographs



THE GOWER SOCIETY

Reg. Charity No. 258372

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The Chief Executive
Countryside Council for Wales
Plas Penrhos
Ffordd Penrhos
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22 November 2011

Dear Mr Thomas,

We understand from this evening's BBC Wales television news that the proposed extension to the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has now been approved.

In view of our previous correspondence and meetings, I now urge you to move forward with The Gower Society's proposal, put to you in my letter of 1st March 2005, for an extension to the Gower AONB.

I refer you to:

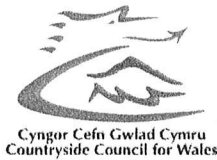
- my letter of 01.03.05
- your reply of 15.03.05
- your reply of 29.03.05
- my letter of 28.04.05
- the reply of 18.05.05 from Mrs Carole Rothwell, Protected Landscapes Officer
- my letter of 18.03.06
- your reply of 31.03.06
- Mr Robert Hart's (Mrs Edwina Hart's Office) email of 04.08.08
- your reply of 09.09.08
- Mrs Edwina Hart's response to Mrs Jane Davidson of 30.09.08
- various meetings with yourself and your officers at WAG
- two meetings with Mrs Jane Davidson, Minister for (*inter alia*) the Environment
- our meeting of 18.07.11 with Mr John Griffiths, Minister for (*inter alia*) the Environment

I look forward to your prompt and positive response.

Yours sincerely,

Malcolm Ridge Chairman, The Gower Society

cc Mr John Griffiths, AM, Mrs Edwina Hart AM, Mr Martin Caton MP, Cllr John Hague, Cllr Ioan Griffiths, Mr R Beale (Gower AONB Team Leader)



Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru Countryside Council for Wales

CADEIRYDD/CHAIRMAN: MORGAN PARRY • PRIF WEITHREDWR/CHIEF EXECUTIVE: ROGER THOMAS

Anfonwch eich ateb at/Please reply to: Roger Thomas, Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive
Cyfeiriad Isod/Address Below
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by e-mail:- ridgegower@btinternet.com

Mr M Ridge
Chairman, The Gower Society
The Orchard
Perriswood
Penmaen
Swansea
SA3 2HN

5 December 2011

Dear Mr Ridge

EXTENSION OF GOWER AONB

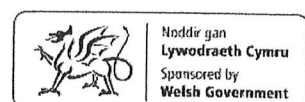
Thank you for your letter of 22 November 2011. We are delighted that, on 22 November, Minister John Griffiths announced the confirmation of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Designation Order.

As you are aware from our previous correspondence, the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) had undertaken more than seven years' work establishing and assessing the evidence base before my Council agreed to proceed to the Public and Statutory Consultation phases of the process. It was only following this detailed evaluation and scrutiny that CCW decided to submit the formal Designation Order in March for the Welsh Government's consideration.

Since the Order was confirmed, you may be aware that the Welsh Government (WG) has also announced a further significant decision affecting the environmental framework in Wales. On 29 November, WG Cabinet approved the business case for establishing a Single Environment Body comprised of CCW, Environment Agency Wales, Forestry Commission Wales and possibly some functions presently undertaken within government.

This Single Environment Body (SEB) is being established in order to deliver the Welsh Government's vision for the natural environment, 'A Living Wales'. This is an integrated ecosystem approach to managing a sustainable, diverse and productive environment.

Given these momentous changes, we will be focussing our efforts for protected landscapes over the next 18 months in working with our National Parks and AONB partners to ensure a



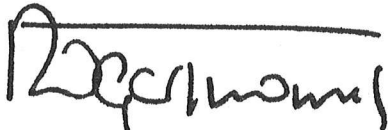
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<http://www.ccw.gov.uk>

smooth transition from CCW to the SEB. Inevitably there will also be a focus on establishing the new Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB. Therefore, given the disappearance of CCW and the legal nature of designation work, we are not currently in a position to consider any further proposals for boundary changes or new designations.

I understand that this will be a disappointing response for you and the Gower Society, but hope that you will appreciate the context within which we are now working.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Thomas', written over a horizontal line.

Roger Thomas
Chief Executive

cc: Mr John Griffiths AM (ps.minister.for.esd@wales.gsi.gov.uk)
Mrs Edwina Hart AM (Rosemary.Jones@Wales.gov.uk)
Mr Martin Caton MP (martin.caton.mp@parliament.uk)
Cllr John Hague (john.hague@swansea.gov.uk)
Cllr Ioan Richard (ioan.richard@swansea.gov.uk)
Mr Mike Scott, Gower Assistant AONB Officer (Mike.Scott2@swansea.gov.uk)