

# The Swansea Metro

The Swansea Metro covers the area from Mumbles in the south to Llandeilo in the north, and from Ferryside in the west to Coelbren Junction in the east. It is roughly half heavy and half light rail, with a clear east / west split, the heavy rail to the west. There are only two heavy-rail routes, the Carmarthen / Gorseinon loop, whose tracks are shared with several other West Wales services, and the line from Llanelli to Gwaun-cae-gurwen, which also shares the loop tracks, between Pontarddulais and Pantyffynnon. The proposed metro services on the heavy rail routes are:

- 2tphRS Swansea – Cockett – Gowerton – Loughor – Llanelli – Pembrey & Burry Port – Kidwelly – Ferryside – Carmarthen – Abergwili Junction – Nantgaredig – Llanarthney – Dryslwyn – Golden Grove – Llandeilo Bridge – Llandeilo (reverse) – Ffairfach – Llandybie – Ammanford & Tirydail – Pantyffynnon – Pontarddulais – Grovesend – Gorseinon – Gowerton East – Cockett – Swansea (Carmarthen / Gorseinon loop, clockwise)
- 2tphRS Swansea – Cockett – Gowerton East – Gorseinon – Grovesend – Pontarddulais – Pantyffynnon – Ammanford & Tirydail – Llandybie – Ffairfach – Llandeilo (reverse) – Llandeilo Bridge – Golden Grove – Dryslwyn – Llanarthney – Nantgaredig – Abergwili Junction – Carmarthen – Ferryside – Kidwelly – Pembrey & Burry Port – Llanelli – Loughor – Gowerton – Cockett – Swansea (Carmarthen / Gorseinon loop, counter-clockwise)
- 2tphRS Llanelli – Bynea – Llangennech – Pontarddulais – Pantyffynnon – Ammanford & Betws – Glanamman – Garnant – Gors-y-garnant – Red Lion Crossing – Gwaun-cae-gurwen

A new connection is provided at Gowerton, (new platforms – Gowerton East,) linking the Swansea – Llanelli line to the former LNW route from Swansea Victoria to Pontarddulais, taking over the trackbed and restoring the line to Pontarddulais. The Carmarthen / Gorseinon loop metro service uses the new platform 0 on the west side of Swansea High St. station – the restored former platform 1, taken out of service in the 1970s, when the former platforms 2-5 were renumbered 1-4, for no obviously good reason. I judge it more trouble than it would be worth to restore the original numbering; in any case, all the best stations have a platform zero. See appendix A for the revised track layout of High St. station and its environs.

The light rail routes run on-street through the centre of Swansea, from Swansea Waterfront as far north as Clydach-on-Tawe. Immediately to the north of High St. station, they share, for the next mile, the reserved bus road. Elsewhere they generally follow former heavy-rail alignments, and this is how they are shown on the maps, but there may well be diversions on-street as necessary to avoid obstacles and to improve accessibility. (So, for example, I show the route through Ystalyfera as following the former alignment, but recognise that a better on-street alignment is almost certainly available.) A number of light rail stations/halts/stops are included as illustration, generally, but not always, corresponding to former heavy-rail stations. There will in practice be many more, that being the nature of light rail. All those sections which are used exclusively by the metro are light rail; heavy rail is used when the metro trains must share route with other, non-metro services.

There are essentially three light-rail routes:

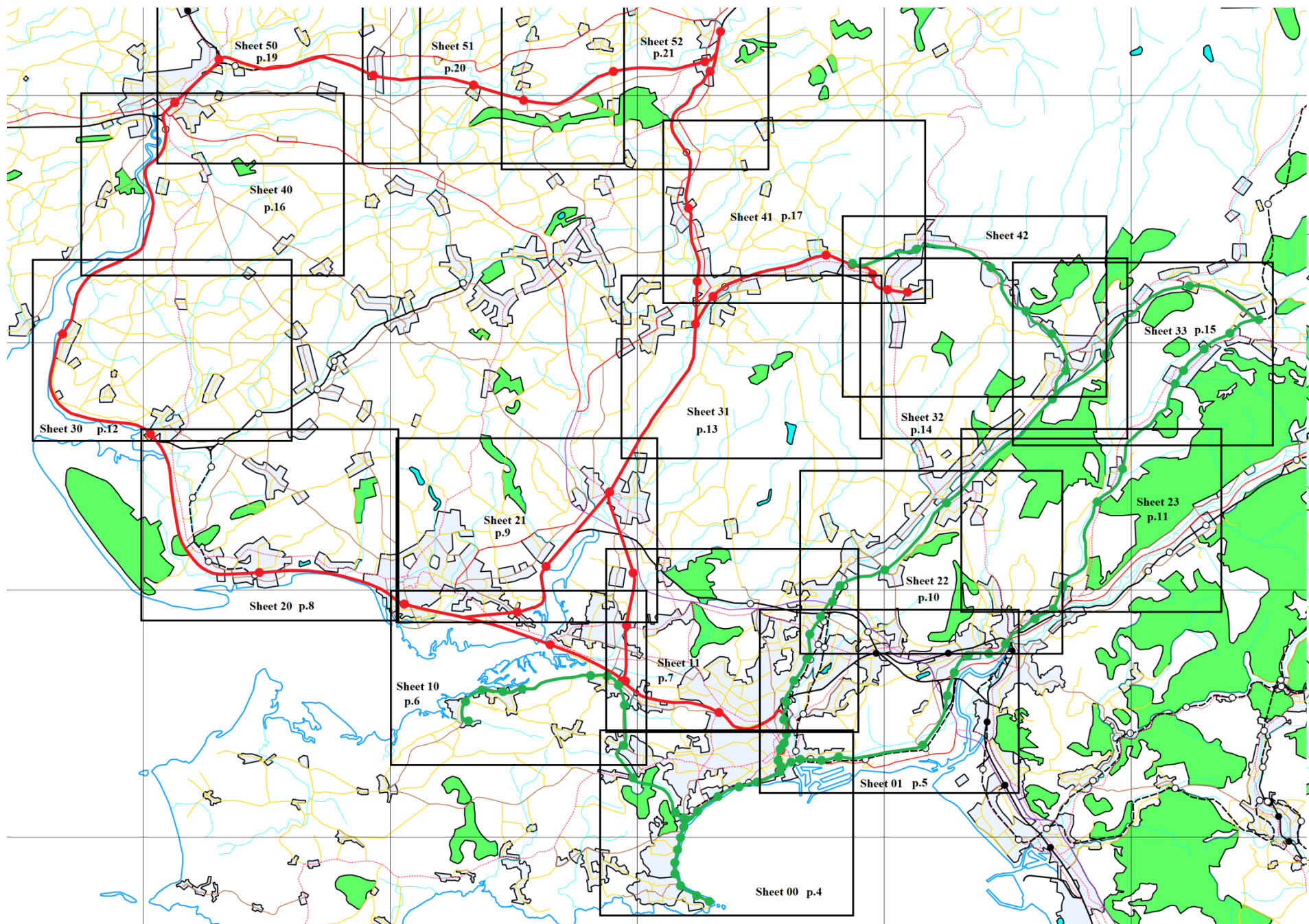
- Llanmorlais – Crofty – Penclawdd West / Dalton's Point – Penclawdd – Dan-y-lan – Gurnos – Gowerton West – Gowerton South – Waunarlwydd West – Dunvant – Killay – Lower Sketty – Mumbles Rd. – Golf Course – University – Swansea Bay – County Hall – Swansea Victoria / Waterfront & Museums – Little Wind St. – Castle Square – Swansea High St. Station – Bethesda

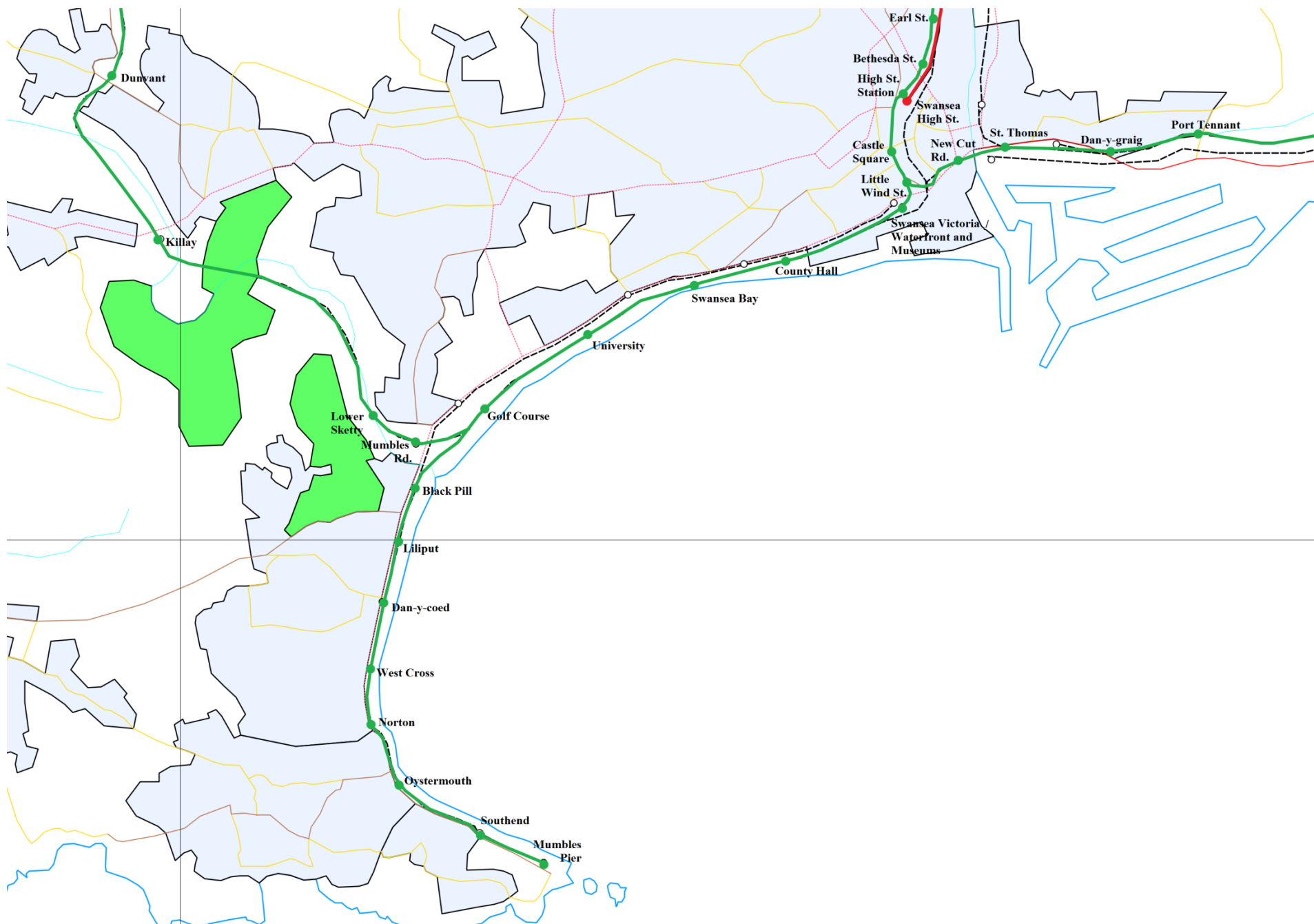
- St. – Earl St. – Neath Rd. / Bowen St. – Landore – Plas Marl – Copper Pit – Morriston – Tir-canol – Ynys-forgan – Clydach-on-Tawe – Glais – Allt-wen / Pontardawe – Ynys-y-geinon Junction – Ystradgynlais – Caehopkin / Abercraf – Coelbren Junction
- Mumbles Pier – Southend – Oystermouth – Norton – West Cross – Dan-y-coed – Liliput – Black Pill – Golf Course – University – Swansea Bay – County Hall – Swansea Victoria / Waterfront & Museums – Little Wind St. – Castle Square – Swansea High St. Station – Bethesda St. – Earl St. – Neath Rd. / Bowen St. – Landore – Plas Marl – Copper Pit – Morriston – Tir-canol – Ynys-forgan – Clydach-on-Tawe – Glais – Allt-wen / Pontardawe – Ynys-y-geinon Junction – Ystalyfera – Lower Cwm-twrch – Gwys / Upper Cwm-twrch – Cwmllynfell – Brynamman – Garnant Station
  - Coelbren Junction – Onllwyn – Pantyffordd – Seven Sisters – Bryn-dulais – Crynant – Abernant – Cilfrew – Aberdulais – Rhydding – Neath Bridge St. – Court Herbert – Neath Abbey – Pentreffynnon – Cardonnel – Jersey Marine / Briton Ferry Rd. – Port Tennant – Dan-y-graig – St. Thomas – New Cut Rd. – Little Wind St. – Castle Square – Swansea High St. Station – Bethesda St. – Earl St. – Neath Rd. / Bowen St. – Landore – Plas Marl – Copper Pit – Morriston – Tir-canol – Ynys-forgan – Clydach-on-Tawe – Glais – Allt-wen / Pontardawe – Ynys-y-geinon Junction – Ystradgynlais – Caehopkin / Abercraf – Coelbren Junction

Note that the Mumbles service uses the former LNW route from Swansea Victoria to Golf Course, and then reverts to the original Mumbles route to Oystermouth and Mumbles Pier.

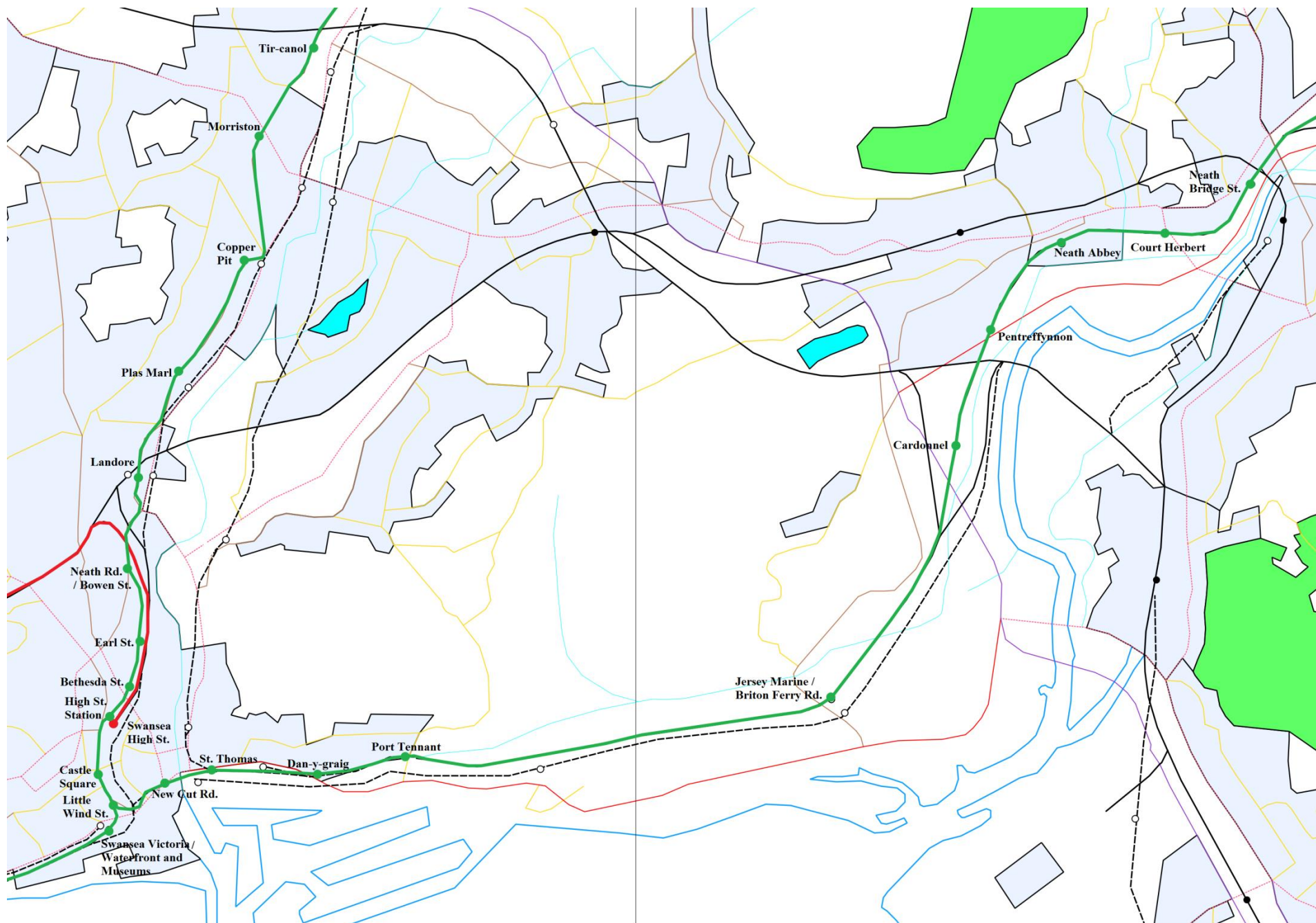
Note also that Landore is the stop for Liberty Stadium, home of the Ospreys (“we also wear red”).

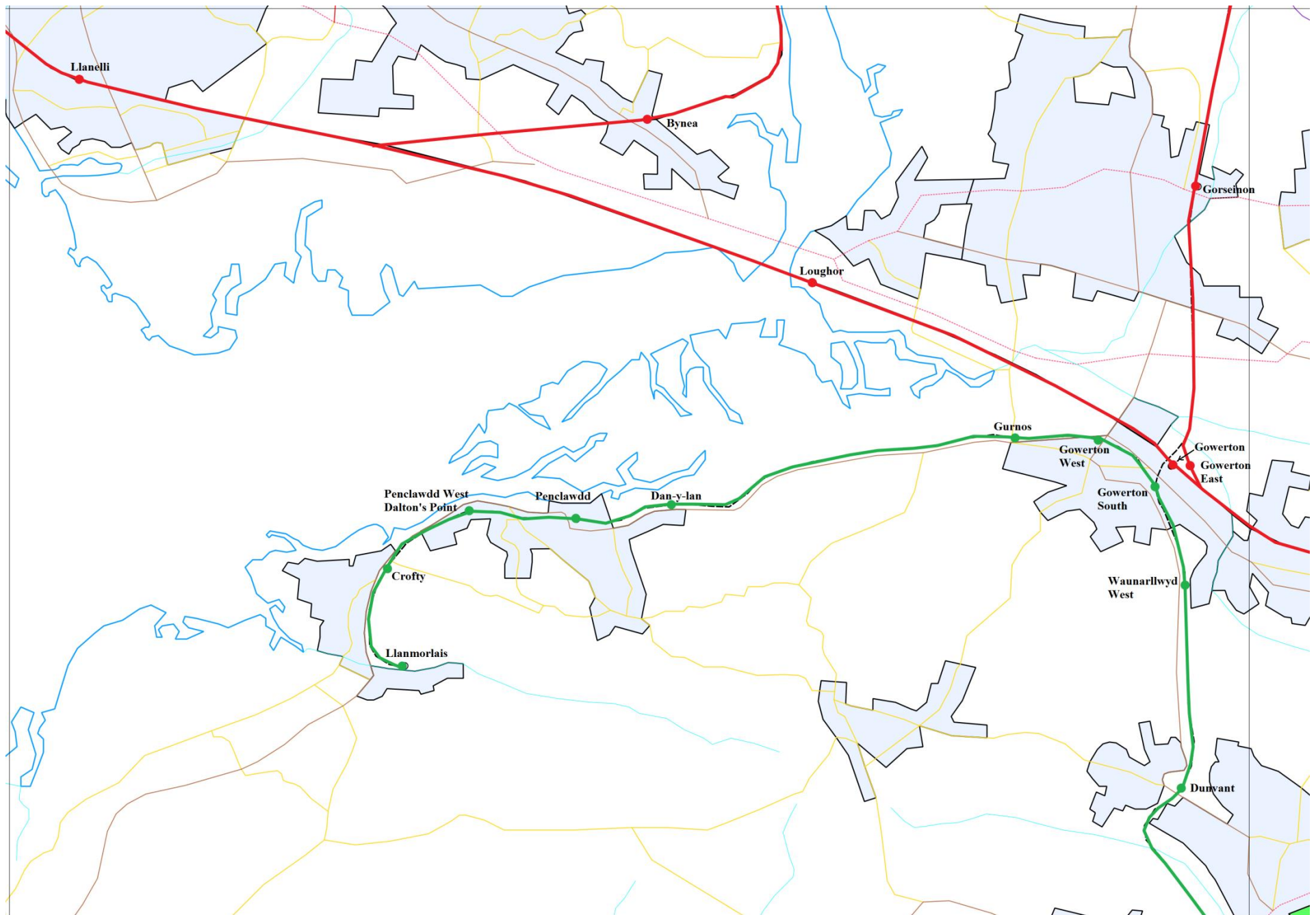
Swansea High St. is itself the terminus of a particular service of the South Wales Metro (q.v.), along the main line from Cardiff, but this is logically and operationally quite separate from the Swansea Metro.



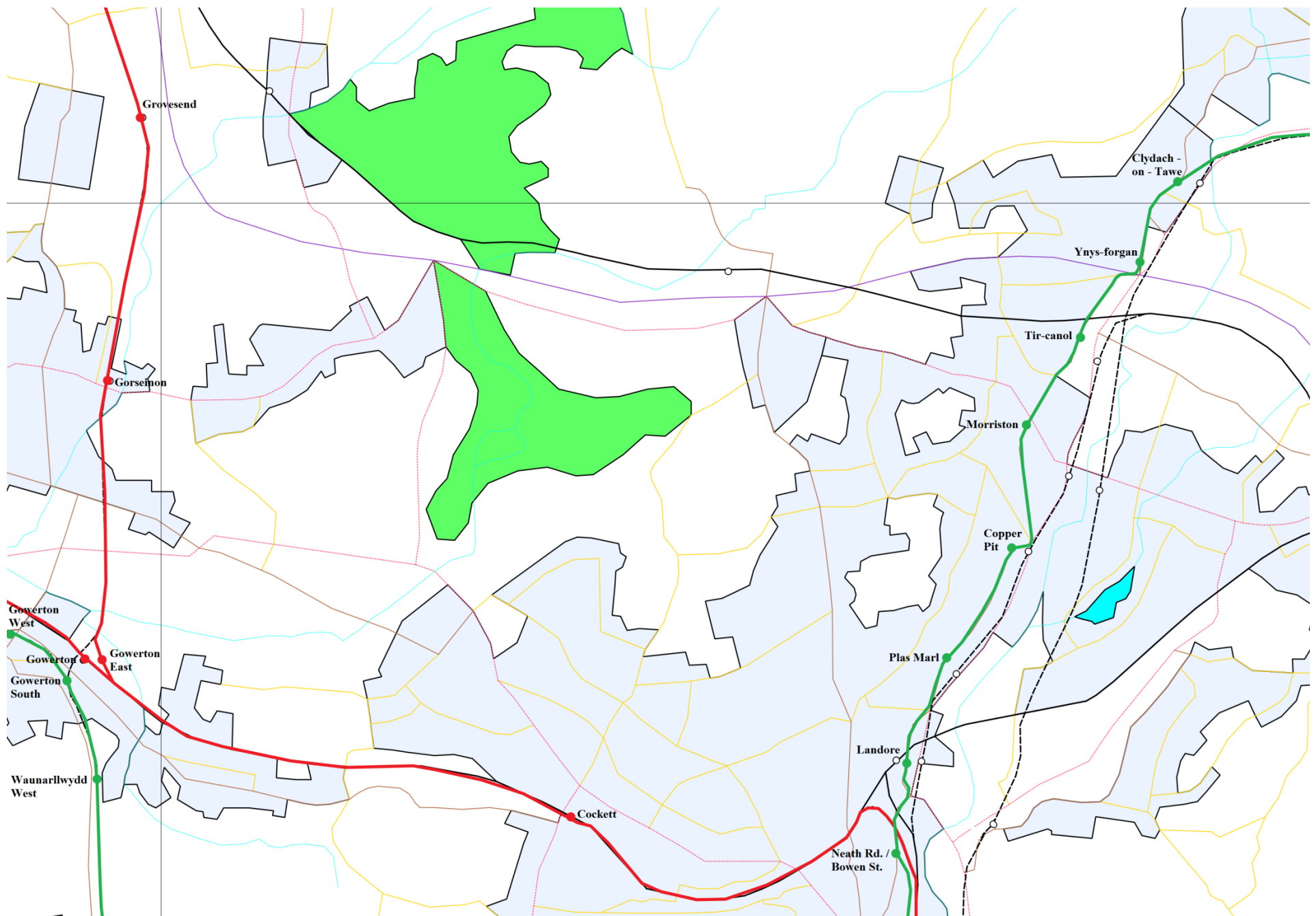


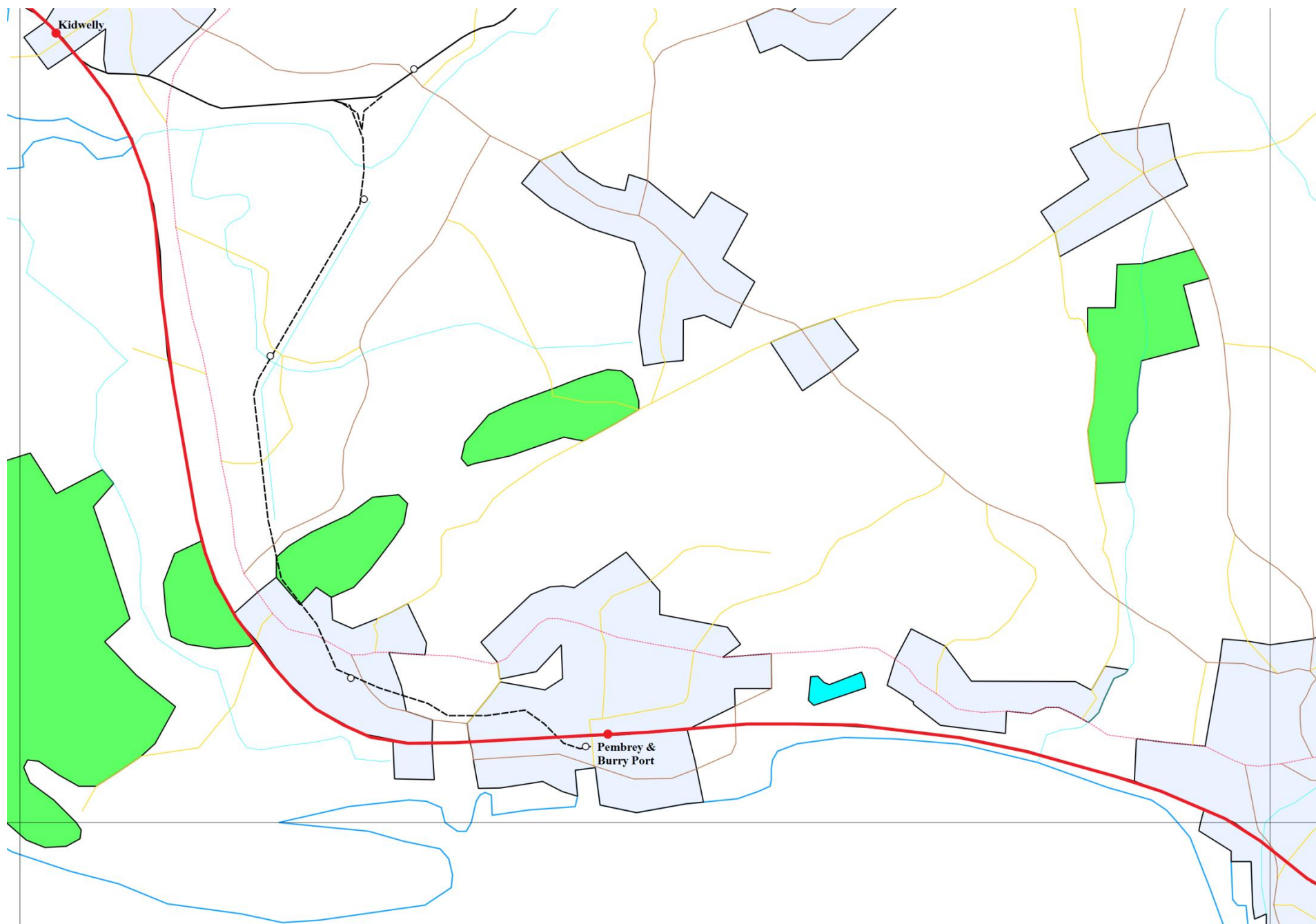


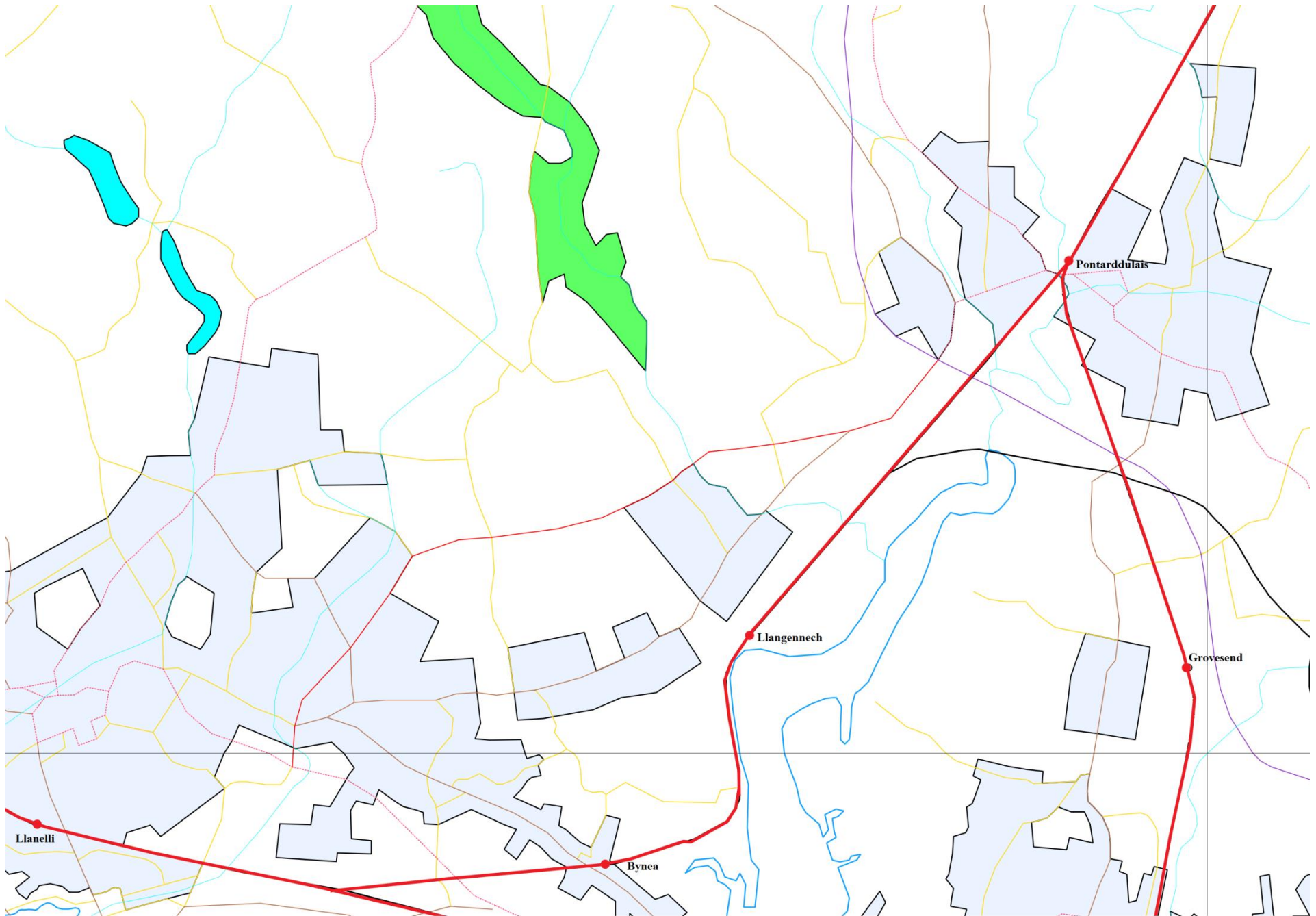




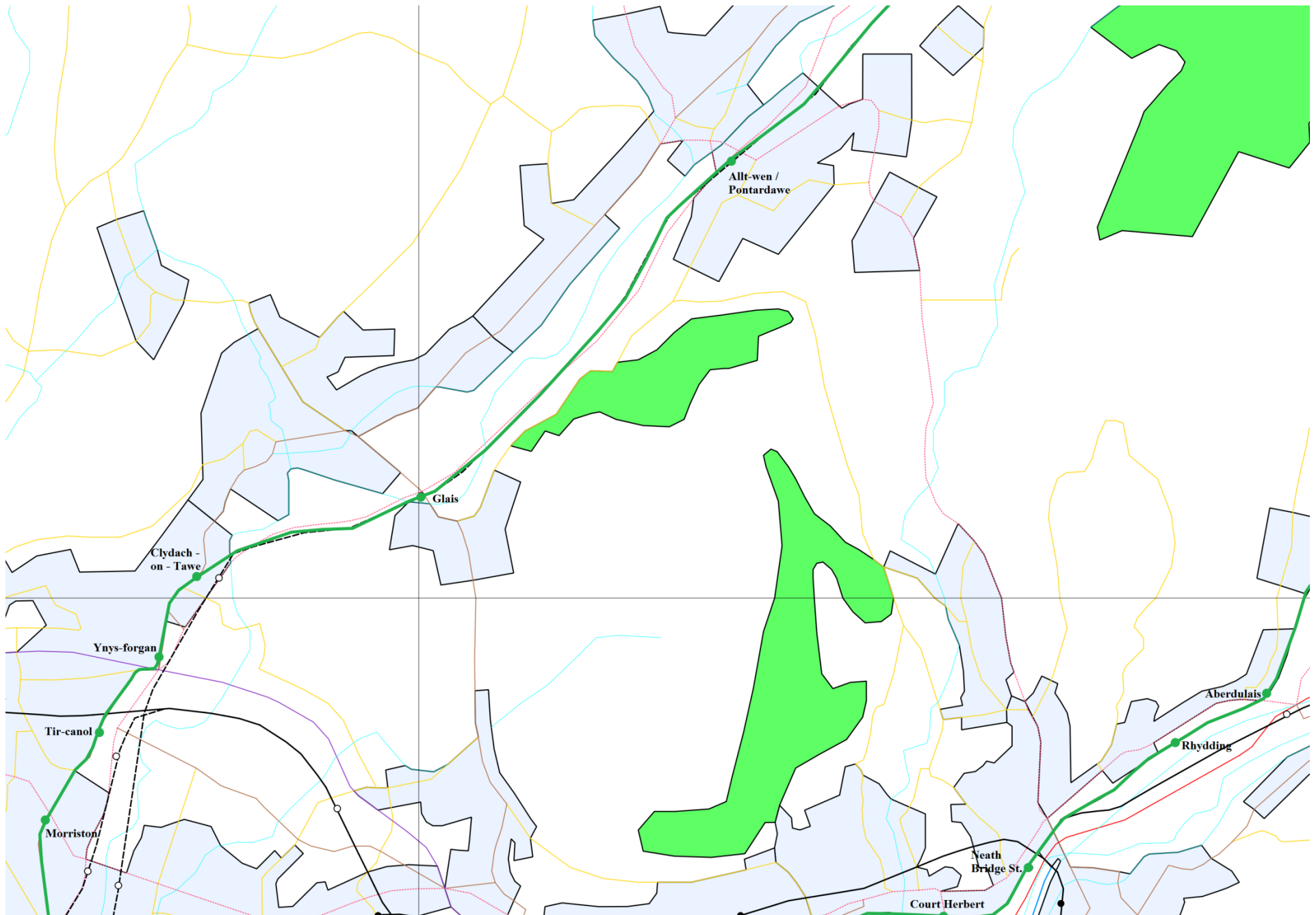


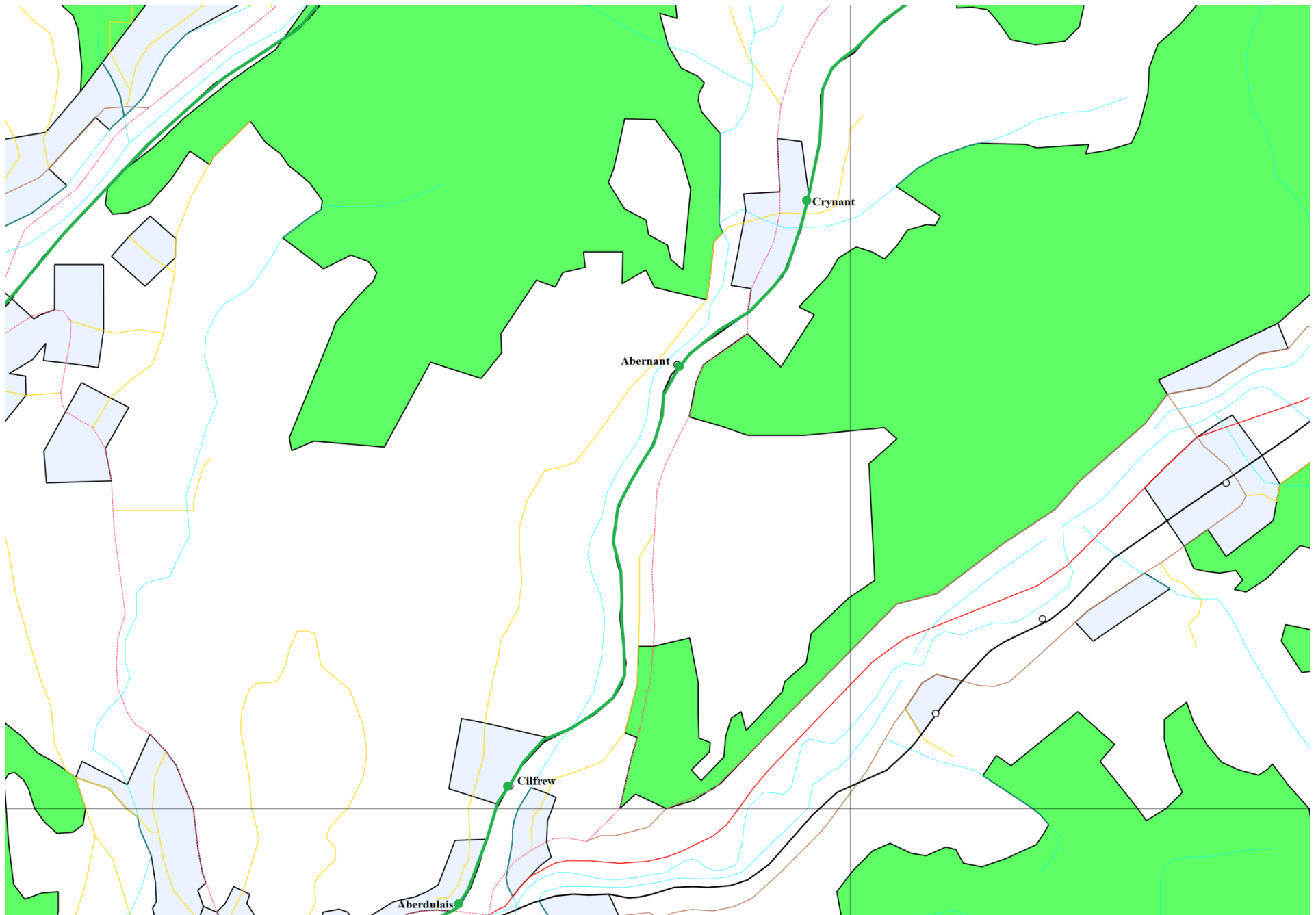


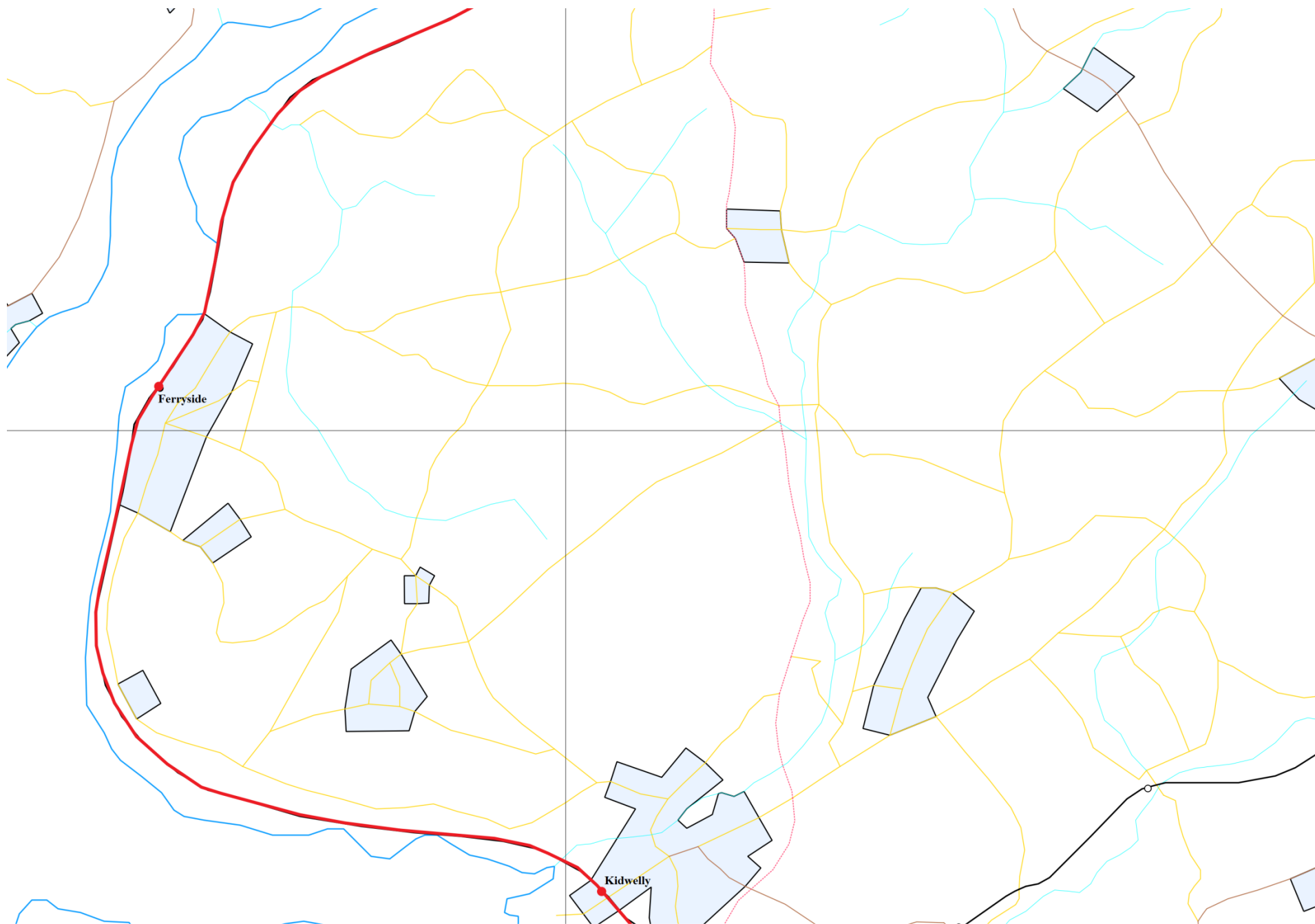


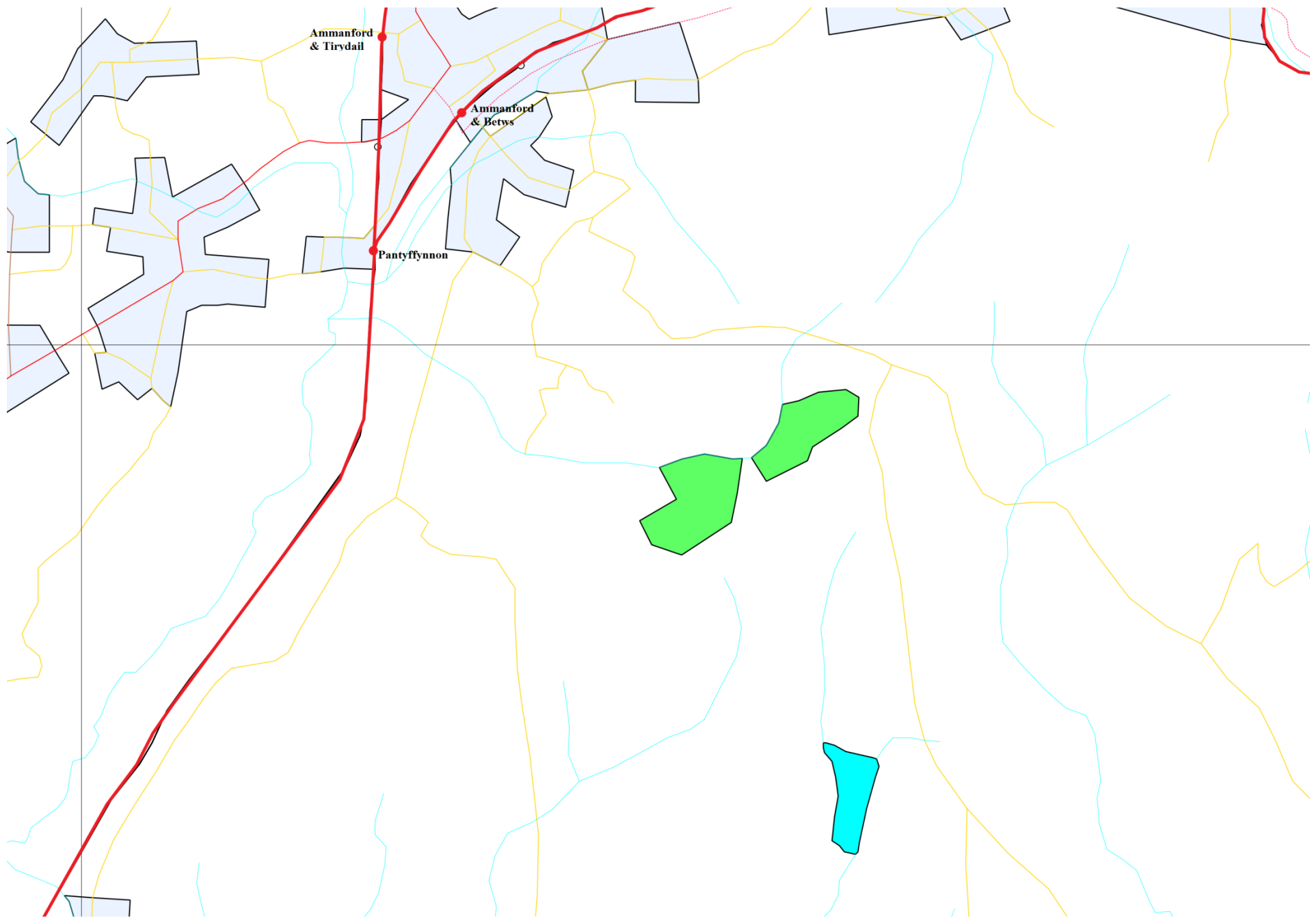


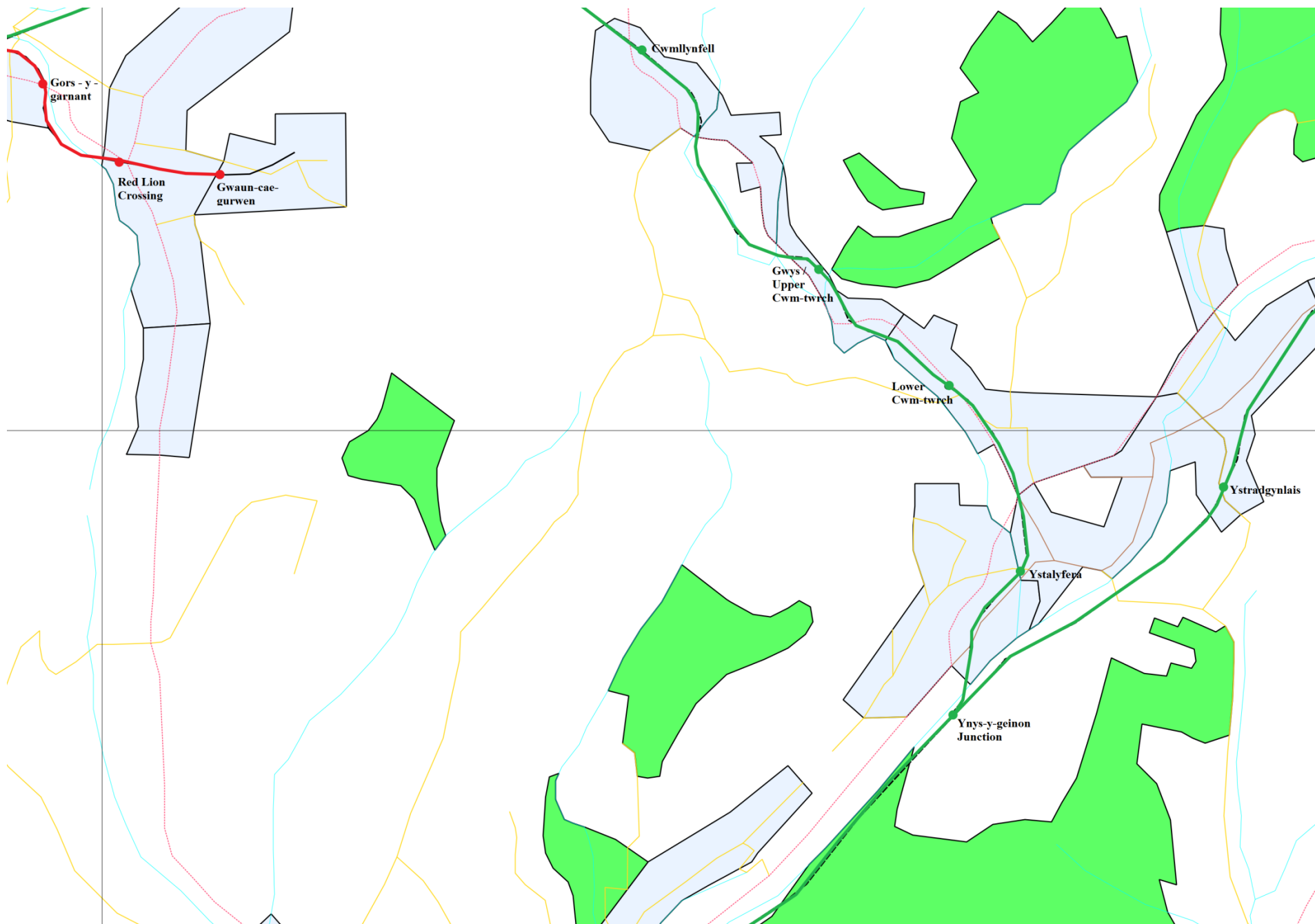




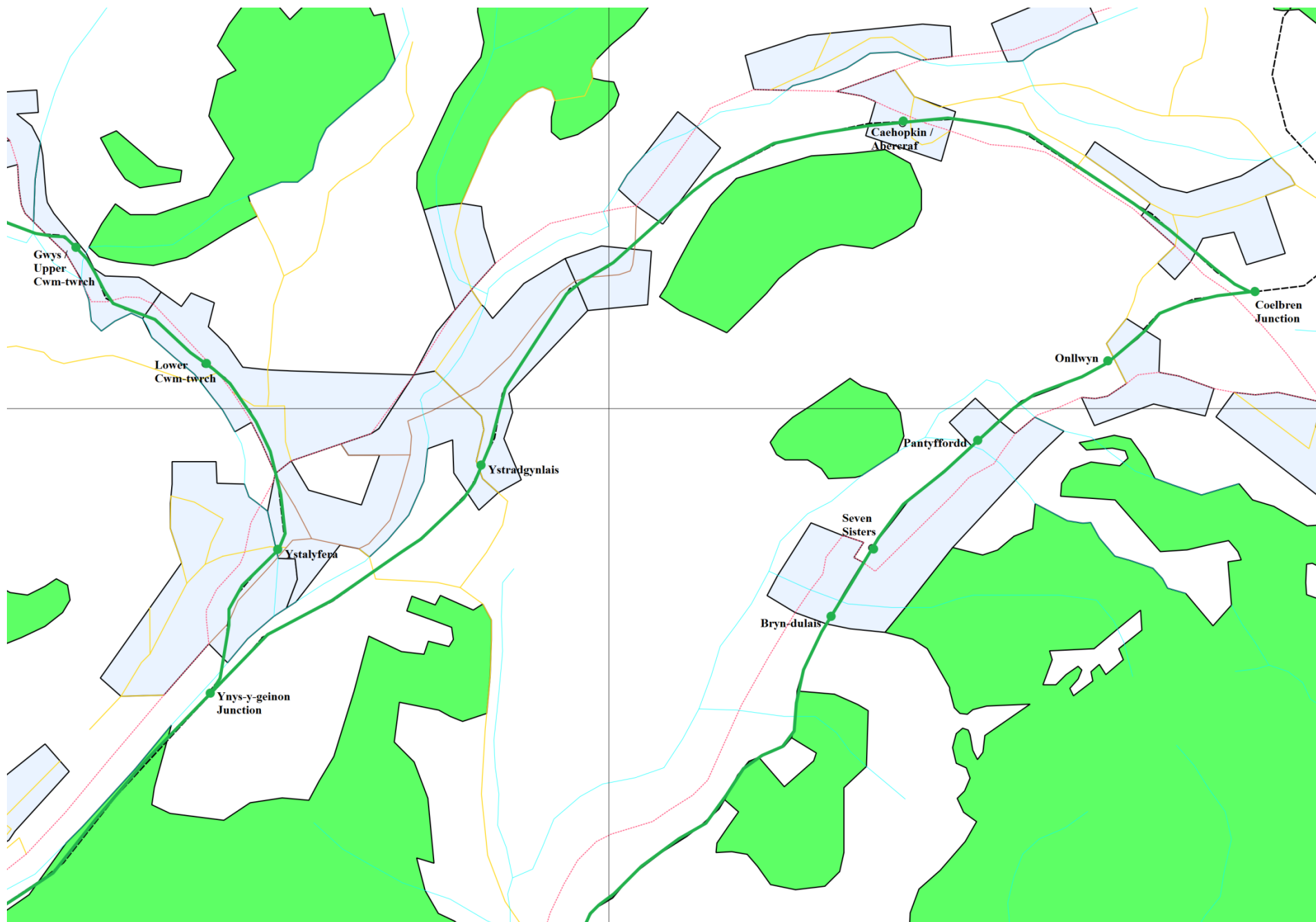


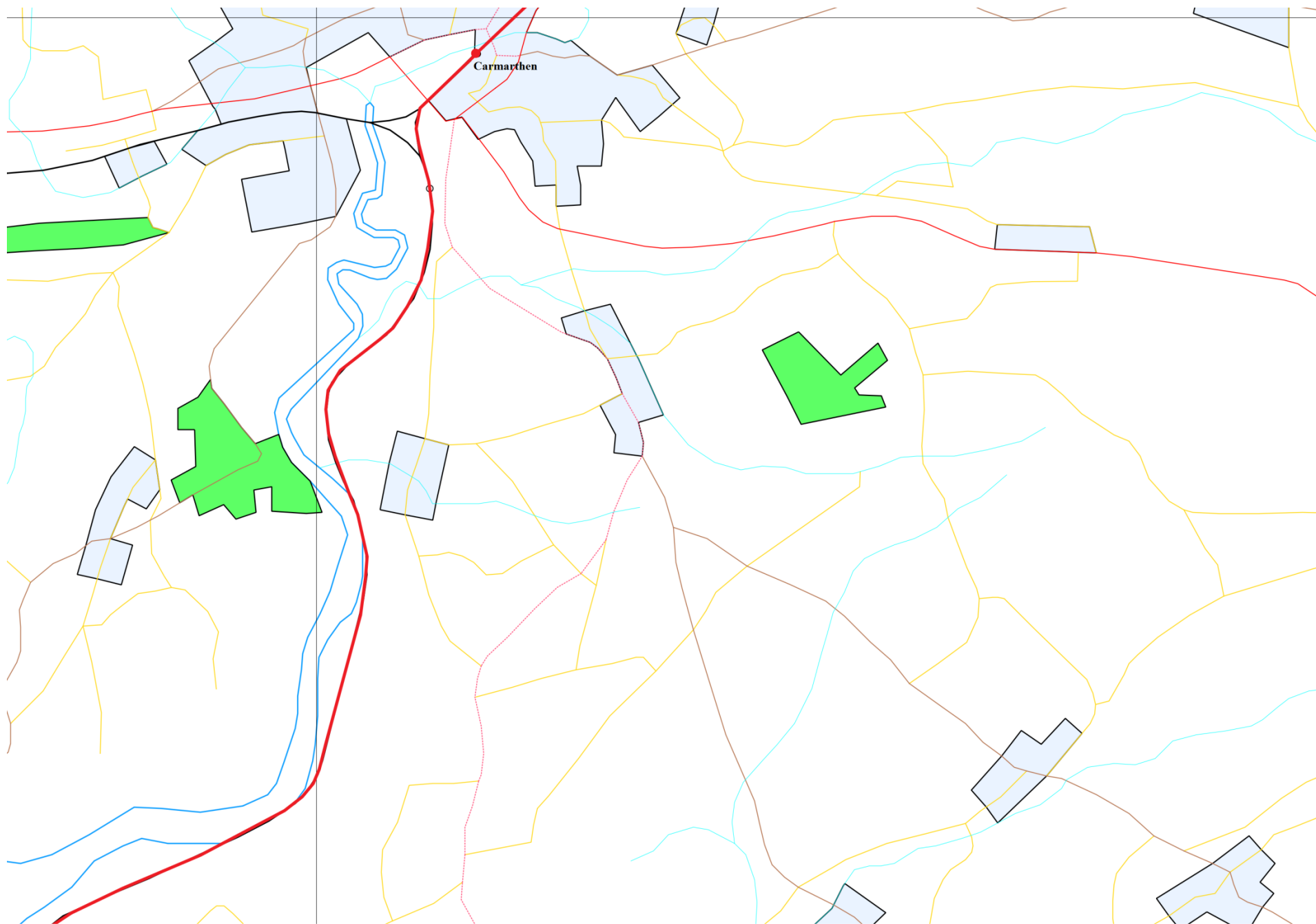


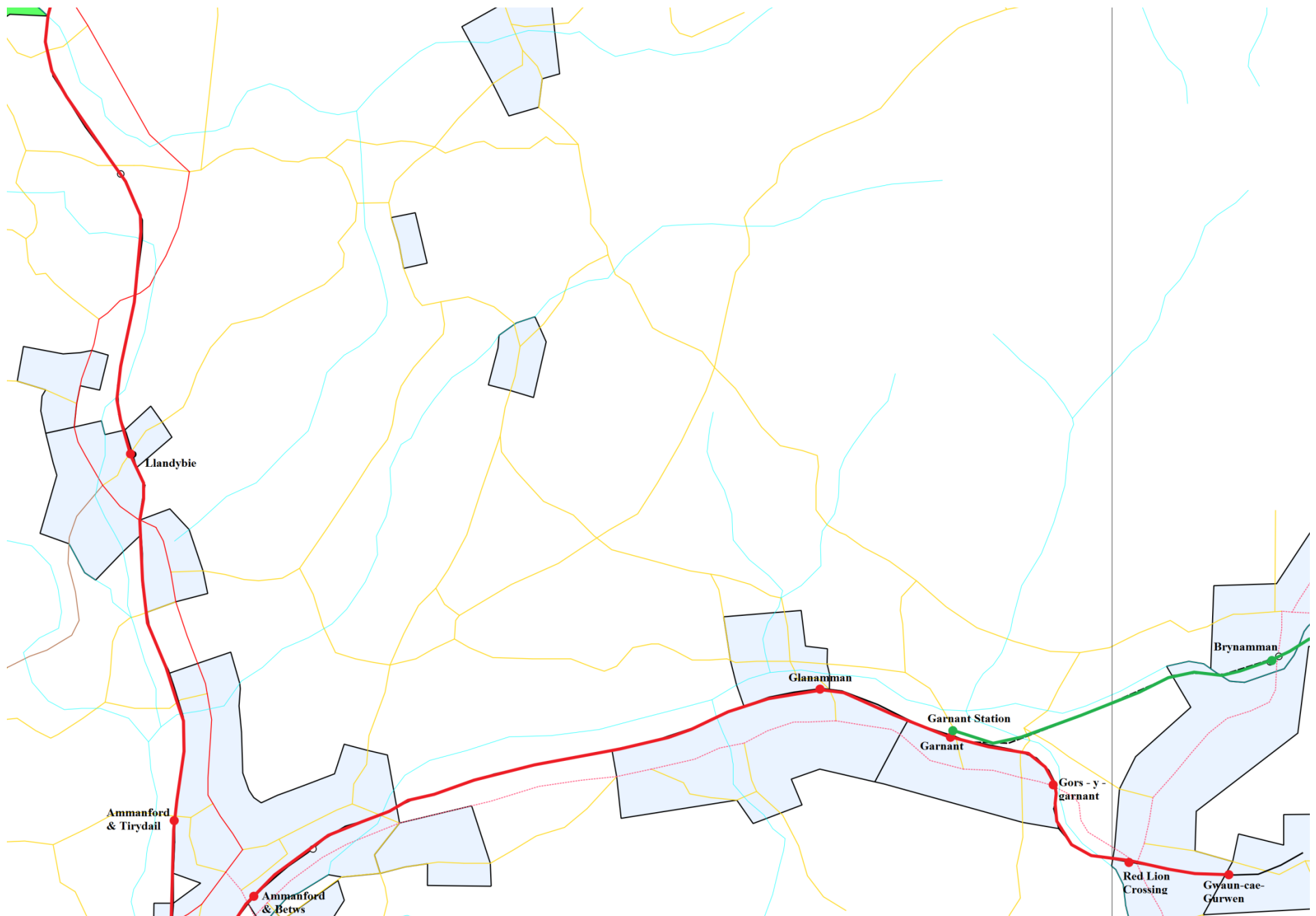


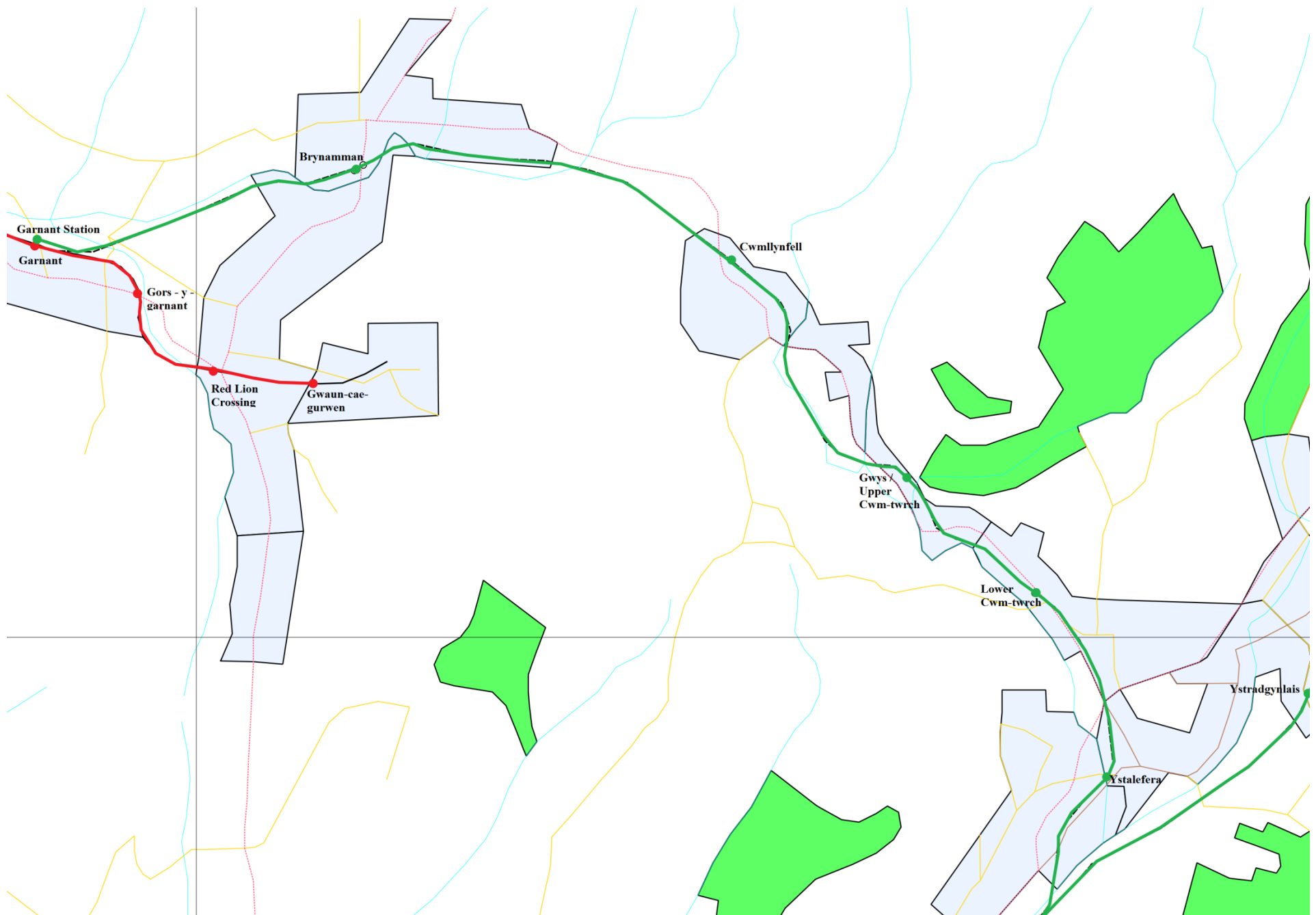


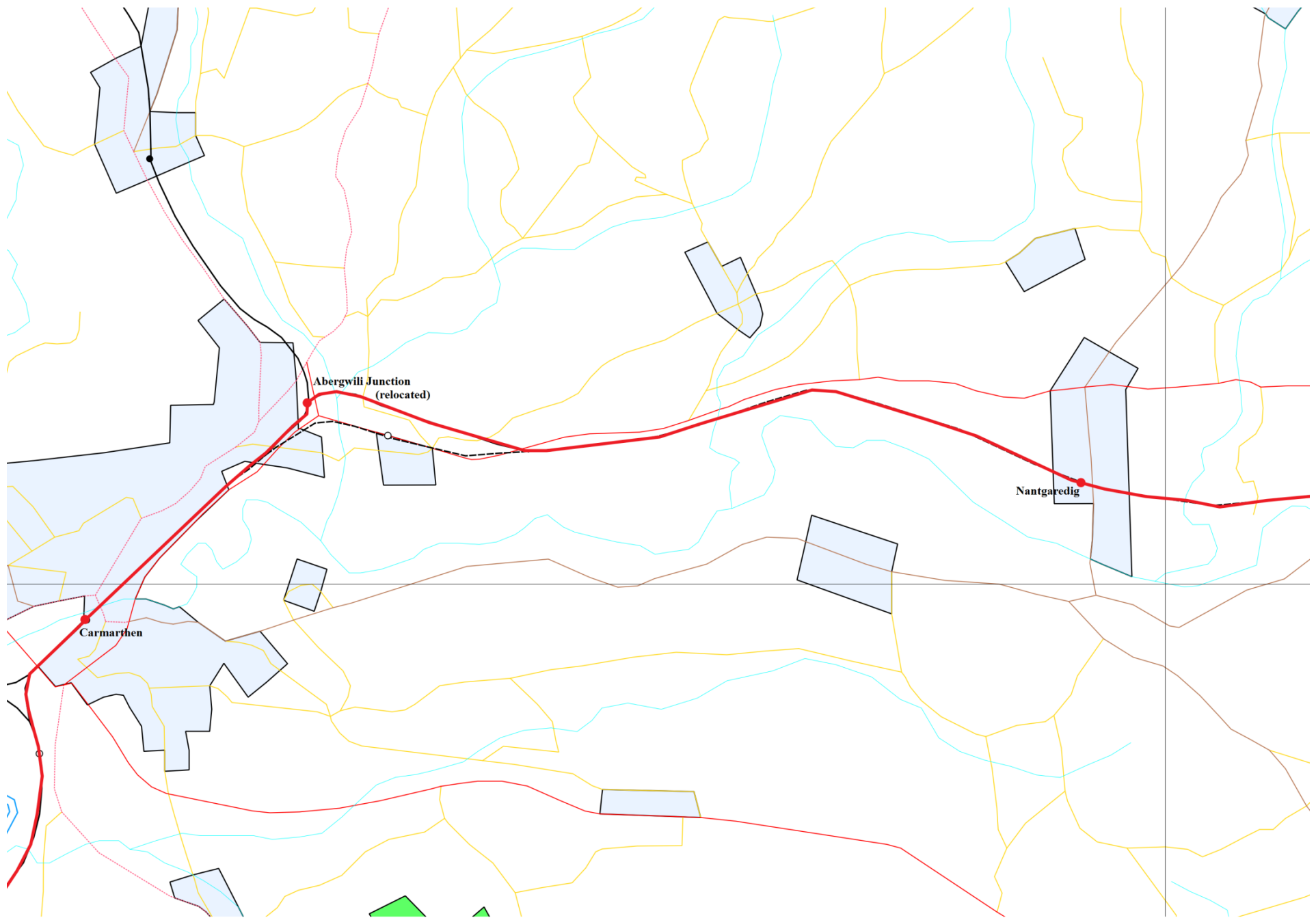




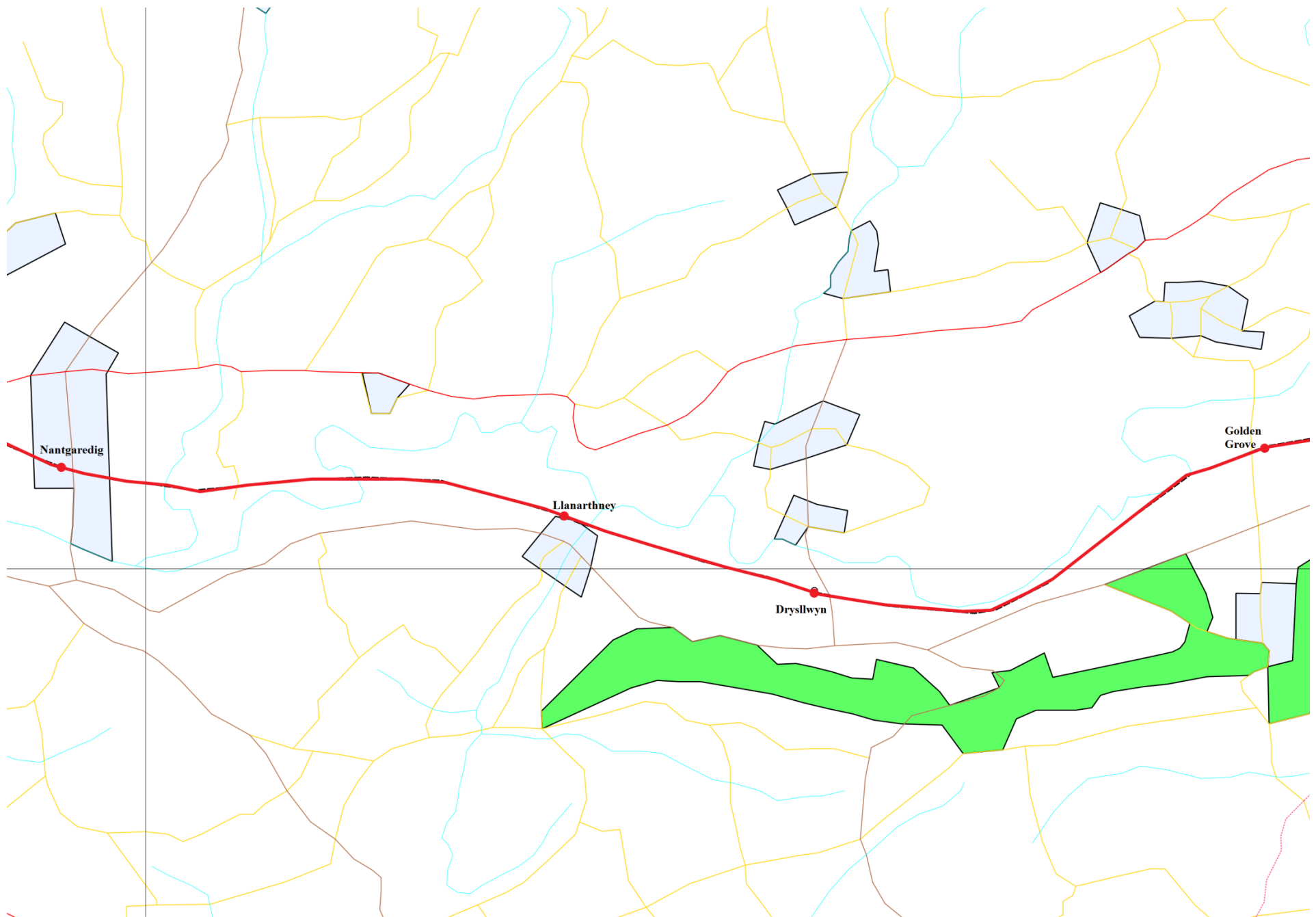


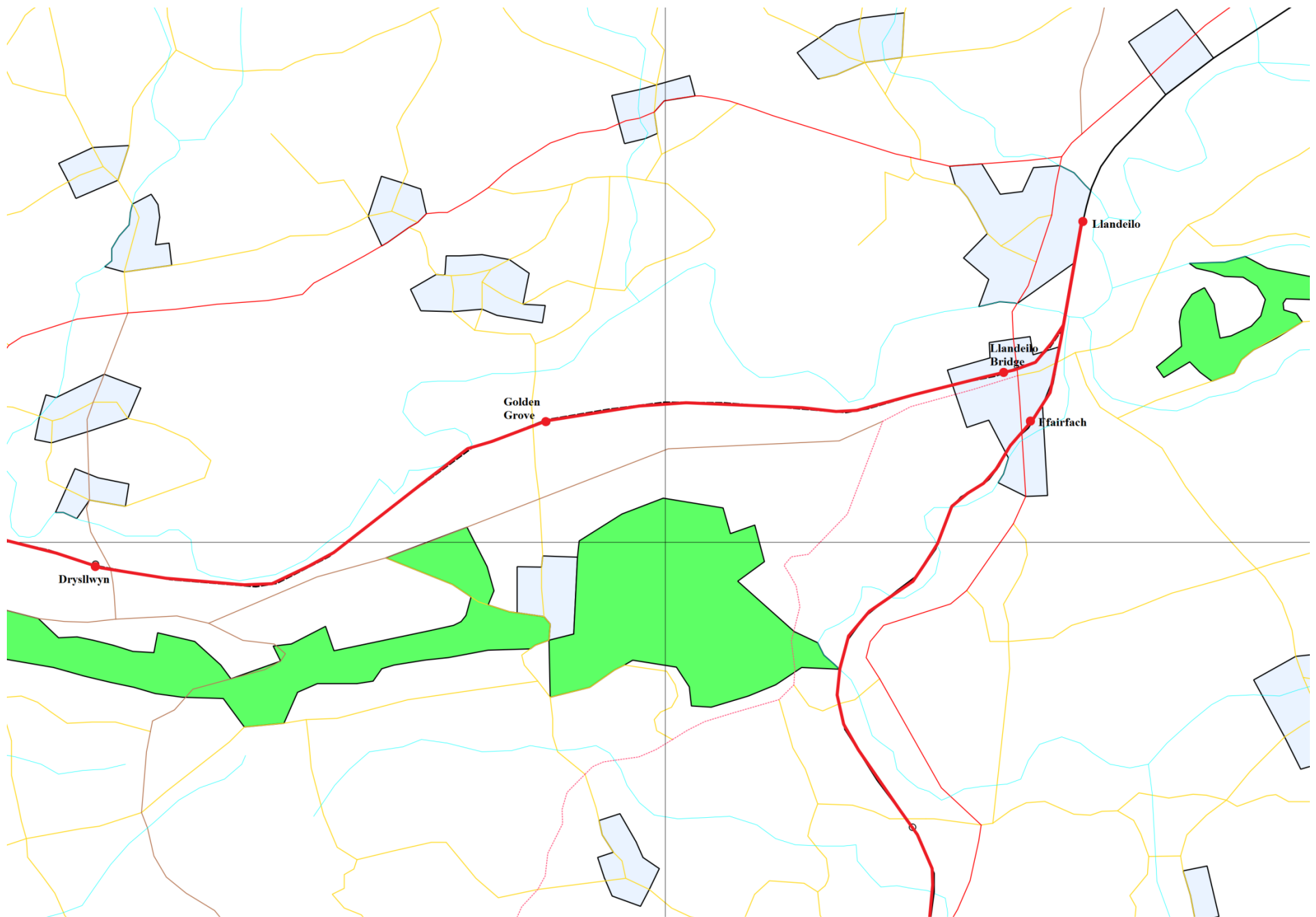






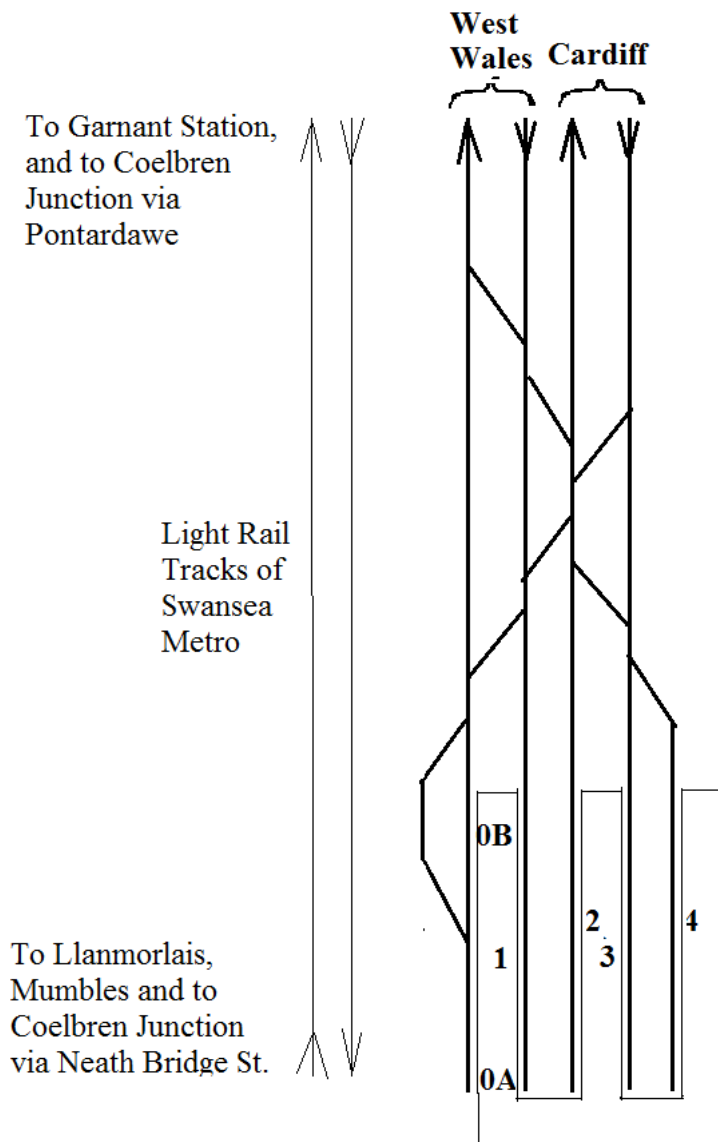






# Appendix A – Revised Track Layout at Swansea

Swansea High St. station's current track layout is decidedly non-ideal, and barely fit for (even current) practice. The necessary improvements are not, however, either difficult or extensive.



The layout plan given here is a topological diagram, showing connections only. No information should be inferred from it as to shape, size or orientation. The main features are, firstly, the reintroduction of the former platform 1 as platform 0 – with an access loop so that it can be used as two logical platforms, 0A and 0B – for all the Carmarthen / Gorseinon loop metro services. Platforms 0 and 1 are used exclusively for West Wales (and metro) services.

Secondly, the West Wales and Cardiff routes are now kept completely separate and independent. The **only** regular traffic between them will be the HS4 CC service of 2tph between Paddington and Swansea, extended through to Carmarthen. This will arrive from London into platform 3, and shortly after depart for Carmarthen, where it will be serviced. Likewise the service from Carmarthen will arrive into platform 2, and shortly after depart for London. This service thus makes limited demands on platform space at Swansea (in striking contrast to the current arrangements).

Platforms 2, 3 and 4 are also used by the long-distance RM services to Swansea from

Manchester (Stalybridge) and Plymouth, and by the stopping services along the main line from Cardiff and Cheltenham. An extra platform 5, on the outer side of 4, would be advantageous if it could be provided without obstructing the HS4 station eventually to be provided on that side.

The light-rail services of the Swansea metro all travel along the north west side of the station, following by the side of the heavy rail tracks until they join the reserved bus route, a little to the north of the station; this they share for the next mile or so until it rejoins the Neath Rd. They would then have followed the former Midland route out to Clydach-on-Tawe, but this has been taken over by the new main road to Neath, so, (fair's fair!) they take over the old Neath Rd. instead.