

LLANFEUGAN

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Introduction

Llanfeugan lies about 1km to the south of the River Usk and 6km south-east of Brecon. The church lies on a spur formed by converging streams, that to the north set in a deeply cut valley running towards the Usk. Topographically, it is a distinctive location.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanfeugan up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

We have not referenced the sources that have been examined to produce this report, but that information will be available in the Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust. The HER can be accessed on-line through the Archwilio website (www.archwilio.org.uk).

History of development

Llanfeugan (or Llanfigan) signifies the ‘church of St Meugan’, and was known as *St Meugan* in 1251 and *Llan Migan* in 1522. St Meugan is relatively obscure but could be the saint to whom there are also dedications on Anglesey and in Pembrokeshire.

The dedication and the location together suggest that this was an early medieval foundation, and when around 1272 the Lord of Pencelli built a new church, the centre of worship was not moved to Pencelli Castle less than one kilometre to the north-east but remained here, a clear sign of a pre-existing ecclesiastical focus.

Nothing is known of any settlement in and around the church, and when the first maps of the area appeared at the beginning of the 19th century the picture of the church and one house beside the churchyard was much the same as it is today. The overall impression is one of isolation, of a church set at the end of a lane and bounded on the north by a valley deeply etched. It is another of Brecknock’s church settlements.

The heritage to 1750

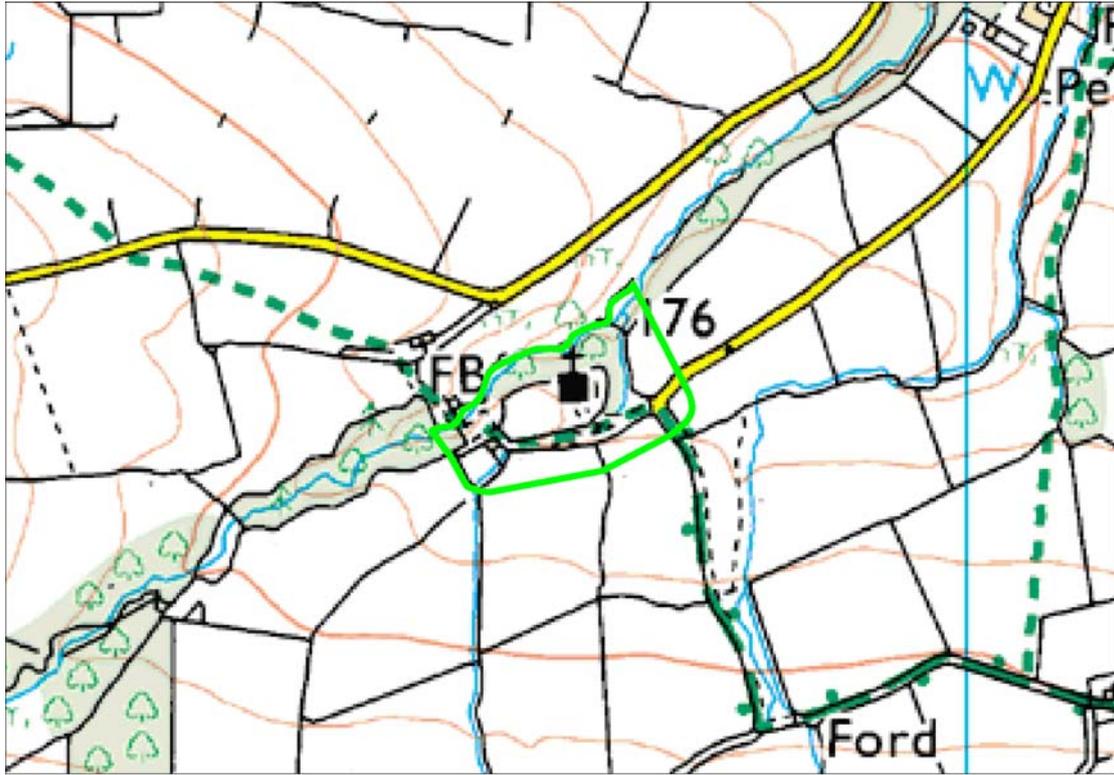
The build of this little church is potentially complex, and the term ‘rustic’ has been applied to it. There is agreement that there could be 13th-century Early English work here, but no accord as to whether the north aisle pre-dates or post-dates the present nave and chancel. Some rebuilding occurred in the 15th century or a little later and the tower was added at this time. Further rebuilding occurred in 1891. The font is considered to be late 13th-century, that part of the screen to survive has been attributed to the 14th century, the choir stalls, pulpit and altar rails include 17th-century work, and there are a few 17th- and 18th-century monuments.

The churchyard's shape, an irregular quadrilateral, is dictated by the spur on which it sits. The base and shaft of the churchyard cross remain, and the faint traces of a supposed cockpit, west of the church.



Llanfeugan Church, photo 1938-0032 © CPAT, 2013

There are no signs of earlier dwellings in the vicinity and at the beginning of the 19th century Ty'r-Eglwys was the only habitation. On the far side of the valley (but linked by a footbridge in the early 20th century) are the ruins of a 17th- or 18th-century barn.



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