

Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr

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Introduction

Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr is a simple church settlement at the end of a lane, only 2km from Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, and a little less than 16km to the west of Oswestry. Formerly in the historic county of Denbighshire it was transferred to modern Powys in 1996, along with several other parishes.

It occupies a remote spot to the north of the Tanat Valley, sheltering on the south side of the hill which has given it its name. It is tucked into the hillside beside a small stream which feeds into Afon Iwrch little more than one kilometre to the south, and most of its few buildings are terraced into the hill slope.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanarmon 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. Numbers in brackets are primary record numbers used in the HER to provide information that is specific to individual sites and features. These can be accessed on-line through the Archwilio website (www.archwilio.org.uk).

History of development

Like many similar church settlements, nothing concrete is known about the origins or development of Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr, which in the past has also been termed Llanarmon-fach according to the St Asaph historian, Archdeacon Thomas.

The church was formerly a chapel of ease to Llanrhaeadr, and is referred to as Capella de Llangarnayaun in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and as Lanarmavn in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291. These may be the earliest dates that the place is referred to in medieval documents, but as no place-name study has been compiled for the historic county of Denbighshire, this remains to be confirmed. In the Patent Rolls of 1394, it was termed the chapel of St German in Mynethmau. Notwithstanding this, Llanarmon was the centre of an ecclesiastical parish, a focus for the surrounding countryside.

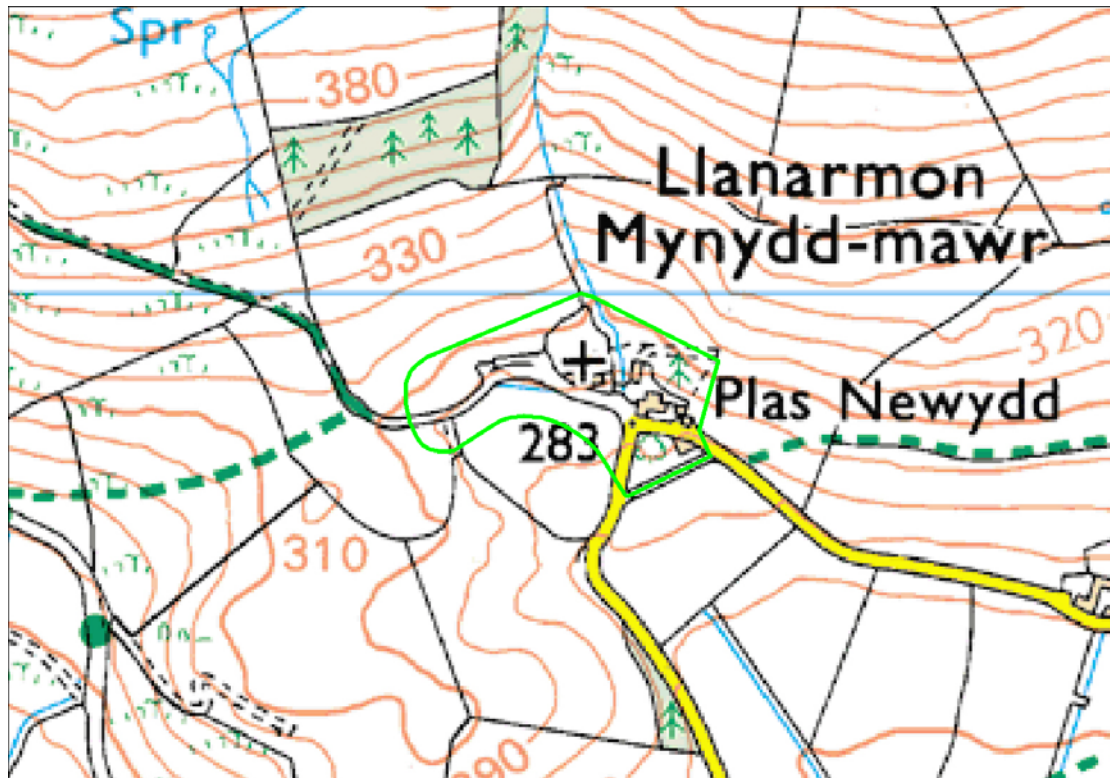
Eighteenth-century maps suggest some relatively recent alterations in the settlement layout. Buildings, which were probably cottages, have disappeared to the west of the church and a farm to the east of the church has been succeeded by farm buildings and the construction of Plas Newydd, which itself post-dates the Tithe survey. There is nothing, however, to suggest that a true nucleated settlement developed around the church.

The heritage to 1750

St Garmon's church (19775) was 'rebuilt or restored beyond recognition' (according to the late Edward Hubbard) in 1886. It is small, single-chambered and has a western bellcote. Inside it is almost as equally devoid of anything pre-dating the Victorian era, the only survivals being the disused bowl of a font, a font cover, and re-cycled altar rails, all of the 18th century.

The present irregular design of the churchyard (19776) owes much to the stream that forms its eastern boundary. A more curvilinear course to the enclosure on the north and west is suggested by the base of a scarp within the churchyard, and the existing south side has a visible curve to it. Collectively this points to a curvilinear form which is probably of early medieval origin.

Now a cul-de-sac location, Llanarmon once lay on one of two contour-following tracks that wound their way around the west side of Mynydd Mawr. This still shows as a broad terrace-way near the church and the location of one building (19777), to the west of the churchyard and shown on a map of the second half of the 18th century, is still discernible.



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