

Llanbadarn Fynydd

SO 09747765
16156

Introduction

The church and houses face each other across the River Ithon at Llanbadarn Fynydd. The former in the shelter of the steep eastern valley slope occupies a rocky projection that has diverted the river into a large meander; the village spreading up the gentle western side of the valley. A few hundred metres to the north beside the main A483 a further settlement focus has developed around the New Inn where the Gwenlas Brook courses down from the north-east to meet the Ithon. Llandrindod Wells is some 17km to the south.

This brief report examines Llanbadarn Fynydd's emergence and development up to 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 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 may 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).



Llanbadarn fynydd village, photo 95-C-302 © CPAT, 2011

History of development

Llanbadarn Fynydd makes its first appearance in the records in 1291 as *Lanemeth*, and curiously as *St Padern in the Desert* a century later, a reflection of its desolate location in the hills. Today's name may be translated as the 'church of Padarn in the mountain'.

Neither the origin nor the early history of this settlement is known. Constrained geographically by its location, the historic portion is unlikely to have ever been much larger than it is today. At the time of the Tithe survey, a small group of houses surrounded the church and there were only two dwellings on the west bank of the river.

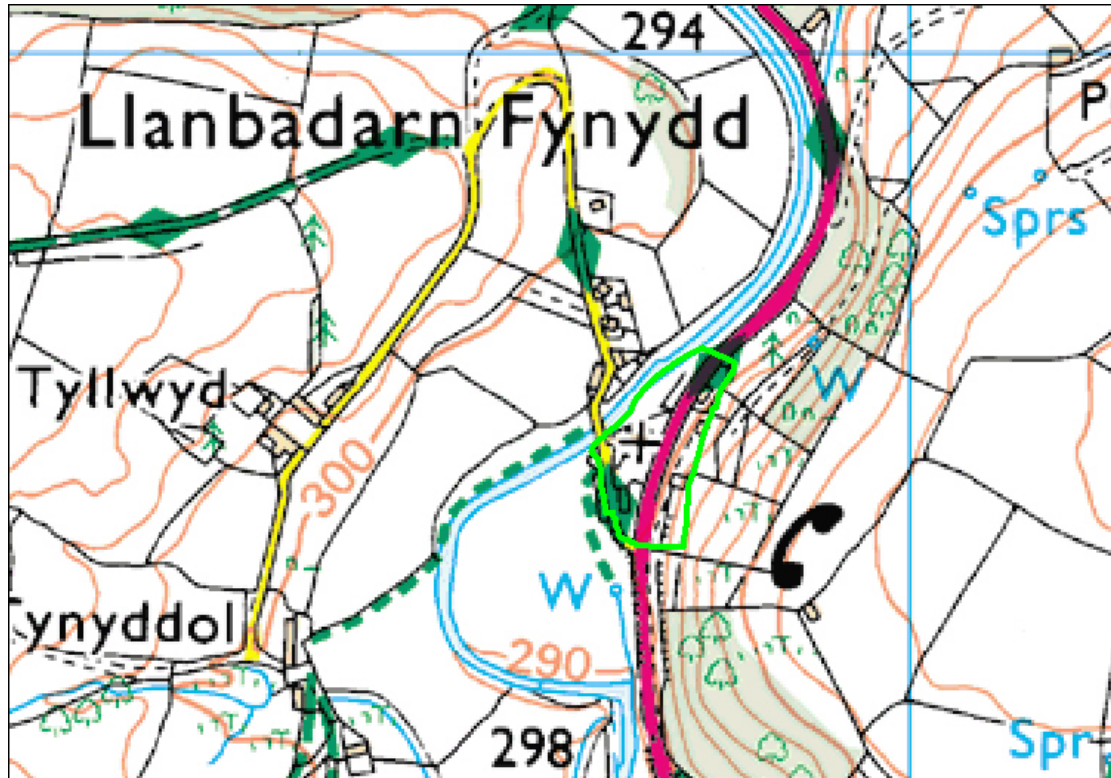
A secondary focus emerged in the 19th century as a result of the construction of the turnpike road between Newtown and Builth Wells. The New Inn was built not much before 1833, and a smithy and other buildings were erected in its vicinity. An inscription erected by Radnorshire County Council in 1973 near the bridge over the Gwenlas Brook states: 'when William Pugh of Bryn-llywarch made the road from Newtown to Builth he fixed a weighing machine here in 1823...'

The overall impression is of an isolated church settlement, lacking an accompanying village.

The heritage to 1750

St Padarn's Church (16021) is a single-chambered structure with a west bellcote, probably largely rebuilt but certainly much restored in 1894. One medieval window and a roof of c.1500 survive, together with part of a rood screen and a 14th-century font.

The churchyard (16256) is walled around in an irregular shape that owes much to the drop to the river on the north and the road revetment on the east. There is no hint of curvilinearity except perhaps for a relict bank amongst the graves on the east of the church, but some of the churchyard could have been lost to river erosion.



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