

Llanddewi'r Cwm

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Introduction

Llanddewi'r Cwm is a small settlement, focused on its church, by the side of the B4520 Builth Wells to Brecon road, some 2km from Builth. It is sited on the tip of a steep interfluvial spur between the Afon Dunhonw and Nant Gwyn valleys.

This brief report examines its 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).



Llanddewi'r Cwm village, photo 95-C-0336 © CPAT 2011

History of development

The name Llanddewi'r Cwm literally means St David's church in the cwm (or valley). It first appears in documentary records in the period 1176-1198 as *Sancti David de Cum in Buelt* and in the Taxatio of 1154 it was *Landewycum*, but the sub-circular churchyard in which it sits places its probable origin in the early medieval period.

The settlement consists of no more than the church, a farm and a house or two, and it has probably never been significantly larger.

The heritage to 1750

St. David's church (20156) retains its simple medieval plan of nave and chancel with an undistinguished tower, and is probably originally a 12th- or 13th-century building. It appears to have been heavily restored in the 19th century (substantial repairs are recorded in 1847 which may have amounted to a partial rebuild). The church houses a 12th-century font, but little else in the way of early furnishings and fittings.

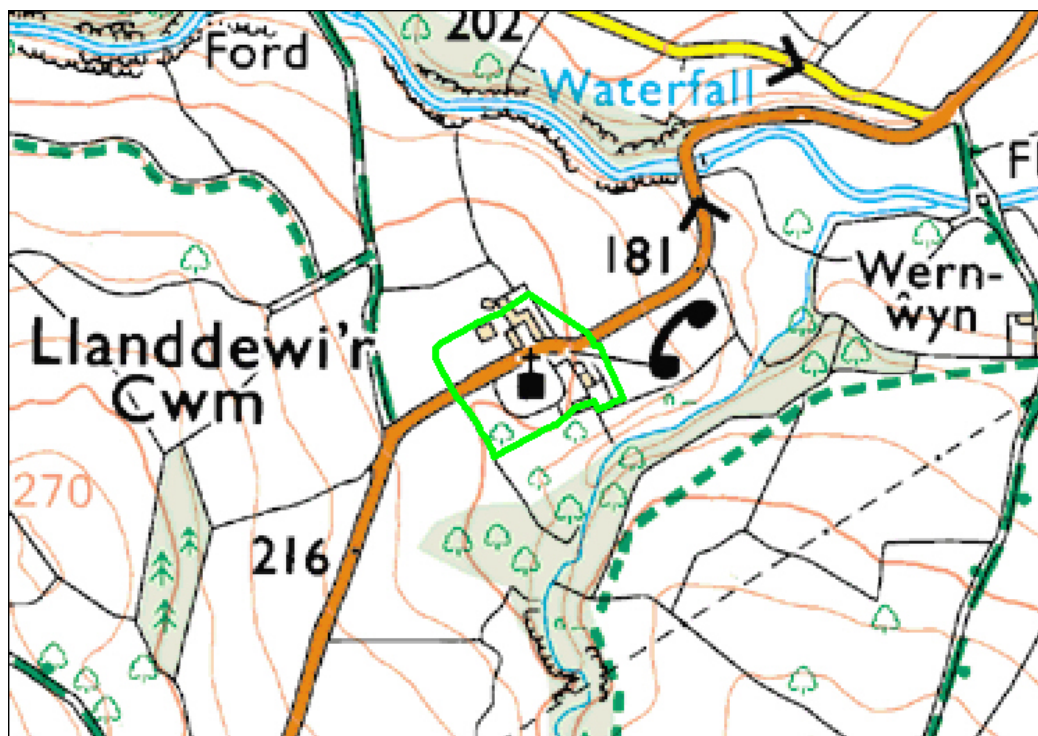
The present sub-rectangular churchyard (2540) is contained by a wall, but within this an earlier churchyard bank, though discontinuous, defines a smaller, oval enclosure.

New Hall (6966) is of local architectural interest and is a two-storied 18th-century building.

The field to the west of the church contains the remains of a small field system (2914) comprising low banks and a trackway which runs down towards the site of a small house, (2915), now gone, on the bank of Nant Gwyn. These are all probably post-medieval in date.

An area of undated ridge and furrow (2916) cultivation survives further to the west, and this may represent the medieval or later field system for the settlement.

In summary, Llanddewi'r Cwm is a small church settlement for which there is presently no substantive evidence of a nucleated community around it in the medieval or early post-medieval centuries.



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