

Llanganten

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Introduction

Llanganten is a minor settlement comprising a church and an adjacent house, lying on the south bank of the Chewfri river some 2km to the west of Builth Wells. Although theoretically a settlement in its own right, the church is now commonly thought of as Cilmeri.

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).



Llanganten village, photo 95-C-0326 © CPAT 2011

History of development

The early history of Llanganten is obscure, and today the settlement survives only as an isolated church and vicarage. The name is first recorded as *Langantein* in 1280 and as *Llanganten* a decade later. The meaning would seem to be ‘the church of St Canten’, an obscure saint who was allegedly a grandson of Brychan Brycheiniog.

The church was the centre of a parish until the 1880s, but primarily appears to have served the village of Cilmeri some 500m to the south-west, and it may never have been a significant focus for settlement itself.

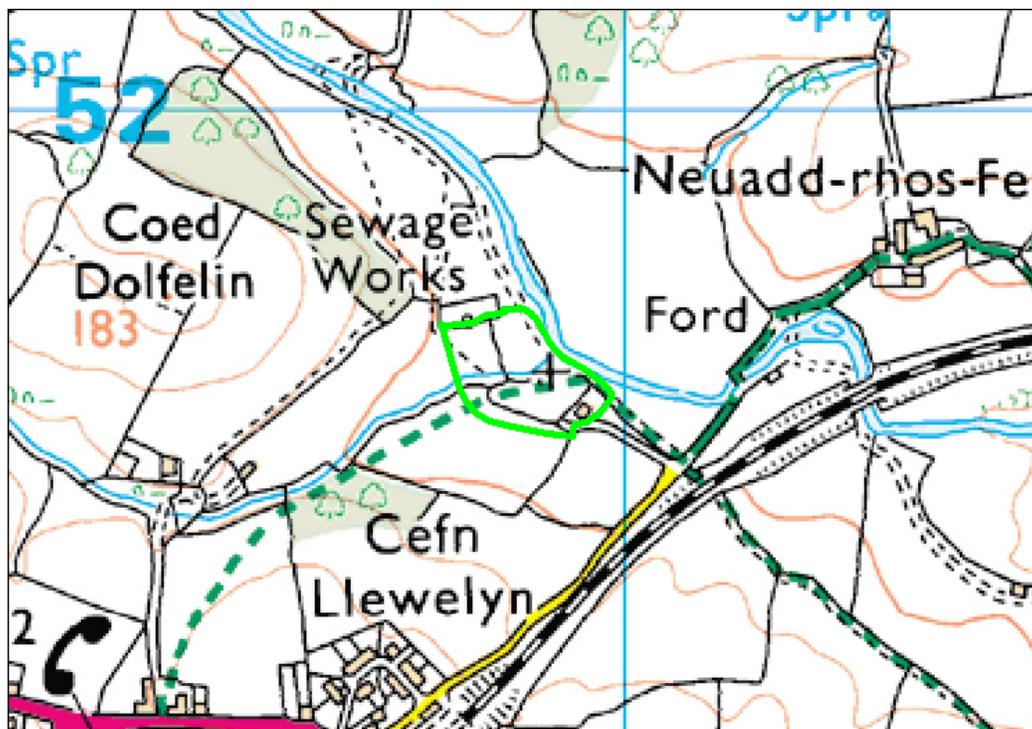
The heritage to 1750

The structure of St Cannen's Church (20159) is 19th-century. It was re-built in 1880 but the present plan, comprising a nave and separate chancel, may reflect that of the building it replaced, and indeed there is some surviving masonry that may be medieval. The only medieval furnishing in the church is the 12th-century font.

The church is sited eccentrically within a large sub-rectangular churchyard (2969) immediately above the south bank of the Afon Chwefru. The river has eroded the enclosure on the north to such an extent that the church now perches precariously on the edge of the river cliff. Within the confines of the present yard is a slight curving earthwork bank, running closely around the south-west front of the church. This could represent the remains of an earlier sub-circular churchyard (2970), though the physical traces are vague and not wholly convincing.

A series of faint earthworks (2971) exist in the field on the north bank of the Chwefri, opposite the church, and may perhaps be related to the settlement. Though these features resemble disjointed banks and a possible holloway, and so could be the remains of a field system associated with the settlement, their low-lying riverside location might point to a more natural origin.

In summary, Llanganten presents an appearance as a church settlement which served a dispersed community without ever becoming the focus of a developing settlement beside the river.



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