

Maesmynis

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Introduction

Maesmynis is a small, scattered settlement comprising a church and few houses. It is sited on a minor road on the fringe of the Wye valley 2km to the south-west of Builth Wells.

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).



Maesmynis village, photo 95-C-0335 © CPAT 2011

History of development

Historically, Maesmynis is the centre of a rural parish, which with Llanynis, Langanten, Rhosferig and Llanddewi'r Cwm formed a cordon of similar parishes around the south and west of Builth Wells, each having a small, scattered population and none appearing to have had large focal settlements.

The present settlement comprises no more than a church and a handful of buildings, most of which appear to be no older than the late 19th century.

The name appears for the first time in 1280 as *Maisminuth* which authorities translate as '[the] open country of Mynys', though nothing is known as to who or what Mynys was. It might also be noted here that in other contexts the term *maes* is often taken to refer to open or common-field agriculture. A solitary record of around 1566 offers the more formal *ll. dewi maes mynys* or Llanddewi Maesmynis.

The heritage to 1750

St David's Church (20155), was wholly re-built in 1878 and refurbished in 1963 (using materials from nearby Llangynog Church). It contains no surviving structure of earlier periods, although there are a number of 18th-century memorials within the church, which come from an earlier building. This earlier church was reputedly medieval but no information exists as to its precise date.

The church stands within a rectangular, embanked and ostensibly modern, churchyard (2677). The tithe survey of 1842 depicts the north-eastern boundary of the enclosure as curvilinear, and while it is tempting to accept this as evidence of a former sub-circular enclosure there is no independent evidence to corroborate this mapped anomaly.

There are no buildings within 100m of the church, and although the topography is suitable for dwellings there is nothing to show that a significant settlement ever existed here. The Rectory (now Ty-Gwyn) and Neuadd Isaf which are the nearest buildings, are both 19th-century in date, though Garthfelin which appears to be the original Neuadd Isaf is reportedly 17th-century.

There is a distinctive area of ridge and furrow, reflecting a field system (2538) to the north of the church that may be medieval and associated with a settlement here.

In summary there is nothing currently known that suggests that Maesmynis had nucleated dwellings and that there was anything other than a church settlement here.

