

Tredustan

SO 139324
2604

Introduction

Tredustan is a dispersed linear settlement on the western edge of the steep sided Afon Llynfi valley some 10km to the east of Brecon. It lies opposite the slightly larger settlement of Trefecca with which it is historically associated, although there is no obvious physical link between the two.

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).



Tredustan motte, photo 3247-0044 © CPAT 2011

History of development

In many respects Tredustan is atypical of the settlements under study, in that it has no church and is not an obvious modern settlement focus.

The settlement comprises three houses, and associated farm buildings clustered around an isolated medieval motte, and may even represent the gradual shift of a single dwelling.

The earliest record of the place is as *Dorstonstone* in 1303, and there is a further 14th-century reference to *Turstenston*. *Trefdurston otherwise Durstans Town* surfaces in 1595. It has been suggested that the personal name reveals Turstan Bret who was in Brycheiniog in the late 12th century. The meaning is 'the village or *tref* of Durstan'.

The heritage to 1750

The medieval motte, which is a scheduled ancient monument (536; SAM B87), has been cut into on the west and north by Pentwyn and later farm buildings. The present mound is about 14m across and 5m high. There is no adjoining bailey, although there are aerial photographs of vague earthworks on the flat ground to the east, which may be the vestigial remains of one.

Pentwyn (21042) is a single-storied longhouse derivative. Parts of the house were re-built in stone in the 18th century, but the original structure is cruck-framed and is probably the settlement's oldest surviving building. Tredustan Court (2673) is a large late 17th-century, stone-built, gentry house sited some 150m north of the motte, and also has a 17th-century timber-framed barn. Tredustan Hall (31114) is a large, stone-built, storied house with a lateral chimney and an internal cross-passage. It dates from the late 17th century and may be a replacement for Pentwyn.

It seems probable that the lane between Pentwyn in the south and Tredustan Court developed during the medieval period. To either side, the field patterns hint at a layout of tenement plots that on the west side of the lane terminated in a continuous back boundary. Earlier maps point to a higher number of dwellings than today, and overall it seems likely that there was a small nucleated village here in the Middle Ages. There is also the possibility, to the south of the castle mound, of a 'small green' with the mill at the far end of it, and other tenement plots running off it.

Former open fields, presumably associated with this settlement, lie a few hundred metres out to the west.

