

## Llandrinio

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### *Introduction*

Llandrinio lies in the valley of the Severn and on the B4393, 12km north-east of Welshpool. The church which is the settlement core is less than 400m from the river, but though the valley floor is generally both broad and flat, there are minor fluctuations in height resulting from alluvial or gravel deposits. It appears that Llandrinio occupies one such raised 'platform', most obviously apparent on the approach from the west and north.

The main road passing through Llandrinio on an east/west axis was a turnpike road and Llandrinio Bridge, dated to 1775, indicates that the road is not a modern development. However, an earlier track undoubtedly existed and a charter of 1309 apparently refers to a ferry (1249) that operated in the vicinity of the later bridge.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llandrinio 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](http://www.archwilio.org.uk)).

### *History of development*

The church was established in the early medieval period, and almost certainly emerged as a mother church for the area. There is circumstantial evidence for a *clas* community here, including an unconfirmed tradition of it being a sanctuary or place of refuge, and the small churchyard was once considerably larger, in keeping with such an important establishment. It is interesting too that in 1526 it was recorded as a place of pilgrimage.

The name refers to the church of St Trinio and is first referenced as *Llantrinew* in the Norwich Taxation of 1254. Subsequent forms of the place-name vary so that in 1309 there is *Llandrunion in Dendour* and in 1385 *Llandrunyo*.

A charter of 1309 granted a weekly market and two annual fairs to the lord of Llandrinio, though what significance this carries regarding the settlement here is unclear. On present evidence it is impossible to determine whether there was ever a nucleated settlement at Llandrinio, and at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the density of buildings was very much the same as it is today.

### ***The heritage to 1750***

The church (6418) has a triple dedication to SS Peter and Paul as well as St Trinio, though it has been suggested that the former were only added at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It is now a single-chambered structure and retains some Romanesque architectural features, remnants of what was presumably the first stone building on the site. Much of it was replaced in the later medieval period and the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw some reconstruction work. There is a Norman font, some 17<sup>th</sup> century wooden furnishings, a west gallery with painted benefaction boards, and two fragments probably from the same early medieval cross-shaft of late 9<sup>th</sup>/early 10<sup>th</sup> century date (6038).



*Llandrinio Church, photo 84-c-0524, © CPAT, 2012*

The present churchyard (7570) with its polygonal shape and the church tucked up against the southern edge, does not represent the original layout: both the Tithe Map of 1841 and an earlier estate map of c.1799 indicate a larger and more curvilinear enclosure and the former gives the name of the field on the opposite side of the main road as 'The Old Churchyard'. This appears to be confirmed in a terrier of 1683 which refers to two acres "enclosed heretofore out of the church".

Domen Castell (1243), a small motte and bailey, much disturbed by the construction of the flood embankment beside the river, lies 400m south-west of the church.

Yr Henblas, the former rectory, lies to the south-west of the church and is of 17<sup>th</sup> century date (7637). A poem of 1430-70 refers to both the parson of Llandrinio and his stone-built parsonage with its moat, bridge and gateway. No trace of the moat remains, although Archdeacon Thomas claimed a surviving section between the house and church at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

New Hall (7638) to the north-east of the church and the road may have originated in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century and its ownership can be traced from 1630 onwards.

Low earthworks, particularly on the west side of the churchyard appear to indicate former enclosures (7571), some of which are depicted on the late 18<sup>th</sup> century map. A track and perhaps ridge and furrow have also been recognised (7572). The 1799 estate map referred to above, also shows open-field strips to the south-east of the churchyard and the north-east of New Hall, implying medieval cultivation.

Llandrinio Bridge, three-arched and with cutwaters, carries a datestone of 1775. Archdeacon Thomas claimed that in the medieval period there had been a ferry across the Severn at this point, as referred to in the charter of 1309.



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