

Llangadwaladr

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Introduction

Llangadwaladr is a remote church settlement established in a deep valley in the eastern Berwyns, 7km north-east of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant. Formerly in the historic county of Denbighshire it was transferred to modern Powys in 1996, along with several other parishes.

The church and churchyard are set on what is effectively the valley floor, although raised on a slight terrace above the small stream, Afon Ysgwennant, which flows round their northern side. Hen Graig to the north and Gyrn Moelfre to the south crowd the valley, restricting flat ground to a narrow strip at its base. Eastwards the valley opens out slightly towards the River Morda and the lowlands around Oswestry. The modern settlement comprises only the church and Tyn-llan which was formerly the vicarage.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llangadwaladr up to the year 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 only 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 will 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).

History of development

Nothing is known of the origins and history of Llangadwaladr. However, its dedication and curvilinear churchyard favour an early medieval genesis for the foundation of the church.

In Pope Nicholas' taxation of 1291 it was referred to as *Bettws Badwalardyr*. *Bettws* here means chapel. *Llangadwaladr* appears in 1547.

Formerly a chapelry in the parish of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, it was separated by act of parliament at a late date, being constituted a parish in 1877.

An estate map of c1760 shows Tyn-llan and perhaps one other structure in addition to the church. The Tithe map of the mid-19th century confirms the belief that in the post-medieval era at least, the settlement has taken very much the same form as it does today, and there is nothing to suggest a nucleated community here at any earlier date.

The heritage to 1750

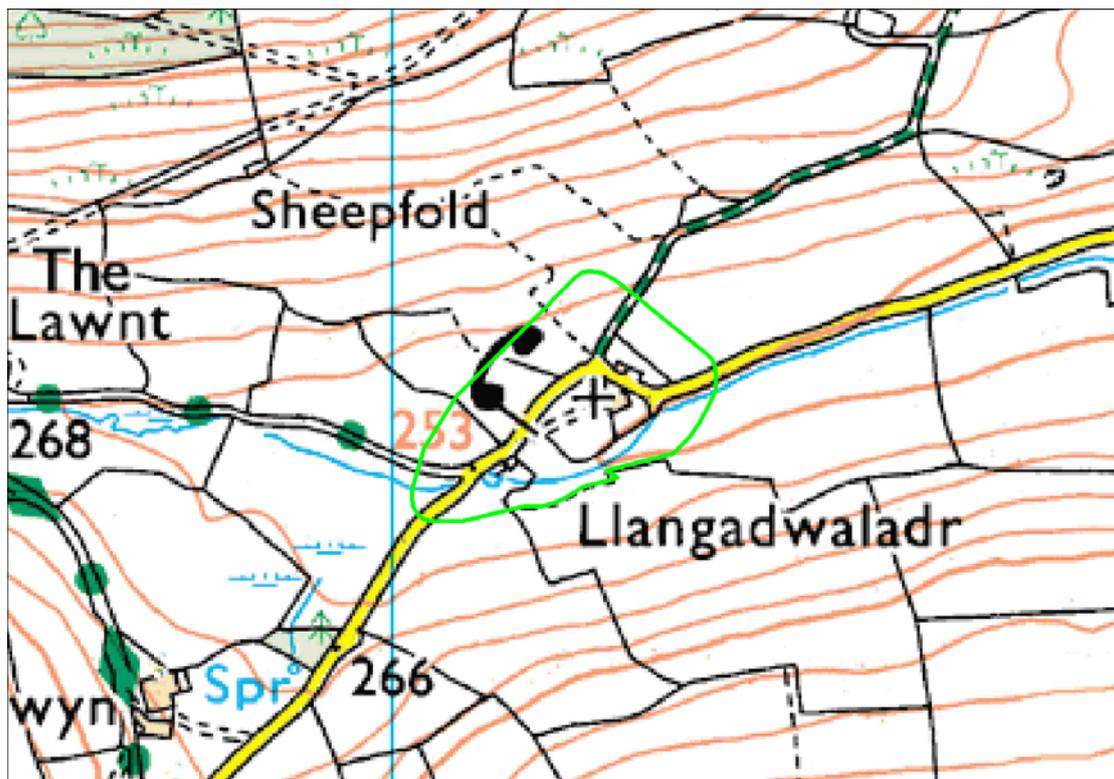
St Cadwaladr's church (101358) is a single-chambered structure, much restored in the 19th century, first in 1840 then in 1883. Some of the medieval wall masonry survives without any

diagnostic features, though there is a reset lancet window in the vestry. The arch-braced roof contains some medieval timberwork, but any pre-Reformation fittings have long since gone.

The churchyard (19732) is irregular in shape and raised by more than one metre on the northern side. It has a strong curve on its northern side where a bank can still be detected inside the encompassing wall, but its original course on the west and east is less obvious. Probably the garden of Tyn-llan has been carved from the early yard, for the northern boundary of the former continues the curving boundary of the churchyard. That there is a considerable drop from the churchyard into the garden suggests that this was not a recent division. On the south the churchyard now incorporates a pronounced scarp above the stream which is sinuous and may not necessarily represent the early boundary. Nevertheless, the church builders seem to have selected a particularly elevated part of the river terrace for their construction.

Relict field boundaries, some showing as banks others as lynchets, cover both sides of the valley and form part of the larger network of fields surrounding the village. Ridge and furrow (19733) is visible in one field with uncharacterised, but minor earthworks to the south-west.

No obvious house platforms or sites have been recognised in Llangadwaladr. However, south-west of the churchyard, on the south side of a stream, opposite modern sheepfolds and close to a largely silted pond is a distinctive artificial platform (19734). Its significance is unclear.



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