

Llanddulas

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Introduction

Llanddulas lies close to the North Wales coastline, on the south side of the A55 expressway, two and a half miles west of Abergele, and three and a half miles east of the coastal resort of Colwyn Bay. The core of the old village lies towards the base of the valley of the River Dulas (which has its mouth here), on the west bank of the river. The deep river valley cuts through limestone hills and has extremely steep sides. The village has grown immensely in the 20th century, as extra housing was needed for the increasing workforce at the huge limestone quarries nearby. Modern housing now extends up to the top of the western side of the valley.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanddulas 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 require modification 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. The HER can be accessed on-line through the Archwilio website (www.archwilio.org.uk).

History of development

The name translates as the 'church on the River Dulas'; it has been claimed that the proper ecclesiastical name is *Llangynbryd*, from Cynbryd the dedicatee of the church, but though this term appears occasionally, it has been said that it was a purely literary term and not one used to describe the settlement or its church. The first written record, which almost inevitably relates to the church is in the 1254 Norwich Taxation and exhibits a form not so very different from today, *Llanndulas*. Later in the century there are some curious variations as with *Thlantheles* in 1287 and *Landuglas* in 1291. It is conceivable that the original name was *Nant Dulas* derived from the nearby stream, particularly as *Nandulas* was referred to in 1284.

Any early history of Llanddulas is now lost to us, but at the end of the 17th century there were five or six cottages in the settlement according to Edward Lhuyd's informant, while in 1781 Thomas Pennant simply described Llanddulas as a small village and church.

At the time of the Tithe schedule in 1839, Llanddulas village consisted of little more than a church, a vicarage, Ty Ucha House, the mill and the houses on Mill Street. Beyond this small nucleus, houses were very few and scattered. The main road through the village today was labelled the "Great road from Chester to Holyhead" on the Tithe map, but Minffordd Road is apparently older, being labelled "Old line of road". To the north-west of the church were a number of long narrow fields, or quillies, now lying beneath Station road and modern housing. The church lay in a circular churchyard, a little to the south of its present position. A road to the vicarage ran around its west and north sides.



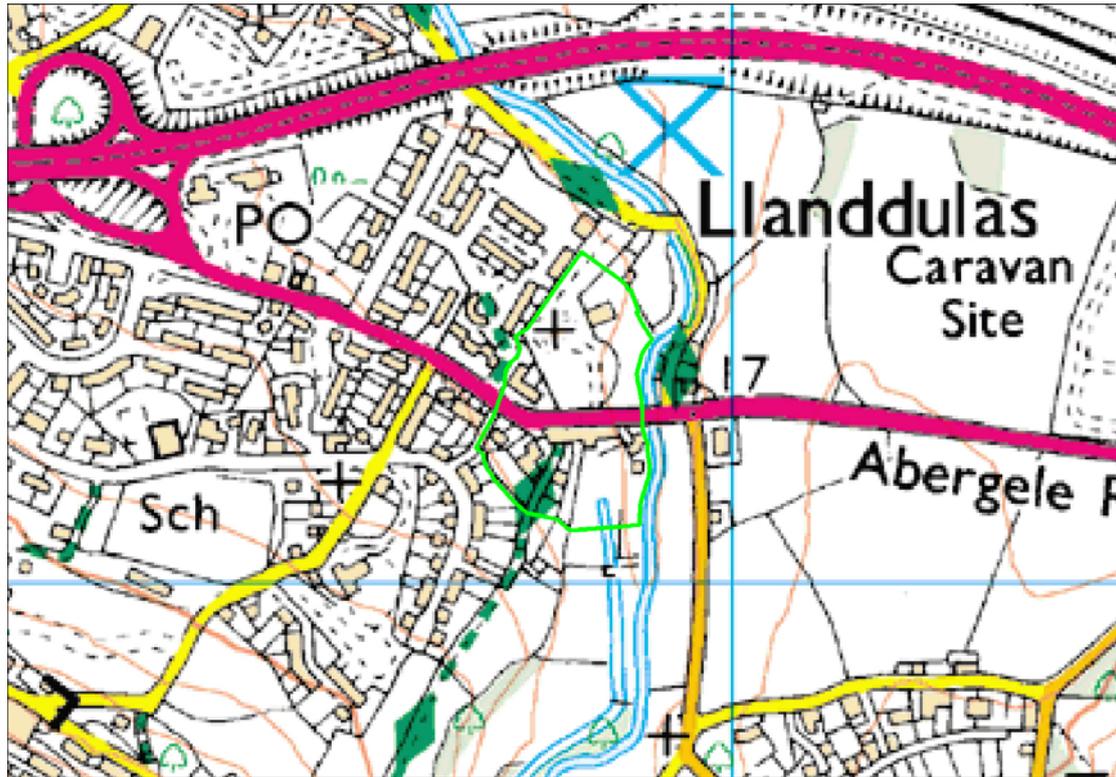
Llanddulas, photo 95-C-0229 © CPAT 2014

The heritage to 1750

The present church, dedicated to St Cynbryd (105465) and built on flat low-lying land at the side of the river, is the third church at Llanddulas within the last two centuries. The date of the first of these churches is unknown, but it was rebuilt in 1732 (105558), when it apparently stood around 18m to the south of the present church. It was taken down in 1867 and the present church was built in 1868-9. It consists of a nave, chancel and south aisle with a south porch and north-east vestry. It has an octagonal-spired bellcote. A small square font bowl, though superseded in use by a remarkable one of 1926, a piscina, and a datestone of 1732 are the only pre-Victorian survivals.

The churchyard (105524) is highly irregular in shape, but its circular origins can be seen on the south side, as well as being clearly depicted on the mid-19th-century Tithe map. The later Victorian church occupies a rectangular extension further north.

Ty Ucha on the opposite side of Mill Street to the church and lying back from it is a storeyed lobby-entry house, probably of 17th-century origin to which a three storey, three-bay range was added in the following century; it now appears to have been converted into several cottages. The Rectory adjacent to the church was built in about 1814. Llanddulas mill which has given its name to the street and is set diagonally across the street from the churchyard is now ruinous. Its date of origin remains unknown.



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