

Mostyn

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Introduction

Mostyn cannot be defined as a single settlement. Modern Mostyn sprawls along the coast from Llannerch-y-mor in the south-east to a valley that carries the subsidiary village of Rhewl-Mostyn inland. This is the modern core of Mostyn lying on the A458 coast road, just over 11km north-west of Flint and 10km south-east of Prestatyn. Further to the north-west is the smaller settlement of Mostyn Quay and on the hill rising above it, Mostyn Hall. Finally about one kilometre to the south of the Hall, on a plateau sloping very gently to the north is Tre-Mostyn. In the terms beloved of landscape historians, Mostyn is a polyfocal settlement.

This brief report examines only the emergence and development of Mostyn 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, and is admittedly more speculative than any other in Flintshire. 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

In 1086 Mostyn was referred to as *Mostone* combining the elements 'mos' [marsh, moss] and 'tun' [farm, settlement]. In itself this does not necessarily suggest anything other than a single farmstead, close to the coast. In 1272 it was *Muston*, and by 1567 it had acquired its present form.

However, the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1292 refers to 'Nova Villa de Moston' with 20 taxpayers, and in 1308 there is a reference to 16 English tenants holding 280 acres of land cut from the demesne which could refer to the 'Nova Villa'. This was probably one of several English 'colonies' established by Edward I on the coastal strip beyond the immediate protection of Flint and Rhuddlan.

Sea-coal and stone quarrying at Mostyn yielded revenue to the Crown in 1294. A coal mine here is still recorded in 1423, but it has been suggested that the industry may have declined in the early 14th century with the completion of the borough developments in Flintshire. Lewis claimed that eastern Ireland was supplied by Mostyn colliery throughout the 17th century and the industry apparently continued to flourish in the later 18th century, Mostyn offering one of the best natural ports on the North Wales coast.

Lead mined in the area from the early 18th and into the 19th centuries was shipped from Mostyn Quay.

Tremostyn was formerly a township in Whitford parish, one of four which wholly or partly were amalgamated in 1844 to become the new ecclesiastical parish of Mostyn.

The heritage to 1750

Mostyn Hall (102474) was extensively remodelled for the first Lord Mostyn around 1846, but the date of the first house on the site has not been ascertained. The present house certainly incorporates some 16th century work, and one roof truss survives from the previous century. Amongst the outbuildings are a late 16th/early 17th century dovecote and a gatehouse range of c.1570. Such are the interest of the gardens and parkland around the hall, they have received a Grade II* listing in the non-statutory Cadw/ICOMOS register of historic parks and gardens.

Christ Church, Mostyn, was consecrated on a greenfield site in 1845.

The location of the 'Nova Villa' is not known and the lack of information has led some authorities to imply that it may never have developed beyond the planning phase, though this would not accord with the entry in the Lay Subsidy roll noted above.

The most likely location is, in fact, at Tre Mostyn, a name which can be traced back to at least 1687. The lane southwards from the road junction at Tre-Mostyn to Plas-uchaf has strip holdings running off it at right-angles, some of which are shown on maps going back to the middle of the 18th century. In 1743 there were at least five dwellings along this stretch of the lane. Northwards between a stream and a pronounced holloway, now a footpath but formerly a lane, are a series of parallel strips defined by scarpes or low banks but now amalgamated in one field (19926; OS plot nos 0800 & 1007). These are termed 'gardens' on the Tithe apportionment of 1849, though they are not directly associated with houses, and do not show on the estate map of 1743 where they were simply termed *Y Maes*. It is tempting but probably unrealistic to assume these too could be relict features of a medieval settlement, and a group of early allotments may be a more likely explanation. However, *maes* names (as shown on the 1743 map) which are generally accepted as a indicator of medieval open-field agriculture, cluster immediately to the east of Tre-Mostyn, with a few more to the north, implying that there was a medieval settlement in the vicinity.



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