

Nannerch

SJ 1662 6966
19943

Introduction

Nannerch is a small village now made larger by the introduction of modern housing at its southern end. It squats on the valley floor beside one of the old roads along the Wheeler valley before the present A541 was inserted to carry traffic on a gentle curve along the edge of the river. Mold is some 7km to the south-east and Holywell 6km to the north.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Nannerch 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).



Nannerch, photo 08-c-0234, © CPAT, 2012

History of development

The Norwich Taxation of 1254 names the church as *Nannerch*, providing us with the first mention of the place-name. It combines the elements 'nant' [stream] and 'erch' [speckled, or dappled]. The name was given not only to the church and/or settlement, but also a stream flowing down the valley. A much earlier origin can be presumed, however – the churchyard shape and location imply a genesis in the early medieval era.

The subsequent history and development of the settlement is unclear, but as late as the 18th century estate maps featured only a few houses south of the church.

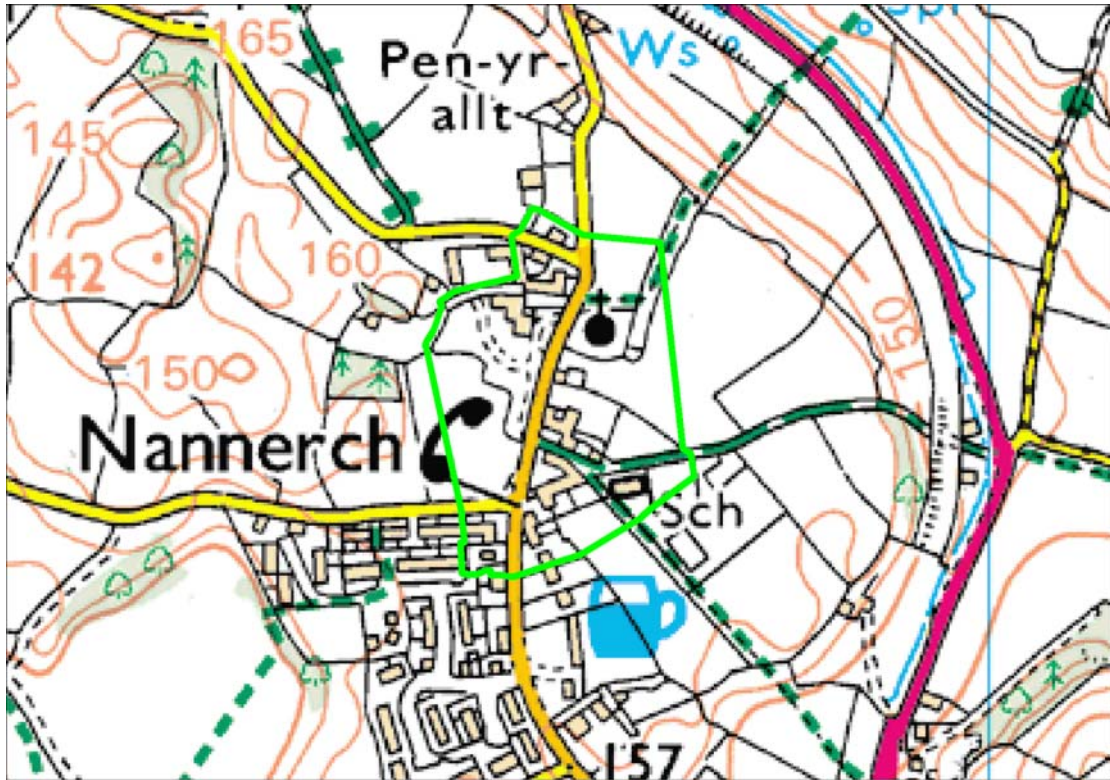
The heritage to 1750

St Mary's church (19911) was rebuilt in 1852-3 as a nave with slightly narrower chancel and a tower on the south side, replacing a similarly small, single-chambered building with a bell-turret, though it did have a Perpendicular east window. Of pre-Reformation date, only some stained glass of around 1500 remains, but there is a Grinling Gibbons memorial (c.1694) which compensates, at least in part. Lhuyd refers to the first church here being made of wattles.

The churchyard (19912) is now rectangular except on the south where the curving perimeter survives from the earlier and smaller oval enclosure that appears on the tithe map, and there are earthwork traces of the enclosure bank, too, within the northern part of the present graveyard.

There are supposedly two late 18th century structures in the village, the former Rectory (40981) and the Cross Foxes Inn (98843), although the date of the latter has not been substantiated. With the church being a Victorian edifice, this means that there are no buildings of any significant age in Nannerch.

The pattern of settlement has altered in the last two centuries, in part as a result of the imposition of Plas-yn-llan (now Nanerch Hall) on the landscape. The main street was formerly a much broader thoroughfare, a wedge-shaped open space starting at the cross-roads by the inn and extending as far as the churchyard. The western edge of this still appears as a sizeable scarp, partly a natural landform, in the grounds and field (OS plot 5560) to the south of Plas-yn-llan. At the cross-roads a triangular extension of the open space projected eastwards on the north side of the Cross Foxes Inn. This was still in evidence at the time of the tithe survey but has now been built over, yet the outline can still be recognised in modern property boundaries. North of the church, fossilised strip fields fanned out from the churchyard boundary to the edge of the river terrace. Only one of these together with the lane to Pen-yr-allt now remains.



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