

Beguildy

SO 19497970
16114

Introduction

An imposing spur confined by the valley of the River Teme on the north and a small unnamed tributary on the south is crowned by Beguildy church, the rest of the small village lying beside and below it. Westwards the land rises steadily to Cefn Pawl more than 400m above sea level. Knighton is 12km to the south-east.

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

History of development

Beguildy, otherwise Bugeildy, appears as *Bugelte* in 1259 and *Bugeyylde* in 1291. Combining the elements *bugail* and *ty*, the name signifies a 'shepherd's house'.

Nothing can be adduced satisfactorily about the origin or early development of the settlement at Beguildy, and even the date of the earliest church here is unclear.

By the mid-19th century, Beguildy comprised the church, the adjacent farm and a few cottages, with an inn, the Radnorshire Arms, on lower ground beside the road which ran along the valley

The heritage to 1750

St Michael and All Angel's church (16003) has a single chamber, its walls of late 15th-century date, as is the roof. It was restored in 1885 and 1896 when the west tower was replaced by a bellcote. There is a Perpendicular screen and the font may also be 15th-century.

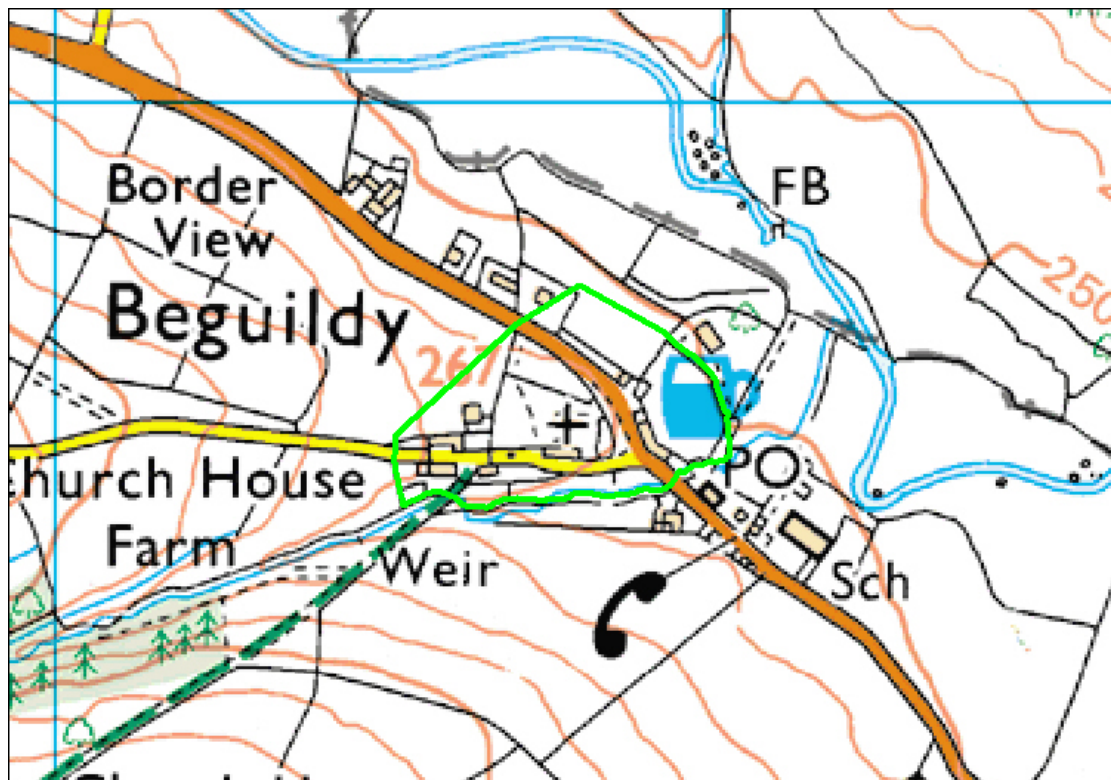
The churchyard (16111) is rectilinear in shape, its form constrained by the topography. Within it on the north-west and west there are traces of a broad hollow, and on the south-west a faint bank. These are probably the remaining vestiges of an earlier curvilinear enclosure.

Pantycaregl, erected in the 1580s but rebuilt after a fire in 1931 occupies what may have been a moated site (1102). It is over 500m south-east of the village and therefore cannot really be

considered a part of the settlement. Church House Farm immediately to the west of the churchyard is listed as a late medieval gentry hall-house that has been substantially rebuilt. Church Cottages nearby could be at least two centuries old and perhaps the same is true of the row of three cottages built against the south side of the churchyard.

No unequivocal settlement earthworks can be detected in Beguildy, but in the field between the Radnorshire Arms and The Vicarage (OS plot 5374) are minor earthworks of uncertain type (16112), and there are others of a similarly non-descript type in the field to the east, behind the post office.

How the settlement developed remains opaque, but some suggestions can be made. At the time of the Tithe survey in the mid-19th century, only three dwellings, one of them the inn, lay beside the road running down the Teme valley, implying that there was no longstanding settlement focus below the church. The lane leading to Church House Farm appears to cut through the early churchyard: note the curving boundary behind Church Cottage which would have linked to the existing curved boundary of the churchyard east of the church. This lane has Church House Farm as its destination, for beyond it simply runs up onto the commons. It is likely then that it came into existence in the late medieval period and that the cottages to either side of it were built at a later date, possibly centuries later. There is then no compelling evidence for a nucleated settlement at Beguildy in the medieval era, nor perhaps even in the 17th century. It is more realistic to consider it a church settlement.



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