

Llanbedr

SO 143463
16158

Introduction

Llanbedr, sometimes known as Llanbedr Painscastle, lies to the north of the hills known as the Begwms in the southern part of Radnor District, nearly 12km to the south-east of Builth Wells. The church accompanied only by Llanbedr Hall Farm occupies a broad east-facing spur sandwiched by converging courses of a stream known in its lower reaches as Bachawy, which is a tributary of the Wye.

This brief report examines Llanbedr's development 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

As is the case with so many of the small settlements in Radnorshire, nothing is known about the history of Llanbedr.

Its earliest appearance in written records is in 1283 as *Lampetir Pain Castle* and as late as 1620 it was referred to as *Lambet Castelpaine*. The meaning is evident: the church of St Peter by Painscastle.

White House (now Llanbedr Hall) was the only building in the neighbourhood of the church in the mid-19th century, and as such Llanbedr appears to be one of the isolated church and farm settlements typical of mid-Wales. Painscastle lying nearly 3km to the east and in the same ecclesiastical parish became a focus of settlement and it is this as much as anything that has left Llanbedr in isolation.

The heritage to 1750

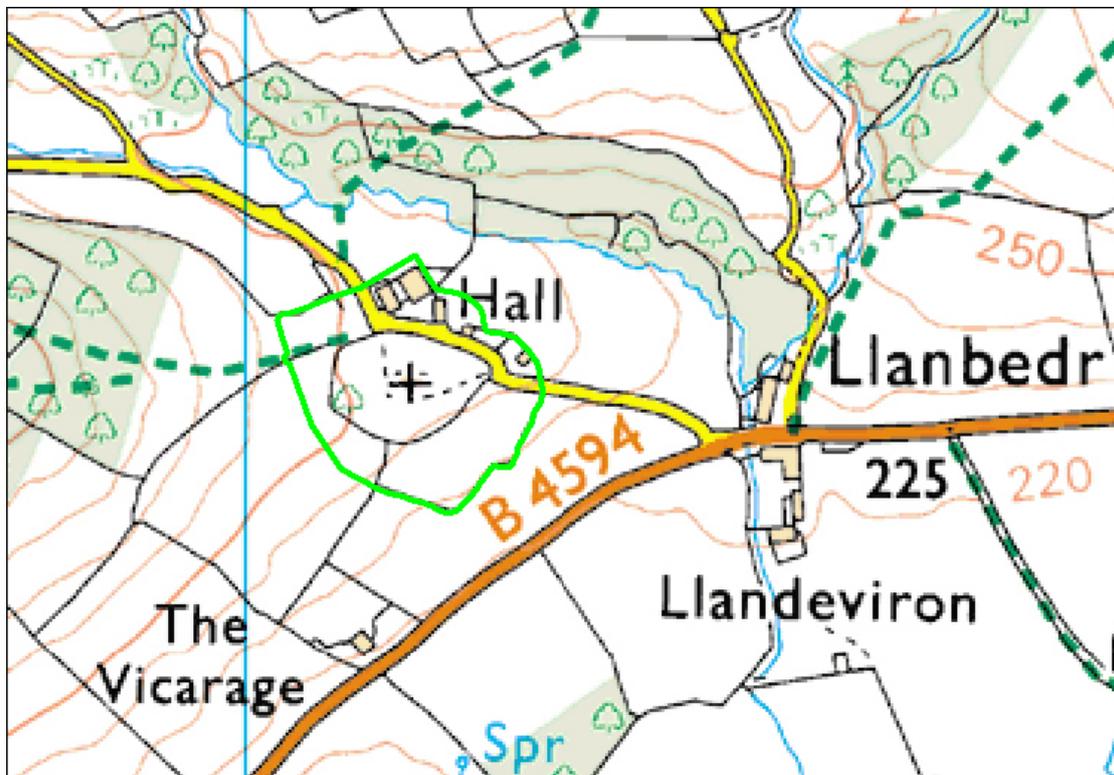
St Peter's at Llanbedr (16023) has a 14th-century nave with a west bellcote, a 15th-century chancel and a south porch which could be Victorian. It houses a font of the 12th century and a fine range of late 17th/18th-century funerary monuments. It was more or less a ruin when Kilvert came here in 1872.

The churchyard (16219) is large and irregularly curvilinear. An earlier and smaller 'llan' is suggested by a low scarp bank to the south of the church which swings around to the east and has an ancient yew growing on it. Though there is an alternative explanation of it being a deliberate platform for the building, it seems too large to have functioned in this way. In the churchyard is the circular base of a churchyard cross (379). It is now used to support a street lamp, so placed as to be visible from both churchyard entrances.

There are no unequivocal traces of earlier settlement. Some minor earthworks on the north-west side of the churchyard, in the area where a small enclosure is shown on the second edition of the OS 25" map, may be related to earlier agricultural activity but this area has now been disturbed by the construction of a new cowhouse.

Llanbedr Hall, demolished in the 20th century, is thought to have been built in the second half of the 18th century, though whether on the site of an earlier building is not known.

About 250m to the north there is evidence of medieval strip fields fossilised in the present field pattern, but it is unclear which farm or farms these related to.



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