

CADW: WELSH HISTORIC MONUMENTS

EARLY MEDIEVAL ECCLESIASTICAL SITES PROJECT

STAGE 2: ASSESSMENT AND FIELDWORK CARMARTHENSHIRE

PART 1: OVERVIEW



By: Neil Ludlow
SMR input: Jenny Hall

Project Record No: 44753
Report No: 2004/2



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PROJECT RECORD NO. 44753

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By

Neil Ludlow

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PART 1: OVERVIEW

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EARLY MEDIEVAL ECCLESIASTICAL SITES IN CARMARTHENSHIRE

STAGE 2: ASSESSMENT AND FIELDWORK

1.0 SUMMARY

The early medieval ecclesiastical sites project (EME) was initiated by Cadw, through the four Welsh Trusts, in 2001. The aim of the project was to identify ecclesiastical sites in Wales with pre Anglo-Norman Conquest origins, in order to formulate management strategies and scheduling priorities. Cambria Archaeology (Dyfed Archaeological Trust) was appointed to cover the counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. A cut-off date of 1100 AD was selected.

Early medieval ecclesiastical sites fall into two main categories -

- *Church/chapel sites, ie. 'developed' cemetery sites*
- *Open cemetery sites, ie. 'undeveloped', never having received a building. These include a number of bronze age round barrows and iron age enclosure re-use sites. These open sites are usually more difficult to identify and assess.*

Stage 1 of the project consisted of a desk-based assessment of the three counties, using the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) as the baseline data. From this assessment emerged a graded list of 108 Carmarthenshire sites with probable or possible early medieval pre-Conquest origins, in addition to a list of 45 Early Christian Monuments (ECMs).

Stage 2 comprised analysis of aerial photographs of all 108 sites, and selective field visits in order to assess their nature, extent, condition, archaeological potential, threats and value. As a result, the list of 108 sites was amended and refined to a list of 115 sites, comprising -

	<u>2004</u>	<u>(2002)</u>
▪ Grade A sites (high probability)	11	(13)
▪ Grade B sites (medium probability)	25	(27)
▪ Grade C sites (low probability)	23	(24)
▪ Grade D sites (possible sites)	56	(44)

In addition -

- *Early Christian Monuments (ECMs) 45*

The main outcome from Stage 2 has been the enhancement and refinement of both the SMR and the schedule of Ancient Monuments, with the formulation of management strategies, scheduling priorities and recommendations for future archaeological investigation.

One of the outcomes of this Stage 1 assessment is a demonstration that many of the traditional indicators and suppositions do seem to hold true ie. circular churchyards, in situ Early Christian Monuments (ECMs) and 'Celtic' dedications are often accompanied by other evidence for early medieval origins. Re-use of iron age sites, and the former presence of large, curvilinear outer ecclesiastical enclosures were suggested at a number of new churchyard sites. In addition, the former location of ECMs, topographic evidence and post Anglo-Norman Conquest documentary sources were used to suggest earlier origins for several new sites. However, it was also demonstrated that the 'native' ecclesiastical tradition was remarkably persistent, particularly in the north and east of the county, which was not brought under direct Anglo-Norman rule until the late 13th century.



2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project background

The early medieval period is of crucial importance to our understanding of the development of Wales and its culture. It saw the emergence of many liturgical and devotional practices that persisted until the reformation and beyond and early Christian sites, more than almost any other sites in Wales, are 'cherished' and regarded as inherently important. The ecclesiastical culture was behind the emergence of a vigorous artistic culture as expressed through its sculpted stone ECMs. The native ecclesiastical tradition has also profoundly influenced landscape and settlement, both physically - through its carved stones, wells and chapel sites - and socially, through the establishment of the present pattern of dispersed settlement, administrative boundaries and churches.

Early medieval ecclesiastical sites fall into two main categories -

- Church/chapel sites, ie. 'developed' cemetery sites
- Open cemetery sites, ie. 'undeveloped', never having received a building. These include a number of bronze age round barrows and iron age enclosure re-use sites. These open sites are usually more difficult to identify and assess.

Early ecclesiastical sites in Wales are, nevertheless, still little-understood, as highlighted in the Musson/Martin survey (Musson 1998). There is - with one exception, a possible Anglo-Saxon church site at Presteigne, Powys - a complete lack of any pre-Conquest structural evidence. Only one excavated chapel site has been properly dated, at Burry Holms, Glamorgan (RCAHMW 1976, 14-15). This lack of evidence also applies to pre-Conquest secular sites, of which only seventeen have certainly been identified in Wales, one of them in Carmarthenshire (Edwards and Lane 1988; Gerrard 1990, 249). The early medieval period was, accordingly, afforded Priority 1 and Category A status by Cadw who, in their Future Threat Related Assessments Project Paper, acknowledged the findings within the Musson/Martin survey and recommended a broad theme of early historic period sites including cemeteries and settlements.

The early medieval ecclesiastical sites project (EME) was initiated by Cadw, through the four Welsh Trusts, in 2001. It follows the similar pan-Wales Cadw Historic Churches Project (1995-8) in which standing, pre-1800 churches under the ownership of the Church in Wales were assessed. At Cadw's request, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (GAT) undertook an EME pilot assessment, concentrating on cemeteries, in 1998/9 - 'Early Christian Burial Grounds at Risk' (Longley and Richards 1999). From this emerged the proposal for the current project which is more wide-ranging in scope, taking in all types of early medieval ecclesiastical sites.

The aim of the project is to identify ecclesiastical sites in Wales with pre Anglo-Norman Conquest origins, in order to formulate management strategies and scheduling priorities. Cambria Archaeology (Dyfed Archaeological Trust) was grant-aided to cover the counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. A cut-off date of 1100 was selected, which represents a compromise date midway between the death in 1093 of Rhys ap Tewdwr, the last Welsh king of Dyfed, and the appointment of the first Anglo-Norman Bishop of St Davids, Bishop Bernard, in 1115. Only one Anglo-Norman foundation can be dated to before 1100, at Monkton in Pembroke (and then possibly on an earlier site).

The project comprises two stages, spread over three years -

- | | | |
|-----------|---|--------|
| ▪ Stage 1 | Overall desk-based assessment of the three counties | 2001-2 |
| ▪ Stage 2 | Selective fieldwork and aerial photograph (AP) analysis | 2002-4 |

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2.2 List of sites

In Carmarthenshire, Stages 1 and 2 have resulted in a list of 115 sites with possible pre-Conquest origins (see Figs. 1 and 2). The sites were graded according to their potential for pre-Conquest origins, using criteria defined by the EME working group (comprising the Project Officers from the four Trusts in consultation with Dr Nancy Edwards and Rick Turner of Cadw). The list, in alphabetical order by former parish, comprises -

▪ Grade A sites (high probability) - total 11

Carmarthen St Peter, Llandeuldyddog bishop-house	PRN: 71
Cenarth (St Llawddog; St Teilo), churchyard	PRN: 49247
Cynwyl Gaeo (St Cynwyl), churchyard	PRN: 49251
Llanddowror (St Cringat; St Teilo), churchyard	PRN: 49266
Llandeilo Fawr (St Teilo), churchyard/monastery	PRN: 912
Llandybie, Waun Henllan	PRN: 7673
Llanegwad, 'Ager Hiemin'	PRN: 49234
Llanegwad, 'Ager Redoc'	PRN: 49277
Llanegwad, Llandeilo Rwnnws (St Teilo)	PRN: 7557
Llangeler (St Celer), churchyard	PRN: 49292
Newchurch, Llanfihangel Croesfeini ?church/?chapel	PRN: 2264

• Grade B sites (medium probability) – total 25

Carmarthen St Peter, churchyard	PRN: 49244
Castell Dwyran (St Teilo?), churchyard	PRN: 49246
Cynwyl Gaeo, Maes Llanwrthwl ?chapel/?cemetery	PRN: 1879
Cynwyl Gaeo, Pumsaint Chapel	PRN: 49254
Eglwys Gymun (St Margaret), churchyard/cist cemetery	PRN: 7378
Henllan Amgoed (St David), churchyard	PRN: 11789
Kidwelly (St Mary), churchyard	PRN: 49258
Kidwelly, Llangadog Chapel	PRN: 49259
Laugharne (St Martin), churchyard	PRN: 14296
Laugharne, 'The Croft' cist cemetery	PRN: 11610
Llanarthne (St David), churchyard	PRN: 49262
Llandyfaelog (St Tyfaelog), churchyard	PRN: 49270
Llandyfeisant (St Tyfei), churchyard	PRN: 49272
Llanfair-ar-y-bryn (St Mary), churchyard	PRN: 49281
Llangan (St Canna), churchyard	PRN: 49290
Llangynog (St Cynog), churchyard	PRN: 2175
Llangynog (St Cynog), cropmark enclosure	PRN: 11821
Llanpumsaint (SS Ceitho etc), churchyard	PRN: 49300
Llanpumsaint (SS Ceitho etc), churchyard chapel	PRN: 7408
Llanwinio (St Gwinio), churchyard	PRN: 7399
Meidrum (St David), churchyard	PRN: 3973
Merthyr (St Enfael; St Martin), churchyard	PRN: 49310
Penbre (St Illtud), churchyard	PRN: 49313
St Ishmaels (St Ishmael), churchyard	PRN: 49318
St Ishmaels, Llansaint Chapel, churchyard	PRN: 49319

• Grade C sites (low probability) – total 23

Abergwili, Capel Bach churchyard	PRN: 49239
Abernant (St Lucia), churchyard	PRN: 49241
Brechfa (St Teilo), churchyard	PRN: 49243
Citymaenllwyd (SS Philip & James), churchyard	PRN: 49248
Cyffig (St Cyffig; St Teilo), churchyard	PRN: 49249
Llanboidy (St Brynach), churchyard	PRN: 49263
Llanboidy, Llan/Parc-y-fynwent enclosure/?cemetery	PRN: 5078
Llandawke (St Odoceus), churchyard	PRN: 49264
Llandingat (St Dingat), churchyard	PRN: 49268
Llanedi (St Edi), churchyard	PRN: 49273
Llanegwad (St Egwad), churchyard	PRN: 49274
Llanegwad, Pontargothi Chapel	PRN: 49276
Llanegwad, Pontargothi Salutation Inn ?cist cemetery	PRN: 8976
Llanelli (St Ellyw), churchyard	PRN: 49280
Llanfihangel-ar-arth (St Michael), churchyard	PRN: 12860
Llangadog (St Cadog; St David?), churchyard	PRN: 49286
Llangathen (St Cathen), churchyard	PRN: 49291



Llangeler, St Celer's (churchyard?) chapel	PRN: 2289
Llansadurnen (St Saturninus), churchyard	PRN: 49304
Marros (St Lawrence), churchyard	PRN: 49309
Pencarreg (St Padarn), churchyard	PRN: 49315
Pendine (St Margaret; St Tailo), churchyard	PRN: 49316
Talley/Cynwyl Gaeo, Capel Teilo	PRN: 49253

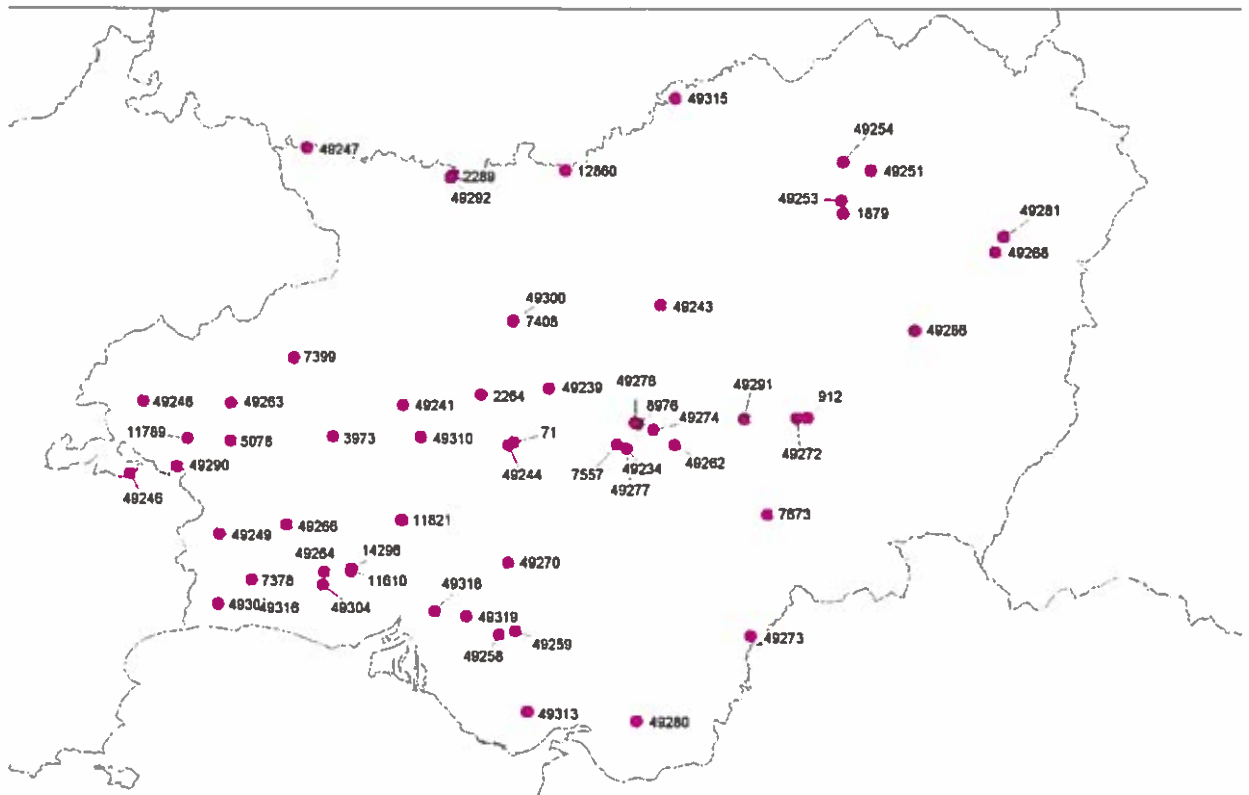
• **Grade D sites (possible sites) – total 56**

Abergwili (St David), churchyard	PRN: 49232
Abergwili, Aberannel Chapel	PRN: 49240
Abergwili, Llanfihangel-uwch-gwili churchyard	PRN: 49238
Betws (St David), churchyard	PRN: 49242
Cynwyl Elfed (St Cynwyl), churchyard	PRN: 49250
Cynwyl Gaeo, Pumsaint enclosure	PRN: 49255
Eglwys Gymun, Parc-yr-eglwys enclosure	PRN: 9833
Eglwys Fair a Churig (SS Mary and Curig), churchyard	PRN: 49257
Egremont (St Michael), churchyard	PRN: 49256
Henllanfallteg, Parciau Stone findspot	PRN: 49237
Kidwelly, Capel Teilo	PRN: 49260
Llanarthne, Hen Llan	PRN: 12711
Llandeusant (SS Simon & Jude), churchyard	PRN: 49265
Llanddowror, Parc y Cerrig Sanctaidd stones	PRN: 3919
Llandeilo Abercywyn (St Teilo), churchyard	PRN: 49267
Llandeilo Fawr, Cefn Cethin ECM findspot	PRN: 49233
Llandybie (St Tybie), churchyard	PRN: 49269
Llandyfaelog, Capel Llangynheiddon	PRN: 49271
Llanegwad, Cefn Hirmin/?Llanyhermin	PRN: 698
Llanegwad, Cefn Hirmin enclosure	PRN: 49278
Llanegwad, Gwyddfa Gatw ? cemetery/?chapel/	PRN: 4740
Llanelli, Machynys	PRN: 11756
Llanfair-ar-y-bryn, Ystrad-ffin churchyard	PRN: 49282
Llanfihangel Aberbythych (St Michael), churchyard	PRN: 49283
Llanfihangel Abercywyn (St Michael), churchyard	PRN: 49284
Llanfihangel Cilfargen (St Michael), churchyard	PRN: 49285
Llanfynydd, Cae yr hen fynwent ?cemetery/?chapel	PRN: 4745
Llangadog, Cae Capel/Mynwent-y-capel	PRN: 4051
Llangadog, Capel Gwynfe churchyard	PRN: 49287
Llangain (St Cain), churchyard	PRN: 49289
Llangan (St Canna), cropmark enclosure	PRN: 11786
Llangathen (St Cathen), cropmark enclosure	PRN: 14327
Llangeler, Capel Mair, churchyard	PRN: 49294
Llangeler, Llain Ddineu ?cemetery	PRN: 5260
Llanglydwen (St Clydwen), churchyard	PRN: 49296
Llangyndeyrn (St Cyndeyrn), churchyard	PRN: 49297
Llangyndeyrn, Closteg ECM findspot	PRN: 49298
Llangynwr (St Ceinwr), churchyard	PRN: 49299
Llangynin, Parc yr hen eglwys ?cemetery/?church	PRN: 5050
Llanllwni, Maes Nonni ?chapel/?cemetery	PRN: 1796
Llansadwrn (St Sadwrn), churchyard	PRN: 49301
Llansawel (St Sawyl), churchyard	PRN: 49305
Llanwinio (St Gwinio), ?enclosure	PRN: 49306
Llanwinio, Cilsant enclosure	PRN: 3969
Llanybydder, Abergorlech Chapel, churchyard	PRN: 49288
Llanybydder, Capel Iago	PRN: 762
Llanwrda (St Cwrda), churchyard	PRN: 49307
Llanycrwys (St David), churchyard	PRN: 49293
Myddfai (St Michael), churchyard	PRN: 49311
Penbre, Cilymaenllwyd ECM findspot	PRN: 49314
Pencarreg, Cae'r hen fynwent ?cemetery	PRN: 4774
St Clears (St Mary Magdalene), churchyard	PRN: 49317
Talley, Talley Abbey	PRN: 12300
Talley, Capel Llanceinwyrwyf	PRN: 837
Trelech a'r Betws (St Teilo), churchyard	PRN: 49320
Trelech a'r Betws, Parc-yr-eglwys	PRN: 5255

▪ **Early Christian Monuments**

An alphabetical list of ECMs, by former parish and with PRNs, comprises Appendix 5 of this report (see Fig. 3).

Fig. 1 – Location map of Grade A – C sites, Carmarthenshire



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Fig. 2 – Location map of Grade D sites, Carmarthenshire

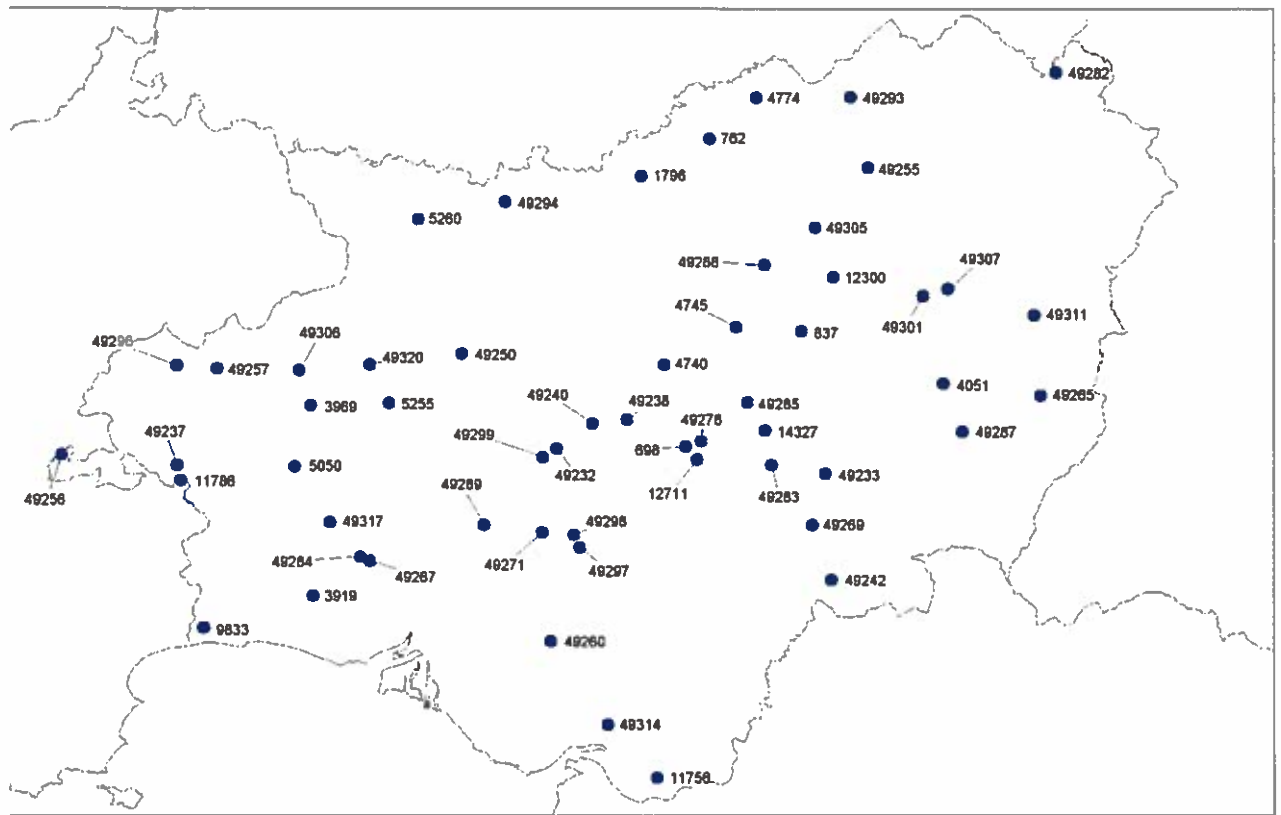
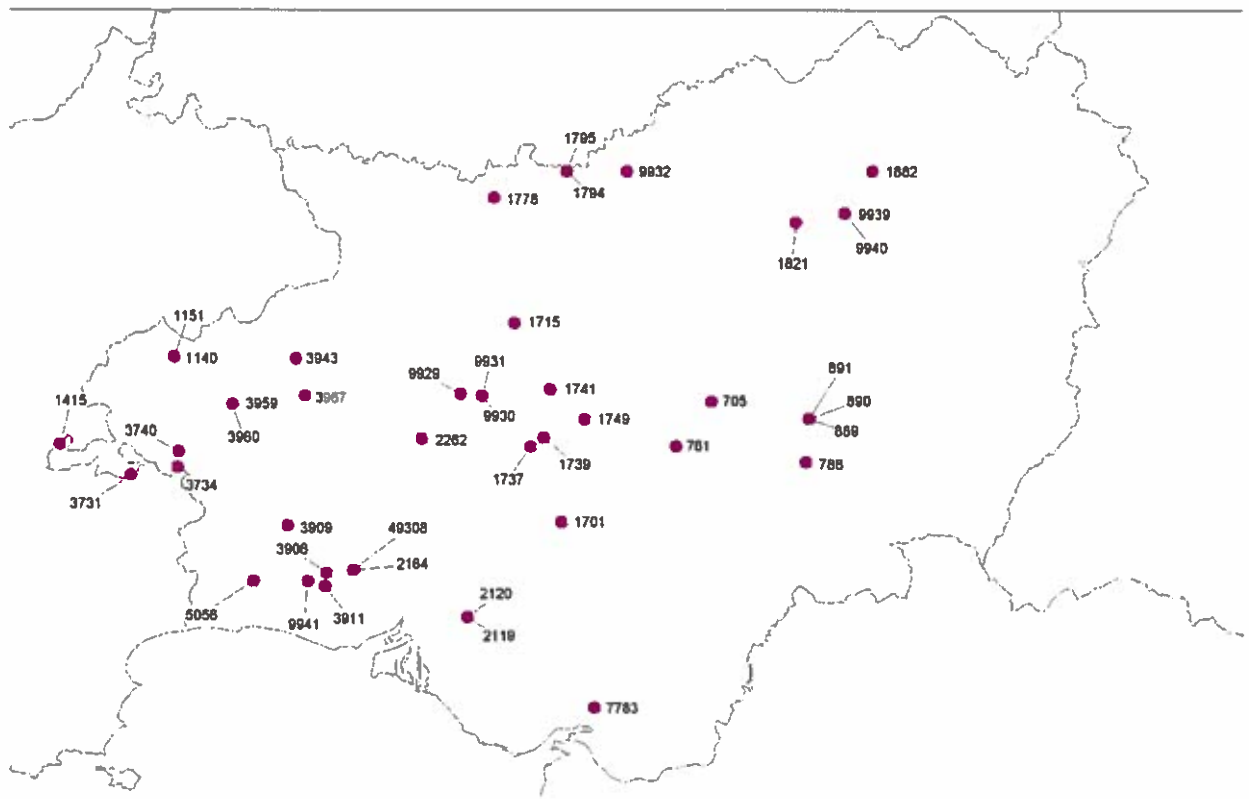




Fig. 3 – Location map of Early Christian Monuments, Carmarthenshire





3.0 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objective of Stage 1 - and to a certain extent, Stage 2 - was to provide a mechanism by which the early medieval ecclesiastical sites of west Wales could be identified and an assessment made of their relative importance.

Unstructured approaches to the early medieval ecclesiastical resource have led to an imbalance in the archaeological record reflected in the regional SMRs and in the Schedule. Primarily, early medieval ecclesiastical sites may not be getting the right kind of protection and management. In addition, these sites form a significant component within a number of projects both, Cadw-funded and otherwise. Both the Cadw Historic Landscape Characterisation Project, and the CCW Landmap programme rely on a significant early medieval input. Early medieval ecclesiastical sites impact upon the ongoing Cadw Prehistoric Ritual and Funerary Sites Project where prehistoric re-use has occurred, and will play a significant role in any future Monastic Landscapes project. Decisions undertaken in the Tir Gofal agri-environmental scheme, as well as routine planning applications, are currently dependent on sometimes unreliable data.

The early medieval ecclesiastical resource, as it currently exists within the SMR, comprises 195 Carmarthenshire records (Fig. 1), which break down as -

- 102 'Celtic' dedications(?)
- 1 cell
- 6 chapel sites(?)
- 6 church sites(?)
- 3 cist cemeteries(?)
- 6 cemeteries(?)
- 3 *clas* sites(?)
- 10 crosses(?)
- 1 inhumation
- 57 ECMs(?)
- 1 monastery (?)
- 6 vallum enclosures(?)

The key objectives were -

- To assess the validity of the existing record.
- To rationalise the existing record.
- To assess the validity of the evidence (physical and documentary)
- To develop criteria for the assessment of ecclesiastical sites, in order to produce a graded list of sites with potential for early medieval origins.
- Using these criteria, to provide a model for future scoping for further, unrecorded sites.

Both stages of the assessment included -

- An assessment of the presence of documented pre-Conquest ecclesiastical sites through the examination of relevant primary sources.
- An assessment of the validity of 'traditional' indicators such as 'Celtic' dedications, circular churchyards, place-name evidence, presence/absence of ECMs, cult centres etc..
- An assessment of the significance of the association between sites and ECMs, where the latter are of known provenance or *in situ*.
- An assessment of the significance of the role of siting, proximity to other site-types, intervisibility with other sites etc.
- An assessment of the development of early medieval ecclesiastical sites from pagan funerary/ritual sites, or other earlier sites such as iron age defended enclosures and Roman sites.
- An assessment of the model for site development from open, 'undeveloped' cemeteries into 'developed', churchyard/chapel sites.
- An assessment of the persistence of early medieval funerary/ecclesiastical practice into the post-Conquest period.
- An assessment of the place of the early medieval church within the wider, secular landscape.
- An assessment of the value of aerial photograph analysis in identifying early medieval ecclesiastical sites

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- An assessment of the limitations of existing evidence, and the need, if any, for further evaluation of the resource



4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Stage 1 desk-top assessment

Stage 1, the desk-based assessment, used the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) as the baseline data. All ecclesiastical sites listed as early medieval ('Dark Age' in the current SMR glossary) were assessed. The scope of the project was widened to include an assessment of all medieval (ie. pre-Reformation) ecclesiastical sites, any of which might have potential for pre-Conquest origins. The assessment involved a thorough rationalisation of the records for these sites. The only exclusions at this stage of the project have been a small number of monastic sites with known, *de novo* post-Conquest origins.

In all 461 records were assessed and rationalised in Carmarthenshire, but in many cases two or more records applied the same site eg. one for the church, one for the dedication, one for the cemetery etc.. Assessment of these records resulted in a list of 108 Carmarthenshire sites with possible pre-Conquest origins. The sites were graded according to their potential for pre-Conquest origins, using criteria defined by the EME working group (comprising the Project Officers from the four Trusts in consultation with Dr Nancy Edwards and Rick Turner of Cadw). The Stage 1 list provisionally comprised -

▪ Grade A sites (high probability)	13
▪ Grade B sites (medium probability)	27
▪ Grade C sites (low probability)	24
▪ Grade D sites (possible sites)	44

Also -

▪ Early Christian Monuments	57
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In addition, 49 possible new sites or features were identified. Many of these represented subdivisions of existing records, so not all were given new Primary Record Numbers (PRNs). Allocation of new PRNs was be in accordance with the standards currently being developed by the Welsh Archaeological Trusts in conjunction with the RCAHM(W).

Early Christian Monuments (ECMs) represent a fundamentally different form of resource and are not individually graded in this report. Not all are ecclesiastical. They exist as mobile entities, often not *in situ* (see Section 4.4), and are only included where an association with a fixed ecclesiastical site can be demonstrated. The ECMs of Wales have been subject to a recent re-assessment by Dr Nancy Edwards, John Lewis and Dr Mark Redknap, in which threats and management implications are considered. It is not intended here to replicate this work, but immediate management concerns are discussed in Section 5.0 of this report.

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4.1.1 Introduction

This section reproduces the overview from the Stage 1 assessment, with amendments and alterations arising from the Stage 2 assessment.

The variable quality of the evidence within the three counties is reason alone for treating them separately within any discussion. In Pembrokeshire, the evidence is comparatively good, both from contemporary/late documentation and dated deposits. In Carmarthenshire it is fair, with little archaeological evidence, while the evidence from documentary sources is often inferential. In Ceredigion, the evidence is very poor.

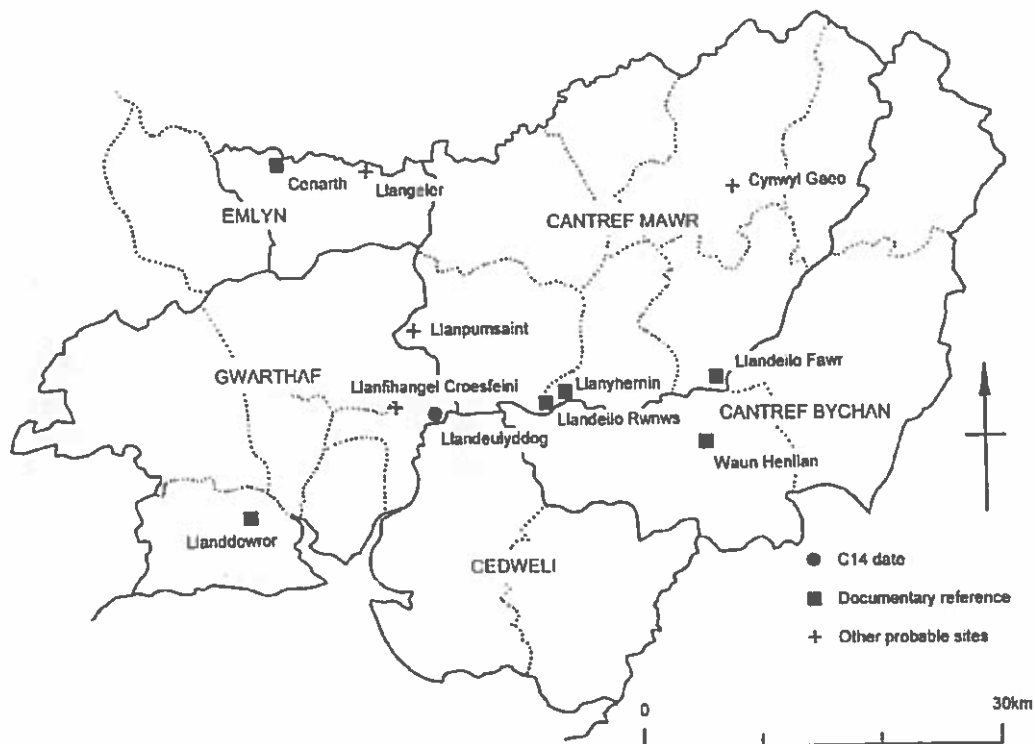
Only eight Carmarthenshire ecclesiastical sites have demonstrable pre-Conquest origins (Fig. 4). Of these, only one, the 'bishop-house' site at Llandeulyddog, Carmarthen, has been absolutely dated by radiocarbon dating. It is no longer an above-ground site; the sample came from a boundary ditch and the exact location of any structures, or cemetery, are unknown.

The rest are known from documentary references. They include the present churches of Cenarth, Llanddowror and Llandeilo Fawr, which can confidently be asserted to occupy the same sites as their early medieval precursors. However, the other four sites are known only from the sources; their precise location is unknown and two of them - at 'Llanyhernin', Llanegwad - clearly represent the same site.

To the eight definite sites may be added a further four sites where, although direct evidence is lacking, a combination of attributes strongly suggests pre-Conquest origins. These are discussed below.

The majority of Grade A-C sites are those that survived as churches into the post-Conquest period. This may merely reflect the quality of the recorded evidence, but it may indicate that there were rather fewer undeveloped cemetery sites than in Pembrokeshire.

Fig. 4 - the well-evidenced pre-Conquest ecclesiastical sites of Carmarthenshire, relative to contemporary administrative divisions





4.1.2 Documentary sources

Contemporary primary sources

In general, there are few contemporary documentary references to identifiable sites (Edwards 1996, 49). However, they do exist and in Carmarthenshire, contemporary documentation begins very early on. Cenarth, Llanddowror and Llandeilo Fawr are mentioned in one of the Llandaff Charters (in the *Book of Llandaff*) which has been dated to the 6th century (Davies 1979, 96 no.127b). The entry records gifts of land 'to St Teilo', while the 'llan' place-name elements suggest that an ecclesiastical presence had already been established at two of the sites. As noted above, the present churches probably occupy these early sites. Llandeilo Fawr was a bishopric by the 8th century (Davies 1982, 159) and the donations of three blocks of land in Llanegwad parish, recorded in late 7th century and late 8th century charters (Davies 1979, 96 no.125a, 99 no.150b), were probably to Llandeilo Fawr. Two of these blocks correspond to known post-Conquest chapel sites, Llandeilo Rwnws and Llanyhernin, although there are two possible contenders for the latter site. The third block, at 'Ager Redoc', is as yet unidentified. A further charter records the 8th century gift of land at Machynys, Llanelli (*ibid.*, 112 no.189), which, although traditionally held to be a monastic site, lacks direct evidence for an ecclesiastical establishment either before or after the Conquest.

The charters also record a further 8th century grant of land at 'Telichclouman', near Llandeilo Fawr (*ibid.*, 96 no.125a). A 'Telych' place-name is still in use some 15km north of Llandeilo Fawr, which appears to be derived from a high-status pre-Conquest secular estate centred on the site of the Roman fort and gold mines at Pumsaint (Jones 1994, 81-95). The ecclesiastical site suggested in the charter cannot be identified with certainty, but there are several possible contenders including Cynwyl Gaco, where the parish church features a 6th-7th century Early Christian Monument (ECM).

The Pumsaint/Cao area lies within the territory of 'Trefwyddog' which was, in the 9th century, to be granted to 'God and Teilo' (ie. Llandeilo Fawr?) in its entirety (Jones 1972, 312-18; Richards 1974, 117). The grant is recorded in the *Lichfield Gospels*, an 8th century book of unknown provenance that has been kept at Lichfield Cathedral since at least 11th century, but was present at Llandeilo Fawr during the 9th century when marginalia were added, recording land-grants, etc. Among them is Maenor Meddynfych, a 9th century estate at Llandybïe which has been reconstructed from the marginalia by Glanville Jones (Jones 1972, 308-11). The estate includes the present site of Llandybïe parish church, but the marginalia refer to 'Gwaun Henllan' ie. the 'old' church. This is an identifiable site associated with possible physical evidence of a building and/or burials. The place-name suggests that it may have been the site of the early mother church of Meddynfych, and may also suggest that a church had been established on the present site, but this is uncertain.

A text of the 'Welsh Laws', dated to the 9th century, includes a list of 'bishop-houses' associated with St Davids (Charles-Edwards 1971, 247-62). It has been suggested that it may record an earlier, 6th century list, each bishop-house apparently being based on one of seven cantrefs of the Kingdom of Dyfed (Fig. 2), which may represent the subkingdoms or *tuath*, established in the 5th century by the *Déisi* and *Ui Liatháin*, settlers from Ireland (*ibid.*; Thomas 1994, 105-6). The control of settlers was mainly confined to the seven cantrefs, six of which were in modern Pembrokeshire, while the seventh - Cantref Gwarthaf, and part of Cantref Emlyn - lay in modern Carmarthenshire. However, it was recorded in the 9th century that the *Ui Liatháin* had also taken control of Cantref Cedweli in Carmarthenshire, and of Cantref Gwyr or Gower (Thomas 1994, 58). The relationship between these bishop-houses - which had 'abbots' - and St Davids is uncertain, but it is thought that they did not represent independent bishoprics (Davies 1982, 160). The list includes the house at St Davids itself, and five more Pembrokeshire sites. The seventh house was at Llandeulyddog (Carmarthen), in Cantref Gwarthaf which comprised northwest Carmarthenshire (Fig. 2). Llandeulyddog appears to have lost its episcopal status at an early date, perhaps to the emerging Llandeilo Fawr.

The hagiographic 'Lives of the Welsh Saints' are largely from the post-1100 period and are of limited topographic validity (Davies 1982, 207; cf. Baring-Gould and Fisher 1908 & 1909). However, the *Life of St David* was composed during the late 11th century, just prior to the Conquest (Davies 1982, 208). In it is an account of the saint's schooling at St Paulinus' monastery at 'insula Wincdilantquendi' which has been identified by both Doble and Thomas - via a highly convoluted argument - with Llanddeusant Church (Doble 1971; Thomas 1994, 100-102). Although this must be treated with some caution, the Paulinus cult was certainly active in the area and associated with at least one 'post-

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Conquest chapelry. A nearby ECM bearing a 'Paulinus' inscription may however record a different individual (Thomas 1994, 104). Thomas also assigns the body of the 12th century *Lives of St Brychan*, in which the churchyard at Meidrum may be mentioned as a 'sanctuary', to pre-Conquest source material (*ibid.*, 147-9; see below).

The major Chronicles, the *Annales Cambriae* (Williams ab Ithel, 1860) and the *Brut y Tywysogyon* (Jones 1952) provide an outline history from the 5th century onwards and 7th century onwards respectively. In themselves, they are proof of a flourishing ecclesiastical culture, having been compiled by clerics, but provide very skeletal information - mainly comprising obituaries - until the Conquest when the entries become fuller. Most of the entries relating to ecclesiastical sites are terse one-liners recording Viking raids, for instance on St Davids and St Dogmaels in Pembrokeshire, in which Llandeilo Fawr's inland location probably left it unmolested. One Carmarthenshire entry may be significant, however - 'Abergwili' is named as the site of a battle between rival princes in 1022, suggesting that it was an established (ecclesiastical?) site (Jones 1952, 12).

Later primary sources

The *Book of Llandaff* was compiled in the 12th century, and though the 149 charters are copies of pre-Conquest documents a very high proportion have been subject to post-Conquest interpolations (Davies 1982, 201); Davies (1979) is a reconstruction of the original texts. The 12th century date is significant. Llandeilo Fawr was the early centre of the cult of St Teilo and many churches in southwest Wales bear his dedication, or were formerly dedicated to saints of the cult. From the 10th century onwards, the influence of Llandaff increased at the expense of Llandeilo Fawr - which it replaced as the centre of the St Teilo cult. Llandaff almost certainly gained episcopal status in the early 11th century (Pryce 1992, 23). During the 12th century, it was to embark on a serious claim to many of the 'Teilo' churches within the diocese of St Davids, claiming the Tywi to be the 'natural' boundary between the two dioceses - which does not appear to reflect any pre-Conquest division. Many of the references to Teilo churches within the charters date from this period. Some of them cannot be identified with certainty, but they probably include Brechfa ('Llandeilo Nant Seru'), Capel Teilo in Talley ('Llandeilo Garthteuir'), Cyffig ('Llanceffig'), Llandeilo Abercywyn, Pendine ('Llandeilo Pentywyn'), and the bishop-house at Llandeulyddog (Yates 1973, 60). The reference to the latter as 'Llandeulyddog-y-gaer' (albeit in an earlier, 11th century interpolation) suggest that at least some of these references may have been based on earlier, pre-Conquest sources (see Evans 1991, 246-7).

Other post-1100 sources may provide an insight into the Carmarthenshire church on the eve of the Anglo-Norman Conquests. Castles and settlements were established at Carmarthen and Kidwelly in 1109-10. The settlement at Carmarthen was situated at some distance from the Llandeulyddog site, to take advantage of the defensive and economic benefits offered by the castle, but the former bishop-house was granted to Battle Abbey in Sussex in c.1109-20, later emerging as an Augustinian Priory (James 1985, 120-121). The Battle grant also included St Peters parish church, which may have been a pre-existing site (see below). 'Land and a cemetery' at Kidwelly, and the tithes of Penbre and St Ishmaels (including Llansaint Chapel) were similarly granted to Sherborne Abbey in 1107-1115 (Davies 1946, 237 D.27), the terms of the grant indicating pre-existing church sites. There is some evidence that the Kidwelly site may not be represented by the present parish church of St Mary. An additional Sherborne grant of 1148-65 provided 'twelve acres around the church of St Cadog' at Llangadog, 2km northeast of St Mary's. It has been suggested that Llangadog (which is associated with a 'sanctuary' place-name, see below) was the site of the original mother church of Cantref Cedweli, becoming a mere chapelry to St Mary's when it was established in c.1110 (Evans 1991, 241). However, the location of St Mary's outside the Anglo-Norman borough defences may suggest that it was a pre-existing site (see below).

The late 12th century Giraldus Cambrensis, in a critique of Wilfrid, the last Welsh Bishop of St Davids (1085-1115), accused him of alienating a number of churches, mainly in Pembrokeshire but including the 6th century site at Cenarth (Davies 1946, 237 D.28).

Llanfihangel Croesfeini, in Newchurch parish, may have possessed a number of ECMs. However, its pre-Conquest origins appear to be demonstrably proven by a post-Conquest source. The parish was already termed 'Eglwys Newydd' in a grant of 1129-34 (Davies 1946, D.99), suggesting that the present St Michaels site had recently been established at the expense of Llanfihangel, which was maintained as a subordinate chapelry into the late medieval period.



The 12th century poet Gwynfardd Brycheiniog, in his '*Canu y Dewi*' ('Song to David'), praises the virtues of the saint and upholds the defence of the Bishopric against the rival claims of Llandaff (Lewis 1931, 43-52). Gwynfardd's list of churches include the Carmarthenshire 'Dewi' churches of Abergwili, Llanarthne, Llangadog, Llanycrwys and Meidrum (as noted by Evans 1993, 14; James 1992, 76; Richards 1974, 116), and it is clear from the poem that the ritual and pilgrimage landscape of southwest Wales was already developed.

Whilst the south and west of the county were held under Anglo-Norman tenure from 1100 onwards, with only brief interruptions, the north and east maintained Welsh rule until much later. Cantref Mawr was not fully brought under Anglo-Norman control until the 1280s while Cantref Bychan, which, with the exception of Cwmwd Iscennen was established as a marcher lordship controlled from Llandovery in the early 12th century, reverted to Welsh rule later in the century and was also retained until the 1280s (Fig.2). In effect, all churches established in Cantref Mawr and Cwmwd Iscennen are pre-Conquest - or at least in the native ecclesiastical tradition.

Bishoprics

Llandeulyddog, as a bishop-house, was probably monastic - the head of a 'monastic bishopric', under a bishop who was a monk. Elsewhere, such monastic bishoprics are suggested by 9th century sources in which the episcopal household is referred to as a 'monastery', as in contemporary Anglo-Saxon England (Davies 1992, 15).

It has been suggested that the bishopric at Llandeulyddog - whose name may preserve a hypocoristic form of St Teilo (Evans 1991, 251) - may have given way to the rising influence of the Teilo cult centre at Llandeilo Fawr, which is recorded as a Teilo site in a 7th century charter (Davies 1979, 95 no.77), and was a monastic bishopric by the 8th century (Davies 1982, 159). It appears to have recognised the superiority of St Davids (Evans 1991, 248) - which, if not actively 'metropolitan', was approaching archdiocesan status - becoming a possession of St Davids by the 12th century (Owen 1894, 228). The rise and decline of Llandeilo Fawr has implications for the assessment of possible early medieval origins at a number of other ecclesiastical sites, particularly Cynwyl Gaeo and Talley (Fig. 3).

The medieval parish of Cynwyl Gaeo was large, and broadly coterminous with Cwmwd Caew, which in turn may have occupied the same area as Trefwyddog, as reconstructed by Glanville Jones (Jones 1972, 312-18), and which may later have been renamed? (Fig. 5). The presence of a Group I ECM at Cynwyl Gaeo church suggests that it was already a major ecclesiastical site. Caew/Trefwyddog also included the site of the later Talley Abbey and most of its grange chapels. It also included Llanycrwys parish within which 'Gwyddog' place-names were recorded in late 16th century accounts of the abbey estate boundaries (Richards 1974, 117). It is significant too that Cwmwd Caew appears to have formed the core patrimony of the Princes of Deheubarth, Gruffudd ap Rhys having been permitted to remain in possession after his unsuccessful rebellion against Henry I in 1116 (Lloyd 1935, 134-5).

Trefwyddog was granted to Llandeilo Fawr, by Rhys ap Grethi, in c.850 (Jones 1972, 312-18; Richards 1974, 117). Llandeilo Fawr already lay at the head of an equally large *parochium*, including the Llanegwad lands noted above, and it has been suggested that it superseded Cynwyl Gaeo as the mother church of what now emerged as an immense territory occupying much of Cantref Mawr (Evans 1991, 249), within which the majority of dedications belong to the Teilo cult. This territory is indeed referred to as '*patria*' in an early 13th century source (Davies 1946, 357 D.469). But between 1184 and 1220, nearly every ecclesiastical site within this *patria* - parish church and chapel alike, including Llandeilo Fawr itself and its pre-Conquest territories - was granted, by the Welsh princes, to Talley Abbey, which had been founded 1184-89 (Price 1879, 168-72; Owen 1893, 39-47). It appears therefore that Talley, in turn, had superseded Llandeilo Fawr as the mother church of the region.





The word is found at only three locations in Carmarthenshire - at Llanarthne (which lies in the hamlet of 'Treclás'), and as field names at two sites in the west of the county with no identifiable ecclesiastical associations (Evans 1991, 248). Llanarthne is traditionally regarded as an early church site, which has been suggested by Nancy Edwards as the source of the fine Group III ECM long known as the 'Cae Castell' cross (Edwards forthcoming), but there is also a nearby 'Henllan' place-name. Nevertheless Wyn Evans suggests that the use of the term at Llanarthne may just denote ecclesiastical land (*ibid.*).

However, there is compelling evidence that Llandeilo Fawr was fully monastic in the witness-lists to the *Lichfield Gospel* marginalia (Davies 1982, 149), and was therefore presumably a *clas* site (Evans 1991, 248). However, the terms used in the sources are *familia* and *sacerdos* or 'archpriest' (*ibid.*). Too little is known of how the seven bishop-houses of Dyfed were constituted to be sure of the clerical make-up of Llandeulyddog, but its re-establishment as an Augustinian priory suggest that it may still have been monastic in the early 12th century.

Pope Nicholas IV's *Taxatio* of 1291 is one of the key documents in any understanding of the medieval church, with its list of appropriations (Record Commission 1802). In it, a number of north Wales churches are listed as 'portionary churches' (Palmer 1886, 175-209). These are thought to represent former *clas* churches, with benefices divided between the church and powerful laymen or 'portionaries', arising from the earlier mixed lay/clerical *clas* community as damned by Giraldus (Evans 1992, 33-38).

No Carmarthenshire churches are described as portionary in the *Taxatio*, whose west Wales entries are generally somewhat terse (Record Commission 1802, 272-7). However, a 'third' of Merthyr church had been granted to Whitland Abbey by the early 13th century (Richard 1935, 356). Furthermore, in 1833 Samuel Lewis recorded the patronage of three churches - Henllan Amgoed, Llangeler and Llanedi - as being 'in the hands of the freemen of the parish', with or without alternate presentation (Lewis 1833). William Rees recognised the significance of this form of patronage on his 1932 Map of 14th century South Wales, marking these churches out specifically as 'churches in the gift of the Welsh community'. It is noteworthy that all three churches - each of which has other attributes suggesting early medieval origins - lie in areas brought under Anglo-Norman control in the early 12th century outside Cantref Mawr and Bychan, and so the tradition of patronage may be a survival from an earlier period.

Cwmwdau and mother-churches

Other monastic or quasi-monastic church sites may survive as the mother churches of pre-Conquest administrative areas, although Wendy Davies has pointed out that the role of a mother church, and the relationships between the churches in a given area, may not have been clearly defined (Davies 1992, 15). Moreover, the status of a church could fluctuate through time, as at Cynwyl Gaeo/Llandeilo Fawr (see above).

And how does one identify a 'mother church' in a particular area? Wyn Evans notes that the medieval rural deaneries recorded in the *Taxatio* are largely coterminous with cantref or cwmwd boundaries (Evans 1991, 241). In Cantref Gwarthaf, as in Pembrokeshire, an early bishop-house site can be regarded as a mother church (Fig. 4), in this case Llandeulyddog; the cantref is coterminous with the Deanery of Carmarthen. Similarly, the medieval deanery of 'Stradlowy' (Ystrad Tywi) took in Cantref Mawr and Bychan, with a mother church at Cynwyl Gaeo, as discussed above. Cenarth is the obvious candidate in Emlyn where cantref and deanery share the same name, while being the centre of a (later?) cult of St Llawddog which was reflected throughout the cantref. Kidwelly deanery, and church, are named from Cantref Cedweli, but the association between the name and a fixed ecclesiastical site can be taken no further back than the 12th century. The mother church here may in any case have been Llangadog, while Llandyfaelog church, with its very large, circular churchyard and numerous subordinate chapels, may also be a contender for the site.

At cwmwd level, place-name evidence would suggest that Henllan Amgoed is the mother church of Amgoed. The suggestion of Meidrum in Ystlwyf cannot be challenged (Evans 1991, 241). Llanelli is referred to as 'the church of Carnwillion' in a mid 13th century source (Davies 1946, 374 D.546), the name of the cwmwd within which it lies. Laugharne church may have been the mother church of Cwmwd Talacharn, from which it may have been named, but other possible candidates exist, as at Kidwelly, including the documented early church at Llanddowror. Cilycwm parish church, in Cwmwd



Mallaen, may be a new foundation of the 14th century suggesting that Llanwrda was the mother church of this cwmwd - there is no evidence for any other church sites in Mallaen. There are no Paulinus/Peulin dedications in Cwmwd Peulinog where, furthermore, no potential mother church site can be identified. However, it is a long way from the northeast Carmarthenshire homeland of the cult and the name may commemorate a lay 'Peulin' (Thomas 1994, 104 n.40). Were mother churches at this level monastic, or were they merely the heads of *parochiae*? - reflecting the parishes they developed into after the conquest?

'Nawdd' and 'noddfa'

A tradition of sanctuary (or *nawdd*) is thought to be indicative of pre-Conquest origins, particularly when associated with a formal place of refuge, or *noddfa*, as at the major churches of St Davids, and Llanbadarn Fawr and Llanddewi Brefi in Ceredigion (Evans 1992, 33).

Neither term appears to be recorded in Carmarthenshire, but a 'sanctuary' place name is recorded at Llangadog, Kidwelly (Sanctuary Bank), which may provide a clue to the location of the church. The *noddfa* is thought to represent a defined, physical space, as found within a churchyard, and may be one of the factors behind the large, circular churchyards at a number of sites (and the possible outer enclosures - see below). A tradition of sanctuary may also be behind the reference by the poet Gwynfardd Brycheiniog to the 'cemetery for hosts' at Meidrum (Evans 1993, 14), which appears to be reflected in the Lives of Brychan which refers to Meidrum churchyard as a camp site (Thomas 1994, 106, 138-9, 147-9).

4.1.3 Dated archaeological evidence

Archaeological evidence dateable to the pre-Conquest period is, in Carmarthenshire, limited to just one site, the bishop-house/*clas* site at Llandeuldydog, Carmarthen. Excavations within the precinct of the later Augustinian priory, in 1979, revealed a number of features associated with the priory but also sections of four ditches which underlay the priory cemetery. A charcoal sample from a primary silt from the base of one of the ditches produced a radiocarbon date of cal AD 675-795. The ditches were between 1.5m and 3m wide, and up to 1.5m deep, suggesting that at least one of them may have defined the early medieval monastic enclosure (James 1985, 127-9). However, all evidence for the layout and form of the early site appears to have been entirely obscured by the later priory whose rectangular precinct is 12th-15th century.

See Section 4.1.5 for Early Christian Monuments.

4.1.4 Undated archaeological evidence

Undated cemeteries

Very few Carmarthenshire cemetery sites (as opposed to churchyards) present any form of evidence for pre-Conquest origins, in contrast to Pembrokeshire where early medieval cemeteries - both developed and undeveloped - are suggested at a large number of sites. In particular, long-cist burials have been observed at only four (possibly five) sites in the county.

It must be stressed, however, that none of these cist burials has been dated. Indeed, of the 26 cist cemeteries that have been recorded in Pembrokeshire (out of 37 possible cemetery sites), only five have produced any form of dating evidence and only three of those dates - at Caer (Bayvil), Llanychlwydog and St Brides - were pre-Conquest. These have been discussed in full in James (1987), along with a catalogue of all cemetery sites then identified in West Wales.

In Carmarthenshire, cist graves were apparently observed during pipe-laying at Pontargothi, near Llanegwad, in the 1980s (James 1987, 73). They may mark the site of the 'lost' chapel of Llanyhernin, mentioned in a 7th century Llandaff charter but known to have continued as a chapel site into the late medieval period, granted to Talley Abbey in c.1200 (Price 1879, 171). Similar chance observation was made at in a field named Yr Hen Fynwent, Llanybydder, during ploughing (James 1987, 73). The adjoining field is named 'Capel Iago', the site of a possible chapelry with a Latin dedication of later



rather than earlier form. Eight burials were apparently observed 'in a mound due north of the chancel' at Eglwys Gymun churchyard in c.1919 (*ibid.*). They were considered to be early medieval but the report does not give the reason - they are described in the report as 'orientated extended burials' but may have been cists. Cists have also apparently been observed within and just beyond the churchyard at Laugharne (Williams 1931, 54-5).

The cist burials at Llanllwni Church appear to be demonstrably post-Conquest. The church sits at the foot of a large motte, which is partly overlain by the churchyard boundary. In 1877, 'several cists with human bones' were discovered, the description of which makes it clear that they were cut into the flank of the motte (*ibid.*; RCAHMW 1917, 175 no.523). A post-Conquest date has been demonstrated, through artefactual evidence, for a group of 26 cists in the churchyard at Eglwyswrw, Pembs. (Ludlow 2003, 20-48) and a 13th century date is suggested by finds from a cist grave at Cilgerran churchyard, Pembs. (Anon. 1859, 350). Post-conquest cist cemeteries have also been suggested in Cornwall (Preston-Jones 1984, 157-177) and Scotland (Reece 1981, 104). A research priority must be to get some dates for the Carmarthenshire cists.

Re-use of prehistoric sites

Potential models for the establishment of cemeteries and their development, or otherwise, into church/chapel sites have been proposed by Heather James (1987 and 1992), and Edwards and Lane (1992). It is suggested that all ecclesiastical sites were primarily burial sites, but what were the factors that led to the commencement of burial at a given site?

In a number of cases, it is possible to demonstrate that pre-existing funerary/ritual sites presented themselves as burial foci. Place-name evidence alone would suggest that prehistoric monuments were recognised as ritual sites. They were often considered to be the graves of heroes (James 1994, 398) while being, in the words of Heather James, 'prominent enough to effectively invite re-use' (H. James 1992, 93). However, it appears to represent a continuing tradition from the Iron Age/Romano-British period, recorded at a number of sites in Wales (Murphy and Williams 1992, 30-35).

Undeveloped, open cemeteries have been recorded at barrow sites at Plas Gogerddan, Ceredigion (Murphy 1992), and in north Wales. These sites do not appear to have ever been given any formal boundaries, and did not receive buildings. A possible undeveloped cemetery site at Llain Ddineu, Penboyr, lies close to a barrow cemetery (and the early medieval record may in fact relate to the bronze age use). It has also been suggested by Wyn Evans that the important Group I ECM from Castell Dwyran church, commemorating the tyrannical 6th century king of Dyfed, Voteporix, may have originally been sited on a nearby barrow that lies in a field called *Parc cerrig y lluniau* or, 'field of the stones with lines/pictures' (Evans 1991, 245; James 1992, 94), cf. the similar Group I ECM at Dyffryn Bern, Penbryn in Ceredigion. Although there is no other evidence for this provenance, the Roman road west of Carmarthen has been recently mapped between the barrow and the church (*ex inf.* Ken Murphy, Cambria Archaeology).

The other two Carmarthenshire re-use sites are 'developed'. Thirty 'large earthen vessels full of ashes', probably bronze age cremations, were revealed within the churchyard at Marros in 1868 (RCAHMW 1917, 212-3 no.621n.). An undated urn was found beneath chancel at Eglwys Gymun parish church during the restoration in 1878-9 (Treherne 1889, 225). The 'Roman cinerary urn', found underneath the south transept at Laugharne Church in 1873-4 (Anon. 1875, 430), may also be bronze age, and many more unrecorded barrows may lie beneath churchyards (see Section 4.7).

Re-use of other prehistoric funerary/ritual sites appears to have been more limited. No re-use of neolithic monuments has been recorded in Carmarthenshire, and standing stone re-use does not appear to have been widespread, although they may have been used as boundary markers at Llanwinio (T. James 1992, 69-70; see below), while the large, crude orthostat in the churchyard at Abergorlech, Llanybydder, is of unknown date. The ECMs at Cefn Cethin, Llandeilo Fawr, and Closteg, Llangyndeyrn, may be re-used standing stones (Edwards forthcoming). The large, recumbent stone in the churchyard at Abergwili may be prehistoric (but may be early medieval, see below), while the large boulders that form the lowest courses of many a medieval church, eg. Llanglydwen, may be *in situ*. However, the possibility remains that, with their normal absence of burial, standing stone sites were not generally favoured for cemeteries.



Prehistoric re-use is not limited to funerary/ritual sites. Iron Age defended enclosures represented alternative foci. These sites are fundamentally different in that the physical space is already defined. One of the 61 early medieval burials revealed by excavation within the iron age enclosure at Caer (Bayvil), Pems. has been radiocarbon dated to cal AD 605-725 (James 1987, 72 no.17). This appears never to have been a developed site, and there may be some parallels in Carmarthenshire. Aerial photography in southwest Wales has revealed cropmark evidence for a number of iron age enclosures of a concentric form, consisting of a small, circular inner enclosure within a larger, circular outer enclosure (James 1990, 295-8; T. James 1992, 69), for which the term 'concentric antenna enclosures' has been adopted. A cropmark enclosure of this form at Lan, Llanboidy - formerly called 'Llan' - lies within a field called Parc-y-fynwent ('cemetery field') and there is a unsubstantiated local tradition that Llangan Church initially occupied this site (T. James 1992, 66-7). Cilsant, Llanwinio, is the site of a lost, possible ECM and with associations with a late 11th century prince of Dyfed (T. James 1992, 67); alternatively it may have been a secular site. However, in contrast with Pembrokeshire, evidence for undeveloped sites is scant in Carmarthenshire although clearly they must exist within the county (see below).

In contrast, there are a number of developed sites with probable iron age origins. The churchyard at Meidrum is almost certainly adapted from an iron age promontory fort (Evans 1993, 15; RCAHMW 1917, 213 no.624) - the only example of the re-use of this kind of enclosure in Carmarthenshire. The circular churchyard at Eglwys Gymyn appears to be adapted from a defended enclosure, possibly multivallate (T. James 1992, 69), while Llangynog churchyard almost certainly represents a small, defended enclosure (*ibid.*, 71). Llangan churchyard overlies one of a complex of cropmark enclosures, which may have been re-used as an outer churchyard enclosure (*ibid.*, 69). The large, subcircular churchyard at Llanwinio can be seen to contain the faint earthwork traces of a smaller, circular enclosure around the church, and is similar in form to the concentric antenna enclosures recorded by James. A similar, cropmark enclosure been observed at Henllan Farm, Llanfallteg (James 1989, 32), and it may be significant that the proper name of the parish is Henllanfallteg. Fields named 'Parc yr Eglwys' at both Marros and Trelech a'r Betws contain enclosures of iron age form (RCAHMW 1917, 210 no.617, 268 no.761), and it is highly probable that a number of further Carmarthenshire churchyards originated within iron age enclosures (see below).

Burial within defended enclosures is suggested in early Irish literary sources, but appears to be limited to chieftains ie. single burials, and be in a domestic context rather than ecclesiastical re-use. For instance, the 'Book of Armagh' records that King Loeguire wished to be buried in armour, 'facing his enemies', in the ramparts of his fort (James 1994, 403).

Churchyard morphology

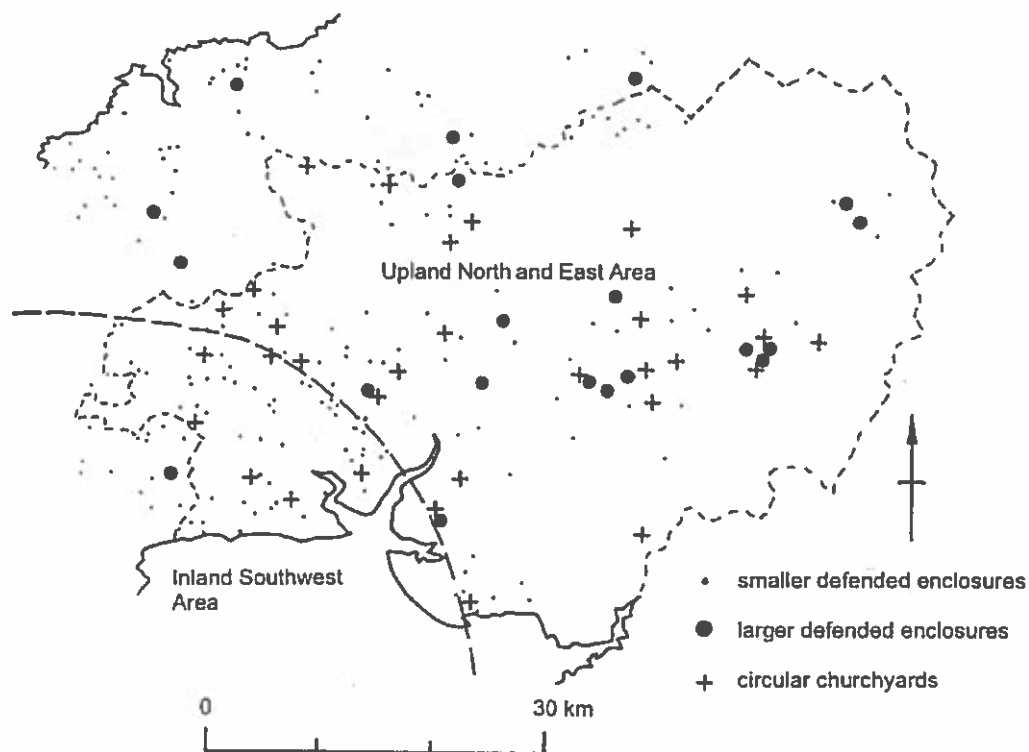
The value of churchyard morphology is still a matter of intense debate within early medieval studies. What, in particular, is the significance of the circular churchyard?

As Thomas has observed, a circular plan has been favoured for funerary/ritual monuments since earliest prehistory, noting that 'the sacred circle separates the holy from the profane, the dead from the living' (Thomas 1971, 52). It is characteristic of round barrows, and it has been suggested that the churchyards at Eglwyswrw and Moylegrove, Pems., were established on barrow sites (Ludlow 2003, 146, 20-48; cf. Mwnt, and traditionally Llanddewi Brefi and Tregaron, Ceredigion where the mounds may in fact be drumlins).

The circular enclosure is taken seriously enough for some researchers to have devised a scoring system for circularity (Brook 1992). However, as James pointed out, it is also the shape of most of the smaller, inland defended iron age enclosures within southwest Wales (James 1997, 7), including, for example, Caer (Bayvil), Pems., and Eglwys Gymun, the definite re-used sites described above. Iron age origins, though strongly suspected, have yet to be conclusively demonstrated for any of the other 31 circular yards in Carmarthenshire, but some suggestions may be made. Iron age enclosures in west Wales fall into three main regional groups, an Upland Northeast Area of mainly large enclosures, a Coastal Southwest Area of mainly large enclosures, often on coastal promontories, and - most significantly - an Inland Southwest Area of small, often circular enclosures (Williams 1988, 31-33). It is this latter area, which includes the medieval Cantref Gwarthaf, in which the enclosures most closely match circular churchyards in size and shape (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6 - distribution of circular churchyards relative to defended enclosure types
(modified from Williams 1988)



It is in this latter area that circular yards are most likely to have iron age origins. It includes Eglwys Gymun, Llangan, Llangynog and Llanwinio, mentioned above. It also includes the circular yards at Cilymaenllwyd, Henllan Amgoed and Eglwys Fair a Churig, Llanboidy, Llandawke, Merthyr and Trelech a'r Betws which in terms of shape, size and siting, are all possible candidates. Nearly all have other attributes suggesting early medieval origins.

It can be seen from Fig. 3 that many circular churchyards lie *outside* Williams' Inland Southwest Area but the boundaries of these areas are not absolute, and the churchyards at Cenarth, Llanedi and Pencarreg - which lie outside the area - are convincingly 'iron age' in form and siting. Moreover, Fig. 3 also shows the large number of small enclosures that lie within the other two areas.

When did iron age re-use stop? Preston-Jones has suggested similar origins for a number of Cornish yards (Preston-Jones 1992, 114). She argues that in Cornwall, circular yards derived from iron age re-use are early, but that *de novo* circular yards are a product of the later early medieval period (*ibid.*, 123). The continued use of the form was presumably due to persistent tradition, but it was eventually superseded by the concept of the rectangular enclosure reflecting of the shape of the church *building*, which may have superseded the burial *enclosure* as the most important aspect of a Christian site (Preston-Jones 1992, 123). However, if Eglwyswrw churchyard was established on a bronze age barrow in the 13th century, it is possible that other forms of re-use also continued into the post-Conquest period. Meanwhile, the circular/oval yards at Llangathen, Llangelor and Llansadwrn lie outside the Inland Southwest Area, as do Cynwyl Elfed, Llanegwad, Llandyfaelog, Llangadog, Llangyndeyrn, Llansawel, Llanwrda, Llanybydder, Myddfai and Penbre, where the siting and topography are not typical of iron age enclosures. Many of these sites occupy Cantrefs Mawr and Bychan where native traditions persisted.

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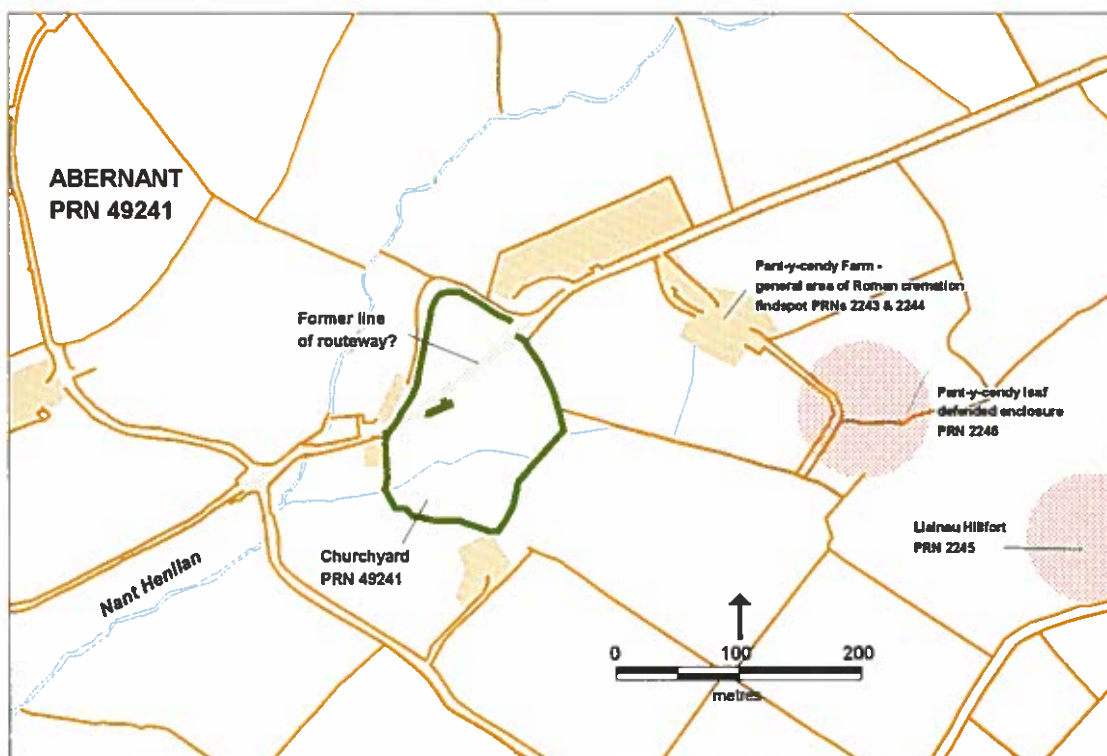
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A characteristic of Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion, not apparently found in Pembrokeshire, is the very large, circular churchyard with or without evidence for other enclosure(s). The type includes Henllan Amgoed, which may be a re-use site, and also Llangeler and Llansadwrn. Abernant is similar, but irregular (Fig. 7). The equally large yard at Llandyfaelog is subdivided by springs (Fig. 11), superficially similar to subdivided Irish churchyards as noted by James (T. James 1992, 73). No other examples of the form are known in southwest Wales, but the very large irregular churchyard at Abernant is divided into three areas by streams.

Fig. 7 - the large churchyard at Abernant



Are all *de novo* circular yards in Pembrokeshire necessarily pre-Conquest - particularly within areas such as Cantrefs Mawr and Bychan with their persistent native traditions? In Carmarthenshire, the evidence suggests that the answer is yes - the vast majority of sites exhibit other attributes suggesting early medieval origins.

The iron age 'concentric antenna' form (see above) is paralleled at an increasing number of church sites in which the churchyards can be seen to lie within large outer enclosures, often observed in aerial photographs but, at many sites, preserved as surviving field boundaries. Terry James has described Llangan, Llangynog and Llanwinio (T. James 1992, 69-70), and possible examples are entered on the SMR as 'vallum enclosures' at Llangathen (cropmark evidence), Betws, Capel Gwynfe (Llangadog) and Llandingat (map evidence). To these existing records may be added a number of new sites observed in Carmarthenshire during the course of the EME project (discussed in Section 4.2).

While some of the western Carmarthenshire examples may represent re-use of iron age sites, it cannot be proved at any of them, apart from perhaps Llangynog where the churchyard was a probable re-used enclosure (see above). However, the possible outer enclosures around Llandawke, Llangyndeyrn, Llanwinio and Merthyr are of a very similar form, perhaps with a 'funnelled' entrance at Llandawke, and lie within the main distribution of iron age concentric enclosures. The possible outer enclosure at Llangeler is very large, like that suggested at Llanwinio, comprising the parish glebe, old vicarage and apparently a multiple church site (see below). The Llangathen enclosure, less certainly, may also be a multiple church site and, like Betws, Capel Gwynfe (Llangadog), Llandingat, Llanedi and Llanwrda lies in Cantref Mawr/Bychan - beyond the main distribution of such iron age enclosures. However, the apparent concentric enclosures at Llandeilo Fawr, discussed by Lawrence Butler, have been proved to be the result of 18th century development (Evans 1991, 246; James 1992, 74).

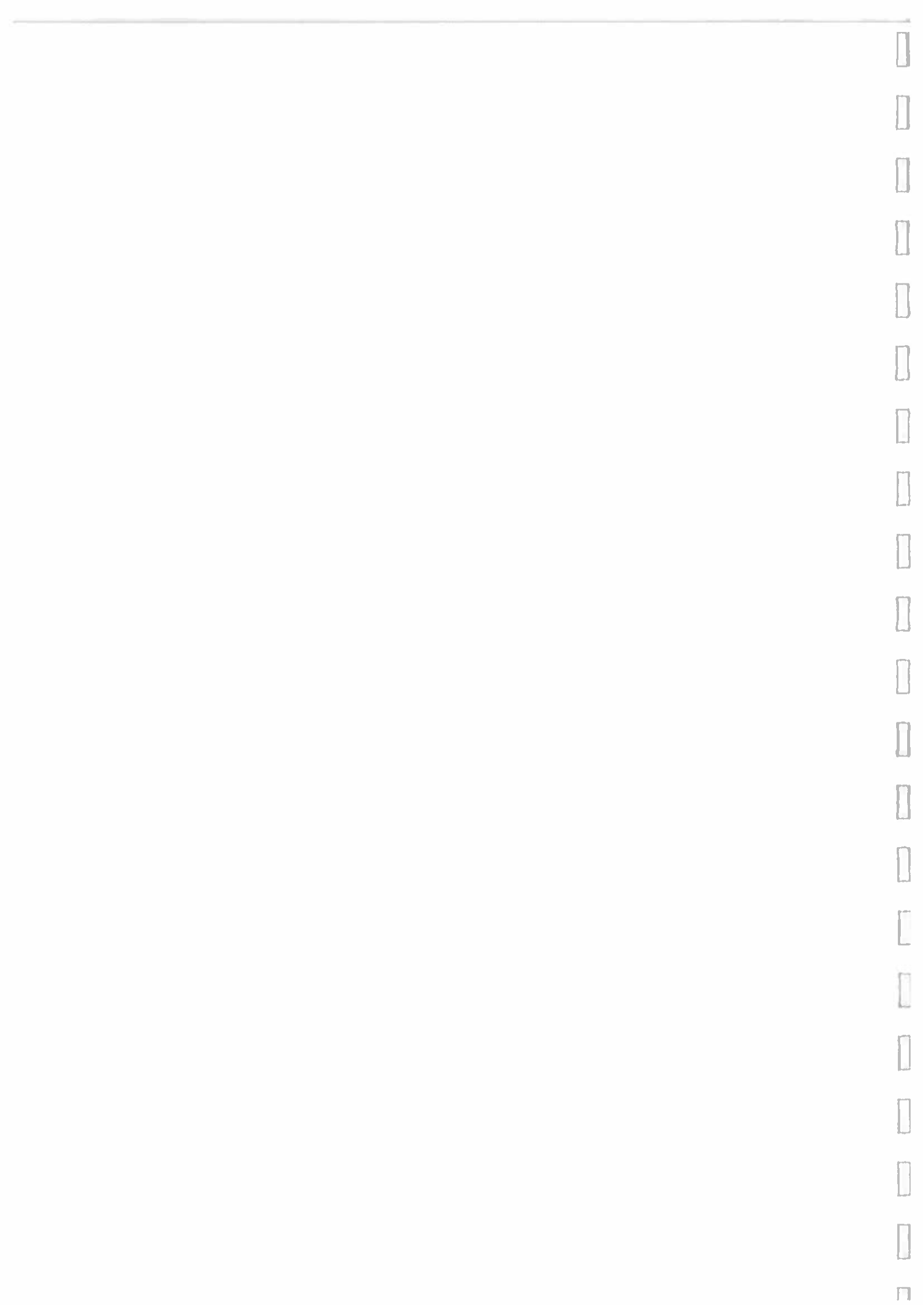
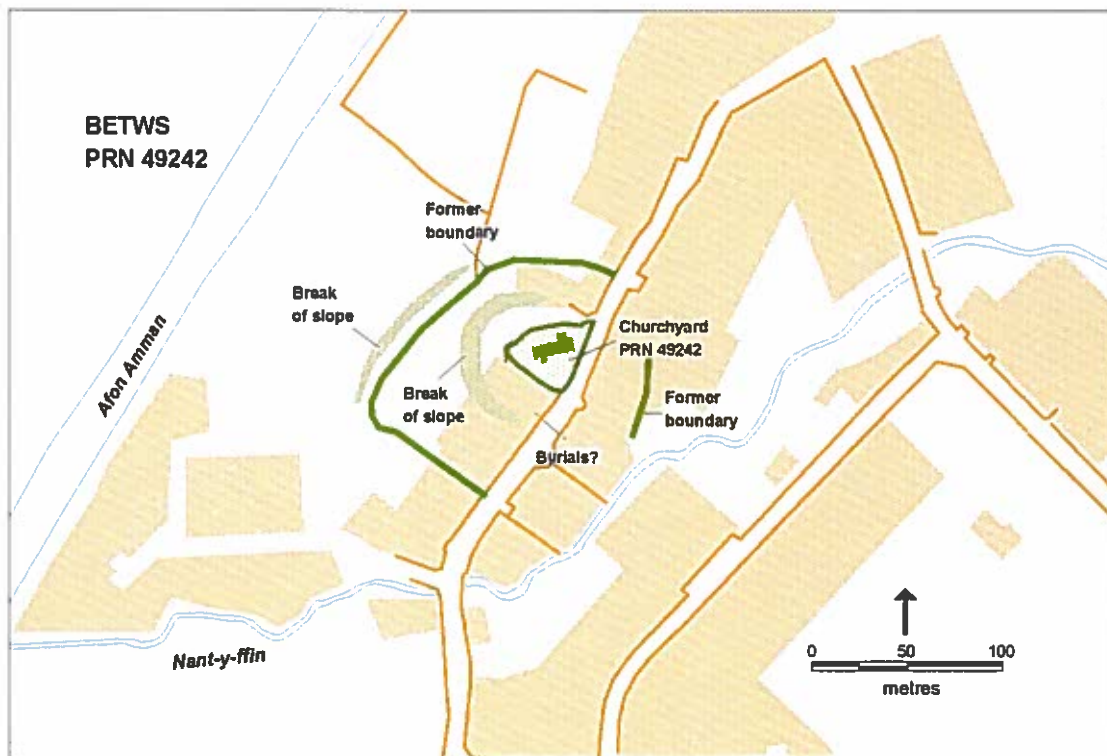


Fig. 8 – The possible outer enclosure at Betws



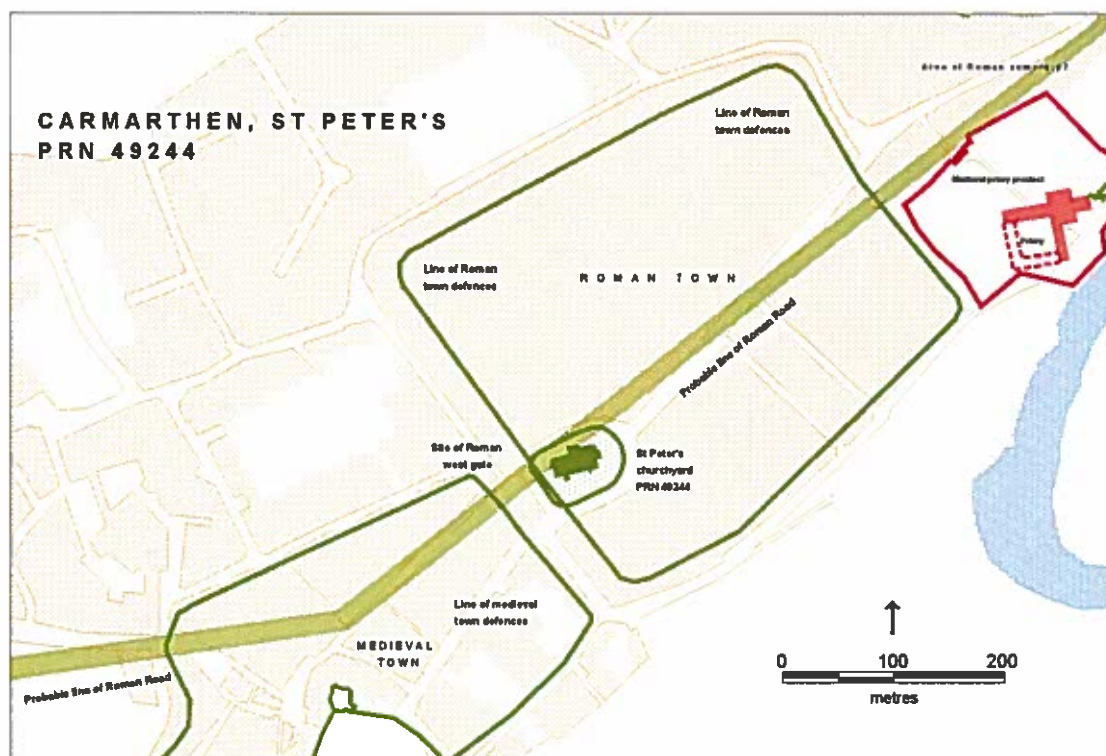
Such enclosures are not always circular, however, and it may be that prehistoric sites provided a loose model for later, *de novo* enclosures. The possible enclosures at Egremont and Llanddowror are respectively square and triangular and do not appear to represent re-use sites. A similar enclosure is suspected around possible cist graves at Laugharne, which lie outside the present churchyard, but its form cannot be discerned.

James suggests that the term *bangor*, albeit later, can be applied to these outer enclosures (James 1994, 404; 1997 1997, 7). They may represent a 'weak' boundary around the more substantial, inner enclosure - which may then be termed a *llan* - that developed into the churchyard. It is suggested above that these outer enclosures may have had a variety of functions - as cemetery, as sanctuary/*noddfa*, as space for an additional chapel, or perhaps agricultural plots. They may sometimes merely have marked the extent of ecclesiastical ownership. Similar enclosures have again be identified in Cornwall, some of them very large indeed (Preston-Jones 1992, 120). A number of sites that exist in the record under the Site Type 'vallum enclosure' appear to represent these enclosure, so this somewhat unsatisfactory and out-dated term has been removed from the regional SMR.

Re-use of Roman sites

Llandeulyddog was established immediately outside of, and to the southeast of the east gate of the defended Roman town of Carmarthen (*Moridunum*), the *civitas* capital of the Demetae and the only Roman town in southwest Wales (Fig. 9). The location of the early medieval site is in itself insufficient evidence for continuing secular settlement into the post-Roman period and it is more likely that the area was already occupied by a Roman cemetery (James 1980a, 21). Although no evidence for Roman burial was produced the 1979 excavations, a Roman cremation was revealed during an evaluation undertaken in 2001 by Cambria Archaeology between the Roman town and amphitheatre, on the northeast side of the Roman east gate (Crane 2001).

Fig. 9 - Carmarthen: Llandeulyddog (beneath priory) and St Peters, relative to Roman town of Moridunum



Better evidence for some form of continuing, or resumed secular settlement at *Moridunum* may be provided by the location of the parish church, Carmarthen St Peter, immediately within the site of the Roman west gate (Fig. 9). This is paralleled at a number of Anglo-Saxon churches where the location is thought to be significant. Gateways were landmarks, they forced travellers to pass the churches, and were symbolic in a Christian context (Morris 1989, 214-8). The location of St Peters suggests that the Roman gateway and main east-west street - which is diverted around the churchyard - were still in use when the church was built, and therefore that some form of settlement lay within the Roman town defences during the early medieval period.

The church at Llanfair-ar-y-bryn, Llandovery, lies centrally within the Roman fort of *Alabum* which still exists as a standing earthwork. Although there is no direct evidence for an early medieval origin the siting is significant, as it is at the former Pumsaint Chapel, which occupied a similar position within the Roman fort of *Louentium*. The significance of the latter site is difficult to assess - it lay within Cwmwd Cao and was subordinate to Cynwyl Gaeo Church and Talley Abbey during the post-Conquest period, the fluctuating fortunes of which have been discussed, in relation to Llandeilo Fawr, in Section 4.1 above. However, it appears to have originally been a 'Teilo' church which had received an additional dedication to the 'five saints' by 1130, when it appears as 'Llandeilo Pumsaint Caer Gaeo' in a papal bull concerning the Llandaff dispute (Davies 1946, 248). There remains the possibility that it featured in the suggested Cynwyl Gaeo - Llandeilo Fawr - Talley sequence described above.

The fort and gold mines at Pumsaint were clearly regarded as a high-status site well into the post-Roman period, and equally clearly influenced the siting of both Cynwyl Gaeo Church and the high-status secular site(s) suggested by the 'Telych' marginalia in the *Lichfield Gospels* (Jones 1994, 81-95). However, further direct Roman re-use may be represented at Llandeilo Fawr which appears to overlie the main Llandovery Loughor Roman road. Both Llandeilo Fawr and the nearby Llandyfeisnat Church also lie within the immediate vicinity of the recently discovered Llandeilo Roman fort site (see Section 4.2). As in Cao, the tradition of status attached to the Roman site appears to have lingered, but the evidence for associated early medieval secular settlement, beneath Dinefwr Castle, is more equivocal (Edwards and Lane 1988, 62). The location of the Pontargothi cists cemetery suggests the possibility

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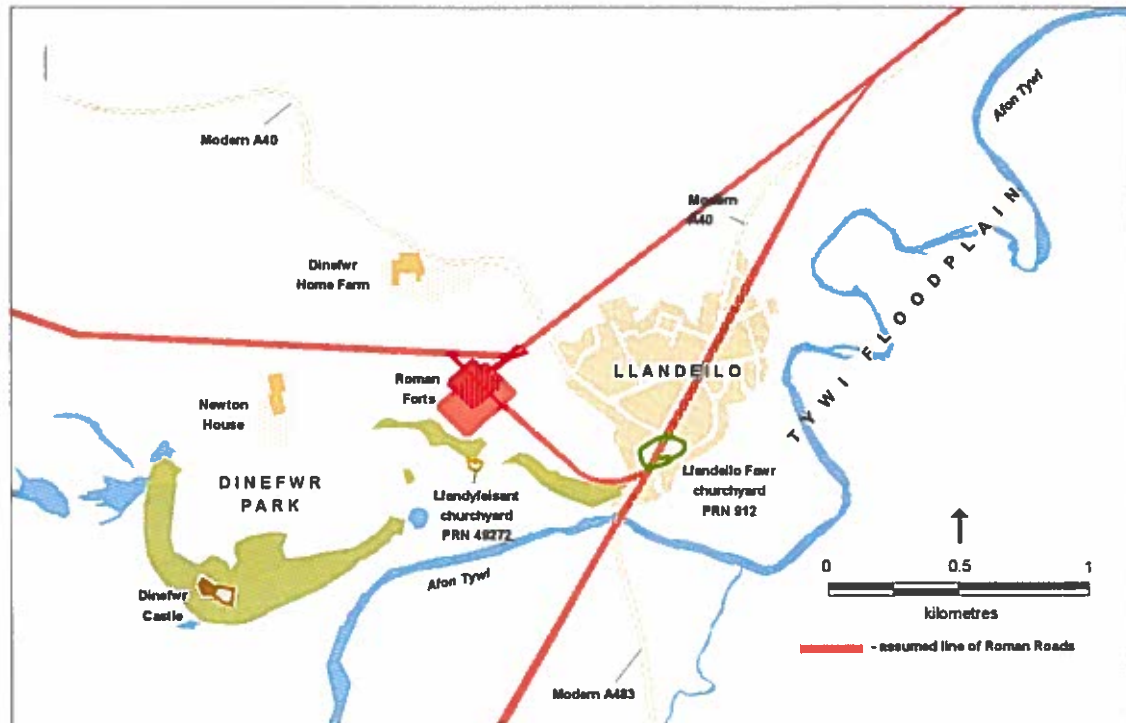
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that the early medieval Llanyhernin Chapel site may have overlain the same Roman road. The evidence at least suggests that the road was a well-defined feature of the landscape into the medieval period, and it is of note that all Roman fort sites suggested in Carmarthenshire, and the town of *Moridunum*, are associated with post-Roman ecclesiastical activity.

The 'urns', found underneath the Eglwys Gymun and Laugharne churches in the 19th century have been mentioned above where it was suggested that it may have been bronze age. Roman cremations have also been recorded immediately beyond the churchyard at Abernant (Lewis 1833).

Fig. 10 - Llandeilo Fawr and Llandyfeisant churches in relation to the Llandeilo Roman fort site and road network.



Multiple church sites and 'capeli-y-bedd'

Multiple church sites in Wales, which may be comparable to the early medieval multiple church sites in Ireland and Anglo-Saxon England, appear to have fulfilled a number of functions. The second church - which might be smaller - may have been reserved for the ecclesiastical community, it may have housed relics or, as in a number of Welsh sites, was constructed over the grave of the founding saint himself (Edwards 1992, 7). These *capeli-y-bedd*, where they survive, are late medieval buildings but, as at Clynog Fawr, Gwynedd, can overlie earlier structures (*ibid.*).

There is good antiquarian evidence for a churchyard chapel - probably a *capeli-y-bedd* - at Llanpumsaint where 'the ruins of a little Chapell (whither) on Sundays in wet weather the country people resorted... to dance' was recorded north of the church in 1710 (RCAHMW 1917, 180 no.541). There is evidence of perhaps three churches at Llangeler - the parish church itself, which was entirely rebuilt in the 19th century, a possible *capeli-y-bedd* which may have adjoined the church (*ibid.*, 162 no.473), as at Clynog Fawr and possibly Rhoscrowdder in Pems., and thirdly a well-chapel, also dedicated to St Celer (Jones 1954, 164), which lay 100m northeast of the churchyard within the large, possible ecclesiastical enclosure defined by field boundaries (see Section 4.2).



'Leacht' sites

A masonry structure with stone foundations at Llansadwrn, Carms., has been interpreted as a *leacht*, or a field-altar similar in type to early medieval-medieval Irish examples of *altoir beg*, by George Treherne in 1907 (Edwards forthcoming; RCAHM 1917, 187-8 no.557). However the antiquity of the site is debatable. The parish boundary between Llansadwrn and Llandawke (later Llanddowror) parishes clearly runs through the site, but Llansadwrn parish is a late medieval, or probably a post-medieval creation from Laugharne parish. The field-name 'Parc-y-cerrig Sanctaidd' was, according to the RCAHM, used for the site on the Llandawke parish tithe survey of 1839 (RCAHM 1917, 187-8 no.557), but in fact the schedule gives the field-name as 'Tafarn Diflas' (schedule no. 17); the Llansadwrn tithe map of 1843 just calls the field 'Slang' (schedule no. 23). Mary Curtis referred to the site as the 'Hollis Stone Field' in 1880, and described the site in terms of local folklore (RCAHM 1917, 187-8 no.557). In fact, the first use of the name appears to have been in 1902 when the enclosure wall was built. However, 17th century deeds refer to the presence of 'holy stones' within the fields of Llansadwrn parish (Ken Murphy DAT, pers. comm.).

Nancy Edwards has recently suggested that the 'ring-crosses' are not of early medieval type – in fact, they are not crosses at all (Edwards forthcoming). She regards the site as post-medieval and has suggested that it might represent the base of a windmill (*ibid.*), and indeed it does occupy a high, level plateau fully taking account of the prevailing wind. In such an interpretation, the site was chosen for the parish boundary purely out of convenience. However, it is rather small to be a windmill base.

In a contrasting view, J. Wyn Evans regards the cross-incised stone PRN 9941 as a genuine Group II ECM erected on the site after it had become disused as an altar, but perpetuating its religious associations. Its true purpose therefore remains unknown.

Undeveloped cemeteries

Finally, something must be said about those undeveloped cemeteries that are seemingly indicated by Early Christian Monuments and place-name evidence. They total only nine, in contrast with the 45 suggested in Pembrokeshire. These sites are normally the most difficult to identify and assess, and there may of course be many more unrecognised sites.

They are all rather doubtful, comprising four sites associated with ECM findspots, discussed in Section 4.2, a field name Cae yr hen fynwent, in Pencarreg, and a dubious record at Llain Ddineu, Penboyr, which may refer to a prehistoric cemetery. However, they also include Llan, Llanboidy, discussed above, and the cist cemetery observed at the Salutation Inn, Pontargothi (which may be associated with Pontargothi Chapel). All other potential cemetery sites are associated with 'capel' etc. place-name elements. Their distribution, as in Pembrokeshire, is interesting, some of them occupying inland, mid-upland 'plateau' sites. Some of them may have developed chapel buildings, hitherto unrecognised. However, the physical evidence suggests that some did not and were disused, or relocated at an early date. An analysis of the factors which influenced continuity and development, or militated against it, will form part of Stage 2 of the EME project.

4.1.5 Early Christian Monuments

Early Christian Monuments (ECMs) are a complex and problematical resource. Neither dating nor interpretation is straightforward, while by no means all are ecclesiastical. Many are not firmly provenanced; ECMs are also notoriously mobile, often having been re-used as gate-posts and cattle-rubbing stones throughout the historic period, or secondarily imported into churchyards. Nevertheless, as Nash-Williams noted in his corpus, *The Early Christian Monuments of Wales*, such stones remain 'the principal material remains of the centuries that elapsed between the end of Roman occupation and the coming of the Normans' (Nash-Williams 1950, 1).

A new corpus is currently being prepared by Dr Nancy Edwards, who is responsible for Southwest Wales, with John Lewis and Dr Mark Redknap, under the aegis of the Board of Celtic Studies and the National Museums & Galleries of Wales, in which the problems are addressed (Edwards 2001). It is intended, in this report, only to provide a brief resumé of their conclusions, and no discussion of



epigraphy etc. is included. The main aim of EME Stage I is to identify new cemetery/chapel sites from ECM evidence, using Edwards' assessments of their provenance.

An issue that has been highlighted is the complexity of dating, and the rather arbitrary nature of Nash-Williams' classification and chronology. Nevertheless, as an interim statement this report, and the catalogues in the appendices, follow Nash-Williams' classification -

Group I	Inscribed stones	5th - 7th century
Group II	Cross-incised stones	7th - 9th century
Group III	Cross-slabs and high crosses	9th - 13th century

The SMR currently records 57 ECMs/possible ECMs in Carmarthenshire (excluding sites recorded as 'crosses' which are place-names only). Two records appear to relate to the same stone, while 20 are not recognised as early medieval by Edwards who has however identified one further stone which is not yet on the record. In contrast to Pembrokeshire, the highest proportion of these appear to be Group I ECMs, closely followed by Group III; there are comparatively few Group II ECMs.

The greatest problem facing the EME project is the mobility of the stones. It is not possible to state categorically that *any* of them are *in situ*. Many stones were secondarily imported onto church sites during the historic period, but it is not always possible to say when. Some assistance is provided by antiquarian statements such as those of Edward Lhuyd, but these normally are 18th century at the earliest.

Nancy Edwards notes furthermore that a significant number were discovered in the fabric of medieval churches during Victorian church restoration (Edwards 2001, 16). Nevertheless, in southwest Wales this fabric is primarily late-medieval, from the 14th-15th century, which may represent the date of the import. Even if they are *in situ*, or early imports, how many of them indicate a 'formal' ecclesiastical site, be it church or cemetery? Edwards considers that whilst a significant number of monuments of all types functioned as symbols of landownership, either secular or by the church, most Group I and II ECMs were primarily commemorative (*ibid.*, 17). In the words of Edwards 'identifying the original locations of the monuments can help to identify many early cemetery and ecclesiastical sites' (*ibid.*). Again, it may be noted that there are far fewer of these 'lost' sites in Carmarthenshire than in Pembrokeshire - four as opposed to fifteen. Stage 2 will attempt to identify these sites.

In Carmarthenshire, Group I ECMs are distributed across the county but there is a concentration within Cantref Gwarthaf in the west of the county. This westerly bias has been associated with late-Roman - post-Roman settlement from Ireland (James 1987, 65). However, Edwards concludes that 70% of Group I ECMs in southwest Wales were associated with non-monastic church sites, suggesting that the ecclesiastical infrastructure, based on numerous churches serving small areas, was established at a very early date (Edwards 2001, 39). Sixth century cemetery sites are suggested at Cynwyl Gaeo and Llandeilo Fawr, each with a Group I ECM, while the possible site at Maes Llanwrthwl (Cynwyl Gaeo) is associated with two Group I ECMs. The provenance of the ECM from Castell Dwyran is unknown, as noted in Section 4.3. Similarly, the Group I ECMs from Eglwys Gymun, Egremont, Llanboidy, Llandawke, Llanfihangel-ar-arth, Llansaint, Llanwinio and Merthyr churches may or may not be *in situ*. The 'Severini' stone from Newchurch may have marked an unidentified cemetery, while the Group I ECMs from Capel Mair (Llangeler), Henllan (Abergwili) and Maes Nonni (Llanllwni) were associated with 'lost' chapel sites.

Group II ECMs are predominantly found in southwest Wales with a particular concentration in the northern part of the area, again suggesting Irish contacts (*ibid.*, 39). While some may indicate landownership, their occurrence suggests that the majority were commemorative grave markers denoting church/cemetery sites (*ibid.*). In Pembrokeshire there is little overlap with Group I stones suggesting a wave of new foundations in the 7th-9th centuries. In Carmarthenshire however, one of the few Group II stones is the re-used Group I ECM from Egremont. The stone at Llanpumsaint Church is probably *in situ* but that in Llansawel church may not be. Cemeteries (possibly undeveloped) are suggested by Group II ECMs at Cilymaenllwyd (Penbre) and Cefn Cethin (Llandeilo Fawr), possibly Closteg (Llangyndeyrn) and at the 'lost' Capel-y-groes, Abergwili.

Group III ECMs are mainly associated with the major churches and monasteries, and are visible symbols of prestige (*ibid.*). They occur on established sites and in contrast to Pembrokeshire, again,



they do not appear to occur at undeveloped sites. The important Group III ECM groups at Llanddowror, where they are very late, and Llandeilo Fawr confirm their continuing status. Llanarthne Church has been suggested by Nancy Edwards as the original site of the fine cross said to have been brought from the defended enclosure site at Cae Castell (Edwards forthcoming), and there are also Group III stones at Laugharne, Llanglydwen and Llangynwr. The well-known, scheduled 'Canna's Chair' stone, from Llangan, has been suggested by Nancy Edwards to be an antiquarian fake (Edwards, forthcoming). However, the stone is shown in this field, named 'Parc Maen' ('stone field'), on the Llangan tithe map of 1844, and it may have been more-or-less *in situ*. Moreover, the field contains an undated rectilinear cropmark ?enclosure complex, which may or may not be associated.

4.1.6 Dedications and cults

The use of dedications in early medieval studies has been the subject of some controversy, largely arising from the rather uncritical work of E. G. Bowen (Bowen 1969; see Edwards and Lane 1992, 2). Nevertheless it is generally accepted that they can play a role in determining early church sites.

However, as Wendy Davies has pointed out, it is in many cases clear that dedications arose centuries after the supposed lifetime of a saint either because of the popularity of his cult, or through acquisition by a mother house (Davies 1982, 146). Without early evidence it is impossible to assign an early medieval date to a dedication. It has been noted above that in most cases, the documentation is post-Conquest at the earliest, but most medieval documents - such as the *Taxatio* of 1291 - list churches by place-name only, and contain very few dedications. The Welsh *Llan* - and *Eglwys* - place-names of course normally record their dedications, but it is not known for sure just how old these were even when recorded in the medieval period. And some 'Celtic' dedications may be secondary, for instance the St Ystyffan dedication at Llansteffan which may have displaced an original dedication to the Latin St Stephen.

Dedications to the favoured Latin cults of St Mary and St Michael were furthermore made on both sides of the conquest. St Michael was always held in particular affection within Wales, particularly in southwest Wales where his dedications are more widespread than those to St Mary. A number of 'Llanfihangels' are noted elsewhere in Wales in pre-Conquest entries in the Llandaff Charters, one of them from the 8th century (Davies 1979, 106 no.167), and the Michael dedication at Llanfihangel Croesfeini (Newchurch) appears to be a definite pre-Conquest dedication.

Carmarthenshire dedications were the subject of a comprehensive study by Nigel Yates (Yates 1973 & 1974). In certain cases it can be demonstrated that present dedications are secondary. Llandawke Church has reverted to its original dedication to St Odoceus after having been rededicated to St Margaret in the late 14th century; Eglwys Gymun (St Cynin?) and Pendine (St Teilo) were rededicated to St Margaret at the same time. The place-name St Clears may preserve an original dedication to St Celer, as at Llangeler (Evans 1991, 242), while Yates has suggested that the churches at Llanarthne and Llangadog are probably 'Dewi' churches that now carry dedications to their lay benefactors Arthen and Cadog (Yates 1973, 58). Thomas similarly suggests that the 'Dingad' at Llandingat was a lay benefactor (Thomas 1994, 124). These examples may be compared with those in Anglesey which have led to the suggestion that many more dedications in Wales may commemorate founders (Butler 1996, 104).

The Dewi dedications at Llanarthne and Llangadog, and at Abergwili, are generally thought of as pre-Conquest (Yates 1973, 58). The latter two sites, moreover, were collegiate churches of the diocese in the 13th century. However, there can be no suggestion that this denotes former *clas* status - their collegiate status was a late, *de novo* institution by Bishop Bek in the 1280s, and at Llangadog was only temporary, being moved to Abergwili before the decade was out (James 1980b, 20-21). Furthermore, the Abergwili college may not have been sited within the parish churchyard, but in the neighbouring Bishops Palace (*ibid.*).

The Dewi cult appears always to have been secondary to the Teilo cult in Carmarthenshire. The impact of the latter on the Carmarthenshire landscape, both ecclesiastical and secular, is discussed above in Section 4.1. No other cult approached its influence in the county, as the number of well-evidenced Teilo dedications and former dedications amply demonstrate. However, smaller cults appear to have existed. The Paulinus cult, around his supposed monastery in northeast Carmarthenshire, has also been



mentioned. Llanddeusant Church has, possibly doubtfully, been proposed as the cult centre (Doble 1971; Thomas 1994, 100-102) but there was at least one St Paulinus dedication within the parish of Llanfair-ar-y-bryn while Llandingat may too have been a Paulinus church (Thomas 1994, 124).

A similar cluster of churches, dedicated to St Llawddog, occurs in Cantref Emlyn and includes the church at Cilgerran in Pembs. Here the majority of dedications may be rather later, possibly post-Conquest. They form a cluster around the mother church at Cenarth, itself originally dedicated to Teilo but firmly associated with Llawddog by the late 12th century (Thorpe 1978, 173). However, Penboyr may originally have been chapelry to Cenarth parish, probably established in the post-Conquest period immediately adjoining a motte castle, taking its dedication from the mother church. The satellite at Llanllawddog may similarly be late, possibly resulting from a persistent 'Llawddog' cult that was as active in the 15th century as ever (Ludlow 2000, 80), as witnessed by a touching *cywydd* written to the saint by the poet Lewis Glyn Cothi -

*The countryside, its woods, its seed corn,
Llawddog is responsible for all its glory.
May Llawddog give success
To his parish, his men, his children,
To every harrow and every yoke,
To every plough,
And every furrow and every hill,
To every ridge and every grain of earth.*

4.1.7 Ecclesiastical place-name evidence

The evidence from place-name elements is similarly problematical when applied to the pre-Conquest period. It has been seen above just how few locations are recorded in contemporary sources prior to the 12th century, so that in most cases the original form of a name is not known. Furthermore, the use of such 'defining' elements as *llan* could continue until the 20th century. This report largely follows the criteria suggested by Tomos Roberts (Roberts 1992, 41-44).

Latin loan-word elements

The use of Latin loan-word elements is fairly widespread in southwest Wales and appears to confirm the suggestion that, despite its primary, westerly influences, the Christianisation of the region resulted from missionary activity emerging from the east (Thomas 1994, 89-93). The *merthyr* element, derived from the Latin 'martyrium' and probably denoting a cemetery that developed around a martyr's grave (Roberts 1992, 42), is present at both Llangeler, recorded as 'Merthyr Celer' in the *Taxatio* (Record Commission 1802, 272) and at Merthyr parish church where the dedication, to 'St Enfael', may be spurious (RCAHMW 1925, 215 no.630 - the present 'Martin' dedication may be derived from the word 'martyr'). A *merthyr* element may also possibly be contained in the alternative name 'Eglwys Fair Mathared', recorded in the 17th century, for Eglwys Fair a Churig, Henllan Amgoed (RCAHMW 1925, 42 no.137).

The *eglwys* element, derived from the Latin 'ecclesia' (church), is much more widespread and its frequency is at odds with Roberts' suggestion that 'there is never more than one *Eglwys*- name in a commote'. In Cwmwd Derllys, for example, Newchurch St Michael was recorded as 'Eglwys Newydd' in 1129-34 (Davies 1946, 254 D.99) while Llangain was recorded as 'Eglwys Cain' in 1174-6 (Roberts 1992, 42). Elsewhere, some of the widespread 'parc-yr-eglwys' names may merely denote tracts of ecclesiastical land. It may also be noted that in southwest Wales, 'eglwys' normally occurs only in association with a Mary dedication or with an adjective, suggesting that the 'Gymun' element at Eglwys Gymyn may be derived from a toponome rather than a St Cynin dedication.

Roberts suggests that *mynwent*, or cemetery (from the Latin 'monumentum'), is a post-medieval borrowing. Nevertheless, its importance should not be diminished. While many a 'Hen fynwent' name - rare in Carmarthenshire but plentiful in Pembrokeshire - may denote a post-Conquest cemetery, the majority of these names occur at open sites, some with cist-grave evidence, and would thus appear to relate to early medieval undeveloped cemeteries.

The loan-word *capel* (from 'capella' or chapel) occurs, as Roberts suggests, either as post-medieval or undated usage (Roberts 1992, 43). The element *myfyr* (from the Latin 'memoria') does not seem to have been borrowed in southwest Wales.

English loan-word elements

It has been suggested that *betws* is a later post-Conquest borrowing from the Saxon 'bed-hus', but Roberts has noted that it does not appear to occur in England (Roberts 1992, 44), whilst it is uncertain precisely what institution 'bed-hus' relates to ('bede-house' - oratory?, field-chapel?). It has restricted occurrence in southwest Wales, mainly concentrated in Carmarthenshire, but does occur at one parish church, Betws (St Davids), suggested by Yates to be a post-Conquest 'Dewi' church established after the surrounding area of Cantref Gwyr had been acquired by Cantref Bychan (Yates 1973, 63). Betws Chapel, Trelech a'r Betws, gave its name to a joint parish but, like the remainder of 'Betws' names in the county, has no suspected pre-Conquest origins and the parish was referred to as just 'Trenleth' in 1291 (Record Commission 1802, 272).

Welsh elements

The most common Welsh place-name element is *llan* which, from its origins denoting any kind of land, became restricted to enclosed land (Roberts 1992, 43). Its ecclesiastical usage is widespread, but it is normally applied to an enclosed, developed cemetery ie. a churchyard. Roberts suggests that at some sites it may have supplanted other ecclesiastical elements such as *merthyr* and *betws*, but this appears to be at odds with the late usage of the latter element suggested by Roberts (*ibid.*, 44).

Although *llan-* has been applied to new sites throughout the historic period, its pre- and early post-Conquest usage is recorded at a number of sites in southwest Wales eg. Llanddowror and Llandeilo Fawr. Furthermore, its occurrence at otherwise unrecorded locations may be significant, particularly when used with the adjective *hen* (or 'old').

The element *bedd* or *beddau* ('graves') is widespread in the county, but is applied to inhumations of all periods being also encountered at bronze age burial sites, and post-medieval cemeteries. The use of *noddfa* and *clas* is more precise, as described above, but they are both uncommon elements in southwest Wales. However, they can (like the more general *sanctaid*, 'holy') be encountered as field-name elements. *Ty-gwyn* and *maes-gwyn* ('white house', 'white field') are, from time-to-time, suggested as denoting lost ecclesiastical sites but there is very little evidence to substantiate this interpretation. The element *bod* ('home' or 'abode') is mainly restricted to north Wales and does not seem to have been used in southwest Wales.

4.1.8 Topographic evidence

There is generally little evidence that Carmarthenshire churches have been relocated, either during the pre- or post-Conquest periods, and their very location may be among the best evidence for early ecclesiastical activity - and continuity.

Topographic location

Topographic location has long been subject to discussion in relation to church dating. However, as E. G. Bowen pointed out, well-evidenced early church sites can occupy a number of site-categories (Bowen 1969, 225).

As a criterion topography may then have limited value. While a number of well-evidenced early sites in southwest Wales, and most cist-cemeteries and Group I ECMs, have a coastal (or even island) location, a number of documented early sites are situated well inland. These include, for instance three of the seven 'bishop-houses', which are possibly from the 6th century, and Cenarth, Llanddowror, Llandeilo Fawr and Waun Henllan (Llandybïe). Elevation and relief may have had a role - a large number of sites are situated on hill-slopes or spurs - but then the relief of Wales, as in other western regions, would tend naturally to dictate this, while Llawhaden and Nevern, which appear not to have been relocated, occupy valley floors.



For various reasons, not all now tenable, Bowen did favour valley-head sites (*ibid.*). It may be incidental that such sites tend to occur on spring-lines. The association between some early church sites and springs/wells, still regarded as significant (Edwards 1996, 58-9), can be clearly demonstrated only at a limited number of sites in Carmarthenshire. For example, of the 12 'Grade A' sites, only two are associated with 'holy' wells, at Llandeilo Fawr and Llangeler. 'Holy' wells have been amply discussed by Francis Jones who regarded the majority as a Christianisation of pagan sites (Jones 1954, 26-7) - with the implication that early church distribution was at least partly dictated by the distribution of such wells and springs. But the holy-well cult, once established, took hold and developed. It was already flourishing by the 12th century when the poet Gwynfardd Brycheiniog, in his '*Canu y Dewi*' ('Song to David'), singled out the '*Dewi*' wells - few of which can now be identified with certainty - for their cures (Lewis 1931, 43-52). However in southwest Wales it appears to have reached its peak on the eve of the Reformation, to judge from the evidence of George Owen (Owen 1897, 509). Many springs/wells may have received their dedications during the intervening centuries. Nevertheless, the EME project has included all wells within 200m of ecclesiastical sites as significant.

Paired sites, proximity and intervisibility

Church location may have been partly dictated by - or has given rise to - secular settlement patterns. Following the observations of John Lewis, Terry James has identified a number of Carmarthenshire sites that occur in close proximity to iron age defended enclosures (T. James 1992, 71-2.). This proximity may suggest continued secular use (or re-use) of these enclosures into the early medieval period. They include Llangynog where the oval churchyard lies next to a cropmark enclosure of similar form (James 1994, 405) and Llanddowror, where the medieval castle may occupy an iron age site (T. James 1992, 71). In addition, Heather James has argued that such proximity may also indicate iron age origins for some of these churchyards, reflecting close associations observed at a number of enclosure sites within west Wales, for instance at Dan-y-coed and Woodside Camps near Llawhaden (James 1994, 405). Such 'paired sites' may be a product of native systems of partible inheritance and James suggests that the cemetery sites may have become kin burial grounds through gift or the presence of a founder's grave (*ibid.*).

The EME project in Carmarthenshire has recorded few more ecclesiastical sites in close proximity to iron age enclosures, in contrast to Pembrokeshire where they are frequently associated. However, Henllan Amgoed churchyard lies in an area with a dense concentration of cropmark enclosures, probably iron age or Romano-British in date (James 1984, 17), while Llansadwrnen Church is just 900m distant from the re-used defended enclosure at Coygan Camp - the only definite early medieval secular site in Carmarthenshire, producing evidence of high-status activity dateable to the first half of the 6th century (Edwards and Lane 1988, 45-6). As noted above, the evidence for early medieval settlement at Dinefwr Castle, near Llandeilo Fawr, is more equivocal (*ibid.*, 62).

However it can be observed that in the Anglo-Norman boroughs of Cardigan, Carmarthen, Kidwelly, Laugharne, Llandovery, Pembroke, St Clears and Tenby, the parish churches all stand outside the initial defended areas (see Soulsby 1983), in sharp distinction to the close church-castle association normally expected in planted settlements. This phenomenon has been commented upon by Murphy (Murphy 1997, 154), and demands explanation. Were the Normans reluctant to establish military/secular settlements close to existing ecclesiastical sites, and to relocate such sites? Or were many of these castles established over pre-existing *llys* sites? Laugharne and Kidwelly castle, for example, were named from their respective *cwmwdau* - were they both earlier *llys* sites? A hoard found near Laugharne contained 60 coins from the 9th-11th centuries (Davies 1982, 54), which may suggest that a high status site was located somewhere near the castle.

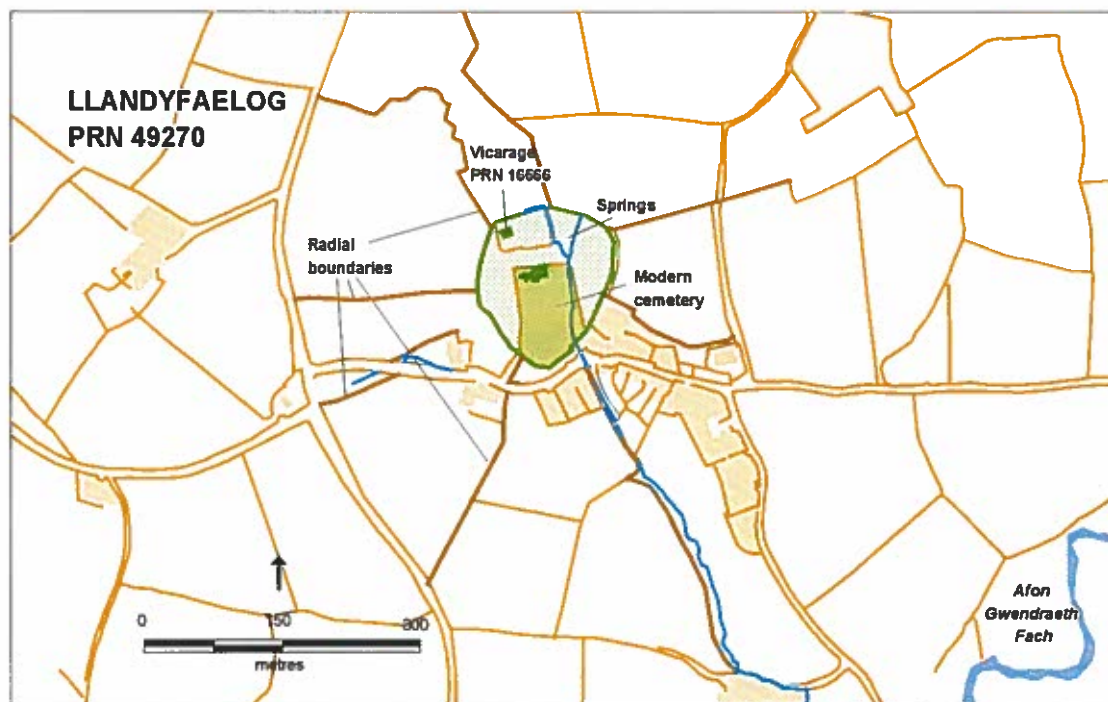
The proximity of the churches in Cynwyl Gaeo to the Roman fort and mine site at Pumsaint was noted in Section 4.3. Many more churches are located within a 1km corridor of the main Roman road to the west, which has now been traced to the borders of Pembrokeshire by Heather James *et al.* (see James 1991 & 2000; Page *et al.*, forthcoming). They include Abergwili, Castell Dwyran, Llanegwad, Llandingat, Llangadog, and Llangathen. Llanycrwys lies within 500m of the road between Pumsaint and the site of the fort of *Bremia*, in Ceredigion. In addition, both Llanybydder and Pencarreg lie within 500m of the Carmarthen-*Bremia* road. The road may have influenced the siting of all these churches.

Proximity and intervisibility may have a role in prospecting for other re-use sites. They are an important consideration in the interpretation of prehistoric ritual/funerary sites, which were often deliberately sited to exploit intervisibility (see Cadw Prehistoric Ritual and Funerary Sites Project). A number of churches lie in prominent locations intervisible with, but distant from, equally prominent round barrows, for instance Eglwys Fair a Churig (Henllan Amgoed) and Llanfihangel Croesfeini (Newchurch), and Llanglydwen where the large recumbent stone beneath the present church fabric may support a bronze age origin for the site.

Landscape morphology

The EME project included an assessment of the relationship between churchyards and the surrounding landscape. Carmarthenshire's rural churches appear to have often had little influence on settlement as it developed through the later medieval period. Often, moreover, a church they may not even be a primary physical presence within the landscapes which it later came to dominate. The pattern of small irregular fields that is so characteristic of the lowland parts of the county has yet to be properly dated, but in many areas it may be early, possibly even iron age (Murphy and Ludlow 2000, 21), and much of it in southeast Carmarthenshire was certainly in place by the 16th century, when new enclosure was recorded in many parts of the southeast of the county (Rees 1953). Nowhere in the county, however, do medieval churchyards appear to interrupt earlier field boundaries as appears to be the case at eg. St Petrox, Pembrokeshire.

Fig. 11 - churchyard and landscape at Llandyfaelog (Cedweli)



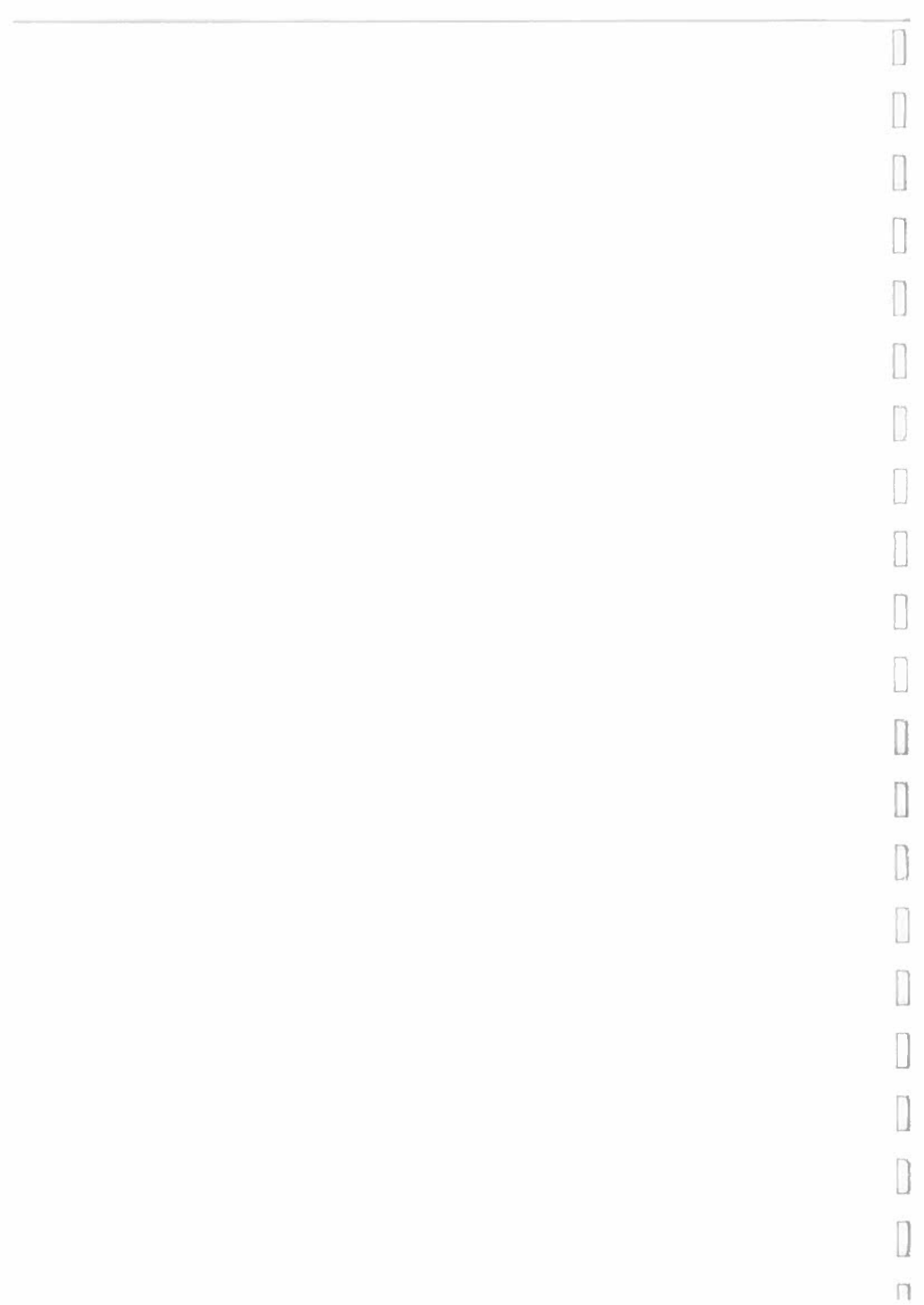
Few churches, moreover, appear to be nuclear to these informal boundaries, unlike Pembrokeshire where more of the landscape may have remained unenclosed for longer. An exception is provided by those churchyards which appear to be central to radial boundaries which, in plan, are like the spokes of a wheel (Fig. 11). These radial boundaries are particularly pronounced at Llandyfaelog, but can also be detected at Llanegwad, Llansadwrn and Pendine. Kisson has argued that the similar boundaries at Jeffreyston, in Pems., belong to an infield-outfield system that may be pre-Conquest (Kisson 1997, 133). It must always be borne in mind, however, that churchyard boundaries, far from being static, change through time.



The influence of Carmarthenshire's rural churches on settlement and nucleation as it developed through the medieval period has been slight, even in the Anglicised areas. At a few sites in the latter region, for example Llansaint (St Ishmaels), Llansadwrnen and Llanybri (Llansteffan), the church is nuclear to a planned, Anglo-Norman vill, but these are exceptional. Most churches are not only rural, but often inaccessible and far from centres of habitation either past or present. Few appear to be associated with medieval deserted settlements (DMVs), although a bond hamlet was recorded at Eglwys Gymun in 1307 (T. James 1992, 62). All these factors argue for early origins at many sites.

Fig. 12 - churchyard and landscape at Pendine (Gwarthaf), plan showing former? green/churchyard and radial boundaries and trackways





4.2 Results from Stage 2

Stage 2 of the project comprised analysis of aerial photographs (APs) of all 108 sites with potential early medieval ecclesiastical origins that emerged from Stage 1, selective tithe map consultation for field names, and selective field visits in order to assess their nature, extent, condition, archaeological potential, threats and value.

Budgetary realism meant that only the 1955 Meridian Airmaps, held by Cambria Archaeology, were analysed, supplemented with DAT oblique aerial photographs where coverage was missing, and that tithe maps were only consulted for field names where a site could be pinned down to a specific area. However, a substantial number of sites in the county lacked any AP coverage at Cambria Archaeology.

Field visits were made to 48 of the 108 sites arising from Stage 1. Many of the 108 sites were represented by practising churchyards and, with a few exceptions, sites that were visited during the pan-Wales Cadw Historic Churches Survey (1995-98) were not re-visited.

As a result of this Stage 2 work, the list of 108 sites was amended and refined to a list of 115 sites, as follows -

	<u>2004</u>	<u>(2002)</u>
▪ Grade A sites (high probability)	11	(13)
▪ Grade B sites (medium probability)	25	(27)
▪ Grade C sites (low probability)	23	(24)
▪ Grade D sites (possible sites)	56	(44)
In addition -		
▪ Early Christian Monuments (ECMs)	45	

See Section 1.2 for a full list of these sites and monuments.

The Stage 2 assessment involved a thorough rationalisation of these records. In many cases, new Primary Record Numbers (PRNs) were given to the potential early medieval phases of eg. church and chapel sites, while further PRNs were given to sites newly identified during the course of the project. In other cases, records were deleted when found to be invalid for any reason. For instance, 'Celtic dedication' was considered invalid as a site type and the record of the dedication was merged with the site PRN.

ECMs were not visited having been subject to a recent re-assessment by Dr Nancy Edwards, John Lewis and Dr Mark Redknap (Edwards forthcoming), from which separate management recommendations will arise. However, baseline information from this re-assessment was added to both the database and report, and basic recommendations have been made.

The main outcome from Stage 2 has been the enhancement and refinement of both the SMR and the schedule, with the formulation of management strategies, scheduling priorities and recommendations for future archaeological investigation.

In addition, a large number of new sites and features were identified. Full descriptions of all sites and features are included in the gazetteer which forms Part 2 of this report. A number of these sites are illustrated by plans which are sketch only, and not to be scaled from. The main new findings are summarised below.

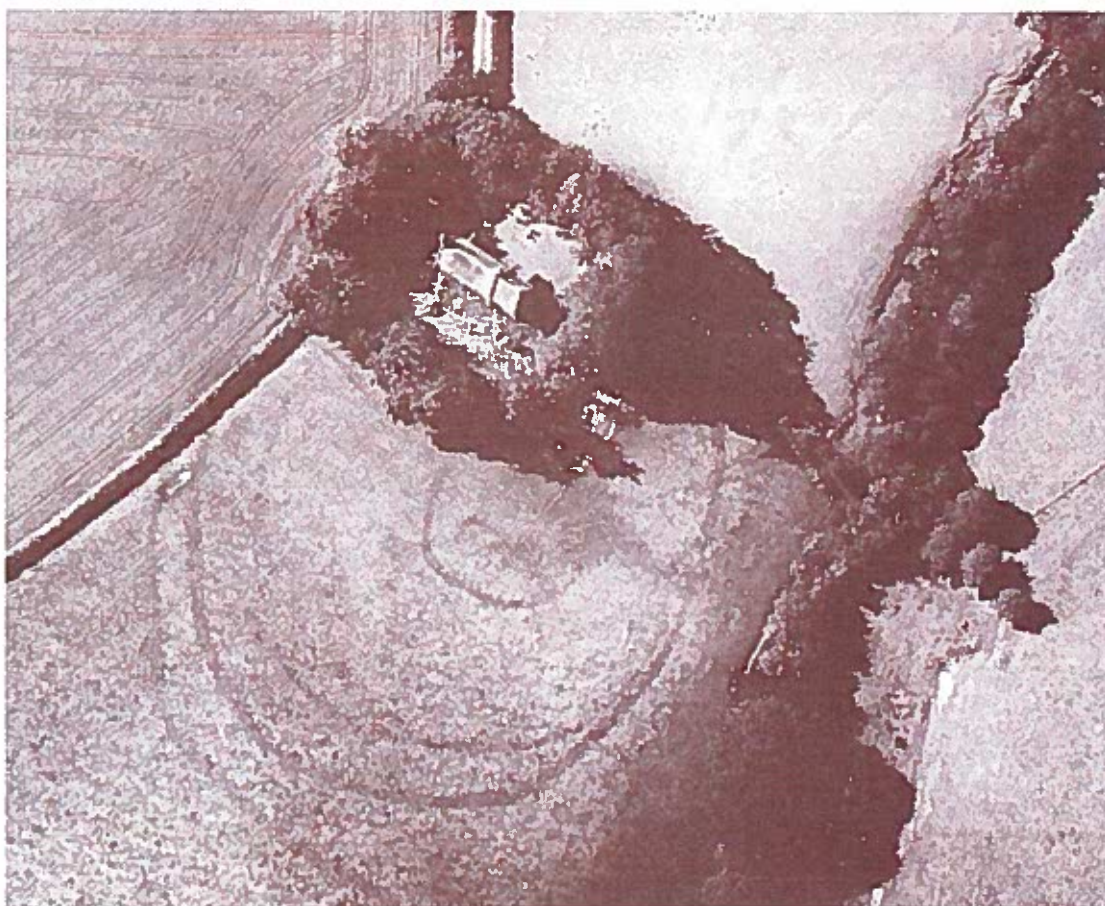


4.2.1 Possible church/chapel sites discovered in 2003

Stage 2 of the project identified several features which may relate to previously unknown church or chapel sites. The most significant may be the cropmark observed at the important Llangan Church complex.

The churchyard is associated with a large number of cropmark features, probably multi-period, and a possible ECM. It overlies the northwest quadrant of a circular cropmark enclosure comprising two (or three) concentric enclosures (James 1984, 15-16; James 1992, 66-7), the smaller, suboval inner enclosure measuring approximately 30m in diameter, the outer approximately 75m. The cropmarks, which are scheduled, appear to represent an iron age concentric antenna enclosure. However the present church lies outside the inner enclosure. It appears in fact to overlie the outer enclosure ditch. Christian burial within the silted ditches of iron age enclosures has been encountered at a number of sites in southwest Wales and this may be another example of a such a cemetery - one that became developed, possibly by the erection of a chapel over a special grave. Perhaps the inner enclosure never underwent re-use - but a possible rectangular cropmark (building?) can be seen within it on aerial photographs (Fig. 14). Alternatively, the present church may represent the *capel-y-bedd* or secondary chapel site, the original church within the inner enclosure having become disused? The latter process may have occurred at St Brides Church, Pembs.

Fig. 14 - Llangan churchyard: aerial photograph from SE, showing enclosure(s), with ?rectangular cropmark inside



The church at Llanegwad may have early medieval origins. Earthwork and cropmark features belonging to an enclosure(s), and a possible building, are visible on aerial photographs in a field adjoining the churchyard, 120m southwest of the church (Fig. 15). They appear to comprise a rectilinear enclosure, approximately 70m square, containing a rectangular enclosure (or possible building?) approximately 30m east-west by 15m north-south. Other cropmarks to the north may represent an extension of the same enclosure, or a further enclosure. The nature and date of the cropmarks are unknown. However, according to local tradition, the original Llanegwad church stood 'in a field close to the site of the present church' and was turned into a dwelling during the 18th century (Sambrook and Page 1995, 59). Might the local tradition be based on fact? However, the enclosure(s) so formed (and ?building) are very regular in plan, while the church and yard were certainly in their present location by the early 19th century (Ordnance Survey 1" map, Old Series, Sheet 81). Moreover, the fields were already called 'Waun Dan-yr-eglwys', ie. 'fields below the church', by 1839 (Llanegwad parish tithe survey, schedule nos. 3291-3). The features may then be domestic, representing part of the shrunken medieval settlement of Llanegwad.

Fig. 15 - aerial photograph of Llanegwad showing earthworks/cropmarks southwest of the churchyard (centre left)



Pumsaint is known to have been the site of a medieval chapel-of-ease to Cynwyl Gaeo parish, which was also a grange chapel to Talley Abbey. It was possibly the site of 'Llandeilo Garth Teuir on the banks of the Cothi' mentioned in a 12th century entry in the *Book of Llandaff*, by 1130, and appears as 'Llandeilo Pumsaint Caer Gaeo' in a papal bull of 1130. Its precise location is unknown but it is assumed that it occupied the interior of Pumsaint Roman fort, but has so far not been revealed through excavation (B. Burnham, pers. comm.). However, an oval enclosure was observed on aerial photographs 90m south of the fort (Fig. 16). In form, the enclosure appears as a 'banjo' enclosure with earthworks/cropmarks apparently forming a funnel entrance on the east side. The enclosure itself is a slightly flattened circle with a diameter of 90m, the more prominent earthworks/cropmarks apparently

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representing a ditch, traceable through most of the circuit, and a bank traceable on the south side only. Some depressions visible in the field may represent these features. However, the siting is not at all characteristic of iron age defended 'banjo' enclosures. It occupies an alluvial floodplain near the confluence of the Afon Cothi and Afon Twrch, within which erosional and depositional features are visible. However, the features that show clearly on aerial photos are far too regular and well-defined to represent natural features. Is there any association between this enclosure and the unknown site of the early medieval – medieval Pumsaint Chapel? Was the chapel deliberately sited outside the Roman fort, as at Carmarthen Roman town and Llandeulyddog monastery? it is worth noting that the line of the Roman road south from Pumsaint fort probably runs NE-SW through the site of this possible enclosure (Ken Murphy, Cambria Archaeology, *pers. comm.*).

*Fig. 16 - aerial photograph of Pumsaint showing area of Roman fort (top)
and cropmark/earthwork enclosure (centre)*



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4.2.2 Church/chapel sites possibly located in 2003

Stage 2 also identified physical evidence possibly relating to recorded, but hitherto unidentified sites.

These include the important early church site at Llanfihangel Croesfeini, which was the site of two Group I-II ECMs, and appears to have been superseded by Newchurch parish church sometime before 1110-1129. Subsequently, the site appears to have continued as a chapelry as it was evidently rebuilt in stone, and had burial rights, but was demolished in 1847 after lone use as a tithe barn (Morgan n.d., 65). It was marked as an open rectangle on the Newchurch parish tithe map of 1844, while the field it which it stood was apparently known as 'Lan Capel'.

A slight earthwork, forming a rough circle 4m in diameter and standing to a height of approx. 0.15m, occupies the location marked on the tithe map and clearly represents the site of the building. There is now, however, no evidence of any accompanying enclosure (ie. the 'graveyard'), nor is it visible on aerial photographs. The site is elevated open and rather exposed, which may have contributed to the relocation of the church, and is now a field of rough pasture. It lies 100m WNW of a post-Conquest motte castle, which suggests that the caput of a lordship may initially have been anticipated at the site – it does not appear to have been re-established at Newchurch.

Fig. 17 - Newchurch, Llanfihangel Croesfeini: site of chapel from WNW, looking towards motte



The exact location of Llandeilo Rwnnws, the medieval grange chapel to Talley Abbey that is normally identified with the site mentioned, as 'Mainaur Brunus', in a text of the '*Llandaff Charters*' from the late 8th century (Davies 1979, 96 no.125b), is not known. It is normally regarded as having occupied the site of the later house called Llandeilo-yr-ynys (Yates 1973, 60), and indeed the south range of the farmyard exhibits a window surround that was regarded as convincingly medieval, probably *in situ*, and possibly part of the medieval chapel by George Williams, formerly of Dyfed Archaeological Trust (SMR DRF). There is also a well or spring within the farm. However, the SMR grid reference places the chapel within the field immediately to the west of the house. The authority for this is not known, and does not appear in any of the sources. The field name on the Llanegwad tithe map of 1841, 'Cae



Ysgubor' (schedule no. 981), is not significant, although the 'barn' could be derived from a converted medieval chapel. Nevertheless, this field does exhibit a large, circular earthwork bank at NGR SN 4933 2047, visible as a slight shadow, c.40m in diameter, on aerial photographs, and as a slight bowl-shaped depression in the field. It is possible that it represents an ecclesiastical enclosure, maybe the site of an early ecclesiastical establishment that later moved to the farmyard site. It may, however, not be medieval at all, and may be prehistoric, cf. the possible henge monument, lying 750 m to the north – or, occupying the Tywi floodplain as it does, be a natural feature. The field is low-intensity grazing.

Fig. 18 - Llanegwad, Llandeilo Rwnws: aerial photo showing earthwork/cropmark enclosure (centre left)



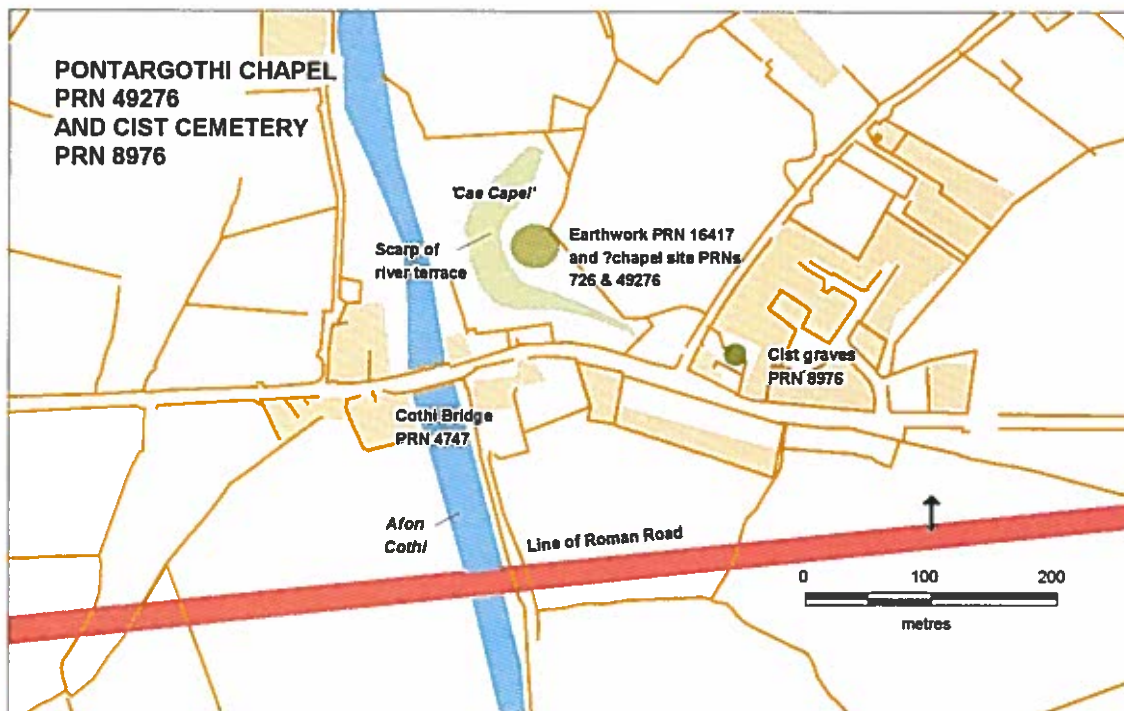
Llanegwad parish contained a further grange chapel to Talley, dedicated to St Mary, at Pontargothi. It was 'dilapidated' in 1833 when it had been converted into a stable (Lewis 1833), and is now gone but appears to have occupied a field named 'Cae'r Capel' on the tithe schedule (No. 1160). The field is occupied by a distinct river terrace, which slopes fairly steeply downhill to the west and south, creating a level platform in the middle of the field. This platform is associated with some amorphous earthworks, visible on aerial photographs, and regarded as belonging to a possible iron age defended enclosure on the SMR. Although they can be fairly confidently attributed to the chapel, it may have occupied a re-used defended enclosure. The field is now open pasture.

The chapel may have occupied the medieval 'tref' (or hamlet) of Hirnin, mentioned in the sources (Richards 1969, 114) but there appears to be some confusion as to where this hamlet was located. It may have centred on the holding called Cefn Hirnin, in the eastern part of the parish (RCAHM 1917, 118 No. 342). However, Samuel Lewis (1833) appeared fairly certain that Hirnin lay in the western part of the parish, near Egwad township ie. Llanegwad village – 'Hirnin, a joint hamlet with Egwad... occupies the left (ie. south) bank of the Cothi, near its junction with the Tywi, where it is crossed by a bridge on the high road (ie. the A40)'. Pontargothi St Mary's Chapel could then represent the



documented medieval chapel of Llanyhirnin, rather than the Cefn Hirnin in the eastern part of the parish. Moreover, the farm of Cefn Hirnin is merely labelled 'Cefn' on the Llanegwad tithe map of 1841, and is associated with no ecclesiastical field name elements. In addition, 'Llanyhirnin' and 'Pontargothi Grange' appear on separate lists of Talley possessions, but never together – implying that they were one and the same. The Pontargothi site lies just north of the A40 which here more-or-less follows the line of the main Carmarthen-Llandovery-Brecon Roman Road, close to the Roman bridging point over the Cothi, and may represent the block of land (and ecclesiastical establishment?) recorded, as 'ager Hiernin' in one of the 'Llandaff Charters' that has been dated to the late 7th century (Davies 1979, 99 no.150b), when it was probably granted to Llandeilo Fawr. It lies fairly close to a doubtful cist grave cemetery behind the Salutation Inn at Pontargothi, which lies 220m SE of the suggested chapel site. It could be that the chapel was associated with a very large burial enclosure, and that the two represent the same site. However the two sites could be entirely unrelated, and the cist cemetery site is rather more doubtful than the SMR site record form suggests; the 'stone slabs' regarded as linted-stones might in fact be part of the Roman road surface, which may run further north here than the projected line suggests (Ken Murphy, Cambria Archaeology, *pers. comm.*). At any rate the association with the 'Celtic' St Hirnin appears to be a tradition, and the dedication to St Mary may have been secondary.

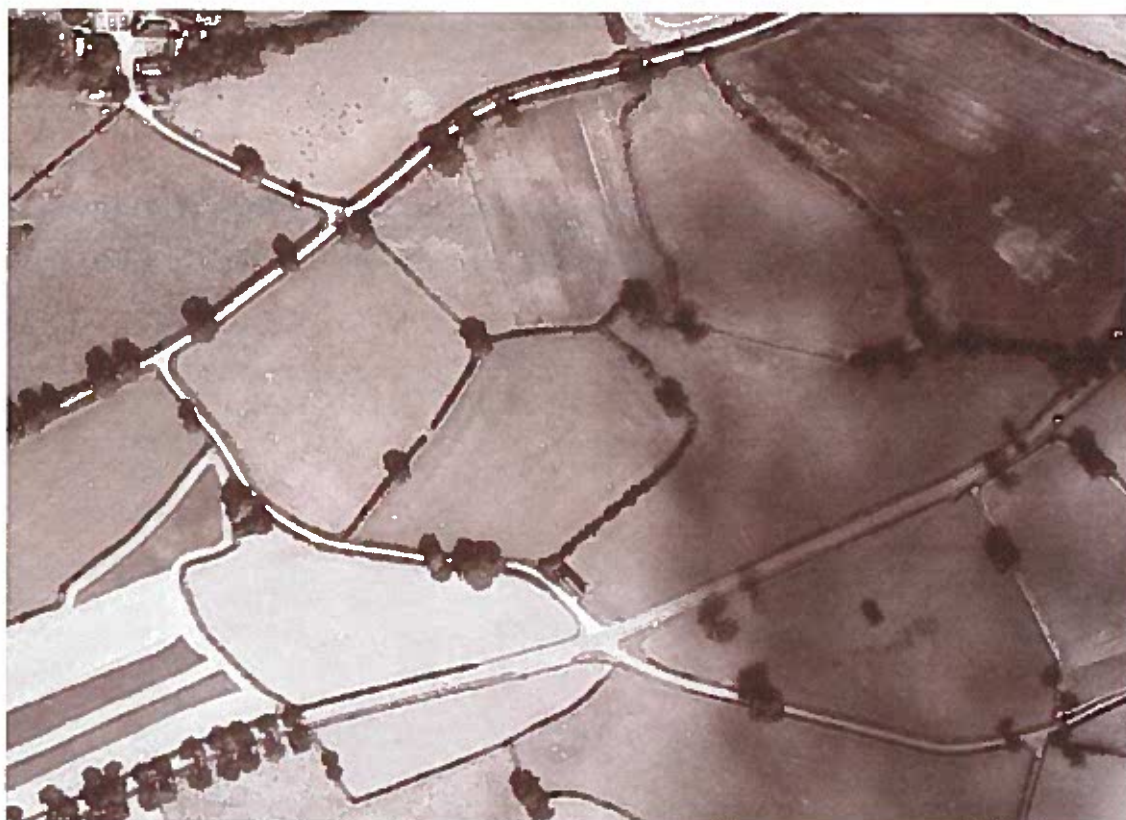
Fig. 19 - Llanegwad, Pontargothi Chapel: sketch plan of area showing ?chapel site and cist cemetery



The suggested chapel at Cefn Hirnin may therefore be entirely spurious, having arisen from local tradition. Nevertheless, a cropmark enclosure is visible on aerial photographs in a field 250m southeast of Cefn Hirnin Farm, at NGR SN 5408 2138. The field, which belonged to the farm in 1841, is named 'Llan Draw' in the tithe schedule (No. 81) – however the 'llan' element may not be significant here. The cropmark, which is 90m in diameter, appears to represent an iron age defended 'banjo' enclosure. However, it also appears to be occupied by a small, east-west rectangular cropmark (possibly with a second rectangular cropmark in the 'banjo' entrance). It could conceivably be interpreted as a church and churchyard, possibly re-using a banjo enclosure. The south facing slope overlooks the Tywi floodplain.



Fig. 20 - Llanegwad, Cefn Hirnin: aerial photograph of cropmark ?enclosure (centre)



*Fig. 21 - Talley, Capel Llanceinwyrwyf:
possible earthwork platform (chapel site?), from NW*



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A further medieval grange-chapel to Talley Abbey (Gwastode Grange), dedicated to the 'Celtic' St Cain the Virgin ('Cein gwyrŷ'), is mentioned in a number of documentary sources (Price 1879, 165; Richards 1974, 113). The RCAHM suggest that the chapel stood on or near the site of the farm named 'Dan-y-capel', now in Talley parish (RCAHM 1917, 264-5). Unfortunately the Talley parish tithe schedule of 1838 does not include field names, but it seems more likely that it stood between Llwynchwyr Farm (whose name is derived from the chapel) and Dan-y-capel Farm, on the slope above the latter. No aerial photographs were available for this site. However, in the field, a possible earthwork feature can be observed in the field immediately above Dan-y-capel and roughly halfway between the two farms. The feature presents itself as a slight rectangular 'platform', oriented E-W, supporting an area of thicker, lush grass and measuring approx. 10m E-W by 5m N-S. It occupies a slight, but distinct terrace in an otherwise moderate southeast-facing slope, at the head of what appears to be a valley associated with a dry spring. A second, active spring lies 40m NE of the platform. A number of other possible earthworks can just be discerned in the field, but are extremely amorphous.

A medieval chapelry to Abergwili parish, called 'Aberannel', is shown on Rees' 1932 map of 'South Wales and the Border on the 14th century', is suggested by 'Capel' and 'Henllan' place-names, and may also have been the findspot of a lost Group I ECM, but its location is unknown. The ECM was first recorded in 1877 at Pantdeuddwr Cottage (NGR SN 4685 2220) but according to tradition it had previously stood 'inside a chapel a few fields off' (RCAHM 1917, 5), located on 'Hen Llan lands' (Edwards forthcoming), which is equated with Rees' Aberannel Chapel. Examination of the Abergwili parish Tithe Map failed to locate these 'Hen Llan lands'. However, a farm named Pant-y-capel lies only 720m N of Pantdeuddwr, at NGR SN 4689 2295. In addition, the present non-Conformist Capel Gwyn (NGR SN 4652 2258), a later 19th century building, occupies a site already known as 'Capel Gwyn' in c.1840 when it was an empty plot (Abergwili parish Tithe Map), having moved to this site from an earlier site in c.1872, according to the datestone. This modern chapel therefore is a potential site for the medieval Aberannel Chapel. However, the morphology of the chapel enclosure, in its present form, is entirely modern - it is fairly regular in plan, with public roads forming 3 sides, the fourth being represented by a hedge and a post-and-wire fence. There are other potential sites. A series of unknown cropmarks on Pant-gwyn Farm (NGR 467 228), which appear in the field as slight parchmarks, may be natural, but one of them appears to form a slight enclosure at NGR SN 4675 2280. In addition, a pronounced knoll near Capel Gwyn at NGR SN 4660 2273, appears to be natural, but may have been artificially enhanced and levelled-off; a level platform lies immediately to the S. Alternatively, the chapel may have lain within Pant-y-capel Farm itself.

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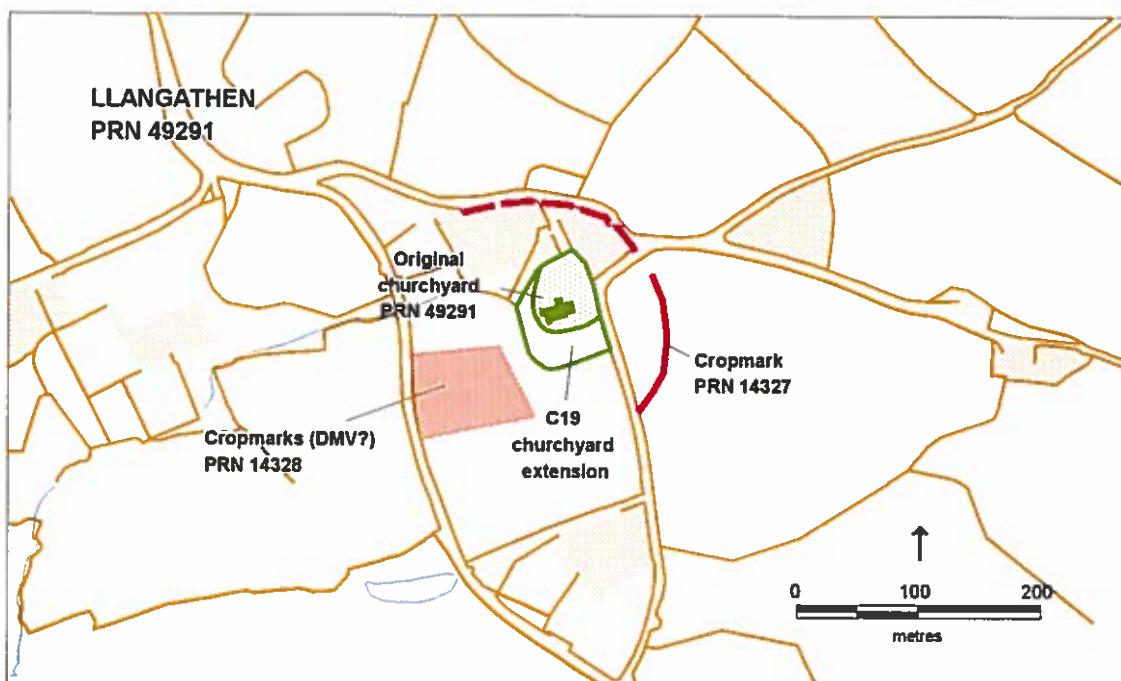
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4.2.3 New outer enclosures

Possible curvilinear outer enclosures have been noted, on aerial photographs, at a number of new sites. Among the more convincing is that at Llangathen, previously noted by Terry James but apparently confirmed by further observation. Llangathen churchyard – which lies 700m to the south of the main Brecon-Llandovery-Carmarthen Roman Road – is now irregular, but was originally smaller, and subcircular – the former churchyard boundary survives as a pronounced scarp close to the south and west sides of the church. A mature yew to the north of the church has not been dated but is very large. A curving cropmark in the field immediately to the east, concentric to the churchyard, may represent part of the boundary of a former large, circular outer enclosure – with origins as an iron age defended enclosure?. The line of this boundary may be preserved by the road that now curves around the north side of the village, giving a diameter of approximately 200m. A spring rises just to the west of the churchyard, and within the possible enclosure. Further, undated cropmarks, immediately to the west of the churchyard, apparently to represent a series of small enclosures, tracks and ditches, and may belong to the documented medieval settlement at Llangathen. If the possible outer enclosure was a complete circle, then it is overlain by these cropmarks.

Fig. 22 - Llangathen churchyard: sketch plan showing ?outer enclosure

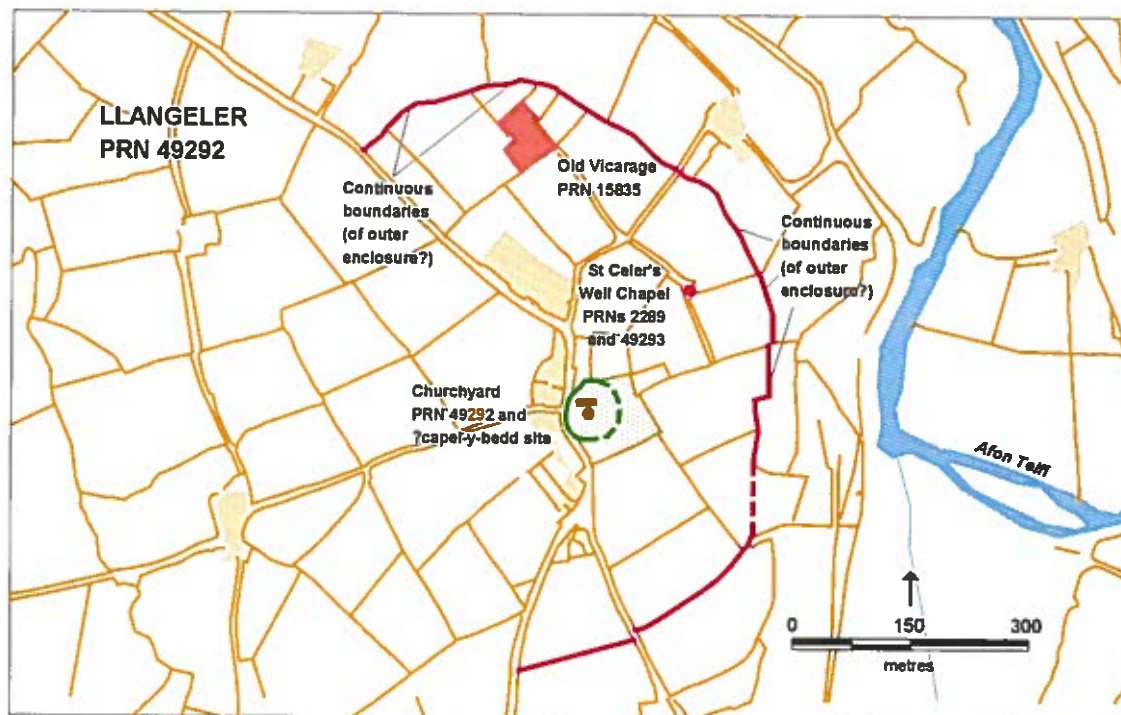


A possible enclosure around Llangeler churchyard was noted during Stage 1. Llangeler appears to have been an important multiple church site. The churchyard was formerly large (approx. 70m in diameter) and circular. The west boundary survives and though the yard was extended to the east in the 19th century the line of the boundary can still be traced. The churchyard – probably significantly – occupies a prominent location on a hilltop overlooking the Afon Teifi. There is evidence of perhaps three ecclesiastical buildings at Llangeler, ie. a multiple church site. According to Edward Lhuyd, writing in the 1690s, the 'sepulchre' of St Celer lay 'near the door on the south side of the church' (RCAHMS 1917, 162 no.473). Lhuyd's description apparently relating to a former *capel-y-bedd*. A spring and well-chapel, also dedicated to the 'Celtic' St Celer, lay 150m NE of the churchyard (Jones 1954, 164). The well was said to have curative properties and was conceptually linked to the churchyard, if not physically, the bathers in the well afterwards 'lying down' in a 'place in the churchyard, properly called a cemetery' according to Lhuyd (RCAHMS 1917, 162 no.473). The link may have been more than conceptual, as both the churchyard and the well-chapel may have occupied a very large circular enclosure now represented by a series of continuous field boundaries around the north, south and east sides of the churchyard. Much of the land within these boundaries may have been under ecclesiastical



ownership in 1839, when the tithe map was drawn, but the map is too badly damaged to be clear. However, the Old Vicarage still occupies the north-east quadrant. The church name had a 'merthyr' element in 1291 when it was listed, as 'Merthyr Celer', in the *Taxatio*.

Fig. 23 - Llangeler churchyard: sketch plan showing features mentioned in the text



Llanedi parish church was not listed in the 'Taxatio' of 1291, when it may yet have been raised to parish status. The church was in the gift of the Welshry of the Lordship of Carnwylion (Rees 1932), which may itself be significant. The large, irregular churchyard lies on a south-facing slope. It was extended to the southwest during the 19th century, obscuring its form, but it formed a fairly regular circle 90m in diameter. In addition, it lies within one of Carmarthenshire's few convincing outer enclosure sites, preserved as an almost continuous line of boundaries concentric to the churchyard, apparently forming a circular enclosure 300m in diameter. Four springs emerging as a stream leading from the southwest quadrant of the ?outer enclosure. The outer enclosure also articulates with the surrounding landscape, being central to radial boundaries which, in plan, are like the spokes of a wheel. It has been argued that the similar boundaries at Jeffreyston, in Pems., belong to an infield-outfield system that may be pre-Conquest (Kissock 1997, 133).

Rather more doubtful is the possible enclosure indicated by features visible on aerial photographs of Llanfihangel Abercywyn parish church, which might be interpreted as possible cropmarks. The church was mentioned in a source from 1197-8 (Conway Davies 1946, 299 D.272), and was later a possession of Whitland Abbey; probably granted by Hywel Sais in the early 13th century (Richard 1935, 351-2). It is well-known for its 'pilgrim's graves', two groups of late medieval grave-slabs in the churchyard, which is scheduled. A large yew in the yard may be up to 800 years old (Milne 1998, 7). The ?cropmarks are visible on aerial photographs in the field immediately west of the churchyard. They define a semicircle, concentric to the yard, with an internal diameter of approx. 150m. Their nature is unknown, but they appear to correspond with a slight break of slope within the field, which is currently under pasture, and has probably been ploughed. They may define an ecclesiastical outer enclosure, or perhaps a circular enclosure pre-dating the present churchyard, associated with the early church? or a prehistoric defended enclosure?. The churchyard is associated with the post-Conquest manor of Trefenty, but is 0.5km from its motte-&-bailey castle, suggesting that the church pre-dates the castle. The 'Michael' dedication may be pre- or post-Conquest. An earlier dedication, perhaps to St Cynwyl, has been suggested on the basis of alignment (Milne 1998, 44-6).



Other, more doubtful cropmark enclosures have been noted around the parish churches of Cilymaenllwyd and Llanfihangel Cilfargen. A possible enclosure at Llangyndeyrn is suggested by the present pattern of boundaries.

Fig. 24 - Llanedi churchyard: sketch plan showing ?outer enclosure

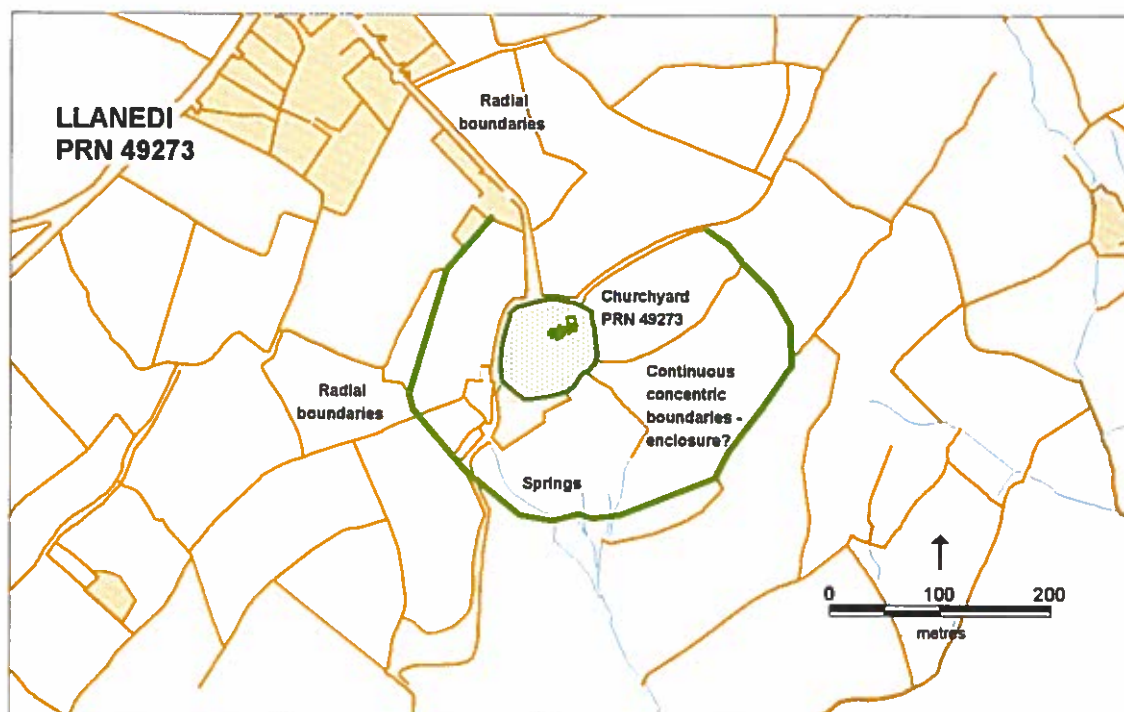


Fig. 25 - Llanfihangel Abercywyn churchyard: aerial photograph from SW, showing possible cropmarks (left of yard)





4.2.4 Evidence from ECM findspots

Stage 2 of the project attempted to identify new cemetery/church sites from the distribution of ECMs of known provenance, but from sites with no surviving above-ground evidence. This process was highly productive in Pembrokeshire (Ludlow 2002-3) where a combination of ECM findspots, aerial photograph analysis, place-name evidence and fieldwork produced 18 possible sites, 9 of which were entirely new. However, it was much less successful in Carmarthenshire. This is doubtless partly due to numbers – 45 ECMs in Carmarthenshire as opposed to 116 in Pembrokeshire. But it is also due to constraints within the project, most notably a deficiency of in-house aerial photographs at Cambria Archaeology. Only four new PRNs were given to ECM findspots –

Henllanfallteg, Parciau Stone findspot

Llandeilo Fawr, Cefn Cethin ECM findspot

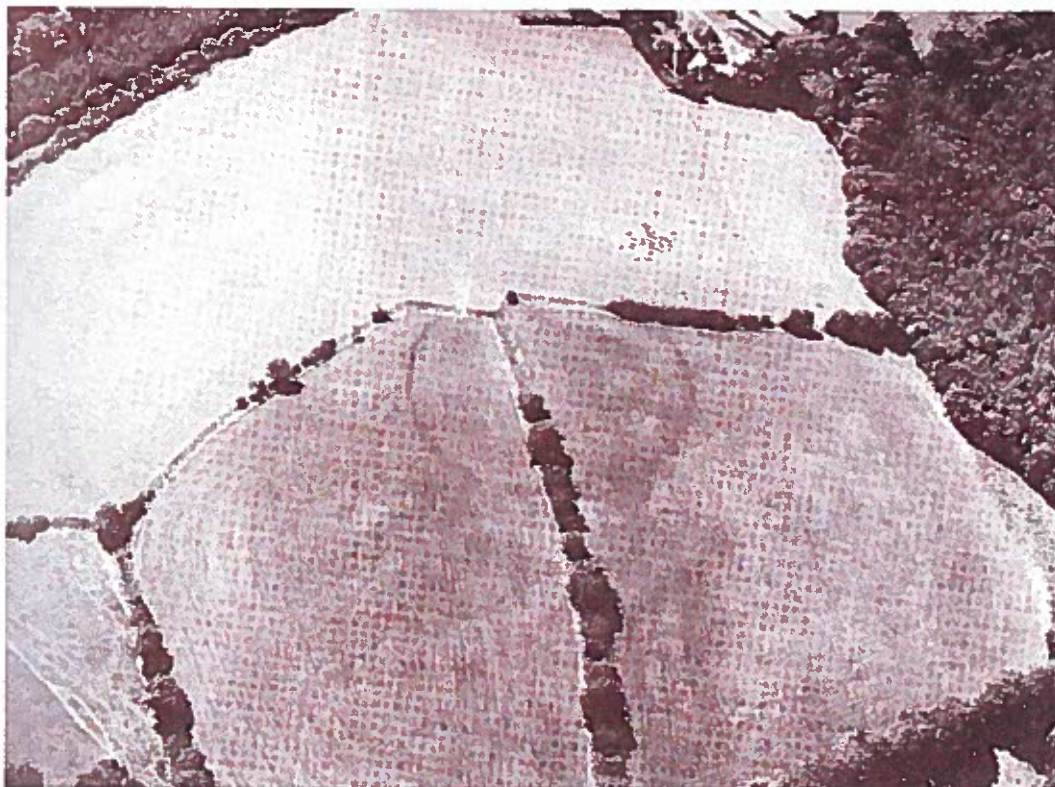
Llangyndeyrn, Closteg ECM findspot

Penbre, Cilymaenllwyd ECM findspot

In addition to an existing 3 cemetery sites suspected from the presence of *in situ* ECMs.

One possible ECM site may be significant. Dubious 19th century account of an inscribed stone from the Cilsant defended enclosure, Llanwinio, were recorded by the RCAHM thus – ‘according to the testimony of Hannah Jones, aged 82... there stood (in the mid 19th century) in the southwest corner of the field known as Pen-y-gaer Fawr, on Cilsant Farm... “a stone with some letters on it”’ (RCAHM 1917, 201 no. 590). Nothing more of this stone is known. The RCAHM thought it possible that it represented an ECM, but it is not included in Edwards, forthcoming. Terry James has suggested that the enclosure represents the ‘Cilsant’ that was the documented caput of Bleddri ap Cadifor, the last native Lord of Blaen-cuch and Cilsant, which remained in use into the 12th century (James 1997, 33-4). The present farmstead of Cilsant appears to have succeeded this site as a manor house/major dwelling later in the medieval period. There are a number of earthworks between the farmstead and the defended enclosure, which lies 170m to the ESE, which may represent tracks or even a deserted rural settlement associated with the medieval manor of Cilsant. In addition, amorphous cropmarks of unknown origin have been observed on aerial photographs in the southern part of the field to the west of the enclosure. The enclosure site may therefore also (or instead) have an ecclesiastical context, and the ‘sant’ element in the place-name may be significant.

Fig. 26 - Llanwinio, Cilsant enclosure: aerial photograph, from the east





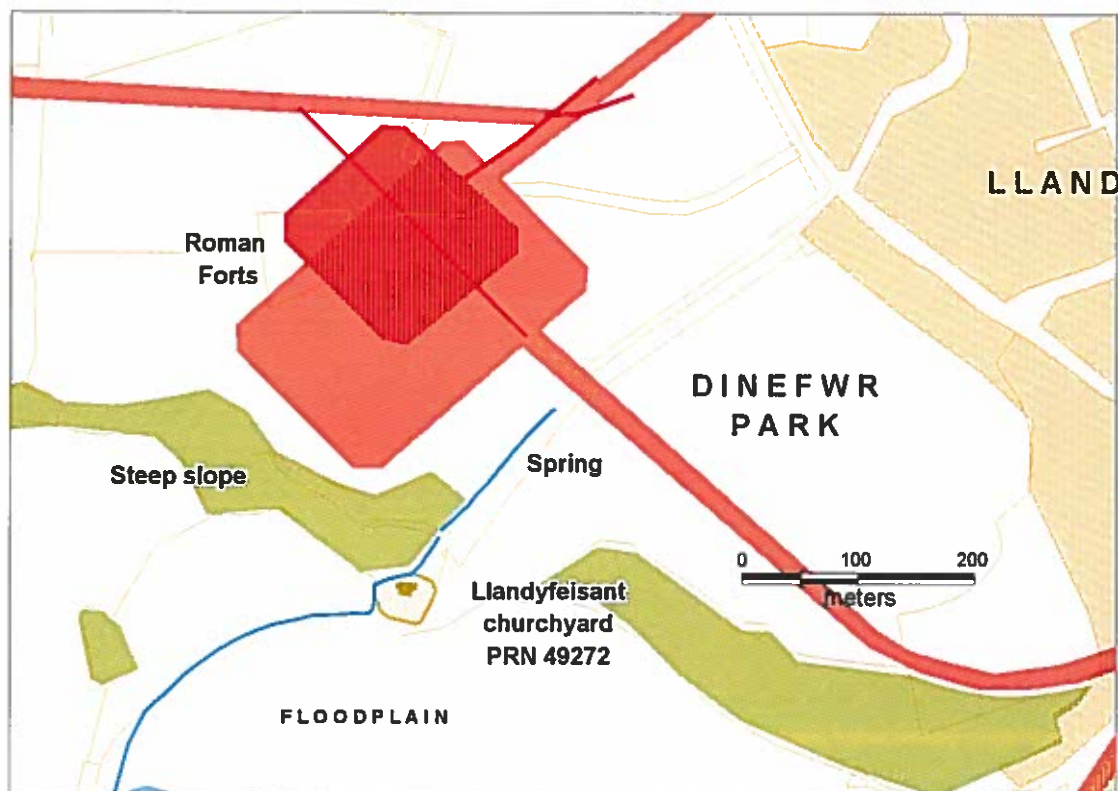
4.2.5 Other associated sites and features

Stage 2 also confirmed, and in some cases disproved, evidence from previously known sites.

The disused Llandyfeisant parish church, in Dinefwr Park, was a possession of Talley Abbey c.1200 (Owen 1893, 39-47), possibly reflecting an earlier association with Talley *clas* (and before that the patria of Llandeilo Fawr?). However, prior to (or during?) the rising influence of Llandeilo Fawr, which lies just 600m east, Llandyfeisant may have been an influential church in its own right during the early medieval period. For instance, its territory appears originally to have been much larger, detached portions of the parish lying within Llandeilo Fawr parish, as far north as the boundary with Talley parish (Llandyfeisant tithe map, 1840) suggesting that it was subsumed by the latter parish at some (early?) period. That part of the parish surrounding the church is small, and roughly coterminous with Dinefwr Park and so its limits here may have been established during the post-medieval period.

Other indications of early origins exist. The small, polygonal churchyard may originally have been circular. It occupies on a natural terrace lies just above the Tywi floodplain. A spring, just beyond its northern boundary, runs through the churchyard. Most significantly, it lies just 90m south of the newly-discovered Roman fort of Llandeilo, revealed through geophysics in 2003 (Hughes 2003). It is said, moreover, that 'the walls of a Roman temple' were discovered while levelling the churchyard in the early 19th century (Lewis, 1833). Given the presence of the stream, it may be that the churchyard overlies either a temple or a bath-house. The level area on which the church lies is just a part of a linear terrace, artificially accentuated, that runs eastwards from the churchyard and was thought to be a Roman Road. The discovery of the exact location of the Roman fort now suggests otherwise, and it could be a medieval road. The tradition of status attached to the Roman site appears to have lingered, as the fort lies close to Dinefwr Castle, which may have developed from a pre-Conquest, royal *llys* site (though the evidence for its early medieval origins is equivocal - Edwards and Lane 1988, 62). The church is dedicated to the 'Celtic' St Tyfei, in west Wales only otherwise known from Lamphey parish church, Pembrokeshire, which is fairly certainly a pre-Conquest site.

Fig. 27 - Llandyfeisant churchyard in relation to the two phases of Llandeilo Roman Fort





The probable cemetery site at Lan/Parc-y-fynwent, Llanboidy, was visited. Previously referred to as a cropmark site, the concentric antenna enclosure was found to be defined by a standing earthwork bank, corresponding to the inner enclosure, represented by a pronounced earthwork bank which is up to 0.5m high on its west side. The north half of the bank also appears as a slight parchmark – indicating buried stonework? Another site recorded as a cropmark only was the rectangular enclosure called Parc-yr-eglwys, Llangynin. It too was found to be represented by substantial earthwork banks and ditches on its east and west sides.

Fig. 28 - Llanboidy, Lan/Parc-y-fynwent: enclosure from the west



Fig. 29 - Llangynin, Parc yr hen eglwys enclosure from the west



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4.2.6 Negative evidence

In some cases, Stage 2 also disproved evidence gathered during Stage 1. Machynys, near Llanelli, was thought to be a possible early ecclesiastical site. It may be the 'terra Machinis' mentioned in a land-grant of c.735, recorded in the 'Llandaff Charters' (Davies 1979, 112 No. 189). The land was granted to Bishop Berthwyn and the grant has been taken by a number of previous authors as suggesting that a monastic establishment was founded on the site.

However, this assumption was influenced by the interpretation of the place-name as a contraction of 'Mynach Ynys' or 'Monk's Island' (Lewis 1833). The name is more likely to be derived from 'maes cyn ynys' ('the field in front of the island'), cf. Machynlleth in Powys (Paul Sambrook, DAT, pers. comm.). It is also influenced by the misunderstanding of an important document. Lewis, in 1833, tells us that 'a monastery is supposed to have been erected by St Piro, about the year 513; this saint constituted himself first abbot, and was succeeded by Samson, a disciple of St Illtud' (Lewis 1833). However, the passage is based entirely on a misidentification between Machynys and Caldey Island, Pembrokeshire. It comes from the 'Life of St Samson of Dol', written in the 7th century, which locates Piro's monastery upon an island 'not far from Illtud's monastery'. All authorities now accept that Caldey Island – or 'Ynys Pyr' – is the island in question (Davies 1982, 143-5 et al.), not Machynys. Later medieval occupation appears to have been secular and there are documentary references to a farm or settlement at 'Maghenes' during the 14th century (James 1993, 14). This is likely to have occupied the same site as Machynys House (NGR 5109 9791), a late 16th-early 17th century 'gentry' house which was demolished in the late 20th century (Page 1999, 16). It stood upon a slight knoll within what is otherwise an area of saltmarsh, which may have been periodically inundated – the name contains an 'island' element and indeed was shown as an island on Emmanuel Bowen's map of 1740. Any earlier occupation – ecclesiastical or secular – is therefore likely to have occupied the same site.

In addition, possible outer enclosures indicated by boundaries around the churchyards at Merthyr and Llandawke have failed to stand up to closer scrutiny. The putative early church site at Henllan, Llanarthne, is tradition only and has no supporting documentation. A reading of the source material for Merthyr Church lead to an assumption that it may have been a portionary church; this now seems unlikely. Llangathen was regarded as a possible multiple church site on the basis of a record for a second chapel in the SMR, with an NGR beyond the churchyard; in fact, the south chapel of the church was meant, and the NGR was incorrect.

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5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Further evaluation

It must again be emphasised that only one Carmarthenshire site has been absolutely dated to the early medieval period - the 'bishop-house' site at Llandeulyddog, Carmarthen, where a radiocarbon date of AD 735 ± 60 was obtained from the primary silt of a ditch. The 7 further sites mentioned in the sources are only assumed to occupy known locations - even where the evidence is good, it is not entirely unarguable. The 45 ECMs included in this study can be dated by their epigraphy and artistic tradition, but similarly none of them can be absolutely attributed to a given site. So whilst it is possible to speculate on the morphology, function and development of early medieval ecclesiastical sites in Carmarthenshire, it is being done without a firm chronological framework against which to assess the evidence.

Obtaining more dates is therefore the crucial next step in evaluating the resource. The culture of southwest Wales during the period was almost entirely aceramic (apart from imports), with few other known artefacts, so the only reliable method of dating is through radiocarbon. Fortunately, ecclesiastical sites generally possess one resource from which these dates can be readily obtained - burials. So the first priority has to be obtaining dates from cemeteries - both from undeveloped cemeteries, cist cemeteries or otherwise, and from churchyard sites. Comparison between the two datasets may tell us more about when and why burial practice ceased, changed or continued at given sites.

There has been a marked lack of intrusive archaeological work on early medieval ecclesiastical sites in Carmarthenshire. No site has been comprehensively excavated in recent times, although Capel Teilo, Kidwelly, was excavated by the Carmarthen Antiquarian Society in the 1960s and there has been limited excavation at Carmarthen St Peters and Llandeulyddog.

In addition to the targeted evaluation outlined below, all sites must be subject to rigorous development control conditions, and proper management plans. These are contained, in full, in Part 3 of this report, 'Management Recommendations'.

5.1.1 Intrusive evaluation

Obtaining dates must come about as a result of proper, targeted archaeological evaluation. Individual dates from *ad hoc* findspots lack the contextual information from which the data can be properly assessed. A sufficient sample of material must be obtained from each site so that the date range can be as accurate as possible a reflection of the lifetime of the cemetery, and that the age, sex, gender and pathology of individuals can be established. The evaluation also should seek to identify evidence for built features, boundaries and structures, or the lack of them. It should seek to identify, through environmental evidence if necessary, the full range of activities on each site.

The EME project in Carmarthenshire has identified a number of green-field sites that are eminently suitable for full evaluation, including –

- Llandybie, Waun Henllan - Grade A early church site (unthreatened)
- Llanegwad, Llandeilo Rwnnws - Grade A site associated with a possible enclosure (unthreatened)
- Newchurch, Llanfihangel Croesfeini - Grade A early church site (unthreatened)
- Cynwyl Gaeo, Pumsaint Chapel - Grade B site associated with a possible enclosure (unthreatened)
- Llanboidy, Llan/Parc-y-fynwent - Grade C enclosure/?cemetery (unthreatened)
- Llanegwad, Pontargothi Chapel - Grade C early church site (unthreatened)



A list of other important, identifiable sites, with good potential for medieval archaeology, if not early medieval ecclesiastical activity, tangibly threatened and suitable for full evaluation may include the redundant church sites at –

- Llandyfeisant – Grade B site (threatened by decay)
- Llangan – Grade B site (threatened by decay)
- Llandawke – Grade C site (threatened by decay)
- Cilymaenllwyd – Grade C site (threatened by development)
- Eglwys Fair a Churig – Grade D site (threatened by decay)
- Egremont – Grade D site (threatened by development)
- Llandeilo Abercywyn – Grade D site (threatened by decay)
- Llanfihangel Abercywyn – Grade D site (threatened by decay)
- Llanfihangel Cilfargen – Grade D site (threatened by development)

5.1.2 Non-intrusive evaluation

Other potential sites require further non-intrusive evaluation, including topographic and geophysical survey, to identify their nature and/or location before further evaluation. Once identified, they may be suitable for full field evaluation.

Grade D green-field sites which may be subject to partial evaluation, , followed by full evaluation where required, include –

- Eglwys Gymun, Parc-yr-eglwys enclosure (unthreatened)
- Henllanfallteg, Parciau Stone findspot (unthreatened)
- Llanarthne, Hen Llan (unthreatened)
- Llanddowror, Parc y Cerrig Sanctaidd stones (scheduled – SMC?)
- Llandeilo Fawr, Cefn Cethin ECM findspot (unthreatened)
- Llanegwad, Cefn Hirnin enclosure (unthreatened)
- Llangan (St Canna), ?iron age cropmark enclosure (scheduled – SMC?)
- Llangyndeyrn, Closteg ECM findspot (unthreatened)
- Llangynin, Parc yr hen eglwys ?cemetery/?church (unthreatened)
- Llanllwni, Maes Nonni ?chapel/?cemetery (unthreatened)
- Penbre, Cilymaenllwyd ECM findspot (unthreatened?)
- Pencarreg, Cae'r hen fynwent ?cemetery (unthreatened)
- Talley, Capel Llanceinwyrwyf (unthreatened)
- Trelech a'r Betws, Parc-yr-eglwys (unthreatened)

The following churchyards are associated with outer enclosures of varying degrees of probability. Most of them are central to nucleations, and so are threatened by development and road-widening. They are therefore suitable for partial evaluation, followed by full evaluation where required –

- Llangeler (St Celer) – Grade A
- Llangynog (St Cynog) – Grade B
- Llanwinio (St Gwinio) – Grade B
- Cilymaenllwyd (SS Philip & James) – Grade C
- Llanedi (St Edi) – Grade C
- Llanegwad (St Egwad) – Grade C
- Llangadog (St Cadog; St David?) – Grade C
- Llangathen (St Cathen) – Grade C
- Betws (St David) – Grade D
- Llanfihangel Abercywyn (St Michael) – Grade D, scheduled
- Llanfihangel Cilfargen (St Michael) – Grade D

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- Llangadog, Capel Gwynfe churchyard – Grade D
- Llangyndeyrn (St Cyndeyrn), churchyard – Grade D

In addition, Llandyfaelog (Grade B) and Abernant (Grade C) churchyards are very large, with large areas that are not in use. Limited evaluation may therefore possibly be undertaken at these sites.

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5.2 Management issues

Detailed threat assessments and management recommendations for individual sites are included as a separate section of this report. A brief overview of some of the issues is provided here.

The 'fixed' early medieval ecclesiastical resource exists, from the point of view of curation, in three main forms -

- Scheduled sites 3 sites (from 115 sites), including 3 guardianship sites
- Church in Wales managed sites 48 sites (from 115 sites)
- The remaining 64 sites are not protected and normally in private hands.

In addition, there are the 45 potentially mobile ECMs, 13 of which are scheduled. Many of these, scheduled or otherwise, are not *in situ* and form part of off-site collections. However, a number are *in situ*, such as the stones at Llanpumsaint churchyard, and the Llanddowror 'Pilgrim's Stones', and can be regarded as 'sites' rather than 'monuments'.

Many early medieval sites are clearly at risk. Those that are associated with existing churches in the care of the Church in Wales (CinW) were assessed in the pan-Wales Cadw Historic Churches Project, and their management is formalised under the Diocesan Advisory Committees which work closely with Cadw and the archaeological curators, and include an archaeologist. Many of the remainder have no such provision. Few of them are scheduled. The green-field sites are clearly at risk, particularly those which are not associated with a standing monument ie. are not re-used hillforts or round barrows, where standing earthworks (normally in any case scheduled) afford some protection. However, modern development, in whatever form, still represents the greatest threat.

There are a variety of threats, including -

- Development remains the most significant threat to Carmarthenshire early medieval sites, many of which are now occupied by CinW managed churches. Development can include new church building and alteration, excavation for services, grave excavation and tree-planting.
- Domestic development of redundant church sites in private hands also poses a significant threat. Development at these sites also can include new building and alteration, excavation for services, garden activity and tree-planting. Cilymaenllwyd and Llanfihangel Cilfargen parish churches have been converted into dwellings, whilst Egremont now lies in the middle of a caravan park.
- Development, construction and alteration to farm buildings is a threat to those sites - many of which are cist cemeteries - which underlie farmyards and farm buildings.
- Piecemeal domestic development in the countryside has the potential to affect any unscheduled below-ground site. Many enclosures, associated with standing churchyards or otherwise, extend into developed areas, some of which are heavily built up eg. Llangathen and Llangeler.
- Agricultural improvement, especially plough-damage, potentially affects a large number of cemetery sites, with or without below-ground chapel sites. Removal of field boundaries is also a threat where those boundaries may represent former ecclesiastical enclosure boundaries.
- Farm access, farm traffic and vehicular erosion can also be a threat, damage from which has been observed at a number of sites, some of them scheduled sites. Livestock erosion appears to represent a lesser threat but also has the potential to damage sites containing upstanding features, as at Cilsant enclosure.
- Road-widening potentially affects any churchyard associated with a public road, CinW managed or otherwise. Some ECMs, situated on roadsides, may also be threatened.
- Natural decay. This is a significant threat at a number of redundant church sites including Eglwys Fair a Churig, Llandeilo Abercywyn and Llanfihangel Abercywyn.
- ECMs, which are not individually graded in this report, are subject to their own individual threats. Although many are scheduled, there is a continuing loss of ECMs, whilst others have been moved. In addition, the location of many, and their exposure to the elements, mean that erosion is constant. These concerns have been expressed in the recent studies by Edwards and Redknap, and form the main theme of the Ancient Monuments Board for Wales Annual Report, 2000-01, *Protecting Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture*, in which the management issues, and a number of proposals, are discussed.

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6.0 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND GRADING

6.1 Introduction

The assessment criteria outlined below, and the three grades A - C, were suggested by the EME working group (comprising the Project Officers from the four Trusts in consultation with Dr Nancy Edwards and Rick Turner of Cadw), after extensive discussion. Close consultation with all parties was maintained throughout Stage I of the project. However the grades are interim only, provisional upon Stage 2.

The criteria were agreed at an early stage of the project, but during the assessment of individual sites it became clear that the value of their application varied from site to site, and not all could be rigidly applied. There could be compelling evidence to suggest - through morphology, patronage etc. for example - that a site meeting only Grade C criteria could belong to Grade B, and *vice versa*. In addition, a number of chapelries with 'Celtic' dedications, particularly in the north of the county, are almost certainly late-medieval foundations, while a number of *de novo* 19th century churches elsewhere in west Wales have 'Celtic' dedications. For this reason, the criteria as used in this section of the report are now graded from 'high importance' to 'low importance'.

A fourth grade, D, was introduced in Carmarthenshire. This includes those sites where the evidence for early medieval origins is indirect, where there is uncertainty about the reliability of the evidence, or where there may be doubts over the precise nature of the site, the original churchyard morphology, the precise location of the site, while proximity and intervisibility, patronage etc. may be significant. This grade contains, for example, a number of the possible cemetery sites suggested by ECM evidence but which cannot yet be proved or whose precise location is still uncertain. Dedications and place-names have, in Pembrokeshire, been taken out of the criteria (see Sections 4.1.6 and 4.1.7).

Individual site grading is based on an assessment of the evidence and all attempts have been made to avoid arbitrary grading. It must also be emphasised that it is a combination of two or more attributes that is significant. Furthermore, many sites entered as Grade C (and Grade D) possess one or more attributes from Grades A and B - the reliability of the evidence is the main guideline to grading. It is likely that some regrading may follow on from field evaluation.

Grade A-C attributes have been entered as Site Types on the SMR database - as *capel-y-bedd* etc. - according to SMR glossaries currently being developed, in order that they can be searched for.



6.2 Criteria of high importance

▪ Documented pre-conquest sites - 7 sites

PRN: 71	Carmarthen, Llandeulyddog ?clas site
PRN: 2076	Cenarth Church (St Llawddog/St Teilo?)
PRN: 49266	Llanddowror Church (St Cringat/St Teilo)
PRN: 912	Llandeilo Fawr Church (St Teilo)
PRN: 7673	Llandybie, Waun Henllan church and ?cemetery
PRN: 49234	Llanegwad, Llanyhernin
PRN: 7557	Llanegwad, Llandeilo Rwnws Chapel (St Teilo)

▪ Clas church indicators - 3 sites

PRN: 71	Carmarthen, Llandeulyddog Clas
PRN: 912	Llandeilo Fawr Church (St Teilo)
PRN: 49262	Llanarthne Church (St David/St Arthneu)

▪ Dated archaeological evidence - 1 site

PRN: 71	Carmarthen, Llandeulyddog ?clas site
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▪ Capeli-y-bedd and multiple churches - 3 sites

Existing records - 1

PRN: 49300	Llanpumsaint Church (SS Ceitho, Celynin, Gwyn, Gwyno & Gwynoro)
PRN: 49292	Llangeler Church (St Celer)
PRN: 11786	Llangan Church (St Canna) enclosure?

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6.3 Criteria of medium importance

▪ Circular/oval churchyards - 27 sites

PRN: 49247	Cenarth Church (St Llawddog/St Teilo?)
PRN: 49248	Cilymaenllwyd Church (SS Philip & James)
PRN: 49251	Cynwyl Elfed Church (St Cynwyl)
PRN: 7378	Eglwys Gymun Church (St Margaret)
PRN: 11789	Henllan Amgoed Church (St David)
PRN: 49257	Henllan Amgoed, Eglwys Fair a Churig Church (SS Mary & Curig)
PRN: 49264	Llandawke Church (St Odoceus)
PRN: 912	Llandeilo Fawr Church (St Teilo)
PRN: 49270	Llandyfaelog Church (St Maelog)
PRN: 49273	Llanedi Church (St Edi)
PRN: 49274	Llanegwad Church (St Egwad)
PRN: 49283	Llanfihangel Aberbythych Church (St Michael)
PRN: 49286	Llangadog Church (St Cadog/St David)
PRN: 49290	Llangan Church (St Canna)
PRN: 49291	Llangathen Church (St Cathen)
PRN: 49292	Llangeler Church (St Celer)
PRN: 49297	Llangyndeyrn Church (St Cyndeyrn)
PRN: 2175	Llangynog Church (St Cynog)
PRN: 49301	Llansadwrn Church (St Sadwrn)
PRN: 49305	Llansawel Church (St Sawyl)
PRN: 7399	Llanwinio Church (St Gwynio)
PRN: 49307	Llanwrda Church (St Cwrdaf)
PRN: 49310	Merthyr Church (St Martin/St Enfael)
PRN: 49311	Myddfai Church (St Michael)
PRN: 49313	Penbre Church (St Illtud)
PRN: 49315	Pencarreg Church (St Patrick/St Padarn)
PRN: 49320	Trelech a'r Betws Church (St Teilo)

▪ Churchyards with curvilinear outer enclosures

Probable - 4 sites

PRN: 49273	Llanedi (St Edi)
PRN: 14327	Llangathen (St Cathen)
PRN: 49294	Llangeler (St Celer)
PRN: 11821	Llangynog (St Cynog)

Possible - 9 sites

PRN: 49242	Betws (St David)
PRN: 49248	Cilymaenllwyd (SS Philip & James)
PRN: 49274	Llanegwad (St Egwad)
PRN: 49284	Llanfihangel Abercwyn (St Michael)
PRN: 49285	Llanfihangel Cilfargen (St Michael)
PRN: 49286	Llangadog (St Cadog; St David?)
PRN: 49287	Llangadog, Capel Gwynfe churchyard
PRN: 49297	Llangyndeyrn (St Cyndeyrn), churchyard
PRN: 49306	Llanwinio (St Gwynio)

▪ Merthyr- place-names - 3 sites

Definate - 2 sites

PRN: 49292	Llangeler Church (St Celer)
PRN: 49310	Merthyr Church (St Martin/St Enfael)

Possible - 1 site

PRN: 49257	Eglwys Fair a Churig Church (SS Mary & Curig) ?
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▪ *Documented sanctuary (nawdd/noddfa) - 2 possible sites*

PRN: 49259 Kidwelly, Llangadog, St Cadog's Chapel
PRN: 3973 Meidrum Church (St David) ?

▪ *Roman site re-use - 9 sites*

Probable - 6 sites

PRN: 49244 Carmarthen St Peter - adjacent to Roman town west gate
PRN: 71 Carmarthen, Llandeuldyddog ? *clas* site - overlies Roman cemetery ?
PRN: 49254 Cynwyl Gaeo, Pumsaint Chapel (St Teilo?) - overlies Roman fort
PRN: 49281 Llanfair-ar-y-bryn Church (St Mary) - overlies Roman fort
PRN: 912 Llandeilo Fawr Church (St Teilo) - overlies Roman road ?
PRN: 49272 Llandyfeisant Church (St Tyfei) - overlies Roman building ?

Possible - 2 sites

PRN: 49241 Abernant Church (St Lucia/St Lleucu) - on/near Roman cemetery ?
PRN: 14296 Laugharne Church (St Martin) - overlies Roman/bronze age cemetery

▪ *Iron Age enclosure re-use - 16 sites*

Probable - 5 sites

PRN: 7378 Eglwys Gymun Church (St Margaret)
PRN: 49290 Llangan Church (St Canna)
PRN: 2175 Llangynog Church (St Cynog)
PRN: 3973 Meidrum Church (St David)
PRN: 5078 Llanboidy, Parc-y-fynwent/Llan ? cemetery

Possible - 10 sites

PRN: 11789 Henllan Amgoed Church (St David)
PRN: 49264 Llandawke Church (St Odoceus)
PRN: 49278 Llanegwad, Cefn Hirmin enclosure
PRN: 11786 Llangan Church, cropmark enclosure
PRN: 49297 Llangyndeyrn Church (St Cyndeyrn)
PRN: 7399 Llanwinio Church (St Gwynio)
PRN: 3969 Llanwinio, Cilsant enclosure
PRN: 49310 Merthyr Church (St Martin/St Enfael)
PRN: 9833 Eglwyscumin, Parc yr Eglwys
PRN: 49315 Pencarreg Church (St Patrick/St Padarn)
PRN: 5255 Trelech a'r Betws, Parc-yr-eglwys

▪ *Other enclosure re-use - 1 site ?*

PRN: 5050 Llangynin, Parc yr hen eglwys

▪ *Bronze site Age re-use - 10 sites*

Probable - 5 sites

PRN: 7378 Eglwys Gymun Church (St Margaret)
PRN: 14296 Laugharne Church (St Martin) - overlies Roman/bronze age cemetery
PRN: 788 Llandeilo Fawr, Cefn Cethin cross-carved stone
PRN: 1701 Llangyndeyrn, Closteg cross-carved stone
PRN: 49309 Marros Church (St Lawrence) - overlies bronze age cemetery

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Possible - 4 sites

PRN: 49232	Abergwili Church (St David)
PRN: 49296	Llanglydwen Church (St Cledwen)
PRN: 49288	Llanybydder, Abergorlech Church (St David)
PRN: 5260	Llangeler, Llain Ddineu ?cemetery ?

▪ *Neolithic site re-use - No sites*

▪ *Undated cist cemeteries - 3 (4?) sites*

PRN: 7378	Eglwys Gymun Church (St Margaret)
PRN: 14296	Laugharne Church (St Martin)
PRN: 762	Llanybydder, Capel Iago/Hen Fynwent (St James)
PRN: 8976	Llanegwad, Pontargothi Salutation Inn - possible site
(PRN: 1832	Llanllwni Church (St Luke or St Llonio) - later medieval)

▪ *ECMs - 45*

Churchyards with ECMs +/- in situ

Probable - 11 sites

PRN: 1882	Cynwyl Gaeo (St Cynwyl),
PRN: 5056	Eglwys Gymun (St Margaret)
PRN: 2164	Laugharne (St Martin)
PRN: 3906	Llandawke (St Odoceus)
PRN: 3908	Llanddowror
PRN: 889	Llandeilo Fawr (St Teilo)
PRN: 1794	Llanfihangel-ar-arth (St Michael)
PRN: 1715	Llanpumsaint (SS Ceitho etc)
PRN: 3943	Llanwinio (St Gwinio)
PRN: 2262	Merthyr (St Enfael)
PRN: 9930	Newchurch, Llanfihangel Croesfeini

Possible - 11 sites

PRN: 1739	Abergwili (St David)
PRN: 1741	Abergwili, Capel-y-groes
PRN: 1415	Egremont (St Michael)
PRN: 761	Llanarthne
PRN: 3959	Llanboidy (St Brynach)
PRN: 3734	Llangan (St Canna)
PRN: 1778	Llangeler, Capel Mair
PRN: 1140	Llanglydwen (St Clydwen)
PRN: 1737	Llangynwr (St Ceinwr)
PRN: 3911	Llansadurnen (St Saturninus)
PRN: 2119	St Ishmaels, Llansaint Chapel

Cemeteries/chapel sites suggested by ECMs - 7

PRN: 49240	Abergwili, Aberannel Chapel
PRN: 1879	Cynwyl Gaeo, Maes Llanwrthwl
PRN: 49237	Henllanfalteg, Parciau Stone
PRN: 49233	Llandeilo Fawr, Cefn Cethin cross-carved stone
PRN: 49298	Llangyndeyrn, Closteg cross-carved stone
PRN: 1796	Llanllwni, Maes Nonni ('Heutren') Stone
PRN: 49314	Penbre, Cilymaenllwyd House, cross-carved pillar stone

▪ *Artefacts - No sites*

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6.4 Criteria of low importance

- *Cemeteries only suggested by place-name evidence - 5 sites*

PRN: 4740	Llanegwad, Gwyddfa Gatw ? cemetery/?chapel/
PRN: 4745	Llanfynydd, Cae yr hen fynwent ?cemetery/?chapel
PRN: 5050	Llangynin, Parc yr hen eglwys ?cemetery/?church
PRN: 4774	Pencarreg, Cae'r hen fynwent ?cemetery
PRN: 5255	Trelech a'r Betws, Parc-yr-eglwys

- *'Holy' wells within 200m - 9 sites*

PRN: 49260	Kidwelly, Capel Teilo
PRN: 912	Llandeilo Fawr Church (St Teilo)
PRN: 49290	Llangan Church (St Canna)
PRN: 49292	Llangelor Church (St Celer)
PRN: 49294	Llangelor, Capel Mair (St Mary)
PRN: 49296	Llanglydwen Church (St Cledwen)
PRN: 1796	Llanllwni, Maes Nonni chapel
PRN: 49305	Llansawel Church (St Sawyl)
PRN: 762	Llanybydder, Capel Iago/Hen Fynwent chapel and cist cemetery (St James)

- *Other wells/springs within 200m - 4 sites*

PRN: 49241	Abernant Church (St Lucia/St Lleucu)
PRN: 49264	Llandawke Church (St Odoceus)
PRN: 49282	Llanfair-ar-y-bryn, Ystrad-ffin Church/Capel Peulin (St Paulinus)
PRN: 49283	Llanfihangel Aberbythych Church (St Michael)

- *Llan- place-names*

This criterion has not been adopted - see Section 4.1.7.

- *'Celtic' dedications*

This criterion has not been adopted - see Section 4.1.6.

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**EARLY MEDIEVAL ECCLESIASTICAL SITES PROJECT
STAGE 2: CARMARTHENSHIRE**

REPORT NUMBER 20042


JANUARY 2004

This report has been prepared by Neil Ludlow

Position Project Manager

Signature

Date


 26/1/2004

This report has been checked and approved by Ken Murphy on behalf of Cambria Archaeology,
Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Position Deputy Director

Signature

Date

 26/01/2004

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may have
on the content or presentation of this report

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