

FOUNTAIN ROAD, LLANNON CARMATHENSHIRE DESK-TOP ASSESSMENT



Paratowyd gan Archaeoleg Cambria
Ar gyfer

Prepared by Cambria Archaeology
For Charles Church Wales



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Gan / By

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	2
INTRODUCTION	2
THE STUDY AREA	2
METHODOLOGY	3
THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	4
ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	6
RECOMMENDATIONS	7
SOURCES	8

FIGURES

- Figure 1. Location map
- Figure 2. Site location map
- Figure 3. Extract from the 1813 Ordnance Survey map
- Figure 4. Extract from the 1831 Ordnance Survey map
- Figure 5. Extract from the 1841 tithe map
- Figure 6. Extract from the 1889 Ordnance Survey map
- Figure 7. Extract from the 1907 Ordnance Survey map
- Figure 8. Extract from the 1922 Ordnance Survey map
- Figure 9. Extract from the 1964 Ordnance Survey map

SUMMARY

This archaeological desk-based assessment of land alongside Fountain Road, Llannon, Carmarthenshire, demonstrated that there are no known archaeological sites within the proposed development area. The land of the proposed development area is peat-covered and has been planted with conifers. The peat is up to 1.5m deep, but is in poor condition, having suffered considerable surface disturbance. It has the potential to contain palaeo-environmental evidence.

INTRODUCTION

Cambria Archaeology has undertaken this desk-based archaeological assessment at the request of White Young Green Planning acting on behalf of Charles Church Wales. Initially, Carmarthenshire County Council required a combined archaeological desk-based assessment and field evaluation. However, following an initial site visit it was clear that because of the site's environment a field evaluation would be virtually impossible to carry out. Therefore, following a discussion with the archaeological advisor to the planning authority, it was agreed that an archaeological desk-based assessment would at this stage be sufficient in order to determine whether or not there is an archaeological dimension to plans to develop land at Fountain Road, Llannon, Carmarthenshire.

The assessment has been guided by *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments* (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1999).

THE STUDY AREA

The proposed development area is approximately 2.25 ha in extent and lies alongside Fountain Road, Llannon, Carmarthenshire, immediately to the east of St Non's parish church and Llannon village (centred on SN 5406 0837). It is fairly level, lying in a saddle at approximately 170m above sea level. To the west the land rises steeply by over 10m into the St Non's churchyard, while to the east the land rises more gently to a rounded hill. To the north and south the land falls gently away. North- and south-flowing streams issue from proposed development area. Those that flow to the north eventually turn to the south and form part of the Afon Morlais, as do those that initially flow to the south.

Peat and peaty soils cover the whole of the development area. The peaty soils seem to be relatively thin (c.0.3m) along the southwestern boundary of the site. Towards the northern boundary and close to streams there could be as much as 1.5m of peat. There are several areas of shallow standing water.

A coniferous plantation covers the whole of the area. This is in poor condition. The only trees approaching maturity lie along the periphery of the site. Elsewhere the trees have not flourished and have died or been blown over. Scrub has taken the place of trees in these areas. The ridges and furrows of deep ploughing, presumably a process during tree planting, are visible across the site.

The streams lie in deep ditches, up to 1.5m deep, and several other ditches of similar dimensions have been excavated across the site. Hard-core has been deposited inside the gated access from Fountain Road in order to create hard-standing. Deep wheel ruts are evident in several areas where vehicles have cut into the soft peat. There is evidence of recent excavations on the site, presumably a result of geotechnical works.

The current plan is to build 21 houses, with a possible further 10 houses along the eastern side of the site. A belt of existing trees between 10m and 20m wide will screen the development from St Non's Church.

METHODOLOGY

This is essentially a desk-based study. The following sources have been consulted:

The Regional Historic Environment Record housed with Cambria Archaeology.

Cartographic sources and other material held by Cambria Archaeology.

Databases compiled by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments in Wales (RCAHMW) and Cadw.

Vertical and oblique aerial photographs held by the RCAHMW and Cambria Archaeology.

A site visit was undertaken. The purpose of the visit was to:

Review the current state of archaeological features and deposits identified during the documentary research.

Identify new archaeological features and deposits, or areas that may contain them.

Carry out rapid recording of archaeological sites, features and deposits by photography, site notes and sketch plans, if required.

Assess the vulnerability of archaeological sites, features and deposits to the proposed redevelopment of the site.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

Prehistoric sites

There are no recorded prehistoric sites within 500m of the proposed development.

Roman sites

There are no recorded Roman sites within 500m of the proposed development.

Medieval sites

St Non's Church (Primary Record No. - PRN - 664 on the Regional Historic Environment Record) is the only recorded medieval site within 500m of the proposed development. The church as it stands is partly medieval with later, mostly 19th century, additions. The dedication to St Non does, however, suggest that a church was founded on the site before the Anglo-Norman conquest of south Wales in the 11th - 12th centuries. It was not a parish church during the medieval period but a chapelry of the Deanery of Kidwelly. It had become a parish church by 1833 (Ludlow 2000).

The Church is a Listed Building Grade II.

Post-medieval sites

There are seven recorded sites within 500m of the proposed development, all relate to Llannon village. They include: St Non's Church (which is also included in Medieval Sites), the Vicarage (PRN 16791), Schools (PRNs 16792, 24248), Plas Llannon (PRN 24106), a drinking fountain (PRN 8835 - this is a Listed Building Grade II), and the village itself (PRN 21472).

The historic landscape of Llannon

The evolution of the historic landscape of southeast Carmarthenshire has not been studied, and, therefore, how and when the current field systems and settlement pattern came into being is unknown. Historic documents, such as a survey of the Duchy of Lancaster lands in 1609-1613 (Rees 1953), clearly demonstrate that the land was settled and that there was much arable land, presumably arranged into some form of field system. These early 17th century surveys also record large tracts of unenclosed moor, or mountain as it was termed. Mountain was a prominent feature of the landscape until the early 19th century, when most of it was enclosed by Act of Parliament. Close to Llannon there is no evidence for large tracts of moor.

Llannon Church was present in the medieval period; the dedication to St Non suggests an early medieval foundation. The form of the settlement pattern around the church in the medieval period is unknown, but given the constraints of the site it could not have been large. Indeed, there may have been no houses at all close to the church. The first cartographic indication of the settlement pattern and field system is the Ordnance Survey map of 1813. The fields on this map are schematic, but they are clearly established. A hamlet of a few houses is also shown around the church. The tithe survey map of 1841 is the next useful map. This shows fields almost identical to that of today. The village had hardly changed since 1813. Indeed, there are no substantial changes to the structure of the village until after the publication of the 1964 Ordnance Survey map. The tithe map records the two field names in the proposed development as Gwaun and Gors (meadow and bog/moor). A series of Ordnance Survey maps is provided here (Figs. 6-9). The only really significant feature is the marshland of the proposed development site shown on the 1889 map, surveyed in 1878.

Aerial photographs taken in the years after WW2 confirm the marshy nature of the site. Photographs taken in 1946 (CPE/UK/1997) show what appear to be drains or drainage ditches cut across the southern part of the site. After 1964 a coniferous plantation was established. Aerial photographs taken in 1987 show tree-growth well advanced. Apart from these land-use changes, aerial photographs show nothing of archaeological interest.

Designated sites

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within 500m of the proposed development area. St Non's Church immediately to the west of the proposed development is a Listed Building Grade II.

Individual Archaeological Sites

There are no known archaeological sites in the proposed development area.

Peat deposits

Peat deposits containing palaeo-environmental data in the form of pollen and other organic remains record vegetation history and past human activity. On the proposed development site the depth of the peat is variable, but in some areas is up to 1.5m deep. It is, however, disturbed by past episodes of drainage, by ploughing for tree planting and by vehicles and geotechnical test pitting. The condition of the peat and its usefulness for providing palaeo-environmental data is, therefore, unknown, but it has the potential to contain palaeo-environmental evidence.

ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

A range of criteria have been used to consider the importance of the archaeological resource and the likely impacts of the proposed development on that resource in order to determine the significance of the impact and suggest possible mitigation measures.

Importance

The importance of all sites visited will be categorised according to the following criteria:

- A** - sites of national importance - usually Scheduled Ancient Monuments and listed buildings
- B** - sites of regional or county importance
- C** - sites of district or local importance
- D** - minor sites or sites so badly damaged that too little now remains to justify their inclusion in a higher grade
- E** - sites about insufficient is known to assign them to a higher grade

Likely impacts

The likely physical impacts of the proposed road on each site have been assessed according to the following criteria:

- Total** - complete destruction of the site
- Very severe** - loss of most of the major components of a site
- Severe** - loss of some of the major components of a site
- Medium** - loss of some components of a site
- Slight** - some loss of some minor components of a site
- None**
- Beneficial**
- Unknown**

Impact assessment

<i>Site PRN</i>	<i>Importance</i>	<i>Likely Impact of The development</i>	<i>Recommendation for further work</i>
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No known archaeological sites lie within the proposed development, and therefore the above criteria do not apply.

Impact of the Proposed Scheme on the Peat Deposits

The condition of the peat in the proposed development area is unknown. The peat, however, has the potential to contain palaeo-environmental evidence. The proposed development will require the removal of all peat.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The only recommendations refer to the peat deposits across the proposed development area. These contain palaeo-environmental data. However, they are disturbed. It is recommended that an intermittent watching brief is maintained during the removal of the peat deposits. If during this watching brief an undisturbed sequence of peat greater than 1m is identified, then a column sample should be taken; this sample should be fully analysed for palaeo-environmental remains, supported with scientific dates, and reported on.

SOURCES

Databases

The Regional Historic Environment Record, housed with Cambria Archaeology

CARN - Core Archaeological Record Index hosted by the Royal Commission of Ancient and Historic Monuments in Wales

Maps

Ordnance Survey 1813, *Original Surveyors' Drawings 2" to 1 mile*, Sheet 188

Ordnance Survey 1831, *Old Series*, 1" to 1 mile, Sheet 141

Ordnance Survey 1878, *Carmarthenshire Sheet LIV.NE* Old Edition, surveyed in 1878

Ordnance Survey 1907, *Carmarthenshire Sheet LIV.NE*, Second Edition

Ordnance Survey 1922, *Carmarthenshire Sheet LIV.NE*

Ordnance Survey 1964, *1:10,560 or 6" to 1 mile, SN50NW*

Llanon parish tithe map and apportionment, 1841

Aerial photographs

All photographs are held with RCHAMW, Aberystwyth

93-132 066	6 June 1993
78-009 033	n.d.
87-030 014	22 April 1987
106G/UK/1400 3137	11 April 1946
106G/UK/1400 4138	11 April 1946
CPE/UK/1997 4442	13 April 1946

Published sources

Ludlow N 2000, *Carmarthenshire Churches*, unpublished Cambria Archaeology report.

Rees W 1953 *A Survey of the Duchy of Lancaster Lordships in Wales 1609-1613*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press

Rees W 1932 *South Wales and the Border in the XIVth century*



Figure 1. Location map, based on the Ordnance Survey.

Reproduced from the 1995 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A

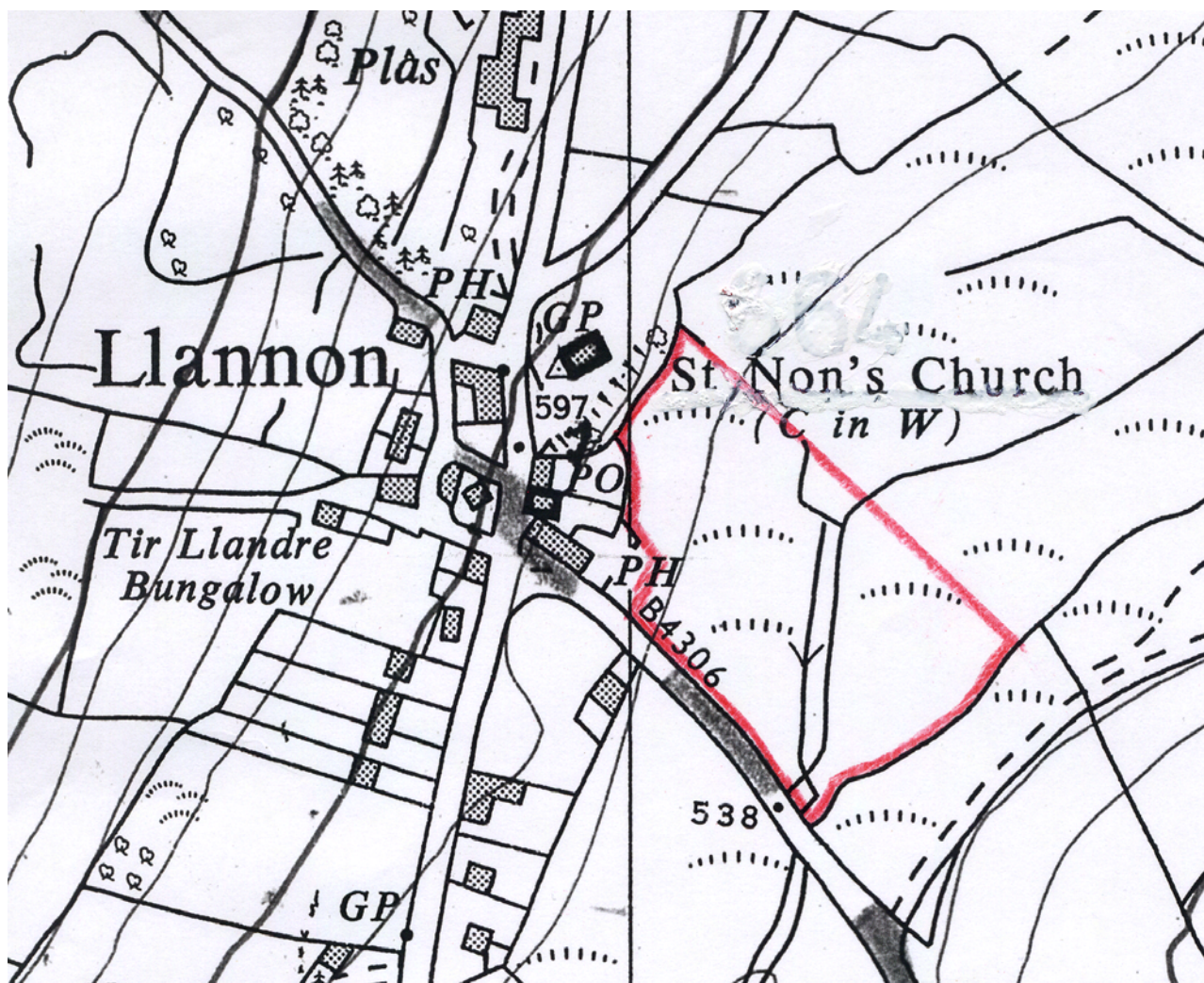


Figure 2. Site location map - boundary shown approximately only.

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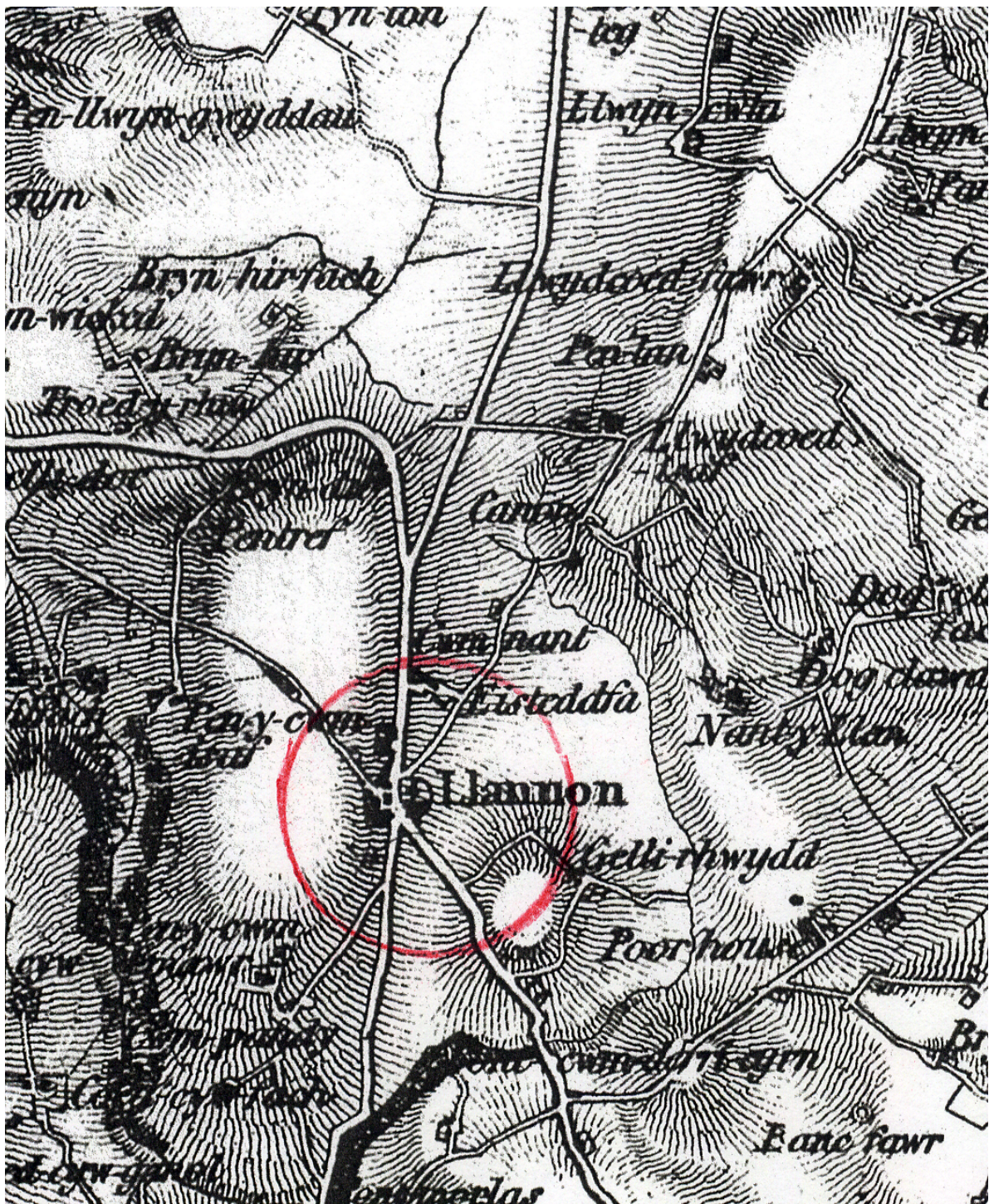


Figure 4. Extract from the 1831 Ordnance Survey map.

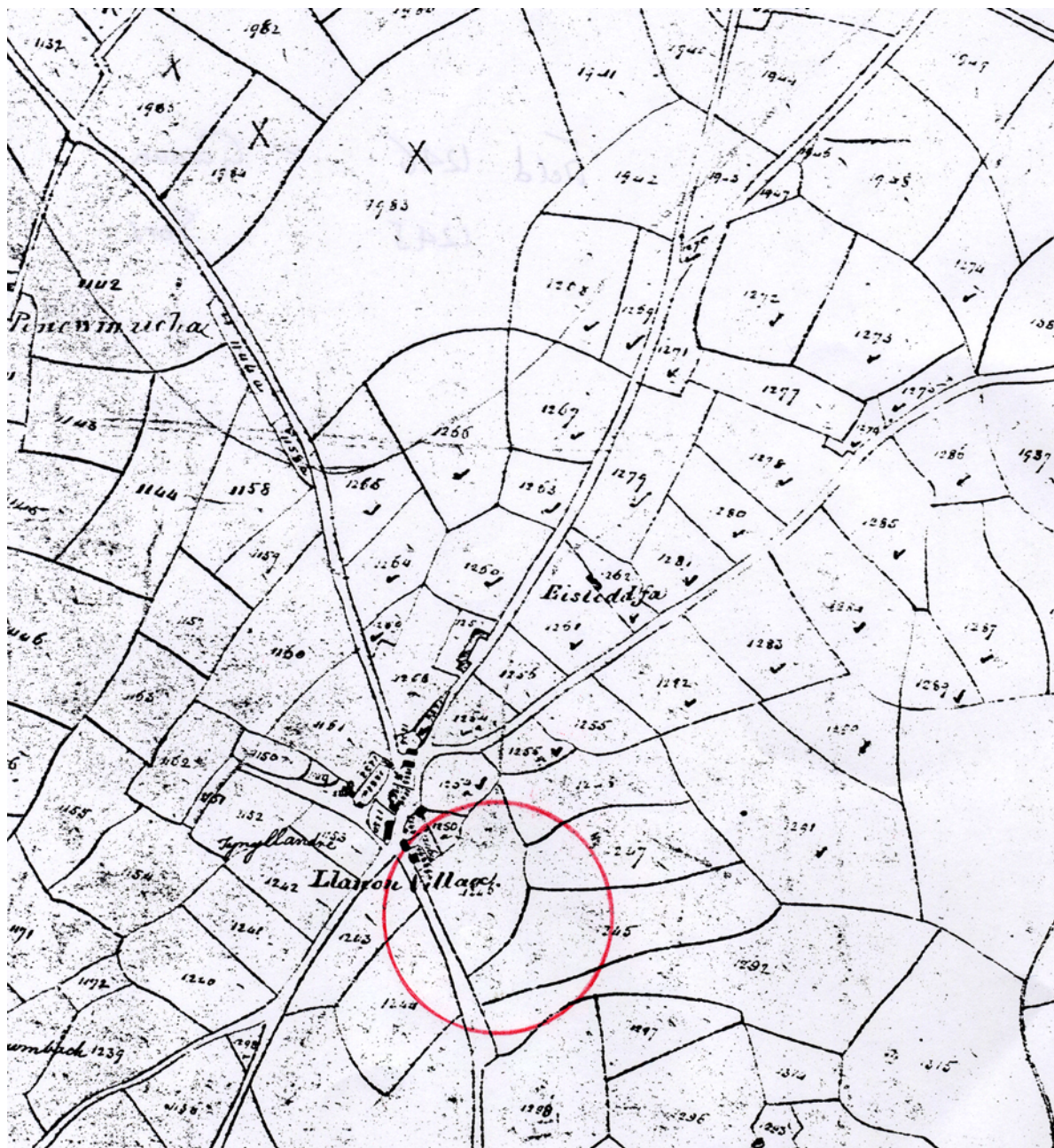


Figure 5. Extract from the 1841 tithe map.

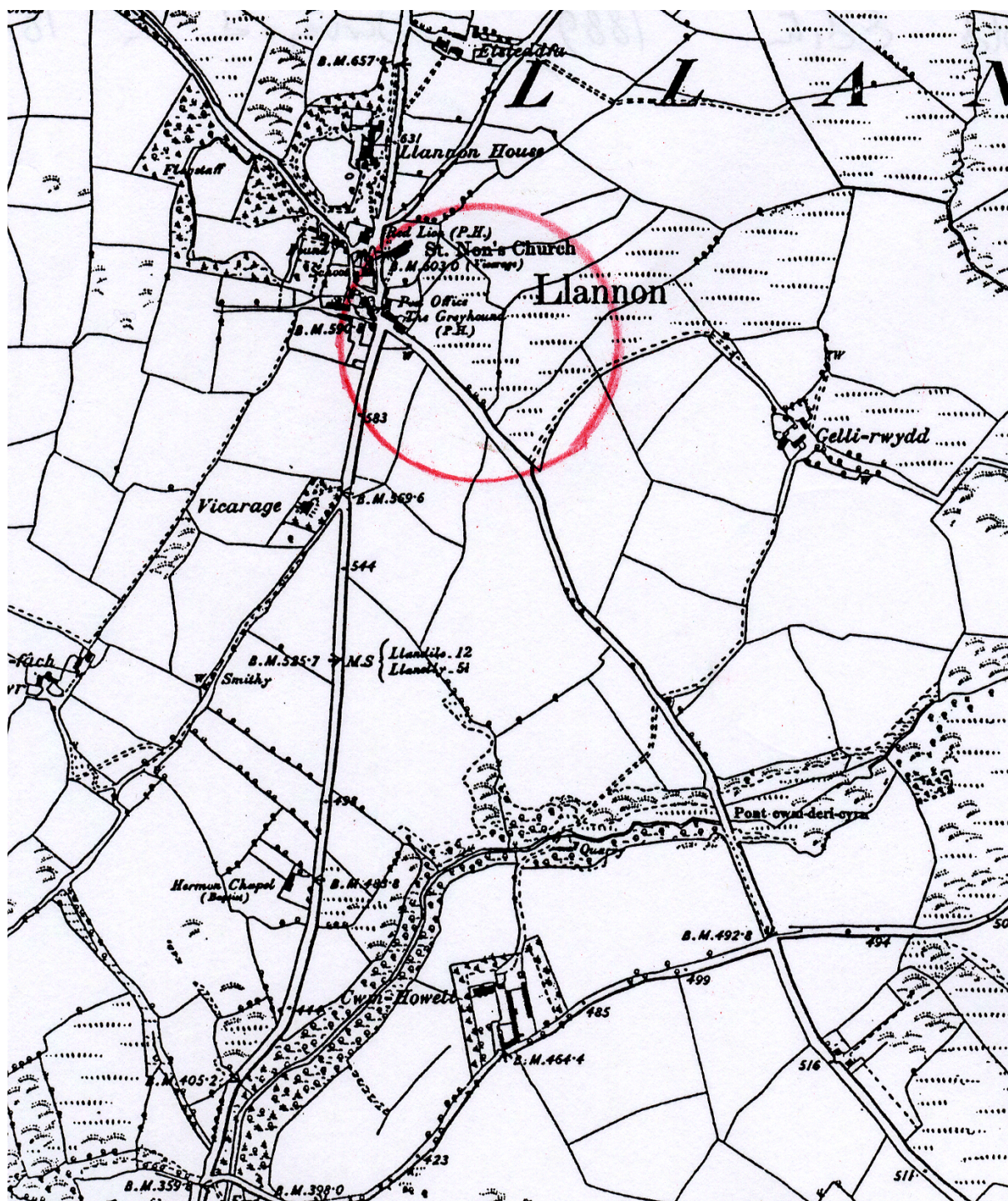


Figure 6. Extract from the 1889 Ordnance Survey map.

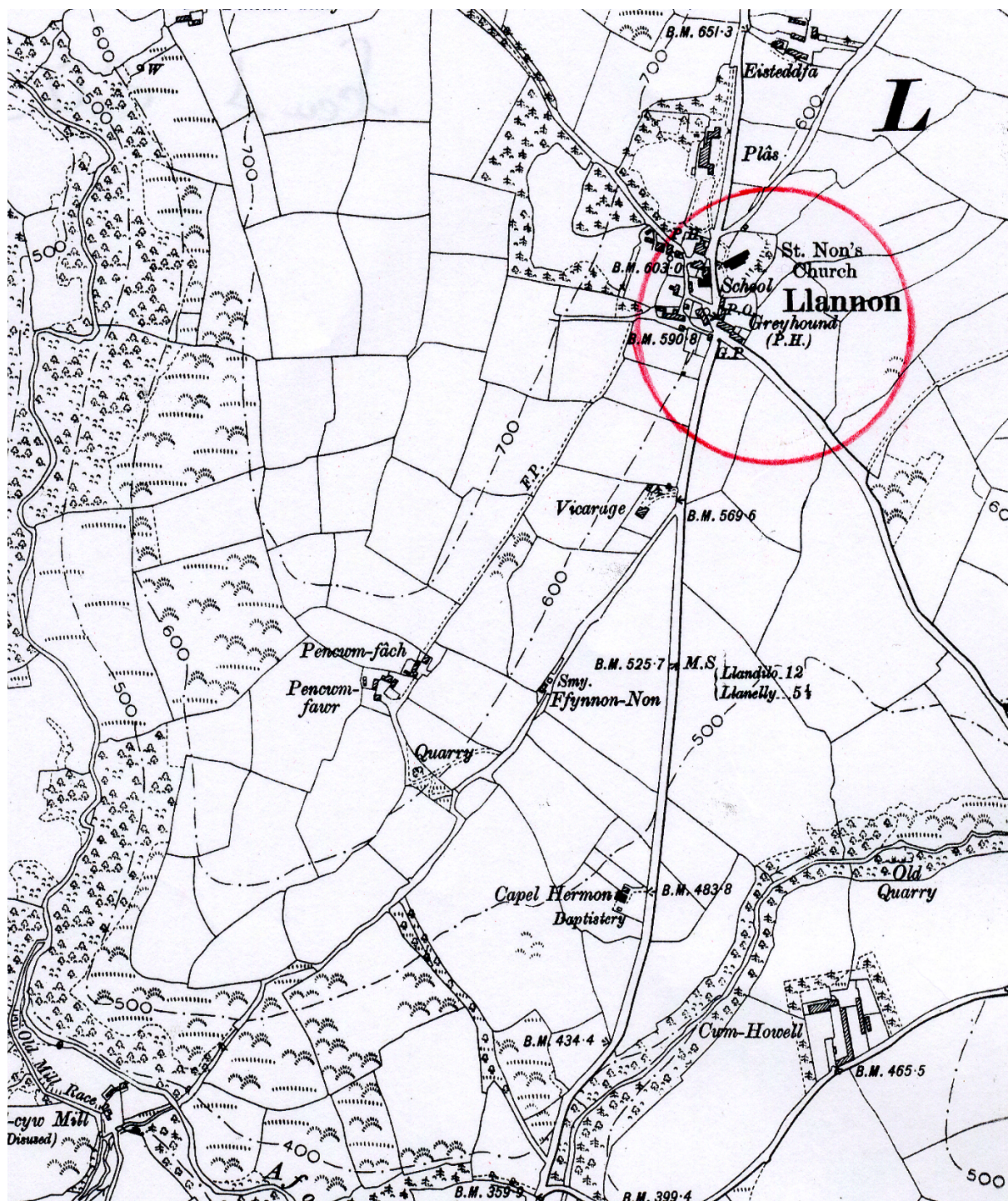


Figure 7. Extract from the 1907 Ordnance Survey map.

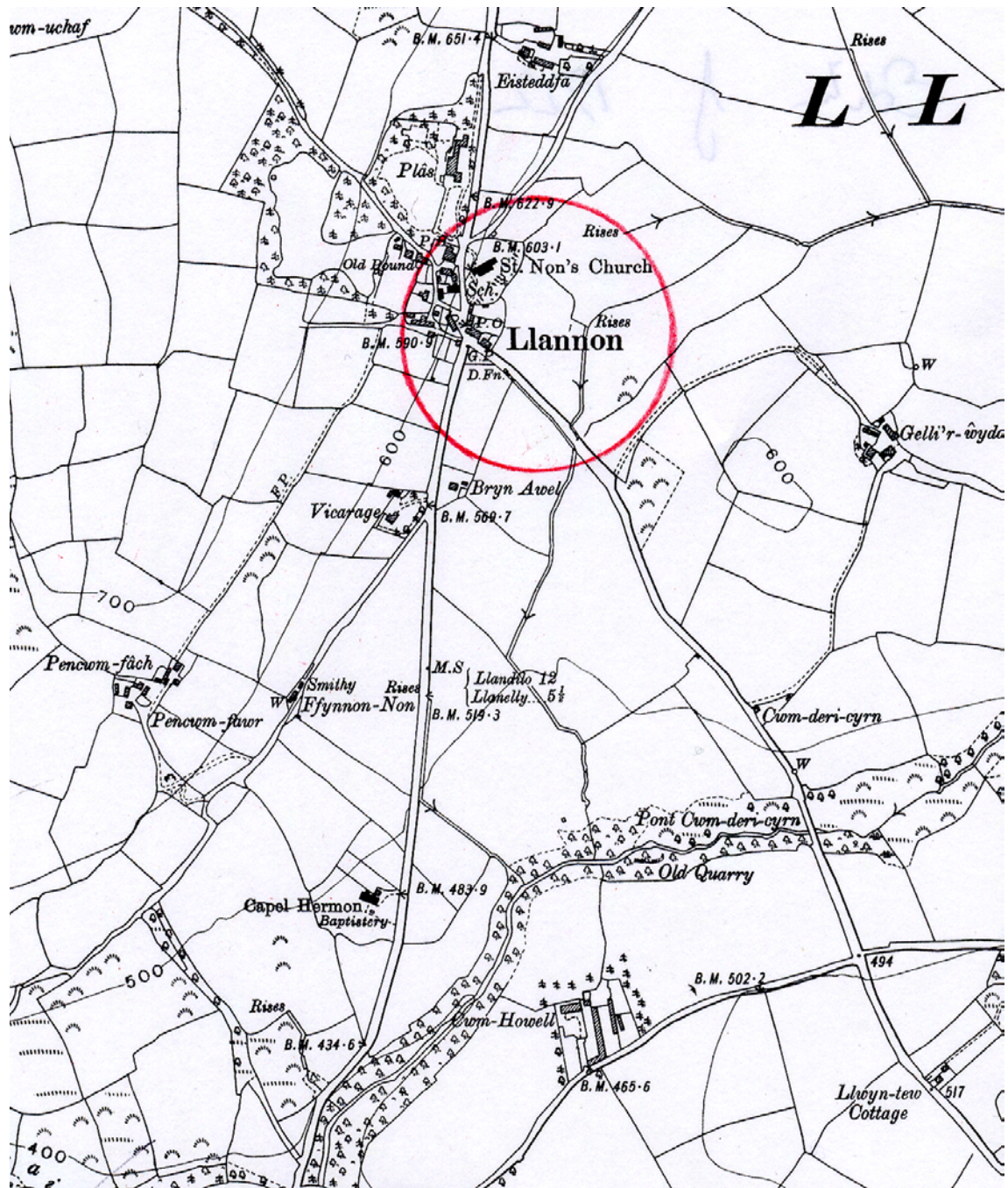


Figure 8. Extract from the 1922 Ordnance Survey map.

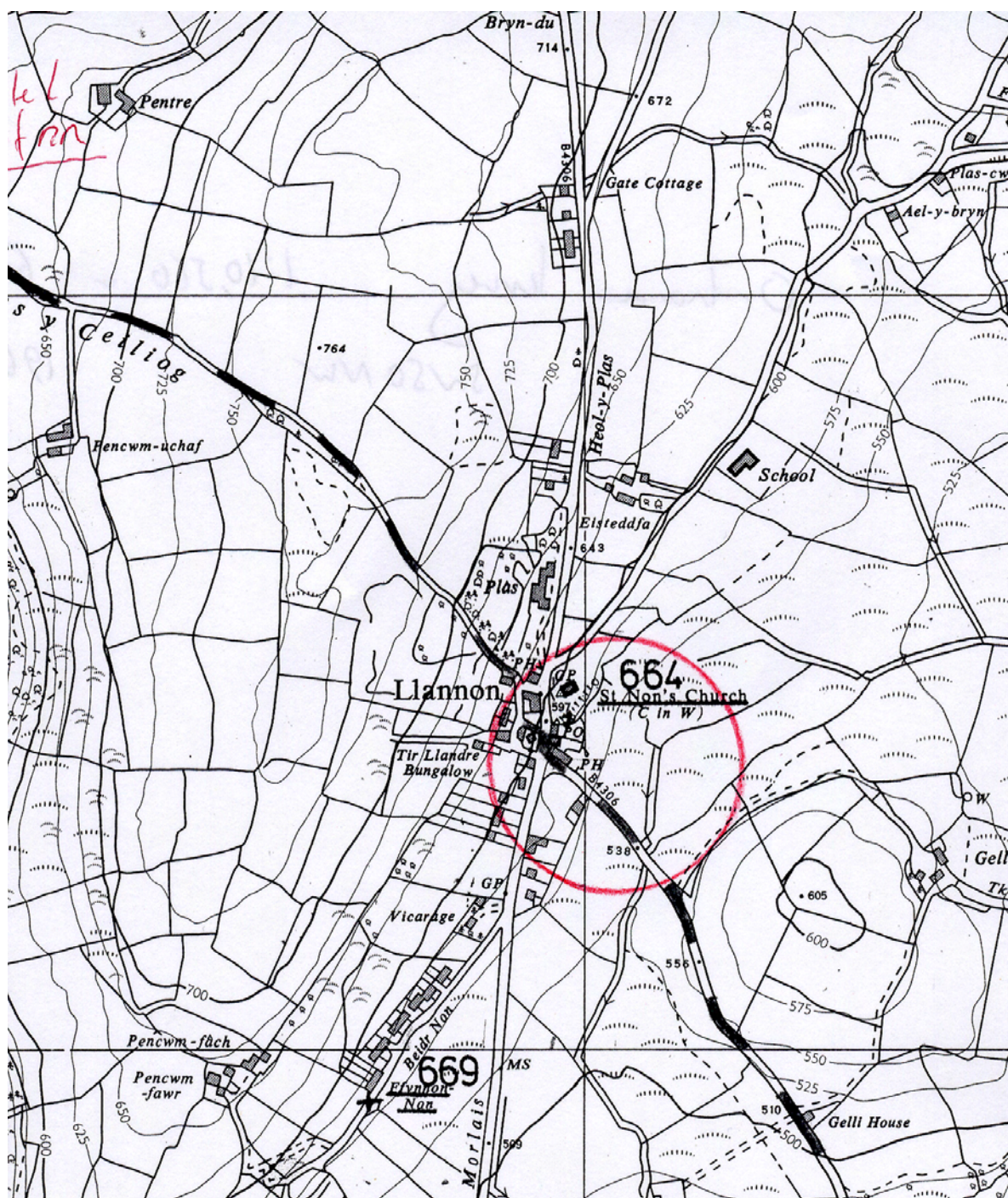


Figure 9. Extract from the 1964 Ordnance Survey map.

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**Ebrill 2006
April 2006**

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Swydd / Position: Principal Archaeologist - Field Services

Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith
This report has been checked and approved by E G Hughes

ar ran Archaeoleg Cambria, Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf.
on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: Trust Director

Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date

Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau
sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn

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