

Lletty Wen, Llanllwch Scheme of Investigation



Report by: Trysor

For: Mr Davies

August 2009



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By

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For: Mr Davies

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Cover photograph: View of the plot from the road, looking south

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1. Summary

Trysor concludes that the likelihood of archaeological remains relating to the identified interests of the archaeological condition is minimal and no further mitigation is therefore proposed in association with the development.

2. Acknowledgements

Trysor would like to thank the staff of the Historic Environment Record at Dyfed Archaeological Trust for provision of historic environment data.

3. Copyright

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4. Introduction

Mr Davies of 9 Courtlands Park, Carmarthen, SA31 1EH commissioned Trysor heritage consultants to provide a written scheme of investigation for a residential development: W/15435. The plot lies to the south of Llanllwch village at SN3863118672, adjacent to the present dwelling at Lletty Wen.

5. The development

The development consists of a new residential development south of the existing building called Lletty Wen. Service trenches and some landscaping will accompany the development.

6. Conditions on the consent

In granting approval for the application, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) imposed eleven conditions on the consent; the tenth condition specifies the actions necessary to mitigate the impact of the development on the archaeological resource.

“No development shall take place until the agent or their successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority”.

This condition was put in place in view of advice received from Cambria Archaeology (letter dated 19th February, 2007) which requested that a written scheme of investigation be prepared by a qualified archaeological contractor, which should;

“...include a specification for an archaeological watching brief as a minimum requirement...”.

According to the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* the purpose of a watching brief is:

“• to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works

• to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard

A watching brief is not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

The objective of a watching brief is to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on a site.”

7. Nature of the archaeological resource

The tenth condition was imposed by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) “*in order to protect potential archaeological interests*”. The accompanying letter from Dyfed Archaeological Trust, the LPA’s archaeological advisers, gives further detail;

“.....the proposed development lies within close proximity to the site of a medieval mill (PRN 12759) and a short distance away from the grade II listed medieval parish church of St Mary (PRN 5241). Consequently, any remains surviving as buried archaeological features will clearly be adversely affected by the proposed development”*

8. Nature of work undertaken

In order to prepare the required written scheme of investigation, Trysor has undertaken an appraisal of the history and archaeological record pertaining to the development site and its environs.

This has included consulting the Regional Historic Environment Record and the National Monuments Record, historic mapping (including historic Ordnance Survey mapping and the parish tithe maps for Llangain and Carmarthen St Peters) and a number of published and unpublished sources (listed in the bibliography).

A site visit was also carried out on April 28th, 2009, to examine the topography of the development site and the surrounding landscape.

9. Historical context

The archaeological condition has been put in place based on the perceived proximity of the development site to the historic settlement of Llanllwch, which was part of a demesne manor to Carmarthen during medieval times. The identified archaeological interest specifically refers to a water mill (PRN 1275) and the church at Llanllwch (PRN 5241). The church still stands (see 7.2 below), although the site of the fulling mill is no longer known (see 7.1 below).

The development site is shown in Figure 1, along with the parish boundary between Llangain and Carmarthen (green line overlying a black dotted line). This shows that the development site actually lies within Llangain, a parish to the southwest of Llanllwch. Llangain was a medieval *maenor* which developed into a post medieval parish. The boundaries of Maenor Llangain and the parish of Llangain are though to be coterminous (see HLC area 179 Llangynog - Llangain, www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk).

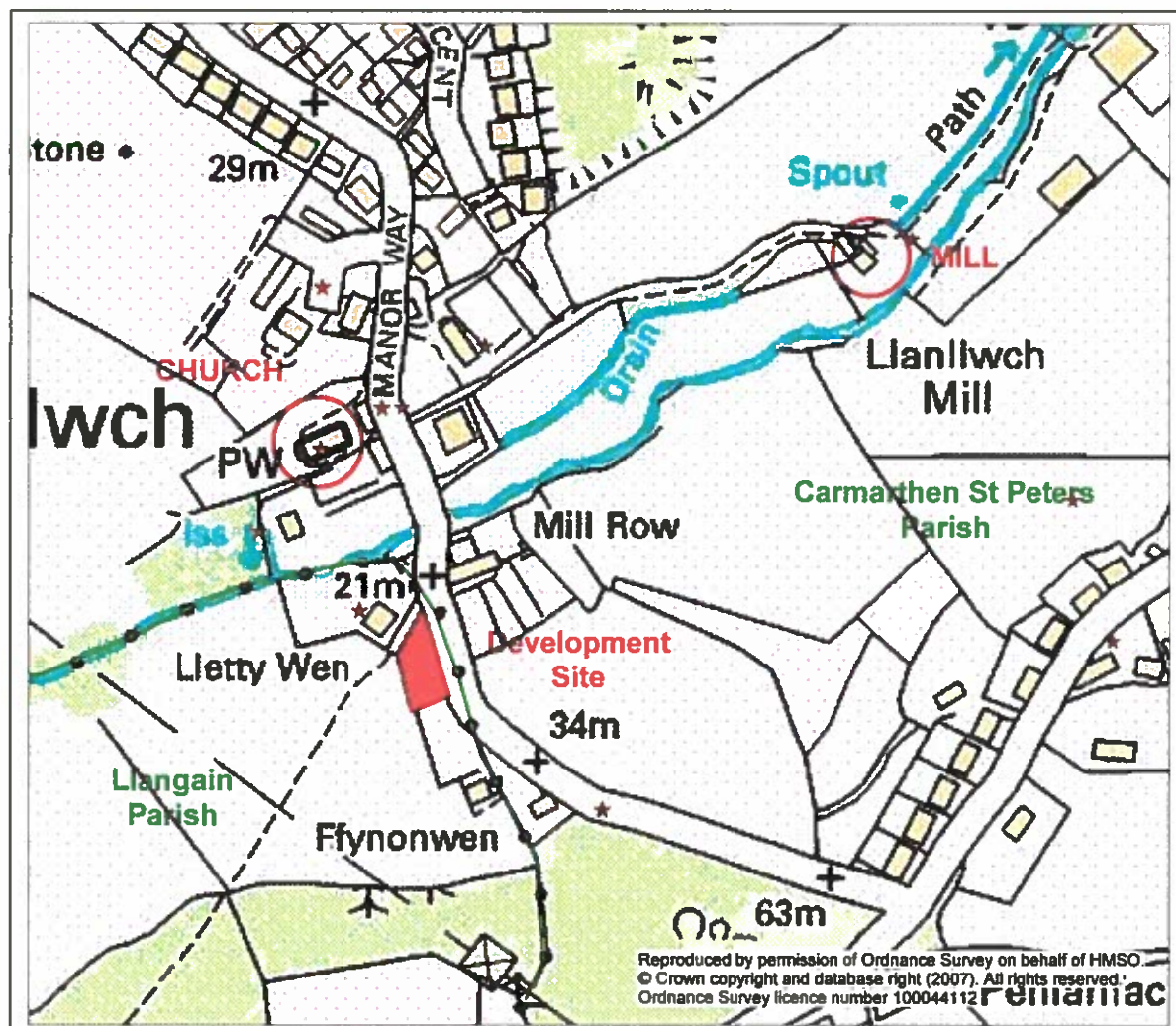


Figure 1: The historic boundary between Carmarthen St Peters and Llangain parishes also showing the location of development site, the church and the post medieval mill

10. Identified interests

10.1 Llanllwch Fulling Mill

The earliest records for a mill on the Llanllwch demesne occur as early as 1300AD (James, T, 1980, 45), but the function of this mill is not known. It seems that Llanllwch Mill was destroyed by Owain Glyndwr's forces during the first decade of the 15th century and it was described as being out of use in 1412-13 in contemporary documents (James, T, 1980, 45).

Jack (1981, 110) records that a fulling mill was built at the Llanllwch demesne for Sir Richard Herbert in the late 15th century, but its location is not known. By 1633, there is a record of a grist mill (corn mill) at Llanllwch, thought likely to be at the site of Llanllwch Mill (James, T, 1980, 44).

The medieval fulling mill at Llanllwch (Historic Environment Record PRN 12759), is quoted by Cambria Archaeology as having stood in close proximity to the development site. A review of the Historic Environment Record shows that the record for the medieval fulling mill was made using a six-figure grid reference - SN386187. The grid-reference was originally quoted by R.I. Jack in an article on the fulling mills of Wales, published in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* in 1981.

According to convention, a six-figure grid reference is given to the southwest corner of the 100m x 100m Ordnance Survey grid-square. Jack's description of the medieval fulling mill notes that the grid-reference marks the location of Mill Row, which is about 50m to the northeast of the development site, across the historic boundary between the parishes of Carmarthen St Peters and Llangain and also on lower ground. Jack does not seem to imply that Mill Row itself was the site of the medieval fulling mill. Indeed, there appears to be no clear evidence as to where the fulling mill stood.

The only extant water mill site known at Llanllwch is that of Llanllwch Mill (Historic Environment Record PRN 9954), which was in use as a corn mill in the late-19th century, but is now a private dwelling. This mill is nearly 300m to the northeast of the development site. It also lies well beyond the boundary between Carmarthen St Peters and Llangain, on the opposite side of the stream valley. In 1986, the Dyfed Archaeological Trust undertook an investigation of the mill leat and pond at Llanllwch Mill (Dyfed Archaeological Trust, 1986). This work determined that the leat, pond and probably the mill site were those of a medieval water mill. It is not known if this mill was also the site of the medieval fulling mill.

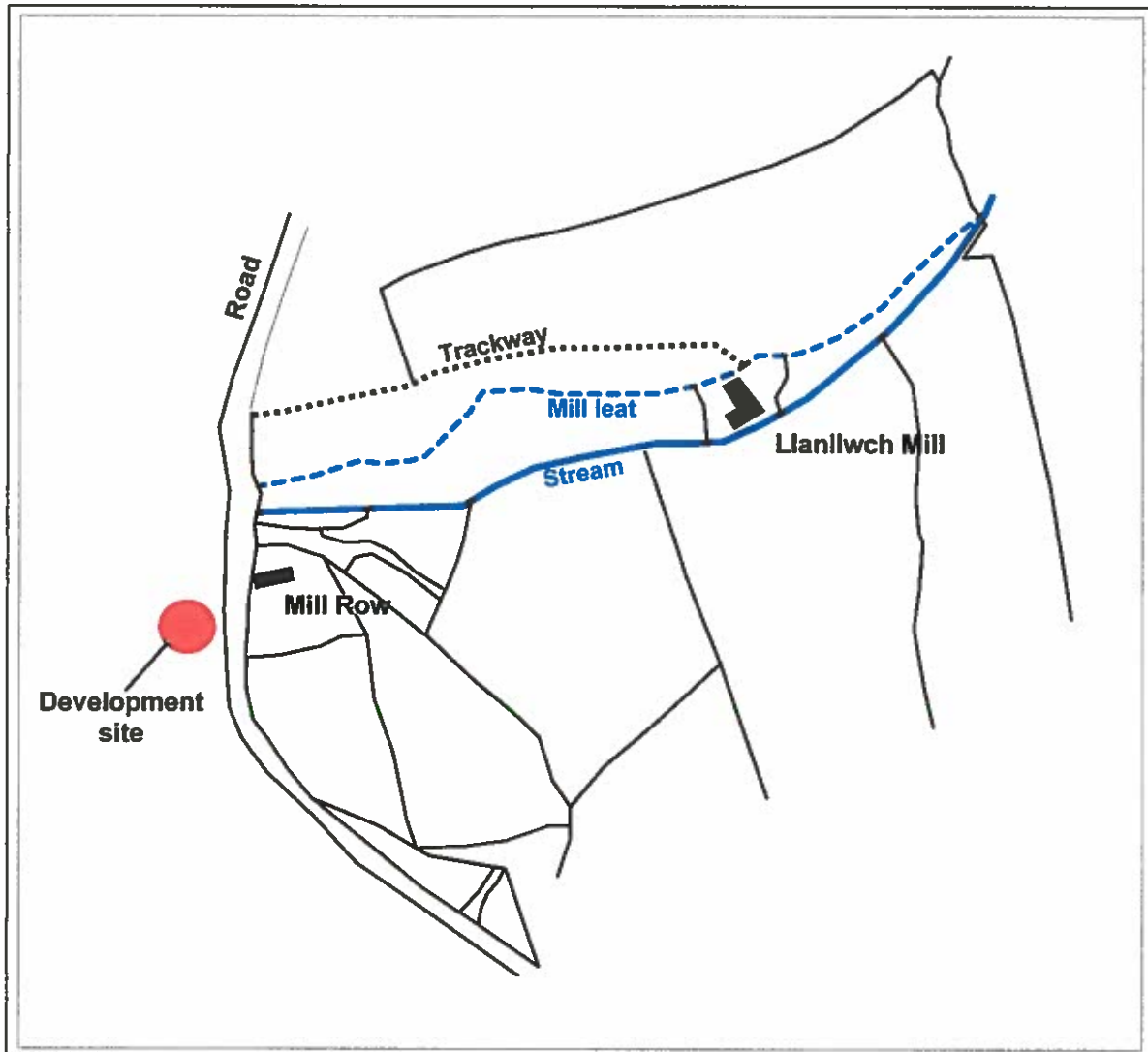


Figure 2: The Carmarthen St Peters parish tithe map of 1837 shows the position of Llanllwch Mill and its leat. Buildings at the site of Mill Row are shown also, but there is no evidence of a second mill site here. The road between Mill Row and the development site acts as the parish boundary. The development site is located in adjacent Llangain parish and appears on the Llangain parish tithe map of 1842, and is shown as a field in the Wauncorngam Fawr farmstead, for which no field names or land use details are provided.

10.2 Llanllwch Church

The archaeological condition placed on this development is also concerned with a possible impact on features which may have been associated with the medieval church and churchyard of Llanllwch.

As the development site lies within the historic manor of Llangain, the historical connection with the church in Llanllwch is also tenuous, despite its physical proximity. The Dyfed Archaeological Trust have recorded that the modern boundary between the area of Carmarthen Town and Llangain Community is likely to have been based on the earlier, medieval boundary between the demesne of Llanllwch and the Maenor Llangain (Dyfed Archaeological Trust, description of HLC Area 179). It seems unlikely that any settlement associated with Llanllwch or its church would have extended across the physical and political boundary that exists here.



Plate1: Llanllwch church, looking southeast, towards the high ground to the south of the largely wooded stream valley which divides the development site and Mill Row from the heart of Llanllwch.

11. Site Visit

The site visit was carried out on April 28th, 2009 to examine the topography and context of the development site.

Firstly, Llanllwch church and its burial ground were investigated. It was noted that they are detached from the proposed development site by a relatively broad and deep valley, which also acts as the historic boundary between the parishes of Carmarthen St Peters (in which Llanllwch is situated) and Llangain. This physical barrier is a considerable one and would suggest that there is no connection between the church and churchyard, to the north of the valley, and the development site, to the south of it.



Plate 2: Llanllwch viewed from the high ground to the south. The church can be seen sitting above the valley that divides Llanllwch from the development site (which is just off the left side of the photograph).

The field evidence for the medieval fulling mill was also investigated. From the bridge which crosses the stream at Mill Row, evidence of the mill leat that fed Llanllwch Mill is visible in the field to the east. Llanllwch Mill lies some 250m to the east-northeast and the leat runs in that direction, originating close to the bridge. Clearly, there is no association between the leat or mill and the development site, which lies in a pasture field, some 50m to the south-southwest.

The site of the medieval fulling mill at Llanllwch is not known, although it has provisionally been located in the Heritage Environment Record as being situated at Mill Row. No field evidence was noted to support this supposition. Mill Row appears on all Ordnance Survey maps since the 1831 1 inch to 1 mile edition and would appear to be an early 19th century row of estate cottages. There is no structural evidence to suggest it has been a mill in the past, or that it stands on the site of a mill. Even if a fulling mill had stood at Mill Row, it is difficult to see how it could relate to the development site, which lies at least 2m above the floor of the stream valley, on ground that rises moderately to the south.



Plate 3: *The development site viewed looking south, with Mill Row to the left, Lletty Wen entrance to the right. The development site lies beyond the farm gate in the centre of the photograph.*

The eastern edge of the development site is formed by a field boundary bank which runs alongside a road that is cut deeply into the slope, forming a hollow way. The sharp step from the field to road level (c.1.5m) again suggests that the site is a very unlikely position for a fulling mill, or any other water mill. It should be noted that the entrance into the field at this point is probably a modern feature, as Ordnance Survey maps up until the mid-20th century show that the boundary ran further north for another 40m, to the minor stream which acts as a boundary between Carmarthen St Peters and Llangain parishes. Lletty Wen house has been built on the land between the stream and the proposed development site in recent years and it would appear that the field boundary bank has been removed as a result.



Plate 4: *A closer view of the entrance to the development site. Note the drop in ground level between the field and the well-established road to the left. The field entrance is a modern feature.*

12. Conclusion

As the development site clearly lies outside the territory of the historic demesne manor of Llanllwch, it seems very unlikely that it will be associated with any archaeological remains relating to the church or medieval fulling mill at Llanllwch.

The exact location of the medieval fulling mill is unclear, but the topography and history of the land make it very unlikely that the development site has any association with such a mill. As has been established, the development site lies outside the boundaries of the Llanllwch demesne. It also lies at least 2m above the level of the stream at Mill Row, from which it is divided by a road which can almost be described as a hollow way. These historical and physical factors suggest that the development will have no archaeological impact to a medieval fulling mill site; the fulling mill and any associated mill leats or races cannot be located within the development site.

History and topography also suggest that no threat can exist to any features associated with Llanllwch church. The development site lies over 100m to the south-southeast of the church, across a deep and broad stream valley. There is no physical connection between the churchyard and the development site.

13. Recommendation

Trysor concludes that the likelihood of archaeological remains relating to the identified interests of the archaeological condition is minimal and no further mitigation is therefore proposed in association with the development.

14. Reporting

Copies of this report will be provided to the client, the Regional Historic Environment Record and the National Monuments Record.

15. References

Map sources

Tithe map. 1837, Carmarthen St Peters

Tithe map. 1842, Llangain

Ordnance Survey, 1831, 1" to 1 mile edition map

Ordnance Survey, 1891, 1:10560 1st edition map

Ordnance Survey, 1907, 1:10560 1st edition map

Web based materials

HLC area 180 Carmarthen, www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk

HLC area 179 Llangynog - Llangain, www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk

Published sources

Jack, RI, 1981, Fulling Mills in Wales, *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, Vol.130, p.110, number 118

James, TA, 1980, Carmarthen, An Archaeological & Topographical Survey, p.42-5, Fig.4.8, No.31

Unpublished sources

Dyfed Archaeological Trust, 1986, *Llanllwch Mill Leat and Pond*. DAT, Abergwili

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