Criggion

SJ 2956 1510
16755

Introduction

Criggion lies on a back lane on the floor of the Severn Valley, 11km north-east of Welshpool. The Breidden Hills tower over this hamlet which occupies flat ground less than one kilometre from the river.

This brief report examines Criggion's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

We have not referenced the sources that have been examined to produce this report, but that information will be available in the Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust. Numbers in brackets are primary record numbers used in the HER to provide information that is specific to individual sites and features. These can be accessed on-line through the Archwilio website (www.archwilio.org.uk).

History of development

The earliest references to Criggion are in the form of *Kregeon* in 1289 and *Cregeon* in 1305, with *the Cruggyon* in 1503. The name probably derives from Welsh *crug* meaning 'hillock' or 'cairn'. Whether these references are to the chapel, to an area, or to settlement has yet to be ascertained. A *Geoffrey de Crugyon* was ordained a deacon at Alberbury in 1343.

There was a chapel here in the 14th century, the earliest record dating from 1343. It lay in the ecclesiastical parish of Alberbury, and was not elevated to parochial status itself until 1864.

Today, the hamlet consists of no more than the church, the Hall and a few cottages.
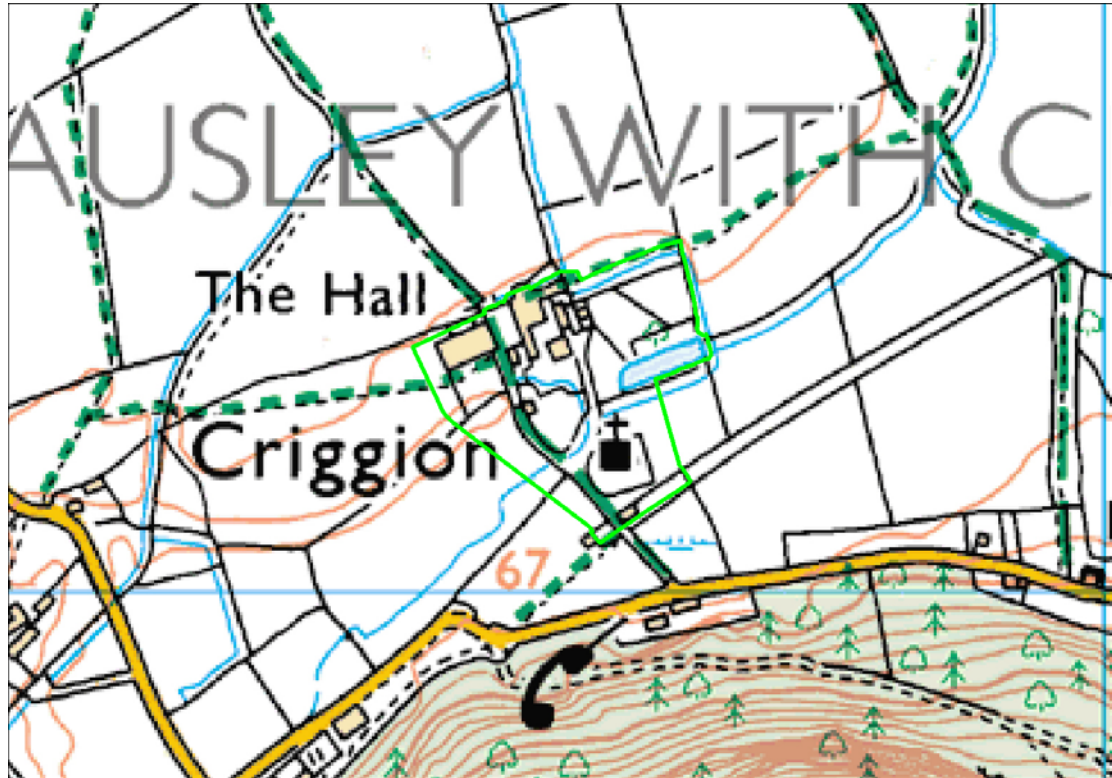
The heritage to 1750

St Michael and All Angel's church (7567) was built in red brick in 1774, to replace the earlier chapel; its stone chancel was added in the mid-19th century. The Alberbury register for 1676 records 'ye first child baptized in ye Chapell [at Criggion] where it now stands', implying a new building in the 17th century, and of the medieval edifice nothing survives and its location is not known. The church contains some 18th-century box pews, a pulpit and an altar rail and a bell of 1682.

The churchyard (7568) is D-shaped, slightly raised and ditched, presumably as a defence against flooding.

The Hall (7569), a Grade II listed building, is a red-brick structure attributed to the 17th century by Cadw, but the 18th century by the Royal Commission.

East of the hall, the pattern of closes and watercourses may disclose the former existence of associated gardens.

There is no evidence of an earlier settlement around the church, and in the circumstances it seems unlikely that this was ever the case.