

Tintern's wider grange landscape

The location of the granges described in this appendix is mapped in Figure 7.13.

Aluredeston grange

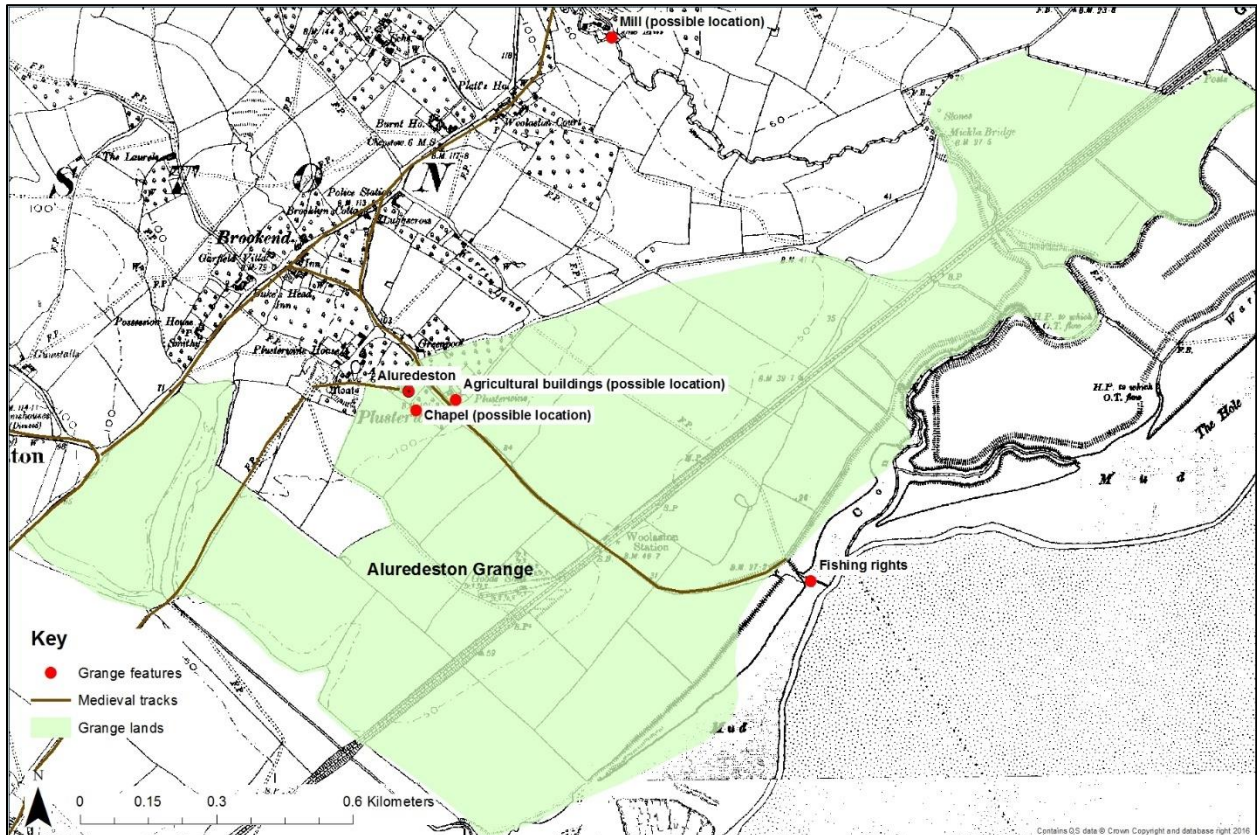


Figure 1: Aluredeston grange (Source: map drawn in ArcGIS® using Ordnance Survey 1:10560 County Series 1st edition, Gloucestershire, 1889 data layer, downloaded from Digimap under licence, <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/>).

A late addition to the estate in 1302, Aluredeston (Figure 1) consolidated and extended the abbey's lush pasture-lands eastwards along the Lydney Levels, in exchange for the harder won and more distant wood pasture of Plataland. 'Aelfred's farmstead' was an established estate at *Domesday*, a separate manor adjoining Woolaston and perhaps including the woodlands that became Woolaston Woodside, at which the abbey already had a virgate of land and a chapel from at least 1255 (Morgan and Smith 1972, 103-4). The grange is thought to have been centred on either the modern farmstead of

Plusterwine (a manor house site surrounded by a now largely destroyed moated enclosure) or the adjoining farm buildings known as Alwick Grange and Atwood Grange (Morgan and Smith 1972b, 106; Walters 1992, 137; Williams 1976, 126).

The riverside pastures of Aluredeston, 'the Low lands', were home to part of the abbey's sheep flock, with a sheepcote recorded in 1318 (*Glos Archives*, Q/R1/144; Williams 2001, 253). That the grange harboured arable production is attested to by medieval-style ridge and furrow earthworks visible in mid-twentieth century aerial photography, probably the site of the estate's open field (*Glos HER* 138526; Morgan and Smith 1972b, 109). The grange also enjoyed fishing rights on the Severn, access to a ferry or wharf and possessed a mill dating to at least 1274 (Williams 1976, 119, 139). By the Dissolution, Aluredeston, along with the other Woolaston granges, had been farmed out with considerable income from rents (Morgan and Smith 1972b, 109).

The grange and other abbey land in Woolaston bordered the manor of Alvington and Ayleburton, a possession of Llanthony Priory (see Chapter 5), and this monastic juxtaposition was a cause of on-going friction between the two houses, as further explored in the discussion in Chapter 11.

Halishall grange



Figure 2: The modern farmstead of Ashwell, looking north-west (Source: author).

Wooded land in Woolaston manor known as Halishall (later Ashwell) was initially granted to the abbey as a park but subsequently assarted in the thirteenth century to form a grange farm, later farmed out (*NLW*, Badminton 2445; Williams 1976, 126) (Figures 2 and 18). A large recorded assart of 200 acres (80.9 ha) within Tidenham Chase by the abbey before 1282 is thought to have created the grange (Morgan and Smith 1972b, 106). Fines paid for illegal clearance of Royal Forest when developing the grange suggest that the abbey's opening-up of woodland may have been somewhat overzealous (Aston 2007, 135). That the abbey's lay brothers were skilled in improving the land that they cleared is shown by the recorded spreading of manure, marling and quarrying lime at the grange (Williams 1976, 118). Ashwell Grove in the northern part of the grange remained as woodland.

The southern edge of the grange boundary indicated in Figure 18 follows the intricate boundary between the civil parishes of Tidenham and Woolaston to encompass tithe-free 'abbey lands'. Tracking the boundaries of individual rectilinear fields (probably post-medieval), its irregular shape is unlikely to indicate the true medieval limits of the grange. Halishall probably included assarted land subsequently handed to Tidenham to

resolve a dispute over tithes with Lyre Abbey (appropriator of that manor), perhaps up to the northern limit of Woolaston grange and bounded in the south-east by Piccadilly Brook (as indicated by the hatched area in Figure 18) (Morgan and Smith 1972b, 102). Here, building platforms possibly associated with the grange complex and ridge and furrow have been identified (*Glos HER* 21337).

Harthill grange

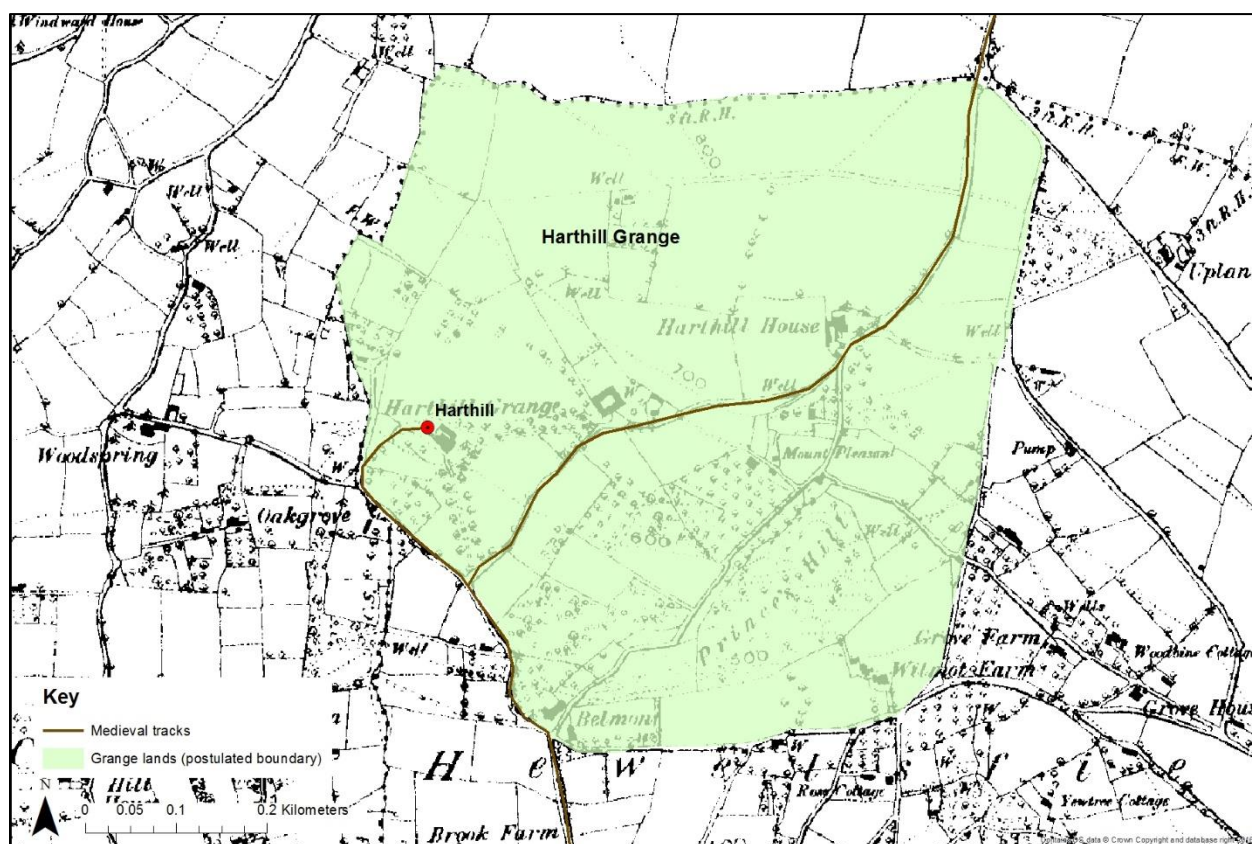


Figure 3: Harthill grange (Source: map drawn in ArcGIS® using Ordnance Survey 1:10560 County Series 1st edition, Gloucestershire, 1889 data layer, downloaded from Digimap under licence, <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/>).

Little is known about the activities, components and extent of the abbey grange occupying high ground on Hart Hill above Hewelsfield Common (Figures 3 and 4). Whether the grange lands occupied the higher fields on the ridge towards Coldharbour and St. Briavel's or the valley-side wooded common below (within the Harthill Wood area of Hewelsfield manor or part of the tithe-free 'Hudnalls' area of St. Briavel's,

perhaps bounded by Mere Brook) is not known. A postulated boundary is indicated in Figure 3, though the actual extent may have been larger. Part of the sylvan common was certainly within the grange's orbit and in 1270 its woodward (the keeper of the grange woods), John of Aure, was found guilty of a misdemeanour leading to the forfeiture of Tintern's woods to the Crown (Baggs and Jurica 1996a, 150; Williams 2001, 229). Any land on the common cleared by the grange *conversi* would have been overlain by an encroachment landscape of small-holding cottages and enclosures during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. A Victorian villa named Harthill Grange occupied a site (now a plantation, the buildings long demolished) to the west of the post-medieval Harthill Grange Farm and this may have been the location of the original grange farmstead (Figure 4).



Figure 4: The position of Harthill Grange (the line of high trees at the midpoint of the skyline) above Hewelsfield Common, looking north (Source: author).

Merthyrgeryn grange

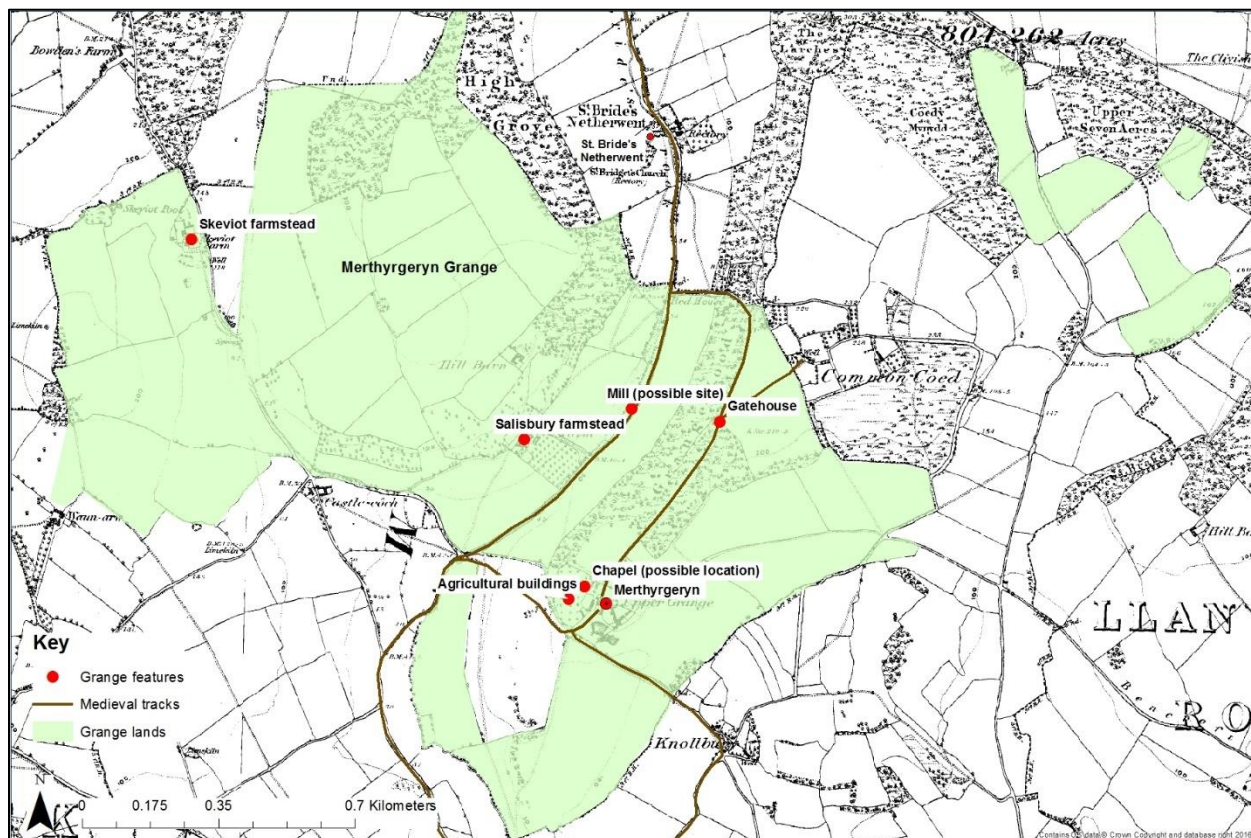


Figure 5: Merthyrgeryn grange (Source: map drawn in ArcGIS® using Ordnance Survey 1:10560 County Series 1st edition, Monmouthshire, 1887 data layer, downloaded from Digimap under licence, <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/>).

Merthyrgeryn (later known as Upper Grange) is probably the Tintern grange subjected to the most archaeological and historical investigation (Figures 5 and 6). Exchanged for land in nearby Wilcrick, the grange was established across the gently rising topography north of the Magor (*Cal Ch Vol III*, 96). With additional gifts including land on the *munedam* (higher ground above the Levels) at Salisbury and Skeviot farms added in 1245, the grange composed 2.5 *caracutes* of arable fields in 1291 and managed substantial detached portions of land, including one *caracute* at 'Hardstrete' (probably the land beyond Common-y-coed, north-east of the grange) and further holdings in St. Bride's, Magor and Undy (including Monk's Mead) (*Taxatio*, 282; Webster 2004, 132; Williams 1976, 114).



Figure 6: Merthyrgeryn and its enclosures looking south towards the Levels with Wilcrick Hill to the right (Source: author).

The surviving Merthyrgeryn bailiff's accounts of 1387-9, recorded in Latin by William Walter and Thomas Carpenter, provide a vivid portrait of the workings of a late fourteenth century grange (*NLW*, Badminton Papers 1571). From these records the physical fabric of the grange (with its granary, byres, vaccary, sheepcote, piggery, stable and garden; constructed of stone, wood and thatch) and the activities of its occupants, including improving the fertility of the soil through liming, marling and muck-spreading, can be pieced together (Bond 2004, 52, 126; Williams 1976, 120). Whilst utilising pasture for cattle, horses, sheep and pigs, arable production is illustrated by costs recorded for ploughing, hoeing, mowing and stacking and the employment of casual labour during harvest (Webster 2004, 134; Williams 1969, 64). 'Great freestones' for Llangybi Castle were won from a quarry at the grange in 1286 (Webster 2004, 131).

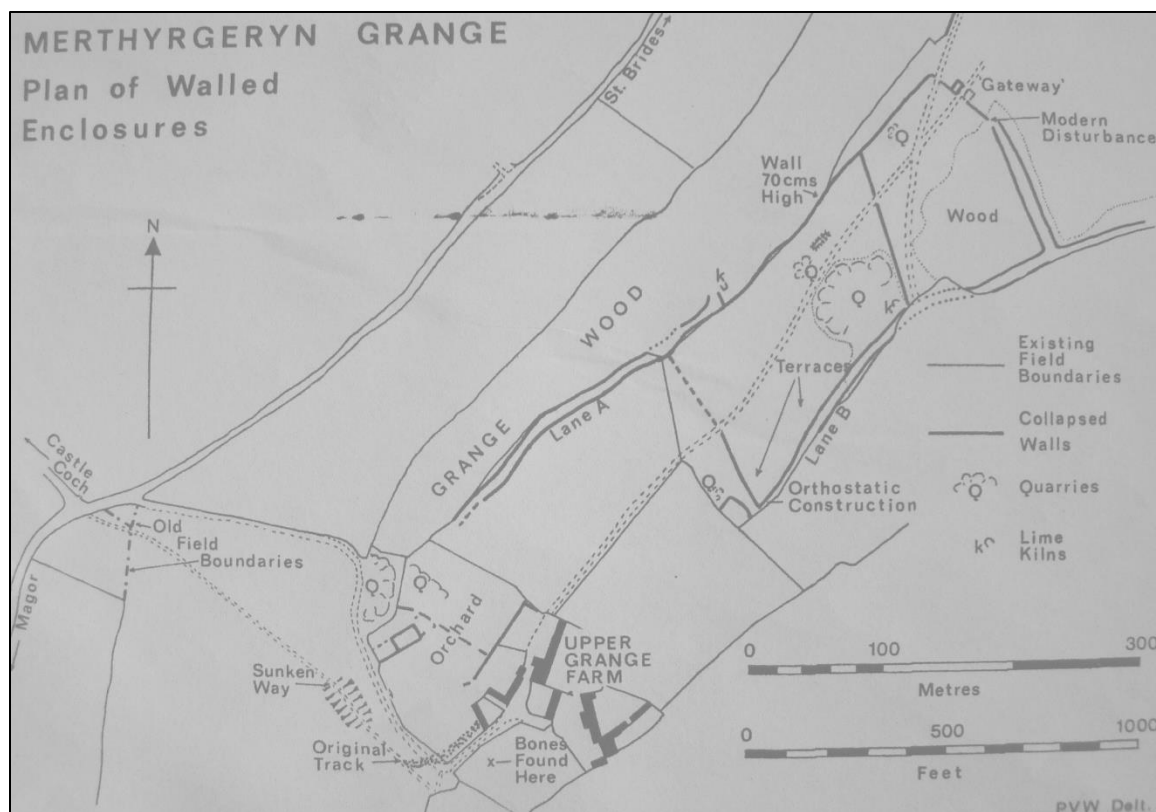


Figure 7: Plan of grange features at Merthyrgreryn (Source: Parkes and Webster 1974, 142).

Fieldwork by Parkes and Webster (1974, 140-154) in the early 1970s embellished the granges' documentary evidence, revealing a range of late-medieval agricultural buildings (stone footings, cruck-framed and tile-roofed) in the orchard next to the modern Upper Grange Farm, cobbled trackways, stone-wall enclosures and a possible gate to the grange complex (Figure 7). The authors concluded that the grange was arranged around an enclosed courtyard, similar to that preserved at Monknaish (Glamorgan), with the medieval domestic buildings and chapel (later a church, said to be in ruin by 1560) probably overwritten by the post-medieval farmstead (Williams 1976, 129). David Williams (2001, 174) has suggested that the church may have been at the nearby Salisbury Farm, whilst Joseph Bradney (1994d, 231) placed it at Moor (Lower) grange.

The estate described in the bailiff's accounts was by then largely leased out with most income coming from rent (only £1.9.4 from demesne land out of a total income of

£15.6.10), with the grange mill, alongside St. Bride's Brook below Grange Wood, also farmed out by 1302 (Cowley 1977, 256). Pasture-land had also been sold off, reflecting a reduction in the abbey's agricultural activity (Williams 2001, 247). As Dissolution approached, the whole grange was 'let to farm' with a value of £6 and substantial rental, court and tithe income (over £35) in 1535 (*NLW*, Badminton 2445; Webster 2004, 132).

The physical and documentary evidence available for Merthyrgeryn illuminate a busy, mixed economy agricultural operation, managing (along with Moor grange) large tracts of land outside of the main estate, integrating both flat marshland on the Caldicot Levels and the higher ground to the north (Webster 2004, 136; Williams 1990, 28).

Moor and New grange

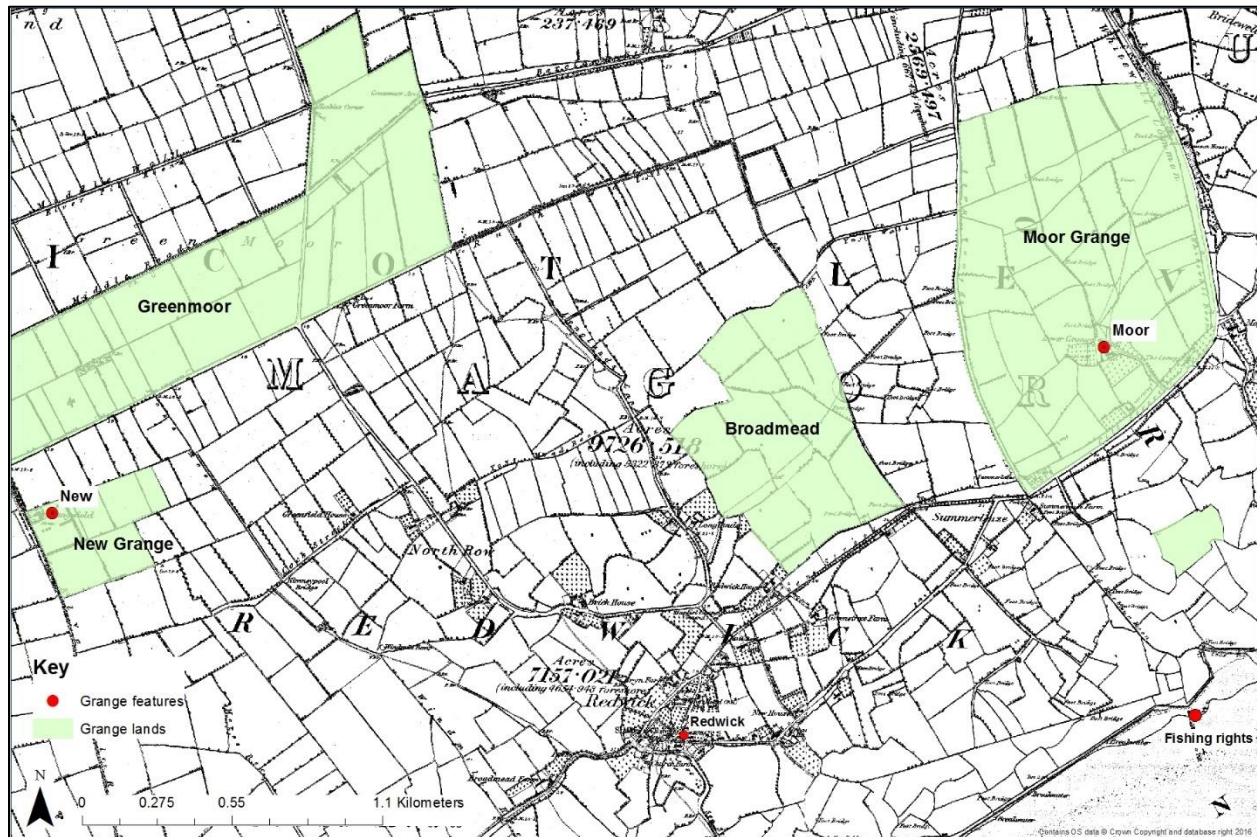


Figure 8: Moor and New grange (Source: map drawn in ArcGIS® using Ordnance Survey 1:10560 County Series 1st edition, Monmouthshire, 1887 data layer, downloaded from Digimap under licence, <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/>).

The core of Moor grange (Figure 8) formed a block of reclaimed marshland amongst the estuarine Caldicot Levels, its watery topography vividly brought to life in the confirmation grant of William Marshal the younger in 1223: ‘in the Moor of Magor all the land as it is divided by the ditches, and sunk fence, and in the said ditch whatever they shall be pleased to make, and to turn the course of the water any way, either inwardly or outwardly, as they shall find it most conducive to their advantage’ (Heath 1806, unpaginated). The abbey was subsequently given licence in 1245 to construct a ditch around the grange (Williams and Rippon 1996, 46). The LiDAR image at Figure 9 illustrates well these ditched boundaries (named Black Wall and White Wall) and the drainage system within the grange enclosures, predating the field systems surrounding

it (*GGAT HER*, 00457g). The grange also had fishing rights on the Severn around the Earl's Gout weir and 'La Pulle' (Bond 2004, 188).

By 1291, the grange controlled two *caracutes* of drained arable land alongside 'full pasture for animals in La Grenemore (Greenmoor)', an alder wood at Llanwerne and further rich pasture and meadow at Porton and elsewhere on the Levels (Heath 1806, unpaginated; *Taxatio*, 282). Unlike most of the abbey's granges, Moor remained directly managed by the abbey bailiff up to the Dissolution, with a value of £6.10.0 in 1535, broadly in line with the other granges (*NLW*, Badminton 2445; Williams 2001, 231).

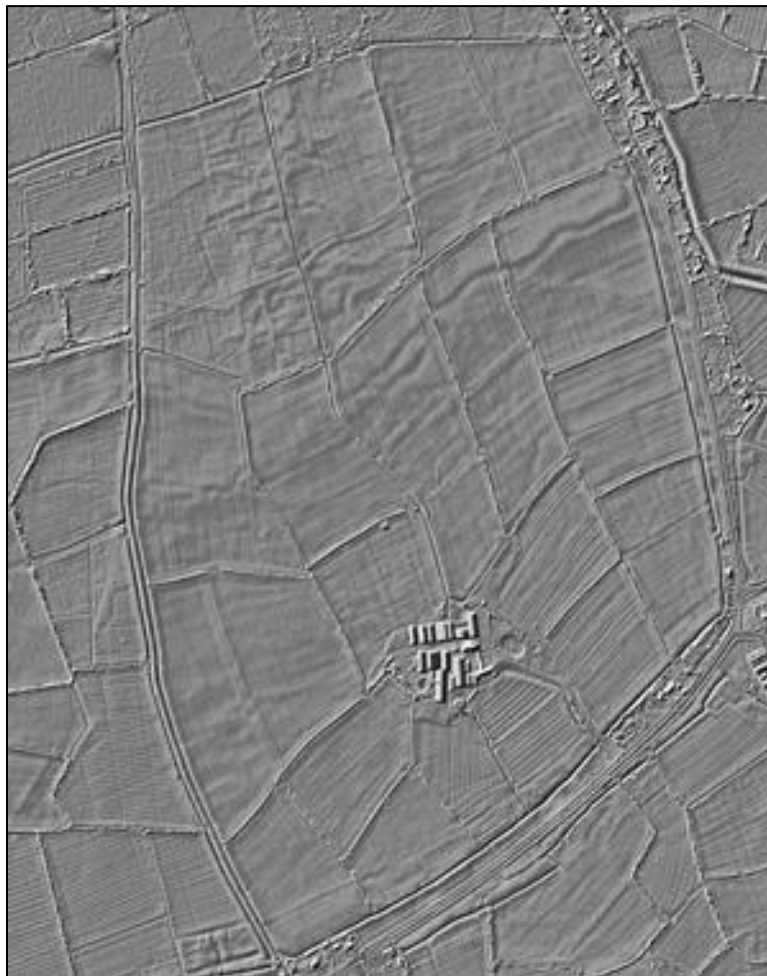


Figure 9: LiDAR image of Moor grange within its drainage ditch topography (Source: LiDAR 1M DSM downloaded from houseprices.io/lab/lidar/map).

The earthworks of a moated enclosure, the site of New Grange, occupy a field next to Grangefield Farm to the west of Moor (Williams 1976, 121) (Figure 10). First recorded in 1322, this out-station may have been used to reclaim the peat-dominated 'Black Moores' waste around it and manage neighbouring Greenmoor and other surrounding land-holdings remote from Merthyrgeryn and Moor (Rippon 1996, 48; Williams 1984, 225). The Merthyrgeryn accounts give detail of stock, cereal production and servants employed at New Grange, which may – along with other detached parcels on the Levels – have by then been under the ultimate control of the Merthyrgeryn bailiff (Williams 1976, 129; 2008, 205).



Figure 10: Grangefield looking west with the platform and rushy moat of New Grange in the foreground (Source: author).

Pethlenny grange

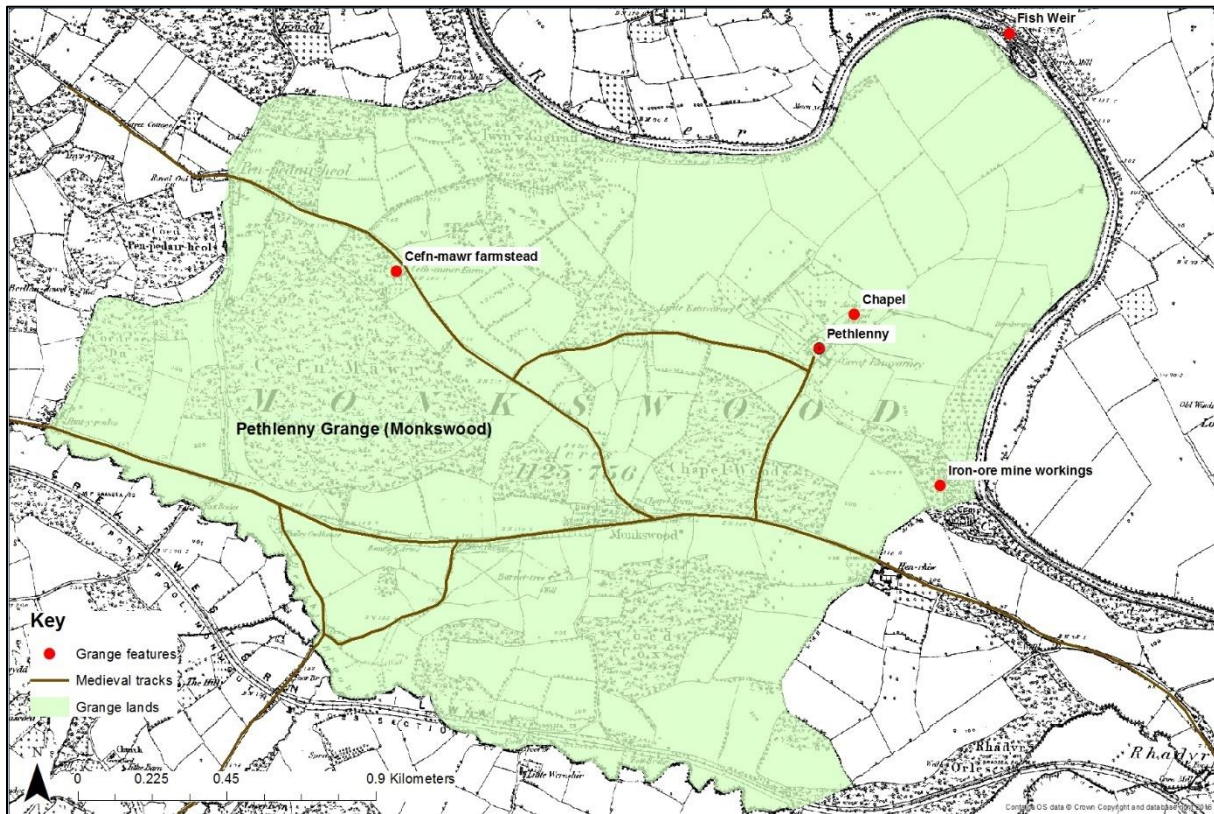


Figure 11: Pethlenny grange (Source: map drawn in ArcGIS® using Ordnance Survey 1:10560 County Series 1st edition, Monmouthshire, 1887 data layer, downloaded from Digimap under licence, <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/>).

Furthest from Tintern of the abbey's Monmouthshire granges, Pethlenny (later known as Estavarney or Monkswood) occupied well-wooded farmland extending out from a river meander in the broad and fertile Usk valley (Figure 11). A field adjoining the post-medieval high-status farmstead of Great Estavarney called Chapel Meadow holds the surveyed earthworks of the chapel and other possible associated grange buildings, with part of the enclosure boundary known as Ancient Walls and a nearby farm building recorded as Monk's House (GGAT HER, 02040g/ 02042g; Williams 1976, 121; 1990, 29). A prominent curvilinear banked field next to the farmstead may be a remnant of a double enclosure, often associated with large arable granges (Platt 1969, 73) (Figure 12). Additional land granted to the abbey at nearby Mynachdy ('monastery') was probably also managed from the grange (Bradney 1994a, 257-8).



Figure 12: Curvilinear enclosure at Pethlenny, looking north (Source author).

Extensive disused workings are found in woodland above the River Usk east of the farmstead (Figure 13). Marked as 'camp/ tumuli' on the first edition historic Ordnance Survey map (1887), the morphology of the deeply incised earthworks and limestone spoil heaps within the wood appear to be the remains of mining or quarrying activity, suggesting the likely site of the iron-ore workings of Monkswood (the name later given to the local parish) recorded from the late-sixteenth century and possibly originating during the monastic period (Donald 1961, 98; Phillips 1951, 106; Williams 1976, 139). Further upstream, the grange operated a fish weir; an island in the river the remains of this feature, Tintern's Lugg, a field name on the opposite bank of the river (Bond 2004, 195; Williams 1976, 139).



Figure 13: Monkswood iron-ore workings (Source: author).

Rogerstone grange

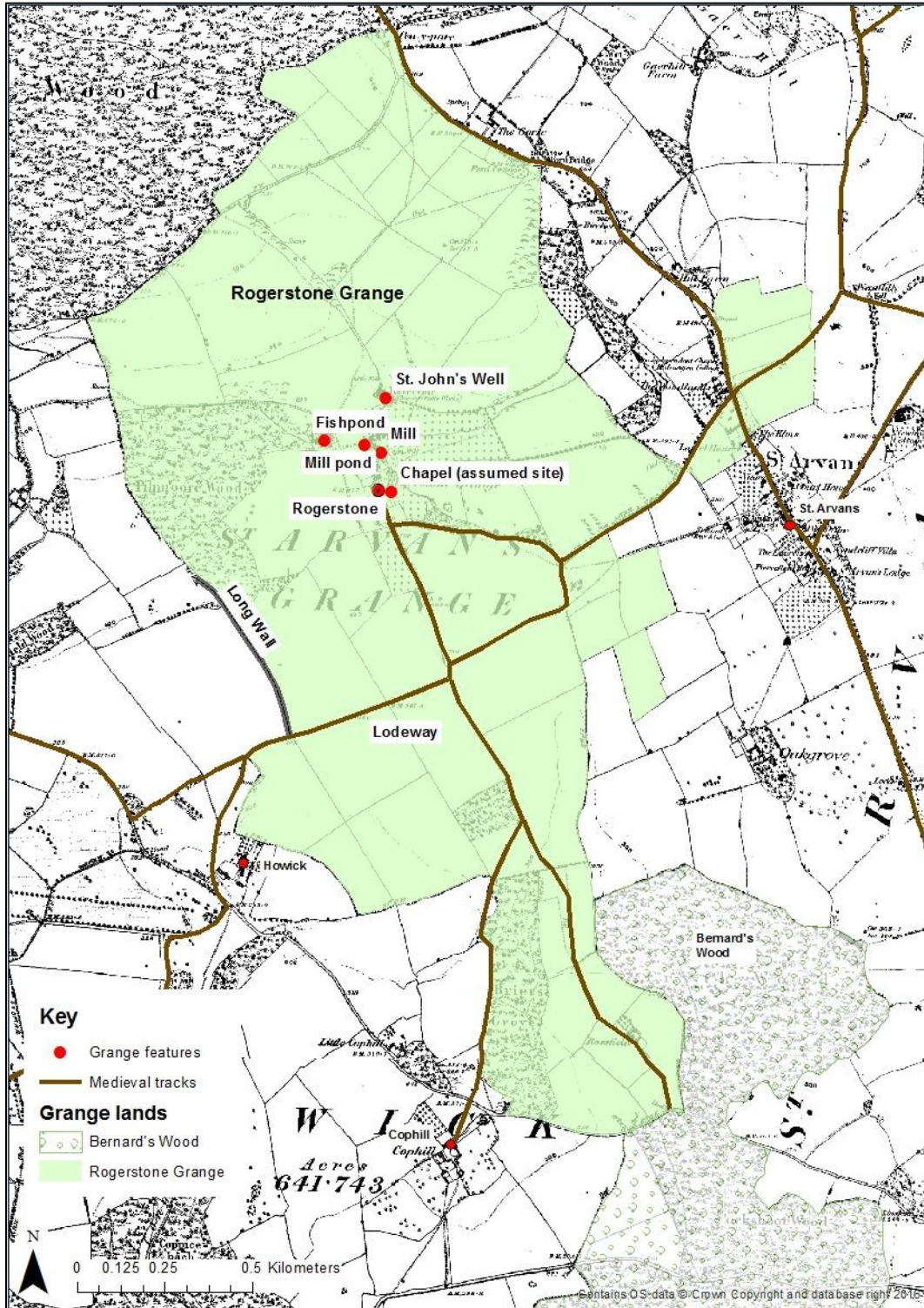


Figure 14: Rogerstone grange (Source: map drawn in ArcGIS® using Ordnance Survey 1:10560 County Series 1st edition, Monmouthshire, 1887 data layer, downloaded from Digimap under licence, <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/>).

The grange at Rogerstone occupied a large tract of prime agricultural land to the west of the vill of St. Arvans, bestriding a geological fault between a Carboniferous Limestone plateau and Old Red Sandstone rising to Chepstow Park Wood (Figures 14 and 15). The estate may be named after Roger de Clare, Earl of Hereford and nephew of Walter de Clare or Roger Berkeley, owner of a *Domesday* property near Chepstow which could be Rogerstone (Crouch 2008, 24; Osborne and Hobbs 1998, 81). A relatively late addition, the pre-existing 'farm of Rogereston, together with the lands, tenements, and all its liberties' was granted to the abbey in 1223, reconfirmed by Roger Bigod in 1307 in return for the abbey maintaining 'a lamp at his mother's tomb' (Heath 1806, unpaginated). A further gift from Walter Marshal, the 'upland of Rogerstone' may have been north of the grange boundary surmised from the tithe-free land in the parish (Williams 1999, 23). Detached land at Coetgae, Cophill, Howick and St. Arvans and the, still extensive, Bernardswood¹ bordering the grange to the south were also managed from here.



Figure 15: Rogerstone grange looking west with Chepstow Park Wood beyond (Source: author).

¹ Named for a Bishop of Llandaff, with the diocese retaining part of the wood, Bishop Barnetts. A portion of the abbey woods had the name Fryth (probably from the Old English *fyrhd* meaning 'enclosed wood used for hunting') (Winchester 2007, 172).

The grange was one of the abbey's main arable operations, recorded as four *caracutes* in 1291, with seven plough teams in 1302 and still in hand, 'restored to the abbot's own use', at the suppression – presumably an indication of its particular strategic and production value (*Taxatio*, 282; Williams 1999, 27, 30). The late-eighteenth century extent of the Rogerstone Grange estate (290 hectares, of which 144 arable, 56 coppiced wood) perhaps giving some indication of the scale of its activities in the monastic period (Williams 1976, 121). Its farming activities rippled out into the surrounding landscape with labour supply from the neighbouring settlements of Howick, St. Wormets and St. Arvans and common pasture rights for sixty oxen in Chepstow Park and Mynydd-y-gaer, as recorded in 1307 (Cowley 1977, 239; Williams 1969, 64). A chapel and holy well (St. John's, probably a stop for pilgrims), fishponds, garden, sheepcot, mill and system of leats complete the picture of a busy self-contained monastic estate (Hurlock 2013, 122; Williams 2001, 242-4, 312).

The grange's western boundary was delineated by the 'Long Wall', parts of which are still extant and remembered by Long Wall Meadow and Wood, whilst boundary stones including the Ancient Stone historically tracking other bounds and Coitca field names (from *coetgae* signifying 'enclosure or hedge') perhaps recall medieval divisions of the land within the grange (Williams 1999, 26). The latter, a Welsh exception in an otherwise largely English-named landscape: Fish Pool Wood, Great Warren, Warren Orchard, Mill Mead, the Ditch, Ox Lease, St John's Mead (probable location of the grange chapel) and Widows Christ ('dower land') memorialising the topography of the grange through field names found as far back as the seventeenth century (*GGAT HER*, 00767g; *NLW*, Badminton Vol. 2 143/1/1; Williams 1999, 23).

Trelleck grange

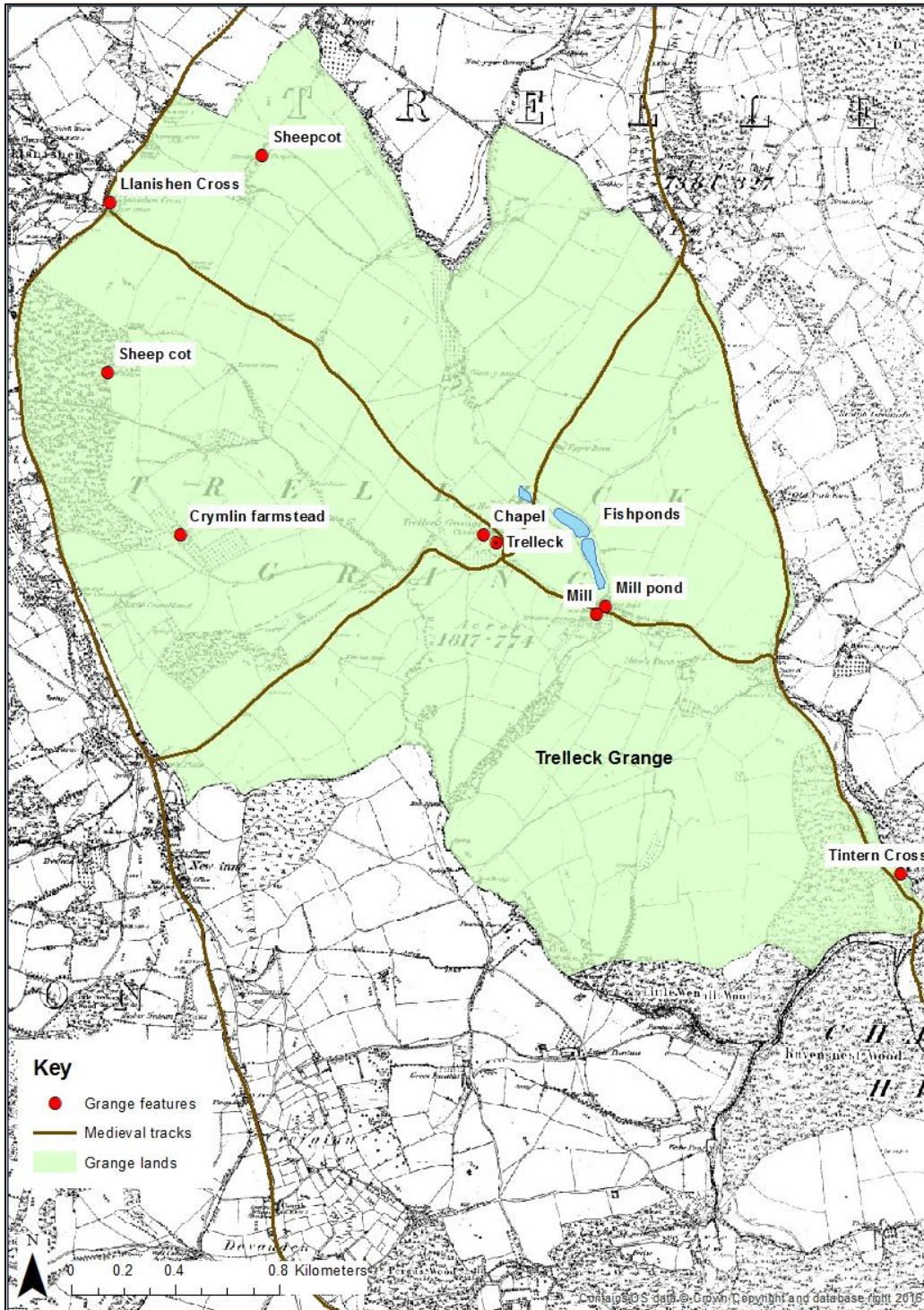


Figure 16: Trelleck grange (Source: map drawn in ArcGIS® using Ordnance Survey 1:10560 County Series 1st edition, Monmouthshire, 1887 data layer, downloaded from Digimap under licence, <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/>).

North of the abbey woodlands in the Angidy Valley was another large and valuable arable-based grange at Trelleck (Figure 16).² Joseph Bradney (1994a, 247) positions the grange as the ‘principle farm for the support of the abbey’, though his claim that the monks created it by clearing woodland is not valid as the land gifted was an established estate of ‘twelve carucates of arable land in the lawn of Trillec’ carved out of the lord’s waste (*Cal Ch*, PRO 1908, 98). That the value of the grange’s now three *caracutes* in the *Taxatio* survey of 1291 was much reduced and less than the abbey’s other larger arable units may be explained by the need to improve its sandy soils and a reduction in demesne land (Cowley 1977, 253; *Taxatio*, 282; Williams 201, 239). Largely Welsh or Anglicised mid-eighteenth century field-names may suggest an already resident population who became lay brothers and later tenants of the grange (*NLW*, Badminton Vol. 2 143/1/2).

Although the buildings of the modern-day hamlet of Trelleck Grange lack recorded monastic-era fabric, the farm and parish church probably mark the site of the main grange complex occupying an oval enclosure bounded by roadways and field boundaries (*GGAT HER*, 00950g) (Figure 17). The grange chapel may have been rebuilt as the church or perhaps lay in the nearby Chapel Meadow (Newman 2000, 580; Williams 1984, 235). To the east of the main grange complex a series of fishponds and a mill pond, probably developed from a lake in a natural depression, serviced a mill below with fast-flowing water (*GGAT HER*, 00948g; Williams 2001, 241, 268). A recorded bake-house also indicates the on-site processing of produce from the grange’s corn-land, whilst a complementary pastoral economy explains the two sheepcots

² The name derives from the prehistoric standing stones outside the neighbouring medieval borough of Trellech (from *tri*, ‘three’, and *llec*, ‘flat stone(s)’. There is also some indication in an abbey charter that the grange was known as Kilwethen at some stage, the medieval name for the upper part of the Angidy Valley; the *cil* element perhaps indicating an early monastic centre, which may also be evidenced by the large pear-shaped enclosure encompassing the grange site (Brook 1988, 72). An Earlier tenth-century place-name, Villa Guidcon, probably represents ‘Gwyddon’s estate’ (*Cal Ch*, PRO 1908, 99; Osborne and Hobbs 1998, 90).

located in the wood pasture of the higher ground in the north of the grange (Williams 1976, 120; 1990, 62).



Figure 17: The hamlet of Trelleck Grange nestled in its farmed landscape (Source: author).

The bounds of the grange which later formed the parish of Trelleck Grange was marked by boundary stones and crosses: for instance, Llanishen Cross to the west and Tintern Cross to the east, probably erected by the abbey (Williams 2001, 235). A section of ancient wall along the Angidy Fawr stream may also have delineated the boundary between the cultivated grange lands and the chase of Trellech Park to the east, with a nearby Gate Piece field-name suggesting a possible entrance (NLW, Badminton Vol. 2 143/1/1).

Woolaston grange

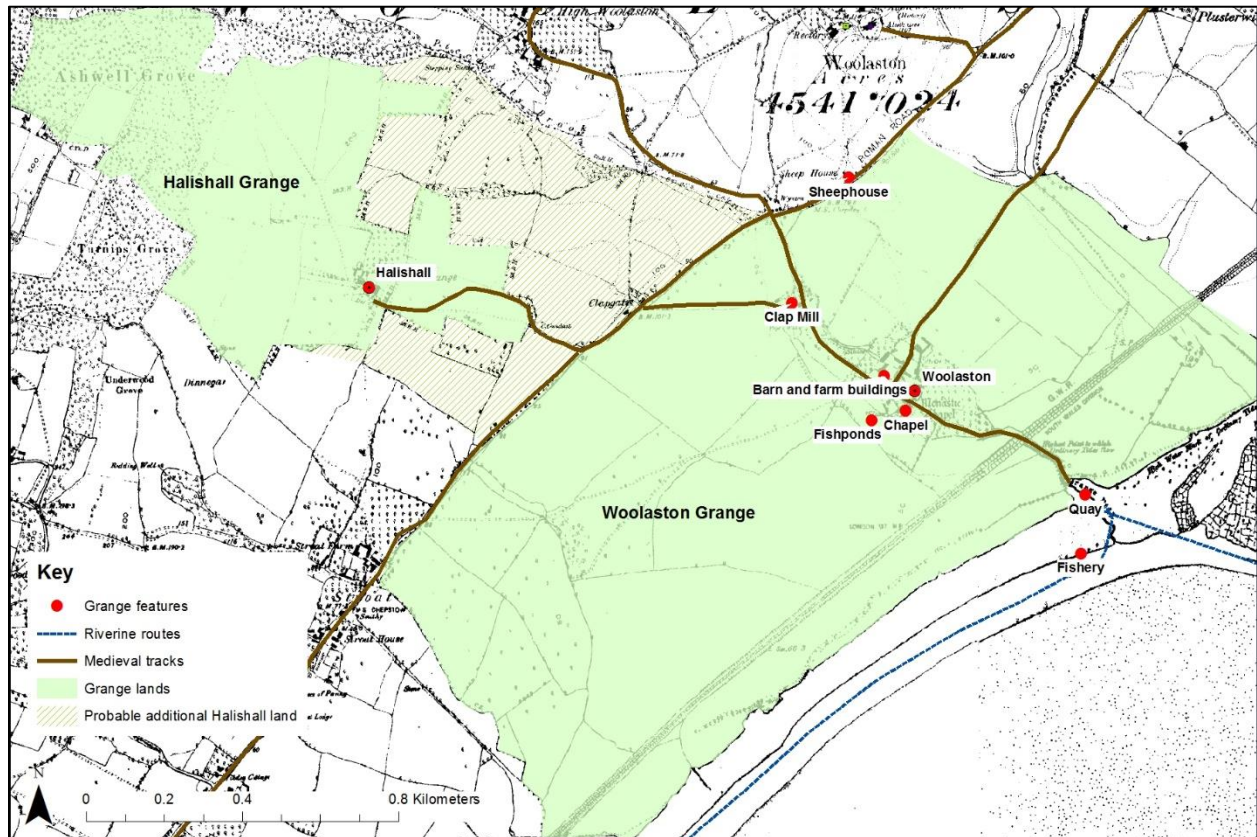


Figure 18: Halishall and Woolaston granges (Source: map drawn in ArcGIS® using Ordnance Survey 1:10560 County Series 1st edition, Gloucestershire, 1889 data layer, downloaded from Digimap under licence, <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/>).

Nestled within a swathe of meadow and pasture on the Lyndney Levels between the Roman road from Caerleon to Gloucester and the estuary shore, this grange took its name from Tintern's manor of Woolaston (Figures 18 and 19). That the grange was a prime agricultural estate is indicated by its value of £22 in 1291 and £24 in 1535/6, by far the highest of the abbey farms (*NLW*, Badminton 2445; *Taxatio*, 282). The drained saltmarsh of the Level has extensive traces of ridge and furrow open-field cultivation, with arable production recorded from the thirteenth century and a later change of land-use to meadow; that Woolaston tenants were admonished for allowing their stock over the abbot's corn further suggests some form of open-field farming (Allen 2001, 38, 41; Morgan and Smith 1972a, 52; Williams 2001, 232).



Figure 19: Estuarine meadows of Woolaston Grange, looking south-west from Grange Pill (Source: author).

A converted malt-house within a building of the post-medieval farmstead of Woolaston Grange encases, now limited, fourteenth century fabric from the grange chapel including a stone vaulted crypt, the farmyard probably the site of the wider grange infrastructure (*Glos HER* 5021). A mansion recorded in 1662 may have been the grange house (*Glos HER* 12879). In the shallow valley below the grange, fishponds, now revived, were fed by a leat leading to the Severn from a mill north of the farm ('Clap' later 'Grange' mill), first recorded in 1488 and operated into the 1950s (*Glos HER* 35777/ 35782). Horse Marsh, Great Ox Leys and, at the landward perimeter of the grange, the Sheephouse homestead (recorded in 1568), various Sheep House field-names and Reeves Orchard further evidence the mixed economy of the grange, with proximity to the Severn enabling a fishery and rights to wreck at sea (*Glos Archives*, Q/R1/144; Williams 1976, 115, 122; 1990, 62).

Part of a stone and timber structure discovered in the inter-tidal zone at Woolaston Pill has been investigated and dated to the mid-twelfth century with later phases of medieval extension (Allen 1996, 227; Fulford *et al* 1992, 101). Interpreted as a quay

operated by the grange when the channel here would have been deeper, it formed part of the abbey's communication and transport infrastructure. Hills Flats on the opposite side of the estuary was the most direct river-crossing from Woolaston, from where a broad track (Longpool Lane) runs to Hill, a manor of Kingswood Abbey, Tintern's daughter house (Allen 1996, 229). Iron-ore deposits have been found at both quay sites: evidence, together with the known routes that Tintern used into Bristol and beyond, suggesting river transport from the abbey's iron mining and forging interests in the Forest of Dean and Monmouthshire (Allen 1996, 229; 2001, 54).