CPAT Report No 1066

Tesco Supermarket Development, Welshpool Smithfield, Powys

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

INTERIM REPORT

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

CPAT Report No 1066

Tesco Supermarket Development, Welshpool Smithfield, Powys

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

INTERIM REPORT

N W Jones
January 2011

Report for Longcross and Tesco plc

The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust
7a Church Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7DL
tel (01938) 553670, fax (01938) 552179

CPAT Report Record

Report and status

CPAT Report Title	Tesco Supermarket Development, Welshpool Smithfield, Powys: Archaeological Excavation and Watching Brief		
CPAT Project Name	Tesco Newtown		
CPAT Project No	1649	CPAT Report No	1066
Confidential (yes/no)	Yes	draft/final	Final

Internal control

	name	Signature	date
prepared by	N.W. Jones		17/01/2011
checked by	R.J. Silvester		17/01/2011
approved by	R.J. Silvester		17/01/2011

Revisions

no	date	made by	checked by	approved by

Internal memo

The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust
7a Church Street Welshpool Powys SY21 7DL
tel (01938) 553670, fax 552179

CONTENTS

SUMMARY

The redevelopment of the former Welshpool Smithfield provided a unique opportunity to re-examine the site where a nationally important collection of Roman metalwork and other finds was discovered during the excavation of a service trench in 1959. The present excavations have shed some further light on these discoveries and have also revealed evidence for multiperiod activity.

A natural alluvial deposit at the lowest levels of the site contained a small assemblage of late Mesolithic flint and chert. The material probably represents a single phase of activity where knapping, including the manufacture of microliths, was undertaken on site. Mesolithic flint scatters are relatively uncommon in mid Wales and the majority of past discoveries are limited to no more than a few flints, while the assemblage from Welshpool contains 161 pieces indicating the significance of the discovery.

The impetus for the excavation was provided by the high-status metalwork and other objects discovered in 1959 and it had been hoped that the recent excavations might provide a context for the discovery. The 1960 excavation trench was reopened, together with the adjacent service trench, the original opening of which had brought the finds to light. The backfill of both trenches contained small fragments from the vessels recovered in 1959 and further fragments were found within a pit which had been truncated by the service trench. The position of this pit in relation to the location and distribution of the finds suggests, however, that they may have been placed within another feature for which there is no surviving trace. The excavations revealed no evidence for associated structures or deposits, any stratigraphical link to the other Roman features on the site.

The Roman activity on site is generally not closely dated owing to a lack of dateable finds, although the stratigraphy indicates two main phases. The earliest phase comprised a series of gullies which may be associated with evidence of plough-scaring. Some of the gullies were later replaced by rows of posts, presumably forming a fenced boundary. These boundary features were then cut by a ditch running towards the Lledan Brook, which produced the only dateable pottery, although this showed a wide date range from the late 1st or early 2nd century into the 4th century. There was no evidence for any structures or occupation within the excavated area and it seems likely that all of the features are associated with a field system, either as land boundaries or as drainage ditches.

The Romano-British field system later was replaced by several gullies on an alignment which is broadly parallel to the present course of Mill Lane. The gullies appear to demarcate plots measuring 8.2m and 5.8m in width, dimensions which are consistent with the size of burgage plots in the planned medieval town to the north-west.

The presumed medieval boundaries was succeeded by a number of undated pits or possible post-holes, although no structures were identified. There then appears to have been a period of abandonment indicated by an undated deposit of silt which sealed the pits and gullies before a stone surface was laid down, presumably forming a metalled yard, although with no indication of any associated structures. The stone surface produced no dateable material, although it was sealed beneath a presumed medieval ploughsoil which contained residual Roman and medieval pottery, but no later material. Following the end of medieval activity on the site the area appears to have been under cultivation for several centuries, leading to a significant accumulation of ploughsoil, the upper levels containing post-medieval pottery.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) was invited in September 2009 by Longcross, on behalf of Tesco Plc, to undertake a programme of archaeological excavation and survey in connection with a new supermarket development on the site of the former Smithfield livestock market on Mill Lane, Welshpool, in Powys.

1.2 The main archaeological interest in the site focused on the previous discovery in 1959 of a collection of high-status Roman metalwork during the construction of a new drain within the Smithfield. Further artefacts were recovered during a small-scale archaeological excavation the following year.

1.3 The Smithfield site was the subject of a pre-planning evaluation in 2006 (Grant and Jones 2006) which revealed evidence for potentially significant archaeological deposits in two areas. Immediately to the south of Mill Lane a possible stone surface and a post-hole were close to and potentially contemporary with the Roman discoveries from 1959/60. To the east of the site two large ditches were thought to be medieval in date, possibly associated with the adjacent Domen Castell motte and bailey.

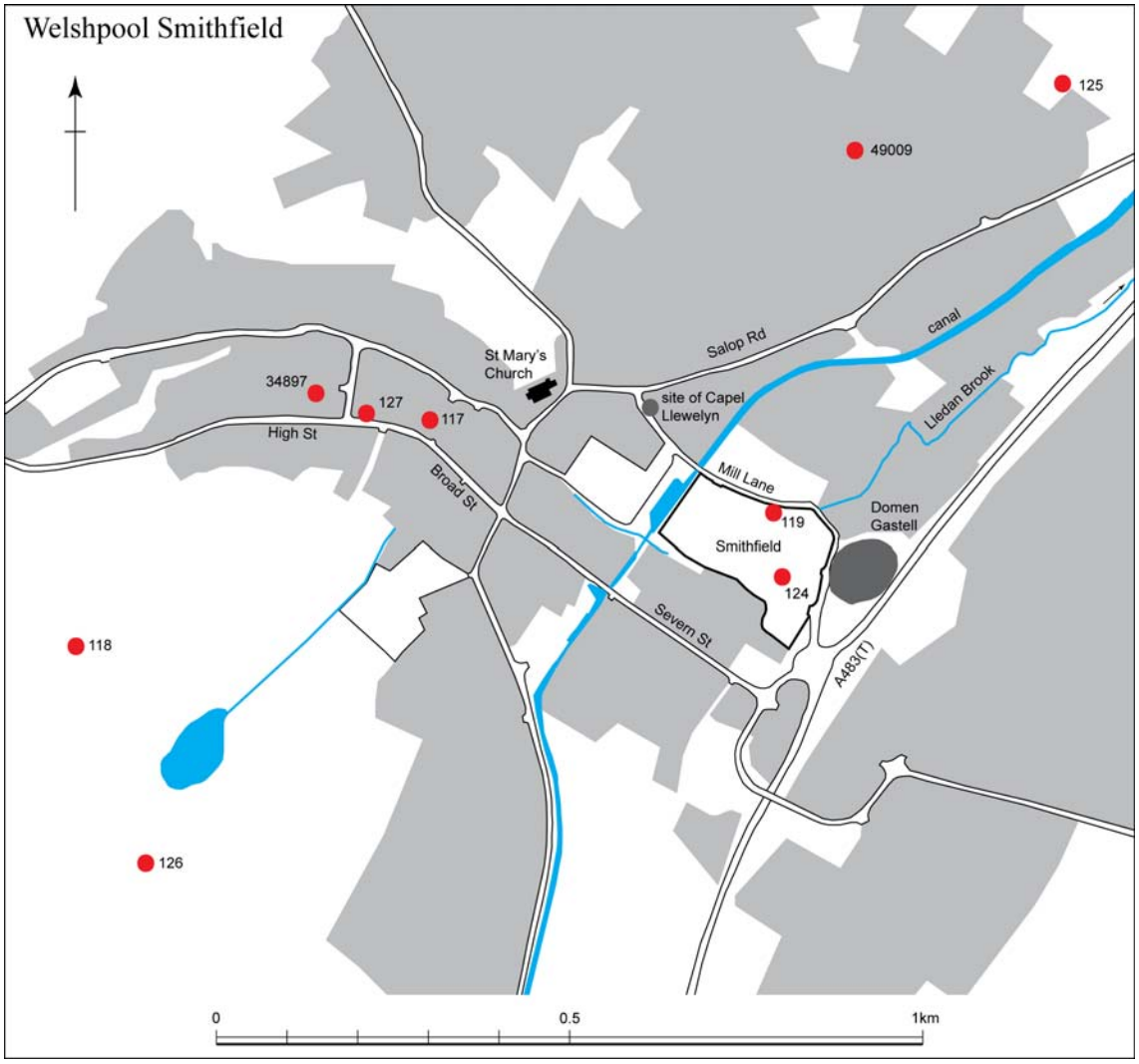

Fig. 1 Plan of Welshpool showing the location of the Smithfield, together with the locations of Roman finds identified by PRN

1.4 Planning permission for the development was granted by the local authority with a condition that required a programme of archaeological investigation, and a curatorial brief was prepared by Mr Mark Walters from the Curatorial Section of CPAT which detailed the works that were necessary (INV 751).

2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The area of the development lies to the south-east of the present town centre of Welshpool, occupying the main part of the former Smithfield livestock market, bounded to the north by Mill Lane and with Smithfield Road to the south-east and the Montgomery Canal to the north-west (Fig. 1; SJ 2296 0746).

2.2 The solid geology of the area consists mainly of undivided Ludlow and Wenlock Series siltstones and mudstones belonging to the Silurian period, though there is some local faulting which has exposed Caradoc Series siltstones and mudstones of the Ordovician period (1994 British Geological Survey map). The soils of the area generally comprise fine silty and loamy soils belonging to the Denbigh 1 Association (1983 Soil Survey of England and Wales map).

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The archaeological interest in Welshpool Smithfield stems from the discovery of an important and unusual collection of Roman metalwork and other objects in 1959. The development site is also in close proximity to the medieval motte and bailey castle known as Domen Gastell, lying between this and the site of Capel Llewelyn (towards the head of Mill Lane), in an area where medieval activity has been postulated.

Romano-British period

3.2 The Roman finds were published in detail by George Boon (1961) and readers are directed to this source for a full description of the items. They were discovered in August 1959 during the installation of a drain on the north side of the Smithfield, adjacent to a former stables and office alongside Mill Lane. The objects were recovered by workmen, although their significance only came to light following the intervention of Mr George Shepherd who, on being shown one of the articles, persuaded the workmen to hand over the artefacts. These were later shown to the Director of Hull Museums (Mr Shepherd was a tutor in Hull at the time), who then informed the Department of Archaeology of the National Museum of Wales (NMW). The collection included a glass jar and bottle, two redware pottery vessels, three bronze *paterae* (a shallow dish with a handle), a bronze ewer (jug) with a decorated handle depicting the young Bacchus, all of which had been placed into a bronze cauldron, after being wrapped in a linen cloth and then packed around with leaves and grasses. Other finds included a wooden bucket, an iron fire-dog and two ornate iron 'standards'. Ewers and *paterae* are common finds associated with rich Roman burials of the first and second centuries AD, while fire-dogs are sometimes part of native burial deposits. Boon therefore concluded that they were likely to be associated with the grave of a native Cornovian chieftain.

3.3 A small-scale excavation was conducted by Boon in July 1960 in the anticipation that more could be found out about regarding the context of the finds. It comprised two parallel trenches, each around 3.5m by 0.9m and 1.9m apart, together with a connecting trench between the two. The excavations recovered a further part of one of the iron standards from the 1959 drainage trench, together with a patch of wood ash, a small iron nail and a few sherds of pottery. There was, however, little information on the context of the finds. The excavation failed to identify any pit or cist which might have contained the finds or been associated with a potential burial.

Boon concluded was that the finds might have been deposited on the Roman ground level and buried beneath a small barrow.

Early medieval period

3.4 Welshpool is said to have been the site of churches founded by St Cynfelyn and his brother Llywelyn in the 6th century AD; the foundation of the latter has since been associated, at least traditionally, with the 'Old Church' which is known formerly to have stood on the east side of Mill Lane, immediately to the south of Salop Road The most recent church on the site was erected in 1587 but was destroyed by fire in 1659, though some of its masonry remains were still visible until the 19th century (Soulsby 1983, 265). Part of its associated graveyard was identified during rescue excavations by CPAT in 1986-7, when seventeen burials were located. Radiocarbon dates suggested that they belonged to the 13-14th century (Blockley 1987, 24-6). Further work in 1997 revealed the possible position of Capel Llewelyn (PRN 4438; Fig. 1) in a garden to the rear of 37 Salop Road. It may be then that the line of Mill Lane broadly followed the western boundary of the graveyard (PRN 16386).

Medieval period

3.5 Domen Gastell, a motte and bailey castle (PRN 120; Fig. 1) lies immediately to the east of the development area. It may have been constructed as early as 1111, although the earliest possible documentary reference to it dates from 1196 (Silvester 1992, 167). There has been some suggestion that a settlement developed around the castle, but no firm evidence has yet been found to substantiate this hypothesis.

3.6 The present town of Welshpool resulted from a deliberate policy by Gruffudd ap Gwenwynwyn, Prince of Powys, to establish a new borough. As such, this was a planned town which owed little to any existing settlement (Soulsby 1983, 266). The burgesses received a foundation charter in the 1240s and a market was recorded there in 1252 (Silvester 1992, 167). The new town adopted a basically linear plan, centred on High Street and Broad Street, with some development also along Church Street, Berriew Street and Severn Street. Interestingly, the parish church of St Mary's, which was refounded around 1250, lies further to the east, away from the centre of the town and in an area recorded by Humphrey Bleaze on his map of 1629 as 'Welshe town' (Silvester 2008, Fig. 3). While this, the earliest map of Welshpool, does not show the area of the Smithfield development, it is clear that the location is within the general area of 'Welshe town', and it is conceivable that Mill Lane was part of an early Welsh settlement which grew up between the motte and bailey castle and Capel Llewelyn.

Post-medieval and modern period

3.7 A mapped survey of the Manor of Leighton, including parts of Welshpool, in 1663, shows Mill Lane and depicts the area later occupied by the Smithfield on the south side of the road as fields. Named as 'maes', this had become an area of open fields which would have originated in the medieval era. Interestingly, it does not indicate any buildings along Mill Lane. Almost a century later a survey of the Estate of Mrs Victoria Lloyd, surveyed by John Rocque in 1747, shows Mill Lane and Salop Road; again there are no indications of any buildings on the street frontage, though this could be because the area then was under different ownership and was thus not mapped in any detail.

3.8 The north-western boundary of the development area is formed by the waterway now known as the Montgomery Canal, which was built in stages between 1794 and 1821, and ran from the Shropshire Union Canal at Frankton Locks to Newtown. The canal was an agricultural rather than an industrial waterway and was primarily constructed to carry and distribute lime for agricultural purposes from the Llanymynech Quarries (Hughes 1988, 9).

3.9 The 1840 Tithe Survey for Pool parish, Lower Division, Trefnant Fechan, Town etc. (Fig. 4) depicts the area later occupied by the Smithfield, showing it as a series of fields. The Lledan Brook is shown crossing the area, and alongside it there is a small building. To the east is

Domen Mill, with its feeder leat (or artificial feeder channel) running from the canal-side weir. This was also shown on Bleaze's map in the early 17th century.

3.10 It is not known precisely when the Smithfield was constructed although it was in existence by 1875 (Boon 1961, 14), and it is depicted on the large-scale Ordnance Survey (1:500) town map of Welshpool in 1885. The Smithfield has undergone some changes, particularly in more recent years, yet the overall layout of the main area remained largely unchanged from that depicted in 1885 until the site was cleared as part of the present development.

4 BUILDING RECORDING

4.1 Prior to demolition of the buildings associated with the Smithfield a survey was undertaken to record the original late 19th-century buildings. This was completed in accordance with the broad specification set out in an English Heritage Level 2 building survey (see Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice, English Heritage 2006) and the IfA Standards and Guidance relating to the Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings (Oct 2008). The survey comprised the following elements: a descriptive survey of all key structural features including the fabric and any original fixtures; a photographic survey utilising high resolution digital photography; a hand-drawn measured survey of the ground and first floors. The plans and photographs this generated form part of the site archive.

Fig. 2 The former Smithfield office and stables viewed from the south.
Photo CPAT 2989-0056

4.2 The original Smithfield buildings comprised a two-storey office and adjacent former stables located along Mill Lane and contemporary with the brick boundary wall. Both are depicted by the Ordnance Survey in 1885. An adjacent building to the east was not depicted at that time and was not, therefore, included within the survey.

Fig. 3 The former Smithfield office and stables viewed from the north-east.
Photo CPAT 2989-0059

4.3 The office building was built of red brick with a slate roof and brick chimney stacks at either end. The ground floor was originally divided into two rooms, although the partition wall had been removed. An original doorway leading off Mill Lane had been blocked, with the main access being gained from the eastern of two doorways on the south elevation, the other accessing the stairs to the first floor. The eastern fireplace remained open, while the western one had been blocked. Matching windows flanked the blocked northern door, with a single, small window in the centre of the southern elevation. A doorway in the western gable wall leading to the former stables may be a later insertion.

4.4 The first floor was accessed by a timber staircase, leading to a landing from which doors opened into a large eastern room with windows on the north and south, and a smaller western room with a single window in the south elevation.

4.5 A trapezoidal brick-built building to the west is believed to be a former stables. The single storey building was roofed with corrugated iron and accessed via a door in the southern elevation, with a northern doorway having been blocked. There were two small windows, one in the southern wall and the other in the eastern wall. The southern wall included three brick buttresses. The space between the office and stables had been roofed in corrugated iron to form a lean-to wash room.

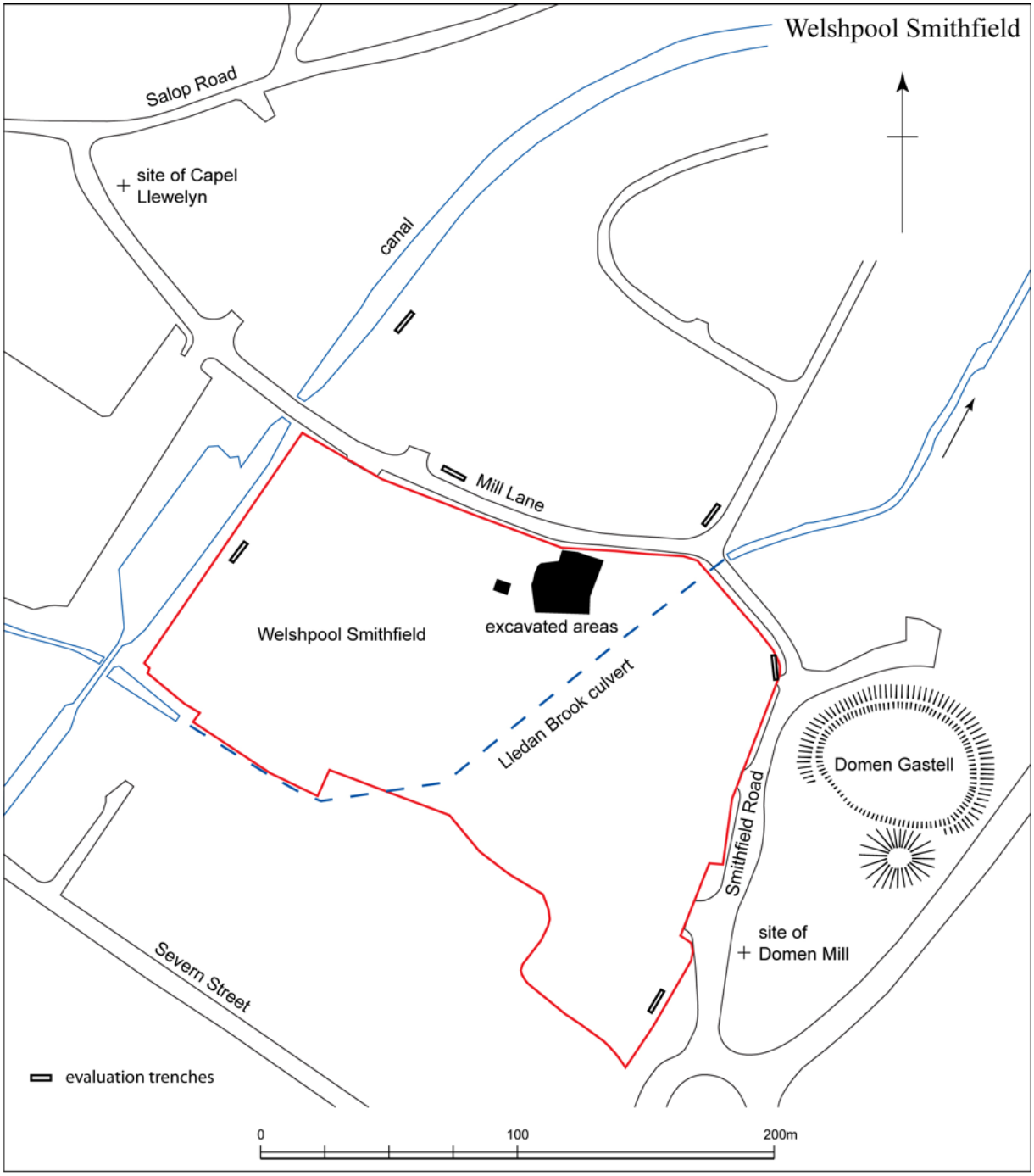

Fig. 4 Welshpool Smithfield showing the location of the excavated areas and the development area outlined in red

5 EXCAVATION

5.1 The excavation was undertaken in two phase between January and April 2010. In all, an area of 445m^2 was stripped by machine under close archaeological supervision, removing a series of 19th-century deposits and earlier ploughsoils onto the surface of the first significant archaeological deposit at a depth of between 1.2m and 1.4m below the surface of the Smithfield. An additional area, measuring 5m by 4m was also investigated nearby, although no archaeological features were identified once the overburden had been removed (Fig. 4). Although a watching brief had been proposed elsewhere within the development area during the construction phase changes in the design and, in particular, the raising of the general levels, meant that there were no large-scale excavations of a sufficient depth to impact on any potential buried deposits.

5.2 Following the initial machine stripping all excavations were undertaken by hand. Numbers in brackets in the following text refer to individual contexts recorded in the site archive. On-site recording was undertaken by a combination of total station survey and hand-drawn planning, with all levels related to Ordnance Datum. Site photography was in digital format. A summary of the site archive is provided in Appendix 1.

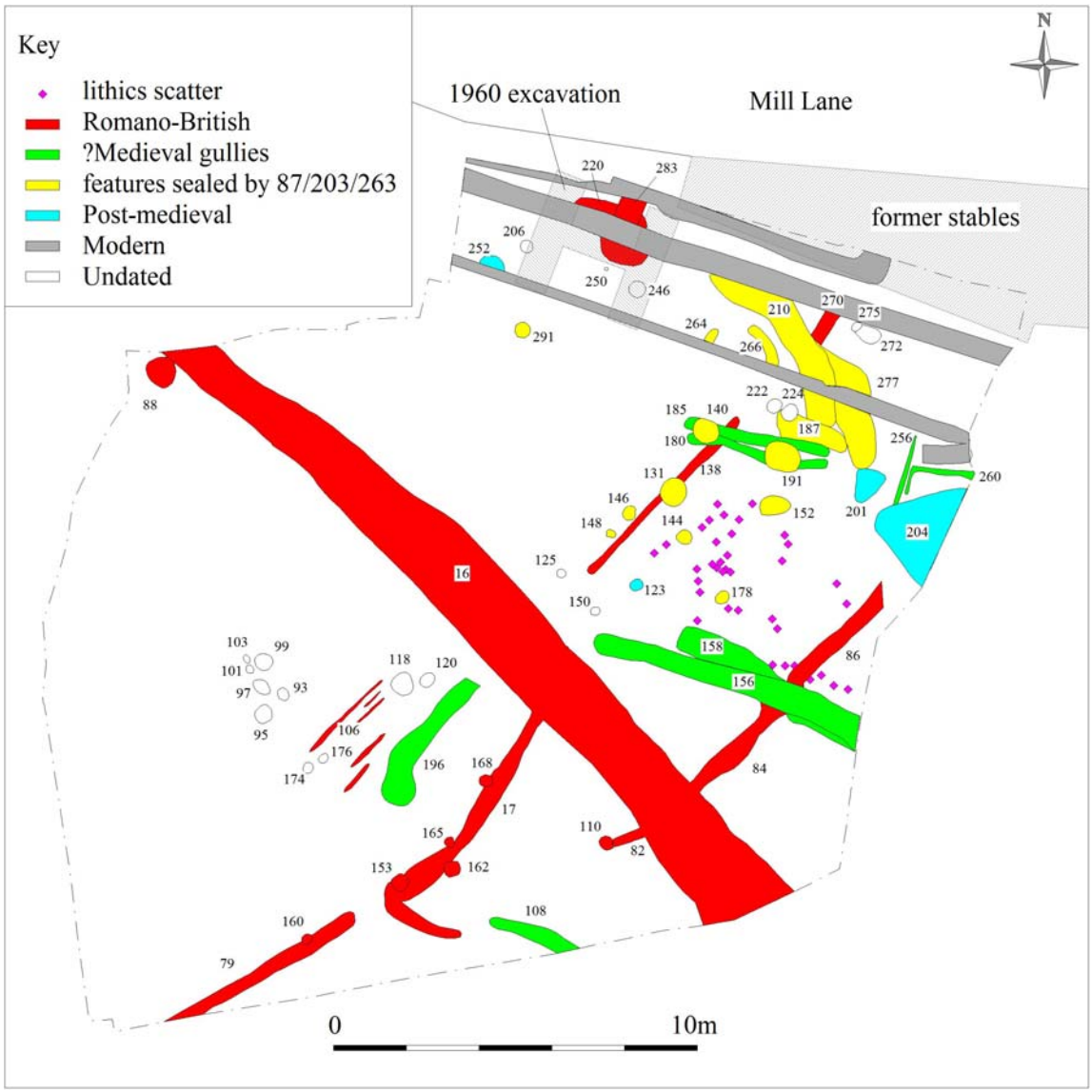

Fig. 5 Phasing summary of excavated features

Mesolithic activity

5.3 The earliest activity on the site is evidenced by a scatter of tools and debitage which indicate an area of stone tool manufacture during the Mesolithic period. The scatter of chert and flint was found within an area measuring around 7m by 5m at the eastern end of the site lying within a natural alluvial deposit (134). A small number of lithics were also recovered from adjacent features which had been cut through this deposit. This small scatter probably reflects a single phase of activity and may reflect a temporary, short-stay camp, where tool preparation and maintenance as well as other domestic processing tasks were undertaken.

Fig. 6 The 1959 service trench with part of the 1960 excavation to the left.
Photo CPAT 3071-0032

Romano-British activity

5.4 The initial interest in the site focused on a collection of high status Roman metalwork, pottery and glass which was uncovered in August 1959 during excavations for a new service trench, and then investigated by small-scale excavation the following year. The present excavations identified part of the 1960 excavation trench (208) where it had cut into the surface of the natural subsoil (Fig. 6). Other elements of that original excavation were not taken down to the same depth and were thus not visible at the surface of the natural subsoil, this being the level to which the present excavation had been stripped by machine. The removal of the backfill from the excavation revealed a shallow scoop (293) around 1.7m across in the base of the trench, corresponding to a feature depicted by Boon in the position where a firedog and two iron standards were found, an area where ash and nails were also noted (Boon 1961, figs 2 and 3). The report indicates that this scoop was the result of excavations undertaken by the workmen in order to retrieve the ironwork. Several sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the backfill, together with fragments of glass, bronze and iron.

5.5 An examination of the north face of the cleaned out service trench revealed what appeared to be a relatively large but shallow pit (220), up to 2.8m across and 0.45m deep, extending for around 0.4m to the north of the trench (Fig. 7). The pit was slightly deeper than the trench and part of its base was visible, although its original width could not be determined as the south side had been removed by the service trench. Several small fragments of bronze and glass apparently came from within the fill of the pit when it was excavated, although their precise position within the fill was not recorded. The pit was also cut by a shallow, undated feature (283) containing lumps of fired clay (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7 Pit 220 and the 1959 service trench. Note the area of burnt clay within the fill of 283. (NB The lower portion of the section consists of natural gravels). Photo CPAT 3027-0040

5.6 While it is possible that the pit was associated with the group of Roman artefacts their distribution as recorded by Boon (1961, 16, fig. 3) suggests that this is unlikely. The finds appear to have been concentrated in a relatively small area around 1.2m across towards, and probably extending beyond, the eastern end of pit 220. It is more reasonable to assume that they were carefully deposited within a fairly shallow pit, all trace of which was removed by the excavation of the service trench and the subsequent uncontrolled recovery of the large iron objects. Any relationship between pit 220 and the finds can no longer be established. Although it has long been assumed that the finds were grave good accompanying a high status burial the recent excavations were unable to provide confirmation of this view. There do not appear to be any associated features or structures in the immediate area and the only indication of a potential burial is a spread of wood ash noted in 1960.

5.7 Elsewhere on the site a ditch and several gullies have been interpreted as of Romano-British, date either as a result of associated finds, or because they respect the same alignment as features which have been dated. Collectively, these features suggest two phases of activity, the earliest of which comprised a series of gullies aligned north-east to south-west, which may be associated with traces of plough-scarring (106).

5.8 It seems likely that three lengths of gully (82, 84 and 86) originally recorded as separate features are actually part of the same feature that had been interrupted by ditch 16 and gullies 156/158 (Fig. 8). The gully was around 0.5m wide and up to 0.4m deep, filled by a firm silty clay (83/85/87) which contained a significant quantity of angular stone in the upper part of the fill and was, in part, sealed beneath a spread of grey/brown silty-clay (157). The only finds from the ditch was a sherd of Roman pottery from a Malvern jar. Around 6m to the north-west was a parallel gully (138), although this was slighter, measuring only 0.25m wide and 0.1m deep. A short length of gully (270) to the north-east may be part of the same feature, based on its position and alignment.

Fig. 8 Gully 86, cut by ditch 16 in the foreground. Photo CPAT 3027-0302

5.9 Towards the south-west corner of the excavation a further gully (79) followed the same general alignment and measured 0.4m in width and 0.2m deep. The clay-silt fill (12) was sealed beneath an undated deposit of angular stone (78) which only survived within the top of the gully but may originally have been part of a wider stone spread. Several sherds of Roman pottery were found within the fill, including a sherd from a Black-burnished ware jar and another from a Malvern jar. The gully was butt-ended to the north-east with a 0.8m-wide gap, possibly an entrance, between it and gully 17, which was slightly curving and appeared to have a sharp corner on the north-east side of the gap. The only find consisted of a sherd from a decorated Severn Valley ware jar. Both features had been cut by a series of stone-packed post-holes (153, 160, 162, 165, 168), predominantly along their north-western sides, possibly suggesting that the gullies formed a boundary which was later replaced by fencing (Fig. 9).

Fig. 9 Gully 17 and post-holes 168, 165, 162 and 153 cut into its side.
Photo CPAT 3027-0197

5.10 Gullies 17 and 82/84/86 were later cut by a large ditch (16) aligned north-west to south-east, sloping towards the Lledan Brook. The ditch was between 1.0m and 1.75m in width and 0.4m to 0.7m deep, increasing in size towards the south-east and was filled by a deposit of clay silt (13/90/105/136) (Fig. 10). Finds from the ditch included Roman pottery with a wide date range: a 1st – 2nd-century Severn Valley ware jar; a sherd of Central Gaulish samian Form 37 of Antonine or possibly Hadrianic date (early second century); and sherds from 3rd- and 4th-century Black-burnished ware vessels. A sherd of medieval pottery was also recorded from the fill although it is not clear at what level in the ditch this was found and it may have been intrusive. A pit or post-hole (88) near the north-west corner of the excavation contained a single sherd of Roman pottery and had been cut by the ditch.

Fig. 10 Section of Romano-British ditch 16. Photo CPAT 3027-0134

Medieval activity

5.11 The Romano-British field system appears to have been succeeded by several gullies on a different alignment which, perhaps significantly, is broadly parallel to the present course of Mill Lane. Features on the predominant east to west alignment comprised gullies 108, 156, 158, 180, and 185.

Fig. 11 Gullies 156 and 158 cutting gully 84. Photo CPAT 3027-0284

5.12 Two phases of activity are suggested by gullies 156 and 158, both of which were butt-ended and cut the Romano-British gully 84/84 (Fig. 11). The earlier phase is represented by gully 158, which was 0.6m wide and 0.45m deep, with three successive fills (184, 173 and 159). The basal fill produced a sherd of pottery which may be from a medieval jug base, together with a fragment of fuel waste and several small fragments of ceramic building material. This had been

cut by gully 156 which was on a slightly different alignment and extended a further 2.2m to the west. Similar in width to 158, it was noticably more shallow with a depth of only 0.25m (Fig. 12). No finds were forthcoming from gully 156, although fragments of Maloideae charcoal (Hawthorn, whitebeam, apple etc) were recovered from bulk samples taken from the fill (172) and these have been submitted for AMS dating.

Fig. 12 Gullies 156 and 158 with gully 86 top left.
Photo CPAT 3027-0212

5.13 Around 8.2m to the south was a short length of a parallel, butt-ended gully (108), extending beyond the limits of the excavation, and 5.8m to the north were two further parallel gullies (180 and 185), both of which were relatively slight in form, measuring 0.2m to 0.3m in width and 0.2m deep (Fig. 13). No dating evidence was recovered from either gully, although 185 cut a pit (187), the fill of which (188) produced a single sherd of medieval pottery. Two narrow, linear slots (256 and 260) may also be associated with this phase of activity, based on their alignment. Of similar form to 156 and 158, but aligned north-east to south-west, was gully 196 which could be also associated with this phase, although there is no stratigraphic or other dating evidence to support this contention.

5.14 Gullies 180 and 185 were cut by two pits or post-holes (140, 191) which appeared to be part of a group of similar features (131, 144, 146, 148, 150, 152, 178 and 291), all of them sealed beneath a deposit of silty clay (87, 203, 263) they do not, however, form any obvious structure. It is possible that at least some of these features, particularly 146 and 148, could be associated with the earlier gully 138. Also sealed by this layer were several more shallow gullies or elongated pits (210, 187, 266 and 277). It is conceivable that at least some of these features could represent activity during the earlier medieval period, possibly in associated with the nearby motte and bailey, this area later being referred to as 'Welsh Town'. The presumption is

that this may have predated the 13th-century Norman planned town, though it probably continued in contemporary use.

Fig. 13 Gullies 180 and 185. Photo CPAT 3027-0257

5.15 The deposit of silty clay (87, 203, 263) sealing many of these features suggests a period of abandonment which ended with the imposition of a stone surface (19, 77) across part of the area (Fig. 14). Although no direct dating was recovered from the surface it was sealed by a deposit (8) containing medieval and Roman pottery, but no later artefacts, which has been interpreted as a medieval ploughsoil.

Fig. 14 Stone surface 19, overlying a silty clay deposit (87, 203, 263). Photo CPAT 3027-0056

Post-medieval activity

5.16 After the medieval period there are no traces of activity on the site for several centuries during which time a considerable deposit of ploughsoil accumulated containing 17th- and 18th-century pottery. A series of walls and brick floors were identified close to Mill Lane, lying beneath the later 19th-century stables and office building. These are assumed to be associated with a building predating the cattle market, which may have had a cellar, and is likely to date from the earlier 19th century, yet no such building is depicted on any potentially contemporary map sources.

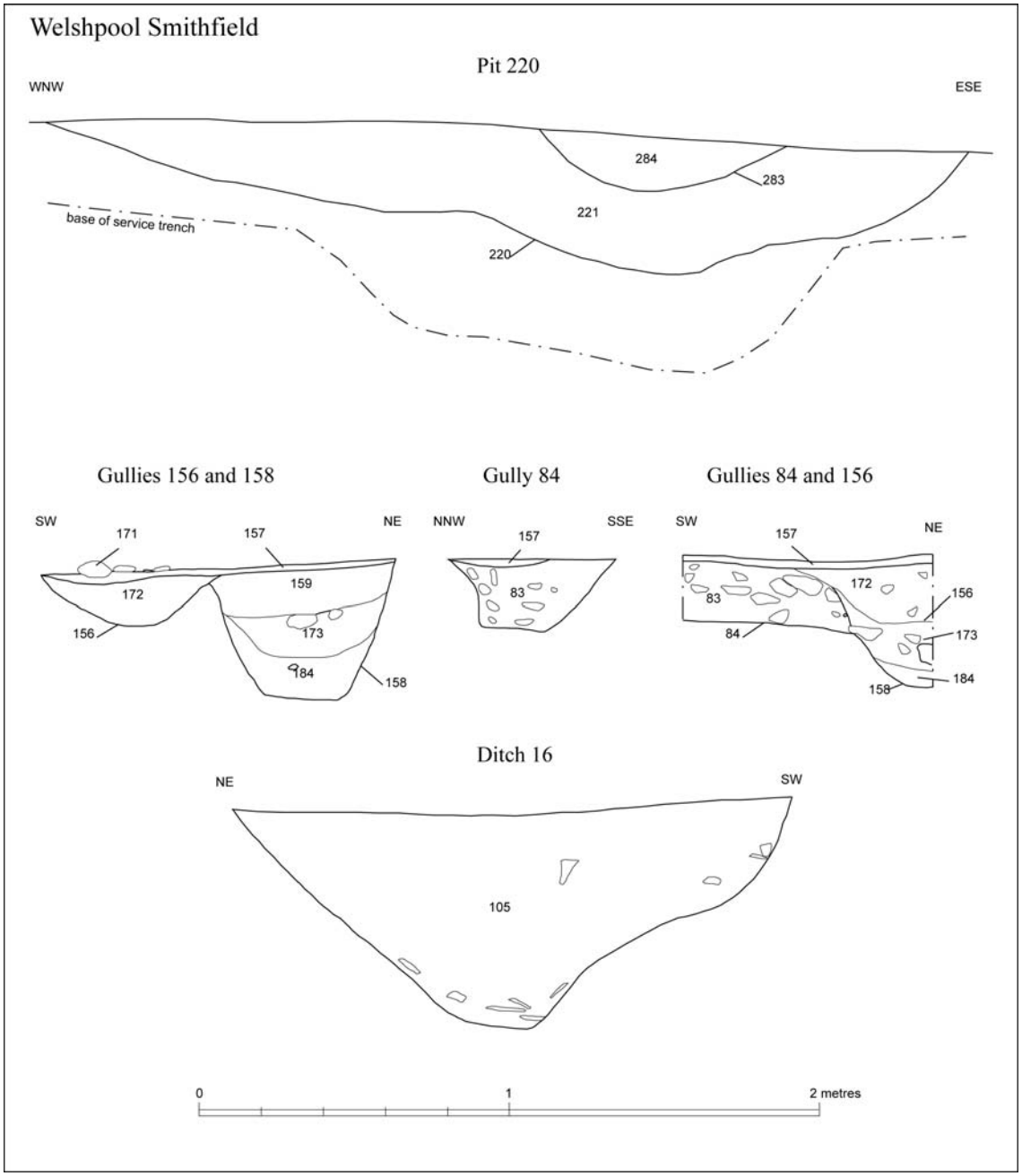

Fig. 15 Sections of key features

6 WORKED CHERT AND FLINT by Philippa Bradley

Introduction

6.1 A small assemblage of 161 pieces of chert and flint was recovered from a range of contexts including a scatter from an alluvial deposit. The assemblage is summarized in Table 1 and selected pieces are described in the catalogue. Diagnostic pieces include six microliths and three blade cores, indicating a Mesolithic date for the assemblage.

Raw materials and condition

6.2 The majority of the material is chert with a few pieces of flint. The chert is mostly light grey, although some pieces of darker material and a striped chert were also identified. These types of chert can be compared with a very large assemblage recovered from Rhuddlan in the Vale of Clwyd (Berridge 1994, 95). The chert has either been worked on site or the debris deposited there as all stages of the reduction sequence are represented (flakes/blades, chips, cores and pieces of irregular waste). The chert mostly has good flaking properties, and is in a very fresh condition with sharp edges, post-depositional damage is minimal. A few pieces exhibit possible wear through usage.

6.3 No refits were found amongst the chert but it is clear that many of the flakes and blades come from the same or very similar nodules. Similarities were also noted between the cores and other debitage. Groups of very similar raw material were recovered from a number of contexts including 62 and 134.

6.4 The flint is mostly brown or cream in colour and has good flaking properties. A few cherty and crystalline inclusions were recorded. Cortication was mostly light to medium. Flint was less important than chert in the assemblage with only approximately 23 pieces (mostly flakes or chips) recovered. A few pieces of flint were burnt, sometimes quite heavily. No burnt unworked flint or chert was recovered.

6.5 The chert probably derives from Carboniferous Limestone in the Vale of Clwyd, North Wales, which is known to have been exploited since the Mesolithic period (see for example Berridge 1994). A source for the worked flint is harder to pinpoint given the limited quantity of material and the lack of cortex. However the flint is generally good quality and is probably non-local.

Assemblage composition

6.6 The composition of the assemblage is summarised in Table 1. Blades and blade cores form a significant proportion of the assemblage (blades, bladelets and blade-like flakes constitute *c.* 17% of the overall assemblage). The complete cores are typical of Mesolithic assemblages and are all blade types: pyramid, opposed platform and single platform. All of the cores have been carefully worked. A little platform abrasion was noted, indicating the removal of overhanging platform edges. The cores have been fairly extensively reduced; weights ranged from 26-36 g, indicating careful use of the available raw material. Three flake core fragments and a single blade core fragment were also recovered. Few original surfaces survive, so it is difficult to gauge the original size of the nodules that were used. Core weights for the Rhuddlan assemblage are not given but the nodules used were larger than the Welshpool examples (Berridge 1994, 95, fig. 10.2). Given the proximity of the raw material, larger cores are to be expected at Rhuddlan.

6.7 The Welshpool blades measure *c*. 30-40 mm, although few complete blades were recovered, whilst the surviving blade scars on the cores largely fall within the same range. A few slightly larger flakes or irregular pieces were recovered; these are between 50-60 mm. This may suggest that the cores were not much larger originally, or that the largest and most useable blades were removed for use elsewhere.

6.8 Other elements of the reduction sequence (chips and pieces of irregular waste) indicate that flint was either worked on site or the debris dumped within the various contexts that it was

recovered from. Chips were recovered from a number of contexts (Table 2) and were mostly fragments although a few microflakes were identified. A single possible microburin (context 62) may indicate that microlith manufacture was being carried out on site. No other specific type of chip was identified.

6.9 A number of retouched tools were recovered, the most diagnostic of which are six microliths. The microliths are small and minimally retouched; all are broken so attribution to type is difficult. However, they are probably obliquely blunted or edge-blunted points, types which occur in both early and late Mesolithic assemblages (Pitts and Jacobi 1979). Two of the microliths are little more than tips, perhaps of obliquely blunted points. There is one middle section from an edge-blunted point (No. 3), one microlith may be an unfinished obliquely blunted point. The remaining microliths are the most complete but they both have broken bases (Nos 4-5). One microlith, (No. 4), is noticeably narrower than the other fragments. A late Mesolithic date for these microliths is perhaps most likely given their form and size, but the absence of other dateable forms precludes closer dating of this material. Five of the microliths are light grey chert, and one is corticated flint. They all came from context 62 together with a retouched flake, two blade cores, blades, flakes and other debitage (Table 2).

6.10 Three scrapers were recovered (Table 2), one broken probable end and side scraper (No. 6), a side scraper and a double end scraper. The first is a mid-brown flint, whilst the side and end scrapers are both light grey chert. The end and side scraper and the side scraper have been fairly neatly retouched. The double end scraper has slightly notched retouch. A minimally retouched flake was the only other retouched piece recovered.

6.11 Flint and chert was recovered from 15 contexts but the bulk of it came from just two contexts (62 and 134, Table 2). The latter was an alluvial deposit. The very fresh condition of the material and the recovery of small chips and flakes suggest that this scatter could have been *in situ.* It is likely that the scatter extended beyond the excavated area. The other contexts contained only a few pieces of flint or chert (Table 2). However, the similarity of raw materials and condition indicates that the assemblage is likely to have the product of a single occupation.

Discussion

6.12 This small assemblage provides evidence for activity during the Mesolithic. The size and form of the microliths would indicate a late Mesolithic date, although owing to the lack of other diagnostic material closer dating is not possible. Knapping, including microlith manufacture, was probably undertaken on site. One of the microliths may have been abandoned unfinished, adding support to the idea of on-site manufacture. The other retouched forms (scrapers and a retouched flake) are typical of domestic assemblages.

6.13 It seems likely that the flint and chert results from a single phase of activity (see above), with only two contexts producing any quantity of material (Table 2). This small scatter may represent a temporary, short-stay camp, where tool preparation and maintenance as well as other domestic processing tasks were undertaken. No burnt unworked flint or chert was found but a few pieces of burnt flint, including some heavily burnt pieces, perhaps suggests that fires were being lit in the vicinity. No Mesolithic material is recorded within the immediate area of Welshpool, with the closest activity represented by finds from Trelystan, 5km to the east (Britnell 1982, 178-9) and the Breidden hillfort, 9.5km to the north-east (Green and Wainwright 1991, 113-4). Limited material is also known from Radnorshire, particularly the Walton Basin (Bradley 1999, 51-73; Wymer 1977, 239). Thus this small collection of worked chert and flint provides important evidence for early occupation.

Catalogue

1. Core, pyramid blade core 35 g, a little platform-edge abrasion. Grey striped chert. Context 62.
2. Core, blade core, opposed platform blade core 32 g, a little platform edge abrasion. Light grey chert. Context 62, find number 1001.

3. Microlith, edge-blunted point, broken. Light grey chert. Context 62.
4. Microlith, obliquely blunted point, broken. Light grey chert. Context 62.
5. Microlith, obliquely blunted point, broken. Corticated flint. Context 62.
6. Scraper, end and side, broken. Dark brown flint. Context 8.

Table 1: Assemblage summary

Flakes	**Blades, bladelets and blade-like flakes**	**Cores, Core fragments**	**Irregular waste**	**Chips**	**Retouched pieces**	**Total**
76	28	7 (1 opposed platform blade core, 1 pyramid blade core, 1 single platform blade core, 4 core fragments)	6	34	10 (1 end and side scraper, 6 microliths, 1 ?side scraper, 1 retouched flake, 1 end scraper)	161

Table 2: Summary of flint by context

Context	**Flakes**	**Blades, bladelets and blade-like flakes**	**Cores, Core fragments**	**Irregular waste**	**Chips**	**Retouched pieces**	**Total**
7	1						1
8						1 end and side scraper	1
13	1						1
55	1	2					3
62	47	15	2 cores (pyramid blade core, opposed platform blade core)	4	32	7 (6 microliths, 1 retouched flake)	107
134	16	9	4 core fragments	1	2	2(1 side scraper, 1 end scraper)	34
139	1						1
151	1						1
181	1		1 blade core				2
203	3	1		1			5
207	1						1
209	1						1
221	1						1
239		1					1
269	1						1
Total	76	28	7	6	34	10	161

7 ROMAN POTTERY by Wendy Owen

7.1 A small assemblage of 118 sherds of Roman pottery was recovered from the excavations, representing a rather limited range of fabrics and forms. The more diagnostic sherds, together with the Samian, were examined by Peter Webster, and his comments have been incorporated into this report. The fabrics are similar to published assemblages from Caersŵs (Jones 1993; Jones 1996) and full descriptions and discussions of the fabrics are to be found in the relevant publications. Red wares were predominant and there were no examples of fine wares, colour-coated vessels, or any white ware fabrics. The pottery is generally very fragmentary and abraded, and few rims or other diagnostic sherds were recovered. With the exception of one red ware jar with a handle, only a very small proportion of any single vessel was recovered, making identification and dating of the coarse pottery rather problematic. This, together with the small size of the assemblage, makes it difficult to draw any very useful conclusions here. The majority of the pottery (72 sherds) was recovered from Romano-British ditch 16, with a further 11 sherds were from Romano-British gullies, and 24 sherds from later contexts.

7.2 Table 3 shows the quantity of each fabric type recovered from the excavations. The various fabric groups are discussed below.

Table 3: Roman pottery

Fabric group	No. sherds	Weight (g)
Samian	7	38
Mortaria	2	22
Red wares	87	798
Grey wares	8	85
Black-burnished ware	11	128
Amphorae	3	336
Totals	**118**	**1407**

Red and grey wares

7.3 Of the identifiable red wares, both Severn Valley ware (23 sherds) and sandier Cheshire Plains type fabrics (59 sherds) were present. Very few rim sherds were recovered and only two vessel forms could be identified, both from ditch 16 and of 1st – 2nd-century date. One was a Severn Valley jar in a partially reduced fabric, decorated with a cordon on the neck and a panel of burnished diagonal lines on the shoulder. The other was a jar with a handle, similar to the a Severn Valley ware form identified by Webster (1976, no. 3), but in a much sandier fabric, which may perhaps be a local product from the area on the borders of the Severn Valley and Cheshire Plain production. Almost half of the red ware sherds appeared to belong to this vessel, including a small rim sherd in a reduced fabric.

7.4 Grey wares included a flanged bowl from ditch 16 in a very sandy grey fabric, the form of which may copy that of a black burnished ware bowl or a flanged and carinated bowl (1st – 2nd century).

7.5 Malvern-type vessels, typically grey-black, rough, hard fabrics with angular crushed rock inclusions, are represented by two sherds from gullies 17 and 86. Forms include a hand-made burnished jar with lumps in the fabric.

Black-burnished Ware

7.6 Black Burnished ware sherds of category 1 fabric (BB1) account for 9.5% of the total pottery recovered from the excavations. The fabric is typically grey-black, hard, rough and contains frequent quartz inclusions. Forms include cooking pots/jars, one of 4th-century date from ditch 16 which is similar to forms identified by Gillam (1976, nos. 12 –14), and flat rim and flanged

bowls with faint burnished chevron decoration, also from ditch 16, of 2nd and perhaps 3rd-century date.

Amphorae

7.7 Three sherds of Dressel 20 South Spanish olive oil amphora were recovered from ditch 16.

Samian (identified by Peter Webster)

7.8 Seven sherds of Central Gaulish samian ware were recovered, amongst which one form 37 vessel was identified, of Antonine rather than Hadrianic date (from ditch 16), though with very little decoration on it. There was also a probable form 31 (from context 8). The remainder of the samian sherds were small and very worn.

Mortaria

7.9 A single sherd of a Mancetter-Hartshill hammer-head mortarium was recovered from context 8. This had two narrow, shallow grooves on the flange and is of 3rd – early 4th-century date (Gillam 1970 no. 279). A small body sherd in a white fabric also came from the same context and may be from the same source.

8 ROMAN GLASS

8.1 A small quantity of Roman glass was recovered from a limited number of contexts. Two small fragments came from the fill of ditch 16, while the remainder was found either within the backfill of the 1960 excavation trench (208), or the adjacent pit (220) which had been cut by the 1959 service trench. Over 70 small fragments of crushed glass came from the 1960s excavation, along with a larger fragment which appears to be part of a bottle which was discovered in 1959. The glass is currently being analysed by Jenny Price and a report will be forthcoming in due course.

9 MEDIEVAL POTTERY

9.1 The excavations produced only a small collection of medieval pottery the majority of which (90%) came from medieval or later ploughsoils (contexts 7, 8 and 198). The only stratified pottery came from a gully or pit (187, fill 188), a pit or post-hole (140, fill 139), and a single sherd from the fill of the presumed Romano-British ditch 16. All of the sherds were in a sandy micaceous fabric, although displaying some variation, which is type of mid Wales but not attributable to any particular source.

Table 4 Medieval pottery

Context	Form	No	Weight	Comment
7	Jug/Jar	1	19	Rim with external green glaze
7	Jug/Jar	1	14	Body sherd with external green glaze
7	Jug/Jar	1	7	Body sherd
8	Jug	1	20	Spout with patchy external green glaze
8	Jug/Jar/cooking pot	17	76	Miscellaneous body sherds
90	Jug/Jar	1	4	Body sherd
139	Unidentified	1	2	Unidentifiable coarse pottery fragment
184	Jug?	1	4	Possible sherd from a thumbed base

188	Jug/Jar	1	12	Patchy internal/external green glaze
198	Cooking pot	1	10	Rim sherd
198	Jug	1	3	Strap handle fragment
198	Jug/Jar	2	7	Rim sherd
198	Jug/Jar	2	9	Body sherd
		31	**187**	

10 METALWORK

Copper alloy

10.1 A number of small fragments of copper alloy were recovered from the excavations, the majority of which came from the backfill of the 1960 excavation (208). The more interesting pieces, some of which may be part of the objects discovered in 1959, are currently awaiting conservation.

Table 5 Copper Alloy small finds

Find No	Context	Feature	No.	Comment
1078	203	-	10	Fragments
1068	209	208	2	Fragments
1079	209	208	1	Thin, sheet bronze with corrosion lump
1080	209	208	2	Thin sheet fragments
1081	209	208	c. 20	Thin sheet fragments
1082	209	208	1	Thin sheet fragment
1083	209	208	3	Thin sheet fragments
1084	209	208	3	Fragments
1085	209	208	3	Fragments
1086	209	208	2	Fragments
1087	209	208	9	Thin sheet fragments
1088	209	208	1	Thin sheet fragment
1089	209	208	8	Thin sheet fragments
1090	209	208	2	Fragments
1091	209	208	2	Bronze object and an iron lump
1077	244	220	c. 10	Fragments
1096	244	220	1	Thin sheet fragment
1095	249	220	3	Fragments

Iron

10.2 A small number of iron objects and fragments were recovered from the excavations. The iron is currently awaiting conservation.

Table 6. Iron objects

Find no.	Context	Feature	No.	Comment
1097	08	-	1	Hobnail
1100	12	14	1	Nail
1002	55	-		Iron object
1098	198 = 8	-	1	Object

1092	209	208	1	Iron lump
1093	209	208	1	Small lump
1099	209	208	4	Fragments

11 PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND RADIOCARBON DATING

11.1 The following samples were submitted to Archaeological Services, University of Durham, for palaeoenvironmental analysis, together with charcoal identification, the report for which is currently in preparation.

Table 7. Palaeoenvironmental samples

Find No	Context	Number	comment
1014	111	10 litres	Includes burnt bone
1015	127	20 litres	Includes burnt bone
1016	128	30 litres	Fill of ditch 16
1018	105	10 litres	Fill of ditch 16
1019	13	10 litres	Fill of ditch 16
1053	139	10 litres	Fill of post-hole 140
1057	18	10 litres	Ditch fill
1063	83	1 bag	cremated/burnt bone
1064	172	10 litres	Ditch fill
1065	184	30 litres	Ditch fill
1070	221	10 litres	Pit fill
1071	244	10 litres	Pit fill
1072	284	10 litres	Pit fill
1076	221	10 litres	Pit fill

11.2 Material suitable for radiocarbon dating was identified from a number of the samples listed in Table 7, although following post-excavation analysis of the site archive it was decided that only those from gully 156 and post-hole 140 had significant potential for assisting with the overall phasing of the site. These have been submitted to Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC) for AMS dating.

12 DISCUSSION

12.1 The redevelopment of the former Welshpool Smithfield has provided a unique opportunity to re-examine the site where a nationally important collection of Roman metalwork was discovered during the excavation of a service trench in 1959. The present excavations have shed some further light on these discoveries and have also revealed unanticipated evidence for multi-period activity.

12.2 At the lowest levels of the site a natural alluvial deposit was uncovered which incorporated a small assemblage of worked chert and flint extending over an area of roughly 7m by 5m, though it also continued eastwards beyond the excavation area. The alluvium had been cut into by a number of later features from which a small number of lithic fragments were recovered. The nature of the worked material demonstrates a late Mesolithic date for what appears to reflect a single phase of activity where knapping, including the manufacture of microliths, was undertaken on site. Scrapers and a retouched flake are typical of domestic assemblages and the discovery of a few pieces of heavily burnt, worked flint points to the existence of fires in the immediate vicinity. The activity may therefore be associated with a temporary camp.

12.3 The landscape during the Mesolithic period would have been very different from the present day appearance of the area. A significant build-up of cultivation soil followed by the development of the Smithfield in the late 19th century have effectively masked the original contours of the site. Of particular relevance is the presence of the Lledan Brook, a tributary of the Severn which was culverted when the Smithfield was constructed. The Mesolithic activity lies around 20m to the north-west of the brook on what would have been gently sloping ground. The course of the Severn at this time cannot be determined, although today it lies around 600m to the east. An examination of the Severn floodplain around Welshpool by Taylor and Lewin (1993) indicated that post-glacial palaeochannels may have been part of a braided river system, whereas by the Bronze Age sedimentation was dominated by a single meandering river system. However, it is not possible to determine when this change occurred, although it is reasonable to assume that the Severn floodplain would have been more of a wetland environment during the Mesolithic than at present, perhaps incorporating a number of relict meanders which could have provided important hunting grounds.

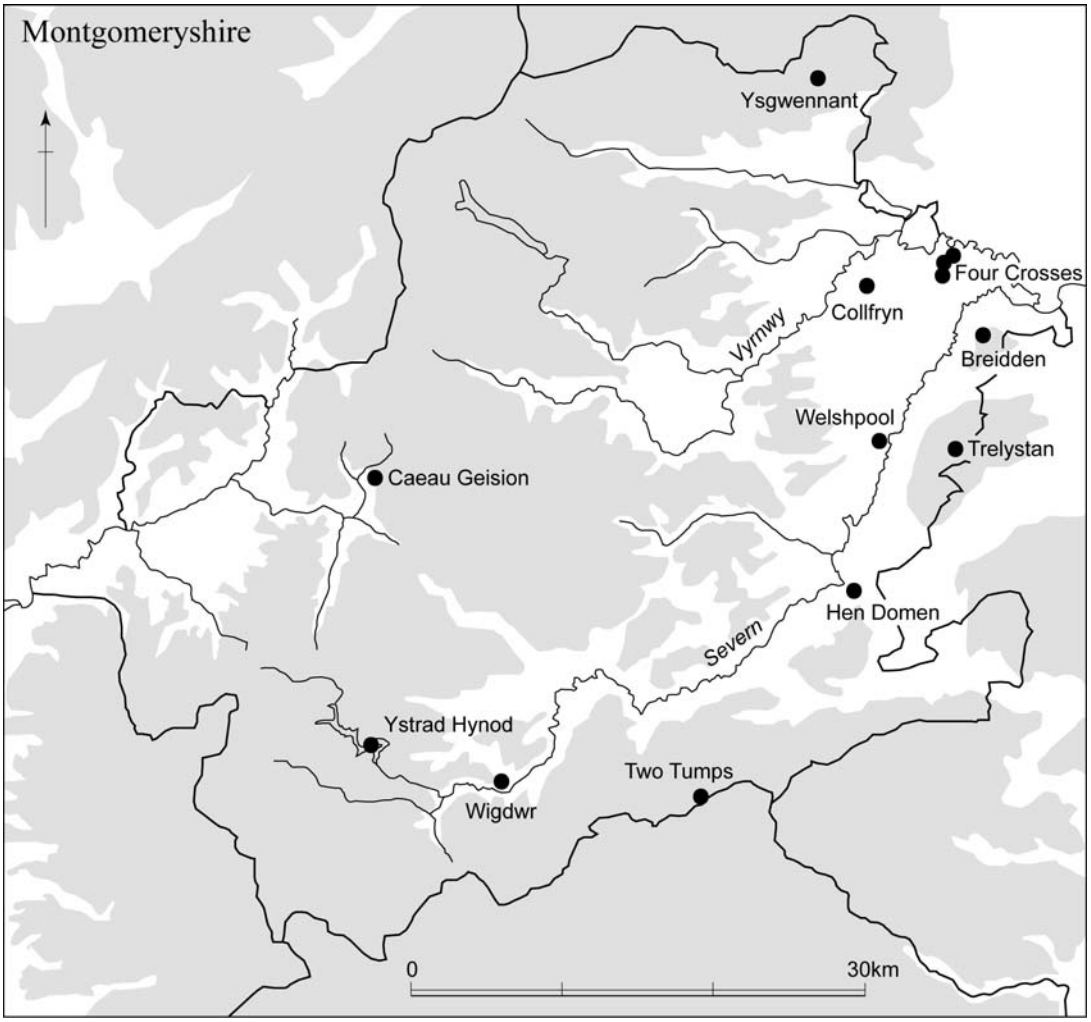

Fig. 16 Mesolithic finds from Montgomeryshire

12.4 Mesolithic flint scatters are relatively uncommon in mid Wales, although such sites must have been much more numerous than the few known examples suggest. There are only eleven sites in Montgomeryshire where Mesolithic artefacts have been found (Fig. 16), and one other where activity is implied by radiocarbon dates. The closest of these is at Trelystan, around 5km to the east of Welshpool, where a single microlith was found within the mounded material of a round barrow (Britnell 1982, 178-9). Excavations at the Breidden hillfort, 9.5km to the north-east,

produced limited evidence for Mesolithic activity in the form of a pond deposit which accumulated between 6,500 and 5,000 bc and contained flecks of charcoal, perhaps indicative of human activity. Two flint blades were found on the surface of this deposit and a bipolar blade-core was uncovered nearby (Musson 1991, 173; Green and Wainwright 1991, 113-4, Nos 1 and 3). At Collfryn, around 10km to the north, a scatter of flint artefacts, including two microliths and a small number of flakes were identified in the base of a buried soil horizon beneath the inner bank of an Iron Age enclosure (Britnell 1989, 104), while slightly further afield at Four Crosses Mesolithic flints came from residual contexts during the excavation of two round barrows. A third barrow produced radiocarbon dates from residual charcoal which fall within the sixth millennium bc (Warrilow *et al*. 1986, 81).

12.5 Other finds of potential Mesolithic date from Montgomeryshire include a pebble mace from Caeau Gleison, near Llanbrynmair (Green 1979), three flakes, a core and debitage from beneath a round barrow at Ystrad Hynod, Trefeglwys, a flint knife from a round barrow at Ysgwennant, Llansilin, several flint flakes from Wigdwr, Llandinam, a number of microliths from beneath a round barrow at Two Tumps, near Kerry, and a flint from a medieval context at Hen Domen, near Montgomery. The majority of these discoveries comprise no more than a few flints, while the assemblage from Welshpool contained no less than 161 pieces. It is, however, not simply the quantity of the finds which is of particular significance but the fact that it represents the first evidence from the county for Mesolithic activity still in situ.

12.6 There is no evidence for any cultural material or features dating from the later prehistoric periods and it is not until the late 1st or 2nd century AD that activity resumed. The features, though of Roman date, are generally not closely dated owing to a lack of chronologically diagnostic finds. Nevertheless, two main phases have been identified. The earliest phase appears to be associated with agricultural activity and may represent part of a field system revealed by a series of gullies that could be contemporary with traces of plough-scarring of the subsoil surface. Some of the gullies were later replaced by rows of posts which presumably formed a fenced boundary. These boundary features were later cut by a ditch running north-west to south-east, towards the Lledan Brook, which produced the only dateable pottery, although this showed a wide date range from the late 1st or early 2nd century into the 4th century. Collectively, these features indicate the presence of some form of Roman settlement in the immediate area, although the excavations produced no evidence for any structures.

12.7 One impetus for the excavation was provided by the high-status metalwork and other objects discovered in 1959 – it was anticipated that the recent excavations might provide a context for the discovery. The 1960 trench excavated by George Boon was reopened, together with the adjacent service trench, the digging of which had exposed the finds originally. The backfill of both trenches contained small fragments from the vessels recovered in 1959. The service trench had also cut the southern side of a previously unrecognised elongated pit, although it is unlikely that this was associated with the finds. The records indicate that the Roman artefacts were concentrated in a relatively small area and the new evidence implies that the ironwork lay within a feature that had been cut shallowly into the subsoil. It seems likely there that the finds were buried within a shallow pit which was disturbed in its entirety by workmen in 1959. The recent excavations failed to reveal any evidence for associated structures or deposits, or provide any stratigraphical link to the other Roman features on the site.

12.8 On stylistic grounds the group of artefacts had initially been loosely dated to a period prior to AD 150. A recent programme of radiocarbon dating on Celtic art objects in Britain has provided a date of 1-120 cal. AD from old yew wood from a bucket stave from the Welshpool collection, suggesting that they were deposited during the 1st century AD or later (Garrow *et al*. 2010, 119). The composition of the collection led Boon to conclude that they were associated with the burial of a Cornovian chieftain, citing the presence of the paterae and, in particular, the iron fire-dog (Boon 1961). The recent excavations have produced nothing to confirm that this was a burial deposit. Although Boon noted a spread of wood ash and a single iron nail, no such material was recorded on this occasion. There is also a complete absence of cremated bone, no

evidence for a vessel which might have contained it, and also no evidence for an associated enclosure such as a ditch surrounding a barrow. The suggestion by Boon that the cremation may have been removed before the construction of the Smithfield seems unlikely as there was no evidence for area having been disturbed prior to 1959. As he noted, however, had the burial been an inhumation rather than cremation it is entirely probable that no human bone would have survived to today because of the acidic soils.

12.9 It is perhaps worth noting the generally very worn appearance of the finds and the fact that one of the patera had been repaired in a crude fashion. These objects had clearly seen considerable use. They could, as Boon suggested, represent treasured heirlooms buried with the last descendants of the line, or may have been seen as no longer fit for functional use but were considered adequate for use in a grave. That the recent excavations were unable to confirm the nature of the deposit is frustrating but perhaps not entirely surprising given that the original finds were not retrieved under controlled excavation and their very discovery had heavily disturbed the context from which they were derived.

12.10 A number of Roman coins have come to light in and around Welshpool (see Fig. 1 where finds are indicated by their PRN), together with a sherd of 2nd-century Samian (PRN 49009), There are though no records for any other Roman material from the area which might indicate structures or settlement. The coins show a wide range in dates, the earliest of which are from the 1st century AD, including a coin of Nero Claudius Drusus (AD 41-54; PRN 118) and a silver denarius of Domitian (AD 81-96; PRN 125). There are several 2nd-century coins, two of which were found during the construction of a sewer at the Town Hall (PRN 117), one of Antoninus (AD 138-161) and the other of Severus (AD 193-211), as well as three brass coins (PRN 124) of Hadrian (AD 117-138) or Commodus (AD 177-192) which were found near the former Domen Mill, around 150m from the Smithfield excavation. That find also included two small colonial brasses which would have been struck for Greek cities as their local coinage within the empire. Their presence on Roman sites in Britain is rare and almost entirely restricted to religious sites where offerings were made (Mark Walters: pers comm.). Later coinage consists of a brass of Diocletian (AD 284-305) from the mint of Alexandria (PRN 126), a bronze coin, probably dated to the mid 4th century (PRN 127), and an unidentifiable bronze coin which may be of 4th century date (PRN 34897).

12.11 The Romano-British field system later was succeeded by several gullies on an alignment broadly parallel to the present course of Mill Lane. The gullies demarcate plots measuring 8.2m and 5.8m in width, dimensions which are comparable with the size range of burgage plots in the planned medieval town of Welshpool to the north-west. However, these presumed plots are parallel to Mill Lane whereas one would have expected such boundaries to extend back from any street frontage. At present the only dating comes from a single sherd of presumed medieval pottery from one of the gullies, although a radiocarbon date is anticipated for a second gully.

12.12 The excavation lies around 100m from Domen Gastell motte and bailey, which is thought to be the castle referred to in a document of 1299 as the 'mota de Pola' (RCAHMW 1911, 182). It has been assumed that this area of Welshpool may have been the site of an earlier medieval settlement predating the Norman planned town, focused around Mill Lane which links the motte with the site of Capel Llewelyn. The northern end of Mill Lane is depicted by Humphrey Bleaze on his map of 1629 as 'Welshe Town'. Small-scale excavations undertaken in 2006 as part of an assessment associated with the redevelopment of the Smithfield identified evidence for medieval activity closer to the motte. Two ditches where uncovered, one aligned north-east to south-west and containing 13th or 14th-century pottery, and the other aligned north-east to south-west. However, trenches excavated elsewhere, on either side of Mill Lane, failed to reveal further evidence of medieval activity (Jones and Grant 2006).

12.13 The medieval boundaries were cut by a number of undated pits or possible post-holes, although no structures were identified. There then appears to have been a period of disuse indicated by an undated deposit of silt which sealed the pits and gullies before a stone surface was laid

down, presumably creating a metalled yard or standing, although with no indication of any associated structures. The stone surface produced no dateable material, although it was sealed beneath a presumed medieval ploughsoil which contained Roman and medieval pottery, but no later material. Following the end of this medieval activity the area fell under cultivation for several centuries, leading to a significant accumulation of ploughsoils, the upper levels containing post-medieval pottery, which were ultimately sealed by the construction of the Smithfield around 1875.

13 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

13.1 The writers would like to thank the excavation staff: Ian Davies, Ian Grant, Richard Hankinson, Keith Hinton, Gary Foster, Gwynfor Maurice, Dawn Powell and David Roberts for their work on site. Thanks are also due to the following people for their help and assistance during the project: Kevin Ferguson of Longcross; Wendy Owen, CPAT; Charlotte O'Brien, Durham University; Adam Gwilt, National Museum Wales; Phillipa Bradley; Phil Parkes, University of Wales, Cardiff; Jennifer Price; and Peter Webster.

14 REFERENCES

Berridge, P, 1994. Lithics, in H Quinnell and M R Blockley with P Berridge, *Excavations at Rhuddlan, Clywd, 1969-73, Mesolithic to Medieval*, Research Report 95, 95-114. York: Council for British Archaeology.

Blockley, K, 1987. Excavations at Capel Llewelyn, Welshpool, Powys, 1986, *Archaeology in Wales* 27, 23-6.

Boon, G C, 1961. Roman Antiquities at Welshpool, *Antiquaries Journal* 41, 13-31.

Bradley, P, 1999. The worked flint from the Dunn Collection and the excavations, in A Gibson, The Walton Basin Project: excavation and survey in a prehistoric landscape 1993-7, Research Report 118. York: Council for British Archaeology.

Britnell, J E, & Jones, N W, 1989. Pool Road, Montgomery: Excavations within the Medieval Town, *Montgomeryshire Collections* 77, 41-72.

Britnell, W, 1982. The excavation of two round barrows at Trelystan, Powys, *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 48, 133–201.

Britnell, W J, 1989. The Collfryn hillslope enclosure, Llansantffraid Deuddwr, Powys: excavations 1980–82, *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 55, 89–134.

Garrow, D, Gosden, C, Hill, J D, & Bronk Ramsey, C, 2009. Dating Celtic Art: a major radiocarbon dating programme of Iron Age and Early Roman metalwork in Britain. *Archaeological Journal* 166, 79-123.

Gillam, J P, 1976. Coarse fumed ware in North Britain and beyond. *Glasgow Archaeological Journal* 4, 57-90.

Gillam, J P, 1970. *Types of Roman Coarse Pottery Vessels in Northern Britain*, *3rd ed*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Grant, F, & Jones, N W, 2006. The Smithfield Livestock Market, Welshpool, Powys: Archaeological evaluation. CPAT Report No 795.

Green, H S, 1979. A Pebble Macehead from Llanbrynmair, Montgomeryshire, *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 28, 313-4.

Green, H S, & Wainwright, G J, 1991. Flintwork and polished stone axes, in C R Musson, *The Breidden Hillfort. A later prehistoric settlement in the Welsh Marches*, Research Report 76. London: Council for British Archaeology.

Hughes, S, 1988. *The Archaeology of the Montgomery Canal*, 3rd edition. RCAHMW.

Jones, N W, 1993. Caersws Roman Fort and Vicus, Montgomeryshire, Powys, 1984-92. *Montgomeryshire Collections* 81, 15-96.

Jones, N W, 1996. Excavations within the Roman vicus at Caersws, 1989-93. *Montgomeryshire Collections* 84, 1-36.

Musson, C R, 1991. *The Breiddin hillfort: a later prehistoric settlement in the Welsh Marches*, Research Report 76. York: Council for British Archaeology.

Pitts, M, & Jacobi, R, 1979. Some aspects of change in flaked stone industries of the Mesolithic and Neolithic in southern Britain, *Journal of Archaeoogical Science* 6, 163–77.

RCAHMW, 1911. *Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouth I - County of Montgomery*. London: HMSO.

Silvester, R J, 1992. *Montgomeryshire Historic Settlements*. CPAT Report No. 40.

Silvester, R J, 2008. Humfrey Bleaze's map of Welshpool and Powis Castle, 1629, *Montgomeryshire Collections* 96, 1-14.

Soulsby, I, 1983. *The Towns of Medieval Wales*. Chichester: Phillimore & Co.

Taylor, M P, & Lewin, J, 1993. Alluvial stratigraphy and floodplain development at Welshpool. Unpublished report. Institute of Earth Sciences, University of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Warrilow, W, Owen, G, & Britnell, W, 1986. Eight ring ditches at Four Crosses, Llandysilio, Powys, 1981-85. *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 52, 53-87.

Webster, P V, 1976. Severn Valley Ware: a prekiminary study. *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloustershire Archaeological Society* 94, 18-46.

Wymer, J, J (ed.), 1977. *Gazetteer of Mesolithic sites in England and Wales*, CBA Research Report 20. London: Council for British Archaeology.

Maps

1629 Plan of 'The Welsh Poole' by Humphrey Bleaze.

1663 'The Mannor of Leighton with other lands and tenements in Welch Poole, Hope and Forden in the County of Montgomery', surveyed by William Fowler.

1747 Survey of The Estate of Mrs Victoria Lloyd in the parishes of Pool, Guilsfield and Buttington, surveyed and drawn by John Rocque, NLW M256.

Post-1780 Powis Castle estate map, NLW Powis Castle M17-18.

1800 Powis Castle estate map, NLW Powis Castle M20.

1840 Tithe Survey and Apportionment for Welshpool parish.

1885 Ordnance Survey 1:500 first edition map of Welshpool.

1983 Soil Survey of England and Wales map (Sheet 2 - Wales) and Legend (1:250,000 scale).

1994 British Geological Survey map of Wales (Solid edition at 1:250,000 scale).

APPENDIX 1

Site Archive summary

293 context record forms
context register
finds register
levels register
photographic register
drawings register
22 A1 site drawings, nos 1-22
4 A2 site drawings, nos 26-29
7 A3 site drawings, nos 30-36
21 A4 site drawings, nos 37-57

Digital photographs:
Film 2989.0001 to 0127, building survey
Film 3027.0001 to 0319, excavation phase 1
Film 3071.0001 to 0102, excavation phase 2