

Archaeological assessment of Tenbury Wells, Hereford and Worcester (including part of Burford, Shropshire)

Hal Dalwood

with contributions by Derek Hurst, Richard Morriss, Elizabeth Pearson and Paul Stamper

Summary

The historic town of Tenbury Wells was surveyed during the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey, a desk-based study of the 64 smaller historic towns in Shropshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Archaeological and documentary evidence relating to the historic core of Tenbury Wells was carefully analysed, comprising topographic data, published and unpublished archaeological reports, museum collections, primary and secondary historical sources, historical maps, and field data recorded by the project team.

Detailed evidence is provided on the character and layout of the settlement in the medieval and post-medieval periods. For each period the available information is analysed and mapped in detail, and a model of the development of the town is proposed. In addition, the evidence for pre-urban occupation is considered, together with evidence of 19th century occupation. All archaeologically-relevant information has been recorded as part of the county Sites and Monuments Record. Specialist assessments of artefacts, ecofacts, standing buildings and documentary sources are included. A detailed archaeological research framework has been developed for Tenbury Wells, which will inform future archaeological investigations as well as management decisions.

The historic core of Tenbury Wells contains buried archaeological deposits, and these are judged to have moderate potential. In addition there is moderate potential for the recovery of artefact and ecofact assemblages. The historic buildings constitute a complementary body of evidence for the post-medieval period, and are judged to have moderate potential for detailed study and recording. The surviving documentary sources are not extensive and there is moderate potential for further study.

1 Introduction

1.1 Location and landuse

The urban area of Tenbury Wells is located at NGR SO 595682 in Leominster District. The modern settlement of Tenbury Wells comprises the historic settlement focus and new housing estates to the south and east. An area north of the River Teme, lying in Burford (Shropshire), also lies within the study area. In this report reference is made to both the Hereford and Worcester SMR (records prefaced HWCN) and the Shropshire SMR (records prefaced SA).

1.2 Topography, geology and soils

Tenbury Wells lies at a height of between c 50m and 60m OD. The underlying topography consists of the flood plain of the River Teme which flows approximately

west to east. Minor watercourses drain the floodplain from south to north, including the Kyre Brook. The settlement is located on a tongue of land at the junction of the Teme and the Kyre Brook. The site is prone to flooding, and a number of floods are documented (VCH Worcs 4, 368 and TWDCS 1993).

The county (and parish) boundary follows the course of the River Teme, but until 1931 the boundary deviated north from the river for a short distance and described an elongated loop enclosing a small pocket of land on the north bank. The area enclosed was part of Tenbury and lay within Worcestershire. It has been suggested that the boundary traced the route of a former meander in the river, which is supported by the presence of earthworks interpreted as silted-up watercourses (Roberts 1983, 7). Although there is no direct evidence for when the river changed course and the meander silted up, it is possible that the earlier medieval topography of Tenbury was rather different than at present.

The soils are typical argillic brown earths of the Bromyard association and typical brown alluvial soils of the Lugwardine Association (Soil Survey of England and Wales, Ragg *et al* 1984). The underlying geology consists of Downtonian Raglan Mudstone Formation and riverine alluvium (British Geological Survey 1:125,000, sheet 52°N-0.4°W). Alluvial deposits were recorded in an evaluation west of Teme Street (Fagan *et al* 1994, fig 6; HWCMS 15210).

1.3 Chronological outline

There is little archaeological evidence for settlement in the Tenbury Wells area in the prehistoric and Roman period. Documentary evidence suggests that Tenbury was an estate held by the monks of Worcester in the early 11th century when it was captured by the Danes (VCH Worcs 4, 365). The place-name evidence may indicate that Tenbury was a defended site (see section 1.4). Documentary evidence for formerly dependent chapels at Rochford and Kyre Magna may indicate that Tenbury was one of a number of poorly-documented minster churches in Worcestershire (Bond 1988, 134).

Tenbury is described in Domesday Book when it was held by Osbern Fitz Richard, the lord of Richard's Castle (Roberts 1983, 12; Thorn and Thorn 1982, 176 c-d). There was a separate smaller estate held by St Mary's Abbey at Corneilles (in Normandy) which had a priest (Thorn and Thorn 1982, 174b). This reference may indicate that there was a church at Tenbury by 1086, if not earlier.

There is a reference in a 11th century charter to a "port street" in Tenbury (Hooke 1980, 450-1) and this may indicate that there was a market at this period (Slater 1982, 181; Roberts 1983, 12). The earliest settlement focus was probably around the church of St Mary, the funnel-shaped market place at the south end of Church Street, and the original crossing point of the River Teme at the north end of Church Street (Roberts 1983, 24).

The manor of Tenbury was held by the Clifford family from the early 13th century (VCH Worcs 4, 365-6). A charter for a market and yearly fair was granted in 1248 to Roger Clifford and a grant of *pontage* (ie permission to build a bridge and charge tolls) was made in 1305 (VCH Worcs 4, 364). Teme Bridge dates from the early 14th century and was presumably erected as a direct result of the grant.

The earliest direct documentary evidence for urban status is a reference to seven burgages in the town in 1454 (VCH Worcs 4; Beresford and Finberg 1973, 184). However the documentary evidence quoted above strongly suggests that Tenbury was urban before this date. It is probable that new regular tenement plots were laid out in the early 14th century along a new market place (Teme Street) aligned on the bridge, built in the early 14th century (Roberts 1983, 24-5).

Tenbury continued to function as a town in the post-medieval period, and Leland described it a market town (Chandler 1993, 387). It has been suggested that Tenbury ceased to be a borough by the mid-17th century, although it was still described as a market town (VCH Worcs 4, 364). The bridge required expensive upkeep through the post-medieval period (*ibid*). The low-lying site of the town was prone to flooding, and a number of severe floods are documented from the 17th century onwards (*ibid*, 368; TWDCCHS 1993). The town "flourished" in the 18th and 19th century when the roads were repaired and the town developed as a coaching stop on a major routes from London to north Wales (VCH Worcs 4, 365; Havins 1976, 61). Mineral springs were accidentally discovered in 1839 and a pump room and baths were built. The town was renamed Tenbury Wells, but the spa was never very successful (VCH Worcs 4, 365; Roberts 1983, 18). There was also considerable rebuilding in the mid-19th century, and the town's economy was based on trade in agricultural products, malting and tanning (VCH Worcs 4, 365).

1.4 Placename studies

The earliest recorded forms of the placename Tenbury Wells are *Temedebyrig* and *Tamedeberie*, meaning "the burh by the Teme" (Mawer and Stenton 1927, 83). Although it has been suggested that the place name derives from the mound known as "Castle Tump" on the north side of the River Teme (*ibid*), this is improbable. The name Tenbury Wells was adopted in the mid-19th century (VCH Worcs 4, 365).

1.5 Syntheses of documentary and archaeological data

The documentary evidence relating to Tenbury Wells has been summarised in the *Victoria County History* (VCH Worcs 4, 362-71). Additional information relating to the church can be found in Nash (1795, 417-21). Other historical works not consulted for the present assessment include Evans (1840) and Joyce (1931).

The present assessment was carried out by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey in 1994. The text was revised in March 1995 to incorporate the results of fieldwork undertaken by the Survey (see section 1.7). No information published after December 1994 has been incorporated into this assessment.

1.6 Cartographic sources

Nineteenth century maps include the tithe map of 1843 (HWRO BA 1199) and the Ordnance Survey first edition 1:2500 map (*Worcestershire sheet XIX.1* (1886)).

1.7 Archaeological excavations and surveys

There has been one archaeological excavations in Tenbury Wells, an evaluation on land to the rear of Teme Street which recorded medieval structural features (Fagan *et al* 1994; HWCW 15210). Limited recording has been carried out at Teme Bridge (Wichbold 1992; HWCW 5309). Fieldwork was undertaken by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey in October 1994. This identified remains, investigated and revised the extent of components, and recorded 18th and 19th century cellarage and modern developments in the urban area.

1.8 Acknowledgments and personnel

Survey fieldwork was undertaken by Paul Godbehere and Hal Dalwood. Analysis, report writing and editing were carried out by Hal Dalwood.

2 Pre-urban archaeological evidence

There is little evidence for early occupation at Tenbury Wells. Documentary evidence indicates that Tenbury may have been a defended site and a minster church in the late Anglo-Saxon period, although direct evidence for this is slight. An Anglo-Saxon cross-shaft (HWCM 8117) in St Mary's Church may relate to an early church at Tenbury, although the original site of the cross is unknown.

The mound known as "Castle Tump" on the north (Shropshire) side of the River Teme is usually interpreted as a motte (Shropshire County Council SMR: SA 1152), although it has also been interpreted as a Bronze Age round barrow (Roberts 1983, 9). It is probable that the site is a motte and it may date from the late 11th to early 12th century. The site lies within a pocket of land enclosed by a former meander of the River Teme, now an abandoned watercourse (see section 1.2; Shropshire County Council SMR: SA 5410). It is not known when the River Teme changed its course, although it is probable that this happened during the early medieval period after the establishment of the shire boundary.

The medieval settlement was focused around the churchyard, Market Square (a funnel-shaped market place), and a possible crossing point over the River Teme at the north end of Church Street (HWCM 5314). However, if the River Teme still followed the meander to the north, then the river crossing would be north of the motte (Roberts 1983, 24; Shropshire County Council SMR: SA 5411).

3 Medieval archaeological evidence

3.1 Medieval remains and buildings

Medieval deposits have been recorded at an evaluation excavation of land to the rear of The Vaults, Teme Street (Fagan *et al* 1994; HWCM 15210). As well as early medieval deposits, there was evidence of medieval iron-smithing (dated to the 13th to 14th century) and a holloway. It is also relevant to record the discovery of a timber structure from the River Teme, about 1km east of Tenbury. The structure has not been studied in detail but appears to be parts of a medieval timber bridge, possibly it an early bridge at Tenbury (HWCM 6001).

Two medieval buildings have been recorded in Tenbury Wells. The church of St Mary the Virgin dates in part from the 12th century and was rebuilt in the 14th century (VCH Worcs 4, 368; HWCM 5307). Teme Bridge (the northern part of the structure) is dated to the early 14th century (HWCM 5309).

3.2 Medieval urban components

Analysis of the evidence summarised above and of cartographic and documentary sources indicated the existence of 14 medieval urban components. The characteristics of these urban components are summarised below.

Churchyard (HWCM 19827). The extent of the medieval churchyard is identified from the 1843 tithe map and contains the remains of the medieval church, the tower of which dates to the 12th century (VCH Worcs 4, 368; HWCM 5307).

Market places (HWCM 19828 and HWCM 19829). Documentary evidence indicates that there may have been a market at Tenbury from the 11th century (Slater 1983, 181) and a weekly market was established in the mid-14th century (VCH Worcs 4, 364). A funnel-shaped market place (HWCM 19828) is identified as Market Square and part of Cross Street, which probably formed the earlier market place (Roberts 1983, 24-5). A second market place (HWCM 19829) is identified

as Teme Street, aligned on the bridging point (HWCM 5309) and consequently datable to the early 14th century (Roberts 1983, 24-5).

Manorial enclosure (HWCM 19830). A manorial enclosure is identified, based on a recorded earthwork identified as a moat (HWCM 5308). An 18th century building called "The Court" stood on the site and its name may reflect the post-medieval and medieval function (Roberts 1983, 23; HWCM 15711). The component is defined by the course of the Kyre Brook and the earthworks depicted on the Ordnance Survey 1885 map.

Street system (HWCM 19838). The medieval street system is identified as two north-south streets, aligned on the church and the bridge, together with other roads. It has been suggested that the north-south street aligned on the church originally continued northwards to a bridge or ford on the River Teme.

Bridging points (HWCM 5309 and HWCM 19837). The bridge over the River Teme was built in the 14th century (VCH Worcs 4, 363; HWCM 5309). A second bridging point (HWCM 19837) is identified over the Kyre Brook at the south end of Teme Street.

Tenement plots (HWCM 19831, HWCM 19832, HWCM 19833, HWCM 19834, HWCM 19835, HWCM 19836, HWCM 19840). A total of seven tenement plot components are identified. Five tenement plot components (HWCM 19833, HWCM 19834, HWCM 19835, HWCM 19836 and HWCM 19840) are aligned on the identified earlier market place (HWCM 19820) and the Cross Street/ Church Street axial route. Two tenement plot components (HWCM 19831 and HWCM 19832) are aligned on the identified later market place (HWCM 19829) and may have been laid out in the early 14th century (Roberts 1983, 24). It has been suggested that the parts of the tenement plots aligned on Church Street (eg parts of HWCM 19833 and HWCM 19834) were abandoned in the 14th century when the focus of settlement shifted to Teme Street (Roberts 1983, 25).

One tenement plot component has been investigated (HWCM 19833). Postholes and other features relating to timber structures were recorded, which contained no dating evidence but were thought to be early medieval. In the 13th to 14th century the area was used for small-scale industrial activity including iron smithing and was crossed by a holloway (Fagan *et al* 1994; HWCM 15210).

3.3 Medieval urban form

Definition and classification. The medieval urban form (HWCM 19843) has been defined and mapped, based on the extent of the identified urban components. The available evidence indicates that the medieval urban form of Tenbury Wells can be classified as a medieval small market town (English Heritage 1992).

Survival. There is evidence that medieval deposits survive within the medieval town. At The Vaults medieval deposits c 0.45m thick were sealed beneath c 0.25m of modern deposits (Fagan *et al* 1994; HWCM 15210). Two medieval buildings survive in Tenbury Wells, the church (HWCM 5307) and the bridge (HWCM 5309). However the medieval components in the form of the churchyard, market places and tenement plot components can be identified in the modern town plan.

4 Post-medieval archaeological evidence

4.1 Post-medieval remains and buildings

Post-medieval deposits earlier than 1800 have not been observed in Tenbury Wells,

although later deposits were recorded at The Vaults, Teme Street, together with a small arefact assemblage dating between the 17th and 20th century (Fagan *et al* 1994; HWCM 15210). A hoard of *c* 500 silver coins of the 17th and 18th century were found in Teme Street in 1849 (HWCM 15731), and unprovenanced 17th century trade tokens have been recorded (HWCM 19844). A total of 21 buildings dated between the late 16th and late 18th century have been recorded in Tenbury Wells.

4.2 Post-medieval urban components

Analysis of the evidence summarised above and of cartographic and documentary sources indicated the existence of 16 urban components. The characteristics of these urban components are summarised below.

Churchyard (HWCM 19827). The medieval churchyard continued in use in post-medieval period. The medieval church was badly damaged by flood in 1770 and subsequently rebuilt (VCH Worcs 4, 368; HWCM 5307).

Market places (HWCM 19828 and HWCM 19829). It is probable that the two identified medieval market places continued to be used in the post-medieval period.

Manorial enclosure (HWCM 19830). The identified manorial enclosure probably continued in use in the post-medieval period. An 18th century building called "The Court" stood on the site and its name may reflect the post-medieval function (Roberts 1983, 23; HWCM 15711).

Street system (HWCM 19838). The medieval street system continued in use in the medieval period, and there is a documentary reference to "Cross Street" in 1699 (VCH Worcs 4, 362, note 3a). Tenement plots were laid out along Berrington Road, probably a medieval field lane.

Bridging points (HWCM 5309 and HWCM 19837). The two identified medieval bridging points continued in use in the post-medieval period. In 1615 Teme Bridge was damaged in a flood and required repair (Willis-Bund 1912; VCH Worcs 4, 363; HWCM 5309).

Tenement plots (HWCM 19831, HWCM 19832, HWCM 19833, HWCM 19834, HWCM 19835, HWCM 19836, HWCM 19840, HWCM 19911, HWCM 19912). A total of nine tenement plot components are identified. The identified medieval tenement plots continued in use in the medieval period and all contain standing buildings dated to the 16th to late 18th centuries. A hoard of silver coins (see above section 4.1; HWCM 15731) was recovered from the tenement plot component east of Teme Street (HWCM 19831). Two tenement plot components (HWCM 19911 and HWCM 19912) are dated to the post-medieval period and contain standing buildings dated to the 17th and 18th centuries. The one area archaeologically investigated (at The Vaults, Teme Street) appears to have been disused in the postmedieval period (Fagan *et al* 1994; HWCM 15210).

4.3 Post-medieval urban form

Definition and classification. The post-medieval urban form (HWCM 19913) has been defined and mapped, based on the extent of the identified urban components. The available evidence indicates that the medieval urban form of Tenbury Wells can be classified as a small post-medieval market town (English Heritage 1992).

Survival. There is no direct evidence that earlier post-medieval deposits survive within the town. At The Vaults, Teme Street, 19th and 20th century deposits were recorded (Fagan *et al* 1994; HWCM 15210). A total of 35 buildings dated between the 16th and late 18th century survive in Tenbury Wells. The post-medieval

components in the form of the churchyard, market place, bridging point and tenement plot components can be identified in the modern town plan.

5 Post-1800 archaeological evidence

The remit of the present study has not allowed for a detailed survey and assessment of the archaeological evidence relating to Tenbury Wells in the period from 1800. Further work is required before such an assessment can be carried out. The oval market house in Market Square was built in 1811 and the Gothick baths in 1862 (Pevsner 1968, 279). There are 16 listed buildings dated to the 19th century within the study area.

6 Specialist assessments

6.1 Assessment of artefactual evidence J D Hurst

Little artefactual evidence is available for Tenbury Wells. A gold object (now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), is possibly of prehistoric date, though its precise provenance is not recorded. The earliest artefact definitely from the study area is a fragment of sculpture of late Anglo-Saxon date (Roberts 1983, 12). Medieval pottery dating to the 13th to 14th century, together with a whetstone, a strip of lead and hammer-scale from iron-working were recovered from an evaluation excavation west of Teme Street (Fagan *et al* 1994, 10; HWCM 15210). A small quantity of post-medieval artefacts were also recovered from this site (Fagan *et al* 1994, 13).

Other artefacts are also of post-medieval date. These comprise a hoard of silver coins buried in a 'leaden' box in the 17th century, and discovered in the 19th century (HWCM 15731), and some 17th century tokens dated to 1648-72 (HWCM 19844). Some carved stones (HWCM 12201) remain undated. Most of the artefacts have not been located.

6.2 Assessment of environmental evidence E A Pearson

A small quantity of biological remains have been recovered from Tenbury Wells. An evaluation to the west of Teme Street produced medieval animal bone, plant remains and molluscs (Fagan *et al* 1994, 10-11, table 3 and 4).

6.3 Assessment of primary documentary sources P A Stamper

There is an average amount of documentation in Worcester Record Office (see section 9).

6.4 Assessment of buildings R K Morriss

Tenbury Wells is a town that clearly underwent redevelopment during the second half of the 19th century, judging from its buildings. However the architectural evidence indicates that the town did not increase greatly in size during that period, and that most expansion of the historic core has taken place in this century.

The main focus of the town is Teme Street. This arrow-straight road runs south from the bridge across the Teme to a point close to the bank of the smaller Kyre Brook, where it is met by Market Street. Most of the facades are of late Georgian or Victorian date, but clearly a few are timber-framed and therefore older. The surviving timber-frames appear to date to the 17th century and are quite plain in their framing (eg 43-5 Teme Street; HWCM 15717). Most of the buildings lie parallel to the street and there is no impression of pressure on land. There is no evidence of large-scale redevelopment of the street until the 19th century. Two Georgian houses were built in an almost identical way (34 and 35 Teme Street; HWCM 15714-5) both of three bays and

three storeys, though the former is slightly wider.

The other streets of the older settlement are not straight but gently curved. Market Street, running westwards at right angles from of Teme Street, leads directly into Cross Street, the road to Bromyard. Market Street has the most obviously grand timber-framed building in the town, the elaborately framed early 17th century Royal Oak (HWCM 5317). Next to it, to the east, is another timber-framed building of similar date but less pretensions, clad in brick (HWCM 16417). The rest of the street is relatively modern. The rear buildings survive relatively intact, although there has been erosion of the back plots by new housing on the west side and by car-parking on the east.

Cross Street is still lined with low terraces of two and one and a half storey houses, both timber-framed and brick, as far as the Pembroke House. This stands at the junction of the main roads leading to Bromyard and to Hereford. The architectural evidence seems to indicate that the built up area of the town reached as far as this point in the late 16th century. That is the probable date of the timber-framed Pembroke House and its adjacent timber-framed buildings. Even for this larger building, the framing is again quite plain, with a first floor jetty. Just to the east, the Cornwall House is a mid-17th century brick house of some pretension, with shaped Dutch gables. Older buildings in the back plots follow the grain of these property boundaries, which are at an angle to the street frontages.

Running northwards from the junction of Market Street and Cross Street is Church Street, which starts off as a broad thoroughfare identified as a former market place. On the west side, 5-6 Church Street (HWCM 15726 and HWCM 15727) are particularly fine examples of very early 18th century semi-detached brick houses (eleven bays in all, and two tall storeys with attics). These would have faced on to the market place and it seems that this was then an important part of the town. The street, surprisingly, seems to decline in status as it approaches the church. When it continues to the east of the church it has low one and a half storey brick terraces on its east side, probably of mid-18th century date or earlier (HWCM 16406-8). Church House is a relatively fine four bay brick house probably built around 1700 (HWCM 15729), and opposite is a maltings complex, probably built in the late 18th century (HWCM 16409). The juxtaposition of these two perhaps indicates and dates a decline in status of this part of the town. There is no architectural evidence to indicate the existence, before the 19th century, of any significant bridge-end settlement north of the Teme across the county boundary.

Survey and analysis. There have been some studies of individual buildings in the town, but no synthetic study as yet.

Assessment of listing details. The comprehensive list is modern (1988), detailed and well up to the standards now expected.

7 Archaeological research framework

7.1 Model of urban development

A model of the medieval and post-medieval town of Tenbury Wells has been produced which is predictive and capable of testing through archaeological investigation. This model has both chronological and spatial (landuse) dimensions (see sections 2 to 6) and is based on an analysis of documentary, cartographic and archaeological sources. The model is derived from the current academic understanding of urban development in Britain, and forms one element of a developing regional research framework. The model is provisional and will be subject to confirmation or revision in the future as new information becomes available, or new studies lead to changing understandings of towns in the region.

7.2 Chronological framework

The archaeological and documentary evidence indicates that urban occupation commenced in the 13th century but developed from the nucleus of a medieval rural settlement (possibly originating in the Anglo-Saxon period around a minster church). The settlement is poorly documented between the 11th century and the early 15th century, although it had a charter for a market and fair from the mid-13th century. It is possible that it was developed into a borough in the early 14th century. Archaeological evidence shows a distinct phase of occupation dated to the 13th to 14th century at one site (Fagan *et al* 1994; HWCW 15210). An earlier phase of occupation at this site was not directly datable, but may date to the earlier medieval period. Documentary evidence and standing buildings indicate that the town continued to function as a local centre of trade and industry associated with agricultural products in the 17th and 18th centuries, although it is possible there was a period of economic decline. The broad outlines of this chronological framework are provisional and require testing through archaeological investigation.

7.3 Urban landuse

The medieval and post-medieval components identified here (sections 3.2 and 4.2) have been mapped and constitute a model of urban landuse for each period. These landuse models are partial and provisional and capable of testing through archaeological investigation.

The urban components of Tenbury Wells have been archaeologically investigated at one location (tenement plot component HWCW 19833), where evidence for medieval buildings and industries (including iron smithing) were recorded (Fagan *et al* 1994; HWCW 15210). The earliest features on this site were undated but may date to a period before the development of urban status. It has been hypothesised that the tenement plots components aligned on Teme Street were laid out in the 14th century and that tenement plot components in the Church Street area were abandoned (Roberts 1983, 24-5). The archaeological investigation seemed to show a more complex picture, with at least some use of this area in the later medieval period. There is potential for recovering archaeological evidence relating to buildings, industrial and craft activity and the layout of burgage plots.

7.4 Potential for survival of buried remains

Buried deposits have been recorded in Tenbury. Limited observation at Teme Bridge recorded no significant deposits (Wichbold 1992; HWCW 5309). Stratified deposits are likely to survive within the urban area, and information from archaeological investigations is required to establish the broad character of such deposits. It is probable that significant deposits are located beneath relatively shallow modern deposits. The continued occupation of the urban area through the post-medieval period may have implications for the density and depth of deposits throughout the urban area.

Fieldwork was undertaken by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey in October 1994. The extent of 18th and 19th century cellarage was mapped, together with the extent of 20th century development (new buildings and major landscaping work). This showed that there was extensive cellarage along the main street (Teme Street) but little cellarage elsewhere, and moderate modern redevelopment within the historic core. It is likely that evidence for more extensive cellarage has been obscured by modern refurbishment of frontages and pavements.

7.5 Potential for artefactual studies J D Hurst

General. Only one small archaeological excavation has been undertaken in Tenbury Wells (Fagan *et al* 1994), and the extent of surviving artefactual evidence in buried

deposits cannot yet be assessed in any detail. It is likely that some contexts that have not been sampled to date, for instance a moat (HWCM 5308), could be of especial significance for the survival of artefactual evidence, as they may include waterlogged finds. Well stratified deposits are present, although earlier archaeological deposits are likely to have been disturbed by later activity, as the town has continued to be an important local centre.

Period discussion. Few artefacts have so far been discovered in Tenbury Wells, so assessment of the range of periods represented and their significance cannot yet be undertaken.

Comparison with documentary evidence. Documentary sources have provided little evidence for crafts or industries in the town, except in the post-medieval period when malting and tanning were carried out. The post-medieval town was associated with activities that were largely agricultural in character.

7.6 Potential for environmental remains E A Pearson

Excavation has demonstrated moderately well preserved environmental remains in the town, although only one small archaeological excavation has been carried out. Good survival of organic remains preserved by waterlogging cannot be expected in soils of the Bromyard association as they are generally well drained. However, there is the possibility that organic remains may survive in alluvial soil near the river. This material may provide information relating to the surrounding natural environment, and in features associated with tenement plots, any occupational debris present.

Alluvial deposits frequently seal rich archaeological landscapes with a high potential for environmental studies (Robinson 1992). As Tenbury is situated in an area of extensive alluvial deposits, it is therefore an area of high priority. Much information can be gained on a changing landscape, heavily influenced by man's activities not only by the study of the wide range of biological remains frequently preserved, but also by the sediments themselves. These studies can highlight periods of alluviation which, in many cases, appear to reflect changes in landscape use (particularly clearance and agricultural activity).

As the extent to which environmental remains have been studied by specialists is limited, any environmental material is likely to be of interest. This could provide increased information on the past environment, diet, living conditions and agricultural or industrial economy. Future excavation should include a policy of sampling and wet-sieving deposits in order to recover plant, insect, molluscs and small animal remains in conjunction with hand-collection of larger items. Where appropriate, specialist sampling for soil and pollen analysis may be required.

7.7 Potential for study of standing buildings R K Morriss

Tenbury has a sufficient number of historic buildings to warrant an extensive survey and analysis of the more significant structures.

7.8 Summary of research potential

The historic core of Tenbury Wells contains buried archaeological deposits, and these are judged to have moderate potential. In addition there is moderate potential for the recovery of artefact and ecofact assemblages. The historic buildings constitute a complementary body of evidence for the post-medieval period, and are judged to have moderate potential for detailed study and recording. The surviving documentary sources are not extensive and there is moderate potential for further study.

8 Management framework

8.1 Urban archaeological area

The mapped extent of the medieval urban form defined above indicated the extent of the urban area (Tenbury Wells Urban Archaeological Area).

8.2 Existing protection measures

The archaeological urban area of Tenbury Wells has been defined above (Section 8.1). The different parts of the urban area are afforded different measures of protection through legislation and the planning process. Directly relevant measures are outlined below.

Scheduled ancient monument. There is one Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Tenbury Wells: Teme Bridge (Here and Worc 322; HWCN 5309). It is possible that following the current Monument Protection programme English Heritage may add monuments in Tenbury Wells to the schedule.

Listed buildings. There are a total of 49 buildings listed as of historical or architectural importance within the urban area. Buildings of special architectural or historic interest should receive very special attention. Such buildings are limited in their number and there is a need to protect and preserve them. The presumption when considering applications to demolish or alter is in favour of preservation. This presumption is also likely to preserve archaeological remains beneath and immediately around such buildings from development. It is important that the architectural and archaeological interests are considered together.

The alteration of listed buildings requires the greatest skill and care to avoid damage to historic structures. Specialist architectural advice is given by the County Conservation Architect or through the District's own conservation officer where that District Council has their own specialist staff.

Conservation Area. A Conservation Area has been defined which partially encompasses the archaeological area (Leominster District Local Plan deposit draft (1996)).

8.3 Management approach

The archaeological urban area of Tenbury Wells contains buried remains relating to medieval and post-medieval occupation, associated with contemporary buildings. The buried remains may vary in complexity and depth, and potentially contain significant archaeological information. It is desirable that any proposed development within the urban area that has a potential impact on buried remains should be assessed by the appropriate archaeological body.

The course of action recommended will depend upon the nature of the development and current planning legislation and frameworks. The archaeological response will be based on both the archaeological information summarised in this document and any subsequent archaeological information recorded on the County Sites and Monuments Record.

9 Principal groups of primary sources compiled by P A Stamper

(WRO: St Helen's Record Office, Worcester)

WRO BA 3855, Court records c 1550-1778, including surveys and court rolls
3762, 8782 & 4719

WRO BA 7406
WRO BA 527

Church records: 1,160 papers 1697-1955
Victoria County History research notes

10 References

- Beresford, M W, and Finberg, H P R, 1973 *English medieval boroughs*, Newton Abbot
- Bond, C J, 1988 Church and parish in Norman Worcestershire, in *Minsters and parish churches*, (ed J Blair), Oxford, 119-58
- Chandler, J, 1993 *John Leland's itinerary: travels in Tudor England*
- English Heritage 1992 *Monuments evaluation manual 4: urban areas*
- Evans, T, 1840 *The history of Tenbury*
- Fagan, L, Hurst, D, and Pearson, E, 1994 *Evaluation at The Vaults, Tenbury Wells*, HWCC County Archaeological Service internal report, **230** (SMR file HWCM 15270)
- Havins, P J N, 1976 *The spas of England*
- Hooke, D, 1980 *Anglo-Saxon landscapes of the west midlands: the charter evidence*, unpublished PhD thesis, Univ Birmingham
- Joyce, F W, 1931 *Tenbury, some record of its history*
- Mawer, A, and Stenton, F M, 1927 *The place-names of Worcestershire*, Cambridge
- Nash, T, 1781-2 *Collections for the history of Worcestershire*, 2 vols
- Pevsner, N, 1968 *The buildings of England: Worcestershire*, Harmondsworth
- Ragg, J M, Beard, G R, George, H, Heaven, F W, Hollis, J M, Jones, R J A, Palmer, R C, Reeve, M J, Robson, J D, and Whitfield, W A D, 1984 *Soils and their use in midland and western England*, Soils Survey of England and Wales, **12**
- Roberts, J P, 1983 *Archaeology in Tenbury*, HWCC Archaeology Department internal report
- Robinson, M, 1992 Environment, archaeology and alluvium on the river gravels of the South Midlands, in *Alluvial archaeology in Britain*, (ed S Needham and M G Macklin), Oxbow Monographs **27**
- Slater, T R, 1982 Urban genesis and medieval town plans in Warwickshire and Worcestershire, in *Field and forest*, (ed T R Slater and P J Davies), 173-202
- TWDCHS 1993 Tenbury Wells and District Civic and Historical Society, *Tenbury Wells: historical aspects*, Tenbury Wells
- Thorn, F, and Thorn, C (eds), 1982 *Domesday Book: Worcestershire*, Chichester
- VCH Worcs *Victoria history of the county of Worcestershire*, Willis-Bund, J (ed), 1913-24, 4 vols
- Wichbold, D, 1992 *Watching brief at Tenbury Bridge, Teme Street, Tenbury Wells*, HWCC Archaeological Service internal rep (SMR file HWCM 5309)

Willis-Bund, J W, 1912 Worcestershire bridges, *Rep Pap Assoc Architect Soc* **31**, 273-302

11 Mapping

The illustrations for this report comprise CAD plots of the urban components for each period and a location plot of archaeological remains combined with OS digital map data (1995) at 1:5000. These plots are current at the date of the completion of this report (March 1995). After this date new information will be held by the Hereford and Worcester County Council Sites and Monuments Record.

- * Historic buildings (listed and other recorded buildings) and urban area
- * Archaeological remains and urban area
- * Medieval urban form and components
- * Post-medieval urban form and components
- * Observed cellarage and 20th century development
- * Urban area and scheduled ancient monuments