CPAT Report No 1030

Tesco Supermarket Development, Pool Road, Newtown, Powys

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION AND WATCHING BRIEF

INTERIM REPORT

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

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INTERIM REPORT

I Grant & N W Jones
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Report for ISG Pearce and Tesco plc

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

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

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) was invited in May 2009 by ISG Pearce, on behalf of Tesco Plc, to undertake an archaeological excavation in connection with a new Tesco supermarket development on land at Pool Road in Newtown, Powys (SO 1145 9147).

1.2 The site was the subject of a pre-planning evaluation in 2006, which revealed significant archaeological remains in the form of a well-preserved Roman road as well as the potential for earlier activity (Grant 2006). The Roman road is part of the line of communication between the Roman forts at Forden Gaer and Caersws and the main route into mid-Wales, dating to the 1st century AD.

1.3 Planning permission for the development was granted by the local authority with a condition to allow for 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 required (EXC 738).

Fig. 1 Aerial view showing the location of the development site

2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The development is located on the south side of Pool Road towards the eastern edge of Newtown centred at SO 1145 9147 (Fig. 1). The site is bounded by Pool Road (the A483 T) to the north-west, with the River Severn beyond, and by the railway to the south-east.

2.2 Prior to the commencement of the development the majority of the area, away from the street frontage, was occupied by the former Smithfield livestock market and Council buildings, together with a former bus depot. The street frontage was occupied by a row of 19th-century

houses, behind which there was an open space, with further, modern housing along the south side of Smithfield Road.

2.3 The underlying geology of the development area consists of Silurian sedimentary rocks of the Wenlock and Ludlow series (British Geological Survey map 1994). The soils consist generally of typical brown alluvial soils, derived from the River Severn which flows just to the north of the study area (Soil Survey of England and Wales map and legend 1983).

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 To provide a context for the excavation, the following section has been taken from the original assessment report (Silvester and Grant 2006) and is included here in unmodified form (paras 3.2-3.9). It has the added benefit to the reader that all the salient information is included, and recourse to the original report should not therefore be necessary.

3.2 For an assessment of the development that has occurred along Pool Road over the last two hundred and more years we are dependent on a sequence of maps that commence in 1788 and continue, admittedly irregular intervals, to the present day. For copyright reasons, it is not possible to reproduce the maps in this report.

3.3 The earliest, John Sayce's 1788 map shows the best depiction that we have from the 18th century. It is evident that even though David Pugh, a local gentleman, did not own all the land – some was owned by James Basier and Pryce Buckley Esq - and the boundaries have much changed, most if not all of the land to the south of the river was agricultural at that time. The modern telephone exchange block, however, is defined by boundaries that were there in 1788. To the south and south-east were two fields known as Maes Gwnasted, spread over ten acres, that were then under meadow. A small additional area was Cae Pontprin under arable.

3.4 The plan of 1798 refines the context confirming that all this land was agricultural at the end of the 18th century. It also holds out the interesting possibility that there was a chapel or church dedicated to St Giles on the south side of the Severn and to the north side of the main road, seemingly where Hughes' garage is today. There is the hint of a curvilinear enclosure around which the road bent and glebe land on the opposite side of the road which by the 18th-century belonged to St Mary's in Newtown. Two buildings are also shown, one presumably the St Giles House referred to in 17th-century documents. There is no suggestion that this putative ecclesiastical focus extended south of the road into the area of the proposed development, but it might provide a general context for the figurine of St Catherine found in 1935 (see below).

3.5 The 1821 map does not show the development area as it was restricted to Pugh's land holdings only, but simply notes 'lands belonging to different persons and the vicarage'. However by edging the block to the west in red it suggests that the area south-east of the historic town was already beginning to be developed. The map volume from the previous year adds nothing to this.

3.6 The 19th century saw the general development of this area as an industrial focus on the south side of the river. The Cambrian Ironworks lay a little to the west. The Tithe map of 1843 shows that land to either side of Sheaf Street had been built on, presumably for housing, and also along the Pool Road frontage. These Pool Road buildings comprised dwelling houses (nos 22-27), and a tannery building. The area immediately behind these buildings was a close held by a Samuel Morgan, with gardens belonging to George Green and pastures, meadows and gardens belonging to Thomas Morris extending to the south.

3.7 The railway which now forms the southern limits of the development area is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1:500 town plan of 1885. The tannery and other buildings fronting onto Pool Road are detailed, and an area of garden is shown laid out behind the houses on Pool Road.

Adjacent to the tannery Green's Court, a short cul-de-sac, allows access to a row of properties to the west (and reflects the ownership identified on the Tithe map). A lane is shown crossing from south-west to north-east, following the former field boundaries. A Rope Walk, runs alongside the railway, with several buildings, presumably associated with the rope making process, in the same area.

3.8 Little change is shown by 1902 (Ordnance Survey 2nd edition) except for additional buildings, both along the railway, and as an extension to the terrace block in the north-eastern sector of the development area. Later in the 20th century the entire open area underwent further development. Large corrugated iron sheds were constructed in the north-eastern part of the site, originally for the transport of ponies during the 1st World War and later housing the bus depot, with the Smithfield Market, built in the 1930s, occupying much of the remaining open area. Access to the market was allowed by the creation of a perimeter road, overlying the former Rope Walk in the south. Demolition of the tannery and the properties to the west allowed the creation of a new road, Smithfield Road, and the building of a terrace of houses followed in the 1970s. In the north-east an electricity sub-station and a new access road was sited on the former 19th-century building plots .

3.9 During the construction of the Smithfield in 1935 a figurine of St Catherine was found. The figurine was made of plaster and was missing the head, the surviving portion standing to just over 3 inches in height. At the time a late 14th or early 15th century date was suggested (Hughes 1936).

The Roman Road from Caersws to Forden Gaer

3.10 Portions of the Roman road from Caersws to Forden Gaer (RR64) are very well-evidenced in the Severn Valley, most recently on the western outskirts of Newtown. The approximate line of the Roman road through Newtown has been known since the early 19th century and it is clear from the later 18th-century maps that there was a continuous line of field boundaries running eastwards on the south side of Newtown which might mark its course. The route was described by Colt Hoare in 1804, and more clearly by the Royal Commission in the early years of the 20th century: 'a Roman road from Rutunium to Caersws ran through the whole length of the parish from east to west, and can be pretty clearly traced here and there. From a point near Glanhafren it runs parallel with the railway, close to the Rectory, across the Brickfield, through the County School grounds, behind the Church, past the Sportsman Inn (which is actually built upon it), across the Park Brickyard (where many yards of it were destroyed and numbers of small horse-shoes and other relics were found), a little north-west of Castell-y-dail, and near the entrance to the grounds of the other Glanhafren at the western end of the parish' (RCAHMW 1911, 163).

3:11 Further sections of the road have recently been uncovered to the south-west of Newtown, and at Bayston Hill, near Shrewsbury. A short length of the road was exposed near Penstrowed (SO 07149094), between Newtown and Caersws, during a watching brief monitoring the installation of a new watermain in August 2009. At that time a small-scale excavation was undertaken by CPAT which revealed that the road had been significantly truncated by ploughing so that only the basal layer of large cobbles survived, indicating a road around 6m in width with a flanking ditch on the north-east side, the opposite side, where an eqivalent ditch might have been expected, lying beyond the excavated area. At Bayston Hill extensive excavations by SLR Ltd were undertaken in advance of a quarry extension, revealing three phases of road construction, with one section crossing a boggy area having been laid on a brushwood base (Tim Malin pers comm.)

4 EXCAVATION

Introduction

4.1 The excavation was conducted from late May to late July 2009 in three separate areas all focusing on the projected line of the Roman road. Where possible the excavations included the whole of the Roman road together with a strip around 5m in width to either side of it, where this lay within the development boundary. In total an area of around 3115m^2 was mechanically stripped in the three areas, uncovering around 210m in length of the Roman road. Within most of this area the underlying drift deposits consisted of stony clay. Following the machine stripping all excavation was conducted by hand and a systematic metal detector survey was conducted along the Roman road. Numbers in brackets in the following text refer to individual contexts recorded in the site archive.

4.2 Separate site grids were established for each of the three areas, and these were located using total station surveying equipment, the base stations of which were located with respect to the Ordnance Survey national grid and Ordnance Datum. 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.

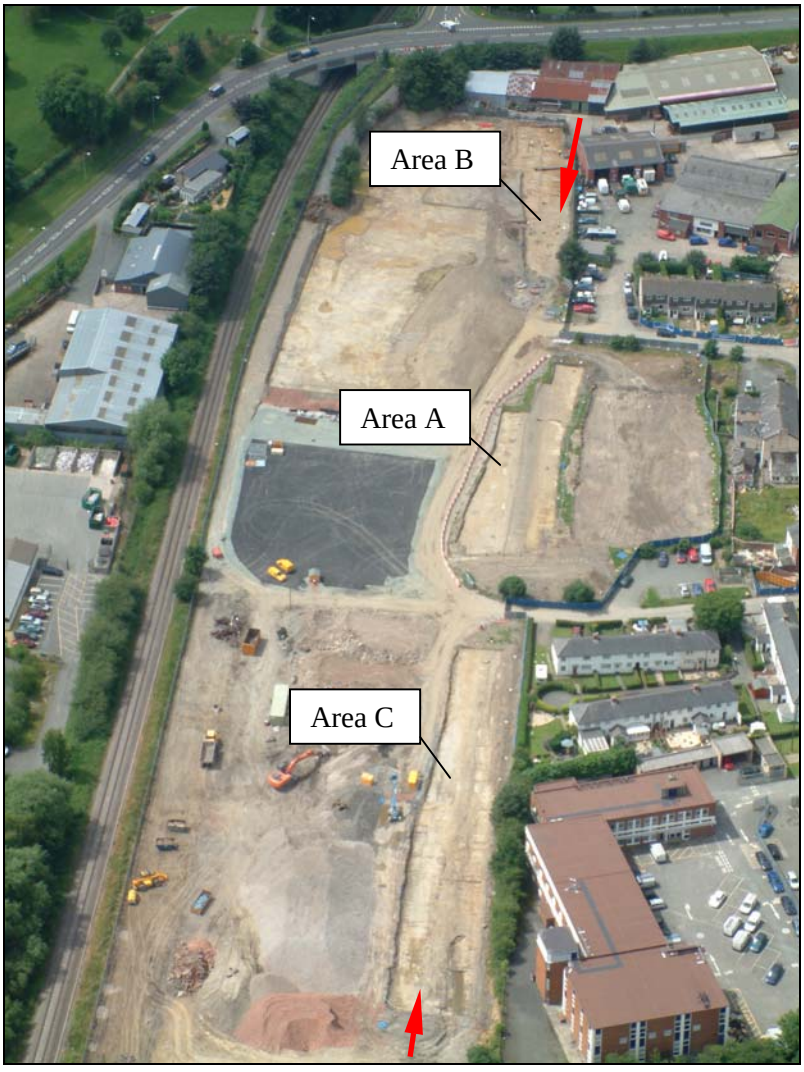

Fig. 2 Aerial view of the development site showing excavated areas and the line of the Roman road (marked by red arrows)

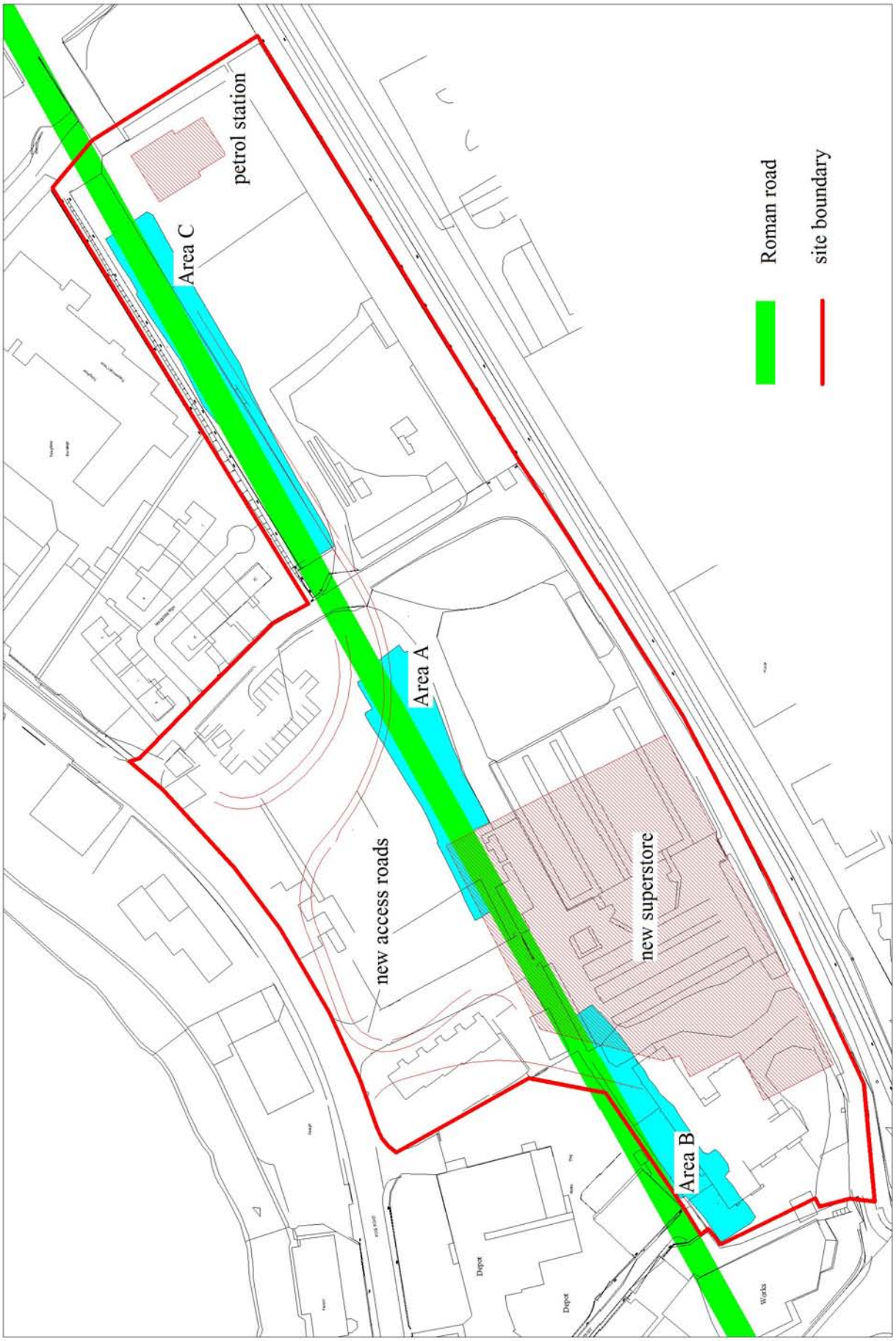

Fig. 3 Plan of development site showing excavated areas and the line of Roman road. Scale

Area A

4.3 Area A measured 74m in length and varied from 6.5m to 19m wide (1005m^2), the area available for excavation on either side of the Roman road being limited by the need to maintain vehicular access across the site for construction traffic.

Pre-road activity

4.4 The evaluation in 2006 identified a large pit (321) sealed beneath the make-up of the earliest phase of the Roman road. This area was investigated further in 2009, falling within one of the hand-excavated sections (Section 3) across the road in Area A (see Figs 5 and 8). The pit measured around 2.6m in diameter and was up to 0.75m deep, cut into the natural stony clay. The basal fill consisted of a grey silt (325) and was overlain by a deposit of mid-grey, firm, sandy silt (324), within which there was evidence for possible later disturbance towards the western side. The excavation produced no artefactual evidence, although soil samples were taken from the fills which will be analysed in due course in the hope of providing palaeoenvironmental evidence, as well as material which may be suitable for radiocarbon dating.

Fig. 5 Section through Roman road in Area A, showing pre-road pit 321

Roman road

4.5 Area A contained the best preserved section of the Roman road, with the full width being exposed over a distance of 52m, with an additional length, 2.5m wide, partially exposed at the south-western end of the area. The entire area was hand-cleaned after which three sections were carefully excavated across the road (see Fig. 8).

Section 1

4.6 Section 1 was located towards the north-eastern end of Area A and measured 11m by 2m, with a 3m by 1.5m extension to the south. The excavations revealed three main phases of road construction, as well as evidence for repairs to all three surfaces.

4.7 The first phase of road construction had been founded on a deposit of clean, reddish-brown clay (118), around 0.2m thick, which extended beyond either edge of the road itself. This material is unlike the natural subsoil in this area and is therefore likely to have been imported to the site,

though from where is unclear. The road was formed by a deposit of compacted river cobbles and gravel (117) around 0.1m thick which survived for a width of 4.3m, and had been cut by a later roadside ditch (121) along the south-eastern side. The worn surface of the road (117) was relatively well preserved, although no wheel ruts were identified. There was no surviving evidence for a contemporary ditch along the south-eastern side, although this could have been removed by later recuts, while along the north-western side there does not appear to have been a ditch present during any of the three phases.

4.8 The second phase of construction consisted of a further deposit of river-worn stone and gravel (104), sealing the earlier road surface, and with a surviving width of around 2.1m, it also being truncated by the later ditch. Three wheel ruts were preserved within the compacted and worn road surface. Although no dating evidence was recovered from the excavated section, a single Trajanic coin (see Fig. 7, Find No. 5032) was recovered from this phase at a point around 10m to the north-east, having been carefully excavated following a metal detector survey.

4.9 The third phase is represented by two deposits of stone (103 and 100), respectively up to 0.15m and 0.1m thick. Both deposits had been truncated by later activity and their original north-western edge could not be determined. Along the south-eastern side there was a single roadside ditch (121) with a later recut (107), the latter measuring 0.72m wide and 0.3m deep. Both phases of ditch were sealed beneath a spread of stone (105) that overlay a thin deposit of silt (108). The metalled deposit (105) appeared to be a deliberately laid surface, extending the width of the road. The extent of this was, however, unclear owing to an amount of intrusive redeposited material, perhaps the result of ploughing or natural erosion of the road.

Fig. 6 Area A Section 1. Phase 2 road surface 104 showing wheel ruts and the roadside ditch 107/121 associated with the final phase of road construction

Section 2

4.10 The second section across the road, located in the centre of Area A, measured 10m by 2.5m, with an extension measuring 2.5m by 2m on the south-western side. The sequence of road construction was broadly the same as in Section 1, with the first phase consisting of compacted stone (223) surviving to a width of 4.9m and founded on a deposit of clay (224). Three wheel ruts were identified in the surface of the second phase (220), which also incorporated notably larger cobbles along part of the north-western edge. The final phase consisted of a succession of stone deposits (213, 215, 211 and 202) and was again associated with a single ditch along the south-eastern side. The original ditch cut (216) was sealed by the final deposit of road make-up (202) and stratigraphically could be associated with an earlier phase of the road. Two recuts (214 and 203), however, were certainly associated with phase three and were sealed by a layer of stone (208) similar to layer 105 in Section 1.

Section 3

4.11 Section 3 was positioned at the south-western end of Area A, incorporating part of a 2006 evaluation trench, and measured 10m by 2.5m. The results confirmed the general sequence of road development observed in Sections 1 and 2. A deposit of clean clay (320) formed the base for the road, sealing the earlier pit (321). The primary road construction (309) had a surviving width of around 5m, having been truncated by later ditch cuts along its south-eastern edge. Parts of its worn surface survived, preserving two wheel ruts. The second phase (318), which was around 3.4m wide, had a fairly well-preserved, worn surface, within which four wheel ruts were evident. As elsewhere, the deposits forming the final phase (315, 314, 306 and 305) had been truncated by later activity but were associated with a single roadside ditch (313) with one recut (310) and no surviving evidence for any ditch associated with the earlier phases. A late deposit of stone (307), similar to contexts 105 and 208 in Sections 1 and 2, sealed the inner edge of the ditch, but may be contemporary with the recut ditch (310).

Post-medieval and modern

4.12 A former field boundary ran along the crest of the road with differential preservation of the road apparent to either side, suggesting differing land use. Towards the north-eastern end of Area A removal of the turf revealed a brick floor or yard area on the north-western side of the boundary which had been constructed on a slight terrace cut into the upper road surface on its north-west side. The date and function of the surface is not known. More recent activity was evidenced by a row of large, irregular pits cutting through the south-eastern edge of the road which had been infilled with modern rubbish. A number of other features of post-medieval or modern date were also noted, although none appeared to be of any significance.

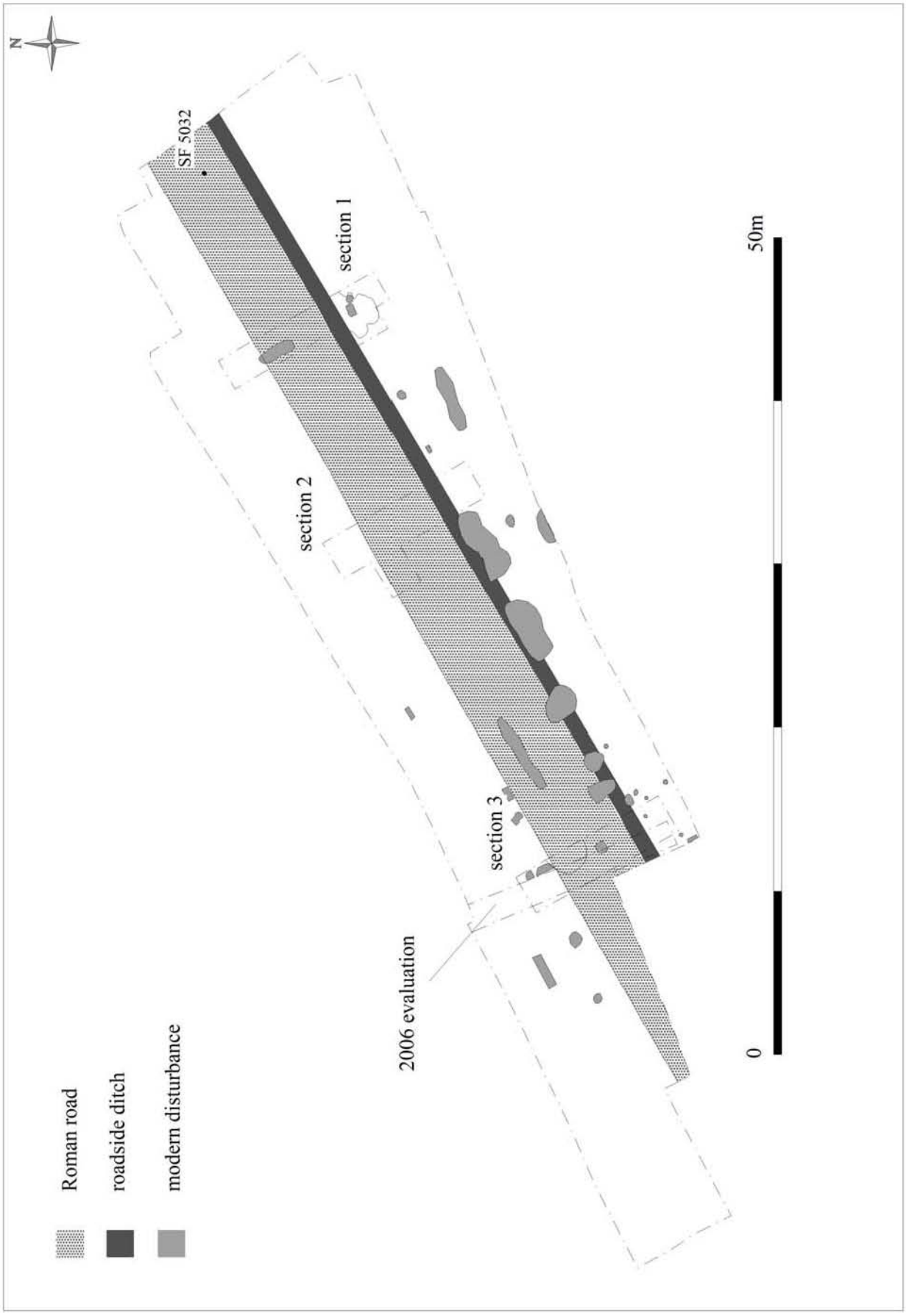

Fig. 7 Area A overall plan

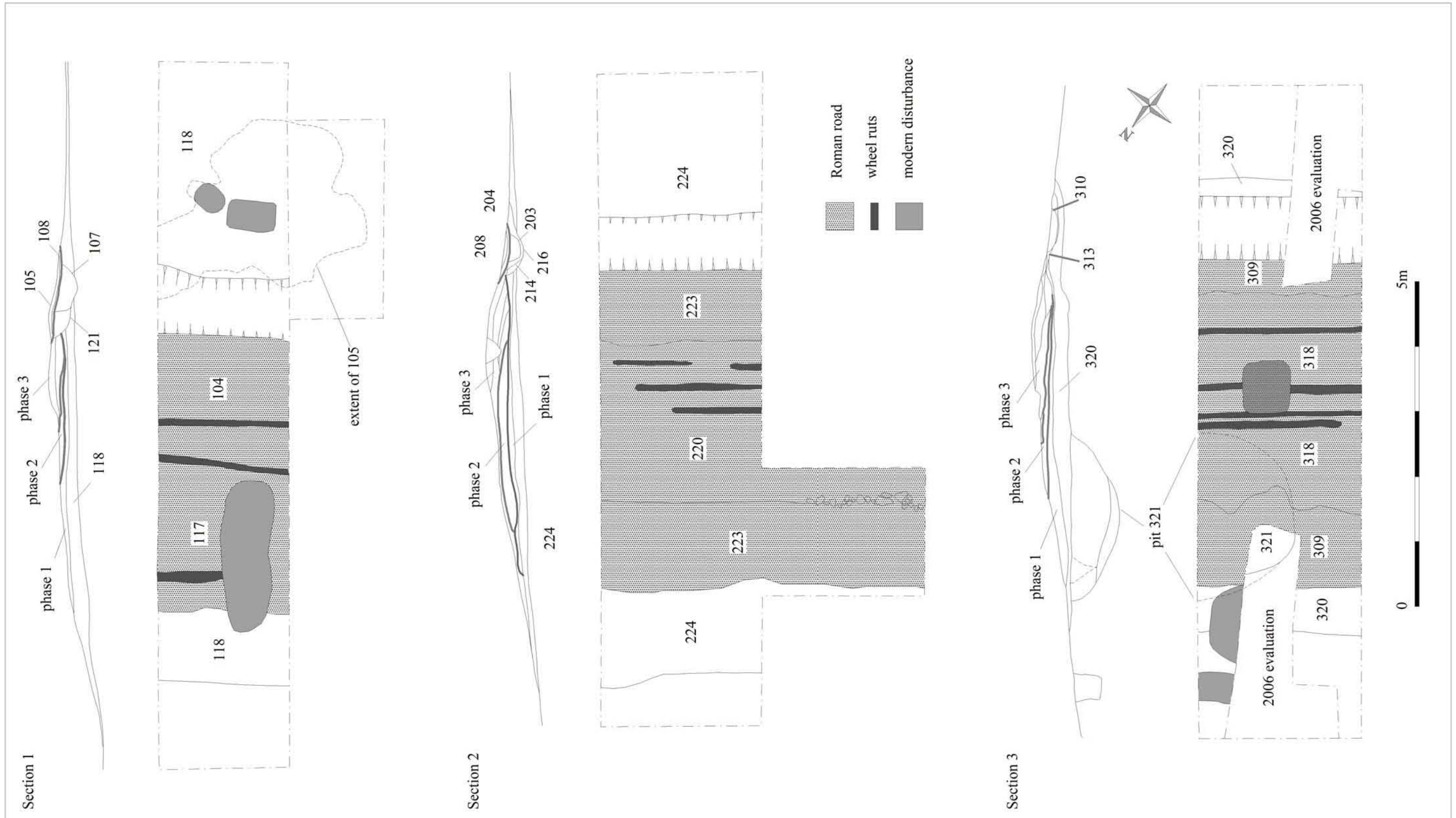

Fig. 8 Area A road sections 1-3

Area B

4.13 Area B, at the south-western end of the development area, measured 73m in length and ranged from 8.5m to 12m in width (850m^2). Parts of this area had been heavily disturbed by the buildings of the Council Depot which formerly occupied the site.

Roman road

4.14 At this point much of the Roman road lay outside and to the west of the development boundary and it was not possible to obtain a full profile or section across it. However, following hand cleaning of the whole area several sections were excavated in order to investigate the relationship between the road and a series of deposits that had accumulated along its south-eastern side. Although no further detail enhanced our understanding of the road construction over and above that produced in Area A, there were some traces for roadside activity, possibly relating to the original construction.

4.15 The excavations revealed that the clay base on which the road was founded extended beyond the south-eastern edge of the road for 4-5m. This was sealed by an intermittent spread of river cobbles (1028, 1045, 1047 and 1048), forming the base for a rough stone surface (1047) alongside the road. The purpose of the surface is uncertain and no dating evidence was recovered, although it is considered that it was broadly contemporary with the first phase of road construction, and had in fact been cut by the roadside ditch (1033). The ditch, which appeared to be a single event with no later detectable re-cut, was constructed during the latter part of the second phase of road building.

Fig. 9 Stone spread 1047 in Area B showing relationship with the roadside ditch 1033

Post-medieval and modern

4.16 With the exception of the relict field boundary ditch (1060) cut along the crest of the Roman road, there was no evidence for any post-medieval activity within the area and the numerous modern features that were visible all appeared to be associated with the former Council buildings and yard.

Undated features

4.17 Towards the south-western end of Area B a metalled surface (1015) was composed of river cobbles (Fig. 10). The surface had been disturbed by later activity and it was not possible to

determine its original extent, although the surviving remains displayed a concentration of stone in a roughly rectangular area that was orientated north-west to south-east, measuring approximately 12m long and 8m wide. It is possible that this was contemporary with the other stone spreads further to the north-east, although the only stratigraphical link is that they were all sealed beneath the same deposit of hill wash. The function of the surface is unknown, and although it could be associated with a building the excavation produced no evidence for any associated structure. The only dating evidence is provided by a single sherd of unglazed medieval cooking pot, from a fine silt (1014) which sealed the stone surface.

Fig. 10 Area B showing stone spread 1015

4.18 An area of burning (1027) was identified at the south-western end of the excavation, which sealed three small post- or stakeholes (1056, 1057 and 1058). This activity extended beyond the limits of the excavation and its extent and function are therefore unknown, although one possibility is that the stakeholes are part of a wooden fence that was burnt *in situ* (Fig. 11).

Fig. 11 Area of burning 1027 showing the remains of either burnt posts or stake-holes.

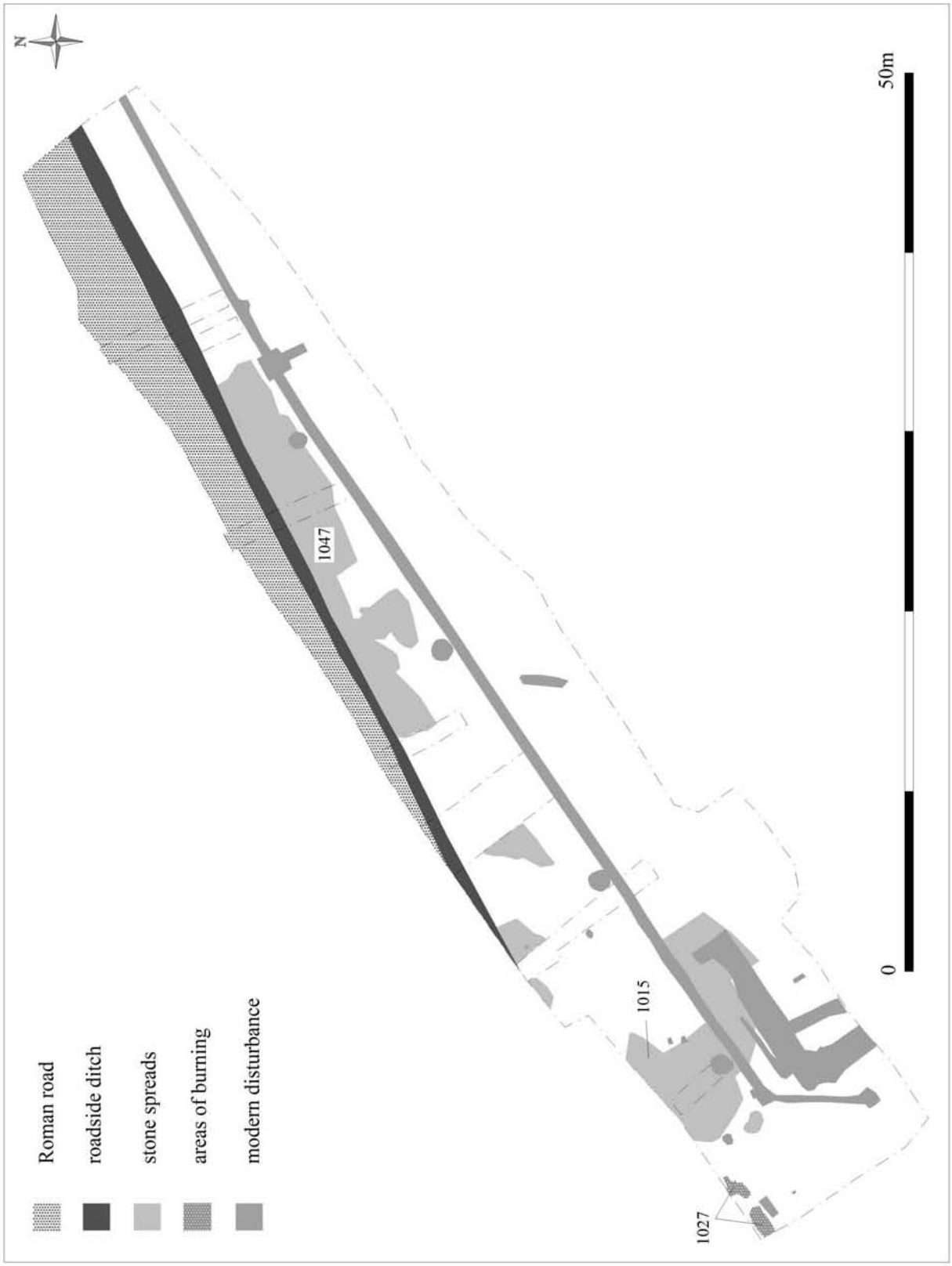

Fig. 12 Area B overall plan

Area C

4.19 Area C measured 103m in length and varied between 9m to 14.5m in width (1265m^2), lying at the north-eastern end of the development site in an area formerly occupied by a bus depot. The area had been heavily disturbed by stanchions and services associated with the bus depot and a significant part of the area had also been contaminated, restricting the areas available for excavation.

Roman road

4.20 The Roman road was identified along the entire length of the excavated area, although it had been disturbed to such an extent by 20th-century activity that only limited information could be retrieved. The full width of the road was investigated in one section (Fig. 14, A-A), and even here the south-eastern side was heavily disturbed. Consequently, the published section (Fig. 14) has been compiled using the results from a second, partial section of the road (B-B) further to the south-west, in an area which was less subject to disturbance.

4.21 The general sequence of road construction appeared to be the same as that in Area A, with three main phases of activity. However, in Area C there was evidence for a second parallel roadside ditch along the south-eastern side with around 2m between the two. The outer ditch was not continuous along the entire length of the road, its terminus being just south-west of the section B-B. Unfortunately, there was no surviving stratigraphy to infer a relationship either between the ditches, or with a particular phase of construction of the road, and unlike the inner ditch excavated in Area A there was no evidence of a later recut. In addition, there was also some evidence to suggest a possible ditch on the north-western side of the road, although this was only seen in a small excavated section and was not readily apparent to the side of section A-A.

Fig. 13 Area C showing the extent of surviving Roman road with two ditches to the right.

Post-medieval and modern

4.22 The remains of the former bus depot were largely removed during the site clearance operations, although a compacted stone surface was noted beneath the concrete floor of the building which is likely to be the floor of the original corrugated iron shed dating from the First World War.

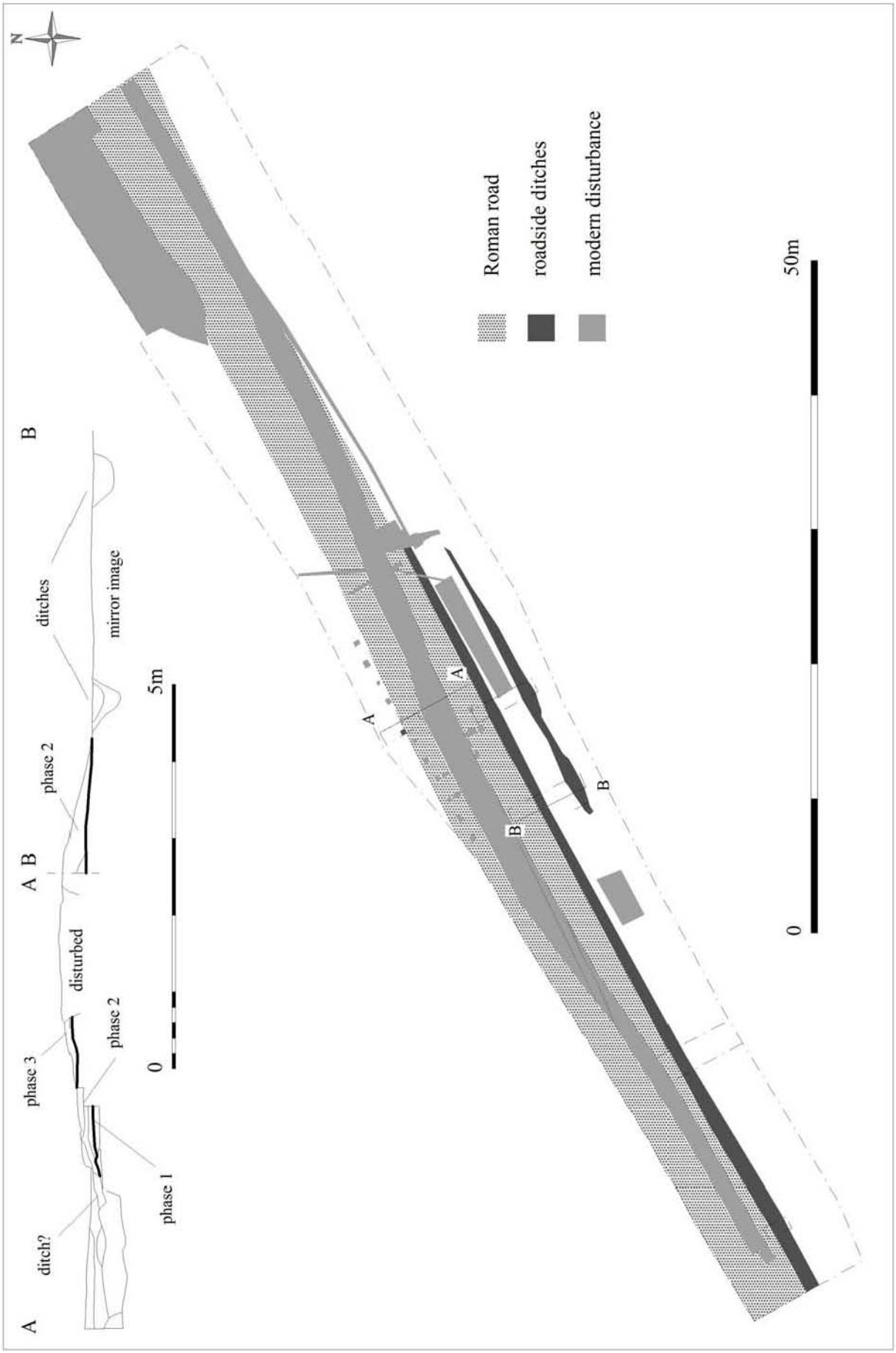

Fig. 14 Area C overall plan and road section

5 WATCHING BRIEF

5.1 After the completion of the excavation a general watching brief was maintained during the construction phase groundworks. The ground level across most of the site had been raised with the deposition of material imported in the early stages of construction and the watching brief was therefore targeted at specific groundworks where these were thought to be of sufficient depth to impact on undisturbed levels. Principally, these included the stanchion pits for the new supermarket, the foundation for a retaining wall along the new access road, and excavations for two large underground tanks associated with surface water drainage. The monitoring of these works revealed no archaeologically significant features, deposits or artefacts.

6 FINDS

6.1 Artefacts from the excavated areas were generally very sparse, with only two stratified iron finds associated with the latter phase of the Roman road being recovered from Area B and a single Roman coin from the second phase of the road in Area A. However, a number of bronze and lead objects were recovered from the Roman road in Area C through the use of a metal detector in areas that were not subject to total excavation. Of these, only two are obviously Roman while most are post-medieval in date. A single sherd of possible Roman pottery was recovered, although this came from a post-Roman deposit sealing the cobbled surface at the south-western end of the site in Area B.

Copper alloy

6.2 Coin identified by Mark Walters. Find 5032, context 104 (make-up for second phase road). A brass dupondius of Domitian (81-96 AD) or Trajan (98-117 AD), but probably the latter. The obverse legend in the latter case is most likely to be IMP CAES TRAIAN AVG GERM, or more rarely IMP CAES TRAIAN AVG GER DAC PP REST. Surface wear to the highlights on the obverse is minimal and the coin was probably not in circulation for long before it was lost. The design on the reverse is unclear, although this and more detail of the obverse would become clearer following conservation. This may well be the first stratified Roman coin to be recovered from a Roman road in Wales.

Fig. 12 Brass dupondius of Domitian (81-96 AD) or Trajan (98-117 AD)

6.3 Brooch, identified by Janet Webster. Find 5033, unstratified. The lower end of a brooch probably dating to the late 1st or early 2nd century. There are lines of zig-zag mouldings to either side of a rib running down the centre of the bow, which terminates in a foot knob. Part of the

catch plate survives, and appears to have a circular piercing which might imply an earlier rather than a later origin within that date range.

Fig. 13 The bronze brooch

6.4 Very dense lump, possibly slag. Find no. 5022, context 2036. Upper road layer (Area C).

Iron

6.5 Two iron objects were recovered from layers of stone within the Roman road in Area B (Find no 5009, context 1037, and Find no 5018, context 1036). Both require x-ray and possibly investigative cleaning by a trained conservator before an identification is possible.

7 PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL POTENTIAL by Dr Fiona Grant

7.1 The author was asked to advise on an environmental sampling strategy as part of the excavation, and two visits were made to the site while the excavation was in progress. Of particular interest was the potential of the site to provide information on the environmental setting and vegetational changes associated with the construction and use of the road, and any associated activity.

7.2 Although the extraction of a monolith from the road makeup had been considered, investigation demonstrated that the material was unsuitable for this method of sampling. The clay base of the earliest phase of road construction was seen to be rich in charcoal, although as the material is believed to have been imported any environmental information that it might provide could not be confidently associated with the Roman activity on site. A programme of bulk sampling was recommended for the large pit sealed beneath the earliest phase of the road.

7.3 At the south-eastern end of the excavation a spread of charcoal and burnt daub, associated with possible structural remains, provided the most promising deposits. As a consequence, samples were retained in order to allow for potential species identification, provide radiocarbon dating material, and also allow the extraction of other possible charred plant remains.

7.4 During one of the site visits two small sub-samples from the fills of the roadside ditch (106 and 209) were wet-sieved and floated. A rapid examination revealed a small quantity of macroscopic wood charcoal fragments in both samples, as well as preserved, uncharred seeds from context 106.

Recommendations

7.5 A small number of contexts have been identified which have sufficient potential to warrant further study, although no pollen analysis is recommended owing to the unsuitability of the material for pollen preservation:

- Spread of charcoal-rich material in Area B: an assessment of this material would allow identification of the possible presence of other charred material in addition to the observed quantities of wood charcoal.

- Ditch fills: an assessment of a small selection of the samples extracted from the ditch fills would determine if further work was warranted. Organic preservation of seeds and wood charcoal was noted, but it is possible that the quantity is too small to provide any meaningful results.

- Pre-road pit 321: the samples should be assessed for environmental potential.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 The excavations uncovered a significantly long section of the Roman road between the forts at Caersws and Forden Gaer. In all around 210m of road were revealed, making this one of the longest sections of Roman road to have been excavated in Wales.

The Roman road

8.2 The excavations identified three phases of road construction, although none can be closely dated owing to the general scarcity of finds, a situation only to be expected in the examination of a long linear feature such as a road. Around 210m of Roman road were uncovered during the excavations, although the full width was not evident in the southernmost area where the road disappeared beneath the development boundary. Nine sections were excavated by hand across the road, three within each excavated area together with additional sections through the roadside ditches and sondages through the agger material, all of which contributed to the elucidation of the basic sequence of construction.

Phase 1

8.3 The earliest phase was constructed on a base of imported pinkish-red clay up to 0.2m thick. This deposit was unlike the local yellowish-grey clay subsoil, which has a stony composition. The road itself was constructed of river-worn stones which appear to have been deposited without any obvious grading or selection to form a metalled surface around 4.5m in width and up to 0.1m thick. There was no surviving evidence for a roadside ditch associated with this phase along the south-eastern side of the road owing to the presence of one or more ditches belonging to later phases. In Area C a second, parallel ditch was revealed 2m further away from the road, although with no stratigraphical link to the overall phasing. Around 23m of the second ditch was identified, with a butt-end at the south-western extent, and no indication of a continuation along the remaining sections of road. There was no conclusive evidence to suggest that a roadside ditch ever existed along the north-western side of the road during any of the three phases, although the presence of a shallow linear feature was suggested by the results from one section excavated in Area C.

Phase 2

8.4 The second level of road metalling was laid directly onto the surface of the first, and formed of graded river gravel which was compacted to form a solid surface. Within this a number of wheel ruts were identified. A south-eastern roadside ditch is suggested by evidence from Area A, although again there seems to have been no corresponding ditch on the north-western side. A Roman coin was found within the make-up for the second phase, which has been provisionally identified as a bronze dupondious, probably of the Emperor Trajan (98-117 AD).

Phase 3

8.5 The final phase saw further deposits of river stone laid on top of the Phase 2 surface. Evidence from the sections excavated in Area A indicate the presence of a south-eastern roadside ditch which was later recut before being sealed beneath a layer of stone that possibly extended the metalled surface to around 6m.

Roadside activity

8.6 While there was some evidence for roadside activity associated with the first phase of road construction, in the form of an intermittent stone spread, it seems likely that a broad strip on either side of the Roman road remained relatively sterile throughout its use, a feature also noted along other Roman roads.

Undated features

8.7 The general lack of stratigraphy across much of the excavated area, together with a sparsity of artefacts, has meant that a number of features and deposits cannot be attributed to a particular period or phase of road construction. The south-western end of the excavation in particular uncovered a series of features indicative of one or more phases of activity, although it was not possible to relate any to the Roman road as at this point it lay beyond the limit of excavation. A rough stone surface (1015) extended over an area of around 12m by 8m. Although there were no clear edges, the surviving extent and in particular a more dense concentration of stone, gave the impression that this was aligned south-east to north-west. A small area of *in situ* burning was identified nearby, the pattern of which might suggest the destruction of a boundary feature, possibly a wattle fence. Unfortunately, there is no evidence to relate these features to each other, or to the Roman road, though they were all sealed by the same deposit of hillwash that sealed both the Roman road and the associated ditches.

Post-medieval and modern

8.8 Each of the excavated areas contained evidence of extensive recent activity in the form of pits, postholes, drains and other service trenches, which collectively had a significant impact on the preservation of the Roman road, particularly in Area C. Modern activity in Area A is likely to be entirely associated with the former Council Depot, while in Area B the activity resulted from the presence of the former Smithfield, and included a series of large pits along the south-eastern edge of the Roman road. In Area C there was evidence for at least two phases of modern activity, comprising stanchion pits, postholes and service trenches associated with the former bus depot. In addition, there was also a significant amount of pollution, the source of which has yet to be identified, which rendered some areas of the site unworkable.

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Maps

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1798 Plan of Newtown and surrounding area (NLW/Glansevern 147/now Folio 89)

1800 (circa) Kedewen Cottages and Lands alotted to the Lord on the enclosure of Commons in that manor. (NLW/Powis Castle M22).

1820 Map of Farms, Tenements and Lands in the Parishes of Newtown, Llanllwrchaiarn, etc, belonging to David Pugh Esq By J Lloyd, Land Surveyor, Broseley, Salop There is a partial schedule only. (NLW/Harrison Volume 6).

1821 Map of Lands in Several Parishes of Llanllwrchaiarn, Newtown etc, the property of D Pugh Esq (NLW/Harrison Deposit 85). Almost certainly be J Lloyd.

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