CPAT Report No 1092

Hindwell Roman fort, Walton, Powys

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS 2010-11

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

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Report for Cadw

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Cover photo: Excavation of Trench 9 (CPAT 3202-0030)

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In November 2010 and February 2011 the Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) carried out investigations in the environs of the Roman fort at Hindwell Farm, Walton, Powys. The work was designed to determine the extent and possible nature of the *vicus* around the fort and methods utilised included both geophysics and excavation. Financial assistance was granted by Cadw.

1.2 The work herein described utilised similar methods to those used in the investigation of the *vicus* at Brecon Gaer in 2009 and 2010 (Hankinson 2009; Hankinson 2010), where geophysics of the area around the fort was combined with small-scale trial excavations to determine whether any evidence of settlement was present. A large part of the fort at Hindwell had already been subject to geophysical survey as part of the SEPAH project in 1998 (Gibson 1999), but there were specific areas that had not been covered by that work and it was proposed that these gaps be examined by further targetted geophysics to provide a more complete picture.

1.3 The areas where geophysics was needed lay on the east and south sides of the fort, and a total of approximately 2.83ha in these localities was added to the area surveyed in 1998. The 1998 and 2010 survey results were then combined to locate areas suitable areas for test pitting, which provided a rapid method of assessing the potential spread of the civilian settlement, while minimising the impact of the work on the archaeological resource. A small number of trenches were positioned in places where the geophysical response had been poor in order to ensure that the results had not been influenced by variations in the magnetic nature of the soils around the fort.

1.4 In addition to the small-scale work, four larger trenches were excavated by machine in the field to the south of the fort, to assess anomalies revealed by the geophysics. Only two of these were integral elements of this Roman *vicus* project, the two others being elements of the concurrent prehistoric funerary and ritual monument follow up programme funded by Cadw. The results from the latter two are considered in a separate report (Jones 2011), though, where relevant to the *vicus* project, they are alluded to below.

2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The fort is centred at NGR SO 2579 6056, only 700m to the north of the small settlement of Walton which lies on the southern side of the eponymous basin, well-known for its extensive evidence of prehistoric funerary and ritual activity. The fort lies at an elevation of about 190m OD and the ground locally is relatively level, rising gradually only to the north-east, where it ascends a small hill to reach a maximum of 216m OD about 500m distant from the fort. The Walton Basin as a whole is drained by a series of small watercourses, primarily the Summergil/Hindwell and Knobley Brooks which combine to flow east-north-east as the Hindwell Brook towards a confluence with the River Lugg near Presteigne, some 10km distant. Part of the area of the fort is occupied by Hindwell farm house and its associated agricultural buildings, while the remainder falls within pasture fields, although arable agriculture is present in much of the surrounding area.

2.2 The soils of the locality are deep, well-drained, fine loamy soils belonging to the East Keswick 1 Soil Association (1983 Soil Survey map and legend). The underlying rocks belong to the Wenlock Series of the Silurian period (1994 Geological Survey map), but these are probably covered by a significant depth of glacial drift in the immediate locality.

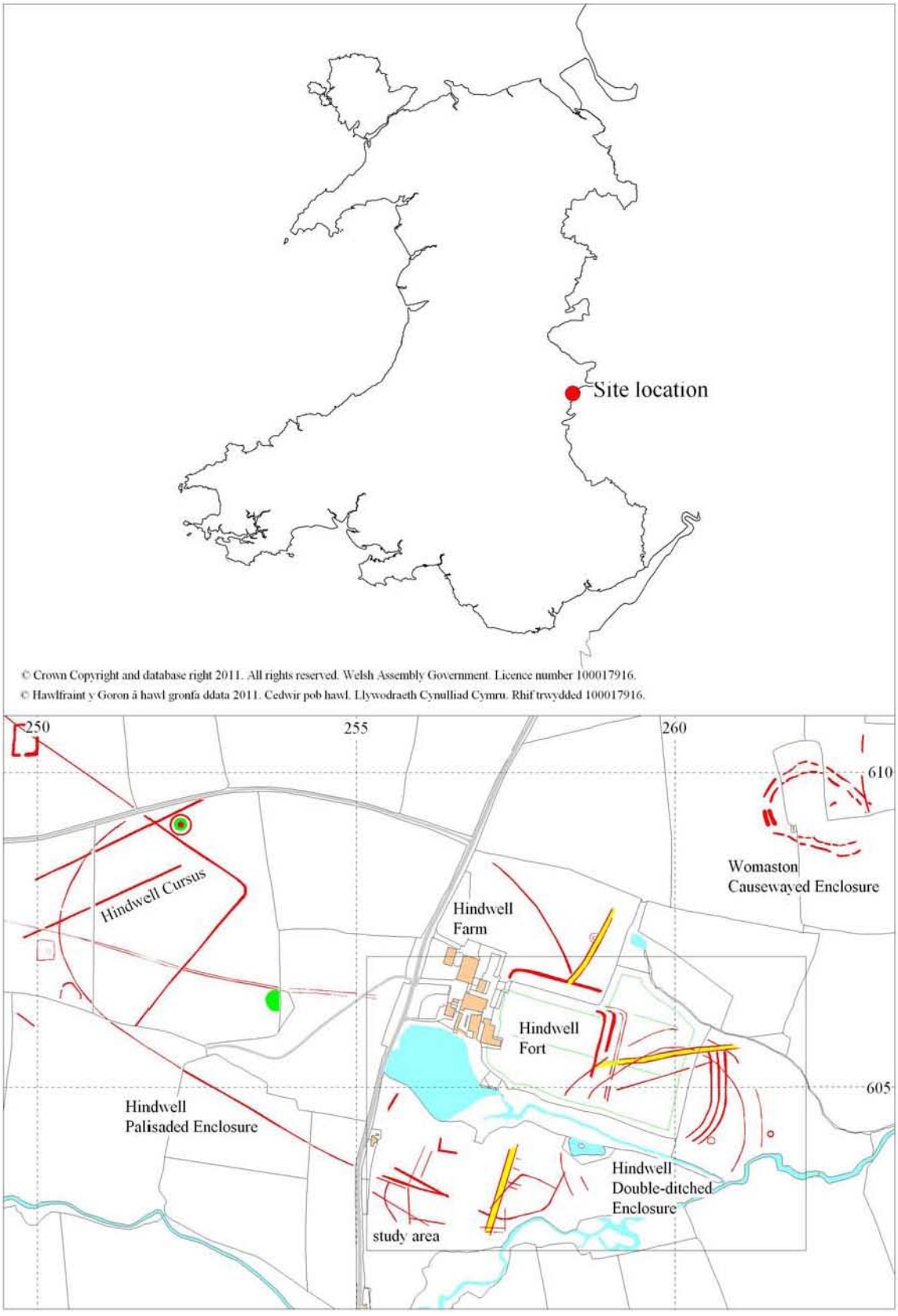

Fig. 1 Location of the Hindwell study area and features of interest

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND (by R J Silvester)

3.1 The fort is a relatively recent discovery, resulting from aerial reconnaissance by Professor J. K. St Joseph in 1973, which provided a context for the Roman pottery and other diagnostic material that had been identified during works at Hindwell Farm in 1956 and 1961. Low earthworks representing the defences were visible in 1973 and subsequent small-scale excavations were carried out in 1976, revealing various details regarding the defences. The fort earthworks were surveyed in 1992, and six years later extensive magnetometry provided a detailed picture of both the fort and its *vicus*. There has not, however, been any major excavation on the site.

3.2 The precise dimensions of the fort cannot be gauged, because of uncertainties over the line of the defences on the west and south, but are around 212m north-west/south-east by 181m, enclosing an area of *c.*1.93 ha. Knowledge of the internal layout of the fort and the activity around it is due almost entirely to the caesium-vapour magnetometry that was carried out in 1998: the defences are complex with an outer, irregularly shaped ditch, two narrower ditches (or palisade slots) backed by a rampart, and inside it an intramural road, together indicating two phases of construction. Field survey implies the presence of three ditches in the same area, but it is the broad and irregular outer ditch from the geophysics that implies an earlier phase, together with a ditch re-cut examined in 1976. A road enters the east gate of the fort at an angle, overlying the outermost defensive ditch, and continues as the *via principalis*, disappearing beneath the modern farm complex to re-emerge further west beyond the fort. The *via praetoria* is also evident, as is *via decumana* and the road that runs from it beyond the north gate. The interior is dense with magnetic anomalies, implying a regular layout of timber buildings, many destroyed by fire, but the only one that can be convincingly discerned is the headquarters building (*principia)* with its courtyard.

3.3 Present knowledge suggests that the *vicus* is focused on the road leading to the east gate, with indications of buildings and ancillary activity spreading out for about 30m on either side of the road and defined by some form of boundary feature which appears on the geophysics. It continues for about 160m beyond the fort defences. Finds made in the 1950s about 120m to the south of the fort included tile and hypocaust bricks and signal the presence of a bath-house close to the stream. Two Samian sherds from this excavation and from the interior of the fort imply Flavian occupation, probably beyond AD 80, while other finds, particularly from the 1976 excavation argue for the fort's establishment in the Neronian period between AD 55-65.

3.4 In addition to the main fort, there is at least one, and perhaps two, marching camps lying immediately to the west of the fort. A linear arrangement of three rectangular cropmark enclosures, less than one kilometre to the south, could represent practice camps.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 The primary aim of the investigations was to assess the extent of any potential *vicus* development in the fields on the south and east sides of the fort, whilst keeping ground disturbance down to acceptable levels. To this end, the methodology adopted followed that utilised at Brecon Gaer, to allow the limits of Roman activity to be gauged without recourse to large-scale area excavation. The initial work comprised a programme of geophysics designed to both fill in gaps that had been left in the 1998 geophysics on the east side of the fort and to examine its south side for anomalies which might suggest further *vicus* development in that direction. The results from 1998 had suggested that a good magnetic response could be obtained from the local soils.

4.2 To elucidate further the nature of the *vicus*, a series of small trenches or sondages (each approximately 1m square) were cut at intervals across the field to the south of the fort in order to identify the presence or absence of layers and/or features of Roman origin. To all intents and purposes the approach is similar to that adopted for developer-funded evaluations where the emphasis is on minimal disturbance to the archaeology. The positions chosen for the trenches were guided by a number of factors, one of which was the geophysics results, both from 1998 and that carried out during the programme herein described. The longer trenches were specifically sited to assess the nature of anomalies identified by geophysics. Auger sampling was only used in one place, to determine the depth of a feature revealed in Trench 9 and establish the nature of its fill

4.3 In the case of each small trench, the topsoil and ploughsoil were removed by hand down to the first significant archaeological horizon, or the natural subsoil if no archaeological horizon was identified. The resulting surface was cleaned and examined to assess its potential, and if appropriate a small amount of investigation was then carried out to elucidate the deposits and recover material which could assist in their dating, while having a minimal impact on their integrity. With regard to trenches of this size, there always needs to be some caution in making judgements about the nature of the features and deposits encountered, as the restricted view of the features makes interpretation problematical. The interpretations given in Section 6 of this report must therefore necessarily be provisional. Again, it must be emphasised that the aim of the work was to define the extent of the *vicus*, rather than investigate its nature and dating.

4.4 In the case of the larger trenches, the topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed by machine down to the first archaeologically significant horizon, or the natural subsoil if no such horizon was identified.

4.5 Each trench was located by EDM survey, thus establishing the precise position of each in relation to the geophysics results and the local field boundaries, the accuracy of which is qualified only by the scale of the digital mapping available. This aside, it should be possible to relocate any trench in the future from the archived data. Ten-figure national grid references for these have been created from the digital data.

5 GEOPHYSICS

5.1 The geophysics element of the survey used a fluxgate gradiometer and the methodology employed was based on that used in the surveys of defended enclosures in Montgomeryshire (see Hankinson and Silvester 2006; Hankinson 2007) which in turn was developed from that used by the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust for their survey of Roman fort environs (Silvester, Hopewell and Grant 2005).

5.2 A total of five individual areas were surveyed, using a series of grids each measuring 20m by 20m, with intervals between the traverses in the grid of one metre. The speed of each traverse was controlled such that readings were taken every 0.5m, thereby giving a total number of 800 readings per 400m^2 grid. Prior to the commencement of each geophysical survey, the survey grids were laid out and then located in relation to nearby field boundaries by total station surveying. The survey was then located against the Ordnance Survey National Grid as a best fit, which enabled the co-ordinates of fixed points on the survey grid to be determined. Of the following figures, Fig 2 shows the greyscale plot of the results and Fig 3 the interpretation.

Fig. 2 Areas of geophysical survey carried out in 1998 and 2010

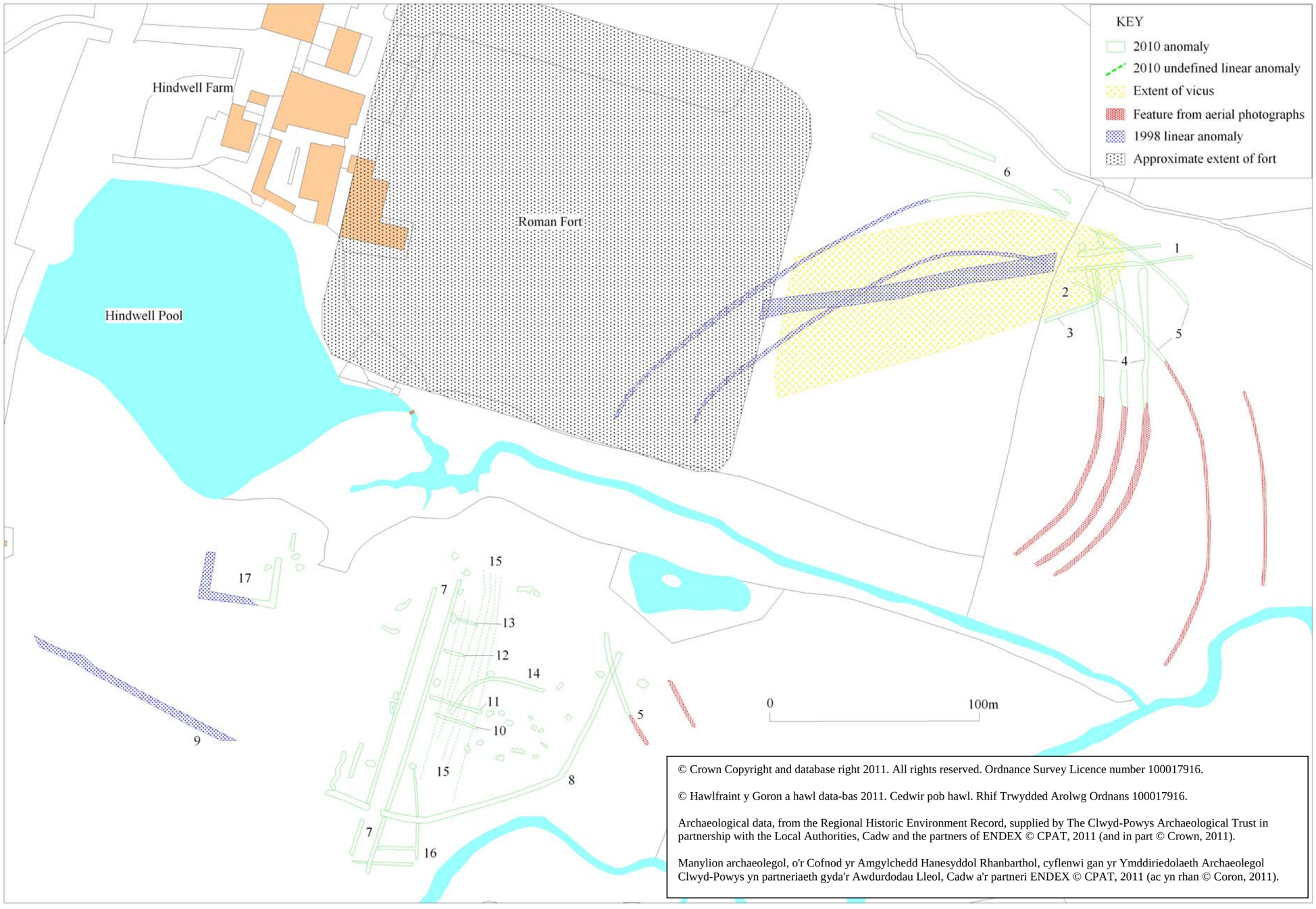

Fig. 3 Interpretation of the geophysical survey results from 1998 and 2010

5.3 The geophysics results have been combined with those produced by Dr H Becker for the SEPAH project in 1998 and are presented in greyscale format, along with an interpretation drawing. The greyscale plot produces a plan view of the survey and allows subtle changes in the data to be displayed. Trace plots have been eschewed because they appeared to add little to the overall impression and understanding of the sites surveyed. It would, however, still be possible to produce such plots from the archived data if these were required at any stage in the future.

5.4 ***Assessment of the results***

5.4.1 Five discrete areas were examined, three on the east side of the fort totalling 1.1ha, and two on the south side of the fort covering 1.73ha. These are depicted on Fig 2, which also includes the results from 1998. A general interpretation of the results is presented on Fig 3 and described below. To alleviate some of the confusion created by the duplication of numbers it should be noted that the text refers to Areas (1-5) and geophysical anomalies/features (1-17),

5.4.2 The area furthest to the east (Area 1) was the first to be surveyed, to determine whether the *vicus* to the east of the fort extended across the small stream which flows obliquely across the course of the Roman road identified in 1998. No convincing evidence of anomalies that were archaeological in character was revealed in this area. The road alignment crossed a part of the field to which access was not possible with the geophysics equipment.

5.4.3 Survey Area 2 was located on the opposite side of the stream and this, in contrast, provided evidence of a range of features. For this programme, the most significant features comprised a further section of the Roman road (1) and a continuation of the *vicus* (2), including the ditch (3) which appears to define its south side. From the results it seems that the occupied area extended for some 170m beyond the east gate of the fort, with a maximum width of about 70m. The metalled surface of the road appears to be about 6m in width, with flanking ditches each 2m wide; a short section was also visible as a raised earthwork where it met the rather wetter ground near the small stream.

5.4.4 In addition to features related to the *vicus*, Area 2 revealed traces of two potential enclosures. The most significant of the anomalies (4) for the vicus project is represented by three, curving, parallel ditches on a north/south alignment which seemed to respect the Roman road. The ditches appeared to be between 2m and 3.5m wide and were approximately 10m apart. A second enclosure (5) represented two, curving, parallel ditches, each 2m wide and spaced about 25m apart. Subsequent examination of aerial photographic sources provided by Dr T Driver of RCAHMW showed that the triple-ditched feature extended for a length of at least 180m across the field, and corroborated the double-ditched enclosure which measured 320m east/west by at least 285m north/south.

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5.4.5 Area 3 was located in the north-east corner of the field to the west of Area 2, and was placed to fill a gap in the geophysics carried out in 1998. It provided a northern limit to the *vicus* activity and also confirmed the link between the outer ditch of the double-ditched enclosure (5) as plotted in 1998 and its discovery in the results from Area 2. Two possible ditches (6) were also noted running west-north-west/east-south-east, each about 1.5m wide and 9m apart. These may be continuations of the central and inner ditches of the triple-ditched feature recorded in the adjoining field although there are slight discrepancies in the size of the anomalies compared to what might have been expected.

5.4.6 On the south side of the fort, Area 4 was placed to attempt to identify the road which exited the fort via the south gate and any evidence for associated settlement alongside it. A variety of features were revealed by the survey, including the road (7) which proved to be approximately 8m wide, with flanking ditches 1.5m in width. The eastern edge of the survey included a further section of the outer ditch of the double-ditched enclosure (5),

again 2m in width. The ditch appeared to have been cut by a later enclosure ditch (8), measuring about 3m wide and running to the south-south-west, then west-south-west and finally west-north-west for a total of approximately 180m, crossing and partially respecting the Roman road in the process. The ditch stopped at the edge of an old stream channel for the Summergil Brook which appears to have formerly linked up with the Hindwell Brook just to the south of the fort, but the 1990s survey shows a very similar feature (9) continuing across the field to the west-north-west for at least a further 100m.

5.4.7 On the east side of the Roman road in Area 4, a number of linear features (10-13), probably ditches, were revealed running at right-angles to the road, from south to north these were respectively 22m, 26m, 11m and 10m in length. It is possible that these represent attempts to divide up this patch of land for some form of settlement, but this remains to be proven. A curved feature (14), approximately 50m long was also evident in this area, as were a seemingly randomly placed range of pits, none of which seemed to provide coherent evidence of settlement structures. A group of linear marks (15) just to the east of the road could represent later ploughing activity but, if so, it is interesting that they are broadly parallel with the Roman road. On the west side of the road there were various linear features, none of which could be readily comprehended, perhaps due to the possibility that they had been truncated by the action of the Summergil Brook in its old channel. The only other feature (16) noted in Area 4 comprised two parallel east/west aligned ditches, respectively 18m and 30m long, linked to a north/south aligned ditch, 45m long, at their eastern ends; its nature and origin remain unclear.

5.4.8 Area 5 was located just to the south of the Hindwell Pool and revealed a possible return for the sub-rectangular feature (17) first revealed in the 1990s geophysics. It is uncertain whether this represents the eastern side of a structure as the old river channel of the Summergil Brook prevented further survey to the east and there was no trace of a northern side, either in the 1990s results or the survey described here. The nature of the feature therefore remains unclear.

6 EXCAVATIONS

6.1 A total of twelve trenches were excavated in the area to the south of the fort, eight of which were small hand-dug trial pits (Nos 1 to 8 on Fig 4). The remaining four trenches (Nos 9 to 12) were dug in conjunction with work carried out under the prehistoric funerary and ritual monuments programme; these were excavated initially by machine down to any significant archaeological layers or features, with the remainder of the work being carried out by hand. In the following text, trenches 1 to 10 are fully described, as the features there appeared to be exclusively of Roman date. Only those features which are of obvious Roman origin are described in trenches 11 and 12, as these are dealt with in more detail in the relevant report on the prehistoric funerary and ritual monuments programme (Jones 2011).

6.2 Each trench is considered separately in the descriptive text which follows, with the numbers in brackets in this section referring to the context descriptions given to individual layers or features within the site archive. Relatively little artefactual material of Roman origin was recovered, which has implications for the potential presence of a *vicus* on this side of the fort, but some evidence of Roman activity was nevertheless recorded.

Fig. 4: Location of excavation trenches in relation to the geophysics

6.3 *Trench 1* (NGR SO 25691 60284; 1.1m north-east/south-west by 1.1m north-west/south-east)

6.3.1 The trench was placed on the west side of the Roman road exiting the fort to the south-south-west, to assess the potential for Roman deposits outside the enclosure (Nos 8 and 9 on Fig 3) revealed by geophysics.

6.3.2 The natural, stony orange to yellowish, silt subsoil (05) was present at a depth of 0.40m, where it appeared in a 0.4m-wide sondage cut through the overlying deposits of small pebbles and angular stones in a grey-brown silt matrix (04), 0.15m thick. A single fragment of brick, possibly Roman, was found in layer 04, but it was quite abraded so probably not in-situ. Layer 04 was overlain by a deposit of brownish-yellow clay silt (03), up to 0.10m thick, in which a single, undiagnostic, nail was found. The uppermost layers in the trench were a thin band of pebbles/gravel in a grey-brown silt matrix (02), up to 0.05m thick, and the surface layer of soft grey-brown silt (01), 0.10m thick, which forms the topsoil. No features were observed.

Plate 1: Trench 1, sondage through layer 04 to the natural subsoil (05), from south-west (photo CPAT 3202-0018)

6.4 *Trench 2* (NGR SO 25703 60315; 1.2m north-north-east/south-south-west by 1.2m west-north-west/east-south-east)

Plate 2: Trench 2 after excavation, from south-south-west (photo CPAT 3202-0020)

6.4.1 The natural subsoil (13) in this trench was the same as that encountered in Trench 1 (layer 05), and was here cut by a gully (09), 0.28m deep and at least 0.6m wide, running north-

north-east/south-south-west and filled with an initial deposit of light grey silty clay (11) up to 0.16m thick, above which the fill comprised mid brown silty clay (10), up to 0.20m thick. Layers 11 and 12 both contained finds of probable Roman origin. On the west side of the gully, a layer of redeposited orange clay silt and pinkish clay (12) was identified on the surface of the natural subsoil, perhaps representing trampling alongside the gully.

6.4.2 The probable Roman gully fills were overlain by a deposit of yellowish-brown clay silt (08), up to 0.12m thick, itself overlain by a deposit of grey-brown silty clay (07), up to 0.16m thick, and the local topsoil (06) of greyish-brown silt, here up to 0.11m in thickness.

6.5 *Trench 3* (NGR SO 25728 60313; 1.1m north-north-east/south-south-west by 1.1m west-north-west/east-south-east)

6.5.1 The natural, stony orange to yellowish, silt subsoil (18) was present at a depth of 0.37m, and was overlain by a thin band of grey-brown mixed silt/clay (17), up to 0.01m thick. These deposits were sealed by successive layers of yellowish-brown clay silt (16), up to 0.07m thick, grey-brown silt (15), up to 0.21m thick, and the local topsoil (14) of greyish-brown silt, here up to 0.08m in thickness. No finds were recovered from any of the layers.

Plate 3: Trench 3 after excavation, from south-south-west (photo CPAT 3202-0022)

6.6 *Trench 4* (SO 25737 60339; 1.1m north-north-east/south-south-west by 1.1m west-north-west/east-south-east)

6.6.1 The natural subsoil was not found in this trench, the lowest layer comprising orange/yellow clay silt (31), which was left in-situ. Its surface contained some pebbles, perhaps forming a metalled horizon of Roman date. This was cut by an irregular pit (30), over 0.80m in diameter and 0.20m deep, filled with a layer of stone/gravel in light grey clay silt (29).

6.6.2 Layer 29 was sealed with a 0.20m thick layer of mid grey to yellowish-brown clay silt (28), from which some Roman material was recovered, and both were cut by a ditch/gully (27) running north-north-east/south-south-west. This was 0.4m deep, but its width was not determined as only 0.5m was visible in the trench and it obviously extended beyond the

limit of excavation. The earliest fill of feature 27 was light grey silty clay (32) with occasional small stones, up to 0.09m thick, and this was sealed beneath its final fill of pale brownish-greyish silt (26). All of the layers and fills described above were examined in a sondage on the south-south-east side of the trench, which occupied approximately half its width in this direction. Layer 28 and fill 26 were sealed by a 0.17m thick layer of grey-brown silty clay (25) and the topsoil layer of light greyish-brown silt (24).

Plate 4: Trench 4 after excavation, from north-north-east (photo CPAT 3202-0027)

6.7 *Trench 5* (SO 25775 60323; 1.1m north-east/south-west by 1.1m north-west/south-east)

Plate 5: Trench 5 after excavation, from south-west (photo CPAT 3202-0023)

6.7.1 The natural subsoil of orange-grey stony silt (23) in this trench sloped down by about 0.1m to the south-west, at a depth of between 0.45m to 0.55m below the ground surface. The overlying deposit of orange-grey silt (22) had few stones but was possibly also of natural origin; it thickened to the south-west as the underlying subsoil dropped, such that its surface was level in relation to the modern ground level.

6.7.2 A sequence of disturbed soils overlay layer 22, comprising a 0.2m thickness of greyish-brown clay silt (21), 0.02m of small stones in grey-brown silt (20), and the surface topsoil of soft grey-brown silt (19), 0.12m thick. No finds were recovered from any of the layers.

6.8 *Trench 6* (SO 25785 60352; 1.1m north-north-east/south-south-west by 1.1m west-north-west/east-south-east)

6.8.1 The natural subsoil in this trench varied from what had been revealed in other trenches, comprising a large proportion of flat and rounded stones in a matrix of brown silt (37). It was covered by a deposit of orange-brown stony clay silt (36), 0.12m thick, which appeared to be disturbed by past activity. The remaining soils were very similar to those which had been revealed in Trench 5, comprising a grey-brown stony clay silt (35), 0.10m thick, a 0.02m thick layer of small stones in a matrix of grey-brown silt (34), and the surface topsoil of grey-brown silt (33). No finds were recovered from any of the layers.

Plate 6: Trench 6 after excavation, from south (photo CPAT 3202-0026)

6.9 *Trench 7* (SO 25792 60377; 1.1m north-north-east/south-south-west by 1.1m west-north-west/east-south-east)

6.9.1 The natural subsoil here was much closer to the surface than in the other trenches, at a depth of 0.24m, and consisted of rounded stones and slabs, up to 0.25m across, in a matrix of orange-brown silt (41). This was overlain by a deposit of stony grey-brown silt (40), which was 0.12m thick and became slightly more orange in colour towards its base. The two uppermost layers were the same as in most of the other trenches, consisting of a 0.02m-thick band of small rounded stones in a matrix of grey-brown silt (39) and the surface topsoil horizon of grey-brown silt (38), 0.10m thick. No finds were recovered from any of the layers.

Plate 7: Trench 7 after excavation, from south-south-west (photo CPAT 3202-0028)

6.10 *Trench 8* (SO 25750 60366; 1.1m north-north-east/south-south-west by 1.1m west-north-west/east-south-east)

Plate 8: Trench 8 after excavation, from south-south-west (photo CPAT 3202-0029)

6.10.1 The natural subsoil here comprised firm orange clay silt containing rounded and flattened stones (47) and was found at a depth of up to about 0.60m. It was overlain by a layer of soft

orange silt (46) which varied for 0.25m thick on the north-north-east side of the trench to 0.20m on the south-south-west, and contained a few flecks of charcoal but no other finds.

6.10.2 Above layer 46 there was a deposit of orange-brown clay silt (45) in which some Roman detritus was found, predominantly brick fragments, as well as a poor quality flint core. The remaining layers were similar to those in many of the other trenches, comprising a 0.08m-thick layer of stony grey-brown silt (44), a 0.02m thick band of small rounded stones in a matrix of grey-brown silt (43), and the surface topsoil layer of soft grey-brown silt (42), 0.10m thick.

6.11 *Trench 9* (SO 25716 60295; 8.1m north-north-east/south-south-west by 3.3m west-north-west/east-south-east, with an extension, 5.9m west-north-west/east-south-east by 1.6m wide on its west-north-west side)

6.11.1 This trench was excavated by machine to investigate the apparent butt-end of the enclosure ditch identified by the geophysics (No 8 on Fig 3), where it met the course of the Roman road running south-south-west from the fort. Once the ditch had been revealed, a narrow trench was excavated by machine to the west-north-west for nearly 6m, as far as the continuation of the ditch on that side and across the line of the Roman road.

6.11.2 The natural subsoil in this area was orange silty gravel (52), containing stones up to 0.2m across, and this was covered throughout the trench by a layer of orange-brown stony silt (51), 0.15m to 0.20m thick, and an overlying grey-brown stony silt (50), about 0.15m thick. The two uppermost layers were as elsewhere in the vicinity, comprising a 0.02m thick band of small rounded stones in a matrix of grey-brown silt (49), and the surface topsoil layer of soft grey-brown silt (42), 0.12m thick.

Plate 9: The main part of Trench 9, showing the end of the Roman ditch (53), from south-south-west (photo CPAT 3202-0031)

6.11.3 The main feature revealed in the trench was the butt-end of the ditch (53) identified by the geophysics, that was cut into the natural subsoil and proved to be 3.0m wide. It was not excavated as there was plenty of Roman brick in its fill of grey-brown clay silt (54) to determine its origin, but the fill was augered to provide a measurement of 1.2m for its depth. The auger sample revealed a sequence of silt and silty clay deposits containing a significant quantity of charcoal.

6.11.4 At the south-east corner of the trench there was a D-shaped protruberance (55), about 0.8m across, on the edge of the ditch. This might represent a post-hole associated with some form a gateway and was filled with grey-brown stony silt (56), very similar to the fill of ditch 53. Just to the east of the D-shaped feature, the edge of a probable flanking gully (57) associated with the Roman road was identified. This was filled with orange-brown clay silt (58), from which a single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered, and it seemed to have been cut by the larger ditch (53).

Plate 10: The west-north-west end of the extension to Trench 9, showing (from left) the large Roman ditch (61) and the roadside gully (59), from south-south-west (photo CPAT 3202-0037)

6.11.5 The continuation of ditch 53 on the west side of the Roman road was almost certainly present at the end of the extension of the trench to the west-north-west, where a small section of a feature (61) cutting the natural subsoil was revealed. This was filled with stony grey-brown clay silt (62), containing plenty of Roman brick debris, which was effectively the same as fill 54. The flanking ditch (59) on the west side of the Roman road lay about 0.6m to the east of feature 61 and was 1.3m in overall width. Its fill of pale orange-brown stony clay silt (60) was not excavated, but it lacked the brick fragments present in the larger ditch so seems to belong to a different, probably earlier, part of the Roman period. The only other feature present in the trench extension was a possible small pit (63), which had been truncated by both ditches (61 and 59) and measured at least 0.6m across; no finds were recovered from its fill of pale orange-brown clay silt (64) so its origin remains unclear. The most notable result from the excavation of this trench was the lack of evidence for any road metalling, which is interesting, given the fact that its course is displayed well by the anomalies corresponding to the flanking ditches revealed by the geophysics programme.

6.12 *Trench 10* (SO 25720 60272; 14.9m north/south by 1.6m wide)

6.12.1 This trench was placed to investigate two, possibly connected, parallel ditches revealed as linear anomalies by the geophysics (see No 16 of Fig 3). It was excavated by machine down to the level of the natural subsoil, which here is gravel in an orange clay silt matrix (72). From the base of the trench, the layers removed included yellowish-brown clay silt (67), up to 0.15m thick, greyish-brown silty clay with rounded pebbles (66), up to 0.17m thick, and a surface topsoil layer of light grey-brown silt (65), 0.09m thick. Two linear features were seen crossing the base of the trench which probably corresponded to the geophysics results, although these were markedly different to each other in character, as will be shown in the following paragraphs.

Plate 11: Overall view of Trench 10, from north
(photo CPAT 3202-0043)

6.12.2 The southernmost of the two linear anomalies was about 5m north of that end of the trench and proved to be a near V-shaped shallow gully (71), 0.80m wide and 0.30m deep, which had an east/west alignment and was cut into the natural subsoil. Half of the part visible in the trench was removed, revealing a primary fill, perhaps waterborne, of very fine orange clay silt (70), up to 0.03m thick, which extended up both the north and south sides of the gully to the top of the cut. Fine grey silt (69), containing some charcoal, gravel and pebbles was then deposited in the base to a maximum thickness of 0.25m before being sealed by the

final fill of the ditch, a soft grey/brown silty clay (68) containing some small rounded stones, charcoal and Roman ceramic material.

6.12.3 The northernmost anomaly seemed rather more irregular on the surface, broadening out from a width of 0.6m at the west edge of the trench to nearly 2.5m on its east edge. Only the western half was excavated and this revealed a ditch (74), 0.95m deep, with near vertical sides and a rounded base, cut into the natural subsoil. Its fill was very mixed, comprising brown clay silt, pale orange and orange-brown silt (73), together with a large proportion of rounded and flat stones up to 0.2m across and charcoal spread randomly throughout. No finds were recovered, but the nature of the feature suggests it was probably Roman in origin.

Plate 12: Gully 71 in Trench 10, from east (photo CPAT 3202-0045)

Plate 13: Ditch 74 in Trench 10, from east (photo CPAT 3202-0048)

6.13 *Trench 11* (SO 25823 60375; 6.4m east/west by 1.5m wide).

6.13.1 The trench was excavated to investigate a presumed double-ditched enclosure at Hindwell under the prehistoric funerary and ritual monument follow-up programme. It is mentioned here because the uppermost fill contained sherds of Roman pottery and a copper alloy coin. A full report can be found elsewhere (Jones 2011).

6.1 rth-north-east/south-south-west by 3.0m west-

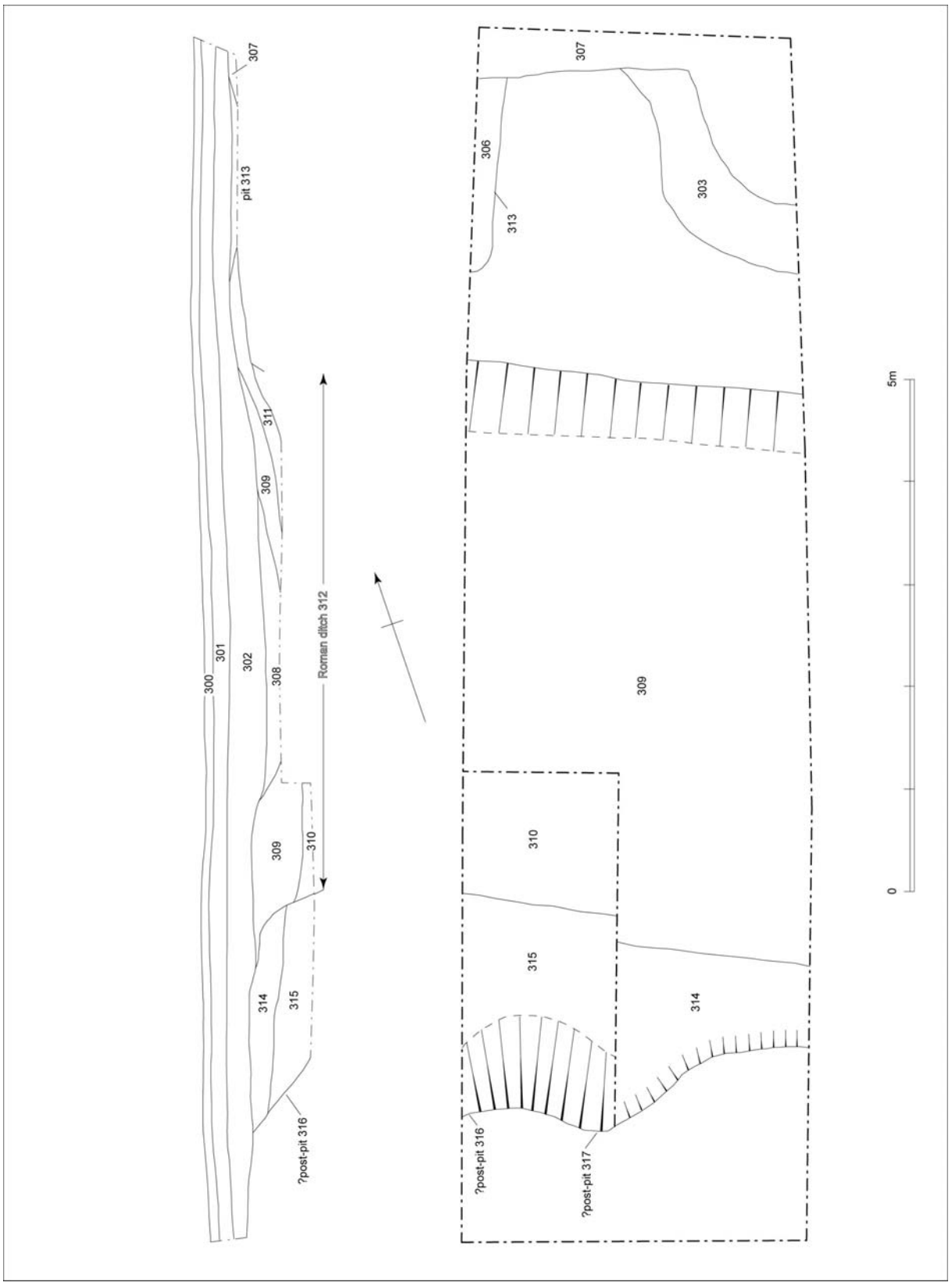

Fig. 5 Plan and section of the palisaded enclosure and Roman ditch

6.14.1 This trench was primarily excavated to investigate the Hindwell Palisaded Enclosure (PRN 19376), under the prehistoric funerary and ritual monument follow-up programme. It is mentioned here, however, because evidence of Roman activity was revealed during the work. A fuller report appears elsewhere (Jones 2011).

6.14.2 The trench revealed a substantial ditch (312), around 5.8m wide, with a well-defined northern edge, but a less distinct southern side. Only a depth of 0.6m was excavated from the ditch fills, but this revealed a sequence of silts and clays (308-310), all of which contained Roman pottery. Possibly the lowest layer in the exposed fill on the north side of the ditch (311) represented material which had once formed a bank on the north side of the ditch, and had perhaps been deliberately slighted later in the Roman period. The north side of the ditch was occupied by layers 303 and 307, both of which appeared to represent Roman occupation horizons, and layer 307 was cut by a pit (313) that contained Roman pottery in its fill (306).

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The work at Hindwell in 2010-11 involved an initial programme of geophysics in areas to the east and south of the fort, which had not been examined in the work carried out by Dr H Becker for the SEPAH programme in 1998. The soils proved to be responsive to magnetometry in both areas so this was an effective means of assessing the sub-surface features. The results, both from 1998 and 2010-11, have added significantly to our knowledge of the total archaeological resource in the environs of the fort, and meant that it was possible to carry out targeted excavations in the field to its south in 2011.

7.2 The extent of the *vicus* in the field to the east of the fort was mostly within the area covered by the 1998 geophysics, but a small extension further east along the Roman road was visible on the 2010-11 results. This area of civilian settlement is of interest owing to the appearance of a delineating ditch on its south side and it seems to be fairly well defined. Part of the Roman road just to the east of the *vicus* was also still recognisable on the ground as an earthwork.

7.3 In the area to the south of the fort the geophysics revealed the line of the Roman road running south-south-west and a number of possible Roman features. The most significant linear anomaly recorded was a large ditch (Nos 8 and 9 on Fig 3) that could perhaps define an annexe appended to this side of the fort, but there were other linear features which seemed to cluster alongside the road alignment. Various poorly-defined pits and smaller anomalies were also recorded, some of which may be of later date.

7.4 Although the main aim of the geophysics was to further define the extent of Roman activity in the fort environs, it did also provide information on a range of enclosures and similar features belonging to other periods, which has aided in their understanding. Some of these are reported under the prehistoric, funerary and ritual programme (Jones 2011).

7.5 Following the completion of the geophysics, the excavations were targeted on a number of anomalies in the area to the south of the fort, to further aid in understanding their nature and dating. The results of these can be summarised with reference to the following plan which is designed to show where in-situ deposits of probable Roman date were encountered in the combined total of twelve trenches that were excavated for this and the prehistoric funerary and ritual project.

Fig. 7: Trenches where in-situ Roman material was encountered in 2011

7.6 The earliest phase of Roman activity identified in the trenches is probably the road which heads south-south-west from the fort. Although, unusually, no evidence of a metalled surface was identified, it seems to have been about 6.5m wide, with flanking ditches, 1.3m wide. It may be that the work was never completed or that the surface was particularly thin and has been lost to later activity. It does, however, appear that most of the Roman activity is centred on the road, and the linear features visible in the geophysics suggest there were some subdivisions, although it is difficult to class this as occupation. There is evidence from the geophysics for pits and linear features further to the east, but none of these were encountered in trenches 5-7, although the lack of disturbed Roman material here may still be significant.

7.7 The larger trenches were rather more forthcoming with evidence for Roman activity and it is clear that the large enclosure (Nos 8 and 9 on Fig 3), which was examined in Trenches 9 and 12, is of Roman origin. It appears to have cut through the eastern ditch of the road, and this is significant as it suggests we may be looking at an annexe which was appended to the fort in a later phase of activity. If this is a correct interpretation, the overall extent of the annexe suggested by the geophysics is about 300m west-north-west/east-south-east by 200m wide.

7.8 One interesting element of the alleged annexe ditch is its deviation at the south-east corner, where the line of the Summergil Brook appears to be respected. The implication of this is that the watercourse took something approximating to its current line in the Roman period, rather than the palaeochannel that was identified to the west of the Roman road. It seems that the palaeochannel had therefore already gone out of use by the Roman period and this has some significance for the prehistoric enclosures in the immediate locality.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

8.1 The writer would like to thank the following colleagues at CPAT for their assistance during the project: Mr I Grant for his assistance with the geophysical survey and excavation; and Mr N Jones and Ms W Owen, for their assistance with the excavation. Also Mrs J Bailey of the Llangynidr Local History Society for her assistance with the excavation.

8.2 The writer would particularly like to thank Mr J Goodwin, the landowner, for permission to carry out the survey and excavation.

9 REFERENCES

9.1 Published sources

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Hankinson, R, 2009. *Brecon Gaer, Aberyscir, Powys: Archaeological Investigations,* CPAT Report No 1017.

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9.2 Cartographic sources

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

48 digital photographs, CPAT Film No 3202
Photographic catalogue
74 context description forms
4 A4 site drawing
Context register
Drawings register
Correspondence

Finds
At the time of writing, the finds had only been subject to an initial assessment, further details will be included in the final site archive on completion.

Digital data
Topographical surveys to locate geophysics – Hindwl1.pts, Hindwl2.pts, Hindwl3.pts, Hind4.pts (Penmap survey software)
Images of the geophysics results – Hindwl1.jpg, Hindwl2.jpg, Hindwl3.jpg, Hindwl4-2.jpg, Hindwl5.jpg (Raw data also archived)
Plan of trenches and features – Hind2011-2.dxf

Contexts Register

Context (Trench)	Type	Comment
01 (Trench 1)	Layer	Topsoil
02 (Trench 1)	Layer	Gravel band below topsoil
03 (Trench 1)	Layer	Disturbed subsoil
04 (Trench 1)	Layer	?Post-Roman subsoil
05 (Trench 1)	Layer	Natural subsoil
06 (Trench 2)	Layer	Topsoil
07 (Trench 2)	Layer	Ploughsoil
08 (Trench 2)	Layer	Disturbed subsoil; abraded Roman material
09 (Trench 2)	Gully	Probable Roman gully
10 (Trench 2)	Fill	Upper fill of gully 09; abraded Roman material
11 (Trench 2)	Layer	Lower fill of gully 09; abraded Roman material
12 (Trench 2)	Layer	Layer adjacent to gully 09
13 (Trench 2)	Layer	Natural subsoil
14 (Trench 3)	Layer	Topsoil
15 (Trench 3)	Layer	Ploughsoil
16 (Trench 3)	Layer	Disturbed subsoil; abraded Roman material
17 (Trench 3)	Layer	Interface between 16 and 18
18 (Trench 3)	Layer	Natural subsoil
19 (Trench 5)	Layer	Topsoil
20 (Trench 5)	Layer	Gravel band below topsoil
21 (Trench 5)	Layer	Disturbed subsoil
22 (Trench 5)	Layer	Variable thickness of silt – natural ?
23 (Trench 5)	Layer	Stonier version of 22
24 (Trench 4)	Layer	Topsoil
25 (Trench 4)	Layer	Ploughsoil
26 (Trench 4)	Fill	Upper fill of gully 27
27 (Trench 4)	Gully	Undated gully – possibly medieval or later

28 (Trench 4)	Layer	Layer below ploughsoil cut by 27; abraded Roman material
29 (Trench 4)	Fill	Fill of cut/pit? 30
30 (Trench 4)	Pit ?	Cut feature, possibly a pit
31 (Trench 4)	Layer	Earliest deposit in Trench 4 – not thought to be natural
32 (Trench 4)	Layer	Lower fill of gully 27
33 (Trench 6)	Layer	Topsoil
34 (Trench 6)	Layer	Gravel band below topsoil
35 (Trench 6)	Layer	Disturbed subsoil
36 (Trench 6)	Layer	Cleaner version of 35
37 (Trench 6)	Layer	Natural subsoil
38 (Trench 7)	Layer	Topsoil
39 (Trench 7)	Layer	Gravel band below topsoil
40 (Trench 7)	Layer	Disturbed subsoil
41 (Trench 7)	Layer	Natural subsoil
42 (Trench 8)	Layer	Topsoil
43 (Trench 8)	Layer	Gravel band below topsoil
44 (Trench 8)	Layer	Disturbed subsoil
45 (Trench 8)	Layer	Cleaner subsoil; abraded Roman material
46 (Trench 8)	Layer	Silt layer below 45; charcoal flecks
47 (Trench 8)	Layer	Natural subsoil
48 (Trench 9)	Layer	Topsoil
49 (Trench 9)	Layer	Gravel band below topsoil
50 (Trench 9)	Layer	Disturbed subsoil
51 (Trench 9)	Layer	Lowest artificial subsoil, post-dates Roman activity
52 (Trench 9)	Layer	Natural subsoil
53 (Trench 9)	Ditch	Large Roman ditch – annexe ? Augered to 1.2m depth
54 (Trench 9)	Fill	Fill of ditch 53; Roman material
55 (Trench 9)	Post-hole?	Possible post-hole adjoining ditch 53 – related to a gate for the road ?
56 (Trench 9)	Fill	Fill of 55
57 (Trench 9)	Gully	Flanking gully to E of Roman road, cut by 53
58 (Trench 9)	Fill	Fill of 57; Roman ceramic
59 (Trench 9)	Gully	Flanking gully to W of Roman road
60 (Trench 9)	Fill	Fill of 59
61 (Trench 9)	Layer	Extension of Ditch 53 on W side of Roman road
62 (Trench 9)	Fill	Fill of ditch 61; Roman material
63 (Trench 9)	Pit?	Possible pit truncated by 59 and 61
64 (Trench 9)	Fill	Undated fill of 63
65 (Trench 10)	Layer	Topsoil
66 (Trench 10)	Layer	Ploughsoil
67 (Trench 10)	Layer	Disturbed subsoil
68 (Trench 10)	Fill	Final fill of gully 71; Roman ceramic
69 (Trench 10)	Fill	Secondary fill of gully 71
70 (Trench 10)	Fill	Initial fill of gully 71
71 (Trench 10)	Gully	E/W aligned gully
72 (Trench 10)	Layer	Natural subsoil
73 (Trench 10)	Ditch	E/W aligned ditch
74 (Trench 10)	Fill	Fill of 73 – undated but probably Roman

Drawings Register

No	Scale	Contexts	Comment
1	1:10	06-13	Post-excavation plan and S-facing section of Trench 2
2	1:10	26-28	Initial plan of Trench 4
3	1:10	24-32	Post-excavation plan and N-facing section of Trench 4
4	1:10	65-74	Post-excavation sections of gully 71 and ditch 74 in Trench 10