

THE AFON TEIFI FLOOD DEFENCE WORKS, LAMPETER, CEREDIGION

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
Project Record No. PRN 34717

May 1997

Commissioned by: District Flood Defence, Environment Agency

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SUMMARY

In May 1997, staff from Archaeoleg CAMBRIA Archaeology were involved in an archaeological watching brief on flood defence works conducted on a 120m stretch of the north bank of the Afon Teifi, immediately south of the town of Lampeter and centred on NGR SN 5782 4768.

*The work was commissioned by the Environment Agency, Carmarthen and followed an archaeological specification prepared by Archaeoleg **Cambria** Archaeology in response to a brief set by the District Flood Defence Office, Environment Agency, Carmarthen. The work was required for the purposes of recording the possible remains of the Roman road (PRN 29499), which from previous archaeological work had been projected to run through the site of the proposed flood defence works.*

No trace of any remains of the Roman road, associated or archaeologically significant features or finds were encountered within the limited area disturbed by the works.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BRIEF

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 In May 1997, staff from Archaeoleg CAMBRIA Archaeology were involved in an archaeological watching brief on flood defence works conducted on a 120m stretch of the north bank of the Afon Teifi, immediately south of the town of Lampeter and centred on NGR SN 5782 4768 (Fig 1).

1.1.2 The work was required for the purposes of recording the possible remains of the Roman road (PRN 29499), which from previous archaeological work had been projected to run through the site of the proposed flood defence works. The work was commissioned by the Environment Agency, Carmarthen and followed an archaeological specification prepared by Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology in response to a brief set by the District Flood Defence Office, Environment Agency, Carmarthen. (Appendix 1).

1.1.3 This report presents the results of the archaeological watching brief carried out at the site, with a limited summary of the archaeological background to the study area. All PRN numbers quoted in this report are taken from the regional SMR, held by Archaeoleg CAMBRIA Archaeology, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire.

1.2 The study area: geology and topography

1.2.1 The site of the flood defence works was situated, behind modern housing, on the north bank of a bend in the Afon Teifi, *approx.* ¾ km south from Lampeter town centre. The study area comprised of a flanking flat parcel of wasteland and pasture, within the river's floodplain, lying at a height of *approx.* 115m OD. The underlying geology of the study area has been characterised as belonging to the undivided Llandovery series (BGS 1994), although a more detailed examination is yet to be published.

1.3 Project brief and objectives

1.3.1 The main objective of the archaeological brief prepared for the flood defence works was to establish if the remains of the suspected Roman road, or other significant archaeological features or deposits survived within the area.

1.3.2 If identified, the purpose of the brief was to record these features or deposits in sufficient depth to provide mitigation for any damage caused by the work.

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 The river bank, specified in the brief, was partly machine-excavated to a depth of *approx.* 0.80m and a width of 1m, before the insertion of large boulders as a blockstone revetment along the edge of the bank, to the east and west of the conservation area denoted by a small copse of mature trees. One small change from the original brief, arising from a request from the landowner, was for the revetment boulders bordering the conservation area to be placed on top of the bank, rather than insertion into the bank.

1.4.2 The area was recorded using methods and guidelines expressed in the site recording manual used by Archaeoleg CAMBRIA Archaeology. All definable layers were given a unique number (context number) by which they can be identified and recorded in a written record.

1.4.3 To supplement the written record, a photographic record, consisting of monochrome and colour slide film, was kept of the works and the observed stratigraphy. In the event, no significant archaeological deposits or features were uncovered and no additional sections or plans were drawn.

1.4.4 The site archive, containing record sheets etc. from the watching brief, will be deposited with the National Library, Aberystwyth (Appendix 2).

2. STUDY AREA: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 General historical background

2.1.1 Archaeologically, little is known about the town of Lampeter. No clear dates exist for the founding of a settlement at the present site, although Lampeter derives part of its Welsh name (*Llanbedr pont Steffan*) from the church of St. Peter, first mentioned in the late 13th century. Written records show that the town was an important market centre for the upper Teifi valley from the medieval period, with market and fair charters granted in 1284. The town was situated on one of the main cattle drove routes into the west Midlands and south of England, a trade which lasted from the Medieval period into the 19th century. The medieval borough, however, appears to have been relatively small with only 19½ burgage plots recorded in 1301 and 26 in 1317, many still partly visible in the plan of the course of High Street.

2.1.2 The earliest known feature in the town is the Norman motte-and-bailey castle (PRN 779), situated within the grounds of St. David's college. A castle at '*Pont Stephen*' is known to have been attacked by the Welsh in 1137, although it was rebuilt by 1290, when the castle was granted to Geoffrey Clement, Lord of Caron by Edward I. The castle was briefly taken by the Welsh in 1405, during the Owain Glyndwr revolt.

2.1.3 The town enjoyed rapid growth after the establishment of St. David's college in 1822 accompanied by a large increase in the town's population from 320 in 1801 to over 1300 by 1831 (Soulsby and Jones 1976).

2.2 Archaeological background

2.2.1 Little archaeological work has taken place within Lampeter and its immediate environs. Recent survey work conducted in 1994 identified the surface remains of a possible Roman Road, (PRN 29499), running along part of the A475 and the Lampeter to Llanfair Clydogau minor road, close to the southern limits of the town.

2.2.2 Subsequent trial-trenching confirmed the presence of the Roman road and one of the two original flanking ditches at one location (SN 4739 4745) less than 500m south-west of the study area (Jackson and Toller 1994). The survey also identified further surface remains apparently within 100m north-east of the study area.

3. WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

3.1 A careful examination was made of the bank's north edge, where the machining had disturbed the natural stratigraphy of the river bank. The basic sequence of deposits observed within the undisturbed section consisted of; a deposit of greyish-brown alluvial sandy clay with silt (102), at least 0.50m in depth, sealed by a brown clay loam topsoil (101), 0.05m in depth. Both contexts contain a small percentage (less than 5%) of small rounded natural pebbles/rough gravel. Below the waterline, the exact relationship between the alluvial clay and the shale/pebble deposit littering the river bed (103) was obscured.

3.2 No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were observed in the study area, either on the surface or within the machined sections.

4. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 Despite the positive identification of the Roman road both to the north-east and to the south-west of the study area, the watching brief produced no evidence of the road running through the area of the flood defence works. The results are perhaps not a complete surprise, given the narrow width of the disturbed area, which was in some places less than 1m.

4.2 Historically, a number of factors would have had an impact on the location of the road, e.g the position of the river during the Roman period, which may have displaced the road from the presently assumed straight line course.

4.3 A rapid examination of aerial photographs, held by the regional SMR, also failed to find any visible traces of the road running through the study area.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

British Geological Survey, 1994, '*The rocks of Wales*', 1st Edition 1:250 000, Natural Environment Research Council

Jackson, S and Toller, H. 1994, '*Trial Trench across the Roman road*'
Dyfed SMR DRF File 29499 (Unpublished notes and photographs of three trial trenches)

Soulsby, I and Jones, D 1976, '*The historic towns in Ceredigion: The archaeological implications of redevelopment*', Urban Research unit, University College, Cardiff.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

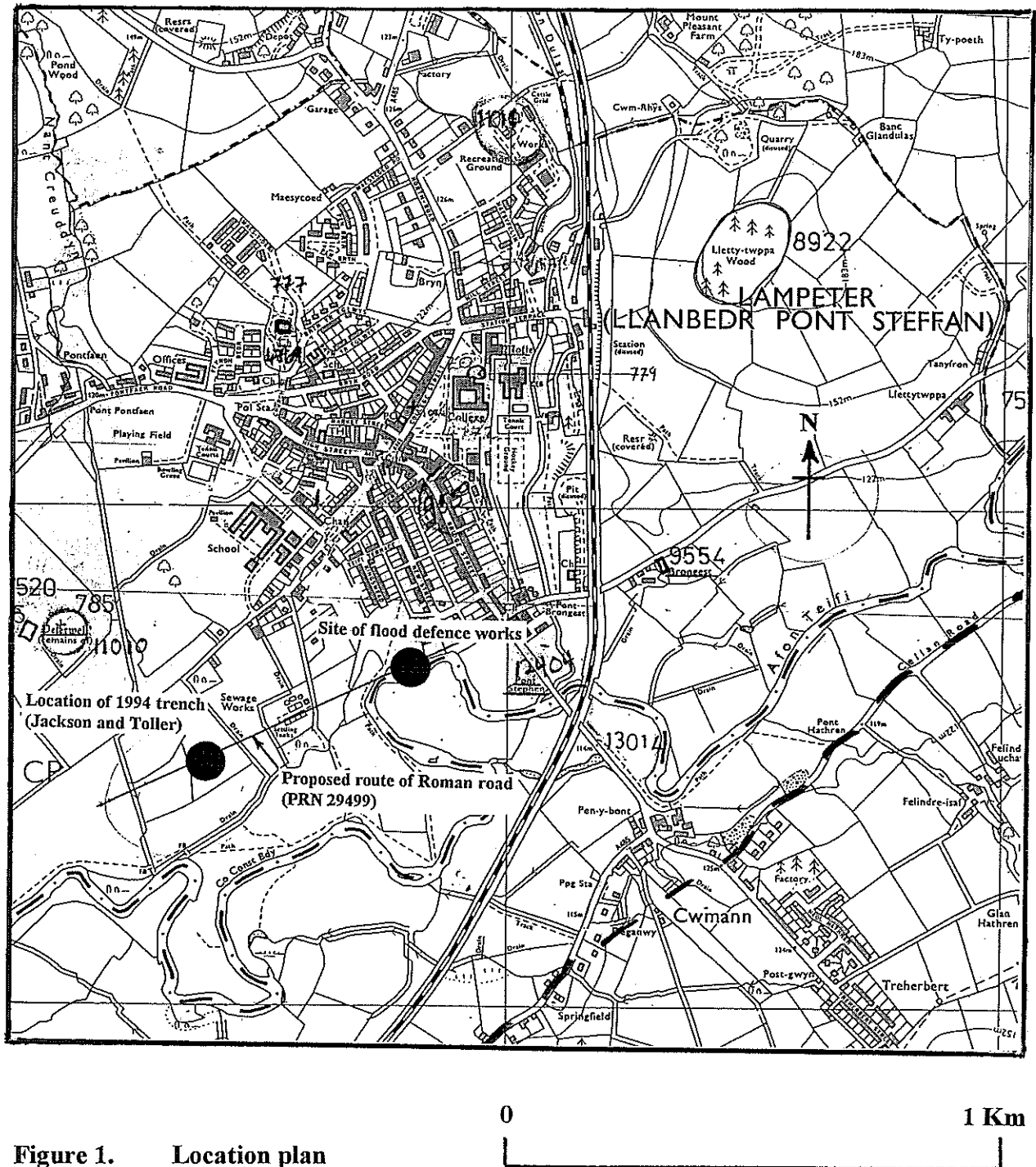
Archaeoleg CAMBRIA Archaeology would like to thank the following for their assistance in the course of this project:

The staff of the District flood defence office, Environment Agency

Archaeoleg CAMBRIA Archaeology staff involvement:

Project Management: Pete Crane
Fieldwork: Andy Manning
Text: Andy Manning

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey's 1:10560 map with the permission of the Controller of HMSO, © Crown Copyright.



APPENDIX A.

Project specification:

As supplied by Archaeoleg **Cambria** Archaeology

COPY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ROMAN ROAD, AFON TEIFI AT LAMPETER SPECIFICATIONS

Introduction

This project specification has been prepared by Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology Field Operations in response to a brief set by **District Flood Defence Office, Environment Agency, Carmarthen**, and in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994).

Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology Field Operations has considerable experience of this type of project and always operates to best professional practice. The conclusions will be based on a considered assessment of the collected data. Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology Field Operations has its own Health and Safety Policy, and all works are covered by appropriate Employer's Liability and Public Liability Insurances. Copies of all are available on request.

1. Project objectives

- 1.1 The observation, investigation and recording of any archaeological deposits revealed during the works.
- 1.2 Preparation of a report fully representative of the data collected during the fieldwork.
- 1.3 Preparation and deposition of site/project archive.

2. Fieldwork

- 2.1 Investigation of any archaeological features and deposits revealed during the works.
- 2.2 Recording of any archaeological features or deposits will conform to best current professional practice in accordance with the Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology Field Operations Recording Manual. All deposits will be recorded using the open-ended numbering system employed by Cambria Field Operations. Significant archaeological features and deposits will be drawn at an appropriate scale (no less than 1:20) and photographed in 35mm format.
- 2.3 All finds will be retained and, where possible, related to their contexts. Finds will be temporarily stored by Cambria Field Operations in stable conditions.
- 2.4 Deposits containing potential palaeoenvironmental material will be sampled and the samples stored in stable conditions. Arrangement for specialist services will be arranged following discussions between all relevant parties.

- 2.5 Should any human remains be encountered the District Coroner's Office and the Police will be notified immediately. All human remains will, where possible, be left *in situ*. If preservation *in situ* is not possible all statutory permissions must be received in writing before removal begins.
- 2.6 In the event of unexpected, but significant archaeological sites, features or deposits it may be necessary to employ further staff. This would only occur following discussions between the Project Manager, client and archaeological curator.
- 2.7 All **Cambria** personnel have waived any rights to financial reward for any objects found.

3. Post fieldwork

- 3.1 Collation of data recovered during the fieldwork and preparation of a site archive in accordance with the specifications in Appendix 3 of Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage 1991), and the procedures recommended by the National Archaeological Record.
- 3.2 Assessment of the results of the fieldwork.
- 3.3 Preparation of a report fully representative of the results of the fieldwork to be sent to the client for dissemination to all relevant parties.
- 3.4 Preparation of summaries of the results of the fieldwork for publication in an appropriate regional or national archaeological journal.
- 3.5 Deposition of the project archive, including artefacts and ecofacts (excepting those which may be deemed to be Treasure Trove) with an appropriate body following agreement with the landowner.

4. Staff

- 4.1 This project will probably be managed by **A Manning**, who has wide archaeological experience, including many projects of this type.
- 4.2 Other Excavation staff will be drawn from the team of experienced archaeologists regularly used by **Cambria** Field Operations (CVs of key project staff are included).

5. Costs and Payment

- 5.1 Daily rates are based on normal working hours Monday to Friday, and on a 37 hours per week. Overtime, only by agreed arraignment, will be charged at day rate multiplied by 1.5, and on Sundays multiplied by 2.0.
- 5.2 Final costs include all administration charges.

- 5.3 Unless specified otherwise, costs and rates are up to the end of the current financial year (31 March).
- 5.3 Payment shall be within 30 days of invoice from Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology.

6. Rates/Estimate

- 6.1 This watching brief will be undertaken at a at £150 per day (this includes the cost of photographic materials etc.) plus travel at 45p per mile. It is estimated that this project will require one days fieldwork, plus 50 miles travel (£22.50) and one days reporting costs.
- 6.2 Total costs to you will be **£322.50** or less further work is requested.

APPENDIX B.

Archive index

The project archive has been indexed and catalogued according to National Monument Record (NMR) categories and contains the following;

- A. Report
 - A1. Copy of final report
- B. Site Written Data
 - B1. Context records-paper,
Records used: (101) (102) (103)
- D Photographs
 - D1. Catalogue of photographs
 - D2. Colour slides (19 taken)
 - D3. Black and white contact prints (19 taken)