

CPAT Report No. 1521

# Westmead, School Lane, Montgomery




Archaeological Watching Brief



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Client name: Williams Homes (Bala) Ltd  
 CPAT Project No: 2225  
 Project Name: Westmead, Montgomery  
 Grid Reference: SO 22411 96728  
 County/LPA: Powys  
 Planning Application: P/2017/0523  
 CPAT Report No: 1521  
 Event PRN: 140192  
 Report status: Final  
 Confidential: No

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## Summary

A watching brief was conducted by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust during groundworks associated with the construction of a new extension at Westmead, School Lane, Montgomery.

No features or artefacts of archaeological interest were observed and it was evident that the ground had already been subject to some levelling in the past, as natural subsoil was present throughout much of the footprint of the extension. This levelling may have occurred either when the previous extension was built or when the sloping ground here was terraced to allow for the construction of Westmead house.

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) were engaged by Williams Homes (Bala) Ltd to undertake a watching brief during the construction of a new extension at Westmead, School Lane, Montgomery (planning application P/2017/0523).
- 1.2. The development is located within the medieval historic core of Montgomery, at the rear of Westmead (Fig. 1; SO 22411 96728). The plot lies to the rear of a medieval street frontage with former burgage plots extending down the hill slope to the west. Typically these rear plots had multiple uses in the medieval and post medieval period and may have been used for extensions, outbuildings, light industrial activity, refuse pits and gardens. Archaeology associated with any of these former uses may be located here at sub-surface levels and would need to be recorded if it is encountered during the early stages of construction.

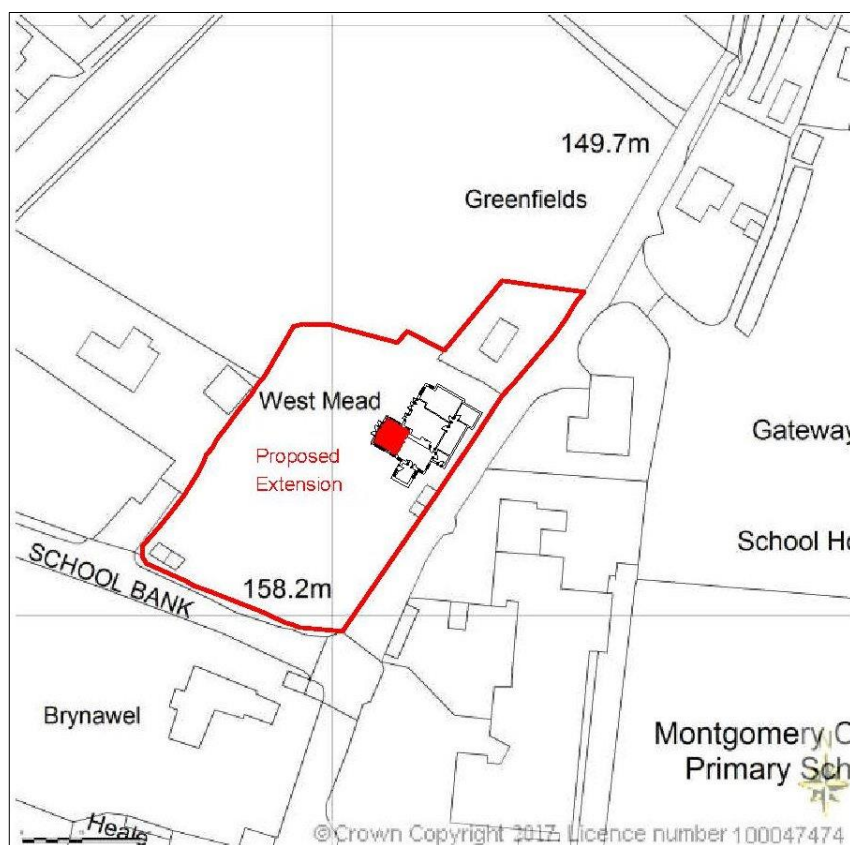


Fig. 1: Location of Westmead, within Montgomery

- 1.3. Planning permission was granted with the inclusion of the following condition relating to archaeology:
  3. The developer shall ensure a suitably qualified archaeological contractor is present during the undertaking of any ground works in the development area so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted. The archaeological watching brief must meet the standards laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs. The Local Planning Authority will be informed in writing, at least two weeks

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prior to the commencement of the development, of the name of the said archaeological contractor. A copy of the resulting report should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the Development Control Archaeologist, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (41 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 0JY Email: [mark.walters@cpat.org.uk](mailto:mark.walters@cpat.org.uk) Tel 01938 553670). After approval by the Local Planning Authority, a copy of the report and resulting archive should also be sent to the Historic Environment Record Officer, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust for inclusion in the regional Historic Environment Record

Reason: To secure preservation by record of any archaeological remains which may be revealed during ground excavations for the consented development.

## 2 Background

- 2.1. Known in Welsh as Trefaldwyn, both this name and its English counterpart were given successively to Hen Domen (or Old Montgomery), the motte and bailey closer to the Severn, and then to the present town of Montgomery. In the Domesday Book the motte was called *Castrum Muntgumeri* after its lord, Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, whose home across the Channel was Montgomery in Normandy. *Gastell baldwin* and hence Trefaldwyn is recorded in c.1170, a reference to Baldwin de Bollers who was granted possession of Montgomery in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.2. Montgomery (or New Montgomery) was developed by Henry III as a strategic and military stronghold on the Welsh border in 1223, its location commended by Mathew Paris as ideal 'for the erection of an impregnable castle'. The spot was rather less suitable for a town, however, but the king issued a safe conduct to all who would bring victuals for sale to the castle, promising the liberties enjoyed by the burgesses of the town of Shrewsbury to those who would stay and live in Montgomery. It was conceived and laid out as a planned town (or plantation) and received its charter in 1227.
- 2.3. The castle's strategic importance declined in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and it began to fall into decay, although later some of it was restored as a private residence. The town on the other hand thrived to some degree, and the population of the borough expanded throughout the 13<sup>th</sup> and into the 14<sup>th</sup> century. A weekly market was held in Broad Street and there were four annual fairs. However, its strategic location hindered its accessibility and thus its commercial development, for it lay at some distance from the River Severn. The rise of Newtown and Welshpool, both on the river itself, created rival market towns in superior locations and in 1279 Welshpool's rights to hold markets and fairs were temporarily removed by royal charter because of the damage they were doing to Montgomery's prosperity.
- 2.4. Not surprisingly, Montgomery went into decline in the late medieval period. Large areas of the town, particularly in the northern part, appeared to be devoid of buildings in 1610-11 when John Speed published his plan of the town (Fig. 2), although it was still ranked as one of the more important settlements in the Principality. This was no doubt partly because the town was accorded the status of county town to the newly created Montgomeryshire in the Act of Union between England and Wales instituted by Henry VIII in 1536.



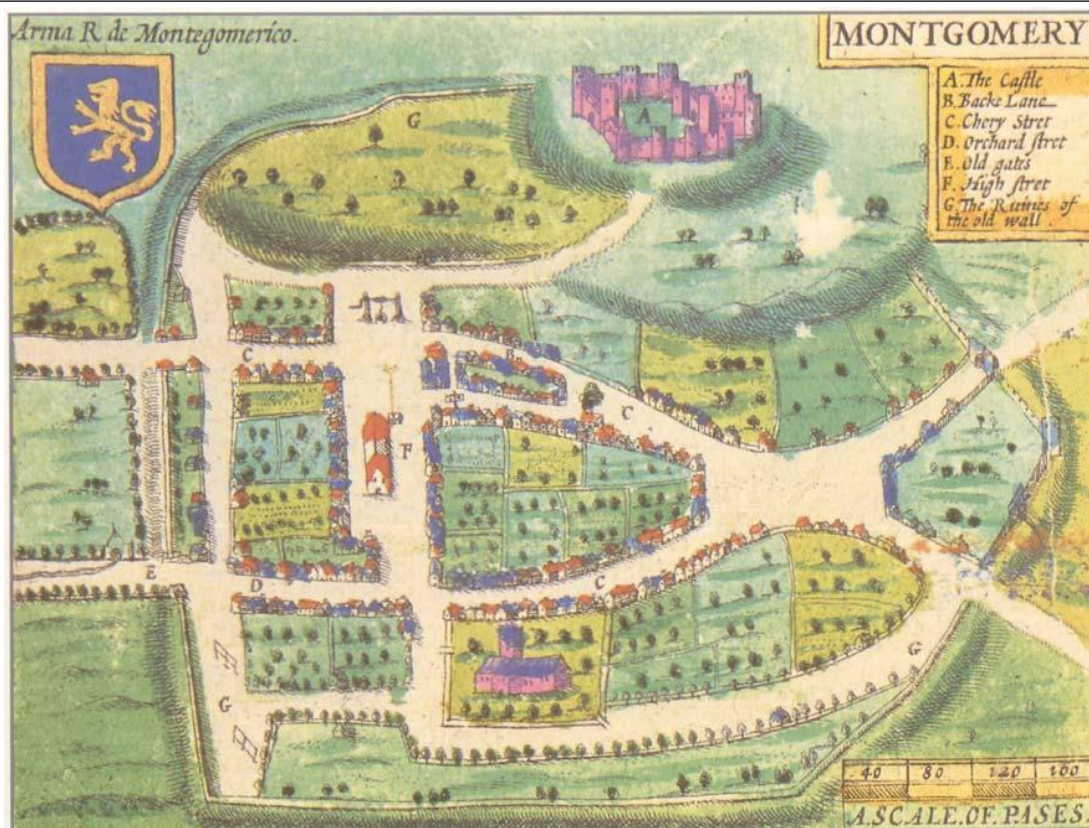


Fig. 2: John Speed's plan of Montgomery; early 17<sup>th</sup> century. North is to the right.

- 2.5. The grid pattern so typical in a planted town such as Newtown is recognisable only at the southern end of Montgomery in the vicinity of the church and market. Further north the natural landform necessitates a less regular layout. The nature of the medieval buildings and their accompanying plots is little known. Typical long narrow burgage plots are still distinguishable in some parts of the town, notably off Princes Street and Broad Street. Excavations on a plot beside Pool Road in 1984 and again in 1987 revealed the superimposed plans of two timber houses with a yard behind. Occupation there began in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and seems to have ceased early in the 15<sup>th</sup> century after which the plot remained empty (Britnell and Jones 1989).
- 2.6. Speed's map (Fig. 2) depicts the town in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, showing the site of Westmead as being part of a group of garden plots to the north of the church. An estate map of 1785 shows the small lane (School Bank) which bounds the southern side of the site, but nothing within the plot itself, and both this and 19<sup>th</sup>-century maps point to the area being used as gardens, probably related to properties fronting on to Princes Street. The Tithe map of 1839, shows Westmead as being divided into three dwellings, the apportionment identifying the occupants as Samuel Ikin, Pryce Weaver and Mary Samuel, while the 1886 Ordnance Survey 25" map (Fig. 3), shows Westmead, with a small outbuilding adjoining the rear in approximately the position of the new extension.
- 2.7. In 1992 an evaluation was conducted in the fields surrounding Westmead, revealing evidence for medieval buildings and associated features (Gibson 1992), while in 2015 a watching brief along School Bank, some 60m south-west of Westmead, revealed the remains of a medieval corn-drying kiln (Hankinson 2015).

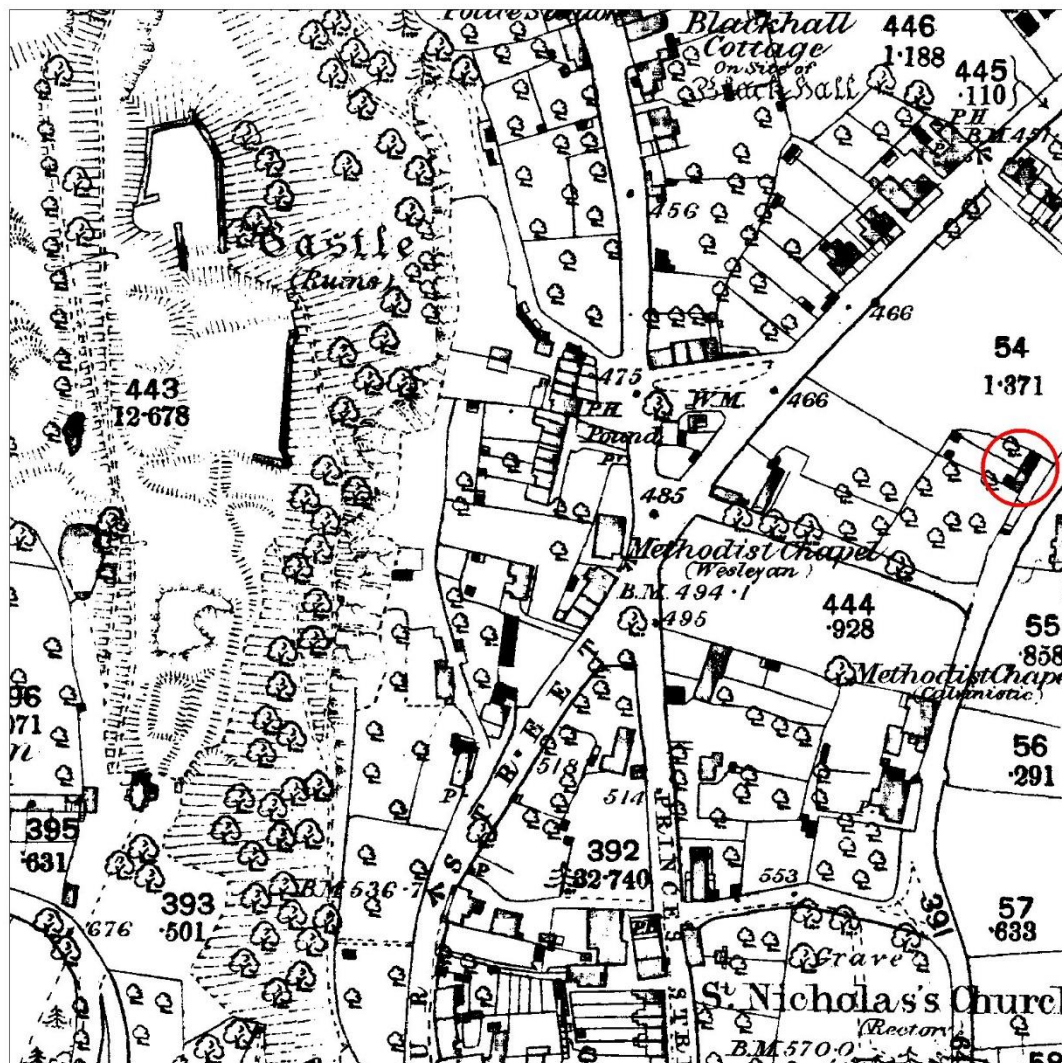


Fig. 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25" map of 1886, showing Westmead circled in red

### 3 Watching Brief

- 3.1. The watching brief was undertaken by the author on 15 August 2017 and was conducted according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014).
- 3.2. The concrete base of the former extension was removed prior to the commencement of the watching brief. The reduction of the existing ground level to allow for the creation of the foundation for the new extension was then observed, which involved the removal by machine of a thickness of approximately 0.3m of modern concrete, rubble etc over an area measuring approximately 5.5m north-east/south-west by 5.0m north-west/south-east, down to the base level of the new foundation.
- 3.3. Throughout much of the area, the reduction revealed a layer of clean, yellow-brown, stony clay which represented the local natural subsoil (see Fig. 4). No features of archaeological interest were observed to be cutting this layer. The northern part of



the ground reduction area revealed disturbed dark grey silt containing bricks and other material, demonstrating it was of recent origin and of no archaeological value.



Fig. 4: The area of the new extension after the concrete base of the former extension was removed, from the south-west. (CPAT 4389-0001)

## 4 Conclusions

- 4.1. The area of the new extension encompassed the footprint of a previous extension and it was clear that, throughout much of the area, the ground had already been reduced to the level of the natural subsoil. This may have taken place at the time the former extension was created or, more likely, when the slope was terraced to allow for the construction of Westmead house.
- 4.2. No archaeological material or features were observed cutting the natural subsoil, while beyond this the finished level of the foundations for the new extension revealed only material of recent origin, probably related to past house improvements or landscaping.

## 5 Sources

### Published sources

Britnell, J, and Jones, N, 1989. 'Pool Road, Montgomery: Excavations within the medieval town', *Montgomeryshire Collections*, 77, 41-72.

Courtney, P. and Jones. N. W., 1989. 'The Clwyd-Powys medieval pottery fabric series', *Medieval and Later Pottery in Wales*, 10, 9-32.

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Knight, J. K., 1982. 'Montgomery Castle: A Provisional Checklist of Fabric Types', *Medieval and Later Pottery in Wales*, 5, 45-62.

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

Speed, J, 2000. *Tudor Townscapes: The Town Plans from John Speed's Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine 1610*, Waddesdon: Map Collector Publications Ltd.

#### **Unpublished sources**

Gibson, A., 1992. Westmead and adjacent plot, Montgomery, Powys: evaluation report. CPAT Report No. 23.

Grant, I., 2009. *Bryn Awel, School Lane, Montgomery: Archaeological Evaluation*, Welshpool: CPAT Report No 989.

Hankinson, R., 2015. *Plot adjacent to Bryn Awel, School Bank, Montgomery, Powys: Archaeological Watching Brief*, CPAT Report No. 1345.

Jones, N. W., 1995. *Plas Du, Montgomery, Powys. Archaeological evaluation*, Welshpool: CPAT Report No 153.

Silvester, R. J., Martin, C. H. R., and Watson, S., 2012, *Historic Settlements in Montgomeryshire*, Welshpool: CPAT Report No 1134.

#### **Cartographic sources**

1610 John Speed's map of Montgomery

1785 Estate map of Montgomery, *Shropshire Archives* 4303/2

1839 Montgomery Tithe map and apportionment

1886 Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 first edition map, Montgomeryshire 37.03.

1902 Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 second edition map, Montgomeryshire 37.03.

1953 Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 fourth edition map, Montgomeryshire 37NE.

## **6 Archive deposition Statement**

- 6.1. The project archive has been prepared according to the CPAT Archive Policy and in line with the CIfA *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives guidance* (2014). The digital archive only will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust and the paper/drawn/digital archive with the National Monuments Record (RCAHMW). No artefacts were recovered. A summary of the archive is provided below.

## **7 Archive Summary**

CPAT Event PRN: 140192

1 Watching Brief recording form

3 digital photographs, CPAT Film No 4389

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## Appendix 1: CPAT WSI 1819

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) have been invited by Williams Homes (Bala) Ltd to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for undertaking a watching brief during the construction of a new extension at Westmead, School Lane, Montgomery (planning application P/2017/0523).
- 1.2. Planning permission was granted with the inclusion of the following condition relating to archaeology:
  3. The developer shall ensure a suitably qualified archaeological contractor is present during the undertaking of any ground works in the development area so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted. The archaeological watching brief must meet the standards laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs. The Local Planning Authority will be informed in writing, at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development, of the name of the said archaeological contractor. A copy of the resulting report should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the Development Control Archaeologist, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (41 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 0JY Email: [mark.walters@cpat.org.uk](mailto:mark.walters@cpat.org.uk) Tel 01938 553670). After approval by the Local Planning Authority, a copy of the report and resulting archive should also be sent to the Historic Environment Record Officer, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust for inclusion in the regional Historic Environment Record

Reason: To secure preservation by record of any archaeological remains which may be revealed during ground excavations for the consented development.
- 1.3. The development is located within the medieval historic core of Montgomery, at the rear of Westmead (SO2241196728). The plot lies to the rear of a medieval street frontage with former burgage plots extending down the hill slope to the west. Typically these rear plots had multiple uses in the medieval and post medieval period and may have been used for extensions, outbuildings, light industrial activity, refuse pits and gardens. Archaeology associated with any of these former uses may be located here at sub-surface levels and would need to be recorded if it is encountered during the early stages of construction.
- 1.4. An archaeological evaluation was conducted on the land surrounding Westmead in 1992 (CPAT Report 23), the results from which identified evidence for settlement within the medieval borough, including house/building foundations of likely 14<sup>th</sup>-century date.
- 1.5. The planning response submitted by the Development Control Archaeologist, CPAT, was that an archaeologist should be present throughout the duration of top soiling, foundation trench cutting, and service trench excavation works in order that an adequate record of any archaeological features revealed by these works can be made.

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## 2 Methodology

- 2.1. The watching brief will be conducted according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014). The watching brief will be undertaken to monitor groundworks associated with the construction of the new extension. The excavation of any archaeological features or deposits will be undertaken by hand using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation:
- The presence or absence of archaeological features encountered during the ground works will be noted.
  - Where features of archaeological interest are identified during the ground works they will be systematically investigated by hand with sufficient work being undertaken to determine their date, character and function, using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation and in accordance with CIfA Standard and Guidance.
  - All features will be located as accurately as possible on an overall plan of the development at an appropriate scale, showing boundaries depicted on Ordnance Survey mapping.
  - Contexts will be recorded on individual record forms, using a continuous numbering system, and be drawn and photographed as appropriate.
  - Plans will be drawn on permatrace to a scale of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50, as appropriate.
  - All photography will be taken using a digital SLR camera with a minimum resolution of 12 mega pixels, including a metric scale in each view, with views logged in a photographic register.
  - In the event of human burials being discovered the Ministry of Justice will be informed. The remains will initially be left *in situ*, and if removal is required, a MoJ licences will be applied for under the Burial Act 1857.
  - In the event of finding any artefacts covered by the provisions of the Treasures Act 1996, the appropriate procedures under this legislation will be followed.
- 2.2. All artefacts and environmental samples will be treated in a manner appropriate to their composition and a sampling strategy will be developed as appropriate:
- All stratified finds will be collected by context, or where appropriate, individually recorded in three dimensions. Unstratified finds will only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest.
  - All finds and samples will be collected, processed, sorted, quantified, recorded, labelled, packed, stored, marked, assessed, analysed and conserved in a manner appropriate to their composition and in line with appropriate guidance.
  - arrangements to assess and study any artefacts, assemblages and environment samples.
  - Any artefacts recovered during the watching brief will be deposited with an appropriate museum, subject to the permission of the owner.



- 2.3. Following the on-site work an illustrated report will be prepared containing conventional sections to include:
- Non-technical summary
  - Introduction
  - Site location
  - Topography and Geology
  - Archaeological Background
  - Watching brief
  - Conclusions
  - References
  - Appropriate appendices on archives and finds
- 2.4. The site archive will be prepared to specifications in English Heritage's Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) system and the CifA *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (2014). The digital archive only will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust and the paper/drawn/digital archive with the National Monuments Record (RCAHMW).

### 3 Resources and programming

- 3.1. The watching brief will be undertaken by a skilled archaeologist under the overall supervision of Nigel Jones, a senior member of CPAT's staff who is also a member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA). CPAT is also a CifA Registered Organisation (RAO No 6) and as such agrees to abide by their *Code of Conduct* (2014) and the *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (2014).
- 3.2. All report preparation will be completed by or with the assistance of the same field archaeologist(s) who conducted the site work. Copies of the report will be deposited with the client and the regional Historic Environment Record within one month of the completion of on-site works. If appropriate, a short report will be published in *Archaeology in Wales*.
- 3.3. The client should be aware that in the event that significant archaeological remains are revealed there may be a requirement for more detailed excavation and specialist services. Any further work over and above the original watching brief and report would be the subject of a separate WSI and costing. The following figures provide an indication of the types of additional services and indicative costs which might be required, for which the client is advised to make some provision.

Curatorial monitoring	£150 per visit
Finds conservation etc	£285 per day
Radiocarbon dating	£330 each
Finds specialist	£285 per day

- 3.4. Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.

- 3.5. CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance, as well as Professional Indemnity insurance.

N W Jones

26 July 2017