



Wyndcliff villa 2018

Chasing the Roman conquest: Recent cropmark discoveries in south-east Wales

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Discovery from the air!



Cessna 172

4-seater

Royal Commission's National aerial reconnaissance programme. Began 1986

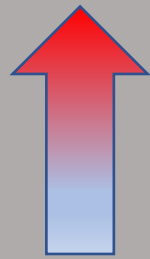
90,000 specialist archaeological air photos

Updates published in *Archaeology in Wales*



Robinson R44

Drones vs aircraft: different capabilities within the toolkit

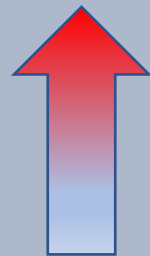
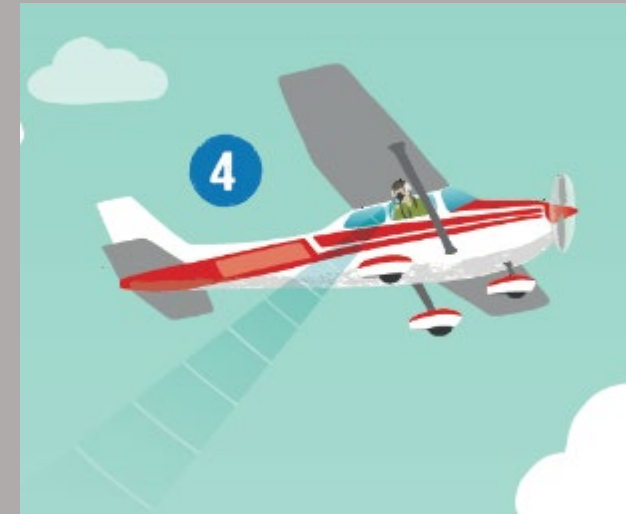


5000ft +

3-5 hours flying time
=
Regional/country
survey



VFR – c. 130 mph

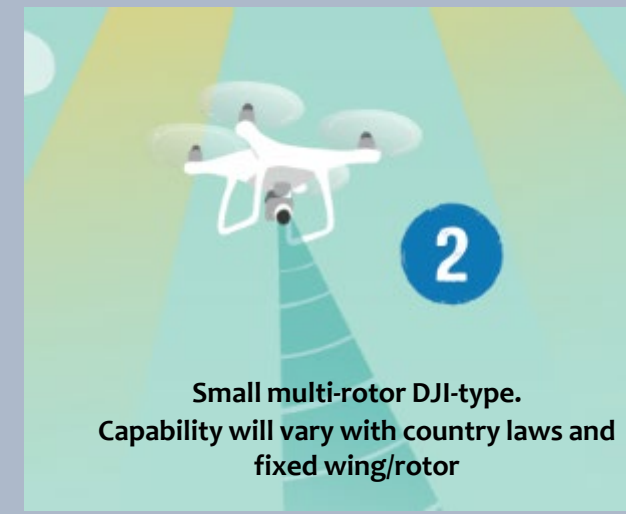


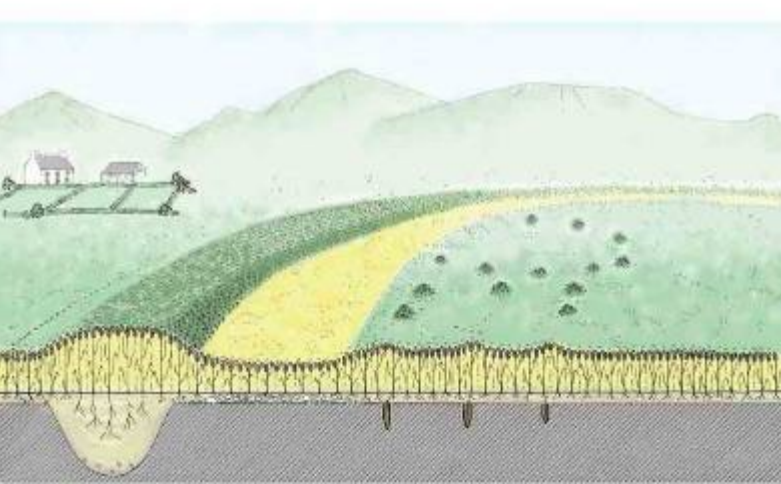
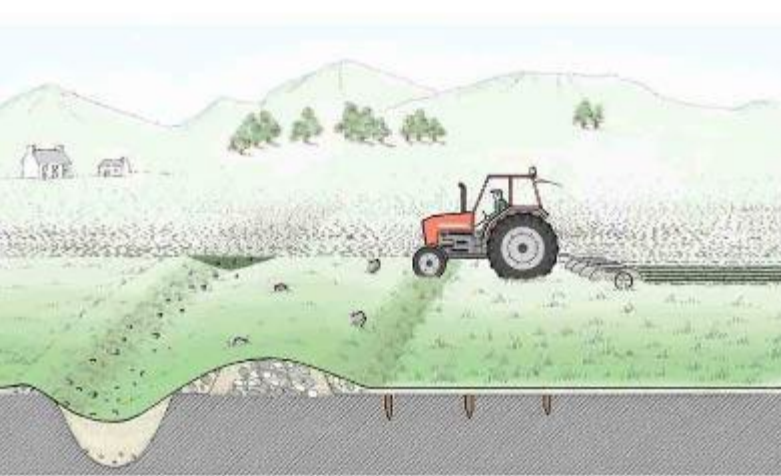
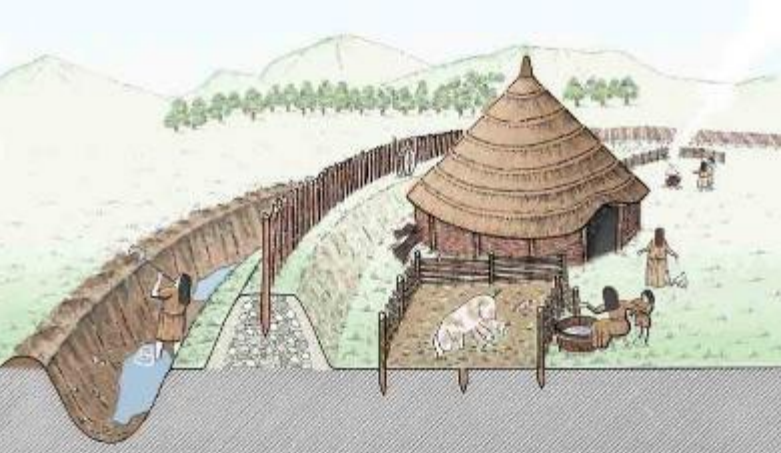
400ft limit

25 min flying time
=
Single site/small
landscape survey



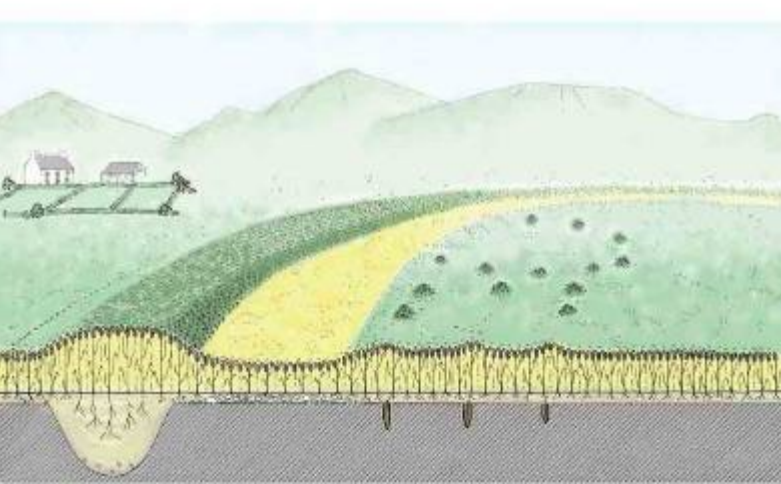
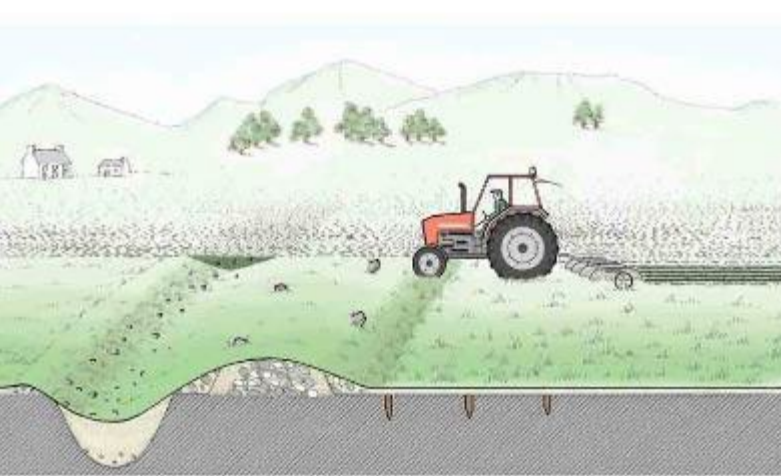
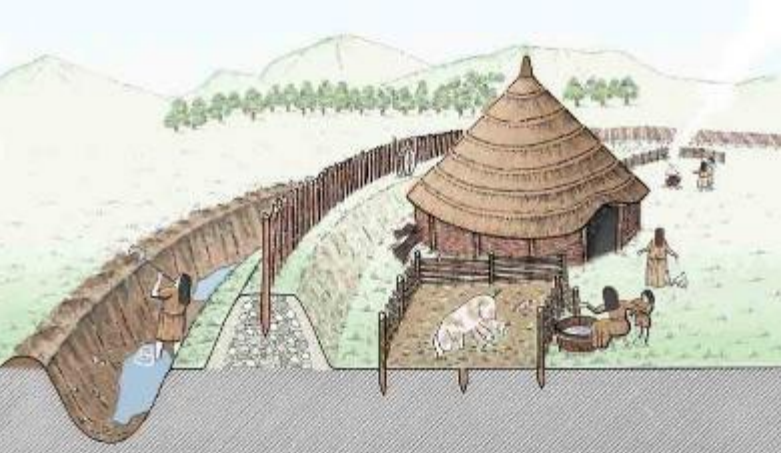
VLOS – c. 500m





**How
cropmarks
form**

Llanmartin Romano-British enclosure or farmstead
Discovered June 2018



Google Earth

Google aerial imagery, late June 2018

**How
cropmarks
form**

Llanmartin Romano-British enclosure or farmstead
Discovered June 2018

Extracting hidden information
from cropmark aerial
photography



Stoop Hill Roman Villa, Caldicot, 6th July 2018

Extracting hidden information from cropmark aerial photography



Black and White

Preset: Custom

Reds: 275 %

Yellows: 60 %

Greens: -151 %

Stoop Hill Roman Villa, Caldicot, 6th July 2018

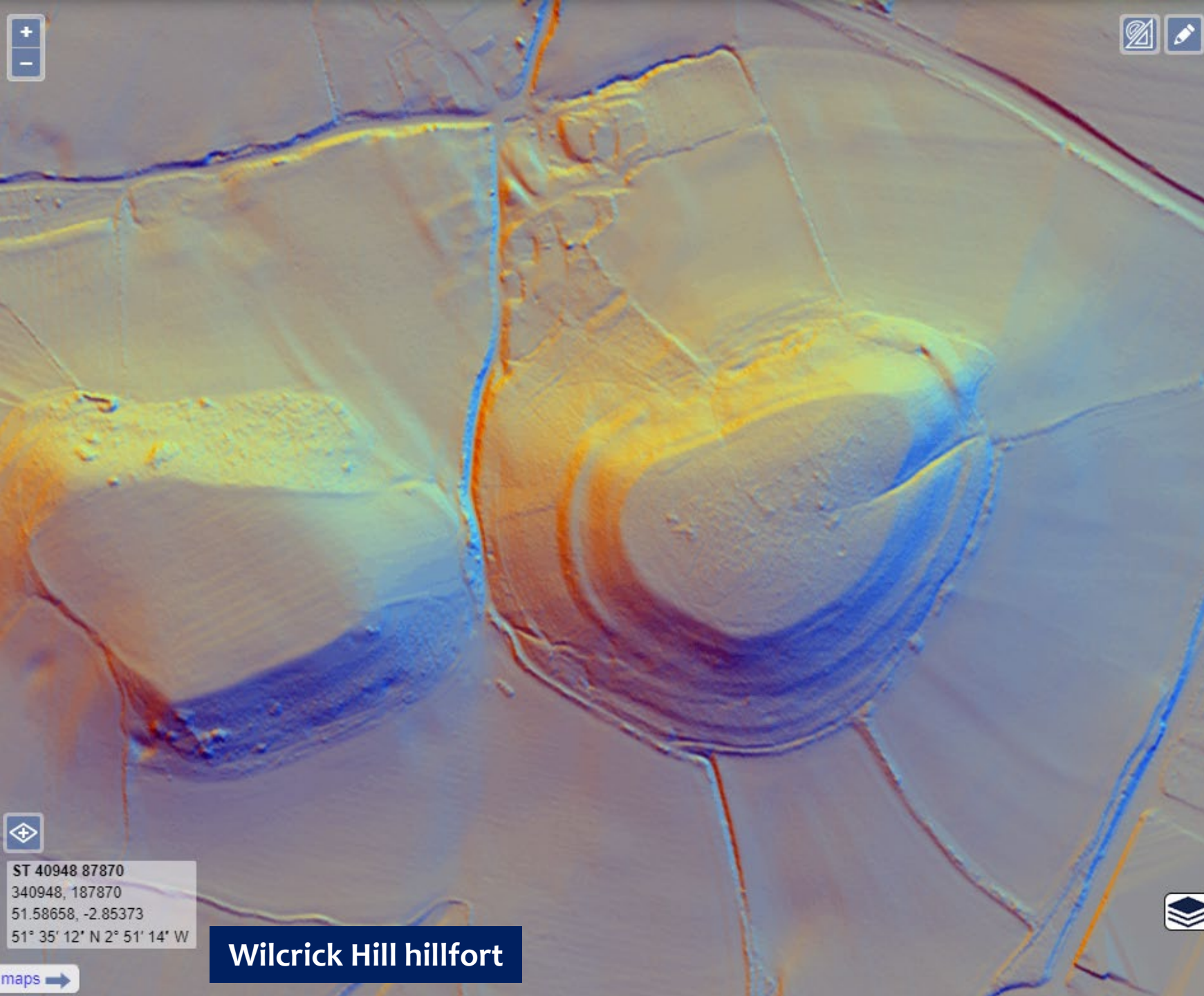


Wilcrick Hill hillfort

LiDAR – Airborne Laser Scanning
Find it on DataMapWales
Or
National Library of Scotland

Digital Surface Model (DSM)





Wilcrick Hill hillfort

LiDAR – Airborne Laser Scanning
Find it on DataMapWales
Or
National Library of Scotland

Digital Terrain Model (DTM)

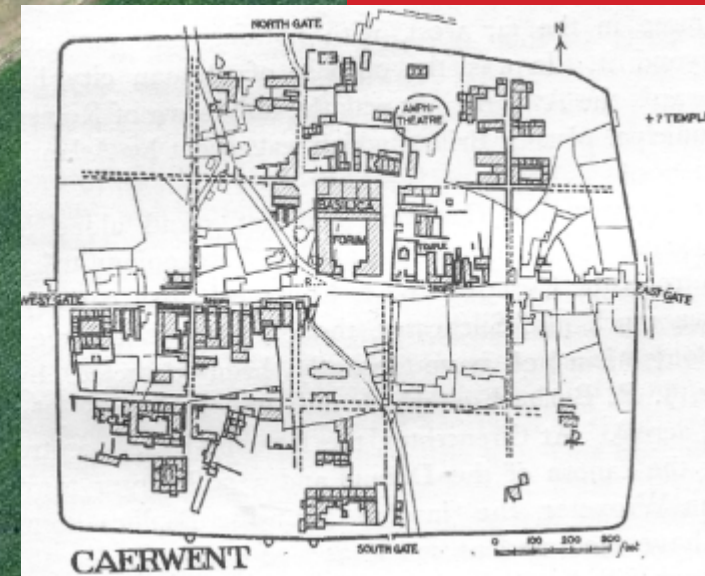


Heading east!

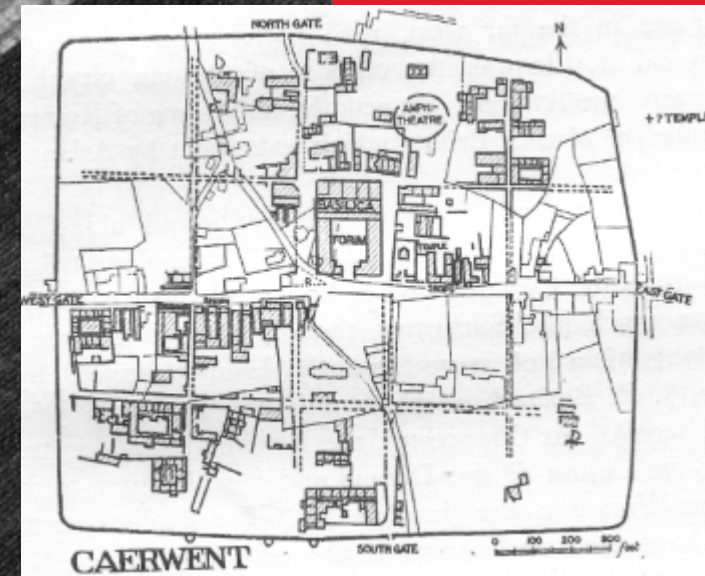


21st July 2022

Caerwent 21st July 2022



Caerwent 21st July 2022



The Roman conquest & campaigning period AD 43-78/80

'Battle followed battle. They were mostly guerrilla fighters, in woods and bogs.'

The Silures were exceptionally stubborn. They were enraged by a much-repeated saying of the Roman commander that they must be utterly exterminated...'

Tacitus



Wet Wood defended enclosure, Wyndcliffe



Latest Iron Age & Roman campaigning period AD 47/8- AD 80

‘... given the literary evidence for the ferocity of the fighting between the Silures and the Romans... We must conclude that... temporary camps must formerly have existed in these areas, but their remains await discovery...with not a single temporary camp being known [from the Usk valley] until Arosfa Garreg and Y Pigwn are reached on the very uppermost margins of the same’.

(Davies and Jones 2006, 64)

2006

Y Pigwn Roman camps

ROMAN CAMPS IN WALES AND THE MARCHES



JEFFREY L. DAVIES
AND
REBECCA H. JONES

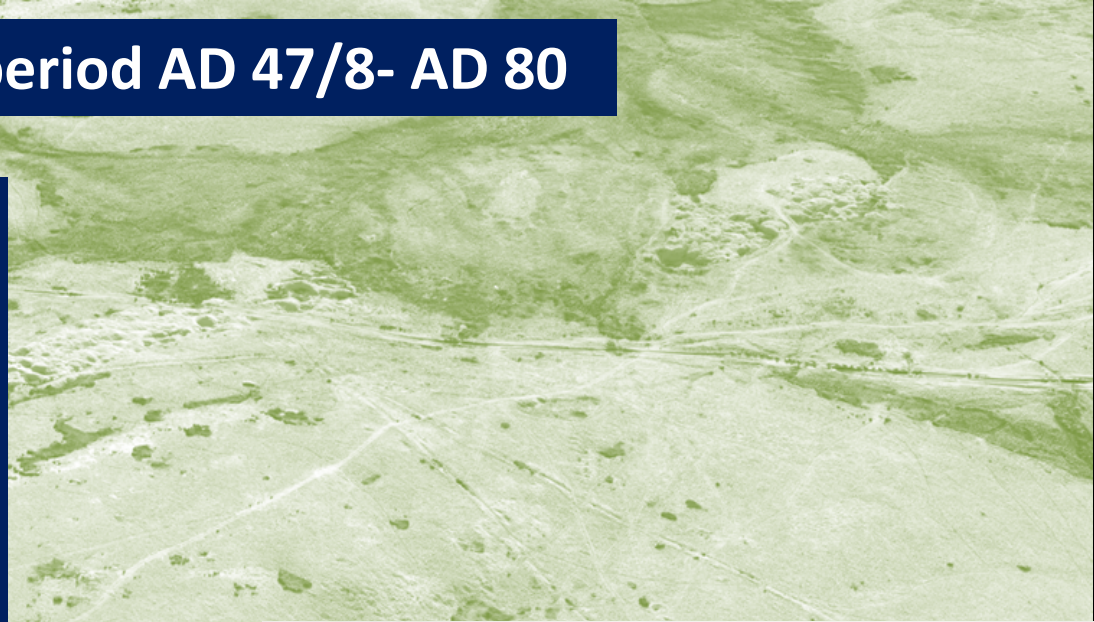
Latest Iron Age & Roman campaigning period AD 47/8- AD 80

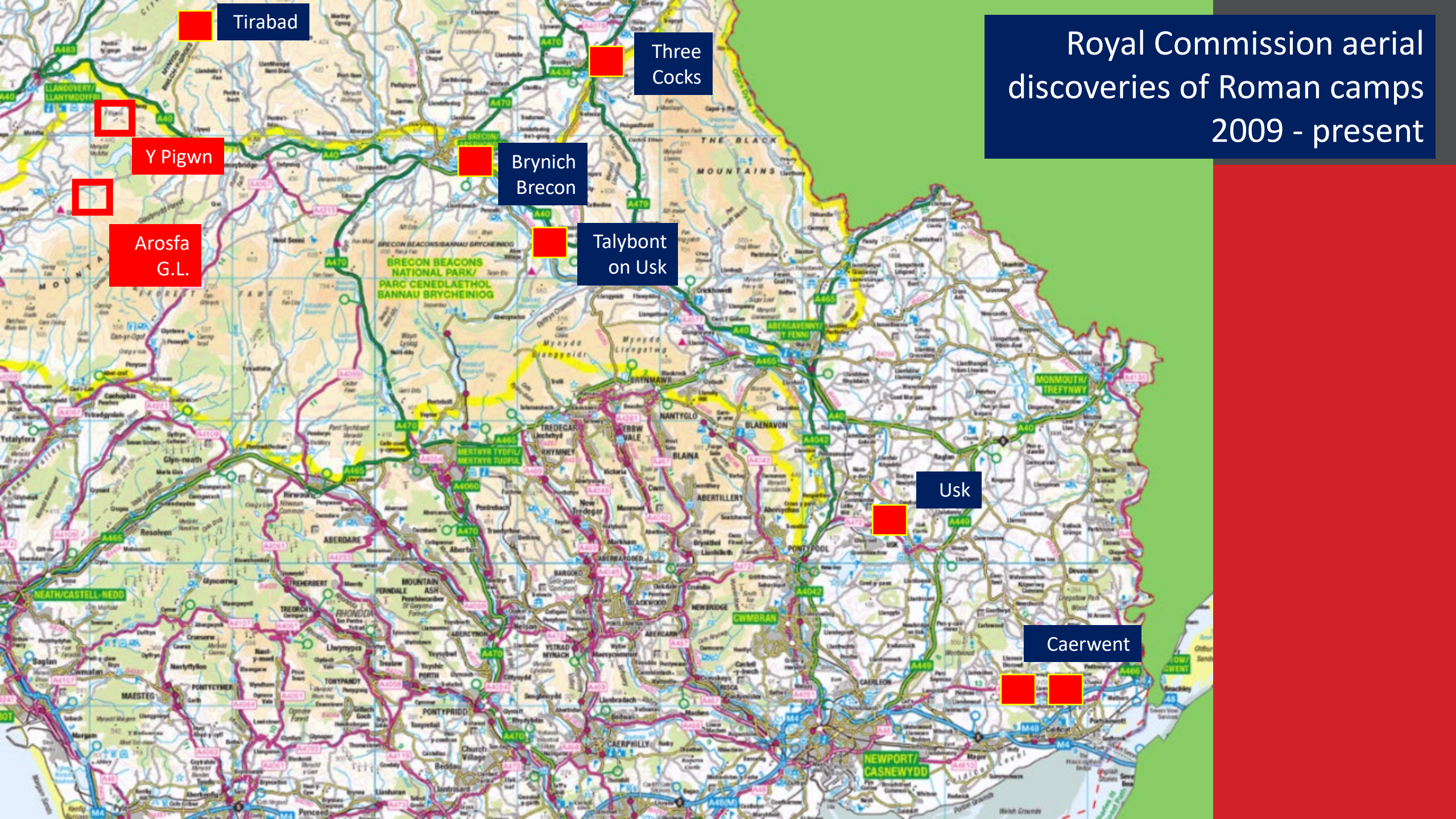
A critical period for Wales: 'Wales on the cusp of change'

Significant camp discoveries in last decade

Hoarding & burial in time of stress

Psychological impact of campaign camps





Royal Commission aerial
discoveries of Roman camps
2009 - present

Tirabad

Three
Cocks

Y Pigwn

Brynich
Brecon

Arosfa
G.L.

Talybont
on Usk

Usk

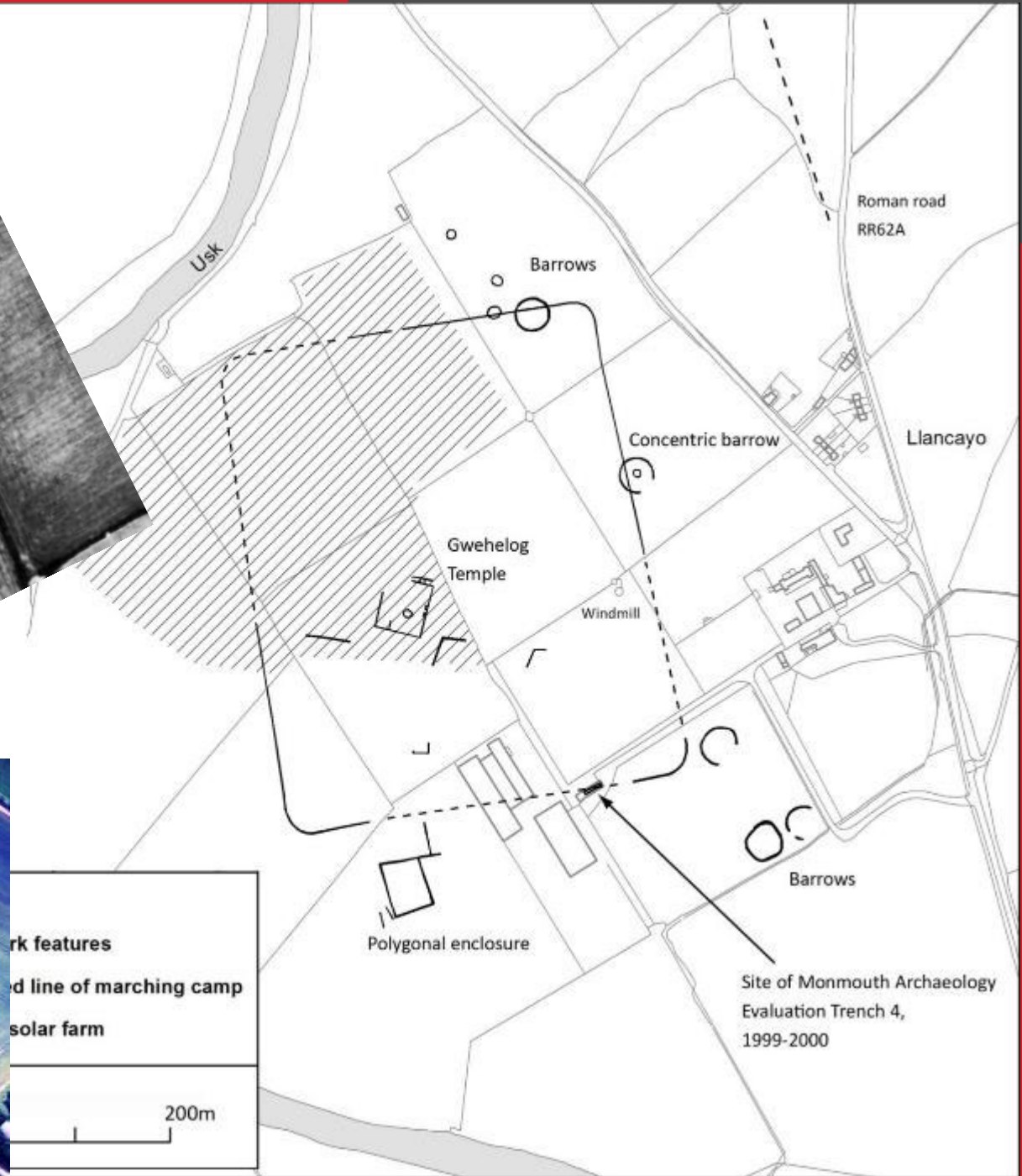
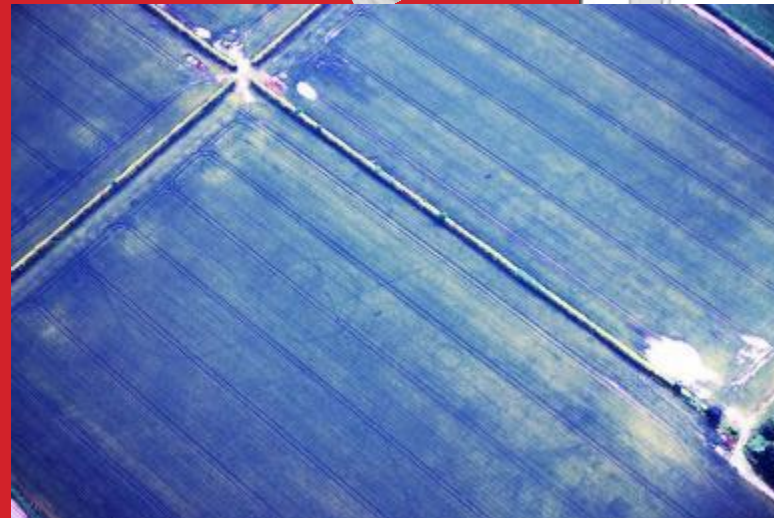
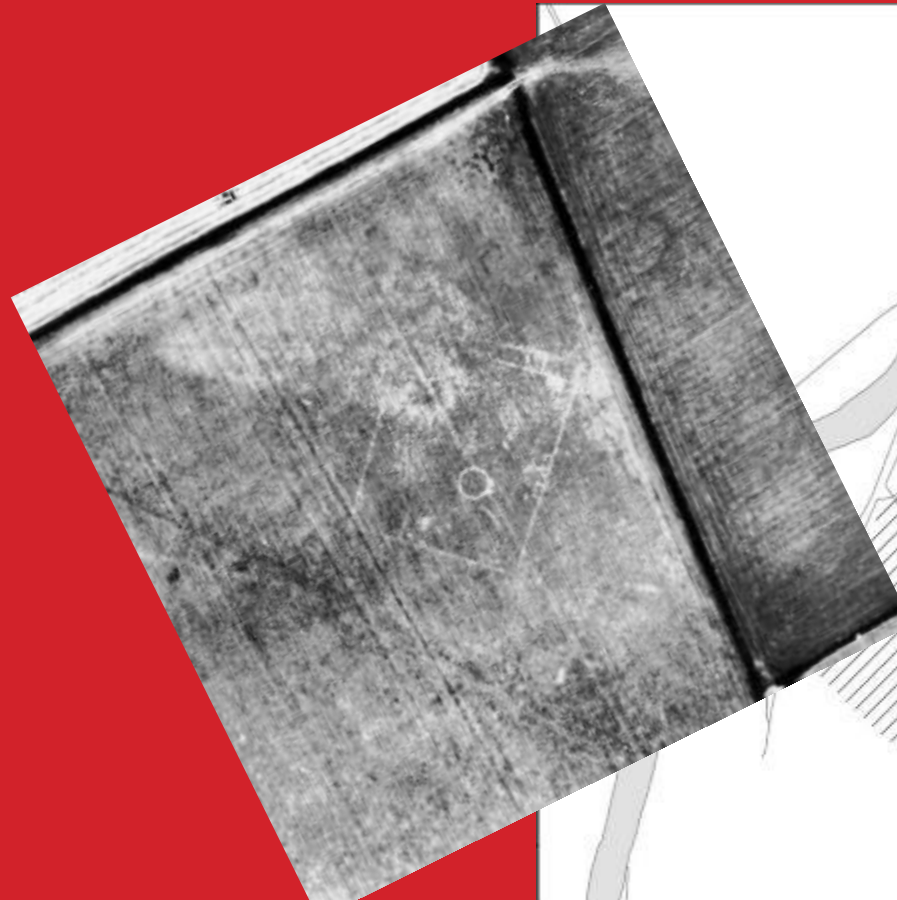
Caerwent

Llancayo Roman marching camp, barrow cemetery and Gallo-Roman shrine

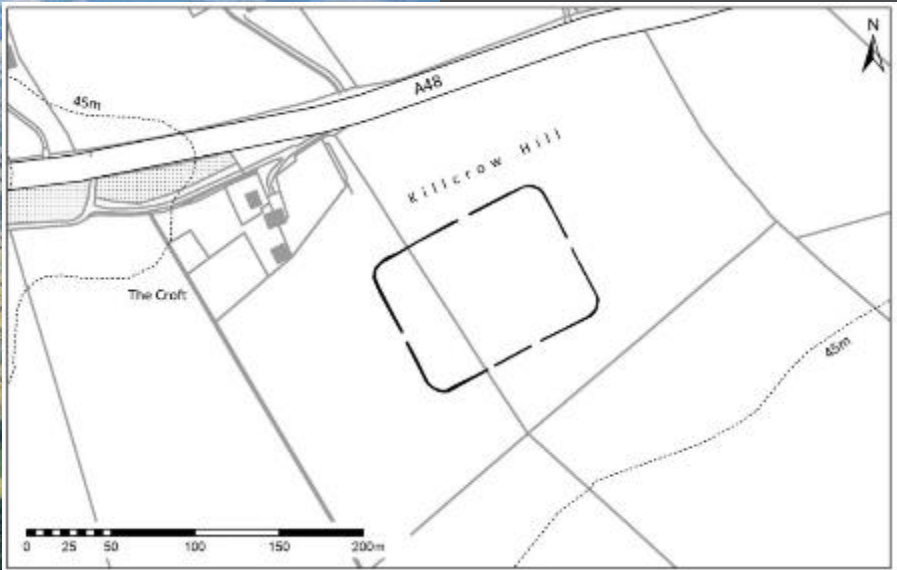
20.2 hectares.

Accommodation for around 12,000 soldiers.

Only three other camps in Wales & the Marches larger than 20 hectares.



Davis, O. & Driver, T. 2014, *Llancayo Farm Roman marching camp, Usk, Monmouthshire*, Arch. Camb, 163 (2015), 1-12



Killcrow Hill, 22nd July 2013
Measures 113m by 87m, enclosing 0.98 ha.
Smallest camp in Wales and the Marches



Killcrow Hill 6th July 2018

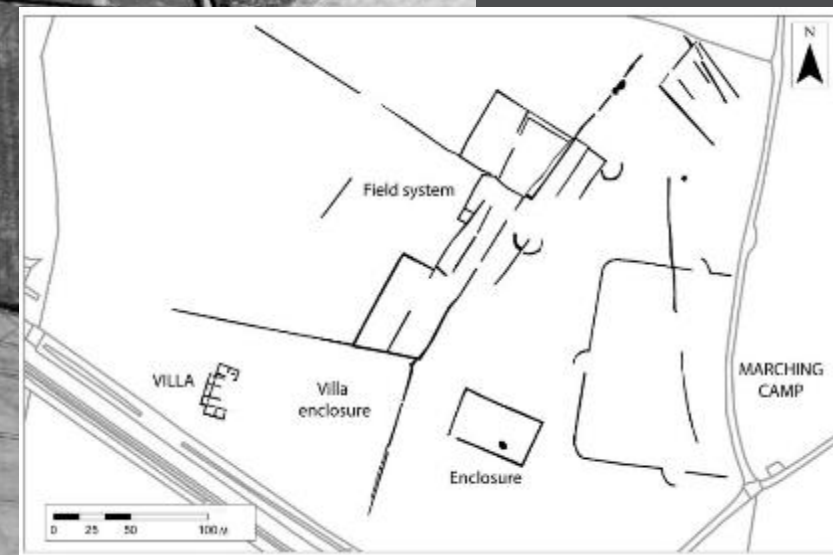
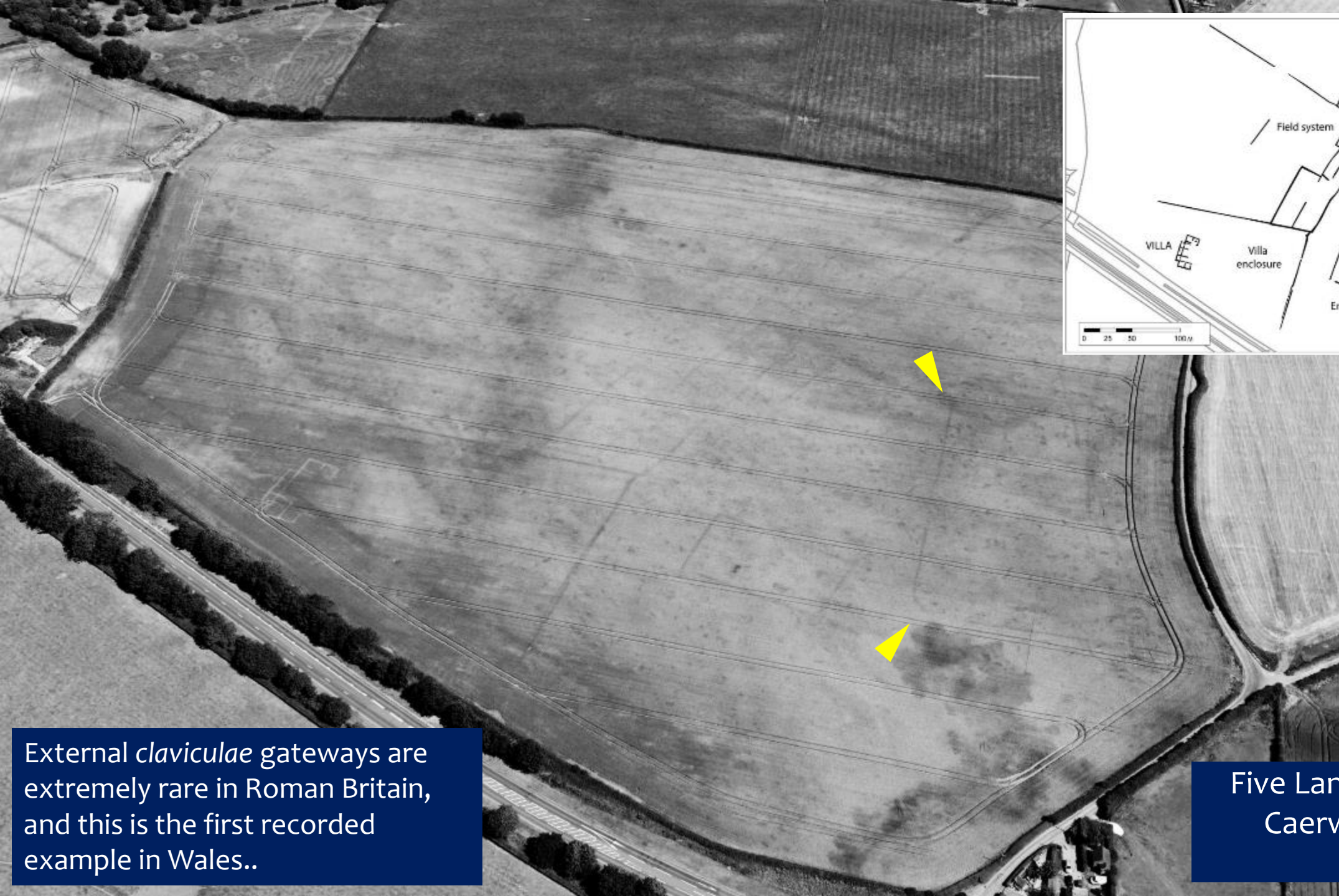




June 2010

Five Lanes Roman villa & field system, Caerwent

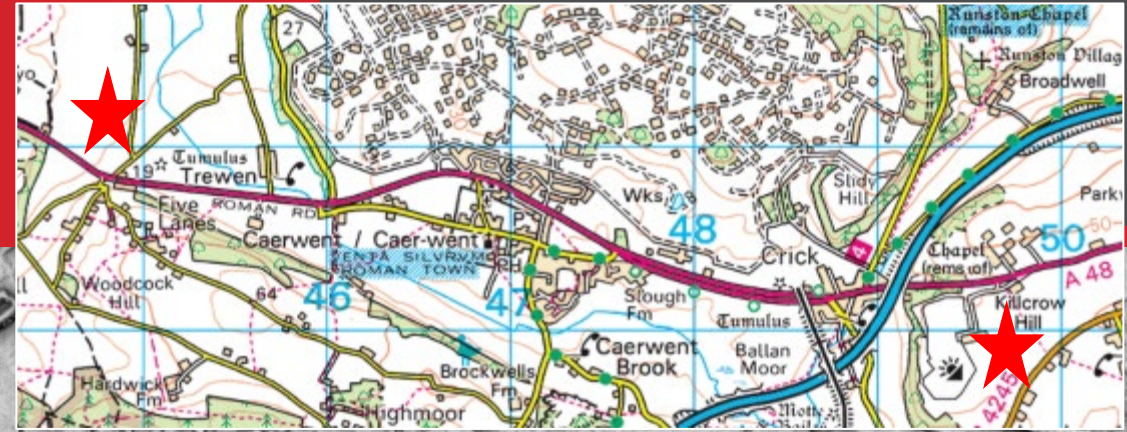
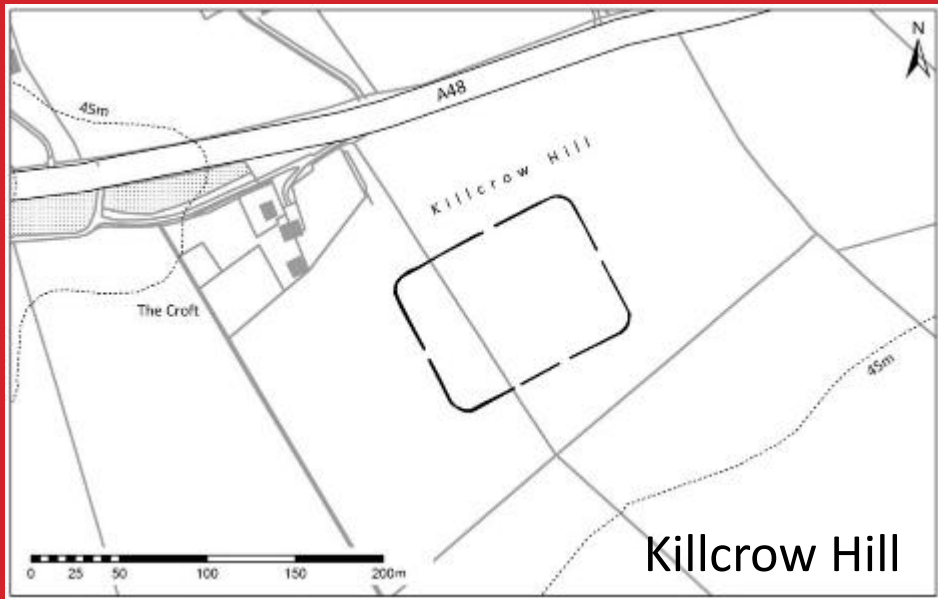
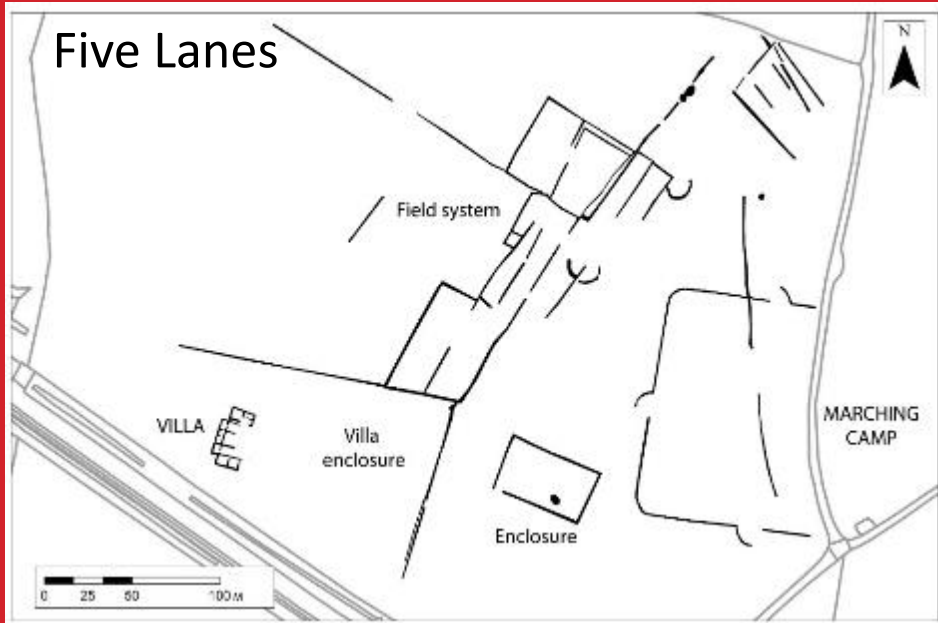
July 8th 2013



External *claviculae* gateways are extremely rare in Roman Britain, and this is the first recorded example in Wales..

Five Lanes Roman villa, Caerwent. June 2018

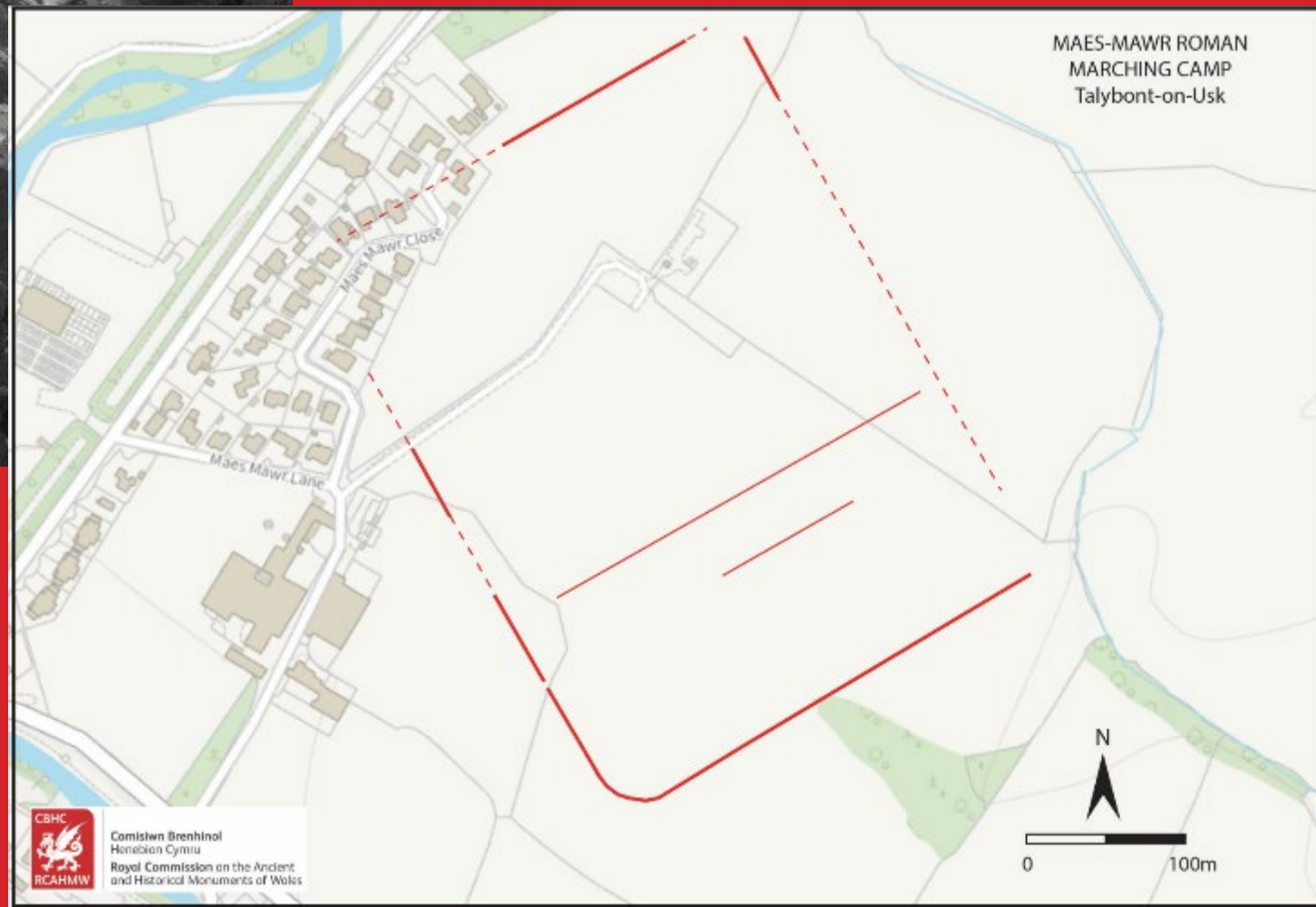
Campaigning-era questions for Roman Wales: Caerwent



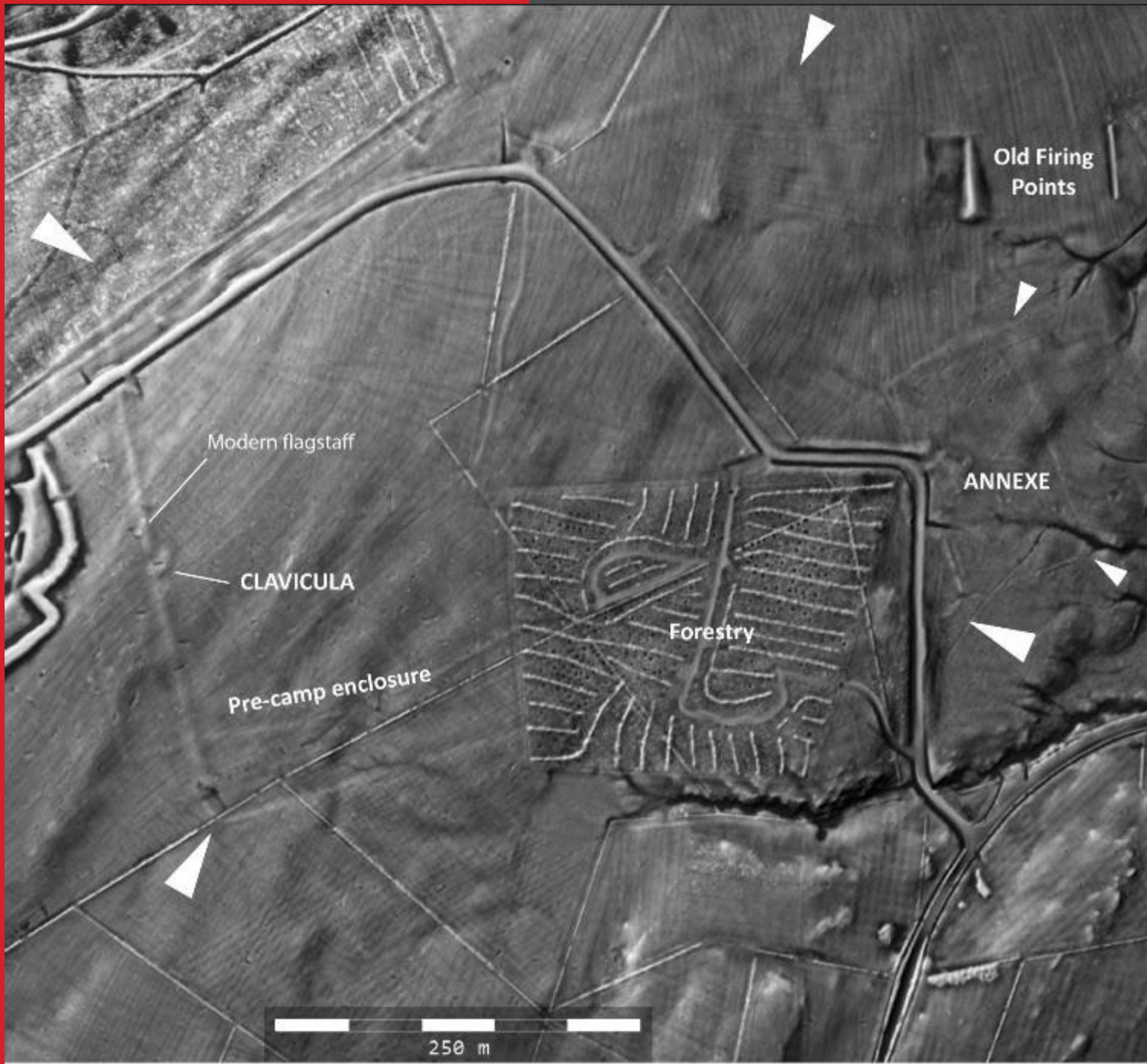
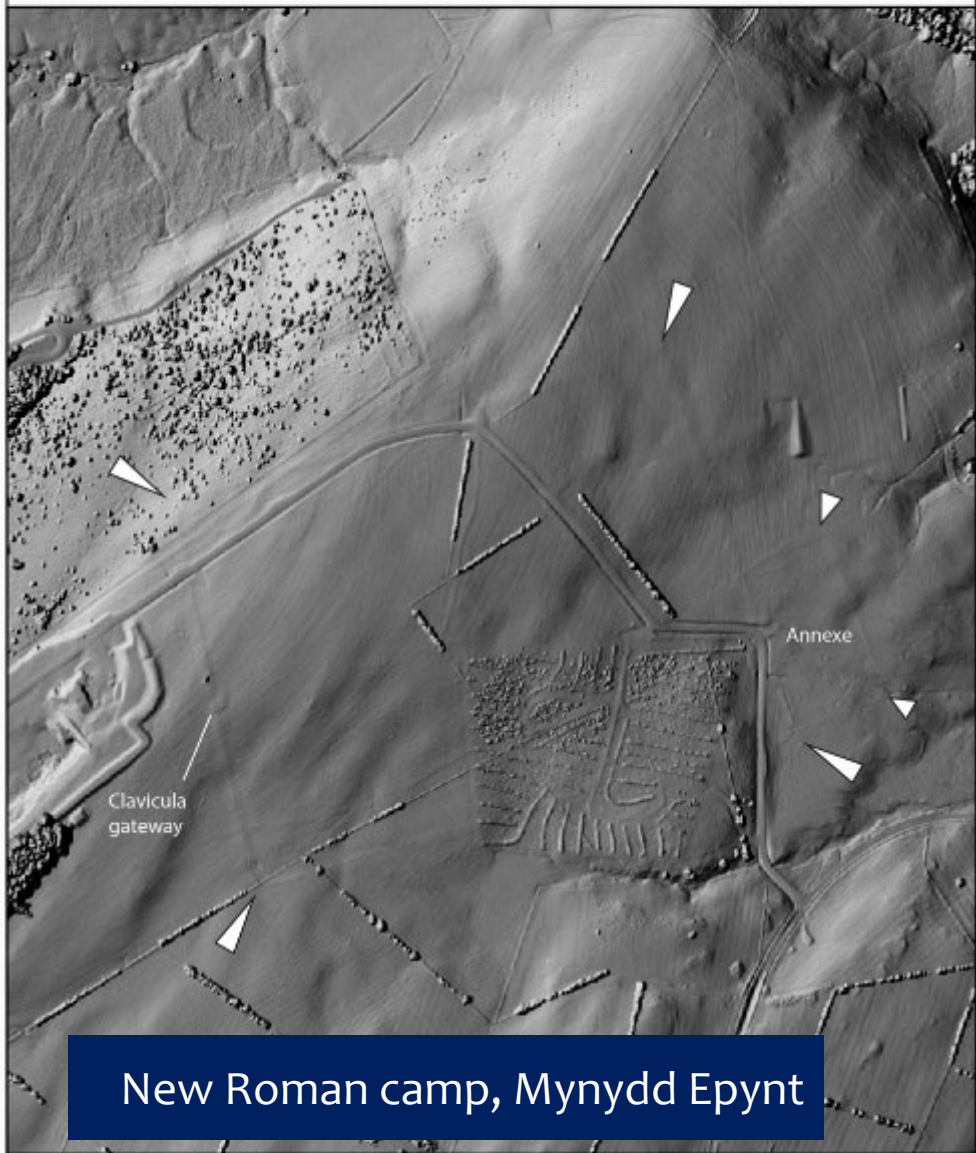


Campaigns along the Usk Valley

Maes Mawr, Talybont on Usk - 2022



SENTA - Roman camp. SN 8786 3968

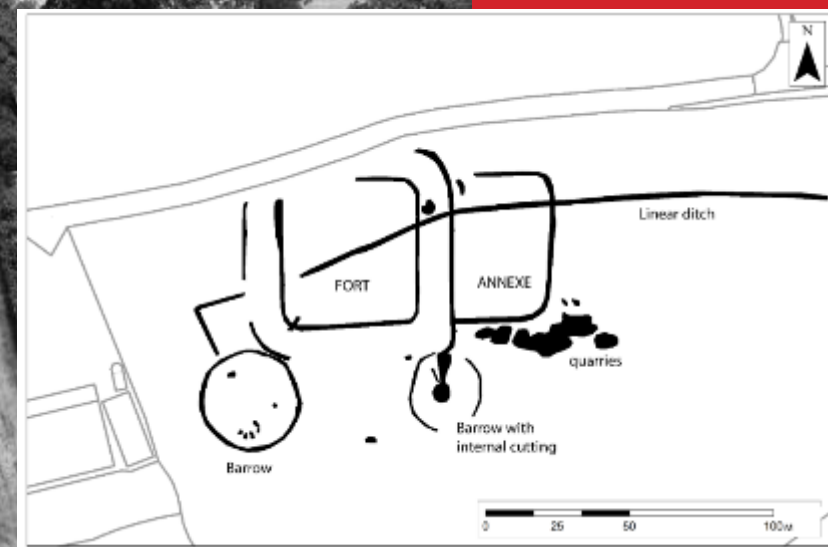


New Roman camp, Mynydd Epynt



New Roman camp, Mynydd Epynt

Other Roman discoveries



‘The ditch system, with an interspace of *c.* 12 m between the inner and outer ditch, resembles that of pre-Flavian military installations such as Hod Hill and Great Casterton, where a ‘killing zone’ has been fashioned’



Great House or Graig Olway Farm, Usk
26th June 2023



Shirenewton Romano-British farm, villa or fortlet?
Discovered 2019 – photo 26th June 2023

Uncertain aerial discoveries

Emerging discoveries from a wealth of online data:

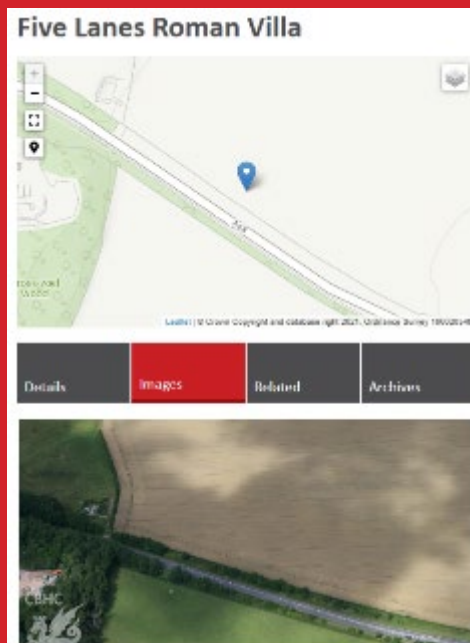
New Roman marching camp or fort on banks of Menai Strait from BingMaps, October 2024

AD 60: 'Flat-bottomed boats were built to contend with the shifting shallows, and these took the infantry across... The enemy lined the shore in a dense armed mass... Close by stood Druids, raising their hands to heaven and screaming dreadful curses..'



Diolch / Thank
you!

Find out more:
www.coflein.gov.uk



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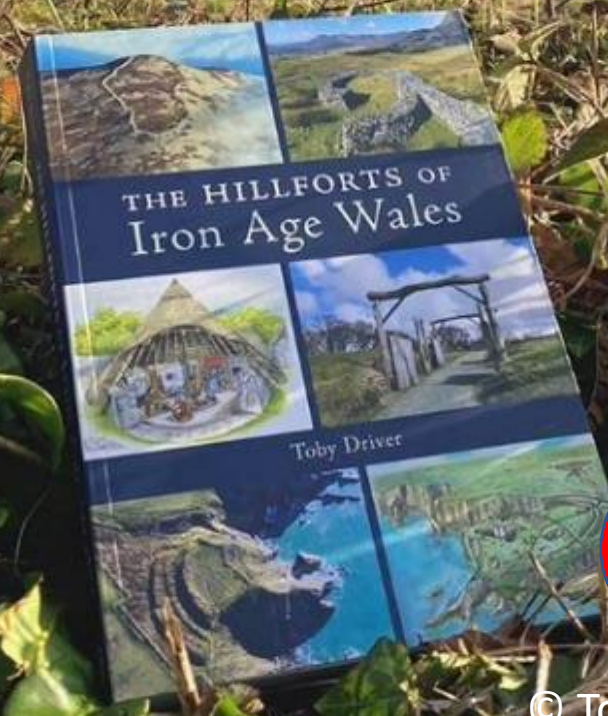
www.cbhc.gov.uk

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Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

The Hillforts of Iron Age Wales
Available from Logaston Press



£20