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A419/417
CIRENCESTER AND STRATTON BYPASS,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

STAGE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

compiled
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APU	Air Photography Unit
CAT	Cotswold Archaeological Trust
FGCE	Frank Graham Consulting Engineers Ltd
GRO	Gloucester Record Office
MPP	Monuments Protection Programme
NGR	National Grid Reference
NMR	National Monuments Record
OS	Ordnance Survey
PRN	Primary Record Number
RB	Romano-British
RCHME	Royal Commission on Historical Monuments of England
SME	Sites and Monuments Record
VCH	Victoria County History

SUMMARY

This archaeological assessment was carried out over the proposed route of the Cirencester and Stratton Bypass by the Cotswold Archaeological Trust in October and November 1990. The study area comprised approximately 97Ha of land running as a corridor from Fosse Farm on the A419 (at NGR: SU071970) to the northern end of Cirencester Golf Club (at NGR: SP007006). All main published and archive sources were examined and an extensive fieldwalking programme carried out over all of the farmland not under crop, woodland or pasture, those areas which could not be fieldwalked were examined in a detailed field checking survey.

The results of this assessment have been to add a further 11 areas of archaeological interest on the proposed bypass route, to the total of 19 sites and monuments recorded on the Gloucestershire County Sites and Monuments Record. These new areas of interest range in date from the Mesolithic period to the Medieval and are represented by scatters of artefactual material in the ploughsoil, earthwork features of various forms, and one seemingly blank area which for reasons to be outlined below it would be prudent to evaluate. All of these may be affected in some way by the passage of the proposed bypass, and to assess how significant any possible disturbance may be it will be necessary to investigate these sites further by a combination of geophysical surveys and trial trenching.

As a result of the assessment work, it is recommended that PRN's 2085, 2089, 6561, 5968, 3067, 2026, 9399, 3072, 2390, 2388, and 7542 are subjected to a Stage 2 Archaeological Evaluation in order to establish their character, significance, state of preservation and potential archaeological value; and that Sites A to S receive similar treatment with the aim of clarifying their character and nature. This process will ensure that as agents of the Department of Transport, the clients (Frank Graham Consulting Engineers Ltd.) will have complied fully with Council Directive No.85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985, enabling firm decisions on planning, layout and construction of the proposed bypass to be made at an early date, and to provide for a strategy of best archaeological practice to be developed and followed through for future use of the land.

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION AND BRIEF

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1.1 Brief Scope and Definitions

This report presents the findings of an assessment of the archaeological information relating to properties affected by the "landtake" of the proposed A419/417 Cirencester and Stratton Bypass (Figure 1.0). The assessment was commissioned by Frank Graham Consulting Engineers Ltd, Elgar House, Shrub Hill, Worcester WR4 9EN for the Department of Transport, with four main objectives in mind.

- (a) The compilation of base-line archaeological data from the study area, covering all periods, and presented as a written record with accompanying plans. This includes archaeological, cartographic and documentary information.
- (b) Systematic field survey of the study area and the analysis of the artefacts recovered.
- (c) The assessment of the nature, extent and importance of the archaeological resource represented within the study area.
- (d) The formulation of recommendations and options for strategies to deal with all aspects of the archaeological resource, a timetable for this work accompanied by revised costings.

The aim of this assessment is to provide high quality archaeological data with a view to enabling:

- (i) any modifications to the design, construction methods and/or layout of the proposed development which might enhance the worthwhile preservation of the archaeological deposits to be made at the earliest opportunity;
- (ii) the design planning and costing of the most appropriate archaeological response to the proposed development to be made in good time.

For the purposes of this assessment 'archaeology' is defined as the study of past human societies through their material remains these being both artefactual and/or structural. This covers all periods of the past from prehistory to the modern era, with an arbitrary upper date limit of AD 1900, beyond which adequate historical documentation and records normally suffice for archive purposes. The archaeological evidence under consid-

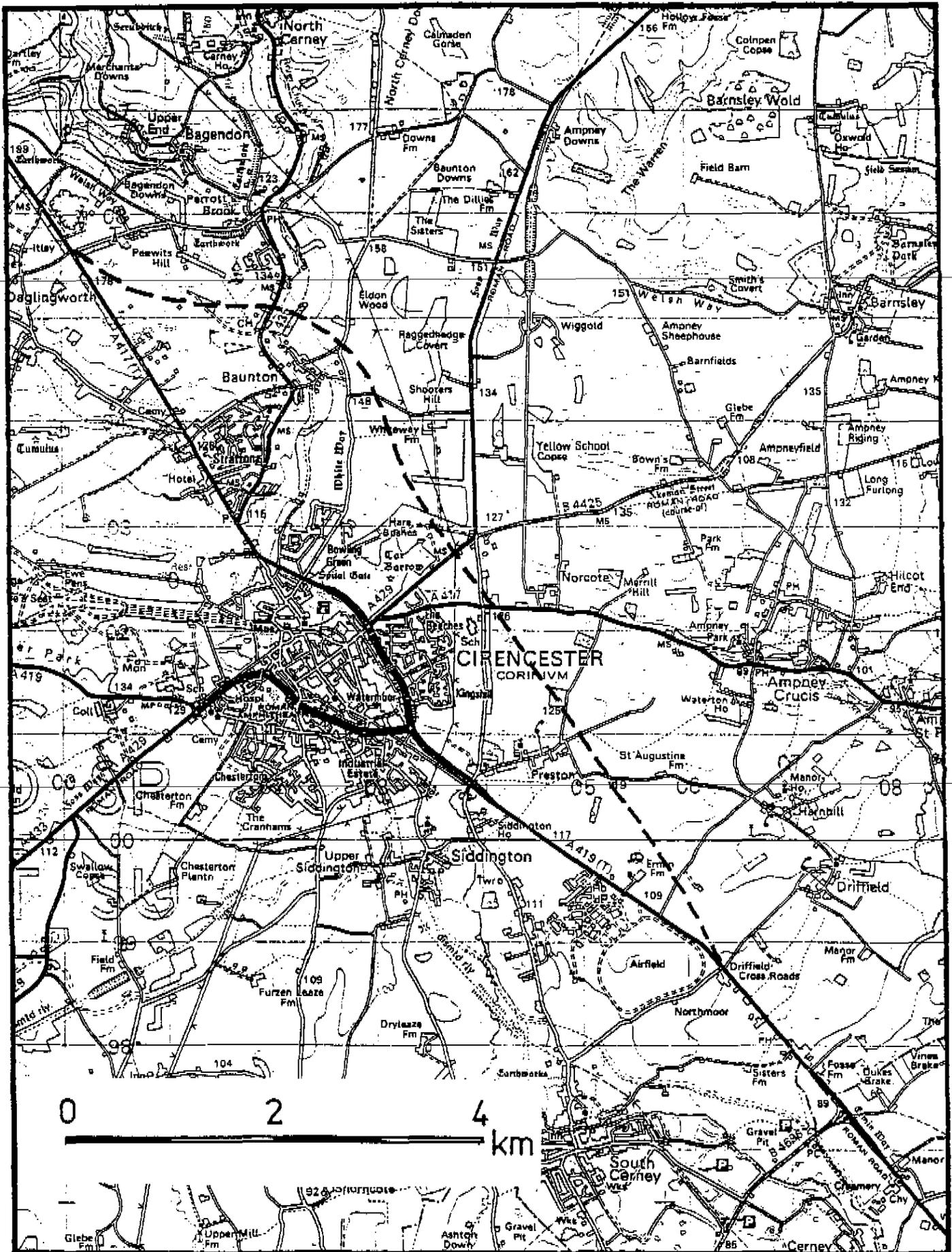


Figure 1-0 Location

eration in this report all lies below or within the present ground surface. No standing structures of archaeological significance fall within the 'corridor of interest' and are therefore not considered within this report.

This assessment report follows the guidelines for required archaeological investigations along the proposed route of the Cirencester and Stratton Bypass, as laid out in the document A419/417 CIRENCESTER AND STRATTON BYPASS, BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY, provided to the Cotswold Archaeological Trust by Frank Graham Consulting Engineers Ltd. The assessment work reported on here fulfils the clients (FGCE Ltd) obligation as agents for the Department of Transport in complying with Council Directive No. 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985.

This report has been prepared by CAT Ltd with all reasonable skill, care, and diligence within the terms of the contract with the client (FGCE Ltd) and taking account of the manpower and resources devoted to it by agreement with the client. CAT Ltd disclaims any responsibility to the client and others in respect of any matters outside the scope of the above. This report is confidential to the client, and CAT Ltd accepts no responsibility of whatsoever nature to third parties to whom this report or any part thereof is made known. Any such party relies upon the report at their own risk.

1.2 The Study Area

The study area is defined as the 'corridor of interest' outlined on Drawing No's 9102/26/34-38 as issued to CAT by Frank Graham Consulting Engineers Ltd, which shows the approximate landtake involved in construction of the Cirencester and Stratton Bypass Scheme. (See Figure 1.1 for reduced version of this). Although the proposed bypass leaves the A417 trunk road at the area of Danglingworth Crossroads the study area does not commence until approximately the meeting point of Stratton, Bagendon, and Danglingworth parishes on the edge of Cirencester Golf Club (NGR: SP 007055). It then runs between the golf course and Peewit's Hill at a width of approximately 25-40m until it reaches the Churn Valley at Trinity Farm where it is carried over the valley on a viaduct. The corridor continues across open countryside in a 20-45m wide strip, widening to 100m where it crosses the Fosse Way to the east of Cirencester. From here it maintains an approximate width of 60-90m as it passes-by Preston village, and on to the junction with the A419 trunk road at the southwestern end of South Cerney Airfield. Thereafter, upgrading of the present trunk road to dual carriageway standard narrows the width of the

corridor to approximately 20m to the point where the study area ends and the Latton Bypass scheme begins at the county boundary near Fosse Farm (NGR: SU 071979). The Latton Bypass is the subject of a separate CAT Archaeological Assessment (Johnson 1990).

The total area involved in the scheme is approximately 97Ha (241 acres), of which some 62.5Ha are under arable cultivation, 23Ha are at present laid down to pasture, 8Ha are woodland, and the remaining 3.5Ha comprise roads, tracks etc.

Linear surveys such as those created by road schemes etc. prove to be awkward units of examination. The great length of such study areas usually means that they run through many features of interest, but that these sites, monuments, etc. tend to become divorced from the neighbouring archaeological landscape. This is unavoidable, and caution must play a part in discursive treatment of a site's local, or regional, importance. For example, one must not put too much emphasis on the discovery of what may genuinely appear to be a 'unique' site within the study area, but which may in fact be only one of several close-by. Only a narrow transect of land could be examined during the course of this study.

1.3 Geology and soils

The underlying geology, from north to south, on the route of the bypass is Great Oolite at the highest part of the route from Danglingworth crossroads to the line of the White Way west of Baunton. Forest Marble as far as the village of Preston from which point Middle Lias Cornbrash predominates as far as Fosse Farm on the A419 trunk road. The Forest Marbles re-occur between Harnhill and Ermin Farm (Figure 1.2).

Within the valley of the River Churn above Cirencester there are deposits of river terrace gravels, Fullers earth and recent alluvium, the alluvial deposits widening downstream of Baunton.

1.4 Archaeological Background

Cirencester and its environs are extremely rich in well preserved archaeological remains. Many of these are upstanding monuments visible on the ground, but the majority are known only from air photographic reconnaissance and chance discovery of isolated finds.

Contained within the brief for the archaeological survey of the Cirencester and Stratton Bypass scheme as supplied by FGCE Ltd was a schedule of archaeological sites identified by the Gloucestershire County Archaeologist in the vicinity of Cirences-



-  Great Oolite
-  Forest Marble
-  Cornbrash
-  River Gravels
-  Alluvium

Figure 1.2 Geology
Solid and drift

ter. Some 141 sites and monuments were listed on the schedule which was accompanied by a general location plan (Figure 1.3). Although significant with respect to the total archaeological picture of the vicinity, most of these sites are unaffected by the passage of the preferred route of the bypass and can thus be discounted from this assessment. Only those sites directly in the path of the proposed bypass are fully assessed in this report. Sites within the immediate vicinity of the study area, i.e. those which may appear to form a close relationship with sites in the corridor of interest, have also been briefly considered.

Within the limits of the study area defined by the 'corridor of interest', there are 13 identified sites and monuments currently registered on the Gloucester SMR which will be directly affected by the proposed route. With six exceptions, mainly Roman or later roads, these are all cropmark features and complexes of mainly indeterminate date identified from air photography.

In addition to these, 13 more areas of interest have been identified from the field survey programme. The investigation of some of these can be combined with evaluation of previously recorded sites and monuments on the bypass route, although many will have to be evaluated as individual problems in their own right. The nature of these will be outlined in Section 3.

1.5 Sites and Monuments Discrimination

For the purposes of this report and the Latton Bypass report recently compiled by CAT (see Johnson 1990), it is proposed to differentiate between the types of archaeological data available for study, a simple division being drawn between archaeological 'sites' and 'monuments'. This will clarify the potential significance of the item in question, assist with improved interpretation of the site/monument, and help to assess the needs of each site/monument for Stage 2 Archaeological Evaluation.

The working division for archaeological data examined in this report is as stated between 'sites' and 'monuments', where a site may be defined as a metaphorical 'window' onto the archaeological resource, i.e. an excavation, watching brief, aerial photograph or an old map would all be defined in this way. All these are single 'views' onto the archaeology which itself may be no more than a component of a larger entity. For example, an archaeological trench which uncovers a masonry wall of a building, is only one view onto a component part of what may eventually prove to be a Roman villa, the complete structure of such is classifiable as a 'monument'.

The use of established archaeological terms, i.e. 'sites', to describe what should be called 'views' of individual archaeological components, leads to some confusion and requires clarification. In this assessment it is proposed to order the SMR data into lists of 'sites' (which are in fact either 1) physical components of larger monuments not yet recognised; or 2) individual discrete findspots, a coin hoard for example), and lists of 'monuments'. Thus, a monument can comprise a number of sites, but a site cannot be a monument in its own right.

The term 'monument' is defined by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (see Appendix D), and as with the Monuments Protection Programme the survival of monuments is recognised in three main forms: single monuments, relief landscapes (together with their components), and urban areas.

Prior to the development of the Monument Protection Programme by English Heritage, these distinctions had not been made on a comprehensive or uniform scale, thus the County SMR information (the standard archaeological data-base) remains a basic schedule of archaeological information with little attempt to sort the diverse data in any systematic or meaningful order.

Following Stage 2 Archaeological Evaluation of the sites and monuments along the bypass route, a full appraisal of monument discrimination for the study area will be included within the report. Only after this work has been done will it be appropriate to make detailed recommendations and comments on the importance of the archaeological resource affected by the proposed scheme.

1.6 Report Structure

Section 2 of this report gives details of the archaeological records and archives consulted, and evaluates the available data. Section 3 outlines the field survey methodology, techniques used and provides a summary of the survey results, including field checking. Section 4 sets the findings from previous sections into a general period context for the purposes of assessing local, regional and national importance of the sites/monuments under scrutiny. Section 5 forwards recommendations for a Stage 2 Archaeological Evaluation of identified areas, sites and monuments.

SECTION 2

DATA COLLECTION

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2.1 Archaeological Records and Archives

The Gloucestershire County Sites and Monuments Record at Shire Hall, Gloucester was consulted for information on the study area. This is a computer based record which incorporates information from diverse sources including the National Monuments Record, the Ordnance Survey, results from excavations, field surveys, casual finds and historical documentation. The system also records information from museum accession records, and a preliminary search of primary and secondary literature. Records of sites monuments and findspots are indicated on 1:10,000 base maps by means of either a pinpoint location accompanied by the Primary Record Number (PRN), or in the case of larger items by outlining the area of the field in which it occurs, accompanied by the PRN. In some cases, plots of the cropmarks which comprise many of the records on the SMR occur on base maps at 1:10,000 scale. The whole system forms the standard archaeological data-base for the county.

The distribution of known sites, monuments and findspots is shown on Figure 1.3.

Within the study area there are 13 sites and monuments identified on the Gloucester SMR which fall into the corridor. Of these 13, probably 10 will require detailed archaeological investigation at Stage 2 level, but all are listed here for reference. From north to south, these are:

PRN 2039: The White Way; an ancient road, probably Roman in origin but following the line of the ridgeway route. It now serves as a modern B road. The principal concern with this monument is to establish whether important components such as roadside ditches will be destroyed by the bypass construction.

PRN 2085: A trackway of uncertain date which runs from Cirencester up the Churn Valley to North Cerney etc. This is the line of the pre-turnpike road which now serves only as a bridlepath. It runs on the opposite side of the valley to the present road, and is well preserved over most of its length. The SMR suggests it may be an alternative route to the White Way.

- PRN 2090: This is the turnpike road built in 1825 to link Cirencester with Cheltenham, and it basically follows the contour line running up the west side of the Churn Valley. The modern A435 road follows the same line. There is no need for this site to be investigated.
- PRN 2128: A series of cropmarks, possibly prehistoric enclosures of indeterminate function spread over an area of 1.64 Ha, undated. The area enclosed under this PRN number on the Gloucester SMR plot comprises several fields, but the actual area of the cropmarks is much smaller and well outside the study area. Therefore it is not deemed necessary to include this PRN within the overall evaluation strategy, although associated areas are worthy of investigation.
- PRN 6561: The Fosse Way, a major Roman road which runs from Exeter to Lincoln, 1st century AD in date. The line of the road is well preserved in the stretch running east from the town, and is now a modern trunk road. There may be roadside occupation within the study area, and significant deposits (i.e. dating evidence etc.) present in roadside ditches.
- PRN 5963: Kingshill Lane (Cherrytree Lane), probably a Roman road linking the Foss Way with Ermine Street acting as a 'bypass' to the Roman town, relieving the traveller of the necessity to pass through Corinium to change onto an alternative principal road. Again the questions to be asked of this are the same as for the Fosse Way, but only after it can be conclusively established that the road is indeed Roman in origin.
- PRN 4944: The Midland and South Western Junction Railway. A section of the disused line is crossed by the proposed bypass but the cutting has now been filled in and is of little concern to this study.
- PRN 3067: Trackway and enclosure showing as cropmarks, undated but the SMR suggests a Bronze Age date due to the association with nearby ring-ditches. This monument group is undoubtedly of significance if it is prehistoric, more so if proven to be early prehistoric. Occupation evidence may be present.
- PRN 2026: This PRN also refers to PRN's 3067, 3068, 3069 and 3070, in the SMR description, but was intended to cover an ECHME reference to 'very faint amorphous ditches' in field 5049. A possible ring-ditch has now been included in this PRN reference, but this remains well outside the study area. The possibility of these faint ditches intruding into the study area will require checking.

PRN 3383: Linear features which show up as cropmarks, some of these may be related to post-medieval field boundaries, although there appears to be a small rectangular enclosure amongst the various markings which is morphologically similar to PRN 3067. Clarification is required on nature, form, date and survival.

PRN 3072: Double ring-ditch feature, i.e. a figure of eight, both rings appear to be gapped and may be Bronze Age in date. Ring-ditches normally represent the circular quarry ditches of Bronze Age earthen burial mounds which when destroyed by ploughing tend to leave no surface traces, only the ditches show up under the right conditions when photographed from the air. Ring-ditches are a relatively common monument type, fairly well documented and understood, but this particular monument is of unusual form and as such is of above average interest. The exact nature, date and survival of archaeological deposits needs to be established.

PRN 2890: A single ring-ditch apparently unbroken, and possibly not quite circular. This is a more standard type of monument but one which will still require simple evaluation to clarify the normal points of concern.

PRN 2888: Recorded on the SMR as "enclosures and linear ditches showing as faint cropmarks", but the area also contains a possible ring ditch with appended linear ditches. Undated. It is proposed to call the possible ring ditch 2888a. The date and nature of any appended enclosures requires clarification. The other features 2888b, are more enigmatic and will require investigation also. Their exact nature needs to be established, as well as date, and state of preservation etc.

A fully detailed descriptive schedule of sites and monuments arranged by period is given in Appendix A. This lists all the known information on each site/monument and the sources for reference. The schedule also contains information on those sites and monuments in the immediate vicinity of the bypass for reference, although this information is slightly less detailed.

2.2 Air Photograph Archives

The aerial photographic collections of a number of repositories were examined for relevant information. These included the libraries of the Committee for Aerial Photography at Cambridge University, the collection held within the Gloucestershire County Sites and Monuments Record, and the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, at Swindon.

Both vertical and oblique photographs were examined throughout the course of the proposed bypass route. The obliques contain the most directly relevant information for the study and tracings of relevant features were taken from these and transcribed manually onto Ordnance Survey base maps at 1:2,500 scale. Without the aid of computer rectification of oblique aerial photographs it is difficult to pinpoint exactly the position of many cropmark features, therefore some allowance must be made for this in the base map plots. The cropmark plots appear on Figures 1.4 to 1.8

Unfortunately, most of the study area lies outside the area of the Upper Thames Gravels which possess ideal geological and soil conditions for aerial photographic reconnaissance, as witnessed by the numerous publications devoted to cropmarks of the region (see Benson & Miles 1974; Leech 1970). As stated in Section 1.3, considerable tracts of land over which the proposed scheme runs are composed of Forest Marbles and Cornbrash. The composition of these and the soil profiles forming above tend to err-away from ideal aerial photographic conditions, and although there appears to be approximate parity in the level of cropmark evidence from each geological area, there are some rather unexpected archaeologically 'blank' sections present. Notably, the considerable stretch of land running from the disused track which issues eastward from Preston, through to the White Way above Daunton. From this point till the end of the study area most of the land involved has been down to grass for a considerable length of time (see Figure 2.1) and therefore not receptive to aerial photography except in exceptional circumstances. This is a problem, as Miles has pointed out (1984, 199) two of the best preserved Romano-British settlements in the Upper Thames Valley were only recently discovered under pasture which had for years masked their presence. The potential of such areas must therefore be borne in mind in any fieldsurvey programme.

A listing of vertical and oblique photographs examined for the study can be found in Appendix B, along with a plot of vertical coverage.

2.3 Cartographic Sources

The proposed bypass scheme runs through or affects some six parishes so there was a considerable amount of cartographic information available for consultation. This was primarily late 18th and early 19th century in date: inclosure awards and tithe maps providing the earliest useful mappings of the area, and the first edition 6" and 25" Ordnance Survey maps detailing information for the late 19th century landscape.

Tithe maps and their apportionments provide information on the position of field boundaries, many of which have since been removed; an essential check against features which show up on aerial photographs. They also provide information on field names, very often providing archaeological clues to the location of long-vanished buildings, features such as ponds, etc. In addition, there is often useful information on contemporary land-use, helpful in assessing archaeological site preservation.

Inclosure maps are sometimes less useful than tithes as they often possess less detailed information on field names or land-use.

For the parishes involved tithe maps and apportionments survive for Bagendon, Baunton, Cirencester, and South Cerney. The Bagendon tithe map was not available for study at the GRO. Inclosure maps exist for Bagendon, Stratton, Preston, Driffield and South Cerney. The inclosure map for Bagendon could not be traced by GRO staff and was therefore unavailable for study. Field name information for Bagendon was transcribed from an OS 6" copy located in GRO (Figure 2.0).

Little information could be usefully retrieved from the variety of estate maps etc that were available. These were nearly all late in date and were not consulted in depth.

A listing of the relevant cartographic material present for these parishes is given in Appendix C.

The following list of field names is taken from the tithe and inclosure maps and awards, and arranged by parish running from north to south along the study area.

2.31 Field Names

Daglingworth

Field	Name	Landuse
17	downs	past.
18	downs	past.
19	downs	past.
20	plantation	
21	downs	past.
22	downs piece	past.
23	Gunpits	past.
24	Gunpits	past.
25	close	past.
26	Fourteen acres	past.
47	close	ara.
48	barn patch	ara.
49	ten acres	ara.
50	long lands	ara.
214	tofts ground	ara.
215	Foss ground	ara.
216	close	ara.
217	Twitching Hill	ara.
218	Foss Ground	ara.
220	Twitching Hill	ara.

Eagendon

117	Forty acres	ara.
118	downs	past.
119	plantation	
120	?	
121	1st Cirencester grnd.	
122	plantation	
123	Cottage , barns, yard	
124	Pewett Hill	ara.
125	Pewett Hill	ara.
126	Knockers Hall piece	ara.
126a	"	
126b	"	
127	Scrivens ground	ara.
129	3rd Cirencester grnd.	ara.
129	?	past.
130	?	past.
131	?	
132	Plantation	
133	2nd Ciren. grnd.	ara.
149	Barrets piece	ara.
151	Round Ham	past.
152	Wateringham	ara.
153	Millhams	ara.

154	"	past.
156a	Round close	
156	Several Quillets:	
	(i) a furrow	
	(ii) a croft on grassyard	
	(iii) a little quibble	
157	Trinity Mill house	
158	House and garden	
159	Little orchard by brook	
160	Back orchard	past.
161	Conduit close	past.

Baunton

35	Mortar pits	ara.
36	Lamburn Hill	ara.
37	Dry land	past.
38	Broad mead	past.
39	Horse shoe	past.
40	The Lynches	past
41	Elms Quarry	ara.
42	Hickmans Pitts	ara.
43	Brake	wood
44	Lake meadow	past.
45	Kaps Ham	past.
46	court close	past.
47	Hickmans pitts	past.
48	Cottages	
49	Church and yard	
50	Garden	
51	"	
52	Rickyard	
53	building	
54	"	
55	orchard	
56	cottages	
57	"	
58	"	
59	"	
60	buildings	
61	orchard	past.
62	Brookhay	past.
63	shed	
64	"	
65	Sheep house ground	past.
66	cottages	
67	"	
68	" and sheds	
69	?	
70	barn and rickyard	
71	Home piece	
72	plantation	

73	"	
74	?	ara.
75	Water Furrow	ara.
76	Hitchings Hedge	ara.
77	" Knowle	ara.
78	" "	ara.
79	?	
82	Shooters Clive	ara.
83	Barley Stone	ara.
84	" "	ara.
85	plantation	
86	Ridgeway	
87	Rook Hill	ara.
88	pt. of Rook Hill	ara.
89	Lower twenty acres	ara.
90	Glaydon Hill	ara.
91	Moor Furlong	ara.
92	Barley Stone	ara.
93	barn and yards	
94	Barley Stone coppse	
95	cottage and garden	
96	Double Fence	wood
97	Whitelands	ara.
98	Dentice Bush	ara.
99	" " plantation	
100	Whitelands Plantation	
101	" "	
102	Moor Furlong Wood	
103	Hare Bushes	ara.
104	Galley Hill	ara.
105	" " Plantation	
106	" "	"
107	" "	"
108	Hare Bushes	wood
109	" "	wood
110	" "	wood

Preston

1	Cherrytree Lane ground	
1a	Five Acres	
2	North Court close	
3	?	ara.
4	?	ara.
5	?	ara.
6	Oak leigh	ara.
7	Mount Hills	ara.
8	Park close	ara.
9	" "	ara.
10	Weet Pitt ground	ara.
11	Whittingstoels	ara.
12	Bottom piece	ara.

13	Middle ground	ara.
14	Court field	ara.
15	" "	
16	Severals	ara.
17	Weet Pitt ground	clover
18	Cowleigh	
19	"	
20	Ampney Ground	
21	West broad leigh	
22	East broad leigh	
23	Severals	
24	Calf closes	
25	Townsend ground	ara.
26	Ampney ground	
27	Pinhill	
28	"	
29	Townsend ground	ara.
30	Ten acres	
31	Home close	
32	" "	
33	Ragnells Green	
34	" "	
35	Ten acres	
36	Four acres	
37	Ox Hay	
38	Harnhill Lane end ground	
39	Duck Foreland	
40	Hamlet	
42	?	ara.
43	?	ara.
44	?	ara.
45	Hangman Stone ground	
46	Moer Foreland	
47	Fourteen acres	
48	?	ara.
49	?	ara.
50	?	ara.
51	?	ara.
52	High Foreland ground	
53	?	ara.
54	?	ara.
55	?	ara.
56	?	ara.
57	?	ara.
58	Moer	
59	Hangman Stone ground	
60	Foreland	
61	Hangman Stone ground	
62	?	
63	Hangman Stone ground	
64	" " "	
65	Moer ground	

66	?	
67	?	ara.
68	?	ara.
69	O. Foreland	ara.
70	?	
71	?	ara.
72	?	ara.
73	?	ara.
74	?	
75	Quarry ground	
76	" "	
77	?	ara.
78	?	ara.
79	?	
80	?	ara.
81	?	ara.
82	?	
83	Locks Quarter ground	
84	?	ara.
85	?	ara.

Driffield

79	Upper field	
80	?	
81	Crab Tree ground	
82	Upper Gatmore	
83	Lower Gatmore	
84	Spur ground	
85	" "	
86	Littleworth mead	past.
88	Blackwells Littleworth	
89	Littleworth	
90	The Ham	
91	Middle Littleworth	
92	Upper Littleworth	
93	Rushy	
95	Rytham	
96	Overstreet Furlong	ara.
97	Lowerstreet Furlong	ara.
98	Lower Littleworth	
99	Upper Littleworth	
100	Littleworth	
101	"	
102	"	
128	Littlemead	
129	Home Five acres	
130	Littleworth	
132	Home ground	
133	Lower ground	

Although few of the field names recorded on the various maps reveal any new information of an archaeological nature, the value of the study has been to reveal that nearly every field through which the proposed bypass runs appears to have been cultivated since at least the early 1800's, and in consequence any underlying archaeology will have suffered to some degree. In the case of ephemeral prehistoric sites, ploughing of the land which brings finds to the surface may well be the only manner in which they can be located. On the other hand, the shallow topsoil present on the limestone uplands of the Cotswolds will have been so thoroughly cultivated that it is highly unlikely that any archaeological features not actually cut into the bedrock will survive intact. It is only on the northern end of the study area where the bypass runs up onto the downs that significant areas of long term pasture are present, but these are much reduced in size now, the downland having been ploughed in recent years for cereals. At least in the few areas that remain, the underlying archaeology may be well preserved.

2.4 Primary and Secondary Documentary Sources

All the important literature which deals with the archaeology and history of the study area is listed alphabetically in the bibliography.

2.5 Museums

The Corinium Museum in Cirencester holds most of the material from the immediate vicinity of the town. Accession registers were checked for the past few years, as casual finds and discoveries during this period may not have found their way onto the county SMR yet. Some additional information was added from this data gathering exercise, most notably the field walking notes of the late Mr SF Coombs which deal in part with areas affected by the bypass route. Although Mr Coombs was only interested in recording flint distributions during the course of his fieldwork, these notes have proved to be valuable in adding a further dimension to the known archaeological resource along the route of the study area.

2.6 Individual Expertise

Several individuals known to have undertaken research work in the area were contacted, few of these could provide additional information of use to this assessment.

2.72 Field Survey

Much of the evidence outlined above contains potentially relevant archaeological information but little of it is presently available in a form which can be usefully employed as a factual basis for an archaeological assessment. In an attempt to remedy this imbalance in the coverage of the information, a systematic fieldwalking and fieldchecking programme was implemented over the route of the proposed scheme. As 65% of the affected land was under arable cultivation fieldwalking was deemed to be the most cost-effective and archaeologically appropriate technique needed to fulfill the requirements of the brief, providing information on site/monument presence or absence, extent, and date. In areas of pasture or woodland where this technique could not be employed, basic fieldchecking using the Monument Protection Programme was used. (See Appendix E for examples of field record sheets).

2.71 Field Survey Methodology

The entire study area was covered extensively by means of 'line walking'. The process involves laying out a field walking grid based on the Ordnance Survey National Grid as this bears no relation to any one period of landscape and enables a fully standardised recording system to operate. In this instance the lines to be walked were spaced at 50m intervals, and along each line being walked artefactual material was collected and grid referenced every 50 metres. The available study area was systematically treated in this way allowing direct comparison to be made between different sample units.

Along the lines being walked all artefactual material considered to be man made, or of intrinsic interest ie. natural materials not indigenous to the area, were collected and bagged. Fieldwalking personnel were equipped with a working knowledge of all artefact types and recovery rates can be assumed to be representative of material present in the topsoil.

Where points of interest were identified along the study area during the walking of the 50mx50m grid, 'nesting' of a smaller 25mx25m grid within the larger units was employed over the site in question. The entire area within the smaller grid square was then intensively walked. Where necessary the re-survey was expanded out from the line of the corridor in order to attempt to define areal extent of artefact spreads.

Processing of the material recovered initially involved washing of finds to aid identification, then sorting into artefact categories and quantifying the results. All of this information was noted on standard recording sheets (see Appendix E for example).

Artefactual distributions throughout the study area fall into two general categories, those that show a low overall incidence and those that show marked clustering. Where this clustering is suspected as being representative of archaeological sites, either through the presence of one artefact category or a combination of a number of these, the site is represented on the 1:2500 base maps by means of a symbol indicating the possible date period of the site, the symbol being accompanied by a letter identifier. In order to illustrate the evidence for the particular site, detailed artefactual plots are included by category. For presentation purposes a simple technique has been used whereby the recorded frequency of artefacts per 50m line (or 25mx25m area) are shown as different sized dots.

Due to the considerable size of the assessment project, and the request from FGCE that all archaeological data should be plotted at a scale of 1:2,500, only sites identified at the data processing and analysis stage have been shown in this manner. It has not been practical to illustrate every artefact category within the full range of types throughout the entire study area. CAT hold working copies of all artefact category plots at 1:2,500 scale over the study area, these form part of the project archive and are available for consultation if required.

2.8 Field Conditions and Land Availability

Field conditions were not ideal during the course of the study. Due to the late time of the year much of the arable land had been sown with winter barley and wheat which had sprouted sufficiently to obscure considerable amounts of ground surface, up to 40% in some cases. Although some 64.5% of the study area was available for fieldwalking at the commencement of the project, not all of the arable land could be walked due to very advanced root crop being present in several fields. 32% was under pasture or woodland and could be field checked, the remaining 3.5% comprised unsurveyable features such as roads, tracks and industrial sites.

Weather conditions have an affect upon artefact recovery rates during fieldwalking. During the course of this study, conditions can be assessed as fair, most days were overcast with periods of rain which help to wash artefacts clean of soil and thus aid recognition. There were days of adverse bright sunshine.

SECTION 3

FIELD SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 General

The evidence for the identification of sites within the study area is conventionally summarised under a series of specific period headings below, relating to successive chronological subdivisions of the prehistoric and historic timescale.

3.2 Prehistoric Period

All evidence of prehistoric activity in the study area is restricted to two categories of artefact - flint and pottery. The flint can be divided into sub-categories, i.e. burnt, waste, implement etc., but the more general of these are difficult to assign to specific date periods, and only by overlaying plots can any sense be made of distributions. Flint artefacts were more widely distributed and prolific in the study area than pottery, but the material recovered was in the main fairly undiagnostic. However, artefacts were recovered in sufficient quantity to allow identification of certain areas of archaeological interest.

The pottery is more specifically datable allowing reasonable statements to be made when found in sufficient quantity. Unfortunately, during the course of this study very little prehistoric pottery was recovered. This is not uncommon, as it is generally not until the late Iron Age that pottery fabrics are resilient enough to withstand the rigours of existence in cultivated soils. A handful of sherds were recovered from the land surface in two locations, one of which (near PRN's 3067 and 3383 at NGR: SP 05250055) is a known area of prehistoric activity. The other location (at NGR: SP 04800120) is on the periphery of an area of possible Roman and certain medieval activity. Such small quantities suggest little more than nearby prehistoric activity.

3.3 Mesolithic

One area of possible Mesolithic occupation was identified on the route of the bypass in Field 2200 at NGR: SP 04102. This revealed a collection of flints including end scrapers, a denticulate notched blade (snapped), several burins, possible cores, waste flakes, unidentifiable lumps and burnt flint spread over an area approximately 100m square. This spread of material appears to confirm the evidence of a Mesolithic site on this spot as previously identified by Mr SF Coombs in 1972 who recovered

several flint points from the field (Coombs, 1976). No real patterning within the overall distribution area could be detected when the site was re-gridded and walked again, but it would appear from the combined results of the two surveys that sufficient different flint artefact types are present on the site to suggest occupation of the site was more than brief.

Nearly all of the flint recovered proved to be relatively 'fresh' in appearance indicating that it had travelled little distance while being uncovered by the plough, and therefore that current distributions of artefacts may reflect with some accuracy their original areas of deposition. The site will require some evaluation in view of the rarity of Mesolithic occupation traces on the Cotswolds. The ephemeral nature of such a site would not withstand major construction works as could be expected on the proposed bypass route.

3.4 Neolithic

A small scatter of flint forming a cluster outside the wood at Hare Bushes was located in Field 4830 at NGR: SP 03400325. This is very close to an area of (?)Neolithic/Bronze Age flint found in 1972 by Mr Coombs in the adjacent field, No.2139, and appears to be an extension of the same scatter. Material recovered in the current survey was mainly undiagnostic, including flakes and unworked material, but also one broken leaf shaped arrowhead. It is felt that the whole areal extent of the scatter in fields 2139 and 4830 should be considered as one site, the precise dating and character of which could only be revealed at the evaluation stage.

This site is provisionally bracketed within this period, the artefacts recovered are insufficient for a conclusive statement to be made on dating although some neolithic material is undoubtedly present, and it could fall into the bronze age or perhaps a later category. This should become clear when the site is subject to evaluation, again this is necessary due to the fragile nature of the archaeological material in question which would not survive major construction works.

3.5 Bronze Age

No artefacts were recovered from the field walking programme which could be positively identified to this period, although there is the possibility that some of the material provisionally assigned a (?)Neolithic date could fall into this category.

With regard to those sites already identified from the SMR as possibly Bronze Age in date, i.e. PRN's 2390, 3067 and 3072, little material was encountered in the vicinity of these monuments to confirm this interpretation. No pottery was recovered, and little diagnostic flint.

3.6 Iron Age

No new previously unidentified areas were located during the fieldwalking programme. A very small number of possibly iron age sherds of pottery were recovered from only two locations (see Section 3.2 above), too few for any conclusions to be drawn. No sites were identified on the SMR as belonging to this period of prehistory, and the several cropmark complexes of indeterminate date in the study area are still without significant dating evidence.

3.7 Undated

As stated earlier the nature of much of the flint recovered during fieldwalking is such that even provisional dating of scatters can be unrealistic. In the case of this study, four areas of flint scatter fall into the undatable category at present.

An area of flint was located within Field 0041 at NGR: SF 03800265 spread over a wide area approximately 100mx50m. Again this is a field walked by Mr Coombs in the 1970's and one in which he located a flint scatter "of various cultures", but which is not fully detailed in his notes. Material recovered during the CAT survey comprised several flakes, some 'worked' flint, a possible small core and a number of amorphous fragments and burnt lumps. Overall the quantity of material was small and the quality fairly poor, but it is necessary to accept that such 'concentrations' may simply hint at the presence of more important archaeology. The flint scatter is in a field where there are very faint cropmark traces probably associated with the cropmark complex (PRN 2129) partly examined by Richard Reece (Reece 1990, 19-25) in advance of house building near Kingshill School. These proved to be Iron Age in date, although a quantity of undatable flint was also present. It is unlikely that the flint scatter and ditches are associated, they are some way apart and appear discrete but this and the exact nature of the site can only be resolved through limited evaluation.

In field 1416 at NGR: SF 043021 there was another concentration of flint, mostly undiagnostic, but including one or two 'worked' flakes and a possible micro-core amongst an assemblage of rather poor material that is perhaps Neolithic or bronze age in date. The area in which the material occurred was about

50mx100m running approximately parallel to the present A417 road. When re-gridded at 25mx25m scale there was no further definition gained in the distribution of material nor in the range of artefacts recovered, although material was present in sufficient quantity for this site to be considered as requiring some very limited evaluation, as a check to ensure that it does not represent the presence of more important archaeology.

In field 6579 at NGR: SU 05709980 flint was found in sufficient quantity over an area about 50mx100m, to provisionally label this scatter as a site. This material lies somewhat northward of the cropmarks in the vicinity although a background presence of flint exists near these as well. The likelihood is that some association may exist between the flint scatter and the cropmarks although this is not apparent at present. Much more material was recovered from the site when re-gridded, including one or two pieces of good quality flint as well as the odd scraper of possible Bronze Age date, but the bulk of the material comprised flakes and much burnt flint. This area probably represents the most convincing spread of material encountered along the bypass route, but even so, it is not conclusive evidence of in-situ occupation. However, it would be wise to evaluate the area in order to check for such a possibility, and to ascertain its true character.

In field 9329 at NGR: SU 06659945, a concentration of flint was found over a 100mx100m wide area adjacent to the A419 road, throughout this field and field 7748 there was a light scattering of flint forming a background to the main concentration. Sufficient was found in field 9329, including small flakes/blades, a possible point and burnt flint for this to be provisionally labelled as a site. There are no known cropmarks from this field with which the flintwork can be associated, and the quality and quantity of the material is once again rather low. Consequently, one cannot force too much emphasis upon the slight evidence present, but it is though advisable that some limited evaluation of the area is undertaken to clarify the situation.

A flint scatter in field 7748 which was re-walked at intensive scale proved to be of little significance, and is now discounted as an area of interest.

3.8 Romano-British

Surprisingly little evidence came to light to indicate Romano-British activity directly within the study area. Only one fragment of Roman roof tile was found during the course of fieldwalking, and relatively little pottery. Several sherds were found along the roadside of Ermine Way between South Cerney airfield and Fosse Farm but insufficient in quantity to be of any significance.

There are two areas where the pottery is present in greater numbers, the first of these is at the complex of cropmarks to the east of Preston, where a light scatter of pot is present in fields 1757 and 2472, but without having a clear focus. The second area is in field 0524 at NGR: SP 04900135 where it appears to mirror a distribution of medieval pottery. Again the scatter is light with no clear focus or tight concentrations. On the other side of Witpit Lane in field 7400 at NGR: SP 04750120 a few more sherds were found with what appears to be a fragment of Roman quernstone. It is known from previous work that Roman material is present to the north of the study area along the line of Witpit Lane, this shall be considered in more detail in Section 4.3 of the report. Where these two spreads of Roman material are present at Witpit Lane evaluation of each can be combined with investigation of the accompanying spreads of medieval material.

3.9 Medieval Period

Two significant spreads of medieval pottery were found along the course of the bypass route, both in close proximity, to the north-east of the village of Preston on either side of Witpit Lane. The first of these is centred on NGR: SP 04950120 and spreads over an area approximately 100m x 200m running parallel to the lane. The second is located at NGR: SP 04750125 on the west side of the lane.

The pottery assemblage recovered from these two sites appears to be mainly of one fabric type, and can be classed as Minety Ware or perhaps a local derivative. The fabric is soft and porous, most of the limestone inclusions having been leached out. Nearly all the sherds appear to come from coil built pots, only one or two seem to show evidence of being turned on a wheel or at least finished off on one. Several rim forms and a strap handle are present and appear to indicate a mid 12th to 14th century date for the assemblage as a whole. A point of interest is that the medieval distribution appears to overlie a lighter distribution of Romano-British material in both the locations mentioned. In addition further evidence exists for a medieval presence in other areas around Witpit Lane in which Roman material has also been located. This will be discussed further in Section 4.3. The considerable density of early medieval material in both these fields in conjunction with Roman material argues for evaluation of each site to establish their nature, extent and survival of structural evidence.

3.10 Post-medieval Period

There is a general and consistent scatter of post-medieval material throughout the entire fieldwalked area, no exceptional concentrations occur, but as can be expected frequencies of material increase in the vicinity of roads, tracks and farms. Nearly all of the material from this date can be safely assumed to have found its way onto the fields through the practice of manuring the land with domestic refuse. Where the concentrations of post-medieval material are slightly heavier this is likely to represent a longer cycle of manuring than in areas where the incidence of material remains broadly constant. To an extent it is possible to use this information as an indicator of how long a field has been under cultivation, and by implication what effect this may have had on underlying archaeology. Several fields along the length of the study area show evidence of having been in arable cultivation for some time, notably those around the village of Preston.

3.11 Early-modern Period

Distributions of modern brick, tile, slag, glass, and pottery broadly reflect the same manuring patterns, road networks, and present occupation patterns as seen in the post-medieval period. Some slight differences occur from field to field which can be put down to variation in patterns of manuring, and again the heaviest concentrations of finds can be associated with activity around Preston. There are no significant or noticeable concentrations of finds which would seem to denote areas within the field-walking survey that require any further attention.

3.12 Field Checking Results

Only one area of the bypass corridor could not be covered by fieldchecking. This is the land belonging to Mrs Robinson at Peewits Hill who would not allow access unless it was to examine previously identified features. As no fieldwalking could be done on the land, and the AP checking and cartographic studies show no obvious features of interest it was not possible to apply for permission of entry on this basis. This is unfortunate as it means a large stretch of route at the northern end of the bypass has not been subject to field examination of any kind, and therefore it is impossible to assess the likelihood of archaeology being present.

Elsewhere in the study area, evidence of potential archaeological features/areas was located in the following fields:

(north to south along the study area)

Field No.0015

A variety of surface features were encountered in this field, most appear to be the result of farming activities, embankment of tracks etc., and as far as can be ascertained from initial observation appear to be modern. The only area which may be worthy of further work is on the gently sloping top of the field adjoining Peewits Farm. It would be prudent to further evaluate this area by means of a geophysical survey to assess whether there are any traces of settlement on this crest, in view of its close proximity to Bagendon, and its suitability for occupation. The remainder of the field is generally too steeply sloping to be considered as a likely settlement area.

Field No.s 0007, 0500, 0608, 1400

A variety of water management features cover the area of all these fields. Features encountered were, leats, sluices, channels, re-routed springs and drains, as well as the mill pond of Trinity Mill. Nearly all of these features can be classed as components of water meadows, and are generally considered to be of post-medieval date. However there appears to be more than one phase of water meadow system present, and how these relate to one another is not clear at this stage. The extremely elongated mill pond associated with Trinity Mill is another notable feature of the landscape here. This is a very unusual mill pond, its great length being necessary to create sufficient head of water for the mill. Although the mill is known to be Saxon in origin, it is impossible to date the actual mill pond itself, there being no documentary evidence, and no archaeological work has been carried out to date. Overall the whole series of related and associated features at this point, the mill, millpond, water meadows and probable medieval tracks and roads, makes this site unique within the Churn valley. The whole complex is extremely well preserved and intact, and ranks highly as a significant medieval and post medieval site. It is thought that all of the earthwork features in this package of land, from the tail of the millpond to the end of the water meadows by the mill, will require a detailed survey at Stage 2. This will assist in interpretation of the area and help to assess how best to deal with it in the event of future disturbance.

Field No.1800

PRN 2085 was examined along the stretch of Lynch Brake plantation through which the study area runs. The road was seen to be well preserved and metalled at this point and raised upon a slight embankment. It is thought that the embankment was created to raise the track above the flood level of the valley, but at what time this was done is unclear. Bearing in mind that this may be a road of some antiquity, and that it shares a close association with the whole package of earthworks in the vicinity of Trinity Mill, it is thought advisable to evaluate this feature at Stage 2.

Field No.4800

At the top of this field at NGR: SP 02600490, a relatively modern quarry feature was encountered in association with disturbed ground. The nature of the disturbance, basically hummocks and dips, is unclear but is most likely due to dumping at some unknown period. However, this type of site is difficult to assess without further investigation. The site is in an area which has many topographic characteristics associated with prehistoric occupation, ie. gently sloping ground on a high valley side with open country to the rear, and would seem ideally suited to settlement. Therefore it is advisable to investigate the area as a check against this possibility, in view of there being some slight evidence for activity of an unknown nature.

Field No.7200

On the west side of the A429 Fosse Way in the wood known as Hare Bushes the following were found; i) a ditch running parallel to the road, ii) a 'platform' area adjacent to the road, and iii) an earthen bank running parallel to the road. The origin or function of these features was not clear in any case, but it is possible that they are all associated with the Roman road, the ditch for instance hints at a perhaps having had a quarrying function for road material. It is suggested that all three of these features are subjected to evaluation in order to establish their true character and possible Roman origin. This could be easily achieved by simple trial trenching.

In other areas of the Hare Bushes plantation numerous 'quarrying' features were encountered most of which appear relatively modern in date, and of little significance.

An earthen bank probably connected with woodland management was encountered on the western edge of the wood at the boundary with field 4830, this appears relatively modern in date and evaluation is not deemed necessary at this stage.

Much of the area of Hare Bushes was too densely covered by trees and undergrowth to allow complete fieldchecking to a reliable standard. This should be borne in mind if the proposed bypass route is confirmed at a later date, there being the possibility that further archaeological areas of interest may remain undetectable until the woodland is cleared.

Field No.0242

A probable modern quarry feature was observed in the small plantation between Norcote Cottages and Cherrytree Cottages. This is not considered to be archaeologically significant.

Field No.7540

Within this copse of poplar trees adjoining Witpit Lane, well preserved traces of ridge and furrow ploughing were detected. These features reflect the pattern of arable cultivation along this western side of the lane visible on early inclosure and tithe maps. These features cannot be usefully evaluated as they form only a small component of major field systems, therefore it is recommended that a simple photographic and field survey at a scale of 1: be carried-out at a later stage should a decision be taken to route the bypass through here. A second feature to note is small pond in the copse, this appears to follow the line of the ridge and furrow earthworks and therefore can be considered as later in date, and consequently of little significance.

Field No.7400

There is a small pond in this field in the vicinity of the pottery scatters recorded during fieldwalking. This pond does not display any characteristics by which it can be easily dated, but as the field has been in arable cultivation for some considerable time it is unlikely to be of great antiquity. However, should evaluation of the pottery scatters in this area reveal occupation evidence of medieval or earlier date, its significance will require re-assessment.

Field No.6800

Very faint traces of ridge and furrow ploughing can be detected in this field. Although these are probably medieval in date, they do not require evaluation, and are only a very small part of a large field system. Simple surveying at a scale of 1: would suffice to record these features at a later date when their future is clearer.

Field No.5400 and 7590

In this field to the rear of Ermine Farm, a series of linear earthworks are preserved along the edge of a minor stream running from a nearby spring. These appear to be remnants of ridge and furrow ploughing but may well be water meadow features as this field is not recorded as arable on the 18th century inclosure map. Evaluation is not seen to be necessary here, a simple surveying exercise would be sufficient to record these features at a later stage when a firm decision is reached on the future of the bypass scheme.

3.7 Conclusions

Overall the outcome of the fieldwalking and fieldchecking surveys can be considered as successful. Several new areas of interest not previously recognised as sites of potential archaeological significance have come to light over the route of the bypass corridor. In addition, several areas highlighted through previous work have been confirmed as significant during the course of the CAT survey and will in consequence require further evaluation. Eight new sites have been identified from fieldwalking alone, while the fieldchecking highlighted a further five sites, some of indeterminate nature, that will also require investigation at Stage 2.

The relevance of the results from the fieldsurvey programme will now be discussed in the wider context of each period in the following section.

SECTION 4

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

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4.1 Early Prehistory

Covering the periods from man's first emergence in Britain through primitive hunting and gathering societies, to the introduction of farming.

4.1.1 Palaeolithic (c.250,000-8,000bc)

There is a general paucity of Palaeolithic finds from Gloucestershire; unsurprising in view of the lack of material across most of central England west of the East Anglian counties, making any find from Gloucestershire in sealed and datable contexts of great importance, particularly since much of the material acquired in the past was not well recorded.

Where artefacts occur, the distribution is almost exclusively limited to the major valleys of the River Thames and Severn, normally only coming to light during the course of gravel extraction on the river terraces. This does not mean that the open higher ground of the Cotswolds was not occupied, simply that severe erosion caused by climatic factors has removed the evidence from these areas, washing material off the original areas of occupation then depositing it within the accumulations of gravels and alluvium built up on the valley floors.

With respect to the study area there is only one potentially productive point on the route of the bypass that could conceivably yield information on this period. Where the road is to be carried over the Churn Valley above Baunton, the situation of steep sided valley with considerable alluvial deposits resting in the bottom provides suitable conditions for artefact deposition and preservation. It may be possible to assess the potential for the presence of Palaeolithic and later material held within the gravels and alluvium at this point (site B). More importantly, not only may artefacts be present, but there is the likelihood of buried land surfaces, soil horizons and environmental data being preserved in sealed and possibly datable contexts. Such information is extremely rare for this period and consequently of great value. Any opportunity whereby the potential of the alluvial deposits within the Churn Valley could be evaluated should be welcomed.

Statement: There should be provision within the Stage 2 Archaeological Evaluation for trial trenching in this part of the Churn Valley to assess the potential of the deposits outlined above.

4.1.2 Mesolithic (c.8,000-3,500bc)

It is from the immediate post-glacial period that the first continuous occupation can be said to have occurred in the Cotswolds region. Evidence of human occupation during the Mesolithic is more prolific now than in the Palaeolithic, and Mesolithic artefactual evidence points more securely towards in-situ occupation. However, Mesolithic finds from Gloucestershire are known mainly from fieldwalking, only a few sites being discovered by chance during the course of excavation. The known distribution of Mesolithic artefactual material in Gloucestershire is concentrated on the Cotswolds, and particularly along the higher ground overlooking the Severn Vale, a pattern which is completely different from the preceding Palaeolithic period. Excluding the site highlighted during this assessment (site I) the nearest findspot to the study area is at Bagendon in the Churn Valley. This is one of very few Mesolithic sites to be located on the Cotswold dip slope but one which displays similar locational characteristics to the recent discovery. Favoured sites in the Mesolithic tend to be on the higher areas of ground and close to water. Off the high ground the masking effects of alluvial and colluvial deposition make the location of sites more problematical.

The Mesolithic sites identified during the course of this assessment is extremely important as it illustrates along with the Bagendon material that the Churn Valley was favoured as an area of settlement in this period. At the time these sites were occupied it is likely to have supported a reasonable wildlife population and a ready supply of other foodstuffs, in a relatively sheltered location. Unfortunately little information exists to illustrate exactly the ecological and environmental balance of the area at the time, and only an integrated research programme of environmental investigation combined with the type of fieldwork carried out for this assessment can hope to answer the many questions posed for the period. Within the strategies devised for Stage 2 Evaluation on the Cirencester Bypass route (see Section 5), it may be possible to meet some of the objectives outlined here. Evaluation of the flint scatter (site I) will hopefully provide information on the sites character ie. seasonal transit camp, or short term hunting site, and environmental sampling of the alluvial deposits in the Churn Valley should throw light upon local ecological conditions.

Statement: The flint scatter highlighted during the assessment is of major significance for aiding the understanding of this period and should be evaluated accordingly. There is a possibility that further Mesolithic material of an artefactual nature could come to light along the course of the study area where sections under pasture hide this type of archaeology. It is difficult to develop a strategy within the Stage 2 Archaeological Evaluation to deal with this possibility as trial trenching for such scatters would be rather 'hit and miss'. It may be necessary to wait for fields of impermanent pasture to be ploughed, thence fieldwalked, or to investigate these areas during bypass construction works at a watching brief level.

4.2 Later Prehistory

Covering the period when farming is introduced into Britain, up until the Roman conquest.

4.2.1 The Neolithic (3500-1900bc)

Gloucestershire, and the Cotswolds in particular, are rich in the remains of the first farming societies in Britain. The most visible manifestation of the presence of this new order are the many funerary monuments that abound in the region. In addition to these, there are other monument types, enclosed and unenclosed settlements, one or two ceremonial sites, as well as isolated flint scatters and findspots of artefacts. Within the study area there is one securely dated spread of flintwork (site D) which may indicate the presence of Neolithic settlement close to present day Cirencester, unfortunately no trace of pottery was found during the fieldwalking programme although this does not mean the site is aceramic. The work of the late Mr SF Coombs has identified several other sites in the vicinity of site.. which could date from the same period and may imply that occupation was relatively widespread in this vicinity, although this statement should be qualified by the fact that the areas in question have not been subject to further examination. As stated in Section 4.12, the possibility of less detectable occupation evidence concealed by grassland along the study area is one which should be noted,

The present distribution of Neolithic sites and findspots is generally confined to the central uplands. It is worth noting, as Darvill (1984,88) suggests, that this distribution may be widened if we consider the possibility that flint scatters containing both Mesolithic and Neolithic material may indicate early Neolithic occupation sites, a case in point being the flint scatter in the Churn Valley at Bagendon noted in section 4.12. There is also the suggestion that many of the Gloucestershire round barrows traditionally assigned a Bronze Age date, of which there are

several candidates on the bypass route, may in fact have origins as Neolithic "rotunda graves", but there is little to support this supposition at present. The questions raised of this period are concerned initially with the transition from the preceding Mesolithic, how this was affected, in what pattern settlement evolved, and in clarifying the relationships between settlement evidence, burial monuments and 'ceremonial' sites.

Statement: To date there is some small amount of evidence to indicate possible Neolithic activity along the route of the study area, this will require further evaluation to establish, firstly the true date of site B, and secondly its character and extent. It is necessary to establish conclusively whether the additional sites of a possible Neolithic date near site D can indeed be included within this period, in order to set possible findings into a local context. Furthermore, if any of the other flint scatters highlighted during the course of this study prove to date from this period, and to possess intact occupation deposits, these will become extremely significant for understanding the settlement patterns of the region.

4.22 The Bronze Age (c.2000-700BC)

The distribution of Bronze Age material in Gloucestershire clusters towards the northern half of the Cotswolds, although southwards, concentrations do occur around tributaries of the River Severn and headwaters of the Thames. This is partly a historical consequence of uneven patterns of investigation and fieldwork, and is unlikely to reflect the true distribution of sites and finds over the region. There are a number of remarkable and well-recorded Bronze Age artefactual assemblages from the county, but typically for the period these come from sepulchral contexts, there being many burial monuments in the region most of which were investigated in the last century. Nonetheless the ceramic and metalwork assemblages are representative of most of the Bronze Age artefact types known from southern Britain. One of the richest group of grave goods from any barrow outside the Wessex region came from the Snowhill barrow, this included a bronze dagger, spearhead, crutch-headed pin, and a polished stone battle axe. Less spectacular but equally indicative of the wealth in the Cotswolds at this time are a series of bronze daggers from the region, several have been found in the southern Cotswolds, one at Bibury and another near Cirencester.

Settlements of this period tend to be more difficult to locate than burial monuments, although the two were once closely associated. Hints of some of these settlements are now known in Gloucestershire, mainly from one or two sites over which later occupation has taken place. The predominant settlement pattern known from elsewhere in England is a series of small homesteads

forming the centres of localised territories, possessing field systems and practising intensive agriculture. Some of the field-systems recorded by aerial photography around the study area may have their origins in this period, and there is one small enclosure within the study area (PRN 3067) associated with monument types characteristic of the Bronze Age (ring-ditches, PRN's 3068 and 3069) which may be contemporary, although the only datable material from the vicinity proved to be Roman. In addition to this there are three further monuments of probable Bronze Age date within the study area, PRN's 2388a, 2390 and 3072, all are ring-ditches and two are complex, one being a double ring-ditch and another possessing appended linear features. Unfortunately little was recovered during the course of the fieldsurvey which would help throw light on the distribution of settlement evidence along the bypass route or provide further detail on the monuments mentioned, therefore recommendations for Stage 2 Evaluation will be made on the basis of existing evidence alone.

Statement: Within the study area there are several recorded monuments, mainly sepulchral, which would appear to date from this period but none of which have been tested by excavation. Should they prove to be Bronze Age in date then they would represent an extremely important body of evidence for occupation in the southern Cotswolds. The various ambiguous flint scatters detected during the course of this study may also prove to be significant, should they too indicate occupation sites.

4.23 Iron Age (c.700BC-AD50)

Of all the prehistoric phases present in the region the Iron Age offers the most prolific evidence in terms of artefactual material and sites and monuments. However study of the resource within the county has not been uniform and much remains unanswered about the period. The most obvious monuments of the period are the hillforts of which Gloucestershire has many fine examples. None of these occur particularly close to the study area, but what is present within the vicinity is the complex of earthen dykes and ditches that together make up the extremely important late Iron Age oppidum at Bagendon. This site covers several hundred hectares and has been identified as the tribal capital of the Celtic Dobunni who inhabited an area centred upon Gloucestershire. The site is only one of a handful of such monuments identified in this country and its importance is further heightened when it is seen as the precursor of the early Roman fort and town of Corinium, later Cirencester. Recent excavations have cast doubt on the Iron Age origins assigned to the site, having produced material more representative of early Roman occupation, therefore investigation in and around the area of the monument is of the utmost importance if better understanding of the site, its hinterland, and relationship with the Roman developments further down the valley is to be resolved.

Away from the large monuments of the period the structurally less substantial sites such as villages, farmsteads and isolated huts are more difficult to identify and separate from more easily recognisable Romano-British sites which show up as cropmarks in the region. Most of these sites cannot be identified during fieldwalking as Iron Age ceramics of the early and middle phases of the period rarely survive. Evidence may be restricted to a single pit, small pit groups, or as well preserved as stake rings of houses, depending upon prevailing land-use. Very few Iron Age sites have been identified and excavated in enough depth to allow sensible interpretations of their role. It is therefore essential that where possible these sites are identified at an early stage, so that investigative programmes or preservation strategies can be developed in good time. On purely morphological grounds the curvilinear cropmark features PRN 2338b seems to be the only site which may fall within the Iron Age period. Unfortunately the field in which it is located could not be walked due to advanced crop, and no evidence exists at present to substantiate the statement. Little evidence was recovered during the fieldsurvey programme to suggest the location of additional Iron Age sites along the route of the bypass.

Statement: Within the study area there are few indications of Iron Age occupation based upon current evidence, but bearing in mind the proximity of many large Iron Age monuments and the general importance of the Cirencester area late in the period it is most unlikely that some of the sites/monuments of indeterminate date identified along the route will not produce some evidence of Iron Age activity during evaluation.

4.3 Romano-British

Gloucestershire and the Cotswolds are fortunate in having preserved so much of their Roman urban and rural landscapes. The most obvious monuments are the major towns such as Cirencester and Gloucester, linked with each other and more distant Roman centres by arterial routes which are still used as trunk roads to this day. Less visible but equally important in the overall pattern are the rural sites, a circle of ten miles radius drawn around Cirencester would reveal around 20 villa sites, a number which should probably be doubled to account for those as yet undiscovered. The pattern of villa sites at the centre of large estates seems to be the predominant one for the Cotswold region with its limestone hills and steeply sloping valleys, although small nucleated settlements are known to exist, some as upstanding earthworks. Off the Cotswolds and into the Upper Thames Valley, settlement is denser, the area being colonised farmsteads, hamlets and possibly villages, with few of the larger villa sites although Driffield, just outside the study area, possesses a rare example. Studies by Leech (1977), and RCHM (1976)

have shown occupation of this date to have been more or less continuous on the gravels of the Upper Thames Valley, although the study area is just on the periphery of this dense settlement it is not unlikely that elements of it continue onto the lower cornbrash slopes before the villa estates take over. Reece (1984) has postulated that within the large Cotswold estates one should expect the villas to perform an estate office function, while the actual tillage of the land was done by a profusion of small working farms.

Along the study area then, it is possible that some of the undated cropmark sites could represent either, villa farming, or a continuation of the peasant farm systems of the Thames Valley, or both, bearing in mind that the study area runs through several topographic regions. Small quantities of Roman material were picked up during the fieldwalking programme around the village of Preston. Combined with the information from a pipeline observation (Gleventis, 1983, 42-3) around Witpit Copse to the north of the bypass line, this would seem to hint at some form of Roman settlement on this side of the present village. The evidence at present is too slight to postulate settlement continuity here at Preston (there is also some medieval material from the area of the current survey, and from the pipeline observations), but several fieldworkers believe this kind of continuity to exist throughout the Cotswolds (Finberg, 1959; Reece, 1984).

One must necessarily look at Cirencester in more detail in view of its great importance to the overall Roman picture of the region. Although the Roman town itself is not affected by the bypass scheme some single monuments, larger monument categories and landscape complexes associated with it may be. Firstly, several of the roads over which the bypass runs are Roman in origin, having preserved their alignments more or less intact over 1500 years. Principally three roads are involved, the Fosse Way, Ermin Street, the White Way and possibly a fourth at Kingshill Lane (Cherrytree Lane). On the sections furthest away from the town (i.e. Ermin Street around South Cerney Airfield) there may be roadside occupation although the results of the current fieldwalking programme did not highlight any points of outstanding interest (although several large fields were not surveyable. See Figure 2.1). On the east side of Cirencester where the bypass runs closer to the town it was thought possible that some small scale occupation or industrial evidence may have been encountered in the manner of other Roman towns (eg. Verulamium, Colchester), but fieldwalking results prove this is not the case, or that the line of the survey was too distant from the town for it to be detected. It is also unlikely that Roman roadside burials would be encountered along any of the stretches affected by the bypass, the bypass route crosses all roads at points too distant for this

to be very probable (the known extent of the cemetery outside the town walls along the Fosse is only some 50m or so west of Corinium). On the other hand there are some as yet undatable features seemingly connected with the Fosse Way in the Hare Bushes plantation which could be significant and which must be evaluated to determine their nature.

The relationship of Cirencester to its immediate environs was addressed by Slater (1973) when examining Saxon settlement patterns. He suggests that the local Roman administrative territory overseen from Corinium can still be traced in the landscape pattern formed by many of the sinuous parish boundaries which run around the town at a fairly regular distance. The eastern boundary of Preston parish is of some concern to this assessment as it is one of those identified by Slater as possibly preserving the line of the administrative unit. This line is crossed by the proposed bypass south of Ermin Farm, and it is suggested that evaluation take place at this point in order to establish whether there is any reason to believe that this parish boundary is one of major archaeological significance i.e. Roman in origin.

Statement: In view of the fact that the proposed route of the bypass runs close to one of the major towns of Roman Britain, it would be surprising if some form of R-B occupation or settlement was not encountered. The possible areas of interest around Preston village (sites J and K) will require further investigation if their importance is to be properly assessed. As will the monument F&M 305? which produced only Roman pottery during the fieldwalking programme. Kingshill Lane (Cherrytree Lane) will also require limited evaluation in order to establish its origin and significance, this and the other roads, the Fosse Way, Ermin Way and the White way can all be evaluated simply and quickly by machine trenching.

4.4 Saxon and Medieval

Study of the Saxon period in Gloucestershire and the Cotswolds proves to be of great difficulty, for the earliest centuries (5th and 6th AD) the written sources are almost non-existent and the archaeology seems to be nearly indistinguishable. As Heighway justly states (1984, 227) "the most intensive archaeological research will be necessary if the history of Anglo-Saxon Gloucestershire is to be amplified". There is very little firm evidence on which to base assumptions and models of settlement patterns, economy etc. Finberg (1959) has made a claim for continuity of settlement in the local landscape from the Roman period right through to the medieval, which theoretically appears to be relatively consistent with the evidence that is available at present slight though it may be, the problem arises when one tries to prove this in detail.

Around Cirencester the evidence for early Saxon presence rests with several sherds of grass-tempered pottery from the amphitheatre, two burials from outside the town at Barton Court Farm, the occasional casual find from within the town and the presence of a pre-10th century church which possibly held the status of minster. As time progresses evidence increases with many parish churches revealing Saxon origins in their fabric, cemeteries increase in size and number, and documentation and written evidence is more prolific, culminating in the work of the Domesday book which gives at least some insight into settlement and economy of the locality.

With regard to the rural settlement around the town there are no positively identified sites which can be attributed either a Saxon origin or show hard evidence of any form of Saxon occupation and continuity of settlement from earlier periods. Partly the problem lies in the difficulty of identifying sites and finds in a period in which it appears that there was a reversion to building techniques in timber and the general use of perishable materials for everyday items, a marked change over the immediately preceding period. On the little evidence available at present one cannot base too much on the fieldwalking results in the area northwest of Preston village where Roman material appears to be connected with medieval distributions (sites J and K). But as stated already, there is a hint of possible settlement continuity here, which if real, could be significant in locating a Saxon element to the village. The name of the village itself is Saxon in origin, and denotes a lesser status site within a larger Saxon estate (Gerrard, pers. comm.). Slater (1975) sees Preston as a Saxon secondary settlement located within the Cirencester borough hundred which is one of seven hundreds located within what was the old Roman administrative unit based on Corinium. He argues that the present eastern parish boundary of Preston runs along this Roman administrative boundary which lay on the higher ground between the Churn and Ampney Brook, and that in Saxon times this land and the land in the northern half of the parish was probably under pasture. The evidence that this northern pasture area may have been colonised from Preston rests on two points, one the name of the farm at Norcote, which implies a northern outlier of the village, and second a Domesday reference to a chapel at Norcote dependent on Preston, the last mention of the chapel is in the 16th century. All this implies a changing settlement morphology for Preston. The date brackets for the pottery recovered during the course of this study fall neatly into the period where we can see Norcote being colonised then declining, perhaps in tandem with other outlying farms, or hamlets, which may be indicated by our pottery scatters. Little work has been done locally on the problems of Saxon landscape archaeology or indeed any other aspect of the period, and until the various outstanding problems are dealt with in more detail, the type of model outlined above will be difficult to prove. One further area worthy of consideration is the land around Trinity Mill in the Churn

Valley, although the mill is recorded as having Saxon antecedents it is unlikely that anything remains from that period in the water management features on the valley floor. However it may be possible to check this during evaluation of the river valley for environmental evidence (site B).

The later medieval period is much better understood in terms of settlement patterns, economy, trade, urban and rural administration etc. Cirencester was a thriving and prosperous market town of the middle ages providing mercantile, administrative and social functions for a wide hinterland. This surrounding countryside was populated in the main by agrarian villages and hamlets, farming the countryside on an open field system in the Upper Thames Valley and the more easily tilled areas of the Cotswolds, although the main occupation over the higher ground was sheep rearing and wool production.

Many of the areas recorded by aerial photography around the town reveal evidence of the extent of the open field systems by their traces of the characteristic ridge and furrow ploughing technique, most of which has been removed as earthwork features by subsequent cultivation. Much of this ridge and furrow cultivation is evident along the southern stretches of the bypass route on the lower slopes of the Cotswolds, and with reference to the village of Preston several of the outlying field boundaries exhibit patterns consistent with ridge and furrow cultivation. This is of interest when one addresses the problem of the early-medieval pottery scatter to the north of the village and why it occurs along the area adjacent to Witpit Lane. One interpretation of the evidence would be to see it as a result of manuring on the open fields, but other areas around the village which display traces of ridge and furrow in their modern field boundaries show no such distributions, an odd fact if they were cultivated at similar times. Many questions are raised by these two sites that cannot be addressed adequately within the scope of this report, more detailed work will need to be done before sound theories can follow.

Statement: No medieval features of major significance are affected by the proposed route of the bypass beyond those outlined above. The possible occupation sites near Preston may be of significance and will need to be evaluated in order to clarify any relationship to possible Roman occupation and the present village. The possible significance of the Preston parish boundary has already been referred to in the previous section, and it may be equally important as another element in the understanding of post-Roman land organisation, and should be evaluated accordingly.

4.5 Post-medieval

The post-medieval landscape in and around the study area differs in one major way from that of the preceding medieval, and this is that the open field system farmed around the villages was replaced by a landscape dominated by medium sized ditched and hedged fields in the 18th century. Small-scale piecemeal inclosure did take place in certain areas before this time, but usually only by improving landlords. Other forms of agricultural land organisation at this time can be seen with the development of complex water meadow systems along river valleys and streams, many traces of which are still visible in the ground today. Only one system of this type is affected by the proposed bypass scheme and that is at the point where the road is to be carried over the Churn Valley on a viaduct north of Trinity Mill. Here not only are there widespread traces of the water meadow systems that exist throughout the valley, but also of a complex series of leats and channels designed to manage the water supply for the mill. The whole mill and leat system is sketched on a map dated to 1688? in Gloucester Record Office.

Statement: With the exception of the Trinity Mill leat system no significant features of post-medieval date would seem to be affected by the proposed route of the bypass, some very small-scale quarrying of pre 18th century date would perhaps be erased from the area south-west of Emlin Farm.

4.6 Early-modern

The modern landscape through which the study area runs differs little from that of the late post-medieval predecessor. There are some field boundary changes, usually involved with enlargement of arable fields, but sometimes also with subdivision. Several farms not recorded on the late 18th or early 19th century maps appear in the landscape, Emlin Farm for example, and lesser farm buildings come and go with the general flow of agricultural fortunes. Villages on the whole acquire more housing, and the eastern urban expansion of Cirencester continues to the present day. One notable addition to the landscape is the construction of the West Midland and Junction Railway (FRN 4944) in the 19th century which cuts through the study area west of Kingshill School, and which

was closed in 1961. The cutting through which it ran has now been infilled and shows up in the arable field as a curving swathe of slag clinker and ash. Generally there are no notable features or sites in the modern landscape which fall within the study area and which would require archaeological investigation.

One final point is that should any of the milestones on the A417 or A419 be threatened by bypass construction works these should be adequately recorded and salvaged, prior to any construction work beginning, but this is a problem outside the scope of the present report.

SECTION 5

STAGE 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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5.1 Aims

The general aim of the archaeological evaluation of the various features, components and monuments outlined below, is to provide high quality archaeological data from direct observation of the deposits to complement and enhance the information already compiled in the Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment, with a view to having sufficient data to enable:

- a) any further modifications to the design, construction methods, and/or the layout of the proposed route of the Cirencester and Stratton Bypass, which might enhance the preservation of the archaeological deposits to be made at the earliest opportunity;
- b) the design, planning and costing of the most appropriate archaeological response to the proposed development to be prepared in good time; and
- c) the Department to comply with the Council Directive No. 95/337/EEC of 27 June 1985.

These aims will be achieved through the pursuit of the following specific archaeological objectives, these are:

- 1) To determine the thickness, depth, and depositional history of the archaeological deposits, paying particular attention to the presence or absence of deposits relating to each of the main phases of occupation for each site discussed in the assessment.
- 2) To characterise the nature of the main stratigraphic units encountered in terms of their physical composition (stone, sand, gravel, humic etc.) and the processes leading to their archaeological deposition and formation (primary deposit, secondary deposit, etc.).
- 3) To assess the overall presence and survival of structural remains relating to each of the main periods of occupation encountered on each site, and the potential for the recovery of additional archaeological information given the nature of the deposits encountered (ie. how disturbed are the archaeological deposits by later intrusive elements).

- 4) To assess the overall presence and survival of the main kinds of artefactual evidence (i.e., pottery, brick, tile, stone, glass metal, bone, etc.), its condition and potential information yield given the nature of the material encountered.
- 5) To assess the overall presence and survival of the main kinds of ecofactual evidence (ie. faunal remains, human remains, and plant remains etc.), its condition and potential for information retrieval given the nature of the deposits encountered.
- 6) To assess the overall presence and survival of the main kinds of environmental evidence (ie. pollen remains, molluscan remains, insect remains and soil profiles etc.), its condition and potential information yield given the nature of the material encountered.
- 7) To appraise the relative value of the main stratigraphic units and archaeological features encountered in terms of their importance for future preservation and conservation.
- 8) To appraise the deposits in terms of their potential for display, presentation and promotion as visible attractions, and for public viewing during excavation.

No site within the study area examined for this assessment is protected by archaeological legislation, and therefore no applications will be required for submission to English Heritage for any archaeological works recommended here.

5.2 Methodology

It is proposed that two techniques of information recovery are applied to the sites of potential interest outlined in this report. The first is the machine trenching and hand digging of evaluation trenches in the areas to be specified in Section 5.3 which were identified either by aerial photography or are visible as upstanding remains. Topsoil and overburden will be machined-off where deemed appropriate then the archaeological features will be exposed and excavated by hand. Where possible sites have been located by fieldwalking which reveals general scatters of material it is proposed that geophysical prospection should be carried out over the area in question in order to identify subsurface features, then these to be evaluated as above. (Geophysical prospecting involves the use of a specialist archaeological contractor to carry out a survey with remote sensing field equipment. This method of investigation is relatively rapid and cost-effective, but does require to be combined with physical trial trenching if best results are to be achieved. CAT deals only with recognised specialists in the field.) Where geophysical sampling

reveals no features as is possible with scatters of early prehistoric flint, then these areas will require sampling by hand excavation from the surface of the topsoil down to bedrock. Geophysical test transects should also be placed within the large areas of pasture where no other prospection method is possible.

The location of the test trenches as outlined in the following section has been dictated by the following factors:

- a) the position and extent of gaps in the known archaeology;
- b) the results of the fieldwalking;
- c) the results of the field checking; and
- e) suspected areas of environmental interest as highlighted by the available soil and geology studies.

Given these considerations it is recommended that a series of evaluation trenches are dug which should comprise approximately 2% of any site under examination. (This figure is a recommended percentage for archaeological evaluation, being the minimum area over which excavation can hope to elucidate and understand the deposits examined. It is not an ideal figure in every instance and has been modified correspondingly for the sites to be examined in this study.)

The trenches will be excavated with appropriate horizontal and vertical recording of the stratigraphic elements encountered (ie. textual records, photographic archive, and drawings). Artefacts and ecofacts will be recovered and recorded by stratigraphic unit. Samples of stratigraphic deposits will be taken for laboratory analysis where required.

5.3 Stage 2 Evaluation Specification Summary

The following list details the location and evaluation requirements of all the identified sites on the route of the bypass, during Stage 2. The list runs from north to south on the line of the study area each site being identified by its FRN, and any trenches on the site being denoted by Roman numerals. The location of evaluation trenches and geophysical transects is shown on Figures 1.4 to 1.8

Field No.0015
Site A

Geophysical test transects will be required in those areas of the bypass route which are under pasture and therefore not capable of being fieldwalked, and which also showed no surface traces of archaeological features when fieldchecked. This is particularly significant at the northern end of the bypass around the area of Bagendon where the relationships between the so-called oppidum and its immediate environs are not at all well understood. Three 50mx20m linear transects will be placed in the areas shown on Figure 1.5. These should give a reasonable indication of presence/absence of occupation features. As a second stage any identified features will be evaluated. A maximum of two 2x2 hand-dug test pits will be excavated in each transect area.

Field No. 0007
Site B

A machine cut trench (20mx2m) through the alluvial deposits of the River Churn in the area to be disturbed by viaduct construction. This trench to be fully recorded and sampled for environmental data, and to establish the exact nature of the organic deposits recorded during the geotechnical exploration works. The only work required to be done by hand will be to clean sections cut by the machine to enable drawing and photography to proceed, and to collect samples of stratigraphic deposits. An interpretative statement of the environmental deposits will be prepared by a specialist consultant.

In addition the whole area of earthworks and water meadow features in the stretch of valley floor pertaining to Trinity Mill (ie. between SP 02150530 and SP 02050495) should be surveyed at 1:500 or a more detailed scale. This may be done with the assistance of a specialist archaeological team subcontracted for the work.

Field No. 1400
Site B

Requirements as per Trench I. Machine-cut trenches across the floor of the valley should give a representative picture of the alluvial history of the area under scrutiny, and assess the potential for preservation of in-situ archaeological deposits. An interpretative statement will be compiled by a specialist consultant.

Field survey as outlined above.

Field No.1800
Site B

A machine-cut trench (20mx2m) across the trackway PRN 2085 to assess its character and if possible to obtain dating evidence from ditches, banks etc. This trench should be continued onto the valley floor to assess the alluvial deposits on the east side of the valley. Archaeological features associated with the track will need to be excavated by hand. This third trench at site B should complete a full transect across the valley, allowing an accurate assessment to be made of the alluvial deposits by a specialist consultant.

Field No. 4800
Site C

A simple machine-cut trench running at right angles to the White Way (PRN 2039) will suffice to determine whether roadside ditches of Roman date exist along this highway, and if so what the value of their deposits is. This trench will be 20mx2m and intrude into the area of disturbed ground adjacent to the road, so satisfying the needs for examination of both items. A second machine-cut trench 10mx2m should be cut on the opposite side of the White Way as an additional check for ditches.

Field No. 4830
Site D

Provisional dating of this site to the (7)Neolithic/Bronze Age raises the possibility of ephemeral occupation features remaining within the subsoil or bedrock. Therefore in order to assess this possibility, a geophysical transect 50mx100m should be run across the area of flint distribution in the bypass line and any features located should be trial trenched by hand excavating 2mx2m trenches to recover artefactual material etc. with which to characterise the site. Sample sieving of material removed from each trench will be necessary to recover the smallest flint artefacts. These trenches will be dug down to bedrock, and this should result in a clearer picture of the site. It is envisaged that perhaps five trenches may be needed in this area dependent on geophysical results.

Field No.7300 Hare Bushes plantation
Site E

A single machine-cut trench (c.15mx2m) at angles to the Roman road and across the earthen bank which parallels it should clarify the relationship between the two.

A second trench will be required in the area adjacent to the road where a small platform of indeterminate character is located. This trench will need to be hand dug as the tree cover in this area of the plantation will not permit machine access. A trench of 15mx2m placed across the platform should serve to identify any features present, and clarify the relationship with the Roman road.

It will be necessary to hand-dig a third trench (15mx2m) across the possible quarry ditch running parallel to the Roman road in order to establish the antiquity of this feature and whether significant archaeological deposits are present within the fill. This trench will need to be run up to the road to attempt to establish any link between the two. A geophysical transect on the eastern open field side of the road will further clarify the presence or absence of roadside features (field 0041). One 20mx2m machine cut trench will be sufficient to confirm or refute any identified features.

Field No.0041
Site F

The uncertain character of the flint scatter in this area defies a simple evaluation strategy, but it is recommended that a geophysical transect is run across the area of highest artefact density, and any features located trial trenched by hand excavating. Again several test pits 2mx2m hand-dug to bedrock will suffice to record the artefactual content of the site and check the geophysical results. The same sample sieving technique as outlined above will be required in each trench. This combination of techniques should result in a clearer picture of the date and type of site being obtained. It is envisaged that perhaps three test pits may be required.

Field No.0041
Site G

A single machine-cut trench (c.10mx2m) running at right-angles to Kingshill Lane will suffice to establish if significant traces of roadside Roman ditches remain and of what quality their contents are. Features uncovered by machine will require to be hand dug.

Field No. 1415
Site H

The nature of the flint scatter in this field is unclear, therefore a geophysical check (75mx50m) for ephemeral traces of occupation evidence would seem advisable. It is recommended that evaluation of the site should be carried out by excavating

possibly three 2mx2m hand-dug trenches down to bedrock to recover artefactual material and check the geophysical survey results.

Field No. 2200
Site I

The nature of the flint scatter in this field appears to be Mesolithic, therefore there is little likelihood of structural remains being recovered but it is thought advisable to run a geophysical transect across the area as a safeguard. It is recommended that evaluation of the site will be adequately covered by excavating five 2mx2m hand-dug trenches down to bedrock to recover artefactual material in the areas most indicative of activity foci. All five trenches should still be excavated if the geophysical results are negative. A slightly more intensive sieving strategy will be required on this site as Mesolithic flint assemblages contain high percentages of microlithic material.

Field No. 9534
Site J

A geophysical transect (150mx125m) should be carried out over the areas of greatest medieval pot densities to ascertain whether structural evidence is present below the cultivated topsoil. In addition three machine-cut trenches (30mx2m) should be put down within the area to check the geophysical and act as an additional prospecting control, any features revealed after removal of the topsoil should be hand dug.

Field No. 7400
Site K

For the same reasons as outlined in the preceding site, one geophysical transect (75mx75m) should be run over the area of highest pottery density, plus two machine-cut trenches (30mx2m). These methods of investigation should clarify the nature of both sites, and allow a reliable assessment of their significance should they prove occupational.

Field No. 2472
Site L

It is proposed that examination of the cropmark complex PRN 9057, is achieved by machine-cutting two trenches in combination with geophysical prospecting. The first trench (c.40mx2m) will be across the interior of the small sub-rectangular enclosure adjacent to the modern lane, and will continue on through the double ditched feature to its north. It is also proposed to blanket the

interior space of the enclosure with a geophysical survey (75mx50), which should also take in some of the interior space enclosed by the double-ditched trackway to check that this is not actually an occupation area within another sub-rectangular feature. This should be adequate to ascertain whether internal features survive within the small enclosure and will hopefully provide dating evidence for it and the double-ditched trackway. The second trench will be a shorter cut (c.20mx2m) across the trackway only as an additional check for dating evidence. Machining will remove the topsoil and overburden, thereafter features revealed will be excavated by hand. Although the double ditched feature is only partially within the current study area it is felt advisable to investigate this site over a slightly wider area bearing in mind the inaccuracies of air photograph plots, and the provisional nature of the bypass corridor at this stage.

Field No. 2626
Site M.

The small cropmark complex PRN 3383 should be evaluated in a similar manner to PRN 3057. A (c.30mx30m) geophysical survey should be carried out over the whole interior space of the enclosure to check for occupation features. A machine-cut trench (25mx2m) will be placed across the interior space of the small rectangular enclosure, and run beyond it to cut the L-shaped ditch feature to its east. A second shorter trench (10mx2m) will be machine-cut across a short length of ditch lying at right-angles to the L-shaped ditch. This should allow the same objectives as outlined above for PRN 3057, to be achieved for PRN 3383. Machining will only remove the topsoil and overburden, thereafter archaeological features will be excavated by hand.

Field No. 5049
Site N

It is proposed that a geophysical survey (100mx75m) should be carried out over the western corner of this field which is within the study area, in order to check for the presence of the indistinct ditches recorded by the RCHM. Should there prove to be ditches within this area these could be evaluated by machine trenching, with hand excavation of features revealed during the process. Possibly two machine cut trenches are envisaged here (10mx2m.)

Field No. 3923

Site O

Evaluation of this complex double ring-ditch feature will be achieved by placing a T-shaped machine-cut (35mx2m plus 10mx2m) trench across the interior space of both rings, and the intersection of their ditches. The objective will be to establish dating evidence for the monument, establish the relationship between the double rings and assess whether human remains survive within each. Machining will only remove topsoil and overburden, thereafter all features will be excavated by hand.

Field No. 6579/8476

Site P

The flint scatter in this field seems to be of late-Neolithic/Bronze Age date, and as such there is a possibility that slight structural remains may survive cut into bedrock. A geophysical survey (100mx50m) in the area of highest concentration may locate traces of structural evidence if present. In addition, four hand-dug 2mx2m trenches will be placed within the same area in order to recover an assemblage of artefacts and to investigate the geophysical results. Sample sieving of deposits removed will be required to recover all flint artefact types.

Field No. 7262

Site Q

The ring-ditch PRN 2690 will be evaluated by placing a single trench across its circumference (c. 35mx2m) and will be machine-cut to remove the topsoil, the features then revealed will be excavated by hand. The aim of this trench will be to establish dating evidence for the monument, and whether human remains survive within.

In addition, the whole problem posed by the possibility of the Preston parish boundary being one of Roman origin can be addressed at the same time by taking the evaluation trench as far as the road in order to locate and examine any roadside ditches and features present.

Field No.0044
Site R

Within the area designated PRN 2388 there are two distinct crop-mark elements. The first is a ring-ditch (2388a) associated with two small radiating ditches. It is proposed to evaluate this monument by placing one machine-cut trench (35mx2m) across the circumference of the ring-ditch and its intersection with a short length of appended ditch in order to establish their relationship, dates, and whether human remains are present within the ring-ditch. Although the air photograph plots of this monument place it on the very fringe of the study area it is thought advisable to include it within the evaluation strategy bearing in mind the inaccuracies of such plots, and also the fact that the bypass corridor is at present only provisionally outlined.

The second area is more complex (2388b) and will require a geophysical survey (75mx50m) across the area enclosed by the semi-circular feature. Machine trenching will also be required in two places. One trench (35mx2m) will be machine-cut across the semi-circular feature on the west end of the complex and the main ditch running through the site on a northeast-southwest axis. The other trench (25mx2m) will be machine-cut across the semi-circular feature and its intersection with a curvilinear ditch which runs south from the main ditch. These trenches will have the objectives of establishing relationships between the features mentioned and their dates and the character of the site. In all cases the features uncovered will be excavated by hand. Some leeway must be allowed for in the exact placement of the trenches which may depend upon geophysical results.

Field No.9329
Site S

The flint scatter of indeterminate date in this field will be evaluated by running a geophysical transect (100mx100m) across the heaviest concentration of finds to establish whether structural evidence is present, and by hand excavation of perhaps four 2mx2m trenches to recover artefact assemblages and check the geophysical results. Sieving of deposits will be required to recover the full range of flintwork. In addition one Machine-cut trench 15mx2m will be cut at right angles to the Roman road to check the alignment, and locate roadside ditches and fills.

In all cases where geophysical surveys are being carried out the exact placement of trenches may be dependent upon the results, and therefore trenches shown on Figures 1.4 to 1.8 are intended only as a guide. In addition, should geophysical results prove to be negative on the flint and pottery scatters it will still be necessary to trench these areas as a double check of the results, and principally in the case of the flint scatters to recover a

reasonable assemblage of artefactual material with which to categorise the site. In all the areas of flint scatter it is suspected that perhaps one 2mx2m trench could be dropped from the total needed on each site, should the geophysical prove negative.

Overall, these proposed evaluation works should hope to answer all of the problems and questions outlined in the preceding sections of this assessment document. Obviously the success with which these outstanding questions will be resolved will be dependent upon the level of intact archaeological remains present within the ground, and also in the ability to successfully locate them and retrieve the necessary information. It is believed that the strategies outlined above are the best approach to meeting the Stage 2 Evaluation needs within the scope of the proposed development scheme.

5.4 Practical Matters

- 1) Necessary arrangements for access to land for Stage 2 works are yet to be made by FGCE.
- 2) The evaluation trenches will be shored fenced and made secure as necessary.
- 3) Reinstatement of the evaluation trenches will be undertaken by CAT where required, this will add additional costs to the budget, consideration might therefore be given to the use of owned rather than hired plant for this work.
- 4) A full report addressing the main objectives and results of the evaluation programme, and presenting a digest of the primary data recorded will be prepared for the client (FGCE Ltd) following completion of on-site and off-site works.

5.5 Summary

On-site works:	Archaeological evaluation; machine cutting and hand excavation of trenches, geophysical prospection.
Off-site works:	Finds processing and analysis, draft report compilation.
Post-excavation:	Draft report production.

SECTION 6

STAGE 2 REVISED COSTING

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The revised Stage 2 costings accompany this report as a separate document. The new costings outline the areas of increased cost, stating the reasons for each increase.

SECTION 7

STAGE 3 TASKS IDENTIFIED

The following short list outlines several tasks which have been identified during the course of the assessment which will not require work at Stage 2, but should be incorporated within any Stage 3 programme that follows on as a direct result of the current work. The tasks are:

- 1) A field survey of the well preserved ridge and furrow earthworks identified in fields 5400 and 7590 at Ermin Farm, would be required for record purposes if the present proposed route of the bypass was to be confirmed. It is assumed that construction works would remove most traces of these features over a broad area.
- 2) A detailed field survey of the well preserved ridge and furrow earthworks preserved in the poplar copse on the west of Witpit Lane (field 7540), should be carried out for record purposes. The proposed bypass route runs right through this copse and would presumably remove all traces of ridge and furrow during construction.
- 3) Several ponds lie within and around the study area, where these prove to be closely associated with archaeological features and are demonstrably not modern, then they should be sample cored to assess their potential for environmental evidence and waterlogged deposits.
- 4) Several woodland banks and ditches within Mare Bushes should be recorded by surveying their profiles as well as plan. This will suffice as an archive should there be the need to remove them during the course of bypass construction.

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