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**A419/417**  
**CIRENCESTER AND STRATTON BYPASS**  
**STAGE 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**  
***ADDENDUM***

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CAT Report 93112

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## GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

### ARCHAEOLOGY

For the purposes of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains, from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

### CROPMARK

A trace of a buried feature revealed by differential growth of crops, best seen from the air.

### IRON AGE

The first period in which iron was the predominant metal. In Britain it is dated between *c*700 BC to the Roman conquest in AD 43.

### NATURAL

Defined in archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site, eg. Lower Lias clay, river terrace gravels etc.

### NGR

National Grid Reference given from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

### NLAP

National Library of Aerial Photographs: a division of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England)

### OD

Ordnance Datum; used to express a given height above mean sea level.

### ROMANO-BRITISH

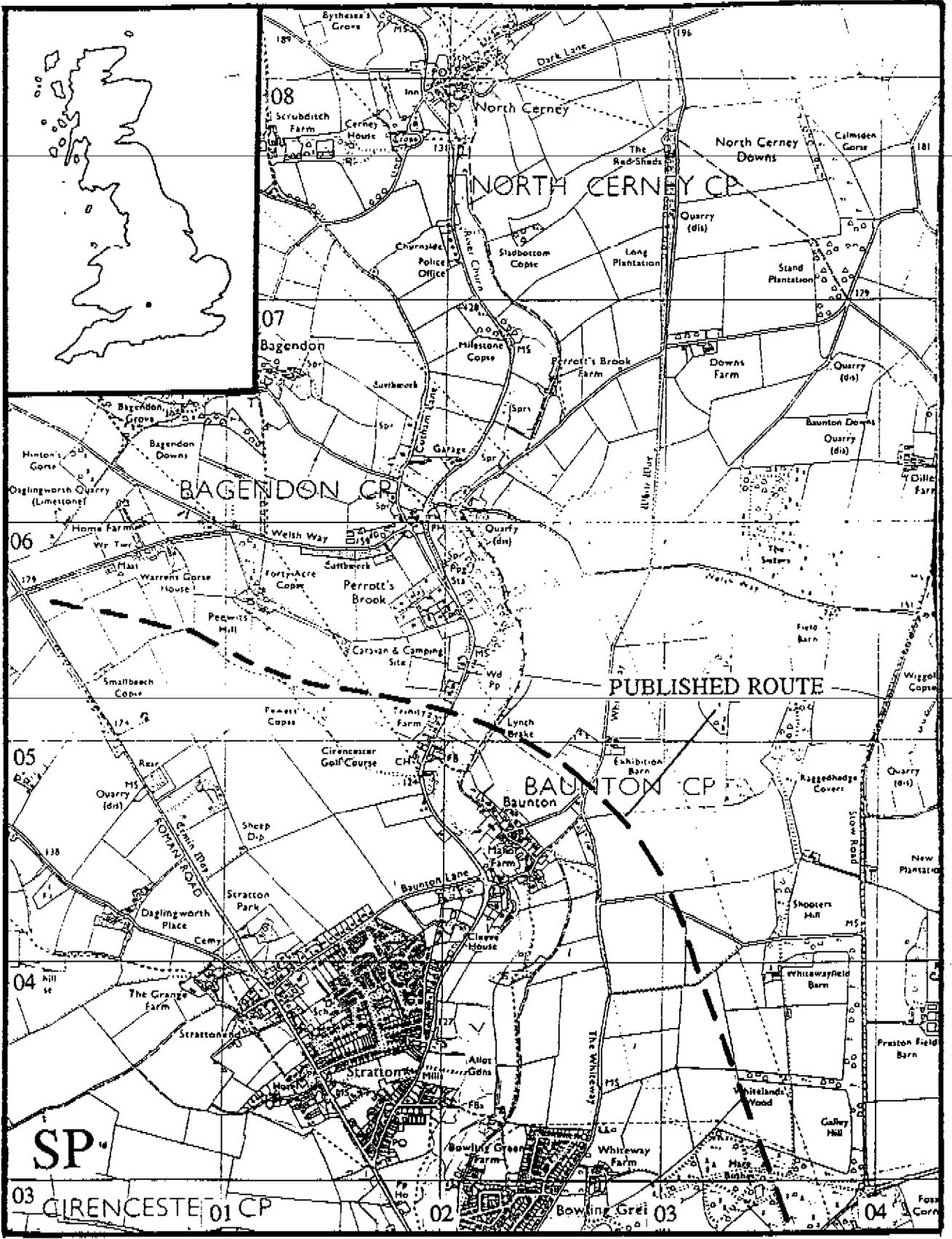
Term used to describe a fusion of indigenous late Iron Age traditions with Roman culture, often abbreviated as 'R-B.'

### SETTLEMENT

An area of habitation, perhaps surrounded by associated closes, paddocks, approach ways and other features which together constitute a complex of earthworks or cropmarks distinct from fields.

### SITE

Sites may be defined as 'windows' onto the archaeological resource, eg an excavation, aerial photograph, or an old map. Any of these may reveal certain archaeological features (pits, ditches, etc) which can be classed as components, but not monuments.



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LOCATION MAP

FIG 1

# 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation of a cropmark feature at NGR: SP00950551 at Peewit's Hill Farm, Bagendon (see Figure 1). It follows as an *addendum* to the A419/417 Cirencester and Stratton Bypass Stage 2 Archaeological Evaluation report submitted to Frank Graham Consulting Engineers Ltd in November 1991 (CAT Report No 9141; Public Inquiry deposit document 8c).
- 1.1.2 Site letter and trench number identifications comply with those used during the 1991 evaluation. The cropmark site is referred to as Site A(vii), and the three evaluation trenches are numbered from west to east as 550, 551 and 552.
- 1.1.3 Trench details and summaries are also presented in the same 1991 format, with a fuller discussion added at the end of the document.

## 1.2 Background

- 1.2.1 During evaluation of the Cirencester and Stratton Bypass Preferred Route in 1991 access for evaluation of potential archaeological sites at Peewit's Hill Farm was not forthcoming, although consent was granted by the landowner for limited geophysical survey.
- 1.2.2 Recent discovery by CAT of a cropmark feature on the edge of the Published Route was entered as evidence to the Cirencester and Stratton Bypass Public Inquiry on 17th February 1993. Evaluation of the site was recommended to the landowner, who after reconsideration of her position, granted access for trenching on 26th February 1993.
- 1.2.3 The cropmark feature can be seen in Figure 2 and was transcribed from aerial photographs (NLAP Ref: 106G/UK/1395; frames 4443, 4444) held by the National Library of Aerial Photographs (Swindon). Although registered on the NLAP index at the time assessment of the Preferred Route was carried out in 1990, the prints themselves were not available for analysis.
- 1.2.4 Analysis of the photographs by staff of both CAT and NLAP concluded the cropmarks suggested the existence of an approximately D-shaped enclosure with internal subdivisions. Such features are not uncommon on the Cotswolds and are generally regarded as late prehistoric or Romano-British minor settlements. The close proximity of this feature to the high status native dyke-complex at Bagendon was of considerable interest as the inter-relationship between Bagendon and surrounding contemporary sites is not well understood. On this basis evaluation was recommended.



2 **STAGE 2: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION RESULTS**

2.1 **SITE A(vii)**

2.1.1 All three trenches were located in positions appropriate to determining the presence and extent of archaeological features suggested by the cropmark evidence.

2.1.2 **TRENCH NO: 550**  
**TRENCH SIZE: 80.0m x 1.5m**  
**TRENCH ORIENTATION: N-S**

**FIELD NO: 9952**  
**LANDUSE: Pasture**  
**LANDOWNER: Mrs B Robinson**

**Characterisation of main stratigraphic units**

**TOPSOIL: Loamy-clay**  
**SUBSOIL: None present**  
**NATURAL: Limestone bedrock**  
**ARCHAEOLOGY: None present**

**HEIGHT OF TOPSOIL: 173.08m-167.77m OD**  
**HEIGHT OF SUBSOIL: N/A**  
**HEIGHT OF ARCHAEOLOGY (maximum): N/A**  
**HEIGHT OF ARCHAEOLOGY (minimum): N/A**

**NO ARCHAEOLOGY PRESENT:** Alternate banding of closely bedded brash, contrasting with brash characterised by a notably higher soil matrix percentage, was seen to run across the lower part of the trench. These changes in surface characteristics of the Great Oolite bedrock broadly correlate with the position and orientation of features seen on aerial photographs.

2.1.3 **TRENCH NO: 551**  
**TRENCH SIZE: 80.0m x 1.5m**  
**TRENCH ORIENTATION: N-S**

**FIELD NO: 9952**  
**LANDUSE: Pasture**  
**LANDOWNER: Mrs B Robinson**

**Characterisation of main stratigraphic units**

**TOPSOIL: Loamy-clay**  
**SUBSOIL: None present**  
**NATURAL: Limestone bedrock**  
**ARCHAEOLOGY: None present**

**HEIGHT OF TOPSOIL: 173.19m-169.28m OD**  
**HEIGHT OF SUBSOIL: N/A**  
**HEIGHT OF ARCHAEOLOGY (maximum): N/A**  
**HEIGHT OF ARCHAEOLOGY (minimum): N/A**

**NO ARCHAEOLOGY PRESENT:** In the north of the trench a small pit-like depression coincided exactly with the position of a curving ditch-like feature of the crop-

mark. It is assumed the depression is part of an irregular (probably periglacial) surface fault in the bedrock which has given rise to a false ditch effect. In the southern end of the trench similar changes to those seen in the bedrock surface in Trench 550, suggest a continuation of the banding between trenches. This results in the presence of a linear feature broadly corresponding to southwest ditch-like boundary of the cropmark.

**2.1.4 TRENCH NO: 552**

TRENCH SIZE: 80.0m x 1.5m  
TRENCH ORIENTATION: N-S  
FIELD NO: 9952  
LANDUSE: Pasture  
LANDOWNER: Mrs B Robinson

**Characterisation of main stratigraphic units**

TOPSOIL: Loamy-clay  
SUBSOIL: None  
NATURAL: Limestone bedrock  
ARCHAEOLOGY: ??gully-like feature [004]

HEIGHT OF TOPSOIL: 173.51m-170.70m OD  
HEIGHT OF SUBSOIL: N/A  
HEIGHT OF ARCHAEOLOGY (maximum): ??171.66m  
HEIGHT OF ARCHAEOLOGY (minimum): ??171.54m

**Archaeological features**

Only one feature was noted in this trench, an ill-defined narrow and shallow gully running in a northeast to southwest direction. Although not identifiable as one of the linear features of the cropmark, the gully did share a common alignment with the three parallel ditch-like features visible on its southeast side.

Although an archaeological origin for the feature cannot be wholly ruled out, its irregularity and lack of association with artefactual or other material make its origin suspect.

**2.1.5 Value of deposits (Site)**

The results of evaluation of this cropmark imply that the features detected on aerial photographs must be largely attributable to geological anomalies in the bedrock, and perhaps also occasional slight archaeological features. However, if the feature in Trench 552 is archaeological (and representative of any others on-site) then its poor condition and lack of association with artefactual, ecofactual and environmental material suggest it is low in potential for the recovery of further information. The lack of clearly identifiable archaeological remains on this site render its assessed value as **Low**.

### 3 DISCUSSION OF CROPMARK AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 3.1 Discussion

3.1.1 The reasons for the occurrence of an apparently archaeological feature on aerial photographs has been attributed principally to geological anomalies. The topsoil on this part of the Cotswolds is extremely thin (c.0.15m) and enhanced moisture and nutrient retention will undoubtedly have been afforded by minor features and possibly also by linear faulting of the bedrock. It is possible that a c.100% increase in soil depth offered by minor features was sufficient to enhance growth patterns of the grass when the aerial photographs were taken during the very dry Spring of 1946. The effect of less specific surface variations in the bedrock is also thought to have contributed to the development of linear patterning within the pasture at the time the farm was photographed.

3.1.2 However, it is less clear why gross geological features should have conspired to create an apparently discreet entity bearing all the characteristics of an archaeological enclosure. It is suggested that the quality of the original photographs and limitations of manual transcription are contributing factors.

#### 3.2 Conclusions

3.2.1 Although examination of this feature has added little to knowledge of the archaeology of Peewit's Hill Farm, the negative results of evaluation should not overshadow the potential the remainder of the farm retains for the discovery of archaeological remains.

3.2.2 As highlighted in the main report to which this *addendum* pertains, Peewit's Hill Farm is the reputed findspot of a number of artefacts of Roman date, some of which are believed to originate close-by the Published Route. Of particular note is the large undated masonry tank reputedly recovered from "the Dell" and investigated by geophysical prospection only. The clear geophysical indications of a possible archaeological feature crossing the Published route at this point must be given due consideration for future works, as must the possibility of additional remains associated with artefactual material noted above.

3.2.3 The mitigation measures suggested in the main report (Section 7.5, page 157) for the area of Peewit's Hill Farm affected by the Published Route are in no way altered by the outcome of this evaluation.