



INDEX DATA	RPS INFORMATION
Scheme Title A419/417 Cirencester + Stratton Bypass.	Details Archaeological Appraisal of objectors Route 125.
Road Number A419/417.	Date January 1993.
Contractor Cotswold Archaeological Trust Ltd.	
County Gloucestershire.	
OS Reference	
Single sided ✓ Double sided	
A3 1 Colour 0	

A419/417
CIRENCESTER & STRATTON BYPASS
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPRAISAL
OF
OBJECTORS ROUTE R5

compiled
by
Graeme Walker
of
Cotswold Archaeological Trust
for
Frank Graham Consulting Engineers Ltd

January 1993

Report No:93106
Job No:0286

(C) Cotswold Archaeological Trust Ltd
Corinium Museum
Park Street
Cirencester
Gloucs
GL7 2BX

(0285) 643625

1 Introduction

The following appraisal has been compiled using data held by Cotswold Archaeological Trust. The principal source of information has been the Cirencester Urban Assessment data-base which contains detailed records of archaeological finds and sites. This is a map based record which also incorporates aerial photographic plots correct up to July 1992. Additionally, information has been retrieved from the Gloucester County Sites and Monuments Record. The information held by CAT is comprehensive but not definitive.

The bypass route under consideration is objectors route 'R5'. This leaves the existing A417 near Daglingworth Quarry, thence along the west side of Stratton to link again with the A417 near Gloucester Street Bridge. From here it progresses along Abbey Way, Grove Lane, Swindon Road and the A419 as far as South Cerney Airfield.

2 Archaeological finds and sites on the route of 'R5'

The following list of finds and sites route is arranged as they occur from north-west to south-east along the route. The prefix letters CUA refer to entries retrieved from the Cirencester Urban Assessment, while PRN refers to entries recorded only on the Gloucester County Sites and Monuments Record.

A short description of each entry is given along with an assessment of importance where known. Criteria for establishing levels of archaeological importance are outlined in Section 7.2 of CAT document 9141; 'A419/417 Cirencester & Stratton Bypass. Stage 2 Archaeological Evaluation'. In many cases the sites have not been investigated and therefore questions of dating and importance must remain subject to revision.

PRN 7542

Ermin Street Roman road.

Importance: High.

PRN 4783

Irregular cropmarks of unknown function and date, some possibly natural.

Importance: Likely to be medium/low.

CUA 50581a

Linear cropmarks of probable field boundaries and enclosure.

Importance: Likely to be high/medium.

CUA 50581b

Cropmarks of (?)Romano-British farmstead and fieldsystem.

Importance: Likely to be high.

PRN 9868

Post-medieval fishponds.

Importance: Likely to be medium.

CUA 50586

Cropmarks of medieval ridge-and-furrow.

Importance: Low.

CUA 50499
Cropmarks of undated rectilinear enclosure.
Importance: Likely to be high/medium.

CUA 50607
Cropmarks of undated trackway.
Importance: Likely to be medium.

CUA 50643
CUA 50644
CUA 52651
Site of possible Roman cemetery.
Importance: High.

CUA 53503
Post-medieval allotments
Importance: Low.

CUA 51006
Carved stone horse of unknown date.
Importance: Low.

CUA 50619
4th cent. Roman coin.
Importance: Intrinsically low, but if related to cemetery then useful in indicating its extent.

CUA 50163
Position of Civil War mortar.
Importance: No known remains so likely to be low.

PRN 2039
White Way Roman road.
Importance: High.

CUA 50550
Medieval ridge-and-furrow earthworks.
Importance: Low, as now mostly ploughed over.

CUA XXXXX (Not yet numbered)
Site of Roman and Saxon artefacts, possible Saxon structure.
Importance: High.

PRN 6561
Fosse Way Roman road.
Importance: High.

CUA 52667
Picture of toll house, exact position of structure unknown but likely to be on line of the bypass.
Importance: Medium

CUA YYYYYY (Not yet numbered)
Roman cemetery.
Importance: High.

CUA 51138

CUA 52407

Undated human remains.

Importance: Likely to be high, as probably part of Roman cemetery.

CUA 53317

Stray find, possibly a Roman coin.

Importance: Intrinsically low, but if part of cemetery then useful in indicating its extent.

CUA 50559

Medieval ridge-and-furrow.

Importance: Low, mostly built-over.

PRN 52901

Line of Midland and South-Western Junction Railway.

Importance: Low.

CUA 52341

CUA 51177

CUA 52339

CUA 52801

Stray Roman artefacts in vicinity of New Mill.

Importance: Unknown.

CUA 51468

CUA 53693

Site of medieval watermill. Listed building.

Importance: High.

CUA 51060

Roman features including post-holes, ditch and palisade.

Importance: High/medium, partly destroyed by existing Eastern Relief Road but much remaining on periphery.

CUA 51493

Cropmarks of undated linear features and enclosures, possibly Roman.

Importance: High.

CUA 51106

CUA 50181

CUA 52831

CUA 51430

Roman cinerary urn on site of probable cemetery.

Importance: High

CUA 52758

CUA 53728

Roman cemetery.

Importance: High.

CUA 50555

Medieval ridge-and-furrow and drainage channels surviving as earthworks.

Importance: Medium.

CUA 51018
Stray find of 4th cent. Roman coin.
Importance: Low.

PRN 2087
Site of Toll bar.
Importance: Medium.

CUA 50053
Possible prehistoric trackway and settlement.
Importance: Possibly high.

CUA 50578
Undated linear cropmark features and enclosures.
Importance: likely to be high/medium.

CUA 50579
Cropmark of undated rectilinear enclosure.
Importance: Likely to be high.

CUA 50582
Prehistoric enclosure and boundaries.
Importance: Likely to be high.

PRN 2347
Site of Post-medieval 'Hangman's Stone'.
Importance: Low.

CUA 50545
Medieval ridge-and furrow earthworks.
Importance: Medium.

3. Scheduled Ancient Monument areas affected by 'R5'

The route 'R5' impinges directly upon Scheduled Ancient Monument No 361 'Corinium Roman Town'. The principal cause of concern arises with proposals to re-direct the River Churn from its present course along the western edge of Grove Lane, to an alignment which would bring it closer to the upstanding earthworks of the Roman town wall and rampart. This will have a highly damaging affect on both the above and below ground archaeological remains in several respects.

Firstly the area between the upstanding earthworks and the present line of the Churn contains at least two Roman defensive ditches and it is believed the Churn was also an integral component in the line of defence. In places these components would be completely destroyed.

Secondly the proposed scheme will damage some areas of upstanding earthworks. As little now remains of the Roman Town defences, intrusions which further reduce their visibility are likely to be viewed unfavourably.

Finally, the importance of the site has been recently reconfirmed by an agreement between English Heritage and Cirencester Town Council to reconsolidate the upstanding remains and greatly enhance presentation and interpretation facilities. The proposals for 'R5' would be seen as counter-productive to these aims.

Any works carried out within the Scheduled Monument area would require written consent from the Secretary of State and would be issued through the Department of National Heritage acting upon the advice of English Heritage.

4 Conclusions

The objectors route 'R5' passes through or affects 38 findspots and sites as well as part of Scheduled Ancient Monument No 361. The principal effects of this proposed route on the archaeology would be;

(a) Three major cropmark complexes and elements of two others will be severely affected. Although little work has been done to establish the nature of these sites, it is probable that they are of late prehistoric and/or Roman date. As such they would be important elements in understanding the nature of both pre-Roman settlement patterns and extra-mural Roman settlement.

(b) Three Roman roads would be directly affected, chiefly large sections of Ermin Street. Although Roman extra-mural activity is often sited along arterial roads little has been recorded around Cirencester apart from cemeteries. However, with such large sections being affected further remains could be expected.

(c) Three principal Roman cemeteries may be severely affected. Such sites are of extreme importance for understanding Romano-British demographic patterns and the development of towns.

(d) A stretch of the Roman town defences listed as a Scheduled Ancient Monument would be severely affected.

(e) The site of a possible Saxon house would be directly within the path of the bypass. No such structures are known from elsewhere in the town and the site would be of the highest importance for studying the development of Cirencester in this period.

(f) Although medieval and post-medieval remains affected by the route are generally of a low-key nature, to build the bypass would necessitate demolishing a Listed Building on the site of a medieval mill, and would affect elements of the Post-medieval manor complex at Stratton.

From an archaeological perspective 'R5' possesses few merits. It involves considerable potential disturbance to known and anticipated archaeological remains of some considerable importance and one Monument of National Importance. It is considered on the strength of current evidence that 'R5' would be more damaging to the archaeological resource than the Published Route.

