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A419 Stage 2A (Stonehouse Court - North Berryfields)
Ebley Bypass, Gloucestershire:

Stage 1 archaeological assessment

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Gloucestershire County Council, October 1991

Contents

- 1 Summary
- 2 Introduction
Description of the survey area, its geology and topography,
present and former land use
- 3 Survey design and methodology
- 4 General discussion
archaeological background, summary of sites and monuments,
the archaeology of the survey area, the archaeological
implications of road construction
- 5 Recommendations for future work
- 6 Gazetteers
- 7 List of unpublished sources and bibliography
- 8 Acknowledgements

Figures

Cover The Stonehouse Court area, from the 1903 Ordnance
Survey map

Figure 1 Location of the survey area

Figure 2 Land use c.1840; land use 1991

Figure 3 Archaeological survey
 Location of sites listed in the gazetteers

Figure 1: Crown Copyright. Figures 2 and 3 are based upon 1:1250
scale maps compiled by Gloucestershire County Surveyor's
Department.

**A419 Stage 2A (Stonehouse Court - North Berryfields) Ebley Bypass,
Gloucestershire:**

Stage 1 archaeological assessment

1 Summary

The following assessment of the archaeology within an area containing the proposed route of the A419 Ebley Bypass (Stage 2A) identifies sites and areas of archaeological interest. The evidence indicates that the area of search has been extensively disturbed in the past by construction of the existing A419 road, a railway line, and housing. No further archaeological assessment is recommended prior to construction, but further stages of work in advance of, and during, construction are identified.

2 Introduction

2.1 Introduction

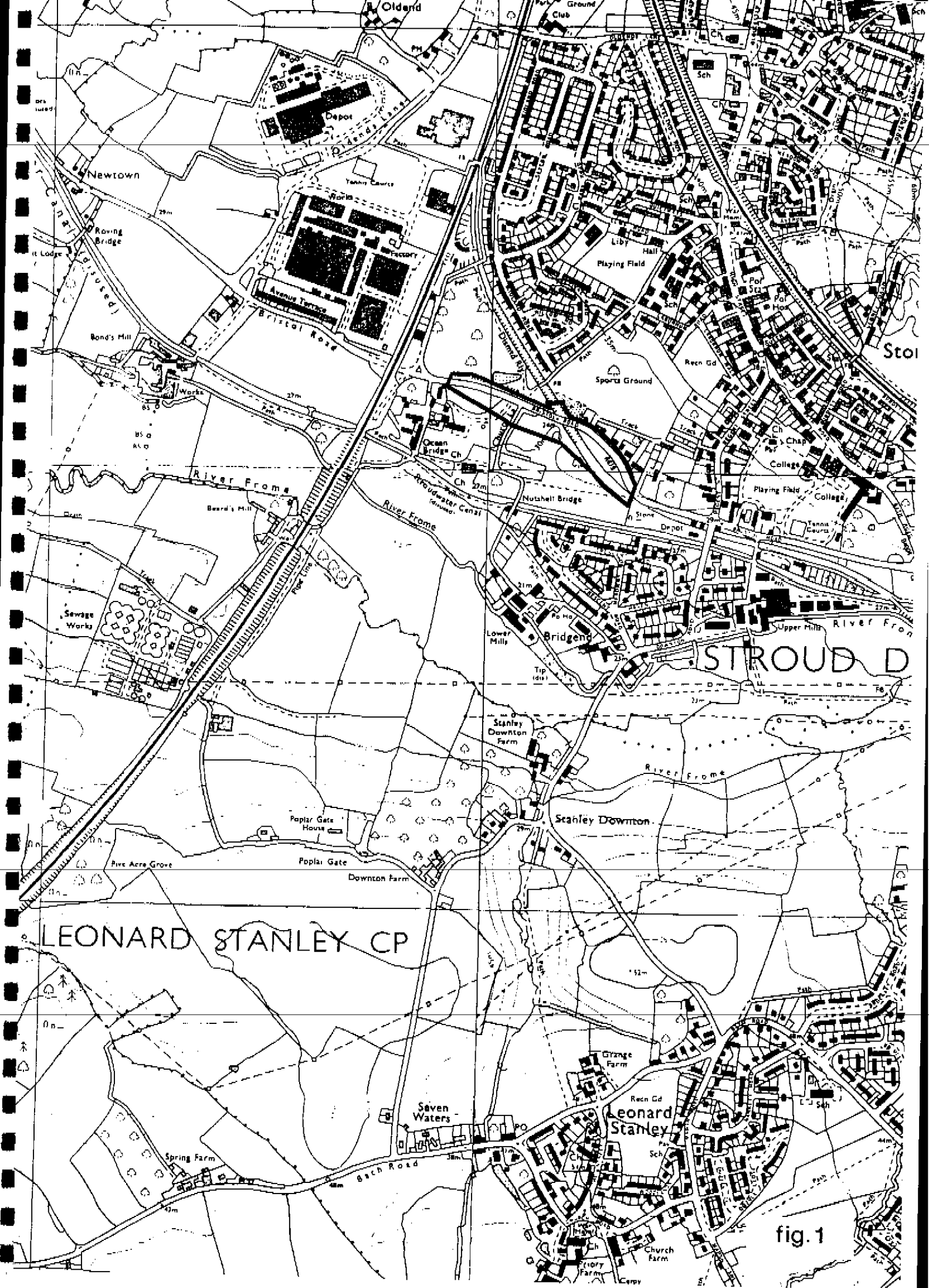
The following assessment of the archaeology within an area containing the proposed route of the A419 Ebley Bypass (Stage 2A), was undertaken by the Archaeology Section of Gloucestershire County Council to provide an indication of the archaeological implications of construction. The survey was undertaken in October 1991, and was commissioned by Gloucestershire County Surveyor's Department.

2.2 Description of the survey area

The survey area is located on the western edge of the small town of Stonehouse, Gloucestershire (fig 1). The area measures a maximum of 375m by 70m, extending from Stonehouse Court eastwards to North Berryfields, and is transected by the present alignment of the A419 road and the dismantled remains of a former railway line.

2.3 Topography and geology

The survey area is located on the northern side of the valley of the River Frome. The western portion of the survey area is mostly level, centred on the 31m contour; the eastern portion falls south-eastwards from approximately 35m AOD to 29m AOD. Geologically, the area is entirely formed of a deposit of sand and gravel forming the third terrace of the River Frome (OS 1972).



2.4 Land use, 1991 (fig 2)

A variety of land use was present within the area of search in October 1991. To the south of the A419 road lay a portion of the grounds of Stonehouse Court Hotel, an area of housing in the process of being constructed, and the embanked remains of a disused railway line, overgrown in places with shrubs and trees. The railway line (within a cutting) was also preserved to the north of the A419, but access under the bridge carrying the A419 across the former railway was blocked. The majority of the land in the survey area to the north of the A419 was pasture.

2.5 Former land use (fig 2)

A map compiled to aid the payment of ecclesiastical tithes during the first half of the 19th century (7.1 below) indicates that landuse c. 1840 was considerably different from the present. As now, the area of search was transected by the A419 (Bristol) road, but the adjacent land was given over entirely to agriculture. This pattern of landuse changed with the construction of the Nailsworth branch line of the Midland Railway in the 1860s (Herbert 1972, 271). However, the area to the east of the grounds of Stonehouse Court Hotel, which is presently given over to housing, was pasture until 1990.

3. Survey design and methodology

3.1 The survey was designed to examine the archaeology of the area of search. Two sorts of evidence were examined.

3.2 Documentary sources relating to the area were surveyed, and the relevant information extracted. These sources were:-

- Gloucestershire County Sites and Monuments Record (Glos SMR) curated by the Archaeology Section, County Planning Department (Section 6: Gazetteer)

- Aerial photographs (vertical), curated by Gloucestershire County Council Planning Department.

- Documents and maps curated by the Gloucestershire County Record Office (7.1 Unpublished Sources)

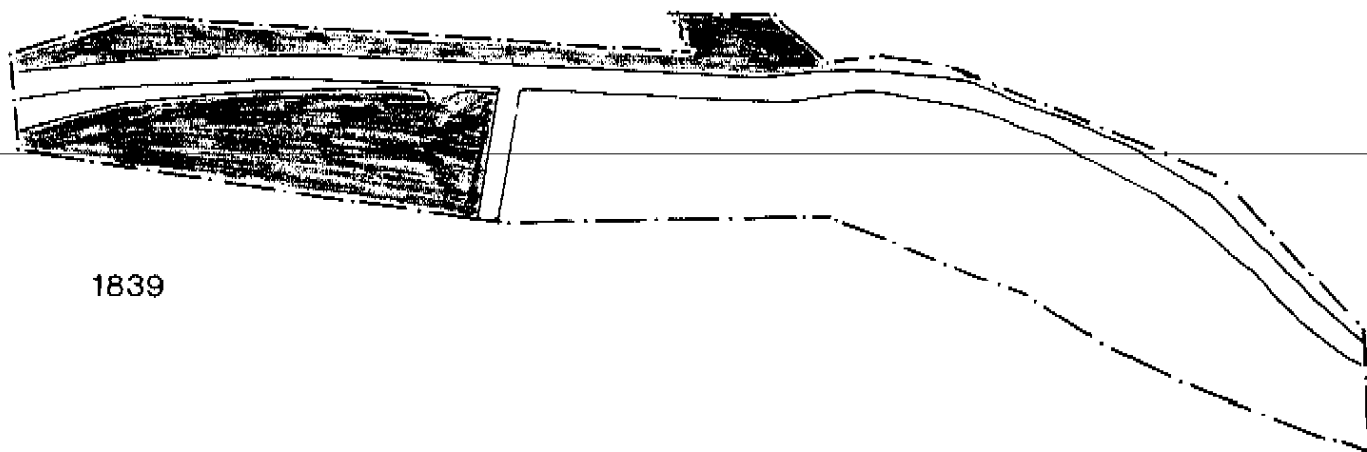
- published works (7.2 Bibliography)

3.3 A field visit was undertaken during October 1991 to validate the recorded evidence of archaeological sites contained in the documents, and to locate new ones.

3.4 The documentary and field assessment resulted in the addition

A419 STAGE 2A

LAND USE



1839

KEY



Arable



Garden / Grounds



Pasture



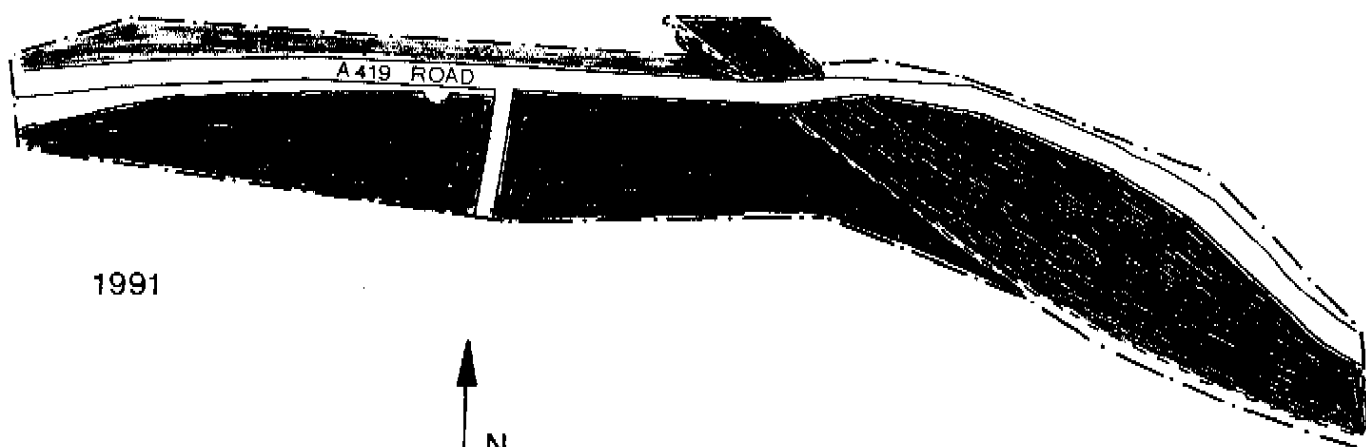
Waste



Housing



Other



1991

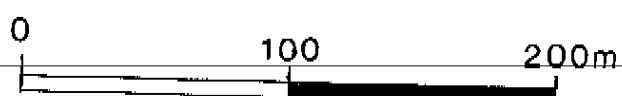
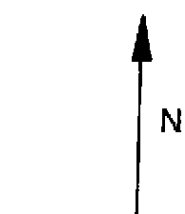


fig 2

of one new entry to the SMR, and a total of five observations were added to existing records.

4 General discussion

4.1 Archaeological background

There is no record of any detailed archaeological survey or excavation having been undertaken within Stonehouse parish prior to 1991. A preliminary archaeological assessment of the proposed Stage 2B of the A419 Ebley Bypass has been undertaken within an area east of, and adjacent to, the Stage 2A survey area (Parry 1991).

A small settlement at Stonehouse has probably existed since the Anglo-Saxon period; the first documentary mention of the name occurs in 1086 (Smith 1964, 202). It is probable that this early settlement lay to the south of the area of search, in the vicinity of St Cyr's parish church (Beresford and Hurst 1971, 188) although no trace of former structures can be identified on the ground surface. Also to the south of the search area lies the post-medieval structure of Stonehouse Court (now a hotel), perhaps representing the latest in a series of manor houses to be constructed on this site (Herbert 1972, 268). Earlier occupation in the vicinity of the parish church is implied by finds of Romano-British pottery discovered during grave digging in St Cyr's churchyard (*inf ex* County Sites and Monuments Record; Clon 6935).

Further afield, on the southern fringes of the Frome valley and its junction with the Severn vale, excavations have been undertaken at King's Stanley (Heighway 1989), Frocester (Price 1983), and Eastington (Gardiner 1932, 170). The combined evidence from these sites suggests that the landscape was densely settled during the bronze age, iron age, and Romano-British periods.

For the medieval period, the site excavated at King's Stanley has also revealed an important sequence of structures forming the centre of a manorial estate (Heighway, *ibid*). The area also contains an important former monastic complex, of which much of the structure survives, at Leonard Stanley.

The medieval and post-medieval history of Stonehouse has been extensively researched (Herbert 1972). The importance of the Frome valley during the 16th-19th centuries for woollen production in Gloucestershire has been emphasized by several commentators (Perry 1945; Tann 1967; Walrond 1967; Viner 1984).

4.2 Summary

A total of six archaeological sites and areas of interest (6.2 below) can be identified within the area of search. The sites

within the survey area may be summarized as follows:

Site type	Glos SMR no
Dismantled railway	3472
Quarrying	11849
Prehistoric flint finds	11850
Fieldname 'Berryfield'	12300
A419 road	12303
Railway bridge	13159

4.3 The archaeology of the survey area

The archaeology of the survey area is dominated by present and former routes of communication along the Frome valley; the A419 road (Glos 12303) and the former railway (Glos 3472) are highly significant for any understanding of the social and economic history of the locality. Within the area of search, however, it is doubtful whether these features contain archaeological deposits which would yield significant evidence relating to their construction and use. The bridge (Glos 13159), which carries the A419 road over the railway, is a structure which may contain useful information in its fabric.

There is no firm evidence to suggest that structures or deposits associated with occupation dating before the post-medieval period survive within the area of search. Finds of prehistoric flint (Glos 11850) may indicate occupation in the vicinity, although scatters of such artefacts are commonly found throughout the landscape and need not be significant. The place-name 'Berryfield' (Glos 12300), which may suggest the former presence of earthworks, might imply that some form of settlement was once present in the southern portion of the area of search. However, an alternative explanation - that the name is derived from earthworks associated with quarrying - seems as likely on the basis of observations made during the construction of housing within the area in question (Hoyle 1990).

4.4 The archaeological implications of road construction

The proposed route of the A419 Stage 2A (Stonehouse Court - North Berryfields) Ebbley Bypass is identified on a drawing submitted with a planning application (no. C2128/31/37) submitted by Gloucestershire County Surveyor's Department. To the west the proposed route follows the present alignment of the A419 road before diverging southwards where it is proposed to utilise the disused railway line to carry the proposed carriageway. The majority of the proposed area of construction has, therefore, already been extensively disturbed during the

construction of the existing road and railway line. Adjacent to the railway line, a proposed roundabout and a short length of access road constitute the only portions of road proposed in areas apparently undisturbed by previous activity. However, the proposed roundabout lies in an area where archaeological observation during the construction of housing has produced no evidence for the presence of significant archaeological deposits (Hoyle 1990): the proposed access road runs across a narrow plot of land, sandwiched between the A419 road and the former railway, where the potential for previous disturbance from the construction of either, or both, of these features is high.

Within the area of search, no areas containing significant archaeological deposits can be identified. It seems probable that, were such deposits ever present, the degree of post-medieval ground disturbance would have resulted in their destruction.

5. Recommendations for further work

5.1 Introduction

The methodology followed in this report in assessing the archaeological impact of road construction, and in making recommendations to mitigate any impact, is summarized as an appendix.

- 5.2** This survey of the A419 Stage 2A (Stonehouse Court - North Berryfields) Ebley Bypass provides an initial (Stage 1) assessment of the archaeological implications of development. Under normal circumstances, a Stage 1 assessment cannot indicate the full range of archaeological deposits present within an area of search: deposits are seldom visible as surface features, and a Stage 2 assessment involving detailed geophysical survey and small scale sampling by excavation is usually necessary before areas of negative and positive archaeological significance can be identified. However, in this case, the Stage 1 assessment has not indicated any areas of archaeological potential requiring further evaluation. For this reason, it is recommended that no Stage 2 assessment of the A419 Stage 2A (Stonehouse Court - North Berryfields) Ebley Bypass will be necessary.

5.3 Stage 3: recording in advance of construction

The proposed construction will affect the setting, and possibly the fabric, of Glos 13159 (the bridge carrying the present alignment of the A419 road across the disused railway). It is recommended that this feature should be recorded in advance of, and during, construction. At a minimum, the bridge should be recorded photographically.

5.4 Stage 4: observation and recording during construction

All groundworks undertaken during the programme of construction should be observed to enable the recording of any archaeological information not predicted by the Stage 1 assessment that might be exposed.

5.6 Stage 5: post-excavation archive preparation, analysis, and publication

If significant archaeological deposits were located during Stage 4, it would be necessary to complete this stage by preparing an archive of the field data, analysing this data, and publishing the results of this analysis.

6. Gazetteer of Sites

6.1 The gazetteer lists in brief sites within the area of search listed on the Gloucestershire Sites and Monuments Record in October 1991. Each site is listed by order of SMR number, and located by National Grid Reference. Each site mentioned in the gazetteers is located on fig 3.

6.2 Gazetteer of sites

Glos 3472

SO SO 80250500 - SO 849200008

Disused railway line, formerly the Nailsworth branch of the Midland Railway, in use between 1867 and 1969 (Herbert 1972, 271).

Glos 11849

SO 802050

An area of former quarrying, identified from deposits of disturbed soily gravel exposed during the construction of housing (Hoyle 1990). The date and extent of the disturbance is uncertain.

Glos 11850

SO 802050

Finds of prehistoric worked flints, found during the construction of housing (Hoyle 1990).

Glos 12300

SO 801051

The fieldname 'Berryfield' is recorded by the Tithe Map and Apportionment of 1839, when it refers to a large area of land situated north and east of St Cyr's parish church, Stonehouse. 'Berry' may be derived from the Old English 'burh': fortified place. The former presence of earthworks might, therefore, be indicated although suspected gravel quarrying in this area (Hoyle 1990) may provide an explanation for the name if substantial spoilheaps were present. 'Berryfield' survives as a placename for houses and open spaces around the Regent Street area of Stonehouse.

Glos 12303

SO 80600485

The Bristol Road, currently the A419, is a route which was probably in use by the medieval period or earlier, giving access along the valley of the River Frome between Eastington and Stroud. The road was turnpiked in 1726 (Herbert 1972, 271).

Glos 13159

SO 80170517

Bridge, carrying the A419 road over the former alignment of the Naisworth branch line of the Midland railway. It is presumably contemporary with the construction of the railway during the 1860s. The abutments are of coursed limestone, the iron span carries a cast iron parapet. Below the span, the former railway line is blocked with dumps of soil.

A419 STAGE 2A
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

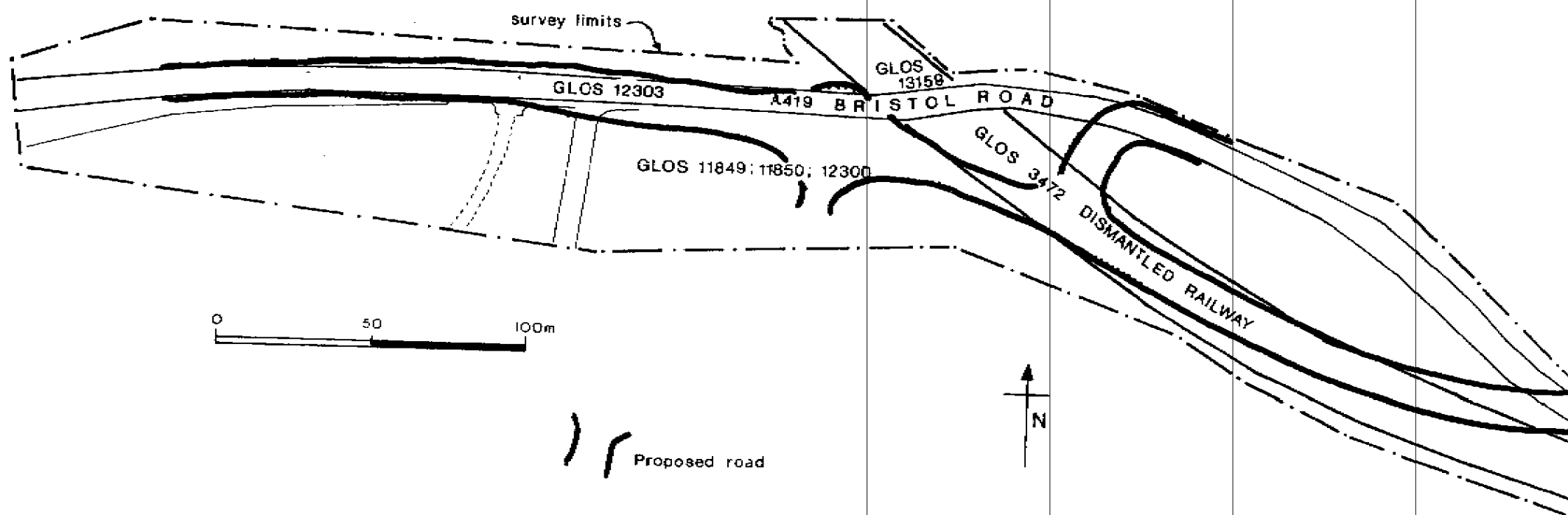


fig 3

7. List of unpublished sources and bibliography

7.1 List of unpublished sources

The sources listed below are those consulted from the Gloucestershire Record Office. The references quoted should be preceded by the letters GRO.

STONEHOUSE	1730	Estate Map	Photocopy 365
STONEHOUSE	1839	Tithe map & Apportionment	P316a SD2/2 GDR TI/172
STONEHOUSE	1839	Parish map	D 1347

7.2 Bibliography

Beresford, M. & Hurst, J.G.	1971	<u>Deserted mediæval villages</u> . London
Gardiner, C.I.	1932	Recent discoveries in the Stroud valley. <u>Proceedings of the Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club</u> 24, 163-80
Heighway, C.	1989	Excavations near the site of St George's church, King's Stanley. <u>Glevensis</u> 23, 33-42
Herbert, N.M,	1972	Stonehouse entry in: <u>Victoria History of the County of Gloucestershire</u> 10, 267-89
Hoyle, J.P.	1990	A report on a watching brief at Bristol Road, Stonehouse, July 1990. Gloucestershire County Council
<u>Ordnance Survey maps:</u>		
OS	1885	Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map 49.1
OS	1903	Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map 49.1
OS	1972	Geological Survey of Great Britain, sheet 234, Gloucester
Parry, C.	1991	Ebley Bypass, Gloucestershire: Stage 2B. Stage 1 archaeological assessment. Gloucestershire County Council

- | | | |
|-------------|------|--|
| Smith, A.H. | 1964 | <u>The place-names of Gloucestershire 2: The north and west Cotswolds.</u> Cambridge |
| Perry, R. | 1945 | The Gloucestershire woollen industry. <u>TBGAS</u> 66, 49-137 |
| Price, E.G. | 1983 | Frocester. <u>Current Archaeology</u> 88, 139-45 |
-
- | | | |
|-------------|------|---|
| Tann, J. | 1967 | <u>Gloucestershire woollen mills</u>
Newton Abbot |
| Viner, D. | 1984 | Industrial archaeology. In A. Saville (ed), <u>Archaeology in Gloucestershire</u> , 317-342. Cheltenham |
| Walrond, L. | 1967 | Industrial archaeology in the Stroud area. <u>TBGAS</u> 86, 173-182 |

Abbreviation

TBGAS	Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society
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Appendix

Stages of archaeological assessment, recording, and analysis of results for road construction schemes

The following procedure is followed by the Archaeology Section, County Planning Department to assess the archaeological implications of road schemes in order to secure the preservation or recording of significant sites, as appropriate. Five stages of assessment, recording, and analysis can be defined.

Stage 1 Preliminary assessment

During this stage the objective is to identify sites and areas of archaeological interest to enable a preliminary assessment of the impact of proposed development. The assessment is effected using documentary information from: Gloucestershire County Sites and Monuments Record, Gloucestershire County Record Office, Gloucester Library (Local History Collection), aerial photographic libraries, and published archaeological literature. This evidence is considered together with information gathered during a field inspection of the proposed route(s).

Stage 2 Detailed assessment

To complete the assessment begun in Stage 1, a second stage using more intensive methods of survey is usually necessary to evaluate the significance of the archaeological evidence identified during Stage 1, and to prospect for new sites. This programme of work should attempt to locate and evaluate the full range of archaeological deposits within the area affected by proposed construction, to determine the extent, date, and degree of preservation. A range of prospection and sampling methods can be utilised to bring the Stage 2 assessment to a satisfactory conclusion:

- fieldwalking can predict the existence of archaeological sites not visible on the ground from the evidence of surface scatters of artefacts. Fieldwalking is most effective on areas of arable, where it is best undertaken between ploughing and replanting
- geophysical survey can detect certain types of below ground features. This technique can be used any time of year, except when a crop may be vulnerable to damage
- aerial survey can detect sites from the air in late summer (for buried sites under arable crop) or winter (for earthwork sites revealed by low winter sun or frost/snow cover)
- small scale excavation can test the results of any of the above survey methods, to establish the character and level of preservation of archaeological deposits

The report on the results of the Stage 2 assessment might include recommendations for the preservation of individual sites or

landscapes, and recommendations for an appropriate level of recording to be undertaken at those sites not selected for preservation.

Stage 3 Archaeological recording in advance of construction

Using the evidence of the Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessments, levels of recording for significant sites not selected for preservation can be determined. This consists of partial or full survey and excavation, undertaken in advance of, or phased within, a construction programme.

Stage 4 Observation

Observation of earthmoving associated with construction is undertaken, to enable a record to be made of any significant evidence not predicted by previous stages of work.

Stage 5 Archive preparation and publication

To complete Stages 1-4, analysis of the results of all preceding stages is undertaken. This entails preparing an archive of the information gathered, analysis of the archive, and publication of significant results. The programme of work is completed with the deposition of the entire archive, both paper record and artefacts, in an appropriate museum.