

**25-27 Querns Lane
Cirencester
Gloucestershire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

for

Kemblewood Ltd

CA Project: 2256
CA Report: 11313

December 2011

25-27 Querns Lane
Cirencester
Gloucestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 2256
CA Report: 11313

prepared by	Emily Rowe, Site Assistant
date	15 August 2007
checked by	Cliff Bateman, Project Manager
date	7 December 2011
approved by	Simon Cox, Head of Fieldwork
signed	
date	14 December 2011
issue	01

This report is confidential to the client. Cotswold Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability to any third party to whom this report, or any part of it, is made known. Any such party relies upon this report entirely at their own risk. No part of this report may be reproduced by any means without permission.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	2
1. INTRODUCTION	3
<i>The site</i>	3
<i>Archaeological background</i>	4
<i>Methodology</i>	4
2. RESULTS	5
<i>The Finds Evidence</i>	5
3. DISCUSSION.....	5
4. CA PROJECT TEAM	6
5. REFERENCES	6
APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS.....	7
APPENDIX 2: THE FINDS	8
APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM.....	9

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)
Fig. 2 Location of observed groundworks (1:500)

SUMMARY

Site Name: 25-27 Querns Lane
Location: Cirencester, Gloucestershire
NGR: SP 0230 0160
Type: Watching brief
Date: May and August 2007
Planning Reference: 06/02994/FUL
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Corinium Museum, Cirencester
Site Code: QUL 07

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology (CA) during geological boreholes at 25-27 Querns Lane, Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

Natural gravel was recorded between 1.5m and 2.5m below present ground level in the boreholes and was overlain by a possible former land surface. This was in turn sealed by 'dark earth' deposits and a heavily reworked cultivation soil.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In May and August 2007 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Kemblewood Limited at 25-27 Querns Lane, Cirencester, Gloucestershire (centred on NGR: SP 0230 0160; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to planning consent granted by Cotswold District Council (Planning Ref: 06/02994/FUL) for the demolition of the existing workshop and warehouse buildings and the erection of 5 cottages on rafted foundations.
- 1.3 The archaeological fieldwork was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by CA and approved by Cotswold District Council acting on the advice of Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2001), the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire* (Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) 1995), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH 1991), and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

The site

- 1.4 The development site is approximately 900m² and is located to the rear of 25 Querns Lane, Cirencester with access via 27 Querns Lane (Fig. 2). The Querns Lane frontage lies at approximately 110m AOD with ground levels sloping down to the southeast. Notably the surface of the site behind 25 Querns Lane is approximately 0.6m higher than a pathway that runs adjacent to the northeast side of the site, and the path itself is higher still than the ground level of the adjacent cottage at 21a Querns Lane.
- 1.5 The underlying geology of the area is mapped as Cornbrash Formation overlain by Pleistocene River Terrace Gravels (BGS 2011). The terrace gravels were observed during the current geotechnical works.
- 1.6 The site is covered by hard-standing and accommodates numerous small workshops along the northeast side and a large warehouse at its southeast extent.

Archaeological background

- 1.7 A staged evaluation programme has previously been undertaken for the development site, including desk-based assessment (CA 2003), a ground probing radar survey (Stratascan 2004) and evaluation trenching (CA 2004). While it is not intended to repeat this information in its entirety, this preliminary work indicated that the site lies in an area of archaeological potential. In particular it lies within the south-western corner of *Insula III* of the Roman town of *Corinium*, adjacent to the projected course of two Roman streets.
- 1.8 The radar survey identified possible Roman buildings adjacent to the Querns Lane frontage with a possible broadly contemporary road being present along the southern boundary of the site (Stratascan 2004). The subsequent evaluation identified Roman demolition debris and possible Roman surfaces and structures at depths of 1.10m to 1.50m below the present ground (107.6 m AOD to 108.87m AOD). These deposits were universally sealed by 'dark earth' deposits which were overlain by a heavily reworked cultivation soil and a variety of modern surfaces, although a possible medieval surface/trackway was also revealed (CA 2004).

Methodology

- 1.9 Following consultations between Kemblewood Limited, CA, and Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Section in November 2006, it was agreed that the new build would be founded upon a reinforced rafted foundation not exceeding 550mm in depth from the existing ground surface. Such a foundation design would allow a minimum coverage of 550mm between the raft sub-base and the previously identified archaeological deposits.
- 1.10 An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks, comprising geotechnical boreholes and the removal of modern demolition debris and the existing concrete floor slabs, throughout the development area. The groundworks for the rafted foundations and service runs were not observed.
- 1.11 Written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.12 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will

be deposited with Corinium Museum, Cirencester, along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain

2. RESULTS

- 2.1 The boreholes were typically drilled to depths of 4m below the present ground level (bpgl). The earliest deposit encountered was the natural gravel substrate which was typically revealed 2.5m+ bpgl, the exception being within borehole 5 where probable natural gravels were revealed 1.5m bpgl. The gravels were sealed by orange–brown typically 0.3m in depth. It remains undetermined whether these deposits are natural in origin or are representative of a pre-Roman land surface. Within boreholes 2 and 3, these deposits were sealed by dark grey–brown silty clay, most probably representative of ‘dark-earth’ deposits, from which six sherds of Roman pottery were retrieved. Overlying these deposits was a heavily re-worked cultivation soil containing post-medieval/modern ceramic building material and glass that was sealed by modern surfacing.
- 2.2 Subsequent monitoring of ground reduction throughout the central and southern extent of the site (see Fig. 2 for location and extent), further revealed the heavily re-worked cultivation soils overlain in part by an early modern cobbled yard surface.

The Finds Evidence

- 2.3 Six sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from two deposits, both interpreted as ‘dark earth’ (see Appendix 2). The pottery present from deposit 203 consists of a North Wiltshire oxidised fabric, identifiable as a hemispherical flanged bowl, and broadly datable to between the 2nd to 4th century AD. A Savernake type jar rim, dating to the late 1st century to 2nd century AD, was recovered from deposit 304.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The earliest deposits encountered within the boreholes were the natural terrace gravels that were sealed by clays that may be representative of a possible former land surface. No artefacts were recovered from these deposits. The postulated land surface was sealed by deposits comparable to post-Roman ‘dark earth’ identified

elsewhere in the town, and during the preceding evaluation, overlying Roman contexts. Deposits of this type have been found in Roman towns across Britain, but their origins are still not fully understood. The 'dark earth' is thought to be an amalgam of early medieval cultivation soil, decayed wooden structures and animal and vegetable remains.

- 3.2 During the removal of the modern yard surface, the earliest deposits encountered were the heavily reworked cultivation soils, containing post-medieval artefacts. Such deposits were encountered during the preceding evaluation trenching sealing the 'dark earth deposits'.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 4.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Emily R. Rowe and Kelly Saunders, who both compiled this report. The illustrations were prepared by Jon Bennett. The archive has been compiled by Emily R. Rowe and Kelly Saunders, and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Cliff Bateman.

5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1946 *Solid and Drift Geology; England and Wales, Sheet 235, Cirencester, 1:50,000*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2003 *25-27 Querns Lane, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: Desk-Based Assessment*. CA Typescript report no. 03178

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2004 *25-27 Querns Lane, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Evaluation*. CA Typescript report no. 04103

Stratascan 2004 *25-27 Querns Lane, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: Results of Ground Probing Radar Survey* Typescript report

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Borehole 1

No.	Type	Description	Depth from modern ground surface (m)	Spot-date
101	Layer	Tarmac surface	0.00 to 0.10m	
102	Layer	Pale white yellow gravel levelling for 101	0.10 to 0.25m	
103	Layer	Dark brown black gritty silt with frequent CBM and glass	0.25 to 1.0m	Post-medieval /modern

Borehole 2

No.	Type	Description	Depth from modern ground surface (m)	Spot-date
	Layer	Borehole already excavated and material not retained to depth of 1.45m bpgl	0.00 to 1.45	
201	Layer	Dark black brown clay silt with frequent CBM and glass	1.45 to 2.9	Post-medieval /modern
202	Layer	Dark black brown clay silt with mortar flecking	2.9 to 3.35	
203	Layer	Dark grey brown sandy silt with charcoal flecking	3.35 to 3.65	C2-C4
204	Layer	Dark orange brown sandy clay with charcoal flecking	3.65 to 3.89	
205	Layer	Natural substrate: mid yellow brown sandy gravel.	3.89m +	

Borehole 3

No.	Type	Description	Depth from modern ground surface (m)	Spot-date
301	Layer	Tarmac surface.	0.00 to 0.10m	
302	Layer	Dark yellow brown sandy silt with CBM	0.10 to 0.55m	Post-medieval /modern
303	Layer	Dark brown black clay silt with CBM	0.55 to 1.70m	
304	Layer	Dark brown grey silt with charcoal flecking	1.70 to 1.90m	LC1-C2
305	Layer	Dark orange brown sandy clay with small stones	1.90 to 2.60m	
306	Layer	Natural substrate; mid yellow brown sandy gravel	2.60m +	

Borehole 4

No.	Type	Description	Depth from modern ground surface (m)	Spot-date
401	Layer	Tarmac surface	0.00 to 0.10m	
402	Layer	Pale white yellow gravel levelling for 401.	0.10 to 0.55m	
403	Layer	Dark red brown silty clay with small stones and CBM.	0.55 to 2.35m	
404	Layer	Mid brown grey sandy clay with charcoal flecking .	2.35 to 2.75m	
405	Layer	Natural substrate; pale yellow brown sandy gravel.	2.75m +	

Borehole 5

No.	Type	Description	Depth from modern ground surface (m)	Spot-date
501	Layer	Concrete surface.	0.00 to 0.30m	
502	Layer	Dark black brown gritty silt with CBM	0.30 to 1.50m	
503	Layer	Pale yellow brown sandy gravel	1.50 to 2.00m	
504	Layer	Layer; dark yellow brown clay .	2.00 to 2.30m	
505	Layer	Layer; mid yellow brown sandy gravels .	2.30m +	

Ground reduction

601	Layer	Modern demolition rubble	0.00 to 0.10m	
602	Layer	Modern tarmac and concrete surfacing	0.10 to 0.25m	
603	Layer	Dark black brown clay silt with frequent CBM and glass	0.25m to 0.45m	Post-medieval /modern

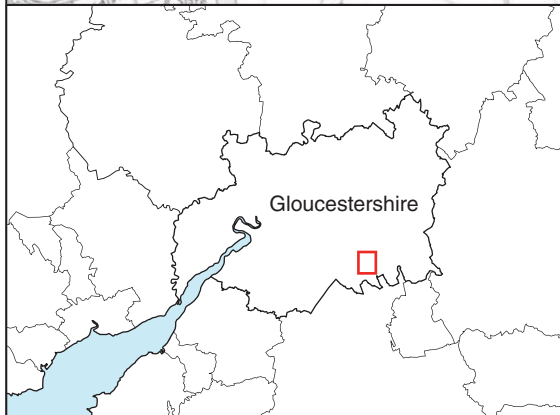
APPENDIX 2: THE FINDS

Finds Concordance

Context	Artefact type	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
203	Pottery – North wilts oxidised ware	5	13	C2-C4
304	Pottery – Savernake type	1	29	LC1-C2

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	25-27 Querns Lane, Cirencester, Gloucestershire	
Short description	Natural gravel was recorded between 1.5m and 2.5m below present ground level in the boreholes and was overlain by a possible former land surface. This was in turn sealed by 'dark earth' deposits and a heavily reworked cultivation soil.	
Project dates	May to August 2007	
Project type	Archaeological Watching Brief	
Previous work	CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2003 25-27 Querns Lane, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: <i>Desk-Based Assessment</i> . CA Typescript report no. 03178 CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2004 25-27 Querns Lane, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: <i>Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA Typescript report no. 04103 Stratascan 2004 25-27 Querns Lane, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: <i>Results of Ground Probing Radar Survey</i>	
Future work	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	25-27 Querns Lane, Cirencester, Gloucestershire	
Study area (M ² /ha)	900m ²	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SP 0230 0160	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	None	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Cliff Bateman	
Project Supervisor	Emily Rowe and Kelly Saunders	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Corinium Museum	Roman pottery
Paper	Corinium Museum	Trench sheet, borehole sheets, levels register, photographic registers.
Digital	Corinium Museum	Reports
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2011 25-27 Querns Lane, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. CA typescript report no. 11313		



0 104 1km

Reproduced from the 2009 Ordnance Survey Explorer map with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright
Cotswold Archaeology Ltd 100002109



Cirencester 01285 771022
Milton Keynes 01908 218320
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE

25 - 27 Querns Lane, Cirencester
Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

PROJECT NO. 2256 DATE 07-12-2011
DRAWN BY JB REVISION 00
APPROVED BY PJM SCALE@A4 1:25,000

FIGURE NO.

1

016

44

QUERNS LANE

23

25

29

21a

T6

T1

T2

2

3

T5

1

T4

4





T3

5

T7

T8

SP

-  site
-  observed borehole
-  area of observed ground reduction
-  evaluation trench (CA 2004)



Cirencester 01285 771022
 Milton Keynes 01908 218320
 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
 25 - 27 Querns Lane, Cirencester
 Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE
 Location of observed groundworks

