

IRON MILLS AND  
LONGFORDS MILL  
MINCHINHAMPTON  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

CA PROJECT: 1284  
CA REPORT: 06077

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## CONTENTS

SUMMARY .....	4
1. INTRODUCTION .....	5
<i>The site</i> .....	5
<i>Archaeological background</i> .....	6
<i>Methodology</i> .....	6
2. RESULTS .....	6
3. DISCUSSION.....	7
4. CA PROJECT TEAM .....	7
5. REFERENCES .....	7

## **LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS**

- Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)
- Fig. 2 The site, showing archaeological features (1:2,000)
- Fig. 3 South-facing elevation of culvert opening in Building 1 (1:50)
- Fig. 4 Photograph: Culvert to south-east of Building 1

## **SUMMARY**

**Site Name:** Iron Mills and Longfords Mill  
**Location:** Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire  
**NGR:** SO 8680 9920  
**Type:** Archaeological watching brief  
**Date:** November 2001 to December 2004  
**Planning Refs:** S97/1463; CT7589/B  
**Location of Archive:** To be deposited with The Museum in the Park, Stroud  
**Site Code:** LMM 04

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology (CA) during groundworks associated with the redevelopment for residential and business use of standing buildings at Iron Mills and Longfords Mill, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire.

The watching brief was limited in scope due to the often small-scale nature of the groundworks but did record a number of limestone culverts associated with the mills' industrial life.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November 2001 to December 2004 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Builders Ede Ltd at Iron Mills and Longfords Mill, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire (centred on NGR: SO 8680 9920; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil conditions attached to planning applications approved by Stroud and Cotswold District Councils (Planning Refs: S97/1463; CT7589/B) for the redevelopment of the standing buildings as offices and residential properties and the erection of new dwellings, service roads and car parking. The objective of the watching brief was to record any archaeological remains exposed during the development.
- 1.2 The archaeological fieldwork was carried out in accordance with a brief for archaeological recording prepared by Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council Archaeological Service, the archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and with subsequent Written Schemes of Investigation (WSIs) produced by CA (2002 (then operating as Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT)) and 2004) and approved by the LPA acting on the advice of Mr Parry. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999) and the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire* (GCC 1995).

### ***The site***

- 1.3 The Iron Mills and Longfords Mill complex is located along the floor of the Avening to Nailsworth Valley, approximately 1km south-east of Nailsworth. It is bounded to the south by Avening Road, and to the east and north by Gatcombe Water and the wooded periphery of the Gatcombe Park estate (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 70m AOD.
- 1.4 At the time of the fieldwork, the site was occupied by a series of disused and partially derelict mill buildings. Several more modern buildings had already been demolished.

- 1.5 The underlying geology of the area is mapped as Upper Lias of the Jurassic Period with overlying bands of Inferior Oolite and Fullers Earth (BGS 1970).

### ***Archaeological background***

- 1.6 The history of Iron Mills and Longfords Mill is fully detailed in a desk-based assessment produced in 2001 (CAT 2001). This document revealed that the standing mill buildings date to the late 17th or early 18th centuries, with later additions. It also suggested that an earlier, medieval mill may have formerly occupied the site.
- 1.7 The site was previously the subject of a standing buildings study by Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England) (RCHME) (1991) and an archaeological evaluation carried out by CA (CAT 2002). These works supported the conclusions of the desk-based assessment.

### ***Methodology***

- 1.8 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSIs (CAT 2002 and CA 2004). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks, comprising the excavation of new foundation trenches and service channels (Fig. 2).
- 1.9 Written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Excavation Recording Manual* (1996).
- 1.10 Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the finds and site archive will be deposited with the Museum in the Park, Stroud.

## **2. RESULTS**

- 2.1 This section should be viewed in conjunction with Fig. 2. A limestone-constructed culvert was recorded in the basement of Building 1 (Fig. 3). This structure had a 1.9m wide and 1.75m high vaulted opening in the interior face of the basement's northern wall, and extended northwards out of the building. Its shingle floor sloped down to the opening so that water flowed through the culvert into the basement. The exact purpose of this structure was unclear.

2.2 Excavations to the immediate south-east of Building 1 broke into the top of a substantial east/west aligned culvert (Fig. 4). The small-scale nature of the groundworks in this area precluded detailed recording of this structure, but it was vaulted and of limestone construction, with water flowing through it in a westerly direction.

2.3 Further limestone-built culverts were encountered to the east and west of Building 2.

### **3. DISCUSSION**

3.1 The watching brief was limited in scope due to the often small-scale nature of the groundworks but did record a number of limestone culverts associated with the mills' industrial life.

### **4. CA PROJECT TEAM**

4.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by David Kenyon, Richard Morton and Kelly Saunders. This report was compiled by Derek Evans. The illustrations were prepared by Lorna Gray. The archive has been compiled by Derek Evans, and prepared for deposition by Teresa Gilmour. The project was managed for CA by Simon Cox.

### **5. REFERENCES**

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1970 *Solid and Drift Geology Sheet 251: Malmesbury*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2004 *Longford's Mill, Nailsworth: Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Recording and Photographic Survey*

CAT (Cotswold Archaeological Trust) 2001 *Iron Mills and Longfords Mill, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Assessment*. CAT Report No. **01120**

CAT (Cotswold Archaeological Trust) 2002 *Iron Mills and Longfords Mill, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire: Project Design for a Programme of Archaeological Recording and Evaluation*

RCHME (Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England) 1991 *Longford Mills, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire*. Unpublished RCHME Historic Buildings Report