

**LARKS RISE  
OLD GLOUCESTER ROAD  
BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

*For*

**MR W. R. BARR**


CA PROJECT: 2437  
CA REPORT: 08010

AUGUST 2008

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CA PROJECT: 2437  
CA REPORT: 08010

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date	7 August 2008
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signed	
date	9 August 2008
issue	01

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## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Larks Rise, Old Gloucester Road, Bourton-on-the-Water  
**Location:** Gloucestershire  
**NGR:** ST 15713 20763  
**Type:** Watching Brief  
**Date:** 17 January 2008 and 12 May 2008  
**Planning Reference:** 07/00594/DOM  
**Location of Archive:** To be deposited with Corinium Museum, Cirencester  
**Site Code:** LRB08

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the proposed erection of a new outbuilding at Larks Rise, Old Gloucester Road, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire.

Although the foundation trenches were located on the site of a demolished 20th century stable building, a large pit of Romano-British date was observed during groundworks. A small quantity of pottery sherds dating to the 1st to 2nd centuries AD were recovered from this pit. No other archaeological features were recorded.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In January and May 2008 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Mr W. R. Barr at Larks Rise, Old Gloucester Road, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire (centred on NGR: ST 15713 20763; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to a planning consent for the proposed erection of a new outbuilding measuring c. 7.5m by 7.5m (Planning ref: 07/00594/DOM). The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the development.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2008) and approved by Mr Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (2001), *the Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire* (GCC 1996) and the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991).

### ***The site***

- 1.3 The site is bounded by Old Gloucester Road to the north and lies adjacent to Bourton Bridge to the east and the Foss Way Roman Road to the south (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 150m AOD, dropping down to the north towards the road, which lies at approximately 143m AOD.
- 1.4 The site comprises gardens and land formerly occupied by a stable building built in the 20th century.
- 1.5 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as silts, silty sands and clays of the Jurassic Middle Lias period (BGS 1981)

### ***Archaeological background***

- 1.6 Archaeological interest in the site arises from its location adjacent to Bourton Bridge Roman settlement and the Foss Way Roman road. The settlement site is a Scheduled Monument (National Monument No. 31930) and Larks Rise lies

immediately outside the western boundary of the scheduled area. Excavations at the site in the 1950s and 1970s suggest that it was founded during the late 1st to early 2nd century AD. It is believed to have grown up between the crossing point of the Foss Way over the River Windrush and the junction of the Foss Way with Buckle Street c. 150m to the north of the crossing point. The excavations on the site have demonstrated that the settlement survives well and that it includes a number of stone structures as well as ditches and the remains of an area of what is thought to be an industrial area. Several of the structures have been interpreted as a *mansio*, a wayside shrine and a bakehouse. A hoard of Constantinian folles was discovered in 1970.

### **Methodology**

- 1.7 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2008). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks, including the excavation of foundations and service trenches for the new outbuilding. Non-archaeologically significant deposits were removed by the contractors under archaeological supervision. Excavation of archaeological deposits was carried out by hand (Fig. 2).
- 1.8 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.9 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, 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 (FIGS 2-3)**

- 2.1 The natural geological substrate 003, consisting of sandy silt and limestone bedrock, was revealed throughout the foundation trenches at an average depth of between 0.2m and 0.4m below present ground level, sloping up towards the northern end of the Trench. An oval pit 006 measuring 1.10m in diameter and 0.45m deep was recorded cutting the top of the natural bedrock and was filled by silty clay 005 (Fig 3.). A small quantity of late 1st to 2nd century Romano British pottery was recovered

from this deposit. This was overlain by modern make-up layer 004. In the northern sections of the foundation trenches, a thin layer of subsoil 002 was recorded overlaying the natural. This was overlain by mixed garden soil 001.

- 2.2 A similar stratigraphic sequence was noted in the soakaway and sewer trenches. The sandy silt and limestone bedrock 1002 was overlain by subsoil 1001 and topsoil 1000. No archaeological deposits were recorded. No archaeological features were recorded, although one sherd of Roman was recovered from subsoil 1001 in the sewer trench.

### 2.3 *The Finds*

A total of 19 sherds of Roman pottery were recovered, the majority from pit fill 005 (appendix B). A single vessel, a necked jar with a shoulder groove, was found in deposit 005 in a single black, sandy burnished fabric which is similar to Cirencester Pottery type 5 (Ireland 1998). The fabric and form are consistent with pottery dating to the late 1st or 2nd century AD.

A single abraded sherd in a coarse greyware, broadly of Roman date, was recovered from the subsoil 1001 in the sewer trench.

## 3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The single pit recorded during the watching brief dates firmly to the late 1st to 2nd century AD and as such is broadly contemporary with the settlement at Bourton Bridge and the Foss Way Roman Road. It is difficult to make a definitive interpretation of this feature or its full extent as it was not fully exposed by the development. This feature could be a quarrying pit used to extract the local bedrock for use as building material or hardcore, especially with the proximity of the settlement and Foss Way. No animal bone fragments or charcoal was recovered and with a silty fill it would appear that the pit had silted up naturally over a period of time rather than being used as a waste or storage pit.
- 3.2 The construction of the 20th century stable building appears to have involved levelling or reducing the ground level to the natural as it is directly overlain by

modern make-up. This would suggest that the pit was truncated and this may have completely removed other unrecorded archaeological features within the site.

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

Fieldwork was undertaken by Jonathan Bennett and Neil Wright. The report was written by Jonathan Bennett and Neil Wright. The illustrations were prepared by Peter Moore. The archive has been compiled by Jonathan Bennett, and prepared for deposition by Kathryn Price. The project was managed for CA by Richard Young.

#### **5. REFERENCES**

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1981 *Geological Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales), Solid and Drift Edition, Sheet 217, Moreton in Marsh, 1:50,000 Series*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2008 *Larks Rise, Old Gloucester Road, Bourton-on-the-water: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

Ireland, C.A., 1998 *The Pottery* in Wilkinson, D. and McWhirr, 98–140

Wilkinson, D. and McWhirr, A., 1998 *Cirencester Excavations IV: Cirencester Anglo-Saxon Church and Medieval Abbey* Cirencester, Cotswold Archaeological Trust



**APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

## Foundation Trenches (Top of Trench 148.66m AOD)

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
001	Deposit	Mixed garden soil			0.20	Modern
002	Deposit	Mid orange/brown sandy silt			0.20	
003	Natural	Mid yellow/brown degraded silty sand and limestone brash				
004	Deposit	Modern makeup layer for stables - mid brown silty clay with limestone pieces incl. glass and blue plastic water pipe			0.40	
005	Deposit	Fill of pit 006, mid grey/brown silty clay incl. lenses of silty sand		1.30	0.45	1st/ 2nd century AD
006	Cut	Oval pit, moderately sloping		4.30	0.45	1st/ 2nd century AD

## Soak away Trenches

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
1000	Deposit	Mixed garden soil			0.13	
1001	Deposit	Mid orange/brown sandy silt			0.28	
1002	Natural	Mid yellow/brown degraded silty sand and limestone brash			>0.1	

## Soakaway

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
1000	Deposit	Mixed garden soil – dark grey/brown silt incl. buried modern material e.g. ceramic drain and stone slabs			0.23	Modern
1001	Deposit	Mid orange/brown sandy silt			0.31	
1002	Natural	Mid yellow/brown degraded silty sand and limestone brash			>0.46	

## Sewer Trench

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
1000	Deposit	Mixed garden soil – dark grey/brown silt incl. buried modern material e.g. ceramic drain and stone slabs			0.22	Modern
1001	Deposit	Mid orange/brown sandy silt			0.32	Roman
1002	Natural	Mid yellow/brown degraded silty sand and limestone brash			>0.11	

**APPENDIX B: THE FINDS**

<b>Context</b>	<b>Artefact type</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Weight (g)</b>	<b>Spot-date</b>
005	Roman pottery; black sandy fabric	18	280	LC1-C2 AD
1001	Roman pottery: sandy greyware	1	8	-

**APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Larks Rise, Old Gloucester Road, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	<p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the proposed erection of a new outbuilding at Larks Rise, Old Gloucester Road, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire.</p> <p>Although the foundation trenches were located on the site of a demolished 20th century stable building, a large pit of Romano-British date was observed during groundworks. A small quantity of pottery sherds dating to the 1st to 2nd centuries AD were recovered from this pit. No other archaeological features were recorded.</p>	
Project dates	17 January 2008 and 12 May 2008	
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Watching Brief	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	None	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Larks Rise, Old Gloucester Road, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)	7.5m by 7.5m	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	ST 1571 2076	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Gloucestershire County Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Richard Young	
Project Supervisor	Jonathan Bennett	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	Corinium Museum, Cirencester	Pottery
Paper	Corinium Museum, Cirencester	Trench Record Sheets, Plans
Digital	Corinium Museum, Cirencester	Digital Photos
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2008 <i>Larks Rise Bourton-on-the-Water: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> , CA report no. <b>08010</b>		