Crucis Park
Ampney Crucis
Gloucestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief

The Environmental Dimension Partnership

Solar Planning Ltd

CA Project: 4794
CA Report: 14141

April 2014
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Ampney Crucis
Gloucestershire

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date 8 April 2014

checked by Cliff Bateman, Principal Fieldwork Manager

date 8 April 2014

approved by Laurent Coleman Principal Fieldwork Manager

signed 8 April 2014

issue 02

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Crucis Park
Location: Ampney Crucis, Gloucestershire
NGR: SP 05306 02995
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 4–12 March 2014
Planning ref: 14/00581/FUL, condition 3
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Corinium Museum
Site Code: CRPK14

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the excavation of a cable trench at Crucis Park, Ampney Crucis, Gloucestershire.

A post-medieval ditch recorded during the watching brief corresponds with a field boundary depicted on historic mapping of the area. No further features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during the groundworks, and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.
1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 In March 2014 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for The Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP), on behalf of Solar Planning Ltd., at Crucis Park, Ampney Crucis, Gloucestershire (centred on NGR: SP 05306 02995; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken both as good practice and to fulfil a condition attached to planning consent for the installation of an underground cable line for Crucis Park Farm Solar Farm (Cotswold District Council planning ref: 14/00581/FUL; condition 3). The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the excavation of the cable trench.

1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2014) and approved by Cotswold District Council (CDC) acting on the advice of Charles Parry, Archaeologist, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2009), the *Statements of Standards and Practices Appropriate of Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire* (GCC 1995), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager’s Guide* (English Heritage 2006).

**The site**

1.3 The cable trench runs across a single arable field immediately to the west of a newly developed PV solar farm. The area is characterised by open farmland approximately 950m to the north-west of the village of Ampney Crucis.

1.4 The underlying solid geology is mapped as limestone and mudstone of the Forest Marble Formation of the Jurassic Period, with no overlying superficial deposits (BGS 2014). Topographically the site slopes gently from north to south, from approximately 130m to 122m AOD respectively.

**Archaeological background**

1.5 The adjacent PV solar development site has been subject to an Archaeological and Heritage Assessment, geophysical survey and trial trenching (EDP 2013, ASDU 2013 and CA 2013 respectively). The previously recorded heritage assets at that
site, as identified by the assessment, comprise two undesignated assets; a findspot of five prehistoric struck flints and a length of Roman road (EDP 2013).

1.6 The geophysical survey identified the drainage ditches flanking either side of the line of Akeman Street Roman road. Evidence for probable settlement remains, of either later prehistoric or Roman date, were identified in the north-west corner of the site, concentrated to the north side of the Roman road (ASDU 2013).

1.7 Several probable enclosure ditches were also identified during the survey, including three clearly defined sub-rectangular enclosures, with associated pit or posthole features and entrances. Further positive magnetic anomalies identified throughout the site were interpreted as further evidence for ditches and pits, with some possibly representing ring-ditches (ibid.).

1.8 Evidence for former ridge and furrow cultivation was also identified, as were former field boundaries, as shown on historic Ordnance Survey (OS) editions (ibid.).

1.9 Subsequent evaluation trenching confirmed the presence of the three ditched enclosures suggested by the preceding geophysical survey. Dating evidence recovered from the enclosure ditches and some of the associated interior features indicate a probable Late Iron Age/Early Roman date. Several other ditches and a pit of similar date were also identified (CA 2013).

1.10 Metalled surfaces, road side ditches and associated road silts, most likely relating to the probable Roman course of Akeman Street, were identified in three trenches at the northern extent of the pv solar development site. The evaluation also confirmed a divergence between the Roman and later alignment of Akeman Street (ibid).

1.11 A quarry pit of Roman date, three other undated quarry pits and several ditches relating to field boundaries displayed on historic mapping were also identified (ibid).

**Archaeological objectives**

1.12 The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;
at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

**Methodology**

1.13 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2014). An archaeologist was present during the excavation of the cable trench, which was approximately 450m in length, 0.5m in width and 1.5m in depth (Fig. 2).

1.14 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2013).

1.15 The archive from the watching brief is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. The site archive will be deposited with Corinium Museum. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

2. **RESULTS (FIGS 2-3)**

2.1 Natural geological substrate 102, consisting of limestone bedrock, was revealed throughout the trench at an average depth of 0.43m below present ground level. This was overlain by orange-brown subsoil 101, averaging 0.23m in thickness. Close to the west end of the cable trench the subsoil was cut by modern boundary ditch 103, which was 1.75m wide and 1.24m deep (Fig. 3). It contained two fills, 104 and 105, in which modern ceramic building material (CBM) and pottery were noted but not retained. The ditch corresponds with a field boundary depicted on the 1884 1st edition OS map which remained in use until it was replaced by the current field configuration in the later 20th century. The ditch fills were sealed by a 0.2m thick layer of topsoil, 100.

2.2 No further features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.
3. DISCUSSION

3.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see archaeological background above), the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. The absence of archaeological deposits may indicate that features associated with the Iron Age and Roman activity in the area do not extend as far as the development, however it is more likely that the limited scale of the development did not directly impact upon any archaeology present.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Christopher Leonard, Tom Weavill and Jay Wood. The report was written by Christopher Leonard. The illustrations were prepared by Jon Bennett. The archive has been compiled by Christopher Leonard, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O’Neill. The project was managed for CA by Cliff Bateman.

5. REFERENCES

ASDU (Archaeological Services Durham University) 2013 Crucis Park Farm, Ampney Crucis, Gloucestershire: Geophysical Survey Report. Report 3168


CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2013 Crucis Park Farm, Ampney Crucis, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Evaluation. CA Typescript report 13539

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014 Crucis Park, Ampney Crucis, Gloucestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief

EDP (The Environmental Dimension Partnership) 2013 Solar Farm at Ampney Crucis, Gloucestershire Archaeological and Heritage Assessment. Report EDP2017_01b
## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

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<th>Context No.</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Context interpretation</th>
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<td>100</td>
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<td>103</td>
<td>Cut</td>
<td>Ditch</td>
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APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

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<td>Christopher Leonard</td>
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| SIGNIFICANT FINDS | None |

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<td>CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014 Crucis Park, Ampney Crucis, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Watching Brief. CA typescript report 14141</td>
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Crucis Park Farm, Ampney Crucis
Gloucestershire

Site location plan

area of observed groundworks
PV Solar development area

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.
Crucis Park Farm, Ampney Crucis
Gloucestershire

The site, showing location of observed groundworks

area of observed groundworks
archaeological feature
PV Solar development area
previous evaluation trench (CA 2013)
3  Ditch 103, looking south

Crucis Park Farm, Ampney Crucis
Gloucestershire

Photograph