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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out on 8th February 1999 at land to the rear of 89-91 Watermoor Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire (NGR SP 02830 01255; Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Patrick Slattery of Abbott and Partners and was required in order to fulfil a planning condition (planning refs. CT0205/C and D; model condition 55 from DoE Circular 11/95) placed upon the development by Cotswold District Council. The watching brief was conducted in accordance with a specification of works prepared by Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT) and approved by Cotswold District Council and Gloucestershire County Council in January 1999.

1.1.2 The watching brief involved monitoring the hand excavation of foundation trenches relating to a new two-storey extension to the rear of the property (Fig. 2). The excavation comprised approximately 6m x 0.6m and 3m x 1m of new trenching, to a maximum depth of 500mm.

1.1.3 The groundworks also incorporated a test pit of 2m x 1.5m excavated by CAT in October 1998 (Coleman 1998). Well preserved Roman deposits were encountered in the test pit at a depth of 0.4m below the modern ground surface. For details of the archaeological background the evaluation report should be consulted (ibid.).
1.2 **Landuse, topography and geology**

1.2.1 The geology of the study area comprises alluvial deposits relating to the River Churn. These deposits variably consist of gravels, sands, and silts at different locations.

1.2.2 The study area lies to the south-east of the modern town-centre of Cirencester. The ground is flat and lies at a height of 106.65m AOD.

1.3 **Methodology**

1.3.1 The principle aim of the archaeological works as outlined in the brief prepared by Gloucestershire County Council (Parry 1999) was to monitor all groundworks required for the development and to record any archaeological deposits and/or finds exposed during this work.

1.3.2 All groundworks were hand excavated under archaeological supervision, and all recording was undertaken in accordance with the CAT Technical Manual 1; *Site Recording Manual*, and the IFA *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (1994).

2. **ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

2.1 The earliest deposit encountered within the excavated area was light yellow-brown silty sand (003), which was intruded upon for approximately 1m northwest of the earlier CAT test pit (Fig. 2). In this area the deposit began at a depth of 0.45m below ground level, and was still present at maximum trench depth of 0.5m below ground level. This horizon was overlaid by medium grey-brown silty clay (002) which was revealed at the maximum trench depth in the remainder of the groundworks. Abraded Romano-British pottery was retrieved from this deposit. Deposit (002) was approximately
0.3m thick and was overlaid by a thin topsoil deposit and the former concrete surface.

3. **ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS**

3.1 The stratigraphic sequence revealed during the groundworks complement the results of the 1998 evaluation. The earliest deposit encountered, (003), seems to represent the uppermost stratified Roman deposit on the site, and the 1998 evaluation retrieved a number of third-century pottery sherds from this horizon. The most extensively revealed deposit (002) probably represents late Roman and/or early medieval ‘black earth’.

4. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Cotswold Archaeological Trust would like to thank Patrick Slattery of Abbott and Partners and Charles Parry, Archaeology Officer, Gloucestershire County Council, for their assistance during the course of this project.

The fieldwork and report were carried out by Richard Morton.

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Figure 1 Location map
Figure 2 Location of groundworks
Fig. 2  Location of groundworks