

Q1.6.38. Sansoms Platt (SM)

In response to Historic England's concern over Sansoms Platt ( a scheduled Historic Monument) the developer states:  
" The Applicant considers that the heritage significance of the Scheduled Monument would be barely affected.....however, elements of the project would be visible...."

This contorted submission sits alongside the Applicant continuing to reference Sansoms Platt as "a Roman Villa or possibly a small settlement." Vol 3. Appendix 7.6.10. Page 61

The developer further references Sansoms Platt in 7.6.26 and 27

In answer to the above assertions by the developer :

Further evidence of the extent of this Roman Town have been discovered and acknowledged by the developer.

The increased extent makes Sansoms Platt a significant Roman Town since it is now proven to extend into field 1.11 towards Dornford Cottage (Oxfordshire County excavations for this enquiry) and, ground radar ( Blenheim's own survey which I have previously presented to the Inspector) has proven the other side of the Drovers Road which is currently an Oxford Way leading to Woodstock has more Roman remains than are currently protected !

This field (originally referred to as 1.11) is absolutely adjacent to the protected monument and alongside Akeman Street (the Roman Road serving the Town.) It contains more of the protected Town so much so that I understand the developer has pulled back to further up the field and away from the monument area and has acknowledged more Roman remains at the top of the field a small area which, I believe, has been removed from development.

So, this "possible small settlement" is now proven to extend to an area greater than is currently protected and having Akeman street – a major road and described by the Developer as "a key feature", linking St Albans and Cirencester - running through the middle of it and being a days Legions march from Bicester Fort, Sansoms Platt was a major trading town.

The increasing misunderstanding about the size of this area is compounded by the proposed new siting of solar panels which will be in full view of the monument and its surrounds since the field rises above the Roman Town area.

However " The Applicant considers the heritage significance of the Scheduled Monument would be barely affected".

I am further mystified that the applicant has taken out a small section of field 1.11 towards Dornford Cottage because of further archaeological discoveries of the town yet has surrounded it by solar panels making it inaccessible and completely overlooked by panels, security fencing etc. This does not sit with the developers assertion " "the magnitude of impact, therefore, being negligible." Question 1.6.38.

Q1.6.42: I also note there is a proposed cable run to be dug into the Drover's Path from the Dornford Area downwards and alongside field 1.11

As it is now proven that either side of this path contains more of the Roman Town than is currently protected and the developer is acknowledging this area's Roman remains by pulling back from The Platt. It makes no sense to protect either side of this path yet allow this path to be dug up, since it runs, like Akeman Street, through the town.

Neither should work be carried out on the section of Akeman Street running past Sansoms Cottage since, similarly, this pathway / Roman Road runs through the protected and unprotected area of the town. I reference the developers acknowledgement "Key features for the Roman period includes the important military road known as Akeman Street which crosses the Northern Site." 7.6.26

I call for this cable route to be stopped.

In summary I again call for all development in this area to be stopped.