

HUCCLECOTE ROAD, HUCCLECOTE
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Report 155

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SUMMARY

Between May and August 1999 a programme of archaeological work was undertaken on land off Hucclecote Road, Hucclecote, Gloucestershire, (NGR: SO 8778 1707) on behalf of Bovis Homes. The archaeological works consisted of a watching brief on groundworks associated with the development of the site for housing development.

A number of features and deposits were identified within the study area, all of which could be dated to, or associated with, modern activity and construction on the site. These consisted of garden features, demolition rubble from earlier construction and evidence of stripping, levelling and backfilling of the land for the bowling green and football pitch. These playing fields occupied the land prior to the development. There was also evidence of drainage for these features.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Foundations Archaeology from May to August 1999 on land off Hucclecote Road, Hucclecote, Gloucestershire at NGR: SO 8778 1707. The programme of archaeological works was undertaken in accordance with the principles of Planning Policy note 16, Archaeology and Planning (PPG16).
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in response to the proposal to develop the land for residential dwellings.
- 1.3 The work was undertaken in accordance with a project design agreed with the Gloucestershire County Council. The project design itself was prepared in accordance with *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IFA 1994) and Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: *Archaeological Watching Briefs* (guidelines) issued by English Heritage (London Region).
- 1.4 The project archive will be deposited in Gloucester Museum and a summary report published in TBGAS and Glevensis.
- 1.5 The project specifications required that all groundworks relating to the proposed development of the study area be monitored by a qualified archaeologist.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The study area is located on the margins of the Roman road of Ermin Street and evidence of prehistoric and Roman activity has previously been identified nearby. Consequently, the recovery of archaeological deposits, predominantly associated with the Prehistoric and Roman periods, was possible from within the study area. This in no way prejudiced works against the recovery of materials from other periods.
- 2.2 Prior to the current development; the site had been utilised as a recreational area, with bowling greens, gardens, a football pitch and a number of associated buildings.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological recording were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains.

3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:

- i) to define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;
- ii) to attempt to characterize the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
- iii) where possible to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The site was topsoil stripped using a mechanical excavator fitted with a grading bucket. Foundation and service trenches for the proposed dwellings were subsequently cut, using a mechanical excavator.
- 4.2 Site works were undertaken under constant archaeological supervision. All groundworks were monitored and recorded (where health and safety considerations permitted) in order to identify further archaeological deposits and to provide additional information on deposits already recognised. All archaeological deposits and features that would be destroyed by the groundworks were subjected to appropriate levels of investigation in accordance with the project design. All site recording was undertaken in accordance with *Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3 (Excavation Manual)*.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 The natural clay substrate was present at a depth of 0.3 to 0.45m from the modern ground surface. At the base of the cut, anaerobic conditions resulted in the natural clay becoming increasingly grey in colour; the bottom 0.35m consisted of yellow clay with naturally occurring sand pockets. The latest deposits comprised a mix of topsoil and demolition rubble from previous site clearance, probably during the construction of the clubhouse and its associated buildings. Prior to the present groundworks a small area had been made-up by a maximum of 0.80m in order to level part of the site. The area, which contained the bowling green, had been stripped onto natural clay.
- 5.2 No archaeologically significant deposits were present within the area of the watching brief. The only cut feature comprised a drain orientated east-west, which ran parallel to the site boundary (Figure 3). This contained a machine-extruded ceramic pipe and consequently may be dated to no earlier than the 19th century.

- 5.3 In the western half of the study area was a series of sand pits. They were irregular in plan and high levels of root disturbance surrounded each feature. These characteristics were consistent with the interpretation of these features as tree boles. Considering the large number of pits present it is likely that the western area of the site was a tree orchard; cartographic evidence (1:1250) shows trees situated across this area.

6 CONCLUSION

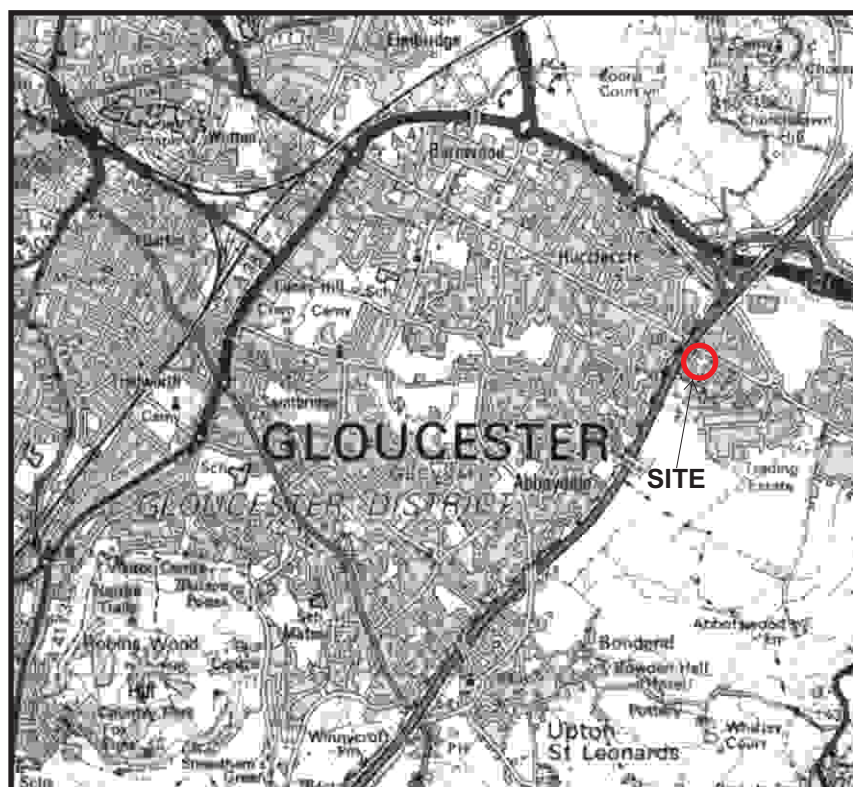
- 6.1 The watching brief revealed no archaeological deposits within the study area. The demolition deposits identified resulted from the removal of the modern buildings and gardens. The only surviving features present in the study area were a number of modern horticultural features and a cut containing a ceramic drainage pipe, which was probably associated with drainage for the bowling green and playing fields.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Foundations Archaeology 1999 *Land off Hucclecote Road, Hucclecote: Project Design*

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank the staff of Bovis Homes and Charles Parry of Gloucester County Council for their assistance in the smooth running of the project.



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FIGURE 1: Site Location

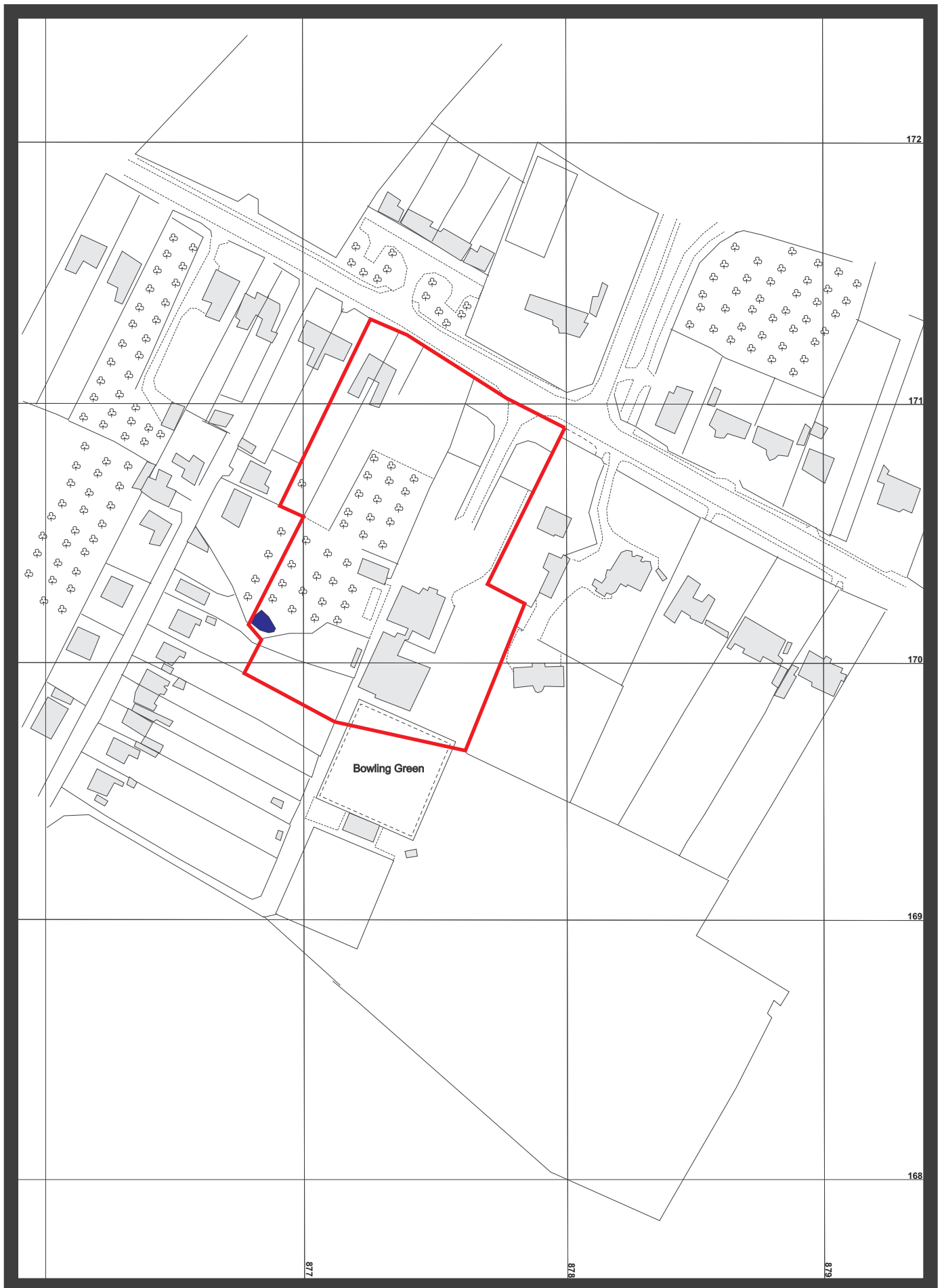


Figure 2: Proposed Development Area

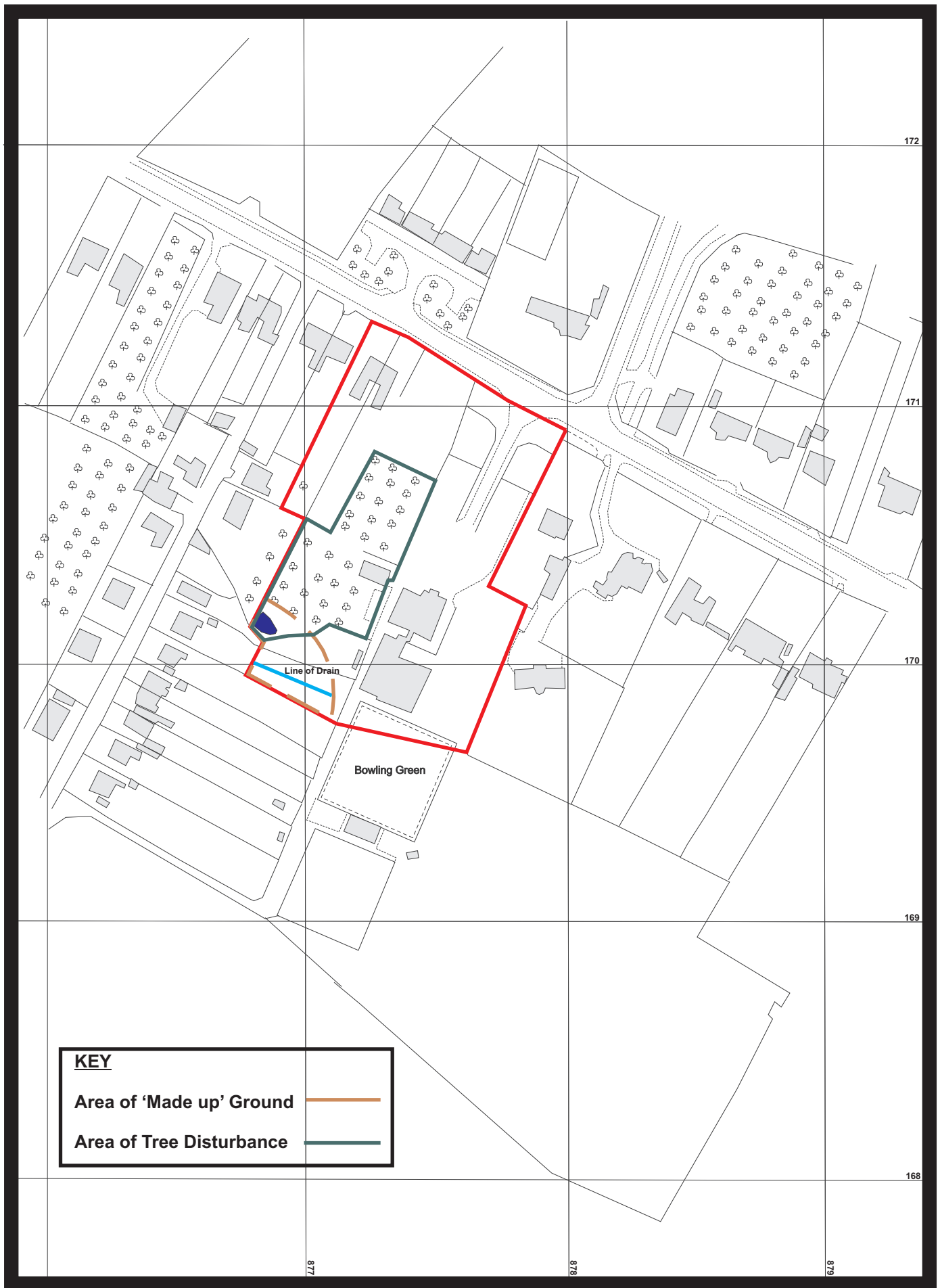


Figure 3: Areas of Disturbance



Figure 4: Watching brief area and house locations