



**Gloucestershire**  
COUNTY COUNCIL

*Archaeological Monitoring at*

**English Bicknor Primary School  
English Bicknor  
Gloucestershire**

**For Gloucestershire County Council**



Andrew Walsh  
Archaeology Service  
Environment Directorate

© Gloucestershire County Council 2012

## Details

Site name:	English Bicknor Primary School Drainage, English Bicknor, Gloucestershire
Report title:	Archaeological Monitoring at English Bicknor School, English Bicknor, Gloucestershire
OS NGR:	358090 215800
Site type:	Archaeological Monitoring
Client:	Gloucestershire County Council
SMC ref:	S00021521
GHER No:	42385
Date of fieldwork:	19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> December 2011
Date of report:	20 <sup>th</sup> January 2012
Author:	Andrew Walsh
Recipient museum:	Dean Heritage Centre
Archived finds:	No

## Contents

	page
1 Introduction .....	2
2 Site location .....	2
3 Archaeological, historical and cartographic background.....	2
4 Methodology .....	2
5 Results of the archaeological monitoring .....	3
6 Discussion and conclusions .....	3
7 References .....	3

## Figures

Figure 1	Site location showing the area of Figure 2 shown in orange and the Scheduled Monument in red
Figure 2	Location of the drainage trench (yellow) and the area of the Scheduled Monument (red)

## Plates

Plate 1	Excavation of the northern section of the drain, looking south
Plate 2	The southern section of the drain has been removed and the northern section has been reinstated. Photo looking north
Plate 3	No archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified during the works. Photo looking north-west

## Summary

Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service was commissioned by Andrew Johnson on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council to carry out archaeological monitoring during drainage works at English Bicknor Primary School, English Bicknor, Gloucestershire. The site is located within the Scheduled Monument of the *Motte and Bailey Castle at English Bicknor* (SM No. 28862). The monitoring was undertaken as a condition of the Scheduled Monument Consent for the works. The monitoring observed the excavation and replacement of a defective drain. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified during the works.

## 1 Introduction

**1.1** Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service (GCCAS) was commissioned by Andrew Johnson on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council to undertake archaeological monitoring during drainage works at English Bicknor Primary School, English Bicknor, Gloucestershire. The site lies within a Scheduled Monument (No. 28862). The monitoring was carried out on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> December 2011 and was undertaken as a condition of the Scheduled Monument Consent for the works.

**1.2** The specific requirements for the monitoring were detailed in the written scheme of investigation (Walsh 2011). The work was carried out in accordance with the Scheduled Monument Consent which was granted in October 2011 (ref: S00021521) and the 'Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching brief' produced by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008). The Archaeology Service is an Institute for Archaeologists Registered Organisation (IfA RO 42).

## 2 Site location

English Bicknor Primary School is located on the north side of the village of English Bicknor, to the west of the parish church of St Mary the Virgin. The site, which is located immediately west of the main school building (Figure 1), is centred on OS NGR 358090 215800 and is at a height of c. 145m AOD. Geologically it is situated on carboniferous limestone of the Black Rock subgroup (BGS 1974). The site lies within the Scheduled Monument of the *Motte and Bailey Castle at English Bicknor* (SM 28862) and is also within the English Bicknor Conservation Area and the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

## 3 Archaeological, historical and cartographic background

**3.1** The castle at English Bicknor dates to the Norman period and marks the progress of the Norman campaigns in the west after the capture of the English crown in AD 1066. It includes a motte, and inner and outer baileys; each bailey is surrounded by a moat, or ditch, with the remnant of a leat adjoining the moat of the outer bailey which is thought to be part of a water management system for the moat. The whole castle takes the form of a rough oval orientated north to south. The motte lies in the south-west quadrant of this oval within the inner bailey which is in turn encircled by a moat.

**3.2** English Bicknor Primary School lies on the eastern side of the outer bailey of the castle. Although no earthworks are visible within the school site it lies above the projected course of the bank for the outer bailey suggesting that important medieval deposits may survive just below the present ground surface. In July 2009 an archaeological watching brief (GHER 35685) was undertaken immediately north of the current site during installation of a new drain. A section of wall and a concentration of charcoal (both undated) were exposed during the works.

**3.3** The First, Second, and Third Edition Ordnance Survey County Series maps (OS 1881, 1902, and 1922) illustrate the main school building in roughly its modern form. The Second and Third Editions also show hachures illustrating the western side of the bank for the outer bailey crossing the development area.

## 4 Methodology

**4.1** The drainage works comprised the removal and replacement of a section of defective drain. During the works the plans were amended and permission for the additional works was granted by Hugh Beamish of English Heritage on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2011.

**4.2** The ground works were undertaken using a 360° mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless bucket. All works were monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist. Pro-forma Trench Record sheets were used to record the details of the works.

**4.3** The site archive will be temporarily stored at Shire Hall, Gloucester under a unique site code, GHER 39314, issued by the County Historic Environment Record Officer. It is anticipated that the archive will be deposited at the Dean Heritage Centre.

## **5 Results of the archaeological monitoring**

**5.1** In total approximately 15m of drain was excavated and replaced. The drain was orientated roughly north-east to south-west, located immediately west of the main school buildings and was excavated in two sections (Figure 2).

**5.2** The northern section of the drain (c. 7m in length) was located below a concrete slab which was removed, and a 1.2m wide trench was excavated to a maximum of 0.75m in depth (Plate 1). To the south the remaining section of drain was located below asphalt. Here a 0.6m wide trench was excavated to 0.8m in depth (Plate 2). The only deposits exposed were modern backfill and hardcore layers (Plate 3). No archaeological features, finds or deposits were identified during the course of the archaeological monitoring.

## **6 Discussion and conclusions**

Archaeological monitoring undertaken during the replacement of a defective drain revealed an absence of any archaeological features, deposits or finds. This is probably due to truncation when the original drain was laid and, given its proximity to the school buildings, may also be partially due to disturbance dating from the construction of the school. However no natural deposits were identified and significant archaeological remains may survive below the levels exposed during these works.

## **7 References**

BGS	1974	British Geological Survey digital data, held on Gloucestershire County Council GIS
IfA	2008	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief</i> . Institute for Archaeologists
OS	1881	Ordnance Survey First Edition County Series Map, held on Gloucestershire County Council GIS
OS	1902	Ordnance Survey Second Edition County Series Map, held on Gloucestershire County Council GIS
OS	1922	Ordnance Survey Third Edition County Series Map, held on Gloucestershire County Council GIS
Walsh, A	2011	Archaeological Monitoring during the replacement of drainage at English Bicknor Primary School, English Bicknor, Gloucestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation



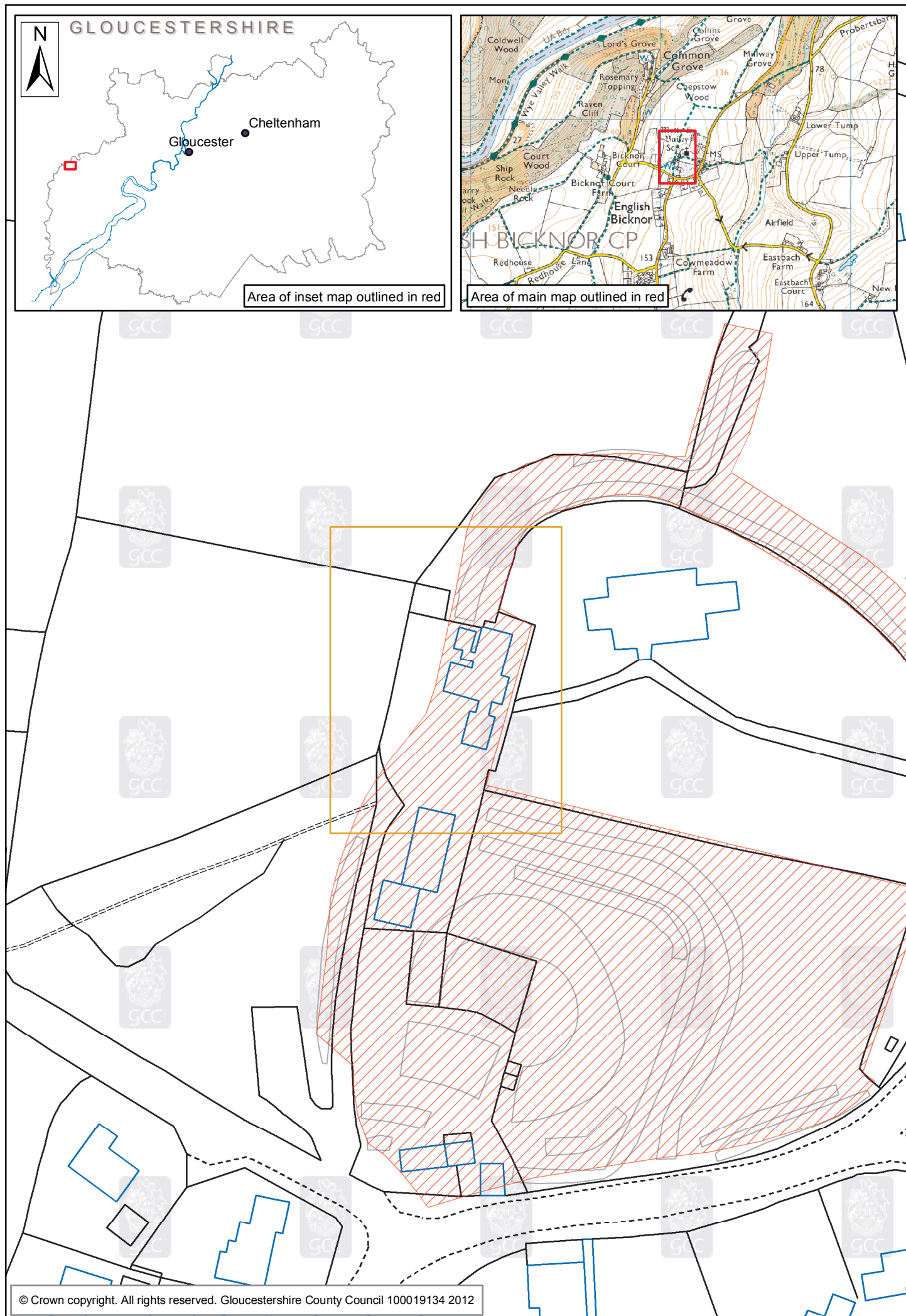


Figure 1: Site location showing the area of Figure 2 in orange and the Scheduled Monument in red (Scale 1:1000 @ A4)





Figure 2: Location of the drainage trench (yellow) and the area of the Scheduled Monument (red) (Scale 1:250 @ A4)





Plate 1: Excavation of the northern section of the drain, looking south



Plate 2: The southern section of the drain has been removed and the northern section has been reinstated. Photo looking north





Plate 3: No archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified during the works. Photo looking north-west