



Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL

*A Topographical Survey on land
prior to the construction of*

**Avonmouth Eastern Access Road 2011
Avonmouth
Bristol**

For St Modwen Developments Ltd



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Archaeology Service
Environment Directorate

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Nigel Ruxton Land Surveys 2011

Details

Site address: Avonmouth Eastern Access Road, Avonmouth, Bristol
Report Title: A Topographical Survey on land prior to the construction of Avonmouth Eastern Access Road 2011
OS NGR: 353075 178590
Site type: Topographical Survey
Client: St Modwen Developments Ltd
Planning ref: 11/02914/F
Site Code: AEAR 2011
Museum Accession No.: BRSMC 2010.34
Date of fieldwork: 4th November 2011
Date of report: 22nd November 2011
Author: Andrew Walsh and Nigel Ruxton
Recipient museum: Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
Archived finds: No

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Summary

Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service was commissioned St Modwen Developments Ltd, to carry out a topographical survey on land in advance of the construction of Avonmouth Eastern Access Road, Avonmouth, Bristol. The survey was undertaken at the request of the Bristol City Archaeologist as the site is in an archaeologically sensitive area and a topographical survey undertaken in 2010 had revealed a number of extant earthworks. This survey recorded an area of linear earthworks probably associated with medieval ridge and furrow.

1 Introduction

1.1 Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service (GCCAS) was commissioned by St Modwen Developments Ltd, to carry out a topographical survey on land in advance of the construction of Avonmouth Eastern Access Road, Avonmouth, Bristol. The survey was required to satisfy Condition 2 of the planning application (ref: 11/02914/F) and was carried out on the 4th November 2011 by Nigel Ruxton Land Surveys (NRLS) on behalf of the Archaeology Service.

1.2 The topographical survey was completed in accordance with the requirements of the approved written scheme of investigation (Nichols and Ruxton 2011). The Archaeology Service is an Institute for Archaeologists Registered Organisation (IfA RO 42).

2 Site location (Figure 1)

2.1 The site is located on the edge of the industrial area of Avonmouth to the west of Bristol. The proposed access road is located between Avonmouth Way and the Access 18 site, on currently undeveloped agricultural land. The topographical survey was undertaken at the southern end of the proposed route between Ballast Lane and Avonmouth Way, and covered an area of c.0.8ha centred on OS NGR 353075 178590. The geology of the site is recorded as Mercia Mudstone overlain by alluvial clays (Halcrow 2009).

3 Archaeological, historical and cartographic background

3.1 The detailed archaeological, historical and cartographic background for the site was reported in a desk-based assessment undertaken in 2009 by Halcrow Group Ltd (Halcrow 2009) and shall not be repeated here.

3.2 Suffice to say that the site lies on an area of land reclaimed during the medieval period. There is potential for Romano-British or earlier features to survive at the site, although post-Roman inundation of the landscape is likely to have sealed any features under deep alluvial deposits. Extant medieval or post-medieval ridge and furrow was identified at the site during the desk based assessment. Cartographic evidence indicates that the field boundaries at the southern end of the site, where the topographical survey was undertaken, were subject to extensive remodelling during the mid-19th century (Halcrow 2009, figs 3 and 4).

3.3 A topographical survey undertaken in 2010 by GCCAS and NRLS immediately north-east of the present survey area revealed a number of features interpreted as the remains of medieval or post-medieval ridge and furrow, a ditch related to Ballast Lane, and two post-medieval or later features (Figure 2: Areas A-G).

4 Objectives and methodology

4.1 As outlined in the written scheme of investigation, the purpose of the topographical survey was to establish the position and height of the ground within the survey area (Nichols and Ruxton 2011). The survey was required in order to satisfy Condition 2 of the planning application (ref: 11/02914/F).

4.2 The topographical survey was undertaken using a total station. Survey stations were established across the site and the survey was tied into the Ordnance Survey grid. Accessible detail was surveyed using detail poles or targets and inaccessible detail was surveyed using the reflectorless laser capability of the total station. Minor detail was surveyed using eight metre pocket tapes.

4.3 An archaeological watching brief is due to be undertaken at the site by the Archaeology Service. It is anticipated that the combined digital data from the 2010 and 2011 surveys (in AutoCAD format) will be deposited together with the watching brief archive at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery with the accession number BRSMC 2010.34. The digital data will also be submitted to Bristol HER.

5 Results of the topographical survey

5.1 The survey covered an area of approximately 0.8ha (Figure 2: Area H). Ridge and furrow, surviving up to 0.45m in height, was recorded across the entire survey area. It was orientated roughly north-east to south-west, measured up to 9m in width and was better preserved than the ridge and furrow recorded to the north-east although it is likely that it is the continuation of the same system. There was a slight curvature in the furrows indicating it forms a reversed S-shaped pattern which has often been interpreted as having an earlier medieval origin (Eyre 1955).

6 Conclusion

6.1 A topographical survey was undertaken to record earthwork features in advance of the construction of Avonmouth Eastern Access Road. The survey recorded a number of extant linear features probably associated with medieval ridge and furrow.

6.2 The work successfully achieved the objectives of the survey outlined in the approved written scheme of investigation and has therefore satisfied Condition 2 of the planning application (ref: 11/02914/F). No further topographical survey work is required to discharge this condition.

7 References

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|--------------------------|------|---|
| Eyre, SR. | 1955 | The Curving Plough-strip and its Historical Implications. <i>Agricultural History Review</i> 3 , 80-94 |
| Halcrow | 2009 | St Modwen Developments Ltd. Eastern Access, Access 18, Avonmouth, Archaeological Desk Based Assessment |
| Nichols, P. & Ruxton, N. | 2011 | A topographical survey and watching brief in connection with the construction of Avonmouth Eastern Access Road, Avonmouth, Bristol. Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation. GCCAS typescript report |

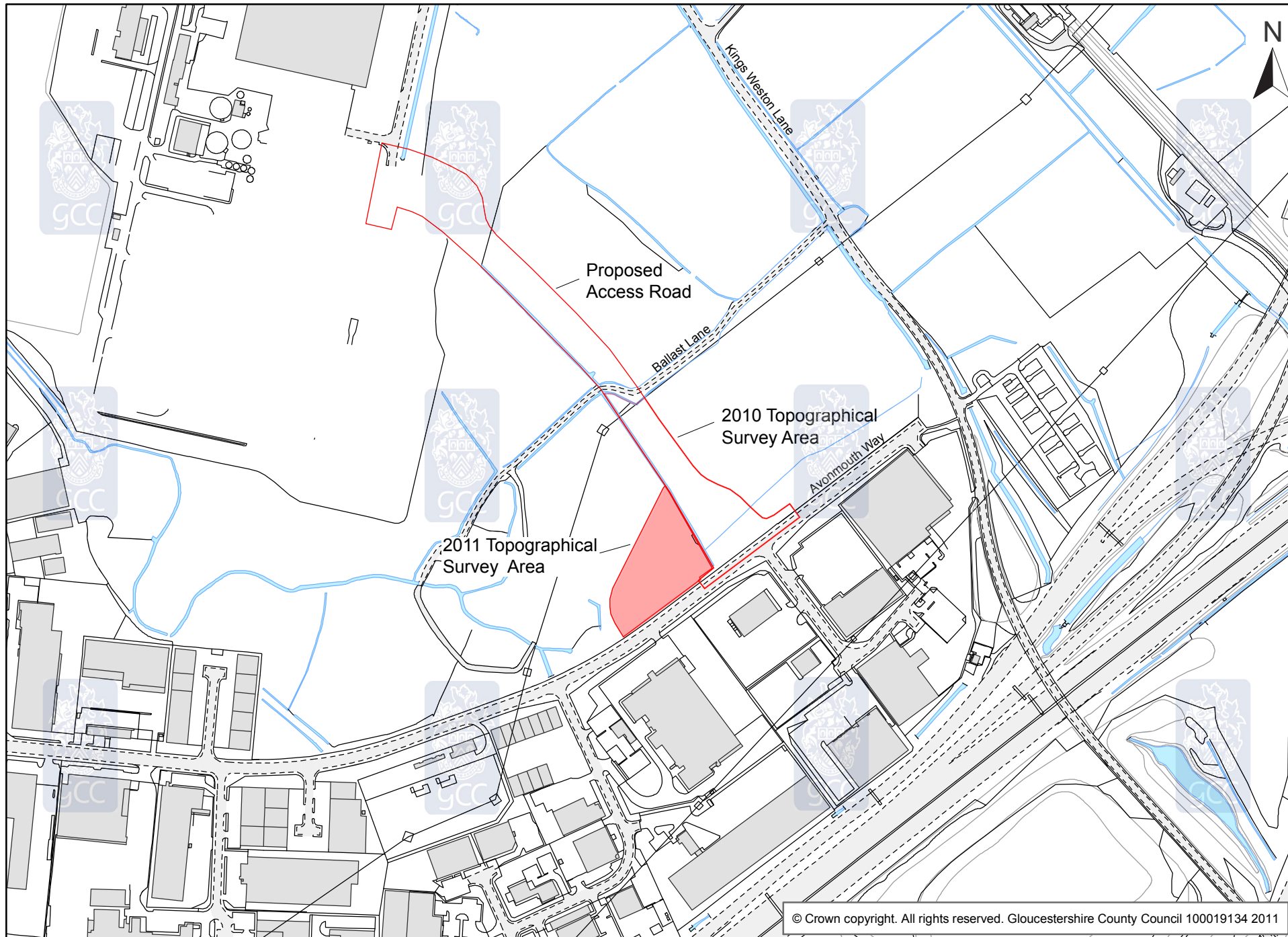


Figure 1: Avonmouth Eastern Access Road. Site location plan showing the original proposed road route (red outline) which was subject to a Topographical Survey in 2010 and the revised route which is the subject of the 2011 survey and report (red shading). Scale 1:5000.

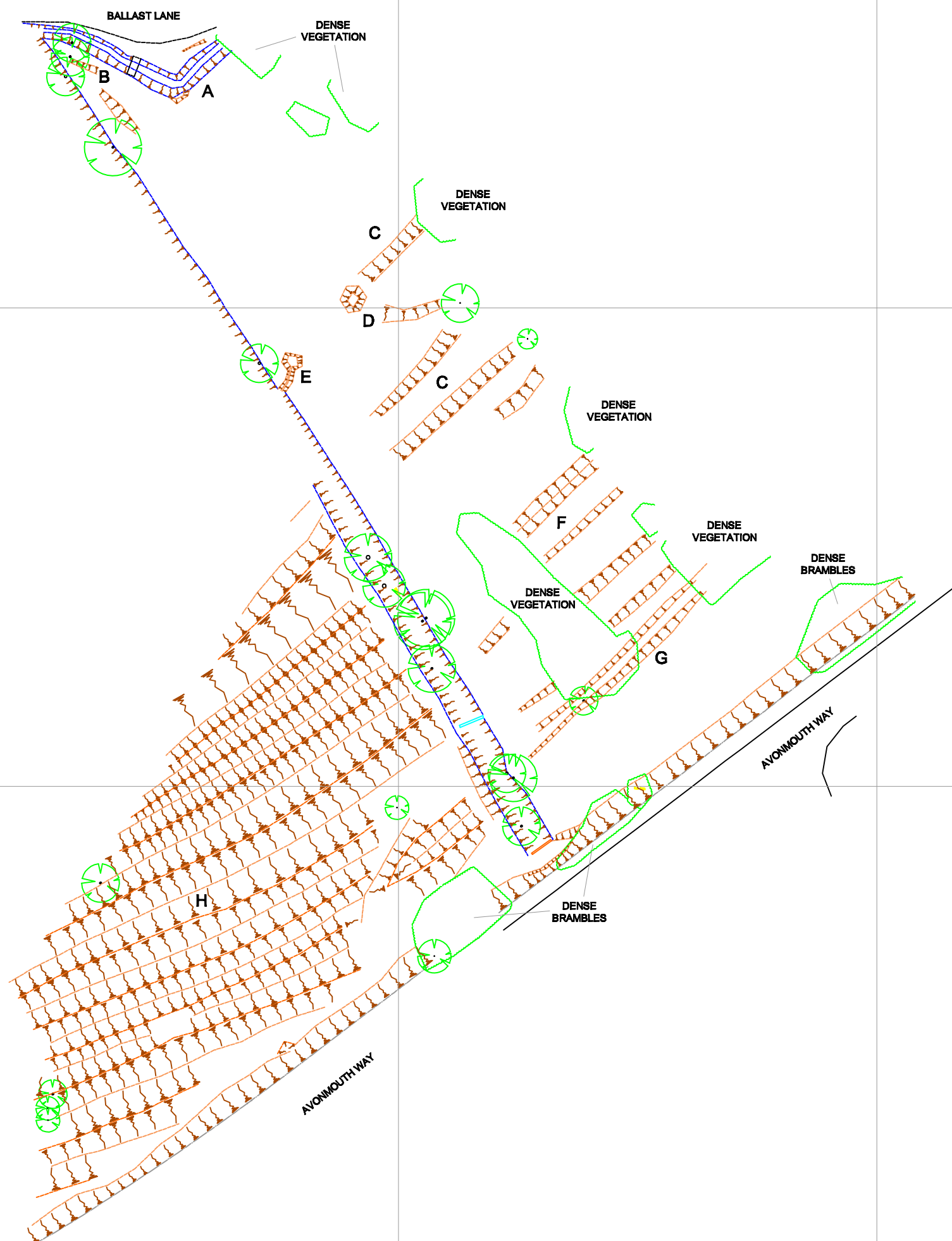


Figure 2: Combined results of the topographical survey (1:1000 @ A3)