

Archaeological Watching Brief
on land near
HOMELANDS FARM,
BISHOPS CLEEVE, NEAR CHELTENHAM,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE.
for
Bovis Homes (SW) Limited



Report No. 2495/2011

By Tim Longman



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Archaeological Watching Brief
on land near
HOMELANDS FARM
BISHOPS CLEEVE, NEAR CHELTENHAM,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Centred on
N.G.R. SO 9571 2828

Client: Bovis Homes (SW) Limited

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<i>Date Issued:</i>	15 November 2011

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Abbreviations

AD	Anno Domini	Km	Kilometre
aOD	Above Ordnance Datum	m	Metre
BaRAS	Bristol & Region Archaeological Services	NGR	National Grid Reference
BC	Before Christ	NMR	National Monuments Record
c.	Circa	OS	Ordnance Survey
HER	Historic Environment Record		

NOTE

Notwithstanding that Bristol and Region Archaeological Services have taken reasonable care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

November, 2011.

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundwork associated with the construction of a revised access route onto land near Homelands Farm to serve a new residential housing development. This work was to include the creation of a small roundabout on a bend of the Evesham Road next to the site of the White Cottage and Tom Bridge, where a new site access road will intersect from the east.

No features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed during the programme of intrusive groundwork.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) was commissioned by Bovis Homes (SW) Limited, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundwork associated with the construction of a revised access route (including a new roundabout) onto land (**Fig. 1; Cover**) near Homelands Farm to serve a new residential housing development (Planning Reference 10/01381/APP) on the northern edge of the village of Bishops Cleeve, near Cheltenham, in Gloucestershire.
- 1.2 The watching brief was commissioned to comply with condition 2 of the planning consent (Planning Reference 10/00494/FUL) granted by the local planning authority (Tewkesbury Borough Council) and in accordance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation* prepared by John Bryant (Acting Manager) of Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (Bryant 2010) and a *Brief for a programme of archaeological recording* produced by Charles Parry (Senior Archaeological Officer) of Gloucestershire County Council (Parry 2011).
- 1.3 The fieldwork was undertaken during several site visits between early June and late October 2011 under the supervision of Tim Longman (Project Officer, BaRAS) who subsequently compiled this report.
- 1.4 The project archive will be deposited with Cheltenham Museum under the Accession Number CAGM 2011.54 and a copy of the report will be made available to the National Monuments Record (NMR) in Swindon, which is maintained by English Heritage. The project will be entered in the Gloucestershire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER) and has also been allocated the following OASIS ID:bristola1-100408.

2. THE SITE

- 2.1 The site (centred on NGR SO 9571 2828) is situated on a bend of the Evesham Road on the northern edge of the village of Bishops Cleeve, approximately 0.5km (0.6 miles) north-west of the village centre, which in turn lies approximately 6km (3.5 miles) north of Cheltenham town centre in north Gloucestershire.
- 2.2 The study area (**Fig. 2**) is not located within a Conservation Area and there are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM's) or listed buildings on or close to the site.
- 2.3 The study area comprises part of the carriageway of the Evesham road along with an area of grass verge immediately to the west. East of the road it includes the site of a former detached dwelling known as the White Cottage, a length of stream (South Brook) that transects the site from north to south, part of a lane ('New Road'; north of Tom Bridge) running parallel to the stream and the western few metres of a neighbouring pasture field. The proposed access road is to lead to/from the proposed residential housing development at this location. Temporary site access from the main road was via a vehicular entrance next to Tom Bridge. The field boundaries within the study area are all composed of mature hedges, some with accompanying drainage ditches. The site is bounded north-west and south-west by the Evesham Road, west by residential housing (Butterfield Court and Deans Court), north by the gardens of Millham House and Nos. 70 & 72 Evesham Road, east by farmland and south-east by the southern end of the lane (New Road).
- 2.4 The topography of the site is that the land comprising the road and the grass verge to the west, with a ground level of about 49.9m aOD, lies approximately 1 metre higher than the ground to the east of the road (48.7m aOD).
- 2.5 The underlying geology of the study area comprises Lower Jurassic Lias Mudstones overlain by calcareous loamy soils and by alluvial deposits alongside the South Brook.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site is situated in the historic parish of Bishops Cleeve, which until 1327 formed part of the hundred of Tibblestone (subsequently part of the hundred of Cleeve) in the county of Gloucestershire. Bishop's Cleeve is covered by the *Victoria History of the Counties of England* (Elrington, 1968). Early accounts are given by Atkyns (1712) and Rudder (1779). Recent accounts include that by Leech (1981) and Douthwaite and Devine, updated by Tilley (2007).
- 3.2 Extensive evidence has been found for Iron Age and Romano-British activity in the Bishops Cleeve area. Evidence from the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods has also been collected. Since the mid-1980s there have been various archaeological fieldwork events in the vicinity of the village. An evaluation near Dean Farm in 1999, on a site less than 200 metres south-west of the study area between the Evesham Road and the by-pass (A435), was followed by an excavation in 2005 (centred on NGR SO 95610 28195), where evidence was recorded for Iron Age settlement along with later Romano-British activity. This included two human burials from the latter period.
- 3.3 Between AD 768 and 779 King Offa of Mercia and Aldred, under-king of the Hwicce, granted land known as 'Clife' or Cleeve to the monastic church of St Michael located at 'Timbingctum' (a name which has disappeared). By AD 888 the monastery's estates had been appropriated by the bishopric of Worcester. It is doubtful that the monastery survived for long after the grant. The monastery may have been located just west of the site of the present parish church of St Michael and All Angels.
- 3.4 The prefix 'Bishops' to the name 'Cleeve' was added after the monastery and its property was granted to the Bishop of Worcester (Smith 1964).
- 3.5 Further settlement activity took place from the early medieval period. At the time of the Domesday survey (1086), the manor was still held by the Bishops of Worcester, with 30 hides of land recorded. During the remainder of the medieval period, the bishops continued to hold the manor, maintaining an episcopal residence there, the remains of which survive as the present Cleeve Hall. Medieval settlement may have extended along the eastern side of the Evesham road as far north as the southern extremity of the present site. There remain a number of long garden plots of more than 100m in length just to the south of the site, although they could be of later, post medieval origin.
- 3.6 The manor of Bishops Cleeve was seized by the Crown in the 1530's at the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The former residence of the Bishops of Worcester (the manor house known as Cleeve Hall) became a parsonage from 1593 when the Rev. Peter Cocks became rector of the parish. In 1604 the manor was granted by the Crown to Peter Vanlore and William Blake, but by 1624 it was owned by Giles Bridges. The earliest known reference to 'Tom Bridge', the site of which lies immediately south of the study area, dates from 1671 (Smith 1964). John Bridges, grandson of Giles, sold the manor in 1730 to Charles Parsons, after which the ownership changed hands several times. By 1885 there was, apparently, no longer any land attached to the manor, and the manorial rights soon lapsed.
- 3.7 Cartographic sources are limited, one of the earliest maps or plans to show the site being the OSD map of 1811 (scale 1:31680). It did not, however, show any settlement in the vicinity of the site, which was almost entirely farmland. A track (still extant) running northwards, in the direction of Gotherington, was labelled 'New Road'.
- 3.8 'New Road' was later shown, on an OS 1:2500 plan from the 1880s, as diverging from the main road at Tom Bridge giving access to Millham House. The location of the modern bridge is outside the area defined for the new development.

- 3.9 Later OS plans show an increase in the number of houses within the plots to the east of the Evesham Road and to the north-east of the bend, with more of the land marked as '*orchard*'. Little changed between the 1902 and 1954 OS map coverage, but by the late 1970s modern housing developments had appeared to the north of the village centre. This situation stabilised for about two decades, but since the 1990s there have been housing schemes that have enlarged the village further to the north and to the north-west. The present scheme (Phase 1 of the Homelands Farm development) proposes '*the erection of 44 dwellings....*'.
- 3.10 The part of the study area located immediately east of the Evesham Road has been the subject of three previous archaeological investigations, specifically, a geophysical survey and evaluation trenching, both in 2004, as well as an archaeological assessment of the Homelands Farm estate in 2009 (Tindall 2009).

4. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork complied with the methodology contained within the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (Bryant 2010). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999, revised 2008) and *Management of Archaeological Projects* (MAP II) issued by English Heritage (EH 1991). The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological features or deposits revealed during the course of intrusive groundwork.
- 4.2 The watching brief initially involved monitoring a topsoil strip of ground alongside the South Brook and across part of the former garden and driveway belonging to the White Cottage. This was followed by the excavation of a trench, alongside the stream, to permit the temporary diversion of the water channel during the construction of a concrete culvert that would in future carry the stream flow beneath the proposed new roundabout. Associated with the new culvert were other limited excavations, at either end of the newly installed structure.
- 4.2 Later groundwork that required monitoring involved, firstly, the excavation of a pipe trench measuring some 3m deep by 15m long beneath part of the carriageway of the Evesham Road linking with the existing mains drainage and, secondly, the excavation of a 100m long by 1.2m deep by 0.6m wide water-main pipe trench located beneath the grass verge on the west side of the Evesham Road.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 All groundwork was carried out using 360° mechanical slew excavators utilising both toothed buckets and toothless grading buckets.
- 5.2 The first site visit, on 1 June, involved monitoring mechanical ground reduction work (**Plates 1 & 2**) alongside the banks of the South Brook, where the stream transected the proposal area. During this phase a small block of roughly worked limestone, incorporating a small circular hollow cut into one flat side (**Plate 3**), was recovered from the topsoil (100) next to the roughly surfaced track ('New Road'). This undated object may have been utilised as the base for a gatepost associated with the nearby Millham House. Up to 300mm of dark brown topsoil was removed mechanically, exposing the underlying brownish yellow, slightly brashy, alluvial clay (101). No other finds were recorded.
- 5.3 A topsoil strip of much of the area of the former garden and driveway (**Plate 4**) belonging to the White Cottage, located west of the stream, commenced later the same day. Beneath up to 0.3m of topsoil (100) was the brownish yellow alluvial clay subsoil (101). Other than a few sherds of late 19th/early 20th century domestic pottery and glass the only find was a circular copper alloy object measuring 68mm in diameter by 20mm thick. The central hole measured 49mm in diameter. It resembled part of the cap of some sort of container, having a screw thread on its underside. Around the upper rim of the object was the inscription '*CHELTENHAM O M C^{oy} LTD*'. Its origin and function is unknown.
- 5.4 The next visit involved monitoring the mechanical excavation of the stream diversion trench (**Plates 5 & 6**), which measured 0.8m wide by 0.8m deep (below the level of the surface of the adjacent lane) by about 22m long. The exposed deposits comprised stiff, blue/grey alluvial clay (103) overlain by brownish yellow alluvial clay subsoil (101). Also visible, in the west-facing section, were several large limestone slabs (102), which formed part of the structure of the lane (New Road) and probably date from the original construction of the track in the 18th/early 19th century.
- 5.5 A few days later work started on the excavation of the route of the new culvert within the existing (now largely dry) stream channel (**Plates 7 & 8**), which will carry the flow of the watercourse beneath the proposed roundabout. The excavation area measured 23m long by 4m wide by 1.5m deep (some 450mm below the original stream bed). The ground surface immediately west of the trench (in the former garden of the White Cottage) lay at a height of 48.74m aOD.
- 5.6 Subsequent ground works in late June and mid July involved excavating ground at either end of the new culvert to widen the stream channel. The areas affected measured 6m long by 3m wide by 2m deep at the north end (**Plate 9**) of the culvert, while excavations extended to a depth of no more than 1.5m at the southern end (**Plate 10**), adjacent to where it joined up with the existing culvert carrying the stream flow beneath Tom Bridge. No significant deposits were observed.
- 5.7 In late October a couple of days were spent monitoring the excavation of two lengths of trench beneath and alongside the Evesham Road. The 3m deep trench excavated beneath the eastern half of the carriageway (**Plate 11**) exposed backfill/made ground in the top 1.5m or so, but beneath that were previously undisturbed deposits of stiff clays and gravels (103 & 104). No deposits of archaeological significance were present. Deposits recorded in the exposed sections visible in the water-main pipe trench (**Plate 12**) excavated to the west of the road comprised gravelly clay subsoil (102) underlying a 250mm thick layer of topsoil (100). No archaeology was present.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 All monitored excavation work took place close to the line of the old Evesham Road leading to/from the village, but no features or deposits of particular archaeological significance were observed and no artefacts pre-dating the modern period were recovered during intrusive groundwork at the site.

7. PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Longman MifA (Project Officer, BaRAS) who also produced this report. The illustrations were prepared and the report compiled by Ann Linge (Design & Production Officer, BaRAS). The project was managed by John Bryant MifA (Acting Manager, BaRAS).

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9. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Bristol and Region Archaeological Services would like to thank Adrian Shute (Senior Site Manager) and Simon Brain (Site Manager) of Bovis Homes (SW) Limited along with Johnny O'Connor and his site staff from O'Connor Construction plus site staff from Brandwells Construction for their assistance and co-operation. Thanks also to Charles Parry (Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council) for his advice.

APPENDIX 1: Policy Statement

This report is the result of work carried out in the light of national and local authority policies.

NATIONAL POLICIES

Statutory protection for archaeology is enshrined in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), amended by the National Heritage Act, 1983. Nationally important sites are listed in the Schedule of Ancient Monuments (SAM). Scheduled Monument consent is required for any work that would affect a SAM.

GOVERNMENT POLICY GUIDANCE

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (1990) have been replaced (23 March 2010) by Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010) which sets out the Government's national policies on conservation of the historic environment. Those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are called heritage assets.

Of particular relevance within the Planning Policy Statement are:

Policy HE6: Information Requirements for Applications for Consent Affecting Heritage Assets

HE6.1 Local planning authorities should require an applicant to provide a description of the significance of the heritage assets affected and the contribution of their setting to that significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage asset. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets themselves should have been assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary given the application's impact. Where an application site includes, or is considered to have the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where desk-based research is insufficient to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation.

Policy HE9: Additional Policy Principles Guiding the Consideration of Applications for Consent Relating to Designated Heritage Assets

HE9.1 There should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour of its conservation should be. Once lost, heritage assets cannot be replaced and their loss has a cultural, environmental, economic and social impact. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I or II* listed buildings and grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

Policy HE12: Policy Principles Guiding the Recording of Information Related to Heritage Assets

HE12.3 Where the loss of the whole or a material part of a heritage asset's significance is justified, local planning authorities should require the developer to record and advance understanding of the significance of the heritage asset before it is lost, using planning conditions or obligations as appropriate. The extent of the requirement should be proportionate to the nature and level of the asset's significance. Developers should publish this evidence and deposit copies of the reports with the relevant historic environment record. Local planning authorities should require any archive generated to be deposited with a local museum or other public depository willing to receive it. Local planning authorities should impose planning conditions or obligations to ensure such work is carried out in a timely manner and that the completion of the exercise is properly secured.

LOCAL POLICIES

The Gloucestershire Structure Plan (2nd Review) was adopted by the County Council on 17th November 1999. It includes the following policies:

Policy NHE.6

The distinctive historic environment of the County will be conserved and enhanced. Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, and their settings will be preserved. Historic settlements and landscape, historic parks and gardens, and sites of archaeological importance will be protected from the adverse effects of development.

14.2.28 The physical survivals of the past are to be valued and protected for their own sake, as a central part of cultural heritage and a sense of national identity. Their presence adds to the quality of life, by enhancing the familiar and cherished local scene and sustaining the sense of local distinctiveness which is so important an aspect of the character and appearance of Gloucestershire's towns, villages and countryside. The historic environment is also of immense importance for leisure and recreation.

14.2.29 Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 "*Planning and the Historic Environment*" (PPG.15, September 1994) states that effective protection of all aspects of the historic environment is fundamental to the Government's policies for environmental stewardship. Planning Policy Guidance. Note 16 "*Archaeology and Planning*" (PPG.16, November 1990) identifies the importance of archaeological remains as the source of information about our society's past, and stresses their finite nature and their vulnerability to damage and destruction. Their protection through the planning system is essential to their survival.

14.2.30 The historic environment of the County has been formed from the activities of human communities over many thousands of years in clearing, farming and settling the landscape. There is extensive evidence of the past in the form of prehistoric settlement and burial sites, Roman towns and villas, medieval churches and villages, and industrial landscapes of national importance. There are many other archaeological sites, historic buildings and other features of more local importance. Local plans should protect the historic environment, preserving the important elements and its general historic character.

14.2.31 Characterisation of the historic landscape of the County is currently in progress. The landscape character areas and descriptions that will result from this project will assist in local plan preparation and in the conservation of the locally distinctive landscapes within the County.

14.2.32 Similarly, for the small historic towns of the County, the Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey will provide information on the historic urban character of these settlements and their archaeological potential. This will assist in local plan preparation and in guiding the location of development.

14.2.33 Historic parks and gardens may be included within English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. Whilst this confers no additional statutory controls, development proposals affecting them are subject to statutory consultation procedures. Similarly, a Register of Historic Battlefields has been prepared by English Heritage. These include the battlefield sites at Tewkesbury [1471] and Stow-on-the-Wold [1646]. Again the effects of development proposals on them should be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

14.2.34 Local Planning Authorities are under a duty to designate as conservation areas any 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Whilst many of these areas are of local significance, cumulatively they contribute to Gloucestershire's diverse historical character. This is different to the conservation of individual buildings. Individual historic buildings and other structures of special historical or architectural interest may be given protection as Listed Buildings. However, where works may affect a listed building, special regard should be had for the desirability of preserving its setting, as this is often an essential part of the building's character.

14.2.35 About 18,000 archaeological sites are currently recorded in the Gloucestershire Sites and Monuments Records (SMR) which is maintained by the County Council. Approximately 400 of these are Scheduled Ancient Monuments of national importance, protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979). Not all nationally important monuments are scheduled. There is a presumption in favour of the preservation of nationally important sites and their settings, whether scheduled or not. In addition, the SMR records many sites of more local significance, and will contain archaeological information about local areas. Local plans should contain policies which will protect significant archaeological sites and which set out how the archaeological implications of development will be assessed and mitigated through the development control process.

NOTE: PPG15 & 16 were replaced by *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5)*, published on 23 March 2010.

APPENDIX 2: Context Descriptions

Context No.	Description
100	Dark brown topsoil
101	Brownish/yellow, slightly brashy, alluvial clay subsoil, containing occasional charcoal flecks
102	Limestone slabs/stone makeup of 18th/19th century track (' <i>New Road</i> ')
103	Stiff, blue/grey alluvial clay
104	Brownish orange clay with gravel

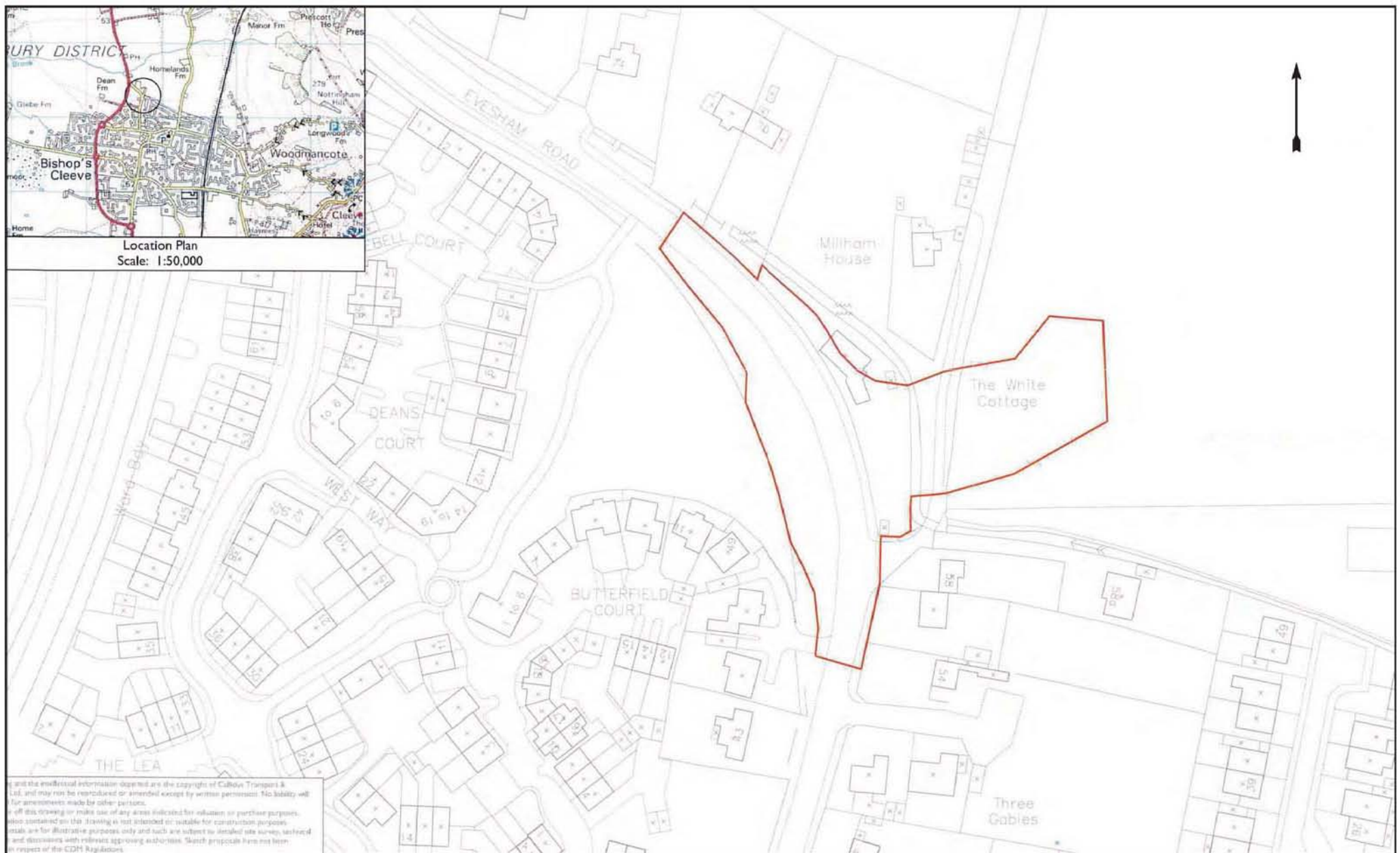


Fig.1 Site location plan, scale 1:1000 @ A3

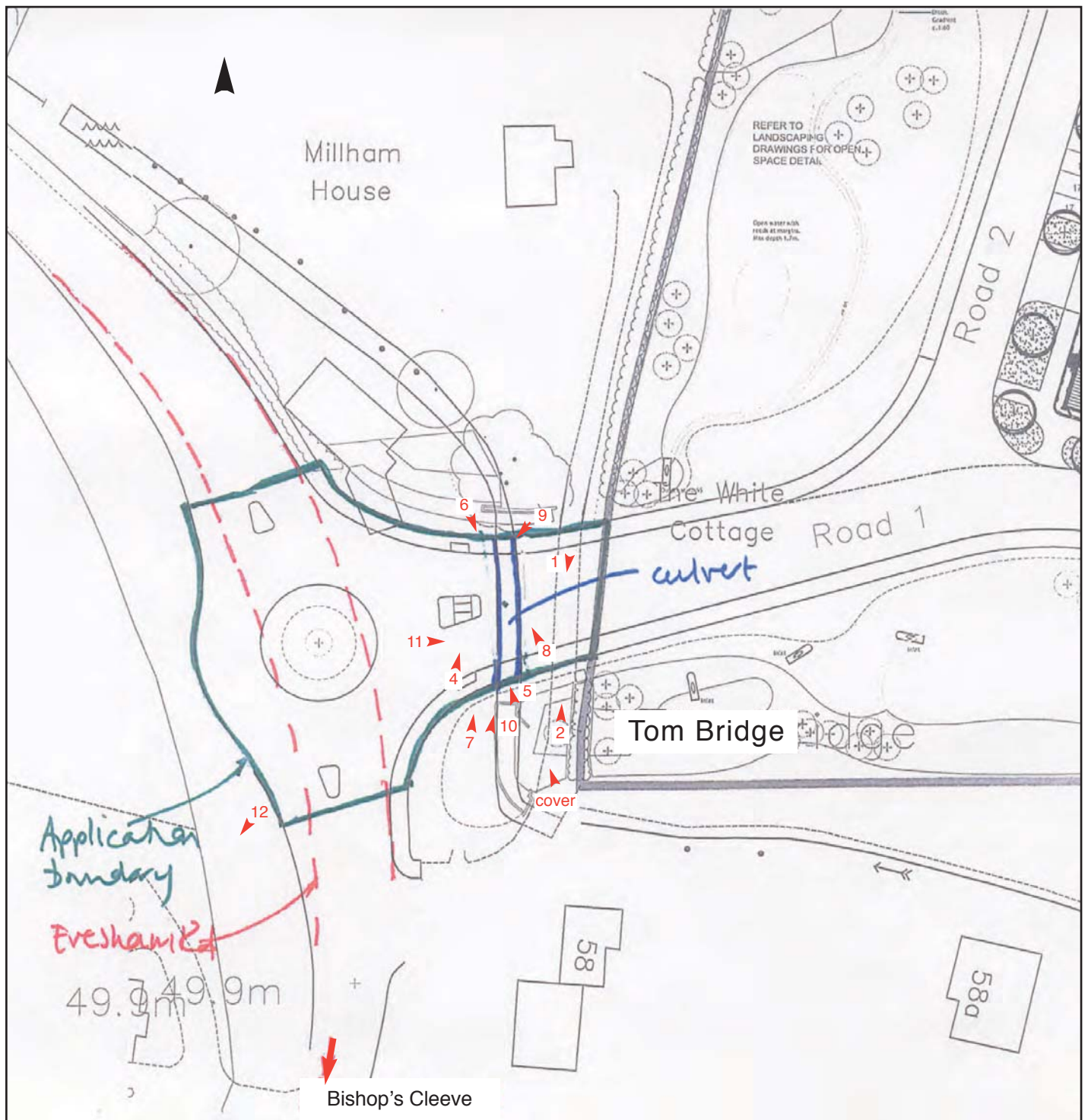


Fig.2 Plan showing study (proposal) area, scale 1:1250 @ A3



Plate 1
Topsoil strip in progress,
looking south, along the
banks of the stream
(South Brook)



Plate 2
A view (looking north),
during the topsoil strip,
along the unmade track
(‘New Road’). The new
access road will enter the
new housing
development, from the
new roundabout, in the
vicinity of the field
entrance in the hedge
(right)



Plate 3
Roughly worked limestone
block; possibly utilised as
the base for a gatepost



Plate 4
Looking north at topsoil strip in progress across the former garden and driveway belonging to the White Cottage. To the right (east) is the stream (South Brook)



Plate 5
Excavation of stream diversion trench, looking north



Plate 6
Excavation/pipe laying in progress on the line of the temporary stream diversion trench; looking south towards Nos. 56 & 58 Evesham Road



Plate 7
Looking north-east at the excavation of the trench for a new culvert to carry the flow of the South Brook beneath a new roundabout



Plate 8
View north of the culvert trench, during excavation



Plate 9
Excavation work at the northern end of the culvert, looking north-west



Plate 10
Excavation work in progress at the southern end of the culvert, looking north-east



Plate 11
North-facing section visible in section of drainage pipe trench immediately east of the Evesham Road



Plate 12
North-east facing section in water-main pipe trench located west of the Evesham Road