

Archaeological Watching Brief  
at  
**JUBILEE ALLOTMENTS,  
MYRTLE DRIVE,  
SHIREHAMPTON, BRISTOL.**  
for  
Jephson Housing Association



Report No. 1902/2010  
BHER No. 24779



Bristol and Region Archaeological Services



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at  
**JUBILEE ALLOTMENTS,  
MYRTLE DRIVE,  
SHIREHAMPTON, BRISTOL.**

Centred on  
N.G.R. ST 53425 76220

Client: Jephson Housing Association  
Agent: E G Carter & Co. Limited

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<i>Signature:</i>	
<i>Date Issued:</i>	1st February 2010 

## CONTENTS

Summary

List of Illustrations

1.	Introduction.....	1
2.	The Site.....	2
3.	Archaeological and Historical Background.....	3
4.	Methodology & Results.....	4
5.	Conclusion .....	5
6.	Project Team.....	5
7.	Bibliography and Sources Consulted.....	5
8.	Acknowledgements.....	5

Appendix 1: Policy Statement

Appendix 2: Context Descriptions

Illustrations and Plates

### Abbreviations

AD	Anno Domini	c.	Circa
aOD	Above Ordnance Datum	Km	Kilometre
BaRAS	Bristol & Region Archaeological Services	m	Metre
BC	Before Christ	MoB	Museum of Bristol
BCC	Bristol City Council	NGR	National Grid Reference
BCL	Bristol Central Library	NMR	National Monuments Record
BCMAG	Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery	OS	Ordnance Survey
BHER	Bristol Historic Environment Record		
BRO	Bristol Record Office		
BSMR	Bristol Sites & Monuments 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.

January, 2010.

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## **SUMMARY**

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during ground works associated with the construction of thirty-two residential units (houses and flats) on former allotments off Myrtle Drive, Shirehampton, Bristol.

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

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

### Figures

- Figure 1 Site location plan (scale 1:1250)
- Figure 2 Plan showing study area in detail and plate directions (scale 1:500)
- Figure 3 Proposed site layout (scale 1:250 @ A1)

### Plates

- Cover View south-west across the site – looking towards Myrtle Hall Allotments
- Plate 1 Looking south, next to Myrtle Drive, during topsoil strip of grass verge for new footpath
- Plate 2 Looking south, during topsoil strip (for road widening) of grass area alongside access track from Myrtle Drive to Myrtle Hall Allotments
- Plate 3 Main site strip commences, next to site cabins (looking south towards River Avon)
- Plate 4 Main site strip in progress – looking north towards Stow House
- Plate 5 Looking south-west at exposed north-facing section through landfill deposits during excavation of storm-water pipe trench
- Plate 6 Looking west at the site of 'Building 1' during the excavation of foundation trenches

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) was commissioned by E G Carter & Co. Limited, on behalf of Jephson Housing Association Group (South & West), to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground works on land off Myrtle Drive, Shirehampton, Bristol (**Fig.1; Cover**) associated with a '*residential development comprising 32 units (2 and 3-bed dwellings of houses and flats) along with access road, parking, landscaping, open space and nature conservation provision*'.
- 1.2 Planning consent had been granted (planning reference number 07/01402/F), by Bristol City Council, with a condition attached which required that all contractors' ground work be monitored by an archaeologist or archaeological organisation to record any archaeological features exposed during the works.
- 1.3 The watching brief was therefore commissioned to comply with the condition of planning consent and in accordance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation* prepared by John Bryant (Assistant Manager, BaRAS) of Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS 2009).
- 1.4 The fieldwork was undertaken by BaRAS archaeologists over a period of 12 days between early September 2009 and mid January 2010. Tim Longman (Project Officer, BaRAS) subsequently compiled this report.
- 1.5 The project archive will be deposited with Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives under the Accession Number BRSMG 2009/27 and a copy of the report will be made available to the National Monuments Record (NMR) maintained by English Heritage at the National Monuments Record Centre (NMRC) in Swindon. The project has been entered in the Bristol Historic Environment Record as: BHER 24779 and it also has the OASIS ID: bristolal-57449.

## 2. THE SITE

- 2.1 The site (centred on NGR ST 53425 76220) lies on the southern edge of Shirehampton, some 700m south of the centre of the former village and 6km north-west of Bristol city centre and site levels range between 11.7m – 13.7m aOD.
- 2.2 The site (**Fig.2**), which is irregular in shape, is located on the edge of a predominantly residential area, immediately south of Stow House. To the east and south it is bounded by grassed public open space, which lies alongside the River Avon, while to the west lies Myrtle Hall allotments.
- 2.3 The site previously comprised disused allotment gardens, with the northern half heavily overgrown with vegetation and the southern half covered by rough grassland. Along the west side of the site is a rough unmade track leading between Myrtle Drive and the neighbouring Myrtle Hall Allotments.
- 2.4 The geology in the vicinity of the study area comprises Recent and Pleistocene First Terrace Gravels, Estuarine Alluvium, and Keuper Marl (Mercia Mudstone) of the Triassic period (British Geological Survey 1962).

### **3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Prior to the present project the study area was the subject of an archaeological desk based assessment (Townsend 2005). The full historical and archaeological background to the site is contained within that document. Relevant details are summarised below:
- 3.2 This site lies in the historic tithing of Shirehampton in Westbury-on-Trym parish in Henbury Hundred in the county of Gloucestershire. Shirehampton became a separate parish, independent of Westbury-on-Trym, in 1844. The parish was incorporated within the revised boundaries of the City and County of Bristol (a county corporate) in 1904. The present site lies close to the inside of a bend of the River Avon, close to a stretch of the river known as 'Hung Road', thought to refer to boats laying at rest on the mud at low tide.
- 3.3 The site, which lies c. 100m east of the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century Myrtle Hall, was used as agricultural land until the early twentieth century. During the 18th and 19th centuries it formed the southern part of a larger field known as 'Rye Leaze' and was used for the production of arable crops. During the 20th century the area became allotment gardens, although part appears to have functioned as a paddock. From the post-war period the site was occupied by temporary prefabricated housing until it was returned to allotments in the late 1970's.



## 4. METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

- 4.1 The fieldwork complied with the methodology contained within the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (BaRAS 2009). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (1994, revised 2008). The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological features or deposits revealed during the course of intrusive groundwork.
- 4.2 All groundwork was carried out by 360° slew mechanical excavators utilising both toothed buckets and toothless ditching buckets.
- 4.3 The initial phase of work involved topsoil stripping two areas beyond the main site. The first was an area alongside (east of) Myrtle Drive, from the junction with Nibley Road, for a new footpath (**Plate 1**) and services, while the second was for road widening (**Plate 2**) on the west side of the site entrance from Myrtle Drive. Between 0.12m – 0.2m of turf and topsoil was removed but no archaeological features or deposits were encountered next to Myrtle Drive. Later that day (Monday 7 September) work started on ground reduction work/topsoil strip inside the site entrance, but with similar results.
- 4.4 The second phase of the watching brief commenced the next day on Tuesday 8 September with the main site strip/ground reduction phase (**Plates 3 & 4**). Depths of between 0.2m – 0.5m of overlying vegetation and topsoil (100) were mechanically removed over the next few days to the top of the underlying subsoil. A few sherds of 20<sup>th</sup>-century pottery and glass bottles (not retained) were observed in the soil, particularly on the southern half of the site, but no significant archaeological deposits or features were present.
- 4.5 In late September excavation work took place, close to the southern site boundary, on the route of a new section of 1500mm diameter concrete storm-water pipe, which was to be connected via a manhole to an existing 1300mm diameter pipe, which had been laid a couple of years previously. The trench [500] (**Plate 5**) was up to 4m deep and the work exposed substantial mixed land-fill deposits (510) of domestic, industrial and building waste, which had not been expected. The presence of these deposits indicated that the southern half of the site, which had been very heavily disturbed to a substantial depth, was archaeologically sterile.
- 4.6 Between November and January excavation work took place for the foundations of the seven new buildings (**Plate 6**) to be erected across the site. However, the sites of ‘Building 2’ and ‘Building 3’ (**Fig. 3**) were not monitored as they lay partly or wholly over the area of landfill. No features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed and no artefacts predating the modern period were recovered during this latter phase of intrusive ground works at the site.

## 5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of the intrusive groundworks. The lack of archaeological deposits may indicate that any archaeology formerly present may have been truncated by previous activity on the site, particularly during the 20th century.

## 6. PROJECT TEAM

- 6.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Longman MifA (Project Officer), Ray Ducker (Site Assistant) and Heather Hiron (Site Assistant), the former of whom also produced this report. The illustrations were prepared and the report compiled by Ann Linge (Design & Production Officer). The project was managed by Bruce Williams MifA (BaRAS Manager).

## 7. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES CONSULTED

### Published Material

Institute for Archaeologists, 2008 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (first published 1994, revised 2008)

### Unpublished Material

Bryant, J., 2009 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief at Myrtle Drive, Shirehampton, Bristol* (BaRAS Report).

Townsend, A., 2005 *Archaeological Desktop Study of land at Jubilee Allotments, Myrtle Drive, Shirehampton, Bristol*. (BaRAS Report No.1495/2005; unpublished client report).

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

BaRAS would like to thank Mark Duncan (Site Manager) and Mathew Vye (Senior Surveyor) of Partnership Housing, E. G. Carter & Co. Ltd and the site team from Carter Construction for their assistance and co-operation during the programme of archaeological monitoring.

## **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 which would affect a SAM.

### **ODPM PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE**

The Planning Policy Guidance of Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16) consolidates advice to planning authorities. The Guidance stresses the non-renewable nature of the archaeological resource, details the role of the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), encourages early consultation with county and district archaeological officers and sets out the requirement for developers to provide sufficient information on the archaeological impact of development to enable a reasonable planning decision to be made.

PPG 16 also indicates the circumstances where further work would be necessary and outlines the use of agreements and conditions to protect the archaeological resource.

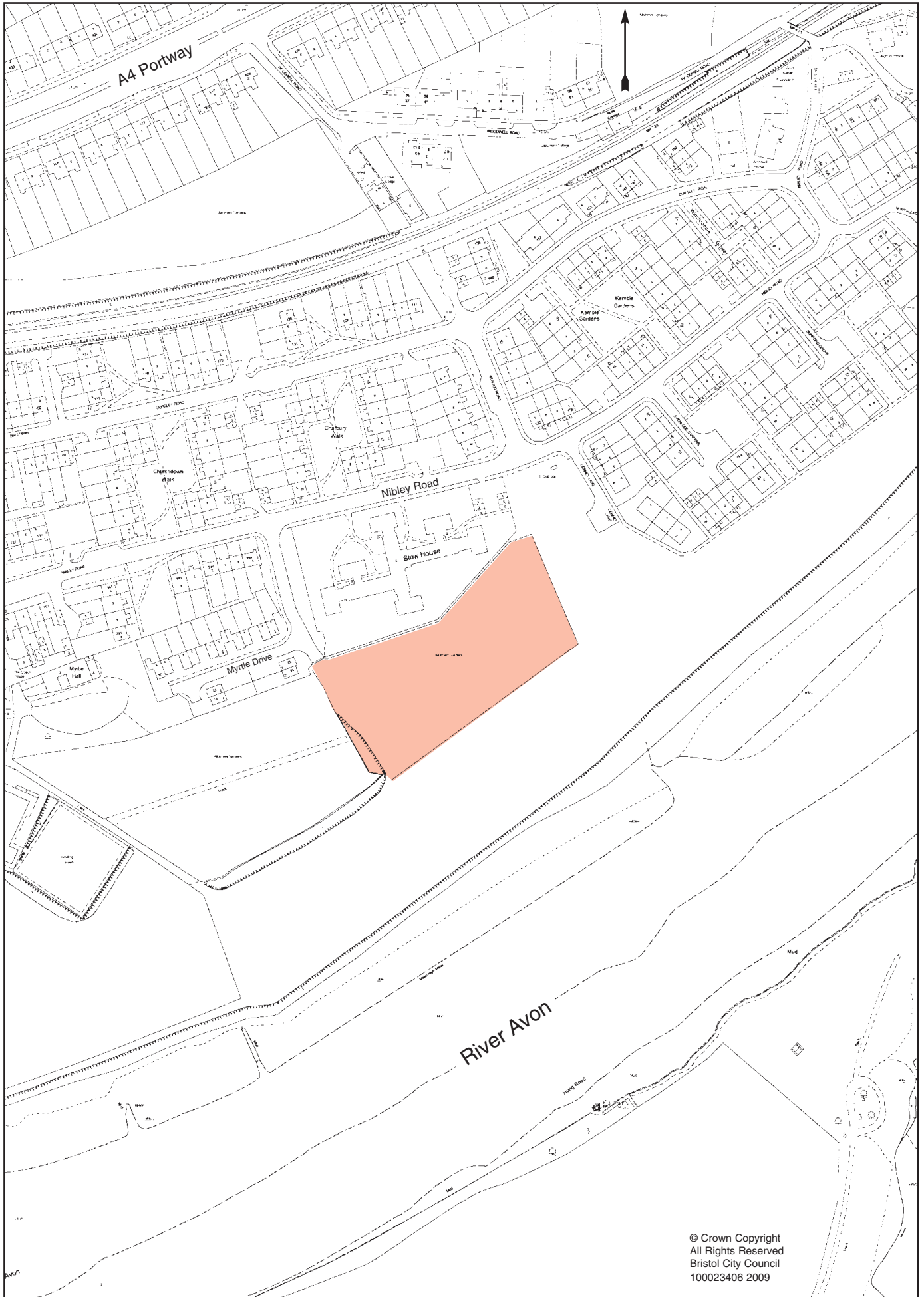
### **LOCAL AUTHORITY POLICY**

Bristol City Council Supplementary Planning Document (2006) states (policy SPD No.7, p4):

- (i) There will be a presumption in favour of preserving any archaeological features or sites of national importance, whether scheduled or not.
- (ii) Development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscapes or buildings of archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeological resource through a desktop study, and where appropriate a field evaluation. Where there is evidence of archaeological remains, development will not be permitted except where it can be demonstrated that the archaeological features of the site will be satisfactorily preserved in situ, or a suitable strategy has been put forward to mitigate the impact of development proposals upon important archaeological remains and their settings; or, if this is not possible and the sites are not scheduled or of national importance, provision for adequately recording the site prior to destruction is made, preferably by negotiating a planning agreement to ensure that access, time and financial resources are available to allow essential recording and publication to take place.

## APPENDIX 2: Context Descriptions

Context No.	Description
100	Topsoil
101	Subsoil
500	Pipe Trench
501	Mid-brown topsoil
502	Reddish-brown subsoil
503	Stiff reddish-brown clay natural
504	Cut for service pipe
505	Service access to drain
506	Tarmac/scalpings of road surface
507	Mid/dark brown topsoil
508	Reddish-brown subsoil
509	Firm reddish-brown clay natural
510	Rubbish tip material – mixed waste, including bottle dump
511	Buried dark brown topsoil
512	Mid/dark brown topsoil
513	Stiff brown clay natural



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Fig.1 Site location plan (scale 1:1250)

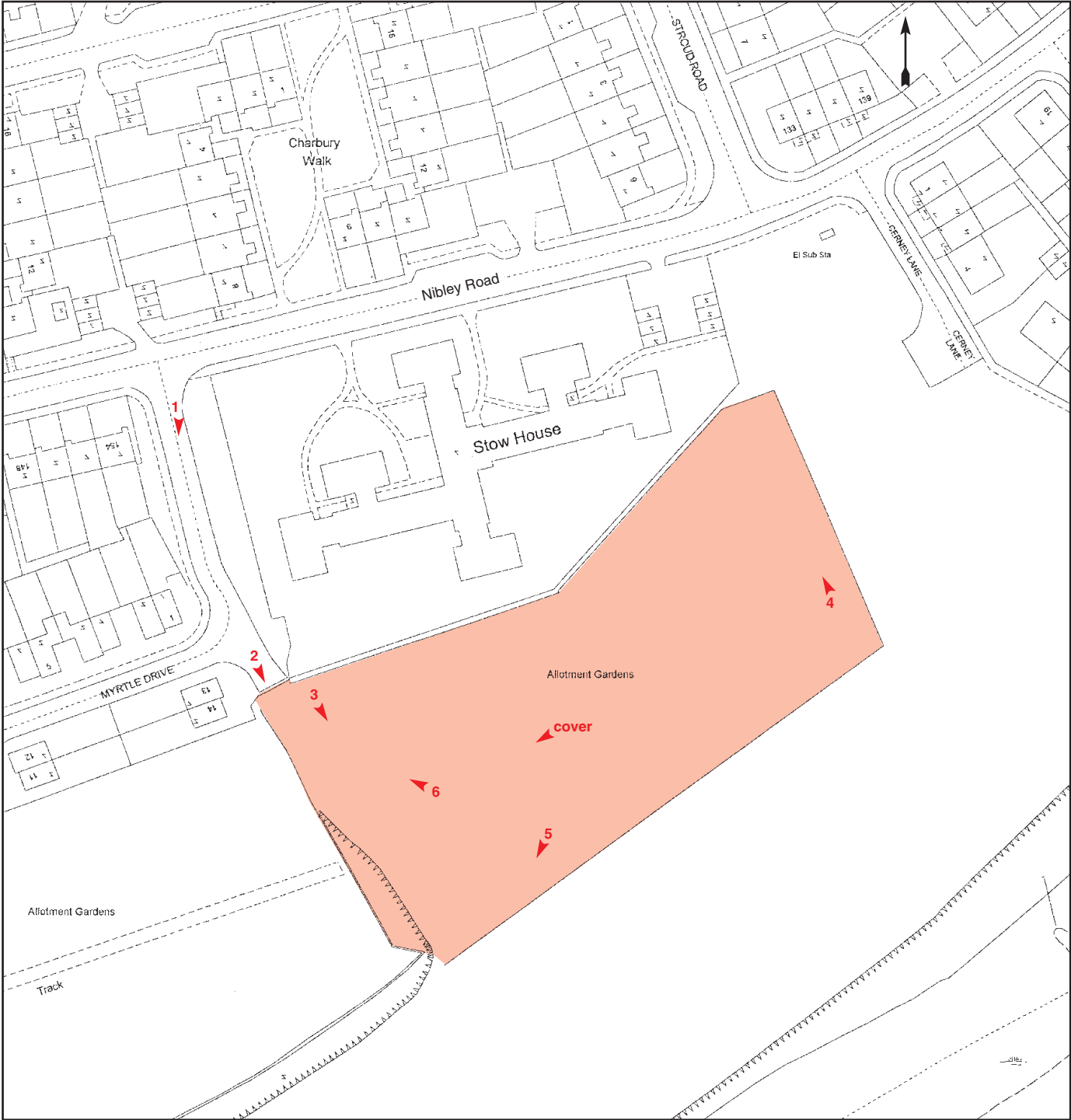


Fig.2 Plan showing study area in detail and plate directions (scale 1:500)

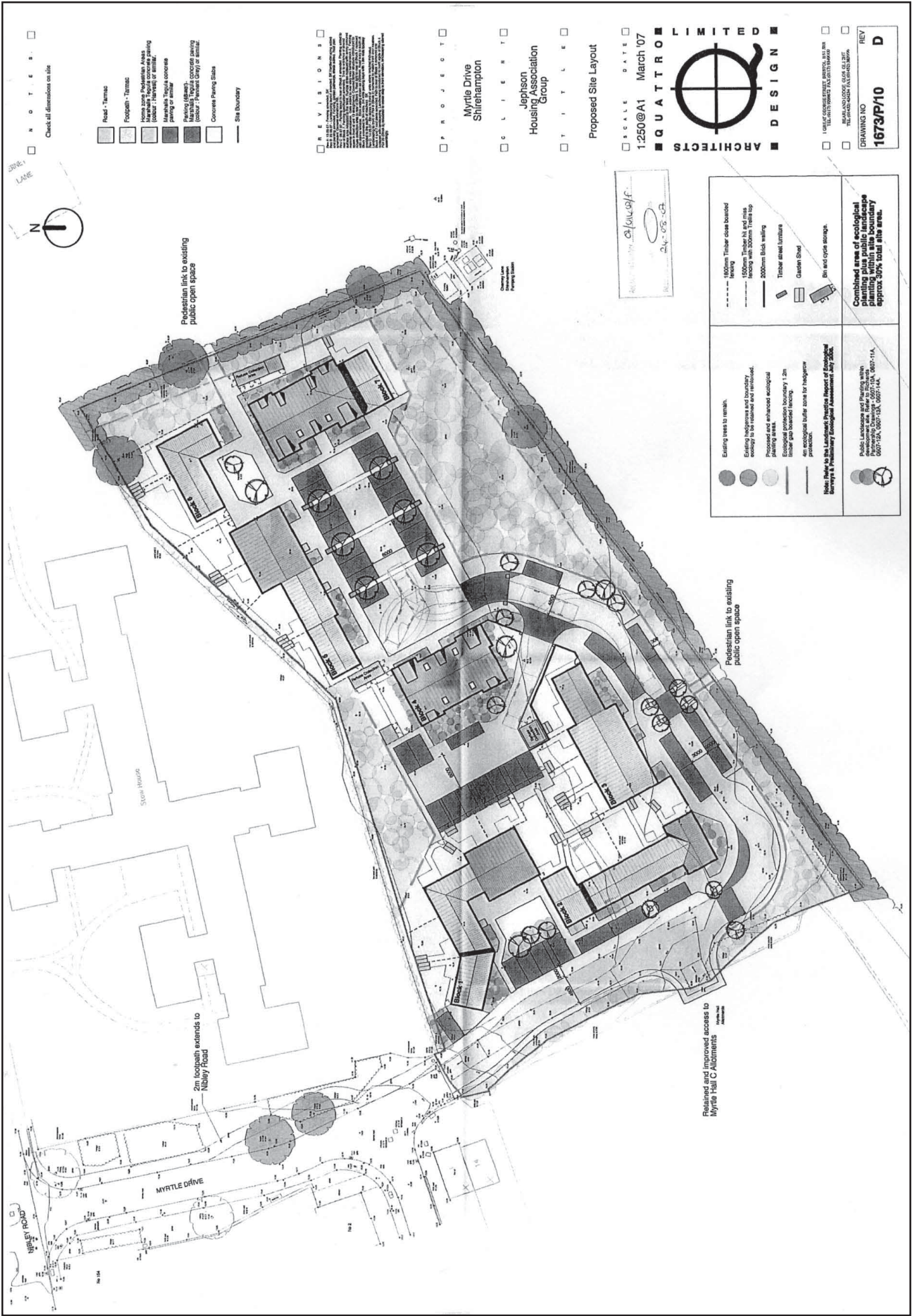


Fig.3 Proposed site layout (scale 1:250 @ A1)



Plate 1  
Looking south, next to  
Myrtle Drive, during  
topsoil strip of grass  
verge for new footpath



Plate 2  
Looking south, during  
topsoil strip (for road  
widening) of grass area  
alongside access track  
from Myrtle Drive to  
Myrtle Hall Allotments



Plate 3  
Main site strip commences,  
next to site cabins (looking  
south towards River Avon)





Plate 4  
Main site strip in  
progress – looking north  
towards Stow House



Plate 5  
Looking south-west at  
exposed north-facing  
section through landfill  
deposits during excavation  
of storm-water pipe trench



Plate 6  
Looking west at the site  
of 'Building 1' during the  
excavation of foundation  
trenches