

Homelands Farm Bishops Cleeve Gloucestershire



Archaeological Evaluation Report



Oxford Archaeology

June 2004

**Client: CPM Enviromental Planning
and Design on behalf of George
Wimpey UK Ltd**

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Homelands Farm, Bishops Cleeve, Gloucestershire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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SUMMARY

In April 2004 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at Homelands Farm, Bishops Cleeve, Gloucestershire on behalf of George Wimpey UK Ltd. The evaluation revealed extensive ridge and furrow cultivation over the whole of the development area from which a single prehistoric flint scraper was retrieved. No further evidence of archaeological remains or activity was encountered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 Between 5th and 14th April 2004 OA carried out a field evaluation at Homelands Farm, Bishops Cleeve, Gloucestershire. This was in response to a proposal by George Wimpey UK Ltd for the development of the site for residential use. A brief in line with the requirements of the County Planning Department was prepared by CPM Environmental Planning and Design and a WSI was agreed with the Gloucestershire County Archaeological Service.

1.1.2 Homelands Farm is situated along the northern edge of Bishops Cleeve, 5 km to the north of Cheltenham off the A435 (NGR SO 9630 2835) (Fig.1). The development site itself is bisected by the north-south line of Gotherington Lane. The site is bounded to the south by modern housing, to the north by arable fields, to the west by a public playground and a farm track, and to the east by a preserved railway line.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies on Jurassic Lower Lias overlaid by calcereous clay soils of the Evesham 2 Soil Association at approximately 60 m OD. The site is presently in agricultural use and occupies an area of c.17 hectares, with a gentle slope to the south down towards a stream, and in the eastern extent of the site down towards the base of the Cotswolds.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological background to the evaluation has been the subject of a separate study (OA 2004), the results of which are presented below. The site itself has produced limited archaeological evidence.

1.3.2 The proposed development site is located in an area of general archaeological potential on the north-western edge of the Cotswolds, on the border with the Severn and Avon Vales. Prehistoric activity is known throughout this area from Neolithic long barrows to Iron Age hill forts, with later Roman activity being fairly predominant around the area between Gloucester and Cirencester in the form of settlement and roads.

1.3.3 The proposed development site has been the subject of non-intrusive archaeological assessment and evaluation. This has comprised the study of aerial photographs, the

Gloucestershire SMR and site visits. These activities were mainly undertaken by CPM during the 1990s.

- 1.3.4 Fieldwalking activities were completed along the eastern part of the site during 1995 by the Cotswold Archaeological Trust. This produced few artefacts with only a single sherd of Roman pottery and two flint flakes being recovered. This was interpreted at the time as possibly not proving an absence of buried archaeology on site, but possibly reflecting the depth of colluvium burying the archaeology below the modern plough soil. Although this is a possibility, as Bishop's Cleeve is located on the south-west edge of Nottingham and Cleeve Hill; examples of the extreme edge of the surrounding High Wolds, the immediate topography is reasonably level and not conducive to such high levels of colluvial material. Certainly finds from the area suggest reasonably prolific activity from the later prehistoric period onwards.
- 1.3.5 Local potential in the area has been indicated by several recent reports of Anglo-Saxon finds recovered by metal detectorists. These have included at least one sword and several shield bosses among other artefacts that were found between Bishop's Cleeve and Gotherington. This typology of artefacts may be indicative of a cemetery within close proximity of the site. However, as none of the artefacts were recovered with permission, it is impossible to determine how accurate these reports and locations are. Evidence of concentrated metal detecting activity through exploration holes has been recorded close to the railway arch in the north-east corner of the site.
- 1.3.6 Aerial photographs have identified ridge and furrow alignments in the western half of the site, with a north-south linear earthwork located immediately to the west of Gotherington Lane. This latter earthwork was related to the existence of a World War 2 temporary encampment at this location.
- 1.3.7 A geophysical survey was also completed by Archaeological Services WYAS during February 2004. This revealed broadly negative results although several magnetic anomalies were identified, these were interpreted as being associated with the WWII camp. A double linear alignment was identified in the north-west corner of the site running south-west by north-east.

2 EVALUATION AIMS

- 2.1.1 To establish the presence or absence of any archaeological remains and in particular any evidence pertaining to Saxon activity.
- 2.1.2 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features.
- 2.1.3 To inform an appropriate mitigation strategy for any remains encountered, prior to the development.
- 2.1.4 To make available the results of the investigation.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of fieldwork

3.1.1 The evaluation consisted of twenty trenches each measuring 50 m long by 1.9 m wide (Fig. 2). Trenches 1 and 2 were located to intercept possible cropmarks, while Trenches 19 and 20 were located to intercept magnetic anomalies identified during the February 2004 geophysical survey. The remainder were sited to provide coverage of the non-anomalous areas of the development site.

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

3.2.1 The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision by a tracked 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.9 m wide toothless grading bucket.

3.2.2 The trenches were cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and where possible to retrieve dating evidence. All features and deposits were issued with unique context numbers. The trenches were planned at a scale of 1:100 where sterile and at 1:50 if containing features of archaeological interest. Section drawings of any features and sample sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. All features, sections and trenches were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the OA *Fieldwork Manual* (OAU 1992).

3.3 Finds

3.3.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context. The majority of the finds were of modern origin and were evaluated on site but were not retained.

3.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence

3.4.1 No deposits of paleo-environmental significance were encountered during the fieldwork.

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

4.1.1 The site was located on a mixture of level ground with a gentle slope running downwards along the southern boundary of the site. All the trenches came down onto natural drift geology represented by a sandy clay alluvium in Trenches 1 to 16 and by a calcareous clay colluvium in Trenches 17 to 20. Sondages were excavated in Trenches 1, 5, 7, 8, 13 and 19 in order to identify the depth of the alluvium and colluvium and to determine whether these deposits sealed any possible earlier archaeology. All the soil divisions were clearly defined with little or no mixing between the contexts. At the time of excavation all the soil deposits were saturated but little ground water was encountered.

4.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits

4.2.1 No deposits of archaeological significance were observed throughout the development site during the evaluation.

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Description of deposits

- 5.1.1 All the trenches displayed similar stratigraphy with the base of each trench being machined down onto natural clay deposits between 0.3 m and 0.5m below ground level. These deposits were either a sandy clay alluvium or a calcareous clay colluvium of prehistoric origin. The sondages in Trenches 1, 5, 7, 8 and 13 revealed the alluvium to be in excess of 1 m in depth, while the sondage excavated in Trench 19 cut through the colluvium and into the underlying alluvium, showing the former deposit to be up to 0.7 m deep (Fig. 3, section 1).
- 5.1.2 A gravel deposit consistent with peri-glacial deposition was encountered in the base of Trench 14 representing the fill of a glacial scar.
- 5.1.3 Within all but one of the trenches the base of these trenches were seen to be cut by north-south running plough furrows, spaced at roughly 8.5 m intervals. These were filled by a dark yellow brown clay silt varying between 0.15 m to 0.4 m deep and representing an earlier ploughsoil associated with ridge and furrow cultivation (Fig. 3, section 2).
- 5.1.4 All the trenches were sealed by a dark grey brown clay loam between 0.25 m and 0.4 m deep, representing a modern ploughsoil.
- 5.1.5 Full details of the stratigraphy, depth of deposits and dating evidence can be found in Appendix 1, Archaeological Context Inventory.

5.2 Finds

- 5.2.1 The majority of the finds observed were of 19th and 20th century in origin. A large quantity of abraded ceramic tile and slate fragments was observed along with fragments of transfer printed and late glazed earthenware domestic pottery, clay pipes and bottle glass, all of which is indicative of the effects of 19th century manuring. A residual flint scraper recovered from the earlier ploughsoil (1802) was the only prehistoric find on site. Aside from this, no finds other than those of post-medieval date were encountered.

6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 6.1.1 The site displayed relatively little intrusion by modern features such as services and land drains. Modern agricultural cultivation has levelled out the original ridge and furrow features to some degree, particularly to the east of Gotherington Lane, but has not penetrated below the level of the earlier ploughsoils. The percentage sample, distribution, and location of the trenches over the anomalies produced by the geophysical survey and the blank areas of the site represents a good reflection of the overall archaeological potential of the site.

6.2 Overall interpretation

- 6.2.1 The presence of an earlier ploughsoil within all the trenches is characteristic of soil horizons produced by the effects of ridge and furrow cultivation. There is a possibility though, that this extensive cultivation system may have destroyed any shallow features dating to earlier periods. However the very limited evidence for residual remains from earlier periods suggests otherwise.
- 6.2.2 Investigation of the geophysical anomalies proved disappointing with the linear anomaly within Trench 1 shown to be a modern land drain with gravel backfill.
- 6.2.3 The results of this evaluation shows that few archaeological remains exist within the site other than those relating to medieval and post-medieval farming practises, and with the exception of a single residual flint scraper, suggests similar features are the only archaeological remains likely to be encountered throughout the rest of the proposed development site. This is further supported by the low density of finds recovered during the fieldwalking survey and geophysical survey results.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1						
	101	Layer	0.0 m - 0.25 m	Modern ploughsoil	Tile, pottery	C20th
	102	Layer	0.25 m - 0.5 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	103	Layer	0.5 m - >0.7 m	Natural clay	-	-
	104	Fill	0.25 m - 0.8 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	105	Cut	0.55m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	106	Fill	0.25 m - 0.8 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	107	Cut	0.55 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
2						
	201	Layer	0.0 m - 0.3 m	Modern ploughsoil	Tile, pottery	C20th
	202	Layer	0.3 m - 0.55m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	203	Layer	0.55m - >0.75 m	Natural clay	-	-
	204	Fill	0.3 m - 0.8 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	205	Cut	0.55 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	206	Fill	0.3 m - 0.8 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	207	Cut	0.55 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
3						
	301	Layer	0.0 m - 0.3 m	Modern ploughsoil	Tile, pottery	C20th
	302	Layer	0.3 m - 0.6 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	303	Layer	0.6 m - >0.75m	Natural clay	-	-
	304	Fill	0.3 m - 0.85m	Furrow fill	-	-
	305	Cut	0.6 m - 0.85 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	306	Fill	0.3 m - 0.85 m	Backfill of land drain	-	C20th
	307	Cut	0.3 m - 0.85m	Land drain	-	-
	308	Fill	0.3 m - 0.75 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	309	Cut	0.6 m - 0.75 m	Plough furrow	-	-
4						
	401	Layer	0.0 m - 0.2 m	Modern ploughsoil	-	-
	402	Layer	0.2 m - 0.5 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	403	Layer	0.5 m - >0.65 m	Natural clay	-	-
	404	Fill	0.5 m - 0.75 m	Fill	-	-

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
4						
	405	Cut	0.5 m - 0.75 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	406	Fill	0.5 m - 0.75 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	407	Cut	0.5 m - 0.75 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	408	Fill	0.5 m - 0.75 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	409	Cut	0.5 m - 0.75 m	Plough furrow	-	-
5						
	501	Layer	0.0 m - 0.15 m	Modern ploughsoil	-	C20th
	502	Layer	0.15 m - 0.35 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	503	Layer	0.35 m - >0.5 m	Natural clay	-	-
	504	Fill	0.3 m - 0.8 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	505	Cut	0.3 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
6						
	601	Layer	0.0 m - 0.35 m	Modern ploughsoil	Tile, pottery	C20th
	602	Layer	0.35 m - 0.6 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	603	Layer	0.6 m - >0.7 m	Natural clay	-	-
	604	Fill	0.35 m - 0.7 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	605	Cut	0.6 m - 0.7 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	606	Fill	0.35 m - 0.7 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	607	Cut	0.6 m - 0.7 m	Plough furrow	-	-
7						
	701	Layer	0.0 m - 0.3 m	Modern ploughsoil	Tile, pottery	C20th
	702	Layer	0.3 m - 0.45 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	703	Layer	0.45 m - >0.6 m	Natural clay	-	-
	704	Fill	0.3 m - 0.8 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	705	Cut	0.45 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	706	Fill	0.3 m - 0.8 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	707	Cut	0.45 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	708	Fill	0.3 m - 0.8 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	709	Cut	0.45 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	710	Fill	0.3 m - 0.8 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	711	Cut	0.45 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	712	Fill	0.3 m - 0.8 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	713	Cut	0.45 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
	714	Fill	0.3 m - 0.8 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	715	Cut	0.45 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
8						
	801	Layer	0.0m - 0.15 m	Modern ploughsoil	Tile, pottery	C20th
	802	Layer	0.15 m - 0.4 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	803	Layer	0.4 m - 0.5 m	Natural clay	-	-
	804	Layer	0.5 m - >0.8 m	Natural clay	-	-
	805	Fill	0.2 m - 0.7 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	806	Cut	0.4 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
9						
	901	Layer	0.0 m - 0.2 m	Modern ploughsoil	-	-
	902	Layer	0.2 m - 0.4 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	903	Layer	0.4 m - >0.5 m	Natural clay	-	-
10						
	1001	Layer	0.0 m - 0.3 m	Modern ploughsoil	Tile, pottery	C20th
	1002	Layer	0.3 m - 0.5 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	1003	Layer	0.5 m - >0.6 m	Natural clay	-	-
	1004	Cut	0.5 m - 0.65m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1005	Cut	0.5 m - 0.65m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1006	Cut	0.5 m - 0.65m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1007	Cut	0.5 m - 0.65m	Plough furrow	-	-
11						
	1101	Layer	0.0 m - 0.25 m	Modern ploughsoil	Tile, pottery	C20th
	1102	Layer	0.25 m - 0.5 m	Earlier ploughsoil	Tile	C18th
	1103	Layer	0.5 m - >0.65 m	Natural clay	-	-
	1104	Fill	0.5 m - 0.7 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	1105	Cut	0.5 m - 0.7 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1106	Fill	0.5 m - 0.7 m	Furrow fill	-	-
	1107	Cut	0.5 m - 0.7 m	Plough furrow	-	-
12						
	1201	Layer	0.0 m - 0.25 m	Modern ploughsoil	Pottery	C20th
	1202	Layer	0.25 m - 0.4 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	1203	Layer	0.4 m - 0.6 m	Natural clay	-	-
	1204	Layer	0.6 m - >0.8 m	Natural clay	-	-

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
12						
	1205	Layer	0.4 m - >0.8 m	Natural gravel	-	-
13						
	1301	Layer	0.0 m - 0.15 m	Modern ploughsoil	-	-
	1302	Layer	0.15 m - 0.35 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	1303	Layer	0.35 m - >0.5 m	Natural clay	-	-
	1304	Cut	0.35 m - 0.6 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1305	Cut	0.35 m - 0.6 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1306	Cut	0.35 m - 0.6 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1307	Cut	0.35 m - 0.6 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1308	Cut	0.35 m - 0.6 m	Plough furrow	-	-
14						
	1401	Layer	0.0 m - 0.25 m	Modern ploughsoil	Tile	C20th
	1402	Layer	0.25 m - 0.5 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	1403	Layer	0.5 m - >0.75 m	Natural clay	-	-
	1404	Cut	0.5 m - 0.65 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1405	Cut	0.5 m - 0.65 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1406	Cut	0.5 m - 0.65 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1407	Cut	0.5 m - 0.65 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1408	Fill	0.5 m - 0.75 m	gravel deposit	-	-
	1409	Cut	0.5 m - 0.75 m	Periglacial feature	-	-
15						
	1501	Layer	0.0 m - 0.3 m	Modern ploughsoil	-	-
	1502	Layer	0.3 m - 0.45 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	1503	Layer	0.45 m - 0.6 m	Natural clay	-	-
	1504	Cut	0.3 m - 0.7 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1505	Cut	0.3 m - 0.7 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1506	Cut	0.3 m - 0.7 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1507	Cut	0.3 m - 0.7 m	Plough furrow	-	-
16						
	1601	Layer	0.0 m - 0.25 m	Modern ploughsoil	-	-
	1602	Layer	0.25 m - 0.4 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	1603	Layer	0.4 m - >0.55 m	Natural clay	-	-
	1604	Layer	0.4 m - >0.55m	Natural clay	-	-

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
16						
	1605	Cut	0.4 m - 0.65 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1606	Cut	0.4 m - 0.65 m	Plough furrow	-	-
17						
	1701	Layer	0.0 m - 0.3 m	Modern ploughsoil	-	-
	1702	Layer	0.3 m - 0.45 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	1703	Layer	0.45 m - >0.6 m	Possible coluvium	-	-
	1704	Layer	0.45m - >0.6 m	Natural clay	-	-
	1705	Cut	0.45 m - 0.7 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1706	Cut	0.45 m - >0.6 m	Plough furrow	-	-
18						
	1801	Layer	0.0 m - 0.3 m	Modern ploughsoil	Tile, pottery	C20th
	1802	Layer	0.3 m - 0.45 m	Earlier ploughsoil	Flint scraper	Prehistoric
	1803	Layer	0.45 m - >0.7 m	Possible coluvium	-	-
	1804	Cut	0.4 m - 0.7 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1805	Cut	0.4 m - 0.7 m	Plough furrow	-	-
19						
	1901	Layer	0.0 m - 0.25 m	Modern ploughsoil	Pottery	C20th
	1902	Layer	0.25 m - 0.4 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	1903	Layer	0.4 m - 1.1m	Possible coluvium	-	-
	1904	Fill	0.5 m - 0.75 m	Earliest ploughsoil	-	-
	1905	Cut	0.4 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1906	Cut	0.4 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	1907	Layer	1.1 m - > 1.3 m	Natural alluvial clay	-	-
20						
	2001	Layer	0.0 m - 0.4 m	Modern ploughsoil	Pottery	C20th
	2002	Layer	0.4 m - 0.55 m	Earlier ploughsoil	-	-
	2003	Layer	0.55 m - >0.8 m	Possible coluvium	-	-
	2004	Cut	0.4 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	2005	Cut	0.4 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	2006	Cut	0.4 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	2007	Cut	0.4 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-
	2008	Cut	0.4 m - 0.8 m	Plough furrow	-	-

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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WYAS, 2004 *Land North of Bishop's Cleeve, Gloucestershire: Geophysical Survey Report 1219*

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Homelands Farm, Bishops Cleeve, Gloucestershire

Site code: BICLN 04

Grid reference: SO 9630 2835

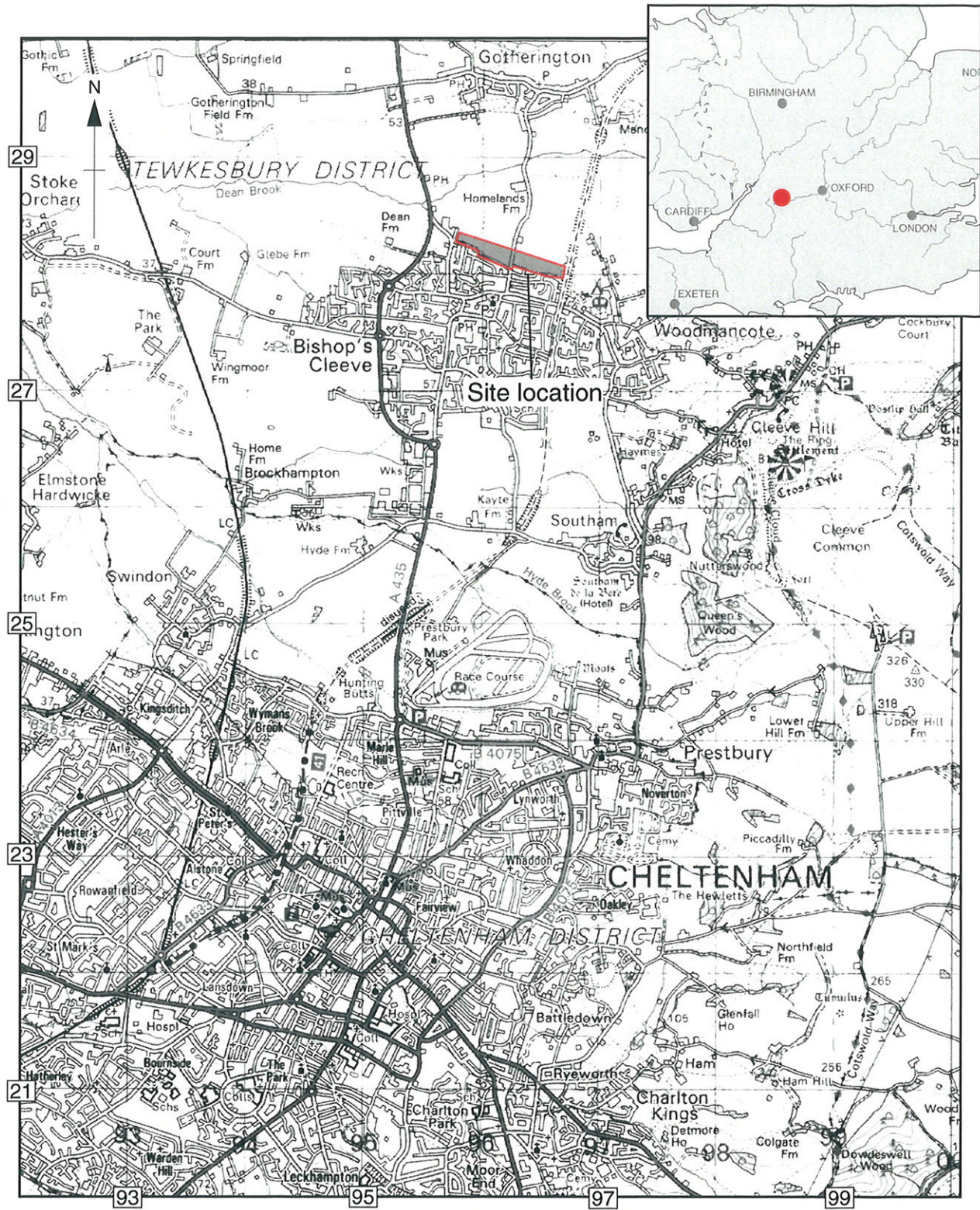
Type of evaluation: Twenty 50 m x 1.9 m trenches

Date and duration of project: Six days, 5th to 14th April 2004

Area of site: 17 hectares

Summary of results: Evidence of extensive ridge and furrow of possible medieval date, no earlier archaeology was encountered

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Gloucester City Museum and Art Gallery under the accession number GLRCM 2004/12



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Figure 1: Site location



Figure 2: Trench location plan

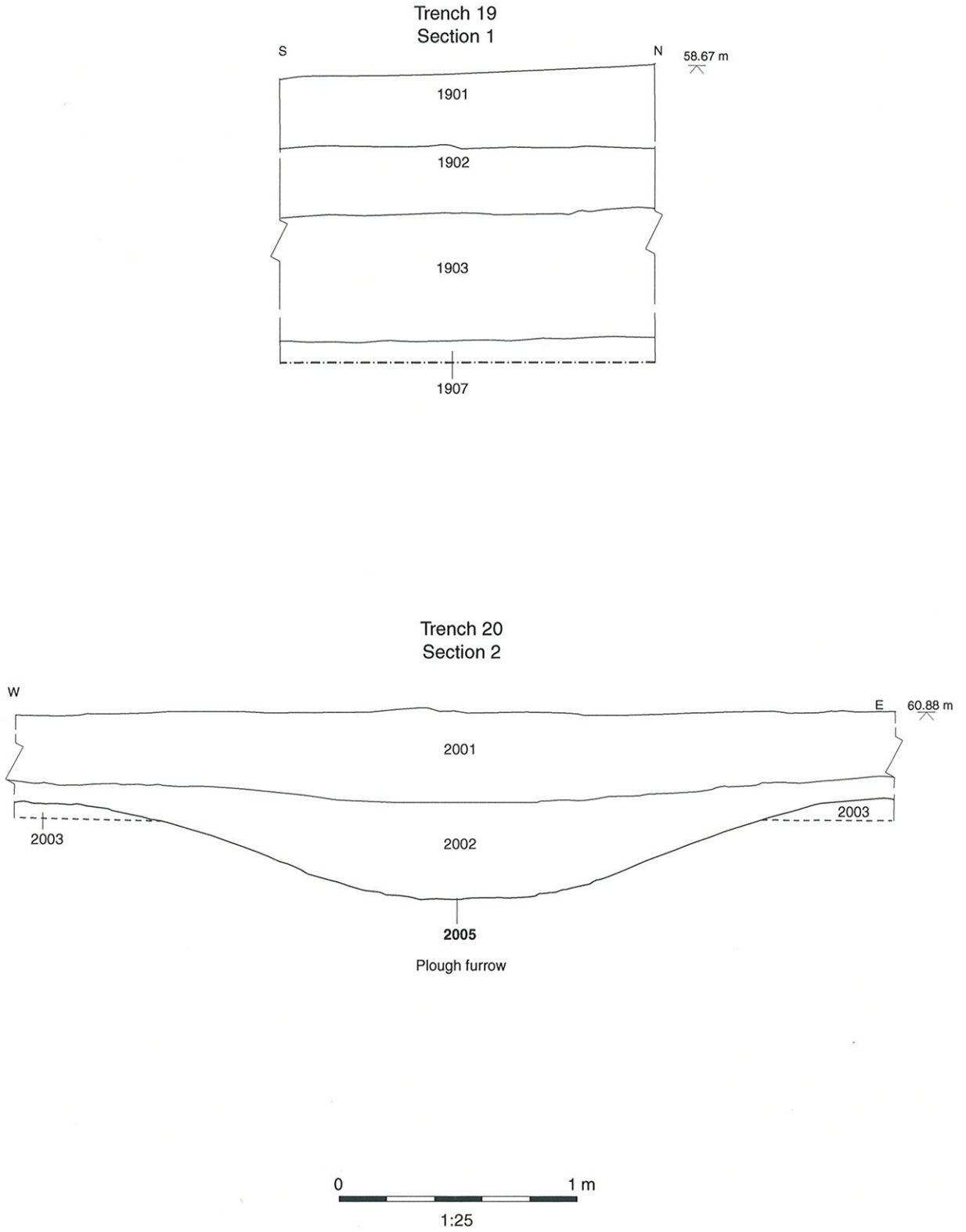


Figure 3: Trench 19 and 20, sample sections



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