LAND ADJACENT TO EVESHAM ROAD,
BISHOP’S CLEEVE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

C.A.T JOB: 1151
C.A.T REPORT: 01020

DATE: MARCH 2001

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SUMMARY

In March 2001 Cotswold Archaeological Trust carried out an archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Evesham Road, Bishop’s Cleeve, Gloucestershire.

Two trenches were excavated, revealing evidence of a post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation system.
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 In March 2001, Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT) was commissioned by Mr D Greening to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Evesham Road, Bishop’s Cleeve, Gloucestershire. The site is centred on NGR SO 95750 28125 (Fig.1).

1.1.2 The evaluation was undertaken prior to the determination of a planning application for the construction of one house and six bungalows with garages on land adjacent to 48 Evesham Road (Planning Ref. 476.2.19; 01/9835/0051/FUL). Owing to the present nature of ownership and access to the site, the Senior Archaeological Officer of Gloucestershire County Council has agreed to the initial evaluation of a limited area of the site behind number 44 Evesham Road. This is based on a provision for further evaluation of the rest of the development area when these issues are resolved.

1.2 The Study Area

1.2.1 The site is situated on the north-western outskirts of Bishop’s Cleeve, adjacent to the A435 Cheltenham to Evesham Road. It comprises the rear garden of 44 Evesham Road and is bounded to the west by the house itself, and to the north, east and south by surrounding properties. This part of the site comprises an area of approximately 1600m².
1.3 Geology and Topography

1.3.1 The underlying geology of the study area is mapped by the Geological Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales) (Sheet 217) as undifferentiated Lower Lias deposits of the Jurassic period.

1.3.2 The site is generally flat, with minor localised undulations. It stands at an approximate height of 51m AOD.

1.4 Archaeological and Historical Background

1.4.1 The proposed development area lies to the east of Evesham Road, and north of the area of most intensive previous archaeological investigations. Sites at Home Farm, Gilder’s Paddock, Cleeve Hall, Stoke Road and Bishop’s Cleeve Mill have produced evidence of occupation from the mid to late Iron Age (Parry 1999). Taken together these indicate an area of Iron Age and Romano-British occupation covering a minimum area of 9.5 hectares.

1.4.2 The Iron-Age (and Romano-British) activity at Gilder’s Paddock is taken to represent agricultural activity, with much evidence related to the production of food (Parry, ibid). Small-scale industrial activity has also been found on Romano-British sites in Bishop’s Cleeve. Excavation at Home Farm revealed evidence for possible Romano-British buildings and garden plots dating to the 2nd century, with agricultural boundaries extending beyond the limit of the excavations (Barber and Walker 1998) and evidence for iron smithing and possibly tanning or flax-retting. Occupation continued here into the late Roman/sub Roman period.

1.4.3 An extensive field system surrounding the focus of the settlement has been suggested, with small dispersed agricultural settlement on the edge of the Cotswold Scarp. The northerly extent of this is less clear, and the evaluation provides an opportunity to examine this relatively unknown part of the town.
1.4.4 Evidence of medieval settlement at Gilder’s Paddock and Stoke Road (Parry 1999, 102) also suggests the possibility of continuous occupation in the town since the later prehistoric period, although archaeological evidence for this is at present inconclusive.

1.5 Methodology

1.5.1 A detailed project design was prepared by Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT 2001) and approved by Mr C Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council.

1.5.2 Two trenches were mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision. Trench 2 was placed in the location agreed by Mr Parry. Due to the presence of an outbuilding and trees, Trench 1 was relocated (see Fig.2).

1.5.3 The main objective of the project was to investigate the presence/absence, nature, extent, character, date and preservation of any buried archaeological remains and to make an assessment of their importance.

1.5.4 The work was carried out in accordance with the Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 1994) and the Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire issued by the Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Section (1996).

1.5.5 All identified deposits were recorded in accordance with the CAT Technical Manual 1 Field Recording Manual (1996). A full written, drawn and photographic record of the evaluation was compiled.

1.5.6 The completed site archive will be deposited with Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum.
2. EVALUATION RESULTS

2.1 General

Trench 1

2.1.1 No archaeological deposits were encountered in Trench 1, which demonstrated a simple stratigraphical sequence of natural sand (103) overlain by a layer of mid orange-brown silty sand (102), interpreted as a previous cultivation soil, in turn overlain by modern garden topsoil (101).

Trench 2

2.1.3 The stratigraphical sequence in Trench 2 was similar to that in Trench 1, however an interfacial layer (203) lay between the natural substrate (204) and the cultivation soil (202). In addition, parts of two furrows were identified, crossing the trench on a west-north-west/east-south-east alignment. These were both filled by the cultivation soil.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 General

3.1.1 The evaluation revealed no significant archaeological deposits within the current study area. Some evidence of post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation was identified.
4. PROJECT TEAM AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The fieldwork was carried out by Mark Brett and Franco Vartuca. This report was prepared by Mark Brett, with illustrations by Peter Moore. The project was managed for CAT by Simon Cox.

Cotswold Archaeological Trust would like to thank Mr D Greening and Mr C Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council for their assistance during the course of this project.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY


CAT 2001 *Land adjacent to Evesham Road, Bishop’s Cleeve, Gloucestershire: Project Design for an Archaeological Evaluation*

GCC 1996 *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire*

IFA 1994 *Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation*

Fig.1 Location plan
Fig. 2  Trench location plan, showing alignment of ridge and furrow
APPENDIX

Context descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trench 1</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>(201)</td>
<td>&lt;0.20m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(202)</td>
<td>0.25m-0.70m</td>
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<tr>
<td>(203)</td>
<td>0.25m</td>
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Fig. 2  Trench location plan showing alignment of ridge and furrow (1:1000)