



# Kings House, Stockton, Warwickshire

## Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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## Kings House, Stockton, Warwickshire

### Archaeological Watching Brief Report

*Written by Paul Murray and illustrations by Charles Rousseaux*

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## Summary

Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Wigley Building & Development Limited to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the redevelopment of Kings House, Stockton, Warwickshire. The works were carried out between the 9<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

The watching brief was maintained during all intrusive works with the potential to impact on archaeological deposits, including service trenches and excavations for foundations. No significant archaeological features were recorded during the course of the watching brief, although a 19<sup>th</sup> century brick well and medieval or post-medieval agricultural soil was recorded.

## Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Wigley Building & Development Limited for commissioning this project.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by John Boothroyd. The fieldwork was carried out by Paul Murray, John Carne, Diana Chard and Tom Black. Thanks are extended to the teams of OA staff that prepared the archive under the management of Nicola Scott.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Wigley Building & Development Limited to undertake a watching brief at the site of Kings House, Stockton, Warwickshire.

1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition (Condition 14) of Planning Permission (planning ref: 17/00523/FUL). A written scheme of investigation was produced by OA detailing the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to discharge the planning condition.

### 1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The site lies to the south of Napton Road to the west of the village of Stockton, Warwickshire. The site is bounded to the north by Napton Road, to the west by the A426, to the south by agricultural fields and to the east by residential properties (Fig. 1; NGR: SP 43436 64076).

1.2.2 The area of proposed development consists of Kings House, a residential property, and its associated grounds and outbuildings, totaling approximately 1.2 hectares.

1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as Charmouth Mudstone Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 183 to 199 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. This is overlain by superficial deposits of mid Pleistocene sand and gravels formed 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (BGS Online).

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in an Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (WA 2016). The following summary is provided to place these works in context.

#### *Prehistoric period*

1.3.2 A scatter of flint artefacts and an Iron Age ditch and pit group were recorded during an evaluation and excavation some 300m to the south-west of the site. Cropmarks indicative of prehistoric activity have been recorded in two locations approximately 600m and 1km to the south of the site. Neither set of cropmarks has been subject to archaeological investigation.

#### *Romano British*

1.3.3 Romano-British artefacts were recovered from a series of ditches and gullies during an evaluation 400m to the south-east of the site. The features are suspected to be the remains of a small settlement.

### ***Medieval and post-medieval***

- 1.3.4 Evidence of early-medieval activity within the vicinity of the site is limited. A ford, located approximately 950m to the north-west of the site, is recorded in a charter dating the early 11th century.
- 1.3.5 Stockton does not appear in the Domesday Survey of 1086 and is suspected to have been part of the manor of Long Itchington held by Princess Christina. In the 12th century Walter de Somerville is recorded as holding a virgate of land at Stockton during the reign on Henry II, the first recorded reference to Stockton.
- 1.3.6 The historic core of Stockton lies to the south-east of the site, including the 14th century parish church, and a moated site suspected to the location of the medieval manor house. Ridge and furrow agricultural has been recorded in the immediate vicinity of the site (c. 50m) which suggests that the site formed part of the agricultural hinterland of Stockton throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods.
- 1.3.7 Stockton developed rapidly during the 19th century with the construction of the Works and the Blue Lias Lime and Cement Works.
- 1.3.8 Stockton House, now known as Kings House, was constructed in the early 19th century and was then extended over the course of the 19th century and into the 20th century, including the construction of outbuildings, a pool, tennis court and formal gardens.

## **2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 General**

2.1.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken to mitigate the impacts of the demolition and construction work through recording any archaeological features and deposits by written, drawn and photographic record.

### **2.2 Specific aims and objectives**

2.2.1 The specific aims and objectives of the archaeological watching brief were:

- i. To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains within the development;
- ii. To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence;
- iii. To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence;
- iv. To assess the level of truncation associated with the creation of the school;
- v. To disseminate the results through the production of a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Warwickshire HER.

### **2.3 Methodology**

2.3.1 The archaeological watching brief was maintained during all ground works with the potential to impact archaeological remains. This included the excavation of service trenches, wall foundation trenches and attenuation tanks.

## **3 RESULTS**

### **3.1 General soils and ground conditions**

- 3.1.1 The stratigraphic sequences revealed were well defined. The geology of Charmouth Mudstone was recorded along the length of the service trenches, and this was overlain by modern gravel surfaces to the south of Kings House. To the east and north of the house made ground was recorded, generally consisting of reworked natural geology with no archaeological potential.
- 3.1.2 Ground conditions throughout the watching brief were generally good, and the site remained dry throughout.

### **3.2 Watching brief results**

- 3.2.1 No significant archaeological features or deposits were recorded during the course of the watching brief.
- 3.2.2 A layer of mid brown silt was recorded within the footprint for the garage (Plate. 1, Fig. 2), to the south-east of the house. This deposit almost certainly represents a medieval or post-medieval agricultural soil, and relates to extant ridge and furrow noted in adjacent fields to the south-east and south-west.
- 3.2.3 A well, measuring 1.24m in diameter, was partially revealed to the east of the house (Fig. 2). It was constructed from bricks laid vertically (Plate 2). Each brick measured 0.24m x 0.114m x 0.075m. It is likely to be contemporary with the construction of the house in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 3.2.4 Make up layers for the gravel surfaces were recorded to the south of Kings House, forming the current driveway and parking area (Plate. 5). Deposits of redeposited clay geology were recorded to east of the house relating to landscaping for the current access off Napton road.

### **3.3 Finds summary**

- 3.3.1 Some ceramic building material of recent date was noted within the made ground which was present to the north and east of the house but not retained.

## **4 DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Reliability of field investigation**

4.1.1 The geological horizon was obvious within the service trenches and the exposed sections cleaned sufficiently to record the stratigraphic sequence. Elsewhere the works did not impact the natural geology. The watching brief can be considered to have successfully mitigated the impacts of the proposed development.

### **4.2 Significance**

4.2.1 The archaeological remains were limited to a post-medieval soil horizon. The results suggest that there is little to no potential for archaeological remains of a greater significance to be present within the rest of the site.

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## APPENDIX A      BIBLIOGRAPHY

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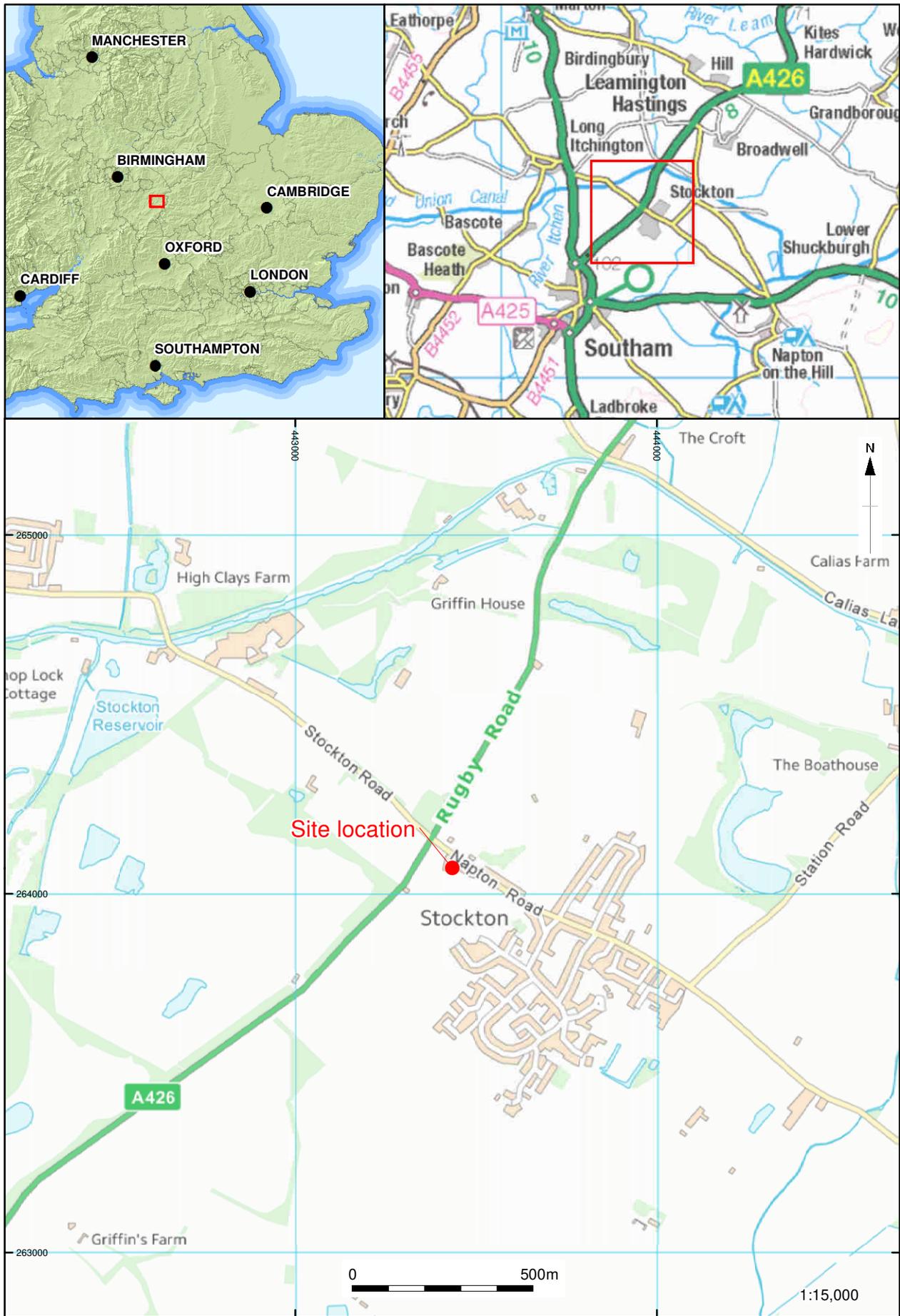
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**APPENDIX B****SITE SUMMARY DETAILS**

<b>Site name:</b>	Archaeological Watching Brief Report
<b>Site code:</b>	STOKIH18
<b>Grid Reference</b>	SP 43436 64076
<b>Type:</b>	Watching brief
<b>Date and duration:</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> October – 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
<b>Area of Site</b>	1.2 hectares.
<b>Location of archive:</b>	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Warwickshire Museum in due course, under the following accession number: TBC.
<b>Summary of Results:</b>	No archaeological features or deposits were recorded during the course of the watching brief. Modern made ground and surfaces were recorded.

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Figure 1: Site location





Plate 1: Garage footprint



Plate 2: 19th century brick well

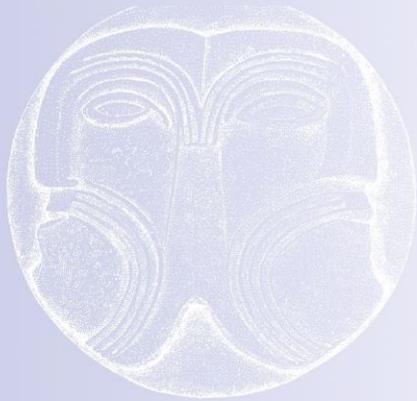


Plate 3: Service trench



Plate 4: Representative section of service trench





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