

**Mark Hurst Estates Limited**

**Land at Kingston Blount, Oxfordshire**

*NGR SU 738 995*

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

**Planning Ref. No. P99/NO345**

**Oxford Archaeological Unit**

**March 2000**

Mark Hurst Estates Limited

Land at Kingston Blount, Oxfordshire

NGR SU 738 995

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

Planning Ref. No. P99/NO345

Prepared by: John Dalton

Date: 14/3/00

Checked by: *CB*

Date: *15/3/00*

Approved by: *R. Williams* HEAD OF FIELDWORK

Date: *16/3/2000*

Oxford Archaeological Unit

March 2000

## ***Summary***

*In March 2000 the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) undertook a watching brief at Kingston Blount, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 738 995). No archaeological features were seen and no finds were retrieved.*

### **1 Introduction**

The development proposal (planning application no. P99/NO345) comprised the construction of a new single dwelling with associated garage and services on land formerly used as car parking for the "Shoulder of Mutton" Public House, now converted into residential accommodation. An archaeological watching brief was required in accordance with the planning consent granted under PPG 16 and Local Plan Policy CON18, as the development site lies within an area of archaeological potential.

The watching brief was commissioned by Mark Hurst Estates Limited. It was undertaken to a brief set by and a WSI agreed with the County Archaeological Officer, on behalf of South Oxfordshire District Council.

### **2 Background**

The development site is located in an area of archaeological potential as it lies within the historic core of Kingston Blount. The village is believed to have been a royal vill prior to the Conquest. Little archaeological evidence has been encountered within the village, mainly due to a lack of archaeological investigation, however two Iron Age cremation vessels (containing one adult and one infant) dating from the first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD were discovered in a pit during excavation of a sewer pipe in 1975, some 100 m to the south-east of the development site.

The site is located towards the centre of the village and previously was used as a car park for the "Shoulder of Mutton" Public House. The site was bounded to the north by a mature hedge, which was removed prior to construction and which will be replaced on completion by a 'Saxon' hedge, and to the south by an access lane. Lying at around 115 m OD, the geology is calcareous fine silty soils overlying Greensand and Lower Chalk. The site was covered with a layer of imported spoil, comprising builder's debris from the conversion of the Public House, to a thickness of c. 1.5 m.

### **3 Aims**

The aims of the watching brief were to identify any archaeological remains exposed on site during the course of the works, and to record these to established OAU standards (Wilkinson 1992), in order to secure their preservation by record.

### **4 Methodology**

All excavation was by JCB mechanical excavator, initially fitted with a toothed bucket in order to break up and remove the tarmac surface of the car park and its associated

hardcore makeup. Excavation thereafter proceeded until the chalky natural was reached.

Within the constraints imposed by health and safety considerations the deposits exposed were cleaned, inspected and recorded in plan, section and by colour slide and monochrome print photography. Written records were also made on proforma sheets. Soil description utilises standard charts for the approximation of percentage of inclusion types in soil deposits.

## **5 Results**

The similarity of deposits seen and their sequence allows for a general description across the site rather than describing individual areas or trenches. The foundation trenches were dug to a width of 0.70 m and an average depth of 1.5 m, below the spread of imported spoil covering the site. The following sequence was identified in all trenches examined:

- (1) - assorted builder's debris, comprising wood, plastic, brick and tile, mixed with tarmac and Type 1 hardcore.
- (2) - Mid gray clay loam subsoil containing occasional stone fragments which may have resulted from intrusions by (1), on average 0.40 m thick.
- (3) - chalky natural, seen at an average depth of 0.50 m below the original ground surface.

This sequence remained consistent across the site; deposit (2) was examined in situ for the presence of features/finds and spoil from it was hand-sorted for finds, however none were retrieved. The upper horizon of (3) was cleaned and examined for the presence of cut features, however none were seen.

## **6 Finds**

Finds were examined on site during the course of the watching brief, but comprised only 20<sup>th</sup> century builder's debris and were not retained.

## **7 Environmental results**

Although full consideration was given to various sampling strategies, due to the absence of any significant archaeology no environmental soil samples were taken.

## **8 Discussion**

The watching brief identified large amounts of modern disturbance across the site, however this appeared to be confined to the surface and, in places, the subsoil. The natural horizon was seen and examined across the site, however no cut features were seen.

## **References.**

Wilkinson, D (ed) 1992 Oxford Archaeological Unit Field Manual, (First edition, August 1992).

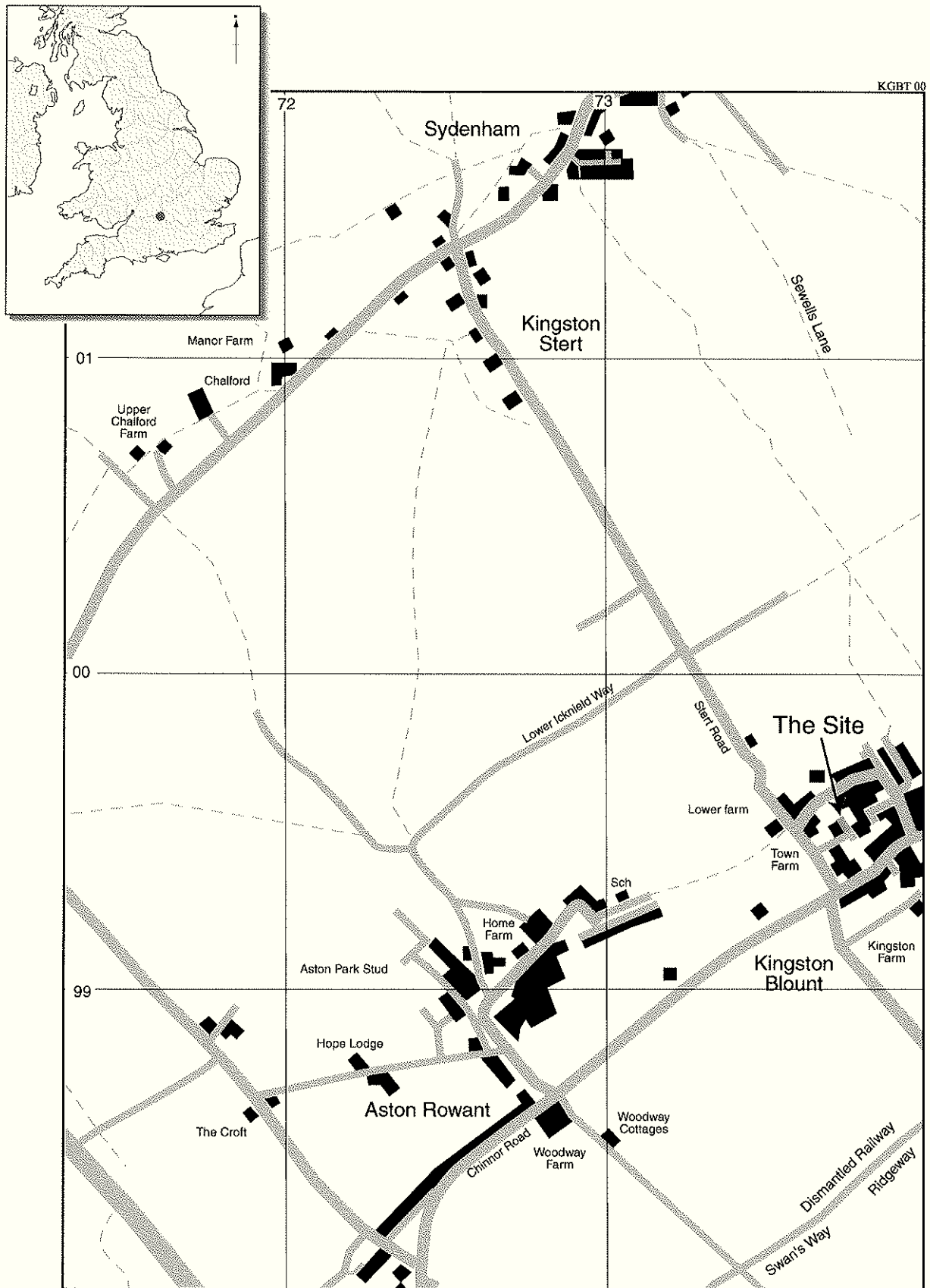
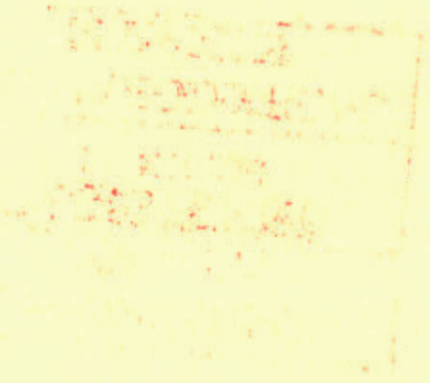


Figure 1: location of site.



## OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES

Tel: 01865 263800 Fax: 01865 793496

email: [postmaster@oau-oxford.demon.co.uk](mailto:postmaster@oau-oxford.demon.co.uk)



---

Director and Chief Executive: David Jennings B.A., M.I.F.A. Oxford Archaeological Unit Limited.  
Private Limited Company Number: 1618597 Registered Charity Number: 235627.  
Registered Office: Janus House Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0ES