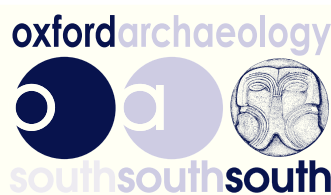


Land at Nutlands  
Bletchington Road  
Kirtlington  
Oxfordshire



**Archaeological  
Watching Brief Report**



April 2012

**Client: Trinity Properties**

Issue No: 1

OA Job No: 5245

NGR: SP 5007 1922





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## Land at Nutlands, Bletchington Road, Kirtlington, Oxfordshire

*Archaeological Watching Brief Report*

*Written by Brian Dean*

*and illustrated by Julia Collins*

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## Summary

*Between 20th and 21st February 2012, Oxford Archaeology was commissioned on behalf of Trinity Properties Ltd to carry out an archaeological watching brief on the site of a proposed new domestic dwelling on land at Nutlands, Kirtlington, Oxfordshire. The total area of the building footprint was 172.5m<sup>2</sup>. The footings for the walls were excavated to a depth of 1.2m and the internal area of the building were excavated to an average depth of c 0.4m. No archaeological deposits were observed within the excavated area.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Between 20th and 21st February 2012, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief on land at Nutlands, Bletchington Road, Kirtlington (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Trinity Properties (D&C) Ltd in respect of a planning application for the construction of a domestic dwelling with car parking (Planning Ref. 11/0104/F)
- 1.1.2 In response to a brief prepared by Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS 2012), OA prepared a written scheme of investigation detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief (OA 2012).
- 1.1.3 The watching brief was maintained during the period of groundworks which included surface stripping and the excavation of foundation trenches. Discussions with Richard Oram during the course of the watching brief determined that monitoring of services trenches would be unnecessary.

### 1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The village of Kirtlington is situated approximately 11km north of Oxford. The site is located on level ground on the southern edge of the village, on the western side of Bletchington Road (NGR: SP 5007 1922). The proposed development area (Fig. 2) is currently in residential use and lies at approximately 97m above OD.
- 1.2.2 The Geological Survey of Great Britain records the underlying geology as 4th terrace river gravels. However, the southern part of the site is also close to the edge of the Oxford Clays (GSGB Sheet 236).

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 An archaeological background was provided in the brief (OCAS 2011) and is reproduced below.
- 1.3.2 The site of proposed development lies within an area of archaeological interest. An Evaluation at Gossway Fields (John Moore Heritage Services 2005), immediately to the west of the proposal site located a series of Roman and Saxon field systems along with two Saxon sunken featured buildings. These two buildings were possibly the western edge of the Saxon settlement and therefore it was possible that they continued into the proposal area.
- 1.3.3 Excavation of the site revealed a system of 2nd/3rd century Roman ditches (field system) and a series of later 3rd - 4th century pits encroached on it. A building with stone foundations was also recorded against the eastern side of the excavation and is



thought to be part of a late Roman villa or higher status farmstead with associated well. Two or possibly three Saxon sunken featured buildings and an associated stone lined well were also recorded along with a small assemblage of Neolithic flint work. The Roman building was located less than 100m west of this proposed site and it is therefore possible that further aspects of the Roman and Saxon settlement site may survive within the area.

## 2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The aims of the watching brief will be to:

- (i) preserve by record any archaeological deposits, structures or features encountered during the course of any ground intrusions;
  - (ii) seek to establish the extent, nature and date of any archaeological deposits, structures or features encountered within the scope of the ground intrusion;
  - (iii) secure the analysis, conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site;
  - (iv) disseminate results through the production of a unpublished client ('grey literature') report.
- (ii) contribute to an understanding of the Roman and Saxon settlement of the area, and understand the date, nature, function and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

### 2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The watching brief was conducted through two site visits during the excavation of the foundations for the building and the car parking.

2.2.2 A record of the extent of the works was recorded in plan form at a scale of 1:100 (Fig. 3). The depth and extent of ground deposits were also recorded at a scale of 1:20. Photographic records were also maintained on black and white film and in digital (jpg) format.

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Description of deposits

3.1.1 A uniform stratigraphic sequence was observed within the footing trenches (Plate 1) The natural geology, encountered at approximately 0.60m across the site, consisted of natural sand and river gravels (102). This deposit was overlain by subsoil comprising loose light greyish brown sandy silt with occasional small stone inclusions (101). The subsoil was sealed by modern topsoil consisting of loose mid greyish brown sandy silt (100). The topsoil contained a marked concentration of root activity.

3.1.2 No archaeological deposits were observed during the excavations of the foundation trenches which were excavated to a depth of 1.2m below present ground level. The internal area was stripped to the level of the subsoil (c 0.4m below current ground level) and also revealed no evidence of archaeological activity.

3.1.3 Evidence of limited modern disturbance was recorded. A dump of stone and building rubble, which contained fragments of modern domestic drain and field drain material





was observed. This however did not impact beyond the lower level of the subsoil and no visible cut was evident.

### **3.2 Finds**

3.2.1 No finds were observed or recovered from the excavations.

### **3.3 Environmental remains**

3.3.1 No deposits considered suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling were observed during the work.

## **4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

4.1.1 Despite the recorded presence of archaeological deposits in the proximity of the site, no archaeological features, deposits or findspots were recorded during the foundation groundwork for the construction of a new dwelling at Nutlands.

4.1.2 Modern disturbance in the area was limited and consisted of a single possibly dumped deposit of stone and rubble which contained modern drainage pipe and pieces of field drain. This disturbance is unlikely to have truncated any potential archaeological remains. The evaluation by John Moore Heritage Services (2005) demonstrated that archaeological deposits were sealed by between c 0.5-0.7m of overburden. It can therefore be argued with some degree of confidence that had archaeological deposits existed they would have remained undisturbed.



## APPENDIX A. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Type	Depth	Width	Length	Comments	Finds	Date
100	Layer	0.35-0.45m	-	-	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	0.4m	-	-	Subsoil	-	-
102	Layer	-	-	-	Natural geology	-	-



## APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet no. 236

John Moore Heritage Services 2005 Gossway Fields, Kirtlington, Oxfordshire. Archaeological Evaluation Report

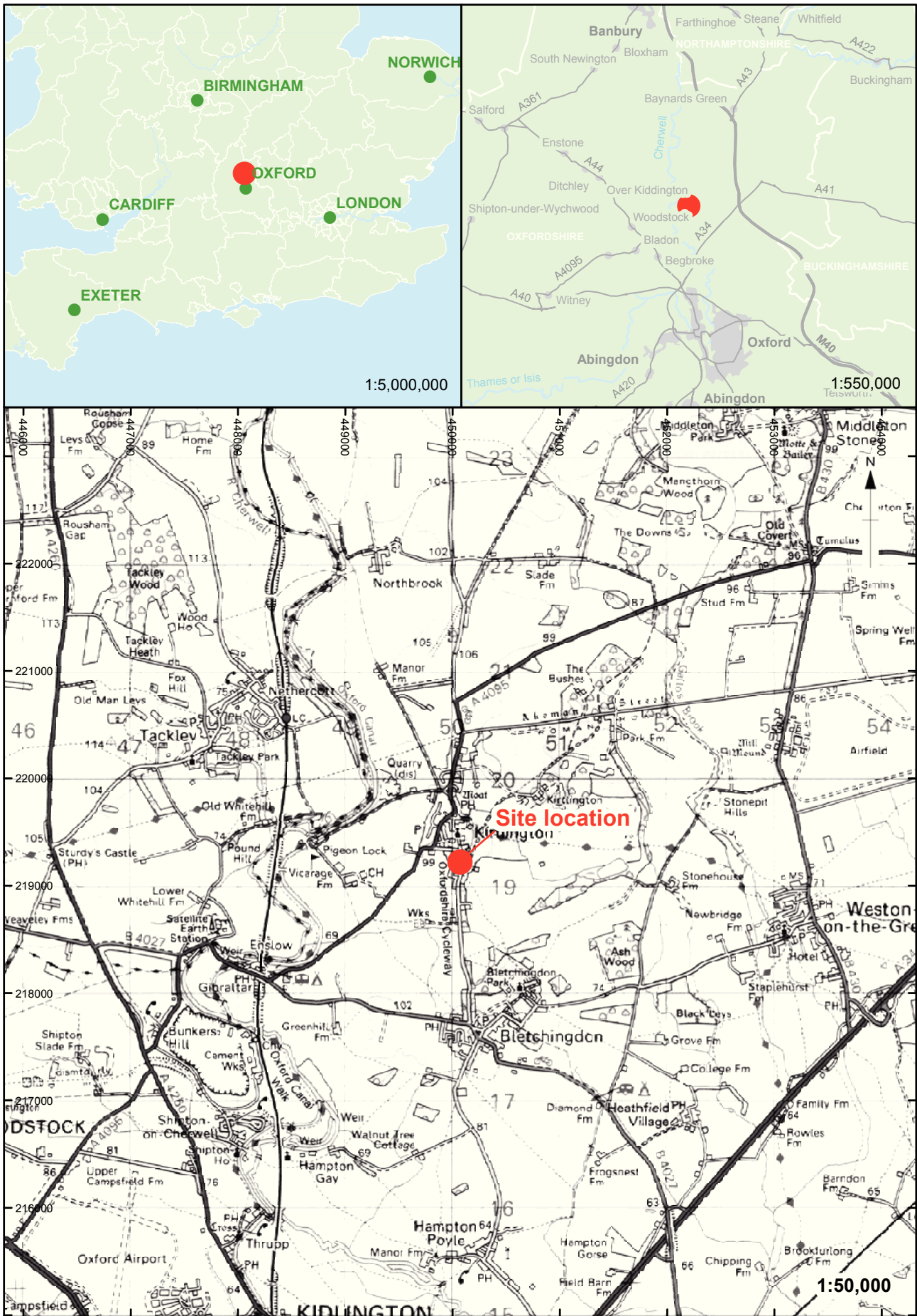
OCAS 2011 Land at Nutlands, Bletchington Road, Kirtlington, Oxfordshire. Design Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief, Oxford County Archaeological Service

OA 2011 Land at Nutlands, Bletchington Road, Kirtlington, Oxfordshire. Written Scheme of Investigation for a Watching Brief, Oxford Archaeology



## APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

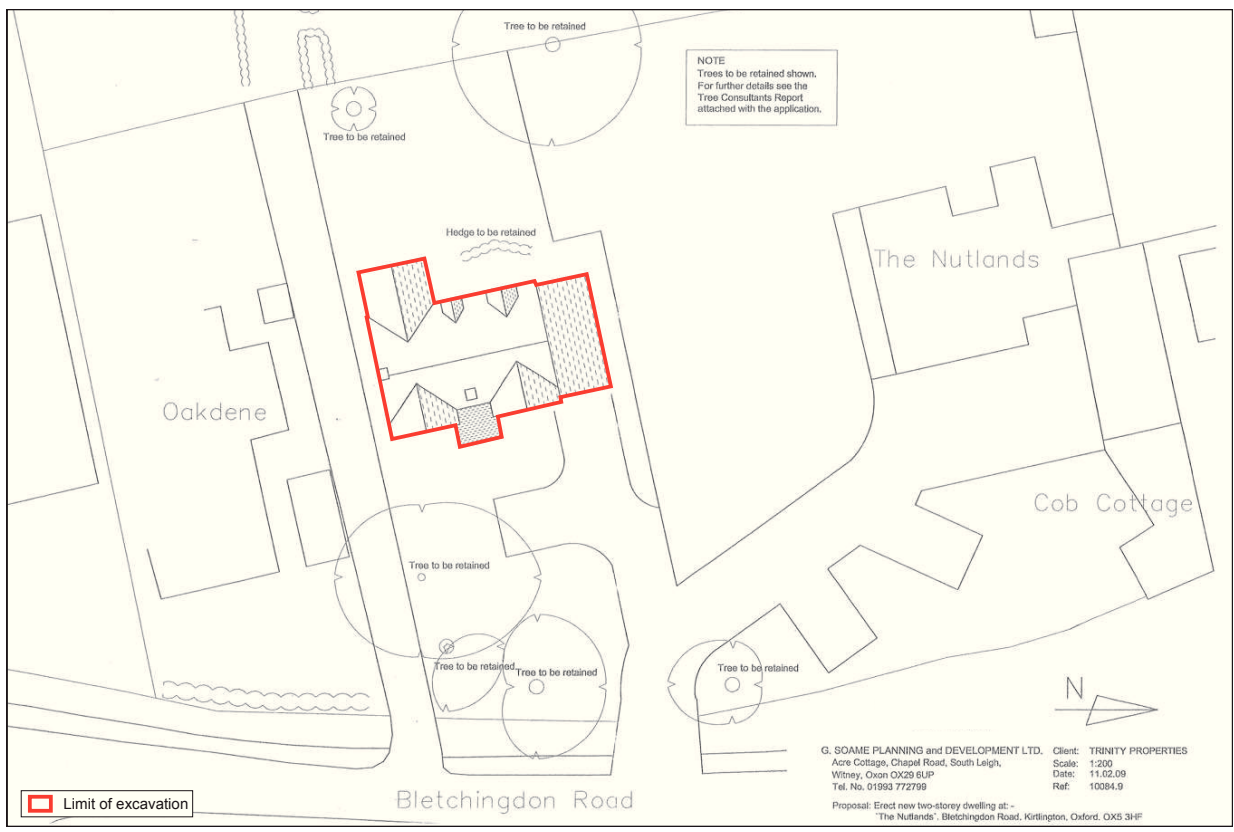
Site name:	Land at Nutlands, Bletchington Road, Kirtlington, Oxfordshire
Site code:	KIRNUT 12
Grid reference:	SP 5007 1922
Type of watching brief:	Watching brief during the excavations for foundations and services for a new dwelling.
Date and duration of project:	20th -21st February 2012
Area of site:	172.5m <sup>2</sup>
Summary of results:	<i>Oxford Archaeology was commissioned on behalf of Trinity Properties Ltd to carry out an archaeological watching brief on the site of a proposed new domestic dwelling on land at Nutlands, Kirtlington, Oxfordshire. The watching brief was maintained during the excavation of footings and removal of topsoil within the footprint of the new building. Footings were excavated to a depth of 1.2m and the internal area of the building were excavated to an average depth of c 0.4m. No archaeological deposits were observed within the excavated area.</i>
Location of archive:	The archive is currently located at Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX20ES and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum Service in due course under the following accession number: OXCMS: 2012.16



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Figure 1: Site location





0 10 m  
1:250

Figure 2: Trench location plan





Plan 100

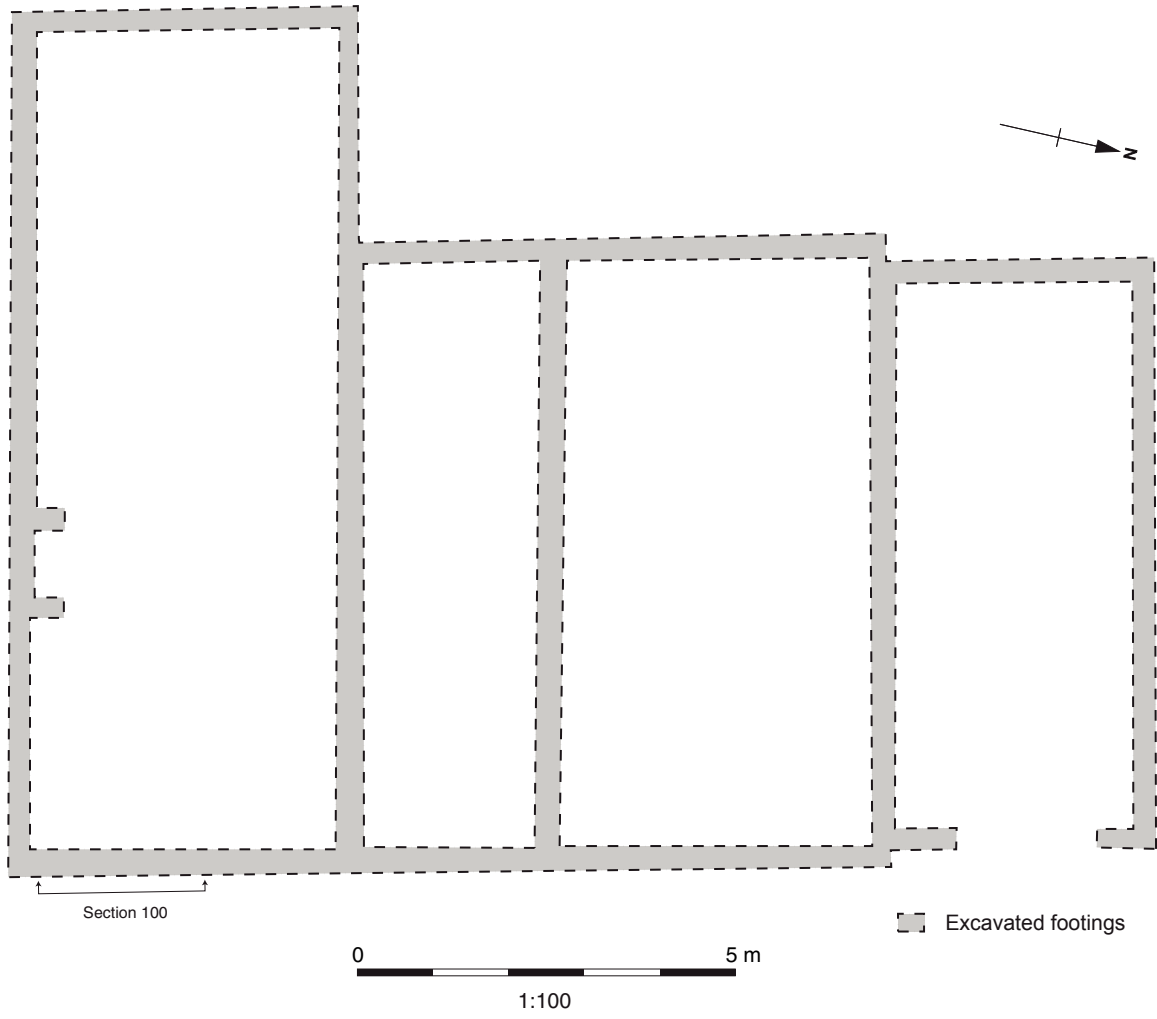


Plate 1: Section 100

Figure 3: Excavation plan