

Land adjacent to Jennets House, Stonesfield, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

NGR SP 3928 1755

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

July 1995

**LAND ADJACENT TO JENNETS HOUSE, STONESFIELD
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT
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1. SUMMARY

Topsoil stripping and foundation trench excavation at this site revealed only modern deposits and features, including one modern pit and the backfilled trench of a former swimming pool. No earlier features were observed during the work.

2. INTRODUCTION

The Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook a watching brief during July 1995 at land adjacent to Jennets House, Stonesfield [Fig.1], in the course of groundwork for a new building. Stonesfield village is located between the historic Oxfordshire towns of Woodstock and Charlbury, just off the B4437. The development site is presently owned by Mr D. Miller, one of the proprietors of Stonesfield Garage. The site slopes from south to north and is presently covered with fruit trees. Topsoil stripping and foundation trenches were monitored for the presence of archaeological features and finds. Groundwork and trench excavation was undertaken by T & J.C.McCann (of Charlbury, Oxon) under plans devised by P.W. Russen Design Services of Witney, Oxon.

The watching brief was recommended by the Deputy County Archaeologist for Oxfordshire in accordance with PPG16, owing to the known presence of archaeological remains near to the development site.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The area of the proposed development is located on the north side of Stonesfield Close between Laughton Hill and Stonesfield Riding. The underlying geology of the area is White Limestone. The site lies at a general level of 112 m O.D.

Topsoil stripping during the 1960's near the proposed site revealed several pits and ditches (PRN 3339) of Iron Age date (3rd-4th century BC). Generally there is little evidence of Iron Age settlement activity on the uplands north of the River Thames and the Windrush Valley. It is for this reason that this development area requires attention.

4. RESULTS

An area of c. 512 square metres was stripped and foundation trenches excavated [Fig.2] using a 360° Hymac machine. The trenches were generally 1 m deep and 1.0-1.20 m wide. No features were observed in the trenches, which were cut from the top of the natural limestone and clay horizon. The soil layers observed are summarised in table form below, as is one modern pit feature. A large backfilled cut feature, a former swimming pool, was not investigated.

5. CONCLUSION

No archaeological remains are present on this site. The spoil heaps were monitored but only modern glazed pottery, glass, and metal objects were present - these were not retained.

J.Hiller
OAU
July 1995

Table of context information

CTX	TYPE	DEPTH	WIDTH	COMMENTS
1	Layer	0.18 m	-	Present topsoil over 2, cut by pit 6
2	Layer	0.31 m	-	Natural light grey clay subsoil, over 3
3	Layer	0.42 m	-	Natural grey-white, clay and limestone brash, over 4
4	Layer	1.10 m+	-	Natural White Limestone brash, below 3
5	Fill	0.40 m	-	Fill of modern pit , contains animal bone and plastic, fill of 6
6	Cut	0.40 m	0.52 m	Modern pit/tree disturbance, cuts topsoil 1

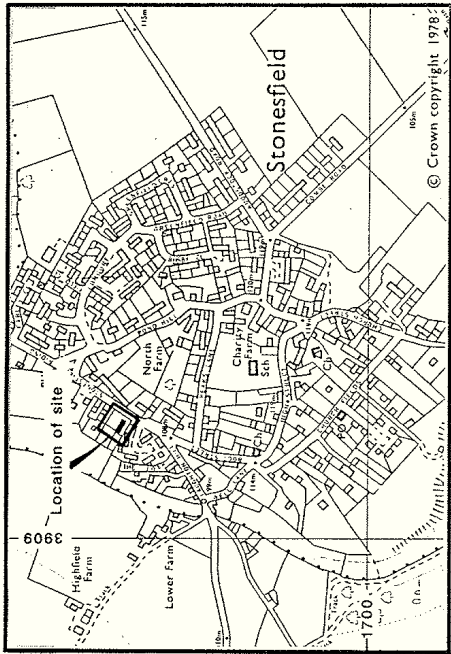
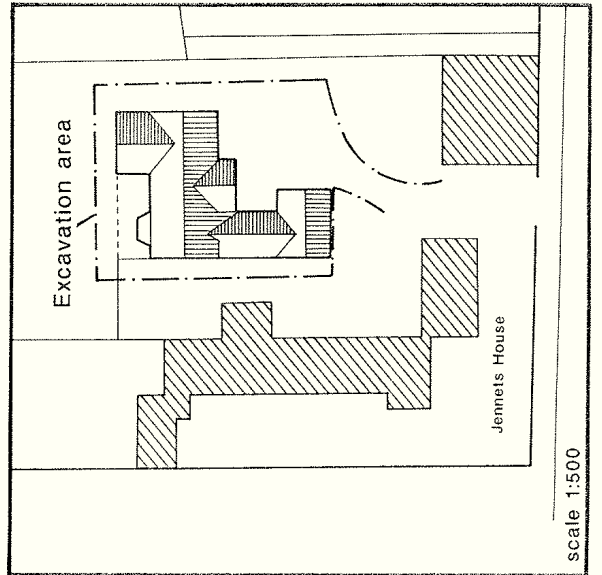
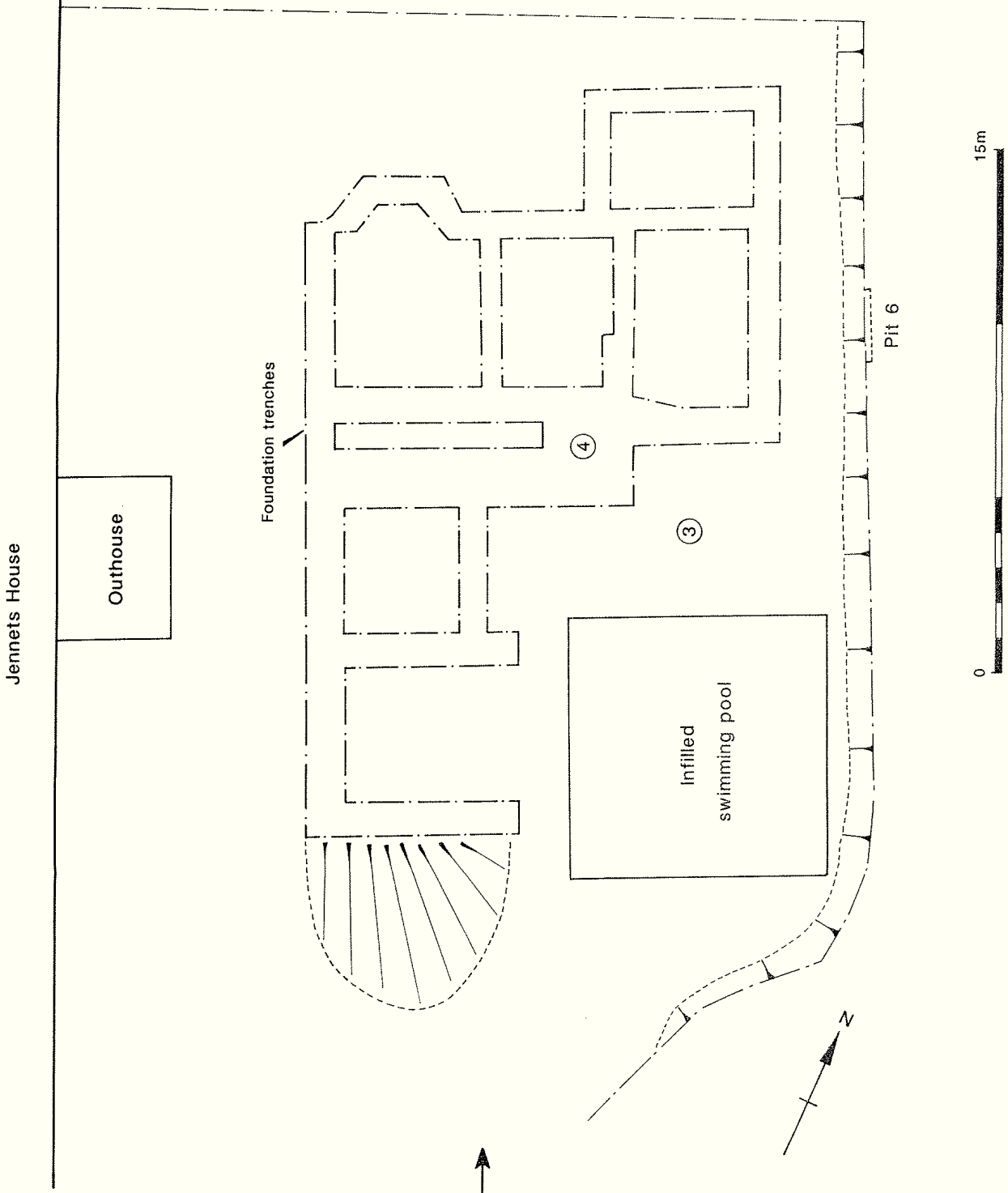


Figure 1

scale 1:10 000



scale 1:500



15m

0

Figure 2



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