

Site Abstract	
Site Name:	Bletchington Bletchington Park
Site Code:	BLBP 19
Accession No:	OXCMS: 2019.91

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological evaluation to establish the quality of any archaeological preservation in advance of proposed developments to the land surrounding the main house located on the Bletchington Park estate in Bletchington, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 50533 18026). A total of 42 trenches ranging from 3m to 30m in length and 1.9m in width were strategically placed in five areas across the estate. Areas 1 & 2 were in the northern field systems which were thought to be of low archaeological potential based on historic maps and records. However, due to the long standing nature of the use of the land for agriculture associated with the estate, and the limited amount of archaeological testing in the immediate area, it was determined to be prudent to produce a sample of the area. Of the 42 total trenches, 24 were placed between these two areas, but only three of these contained evidence of activity earlier than that associated with modern agricultural use. The archaeological evidence showed a series of three separate ditches, two running on a N-S alignment and one on a E-W alignment, were present prior to the modern layout of the fields and tracks.

Area 3 was located to the northwest of the main house directly south of the fish ponds which were being heavily renovated. The topsoil had been previously removed prior to monitoring of the excavation of the seven trenches, but the natural clay was immediately present below the removed topsoil. No archaeological preservation was observed in this area.

Areas 4 & 5 were to the south of the main house and were determined to be of archaeological potential. Of the 11 remaining trenches in these two areas, all but two contained archaeological preservation. Evidence of the earlier medieval road leading from the village to Saint Giles Church was seen in TR2 and TR36. There was evidence of previous garden landscaping including level formation deposits and spatial division methods (i.e. walls and ditches), a garden boundary wall running parallel to the road, multiple ditches and pits which were likely to predate the current main house, and a substantial foundation wall which could have associated with a fairly substantial structure. Material recovered dates predominantly to the medieval period.