

**JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**AT**

**PARK FARM, KIRTLINGTON,**

**OXFORDSHIRE**

**SP 5114 2050**

*On behalf of*

*Park Farm Partnership*

**September 2005**

**REPORT FOR**

Park Farm Partnership  
Park Farm  
Kirtlington  
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## CONTENTS

	Page
<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Site Location	
1.2 Planning Background	
1.3 Archaeological Background	
<b>2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3 STRATEGY</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1 Research Design	
3.2 Methodology	
<b>4 RESULTS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5 FINDS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>6 DISCUSSION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>7 BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>4</b>
 Figure 1      Site Location	 <b>2</b>

## **Summary**

*A watching brief was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services during the excavation for a new lake. Nothing of significance was found.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)**

The site is located to the east of the polo ground at Kirtlington Park, which is to the north-east of Kirtlington village (NGR SP 5114 2050). The geology is Cornbrash, close to the junction with Oxford Clay, and the site is located at approximately 93m OD. The development area was parkland.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

Cherwell District Council granted planning permission for the change of use from a field/horse keep to artificial lake in order to provide irrigation for polo grounds. The clay-lined lake formed was 3500m<sup>2</sup> and 2m deep with a 1m high 2m wide bank around it. Due to the potential presence of below ground archaeological deposits a condition was attached to the planning consent that required the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during the course of the groundworks in order to preserve by record any archaeological remains of significance. Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS), on behalf on Cherwell District Council, provided a *Brief* for the work. John Moore Heritage Services undertook the work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by OCAS.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

The site lies immediately to the south of the line of Akeman Street, which was the main Roman road between Cirencester, Alchester and Verulamium. Very little is known about this stretch of Akeman Street and it was considered possible that remains of roadside structures and archaeological deposits relating to roadside activities may be present. However, previous metal-detecting in the area had failed to find anything of significance.

## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To make a record of any significant remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.
- In particular to record any remains associated with the Roman road
- To make public the results of the investigations.

Figure 1. Site location.

### **3 STRATEGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services, on behalf of the local planning authority.

#### **3.2 Methodology**

An archaeologist monitored the removal of the topsoil across the area of the lake. Constant monitoring was not required as the surface of the underlying natural deposits were not driven across by plant. Three monitoring visits over two days were made.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and sections drawings compiled where appropriate.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994).

The intended irrigation pipes were not needed as another means of transporting the water was found.

### **4 RESULTS**

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers in [ ] indicate features i.e. walls, pit cuts; while numbers in ( ) show feature fills or deposits of material.

All along the east side of the footprint of the lake Oxford Clay (04) was seen. Further to the west this was overlaid by Cornbrash (03), which consisted of pale-mid orange brown clay with 10-70% by content of small and medium pieces of limestone. The exposed Oxford Clay was within the bottom of a small north south valley that is visible as a slight hollow across the field to the south. The hollow is filled with pale-mid brown-yellow silty clay (02) some at least 600mm thick. This material is considered to be colluvium. Overlying the colluvium and Cornbrash was a topsoil deposit (01) of mid grey brown clayey silt with occasional small pieces of brash supporting pasture. The topsoil was c. 150mm thick.

### **5 FINDS**

The only find seen was a sherd of 17<sup>th</sup> century pottery in the topsoil (01).

### **6 DISCUSSION**

Nothing of significance was found.

## **7 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994      *Standard and Guidance for  
Archaeological Field Evaluations*