

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
6 TYTHE GARDENS
TYTHE CLOSE
STEWKLEY
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

on behalf of Mrs Toni Hampton



Calli Rouse BA PIFA

May 2006

ASC: 789/STG/2

Letchworth House
Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall,
Milton Keynes MK6 1NE
Tel: 01908 608989 Fax: 01908 605700
Email: office@archaeological-services.co.uk
Website: www.archaeological-services.co.uk



Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	STG	<i>ASC Project no:</i>	789
<i>Event No:</i>	N/a	<i>Accession No:</i>	2006.186
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Stewkley		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Stewkley CP		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 4850 2259		
<i>Present use:</i>	Fields		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Construction of stables and access track		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	04/0138 & 04/0139		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Aylesbury Vale District Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	08/05/2006		
<i>Client:</i>	Mrs Toni Hampton 6 Tythe Gardens Tythe Close Stewkley Buckinghamshire LU7 0HF		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Mrs Toni Hampton		
<i>Telephone</i>		<i>Fax:</i>	-

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Calli Rouse	<i>Date:</i>	12/05/2006
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

© Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

No part of this document is to be copied in any way without prior written consent.

Every effort is made to provide detailed and accurate information. However, Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd cannot be held responsible for errors or inaccuracies within this report.

© Ordnance Survey maps reproduced with the sanction of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

ASC Licence No. AL 100015154

CONTENTS

Summary 4

1. Introduction 4

2. Aims & Methods 7

3. Archaeological & Historical Background 8

4. Results. 10

5. Acknowledgements 12

6. Archive 12

7. References 13

Appendices:

1. Monitoring Sheets..... 14

2. Photo List..... 15

3. ASC OASIS Form 16

Figures:

1. General location 3

2. Site location 5

3. Site plan 6

Plates:

Cover: As Plate 4

1. Soil profile in stable area 11

2. Soil profile in track area 11

3. Access track, view north east 11

4. Access track, view south west 11

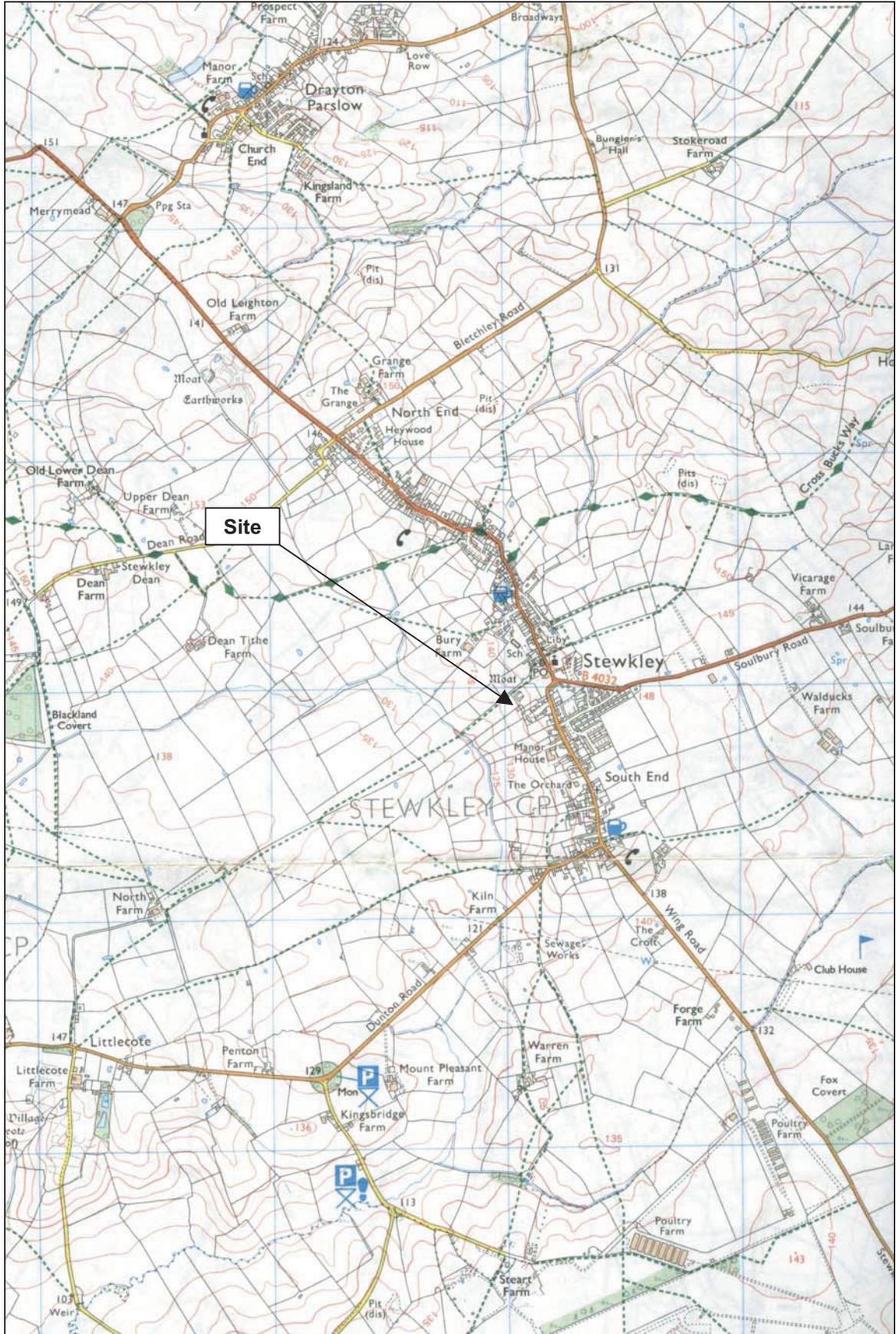


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In May 2006, Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd. (ASC) undertook a watching brief at 6 Tythe Gardens, Tythe Close, Stewkley, Buckinghamshire, during the construction of a stable block and access road. The site lay within the medieval core of Stewkley, and was in close proximity to a well-preserved medieval moat. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

1 Introduction

1.1 In May 2006 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at 6 Tythe Gardens, Tythe Close, Stewkley, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 4850 2259: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Mrs Toni Hampton, and was carried out according to a project design prepared by ASC (Hawtin 2006), and a brief (Radford 2006) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Aylesbury Vale District Council*, by their archaeological advisors (AA), *Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service*. The relevant planning application references are 04/0138 & 04/0139.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This watching brief has been required as a planning condition under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), in response to proposals for the construction of a new stable, store room and associated trackway.

1.3 *Location*

The proposed development is located to the rear of Tythe Gardens, off Tythe Close, within the medieval core of Stewkley (Figs. 1 & 2). It lies adjacent to a well-preserved medieval moat.

1.4 *Geology & Topography*

The site lies at the intersection of two similar soil types. Soils to the west are of the *Beccles 3 Association* (Soil Survey 1983, 711t), defined as *chalky till, slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged fine loamy over clayey soils and similar soils with only slight seasonal waterlogging. Some calcareous clayey soils especially on steeper slopes*. To the east the soils are of the *Ashley Association* (Soil Survey 1983, 572q), which are described as *chalky till, fine loamy over clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging, associated with similar but wetter soils. Some calcareous and non-calcareous slowly permeable clayey soils*. The site lies at an elevation of c.140-145m AOD.

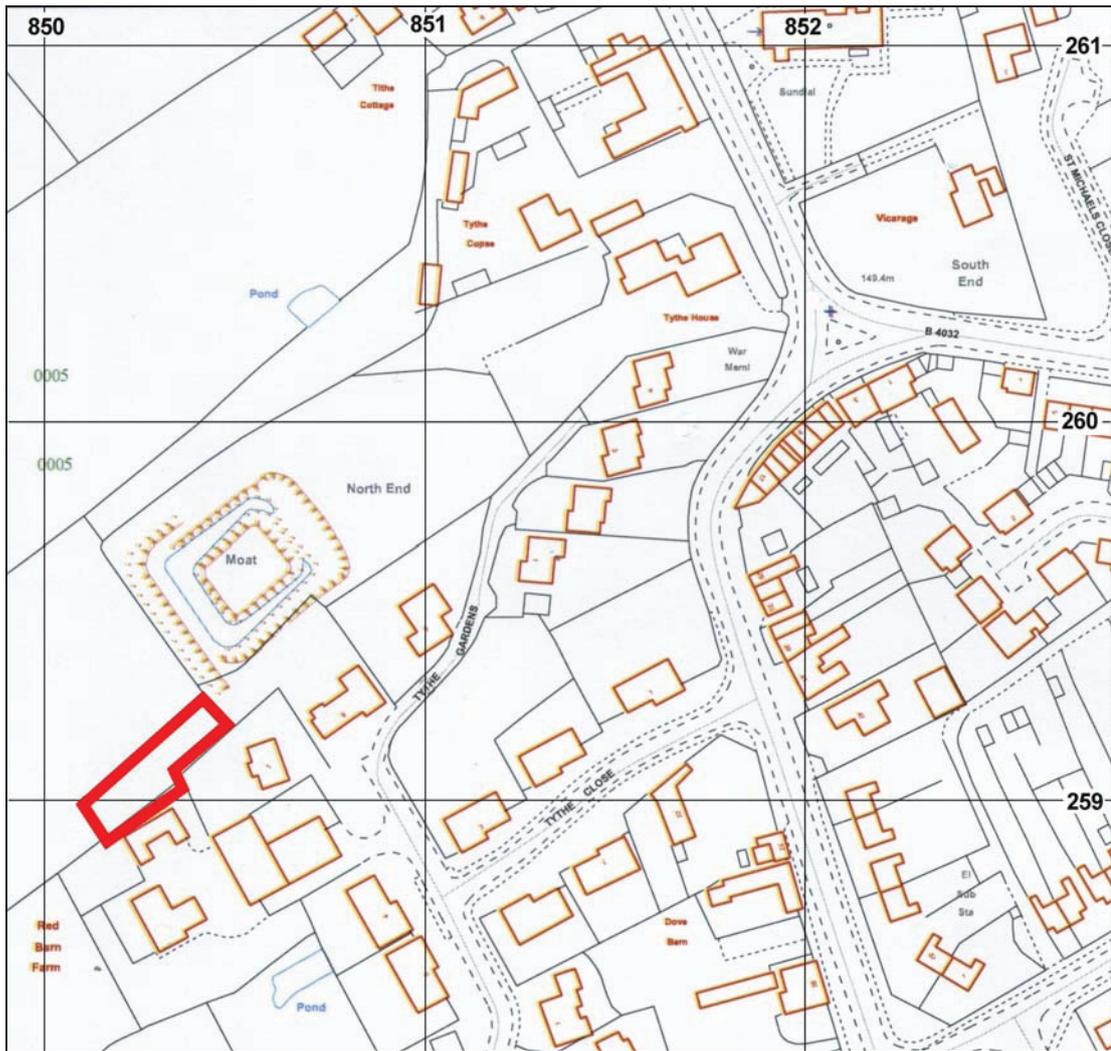


Figure 2: Site location (scale 1:2000)

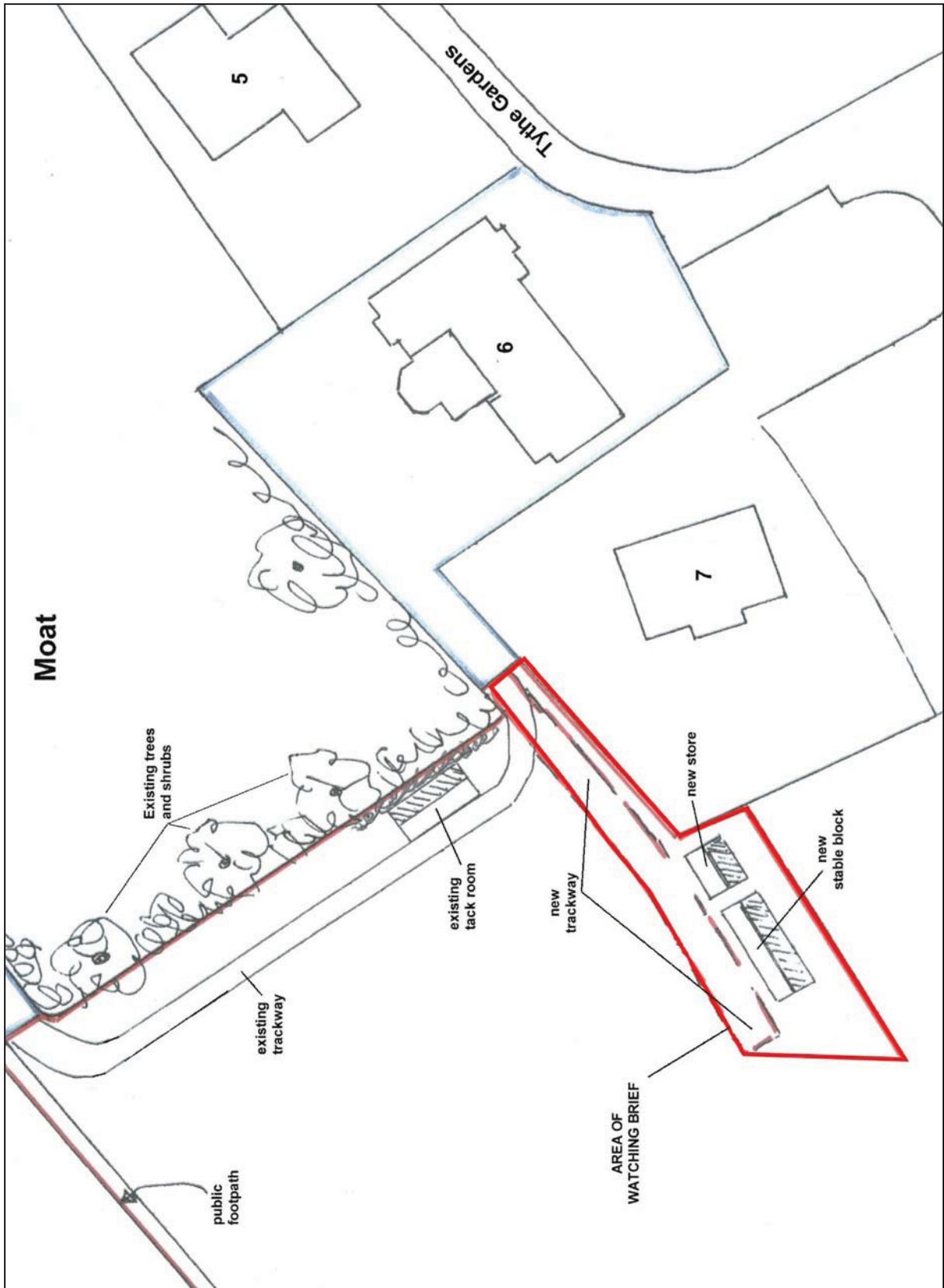


Figure 3: Site plan (scale 1:500)

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

As described in the brief (Section 6), the aims of the watching brief were:

- To identify and record any significant archaeological remains revealed by the groundworks, paying particular regard to the potential for late Saxon and medieval occupation

2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the brief (Section 8), which required:

- The presence/absence of archaeological features will be noted.
- If features are identified then sufficient work will be done to date, characterise and record the remains.
- If an 'unexpected discovery' is made then the County Archaeological Service and the developer will be informed as soon as possible.
- Groundworks will be undertaken using an appropriate machine fitted with a toothless 'ditching' bucket and working under archaeological supervision

3 Archaeological & Historical Background

CAS References taken from the Buckinghamshire County Sites & Monuments Record (SMR)

3.1 Prehistoric (before 600BC-AD43)

There is limited evidence of early prehistoric activity and occupation within the area, and only two finds of prehistoric date are recorded by the SMR. A flint blade of Mesolithic date was found to the east of Stewkley in 1982 (CAS 5352) and Neolithic flints are recorded in a similar location, about 200m distant (CAS 5512).

3.2 Roman (AD43-c.450)

During the Roman period the study area fell within the tribal territory of the *Catuvellauni*, with its capital at *Verulamium* (modern St. Albans). The landscape at this time was wholly rural: the nearest settlement of any size was the small Roman town of *Magiovinium*, near Fenny Stratford, about 8km north of Stewkley. It has been suggested (Viatores 1964, 169a) that the B4032 north-west of Stewkley represents part of the route of a Roman road (CAS 2991).

The SMR records finds of Roman pottery sherds and glass fragments in 1964 in fields to the east of Stewkley Lane, about 0.5km south-east of Ashdean Farm, which may indicate an occupation site (CAS 1073).

3.4 Saxon (c.450-1066)

No sites of definite Saxon date are recorded within the area. To the north-east of Stewkley, Sheahan (1862) records occasional finds of human bones from *Pitch Green Furlong*, which he supposes to be either the site of a Saxon cemetery, or a Civil War engagement.

The settlement at Stewkley is of Saxon origin. The village probably originated as a series of small settlements, each with its own enclosed fields (Bailey 2005, 93). Bailey notes that *this pattern is typical of the period prior to the tenth century, and has its origins in prehistoric times* (ibid.).

3.5 Medieval (1066-1500)

The Domesday Survey of 1086 records that the principal landholding there was held before the conquest by Brictric, a thegn of King Edward. By 1086 this manor had passed to Neil of Miles Crispin (Page 1927, 420), who later ceded his lands, including Stewkley, to the Earls of Cornwall, who held the manor until at least 1559. By 1167 the holding had become attached to Grove Priory, Bedfordshire, who also held the royal manor of Leighton Buzzard. In 1413 the priory granted Stewkley to Sir John Phillips for life, or for as long as the war with France should continue. The following year the priory was dissolved, and then Sir John held the manor until his death, when it passed to the Duke of Suffolk, who also held Leighton Buzzard. In 1480 the Duke alienated Stewkley manor to the Dean and chapter of St George's chapel, Windsor, who held it until the mid 19th century.

The proposed development is adjacent to a well-preserved medieval moat, which is a candidate site for scheduling (CAS 0417). This moat is square and covers

approximately 0.25ha. There is a retaining bank on the southwest side of the moat and a hollow-way runs along the northern side of it into the adjacent pasture. Because much of the land to the west of Stewkley has remained as permanent pasture, the survival of ridge-and-furrow has been particularly good, and is visible at the southern end of the pasture adjacent to the moat. A number of indistinct earthworks have been identified at the northern end of this pasture, close to the proposed development.

The well-preserved medieval moated grange, fishponds and associated earthworks of Stewkley Grange lie on the south side of the B4032 opposite Old Leighton Farm (CAS 0418). Stewkley Grange was held in the 13th century by Woburn Abbey. In 1331 the abbot charged its tenant, Richard de Aythrop, with ‘waste, sale and destruction’ on his lands at Stewkley (Page 1927, 423). Aythrop was charged with selling ‘a hall with two upper rooms and two cellars, a chapel with two garderobes, a kitchen with dairy attached, a stable with *pressurhous* and hay-loft, an ox-house, a sheepfold, two large gatehouses with dwellings over them, and a pigsty’. He had also cut down and sold a number of apple, pear and oak trees. After Dissolution this manor was granted to the Dukes of Suffolk. From 1541 to 1565 it was held by the Duncombe family, and subsequently by the Webbe family until 1626, when it was reunited with Stewkley Manor.

3.6 Post-Medieval (1500-1900)

A windmill is recorded in Stewkley (CAS 4326), to the north-east of the village. A second windmill, a smock mill, was built at the south end of Stewkley in 1839 by the Tofield brothers (CAS 0638). It has since been demolished.

In the Dunton Road area of Stewkley, the presence of suitable clay deposits led to the establishment of a long-standing brick and tile manufacturing industry in an otherwise rural environment. The SMR records three brick works, two on Dunton Road (CAS 0620, 0622) and one on Wing Road (CAS 5786).

3.7 Modern (1900-present)

From the 18th century to the present the area has remained largely unaffected by major modern development. No canals, railways or modern roads pass through the area and development has been limited to small-scale residential infilling in the village and the brick works.

4 Results

4.1 One visit was made to the site on 8th May 2006. No archaeological finds or features were observed during the visit.

4.2 The bases of the new buildings and the associated track were stripped of topsoil to a depth of between 150mm and 250mm (Plates 3 & 4). The stripping revealed the topsoil to be yellowish brown loamy clay, but did not go deep enough to expose the nature of the subsoil (Plates 1 & 2).

4.3 *Archaeological Impact of the Development*

From the results obtained from the watching brief, it is not possible to surmise whether there has been a significant level of past human activity on the site. In view of the shallow depth of soil removed, the archaeological impact of the development is judged to be minimal.

4.4 *Confidence Rating*

The weather conditions on the day of the site visit were very wet, which resulted in parts of the site being covered by standing water. Despite this, the confidence rating attached to this watching brief is high, as the site stripping did not disturb the subsoil.



Plate 1: Soil profile in stable area



Plate 2: Soil profile in track area



Plate 3: Access track, view north east



Plate 4: Access track, view south west

6. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Mrs Toni Hampton for commissioning this work. The project was monitored by David Radford of Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Service. The fieldwork was undertaken for ASC by Nigel Wilson HND AIFA. This report was prepared by Calli Rouse BA, and edited by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site Monitoring Sheets
6. List of photographs/slides
7. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum. Accession number is 2006.186.

8. References

Standards & Specifications

- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition. English Heritage (London).
- Hawtin T 2006 *Project Design for Watching Brief at 6 Tythe Gardens Tythe Close Stewkley Buckinghamshire* ASC Ltd
- IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2000b Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.
- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.
- Radford D. 2006 *Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief: 6 Tythe Gardens, Stewkley*. Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service.

Secondary Sources

- Bailey K. 2005. Early Medieval Stewkley: Settlements and Fields. *Records of Buckinghamshire* 45: 93-114.
- Page W (ed.) 1927 *The Victoria History of the County of Buckingham* Vol. 3 (London).
- Sheahan JJ 1862. *History and Topography of Buckinghamshire* (Chicheley).
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpندن).
- Viatores 1964. *Roman Roads in the South-East Midlands* (London).

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME:				SITE NO/CODE:
Shot	B&W	Slide	Digital	Subject
1			✓	Soil Profile of stable area
2			✓	Track looking NE
3			✓	Track looking SW
4			✓	Track profile
5			✓	Track profile
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
21				
22				
23				
24				
25				
26				
27				
28				
29				
30				
31				
32				
33				
34				
35				
36				
37				
38				
39				
40				

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS						
Project Name:	6 Tythe Gardens, Tythe Close, Stewkley, Buckinghamshire					
Short Description:	<i>In May 2006, Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd. (ASC) undertook a watching brief at 6 Tythe Gardens, Stewkley, Buckinghamshire. The site lay within the medieval core of Stewkley, and was in close proximity to a well-preserved medieval moat. No archaeological finds or features were observed</i>					
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	DBA	FW	Geophys	Survey	Bldg Rec	Post-Exc
	WB	Strip&Rec	Trenching	Test pits	Exc	Other
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	None		Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)		None	
Current land use:	Agricultural		Future work: (yes / no / unknown)		No	
Monument type:	N/A		Monument period:		N/A	
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	None					
PROJECT LOCATION						
County:	Buckinghamshire		OS reference: (to at least 8 figures)		SP 4850 2259	
District:	Aylesbury Vale		Parish:		Stewkley	
Site address: (with postcode if known)	6 Tythe Gardens, Tythe Close, Stewkley, Buckinghamshire, LU7 0HF					
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)			Height OD: (metres)		140-145	
PROJECT CREATORS						
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd					
Project brief originator:	David Radford		Project design originator:		Teresa Hawtin	
Project Manager:	David Fell		Director/Supervisor:		Bob Zeepvat	
Sponsor / funding body:	Mrs T Hampton					
PROJECT DATE						
Start date:	08/05/2006		End date:		08/05/2006	
PROJECT ARCHIVES						
	Location (Accession no.)		Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)			
Physical:	Bucks County Museum Accession No. TBC		No Finds			
Paper:			Brief/PD/Report/Record Sheets/Plans			
Digital:			CD with all digital files			
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)						
Title:	Watching Brief at 6 Tythe Gardens, Tythe Close, Stewkley, Buckinghamshire					
Serial title & volume:	ASC Report, 789/STG/2					
Author(s):	Calli Rouse BA PIFA					
Page nos	1-15		Date:		12/05/2006	