

# Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

WATCHING BRIEF: EMERSON FARMHOUSE 27 LITTLE STOCKING SHENLEY BROOK END MILTON KEYNES

NGR: SP 8330 3530

on behalf of Bastion Homes Ltd



Mo Muldowney BA PIfA

April 2013

ASC: 1526/SLS/2



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# Site Data

ASC project code:	SLS		ASC Project No:	1526		
OASIS ref:	archaeol2-126080		Event/Accession no:	AYBCM: 2012.49		
County:		Buckingl	namshire			
Village/Town:		Milton K	eynes			
Civil Parish:		Shenley	Brook End			
NGR (to 8 figs):		SP 8330	3530			
Extent of watching br	rief:	c.8208 sc	<u>ן. m</u>			
Present use:		Emerson	Farmhouse, associated	outbuildings and garden		
Planning proposal:		Housing	development			
Local Planning Autho	ority:	Milton Keynes Council				
Planning application	ref/date:	11/01139/FUL, 11/01138/LBC, 11/01137/FUL,				
		11/01136/LBC, 11/01135/FUL				
Date of fieldwork:		November 2012 to April 2013				
Client:		Bastion I	Homes Ltd			
		Emerson Farmhouse				
		The Annexe				
		27 Little Stocking				
		Shenley Brook End				
		Milton Keynes				
		MK5 7BG				
Contact name:		Will Tiley				

#### **Internal Quality Check**

Primary Author:	Mo Muldowney	Date:	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2013
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Revisions:		Date:	
Edited/Checked By:		Date:	16 <sup>th</sup> April 2013
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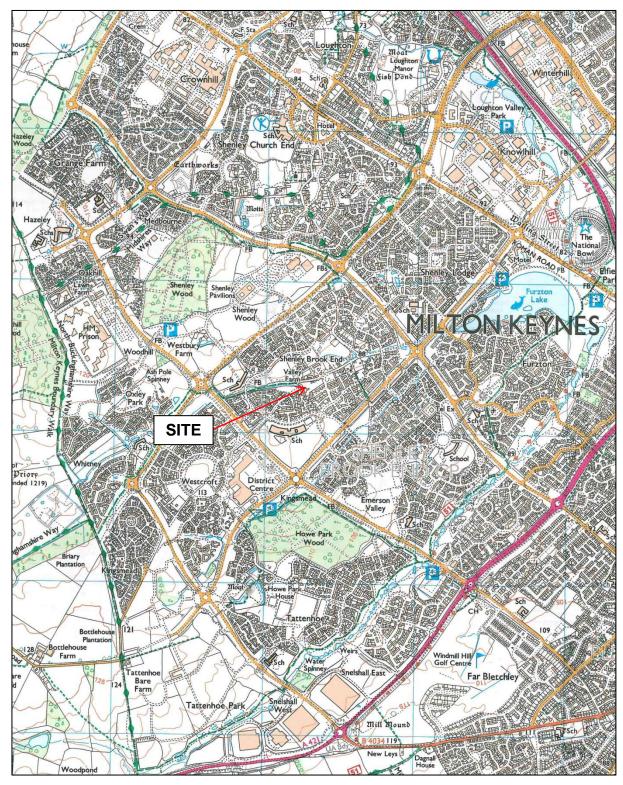


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

## Summary

Between November 2012 and April 2013 a watching brief was carried out on land at Emerson Farmhouse, 27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes during groundwork associated with the residential development of the site. The work revealed that the area around Emerson Farmhouse had previously been subject to considerable lateral and intrusive truncation. The only surviving features were two pits of probable post-medieval date, one of which contained the sawn skeleton of a horse.

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Between November 2012 and April 2013 Archaeological Services and Consultancy *Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at Emerson Farm, 27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes. The project was commissioned by *Bastion Homes Ltd*, and was carried out according to a project design prepared by ASC (Summerfield-Hill 2012), and approved by *Milton Keynes Council Archaeological Officer*, archaeological advisor (AA) to the local planning authority (LPA), *Milton Keynes Council*. The relevant planning application references are: 11/01139/FUL, 11/01138/LBC, 11/01137/FUL, 11/01136/LBC, 11/01135/FUL.

#### 1.2 **Planning Background**

This watching brief was required under the terms of the *National Planning Policy Frameworks* (NPPF), as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

#### 1.3 Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

ASC is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Organisation* by the Institute for Archaeologists and is also accredited ISO 9001, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

#### 1.4 *The Site*

#### 1.4.1 Location & Description

The site is situated in Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 8330 3530 (Fig. 1). It comprises a rectangular plot of land within which is Emerson Farmhouse, associated outbuildings and garden. Residential properties surround the site boundaries. Whaddon Road is to the east, and Little Stocking is to the north providing access to the site (Fig. 2).

#### 1.4.2 Topography & Geology

The natural soils of the site belong to the *Hanslope Association*, namely slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils (Soil Survey 1983, 411d). The underlying geology comprises till drift deposits (BGS, Sheet 220). The site lies at an elevation of *c*.89.8m AOD.

#### 1.4.3 Proposed Development

The proposed development includes three plots. Plot 1, the Whaddon Road area, is at the east end of site and entails the construction of  $2\times5$  bedroom dwellings (11/01139/FUL). Plot 2, Emerson Farm house; the erection of first floor side and rear extensions and single storey rear extension and refurbishment of building (11/01138/LBC & 11/01137/FUL). Plot 3, the land beyond the Emerson Farm house, is at the west end of the site and entails the conversion of the existing barn for a 4 bed dwelling, the erection of  $3\times4$  bed dwellings,  $2\times3$  bed dwellings and  $1\times5$  bed dwelling (11/01136/LBC & 11/01135/FUL; Fig. 3).

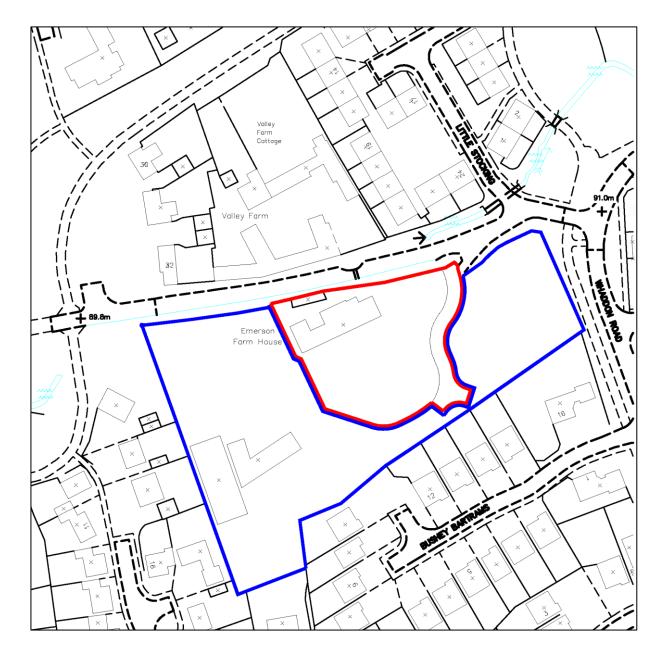


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1250)

# 2. Aims & Methods

#### 2.1 *Aims*

As described in the project design, the aims of the watching brief were:

- To archaeologically monitor all aspects of the development programme likely to affect archaeological remains.
- To record any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme.
- To analyse, conserve and secure the long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site.

#### 2.2 *Standards*

The work will conform to the requirements of the AA, to the relevant sections of the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2008a) and *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2010), to English Heritage guidelines (EH 1991), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

#### 2.3 *Methods*

The work was carried out according to the project design, which involved:

• The attendance of a qualified and experienced archaeologist during works that could affect buried archaeology, such as road stripping and footing trenches.

#### 2.4 Constraints

No constraints were encountered.

# 3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 The following section provides a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs. The site lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest, within the medieval field system associated with the deserted medieval village of Westbury-by-Shenley.

This section has been compiled with information from readily available sources.

#### 3.2 **Prehistoric** (before AD43)

Little evidence for prehistoric activity is known within the vicinity of the site. Scatters of prehistoric artefacts have been recorded around the Shenley area, for instance a Bronze Age palstave (MK370) and a tanged bronze arrowhead (MK375).

A number of more substantial archaeological remains have been discovered from the late Iron Age. For instance, at North Furzton, *c*.1.5km northeast of the site, a first century BC stock farmer's habitation site was excavated (MK1772) (Ivens 1993:131-134). Iron Age activity has also been discovered beneath the later medieval settlement at Westbury-by-Shenley (MK636), located in Shenley Brook End (Zeepvat 1991:49-63; Williams 1993:5-10). At Westcroft a watching brief on Cranbourne Avenue, *c*.1.2km southwest of the site, revealed a small-late Iron Age Farm occupied from 100 BC to AD50 (Anthony 2003, 39-46). An evaluation at south Kingsmead, *c*.1.65km southwest of the site, revealed two phases of Iron Age settlement with at least seven round houses in two clusters (MK892; *Recs Bucks* 2006, 199).

#### 3.3 **Roman** (AD43-c.450)

In the Roman period the Milton Keynes area fell within the *civitas* (tribal area) of the *Catuvellauni*. The nearest towns were *Magiovinium* (near Fenny Stratford) to the southeast and *Lactodorum* (Towcester) to the northwest. The road linking them follows the present alignment of V4 Watling Street, *c*.1.6km northeast of the site (Mynard 1987:24; MK77).

Traces of Roman activity have been found throughout Shenley parish. They include an extensive series of field-systems at Westbury, which may indicate a settlement within the area. A tessellated pavement was also uncovered at Dovecote Farm, *c*.400m northeast of the site, (RCHM 1914:245; Ivens 1993:134), suggesting the possible existence of a villa (MK1422). Excavations at Egerton Gate, *c*.500m northeast of the site, uncovered a Roman site that contained two timber buildings, gullies, ditches and pits (MK1202). A watching brief carried out at 22 Dovecote Cottage, *c*.400m northeast of the site, uncovered evidence of a high status Roman building dating to the  $3^{rd}$ -4<sup>th</sup> century AD (MK873). A further watching brief at 23 Church End Road, *c*.500m northeast of the site, revealed two ditches and a spread or ditch associated with a small posthole dating to the  $3^{rd}$  to  $4^{th}$  century. The pottery and roof tiles suggest the presence of a Roman building within the vicinity (*Recs Bucks* 46, 201).

A Romano-British settlement dating from the late second to mid/late fourth century has also been excavated at Portishead Drive, *c*.1.6km southwest of the site (MK8093; *Recs Bucks* **44**, 148).

#### 3.5 Saxon (c.450-1066)

Little is known of the Shenley area between the Roman period and the Norman Conquest. The name Shenley (*Scienan-liage*, i.e. 'bright clearing') could indicate a new Saxon settlement in a wooded area (Ivens 1993:134). Saxon artefacts have been revealed around Shenley Church End, the deserted village of Westbury (Ivens *et al* 1995:1-5), and to the south of Shenley Brook End. Excavations adjacent to Westbury Farm, *c*.700m northwest of the site uncovered a group of 7<sup>th</sup> century Saxon burials and two wells underlying the medieval settlement (Ivens *et al* 1995, 71-78; MK 392).

#### 3.6 *Medieval* (1066-1500)

The Domesday Survey (1086) records four separate holdings in Shenley, two in Church End and two in Brook End (Ivens *et al* 1993:134). Settlement in the area was dominated by two villages, Westbury-by-Shenley (MK636), and Tattenhoe to the south (MK2730; Ivens *et al* 1995:1-5).

Westbury-by Shenley was represented by a series of well-preserved earthworks that originally extended along a single street between the medieval moated sites of Westbury Farm (MK682), *c*.700m northwest of the site, and East Green (MK637), *c*.700m northeast of the site, on the line of what is now H6 Childs Way. The village's main period of occupation was between the  $13^{\text{th}}$  and  $14^{\text{th}}$  centuries, it continued to be occupied in a reduced from through the  $15^{\text{th}}$  century, and was virtually deserted by the  $16^{\text{th}}$  century.

Medieval ridge-and-furrow ploughing formerly covered most of the parish and surrounding area. An evaluation at Shenley Brook End Middle School, Garthwaite Crescent, c.500 west of the site, uncovered medieval ridge-and-furrow ploughing (Zeepvat 2000). Emerson Farmhouse is also within the medieval field system associated with the Westbury-by-Shenley.

#### 3.7 **Post-Medieval - Modern** (1500-present)

The village consists of a loosely linked collection of four farms: Shenley Lodge (formerly East Green), Dovecote Farm, Valley Farm and Emerson's Farm.

Valley Farm immediately north of the site, and Shenley Lodge (East Green), c.1km northeast of the site, both date from  $17^{\text{th}}$  century (Croft and Mynard, 1993, 137). An historic building assessment was carried out at the Old Beams public house, on Paxton Cresent, c.900m northeast of the site. The grade II listed 'L'-shaped building known as East Green Farm, until the 1990s when it was converted to a public house. The earliest known reference for the building dates to 1698 (MK7227; *Recs Bucks* **47.1**, 230).

Dovecote Farm lays c.400m northeast of the site. The present house at Dovecote Farm dates to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, it is on the site of an earlier farmhouse believed to date from the medieval period. Dovecote Farm is marked on the 1599 Salden Map and the 1698 survey (Croft and Mynard, 1993, 137).

The site area is not depicted on the 1698 Shenley Brook End Estate Map. Emerson Farm is a Grade II listed building constructed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (MK7230).

# 4. **Results**

- 4.1 The watching brief was carried out during mechanical stripping for an access road over the north-east and south part of the development area, and levelling for house foundations at the west end. The ground level in the central part of the site was raised.
- 4.2 The underlying natural geology was observed across the site as mid yellow brown clay with occasional chalky till and was seen most clearly at the east end of the development area. At the west end the level required for the development was slightly higher than the upper surface of the natural so it was not seen as clearly. Post-medieval and modern intrusions were evident across the development area, increasing in density and frequency towards the south-west end. Truncations of interest include a pit or pond backfilled with large concrete slabs at the west end (Plate 1) and two sub-rectangular pits (Plate 2) one of which contained a horse skeleton that had been sawn into sections and remained partially articulated.
- 4.3 A moderate quantity of rubble had been deposited on the site onto and mixed in with the topsoil, dark brown clay silt varying in depth between 0.20m and 0.35m. The rubble comprised building debris and other waste materials such as plastic, baling twine and metal. Near the east-central part of the site the brick footings of a 19<sup>th</sup> century former farm building were visible (Plate 3). The bricks were un-frogged and were bonded with a lime mortar.



Plate 1: Backfilled pit/pond, facing north-east



Plate 2: Post-medieval pits (horse skeleton rear pit), facing south



Plate 3: Brick footings of 19<sup>th</sup> century former farm building, facing north

# 5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The results of the watching brief have demonstrated that although the land associated with Emerson Farmhouse lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest and in particular within the medieval field-system associated with the deserted medieval village of Westbury-by-Shenley, the only surviving remains on the site were of post-medieval or later date. The two pits containing animal bone, in one instance the almost complete skeletal remains of a horse, were very likely to be post-medieval despite containing no pottery because the remains were sawn, a technique generally restricted to the post-medieval period (Rackham 2013).
- 5.2 A brief map regression exercise has shown that the structure of which only the footings remain near the west end of the development area, was present on the farm by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (see 1881 OS map extract) but had been demolished by the late 1970's.
- 5.3 Despite the potential for archaeological remains from at least the medieval period, the work has demonstrated that nothing other than features associated with modern (and post-medieval) activity exists or survives on the site. Any other or earlier remains which may have been present are very likely to have been disturbed and/or destroyed by farmyard activity.

#### Confidence Rating

All visits were undertaken with the full cooperation of the site manager and access was given to all areas of the site where groundwork had taken place. All observations were undertaken in good conditions despite the heavy rainfall causing partial flooding. As a result full confidence can be applied to the results of the watching brief.

# 6. Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by *Bastion Homes Ltd*. The project was monitored by Nick Crank on behalf of the local planning authority.

The project was managed for ASC by David Fell MA MIfA. Fieldwork was carried out by, Mo Muldowney BA AIfA, Calli Rouse BA AIfA. The report was prepared by Mo Muldowney 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. Site record drawings
  - 7. List of photographs
  - 8. B/W prints & negatives
  - 9. Original specialist reports and supporting information
  - 10. CDROM with copies of all digital files.
- 7.2 The archive will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum.

### 8. References

#### Standards & Specifications

EH 1991 The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. English Heritage (London).

IFA 2010 Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct.

- IFA (various dates) Institute for Archaeologists' Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments 2011, Watching Briefs 2008, Evaluations 2009, Excavations 2008, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings 2008, Finds 2008, Archiving 2009).
- Summerfield-Hill, C. 2012 Emerson Farmhouse 27 Little Stocking Shenley Brook End Milton Keynes: Project Design for Archaeological Watching Brief. ASC doc no. 1526/SLS/1

#### Secondary Sources

- Anthony S 2003 Iron Age Settlement at Cranborne Avenue, Westcroft, Milton Keynes. *Recs Buckinghamshire* **43**, 39-46
- BGS British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology
- Croft, R. A & Mynard, D. C 1993 *The Changing Landscape of Milton Keynes*. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society Monograph **5** (Aylesbury)
- Ivens, R. J 1993 The Shenleys in R A Croft & D C Mynard, 131-143
- Ivens, R.J, Busby, P. and Shepherd, N.J. 1995 *Westbury and Tattenhoe*, Buckinghamshire Archaeology Society Monograph Series 8 (Aylesbury)
- Mynard, D. C (ed) 1987 *Roman Milton Keynes*. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society Monograph Series **1** (Aylesbury)
- Page, W (ed) 1927 The Victoria History of the County of Buckingham, vol 4. Dawsons of Pall Mall (London)
- Rackham, J., 2013 'Environmental, Animal Bone and Slag Assessment' in Post-excavation Assessment & Updated Project Design: The Swan Public House, High Street, Clapham Muldowney, M., forthcoming ASC Report no. 1512/CTS/3
- Soil Survey 1983 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend (Harpenden)
- Williams, R. J 1993 Prehistoric Landscape in R A Croft & D C Mynard, 5-10
- Zeepvat, R. J 1991 'The Milton Keynes Project', Records of Buckinghamshire 33, 49-63
- Zeepvat, R. J 2000 Archaeological Evaluation: Shenley Brook End Middle School, Garthwaite Crescent, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes. ASC/M/SBS00/2

'Archaeological Notes', Records of Buckinghamshire

# **Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets**

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# **Appendix 2: List of Photographs**

SITE NAI	ME: Emerson Farmhouse, Shenley Brook End	SITE NO/CODE: 1526 SLS				
Shot	Subject					
1	Post-medieval pit with horse skeleton, facing south					
2	Unexcavated post-medieval pit, facing south					
3	Post-medieval animal bone pits, facing south					
4	Grey spread/natural variation east from post-medie	val pits, facing south-east				
5	Spread/natural variation with pits in background, fac	cing south-west				
6	General shot, facing north-east					
7	Reduced area for house in south-west corner of plo	ot showing modern pit, facing east				
8	As above, facing north-east					
9	West extent of development area, facing north					
10	General view to north-east over development, facing	g north-east				
11	North-west corner of development area, facing north	h				
12	As above, facing north-east					
13	View of stratification at west edge of site, facing nor	rth-west				
14	Post-med pit/pond, facing north-east					
15	Brick sample, short edge showing absence of frogg	ing				
16	Brick sample, long edge showing mortar					
17	General view of brick foundations, facing north					
18	Foundations in section, facing south					
19	General view of raised road area, facing south-east					

# **Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form**

Project Name:     Emerson Farmhouse, 27 Little Stocking     OASIS reference:     126080       Short Description:     Between November 2012 and April 2013 a watching brief was carried out on lan Farmhouse, 27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes during ground associated with the residential development of the site. The work revealed that the Emerson Farmhouse had previously been subject to considerable lateral and int truncation. The only surviving features were two pits of probable post-medieval which contained the sawn skeleton of a horse.       Project Type:     Watching Brief       Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)     None       Current land use:     Former farmyard       Future work: (artefact type & period)     Pit       Monument type:     Pit       Significant finds: (artefact type & period)     Horse skeleton (not kept) (27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK5 7BG (+ postcode if known)       Site address: (+ postcode if known)     27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK5 7BG       Study area: (sq. m. / ha)     0.82ha     Height OD: (metres)     95m OD		
Farmhouse, 27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes during ground associated with the residential development of the site. The work revealed that t Emerson Farmhouse had previously been subject to considerable lateral and int truncation. The only surviving features were two pits of probable post-medieval o which contained the sawn skeleton of a horse.     Project Type:   Watching Brief     Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)   None   Site status: (eg. none, SAM, listed)     Current land use:   Former farmyard   Future work: (yes/no/unknown)   No     Monument type:   Pit   Monument period:   Post-medieval     Significant finds: (artefact type & period)   Horse skeleton (not kept)   PROJECT LOCATION     County:   Buckinghamshire   OS reference: (8 figs min)   Site address: (+ postcode if known)		
Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)   None   Site status: (eg. none, SAM, listed)   None     Current land use:   Former farmyard   Future work: (yes/no/unknown)   No     Monument type:   Pit   Monument period:   Post-medievality     Significant finds: (artefact type & period)   Horse skeleton (not kept)   PROJECT LOCATION     County:   Buckinghamshire   OS reference: (8 figs min)     Site address: (+ postcode if known)   27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK5 7BG	dwork he area around trusive	
(eg. SMR refs)   (eg. none, SAM, listed)     Current land use:   Former farmyard   Future work: (yes/no/unknown)   No     Monument type:   Pit   Monument period:   Post-medieval     Significant finds: (artefact type & period)   Horse skeleton (not kept)   Post-medieval     PROJECT LOCATION     County:   Buckinghamshire   OS reference: (8 figs min)     Site address: (+ postcode if known)   27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK5 7BG		
Monument type:   Pit   Monument period:   Post-medieval     Significant finds: (artefact type & period)   Horse skeleton (not kept)   PROJECT LOCATION     PROJECT LOCATION     County:   Buckinghamshire   OS reference: (8 figs min)     Site address: (+ postcode if known)   27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK5 7BG		
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)   Horse skeleton (not kept)     PROJECT LOCATION     County:   Buckinghamshire   OS reference: (8 figs min)     Site address: (+ postcode if known)   27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK5 7BG		
(artefact type & period)   PROJECT LOCATION     OS reference: (8 figs min)     Site address: (+ postcode if known)   27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK5 7BG	al	
County: Buckinghamshire OS reference: (8 figs min)   Site address: 27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK5 7BG		
Site address:   27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK5 7BG     (+ postcode if known)		
(+ postcode if known)		
Study area: (so m / ha) 0.82ha Height OD: (metres) 95m OD		
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation: Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator: Nick Crank Project design originator: Carina Summ	nerfield-Hill	
Project Manager: David Fell Director/Supervisor: Mo Muldowne	еу	
Sponsor / funding body: Bastion Homes Ltd		
PROJECT DATE		
Start date:November 2012End date:12 April 2013		
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
Location (Accession no.) Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/she	ets)	
Physical: Buckinghamshire County None		
Paper: Museum Report, maps, plans, record sheets	Report, maps, plans, record sheets	
Digital: CD with all digital files		
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client repor	,	
Title:     Watching Brief: Emerson Farmhouse, 27 Little Stocking, Shenley Brook End, Mi	Iton Keynes	
Serial title & volume: ASC Ltd Report ref. 1526/SLS/2		
Author(s): Mo Muldowney		
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