

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
7A HIGH STREET
STONY STRATFORD
MILTON KEYNES**

NGR: SP 7886 4034

*for Meridian Architectural LLP
on behalf of Anne Beckwith-Smith*



Calli Rouse BA (Hons) AIFA

May 2013

ASC: 1578/SSH/2




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Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	SSH	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	1578
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	Archaeol2-148083	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	1375
<i>County:</i>	Milton Keynes		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Stony Stratford		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Stony Stratford		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 7886 4034		
<i>Extent of watching brief:</i>	c.0.1ha		
<i>Present use:</i>	Commercial building		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Two storey rear extension		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Milton Keynes Council		
<i>Planning application ref:</i>	12/00803/FUL		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	April 2013		
<i>Commissioned by:</i>	Meridian Architectural LLP 29 Samwell Way Northampton NN4 9QJ		
<i>Client:</i>	Anne Beckwith-Smith 18 Onslow Square London SW7 3NP		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Michael Coggin		

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Calli Rouse	<i>Date:</i>	7 th May 2013
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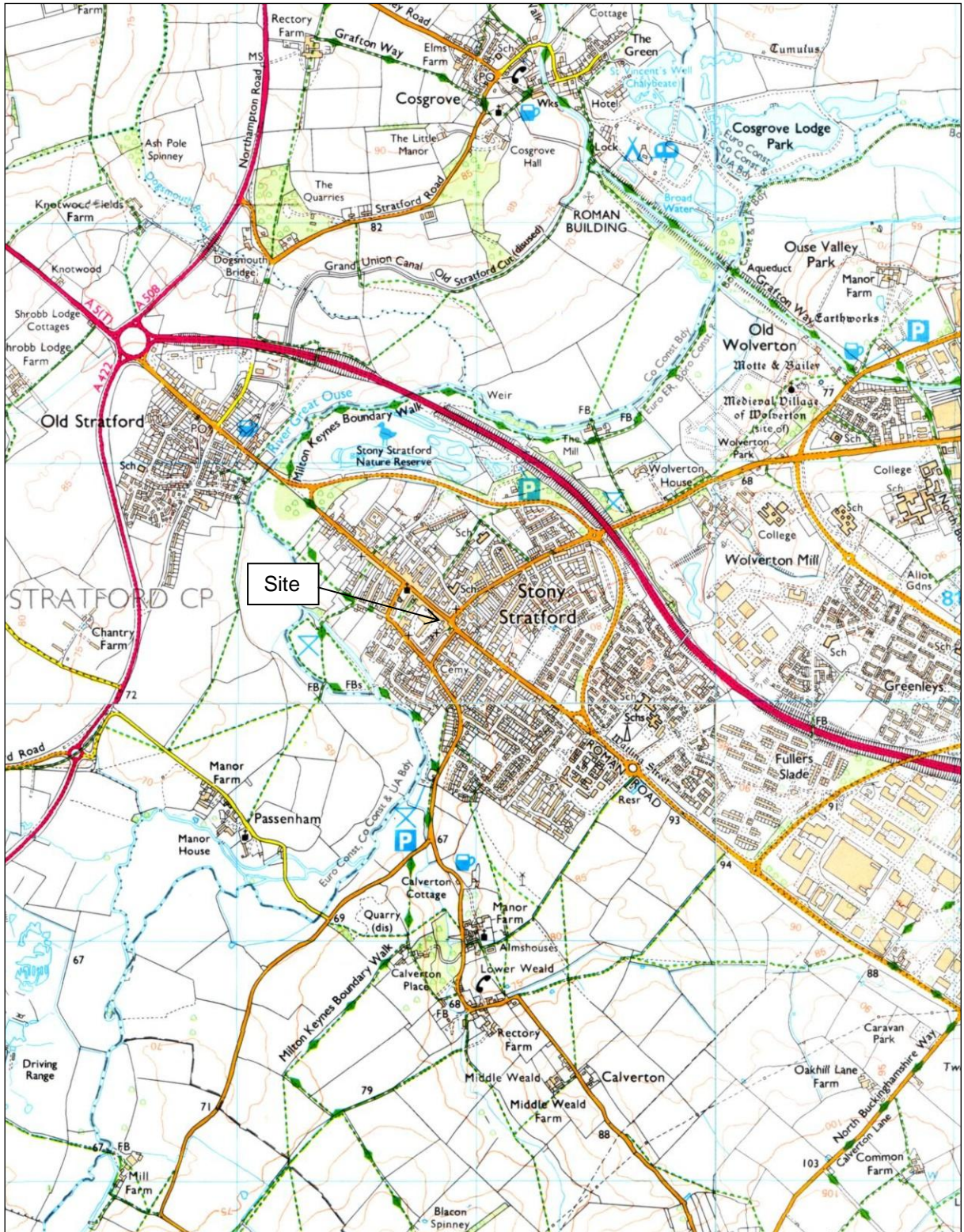


Figure 1: General location (Scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In April 2013, an archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks for an extension at 7A High Street, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes. The proximity of the site to the High Street suggested it had the potential for the survival of archaeological remains that may have contributed to the understanding of the development of Stony Stratford. No pre-modern archaeological finds or features were observed within the trenches. One area of modern disturbance was recorded in the north western part of the site, which may be connected to the construction of the bank on the adjacent plot.

1. Introduction

1.1 In April 2013 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at 7A High Street, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes. The project was commissioned by *Meridian Architectural LLP* for their client *Anne Beckwith-Smith*, and was carried out according to a project design prepared by ASC (Brown 2012), and approved by the Archaeological Officer (AO) of the Conservation and Archaeology department of *Milton Keynes Council* (MKC), archaeological advisor (AA) to the local planning authority (LPA), MKC.

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. The relevant planning application reference is 12/00803/FUL.

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 The site is situated in Stony Stratford in the administrative district of Milton Keynes, within the historic county of Buckinghamshire (Fig. 1). It is located in the centre of Stony Stratford, on the south west side of the High Street and is centred on Ordnance Survey national grid reference SP 7886 4034 (Fig. 2). It lies on the west side of the High Street, close to its junction with Wolverton Road and comprises a rectangular plot of c.0.1 ha. The site is occupied by a three storey building currently in use as the *MacIntyre Gift and Coffee Shop* which fronts onto the High Street.

1.4.2 *Topography & Geology*

The site is level and lies at an elevation of c.70m OD. The site is in an urban area and the natural soils may not survive. Any surviving soils are likely to comprise the Hanslope Association, namely “slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils, with some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils” (Soil Survey 1983, 411d). The underlying geology comprises first river terrace gravels (BGS 1969, 202).

1.4.3 Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises the construction of a two storey rear extension with access lift and associated services (Fig. 3).

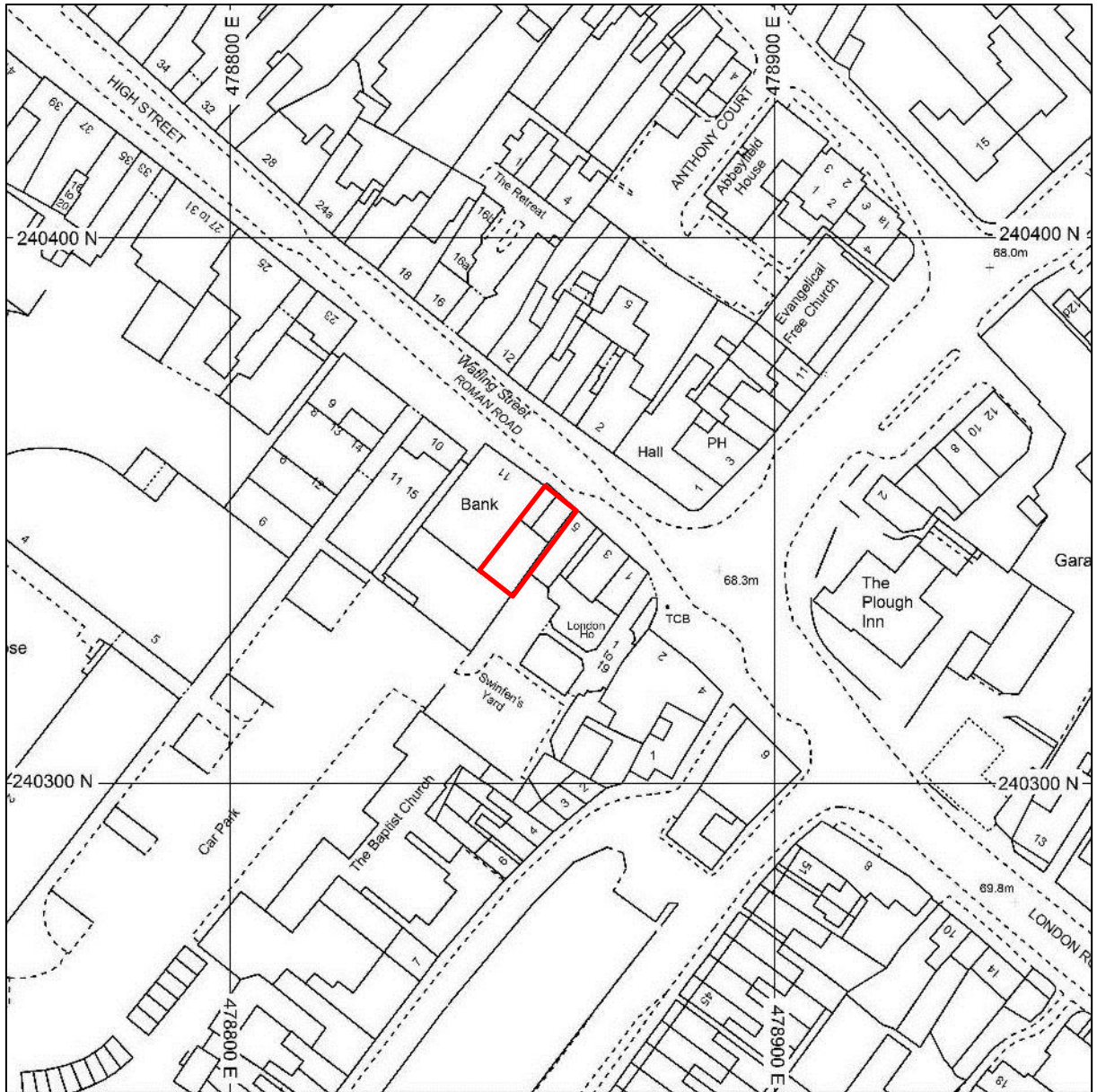


Figure 2: Site plan (Scale 1:1250)

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 conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IfA 2008a & b) and *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010), to current English Heritage guidelines (EH 1991; EH 2006), and to the relevant sections of ASC's *Operations Manual*.

2.3 Methods

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

- The archaeological monitoring of landscaping works, footing trenches and associated services
- The rapid investigation and recording of any archaeological features/deposits
- Examination of spoil-heaps for archaeological material

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 and but the focus of attention is considered to lie in the medieval period.

This section has been compiled with information from the *Stony Stratford Historic Town Assessment Report* (BCC, ND) and other readily available sources.

3.2 ***Prehistoric*** (before 600BC)

Stony Stratford and the wider area of Milton Keynes have been represented in the archaeological record as far back as the Mesolithic period, with flint and stone implements from the Ouse and Ouzel valleys, and flints from the Bradwell Brook valley at Bancroft, c.3.5km east of Stony Stratford.

Evidence of settlement within this area appears from the Neolithic period onwards, with sites such as that discovered at Stacey Bushes, 3km south-east of Stony Stratford. Further evidence comes from a probable Neolithic cursus excavated c.2.5km to the north east at Old Wolverton.

Evidence of human activity in the Bronze Age is provided by ring ditches (ploughed out round barrows) found throughout the Ouse valley, the nearest being at Warren Farm, 1.5km east of the site (Green 1974). An isolated find of a Bronze Age socketed axe is recorded from Stony Stratford (Croft & Mynard 1993, 7).

3.3 ***Iron Age*** (600BC-AD43)

The Iron Age provides the most complete example of prehistoric settlement distribution in the Milton Keynes area. Settlement is still largely related to the river valleys, though evidence of it has been found in a much wider range of topographic settings (Croft & Mynard 1993). Iron Age pottery has been found at Kiln Farm and close to the present crossing of the River Ouse, at Old Stratford.

3.4 ***Roman*** (AD43-c.450)

During the Roman period the Milton Keynes area lay within the tribal canton of the *Catuvellauni*, with its capital at *Verulamium* (St Albans). The major Roman road from London to Wroxeter, later known as *Watling Street*, followed the same alignment as the present Stony Stratford High Street, crossing the river Ouse by a bridge or ford (OS 1979). The river crossing appears to have had some religious significance, evidenced by quantities of Roman coins and some votive objects found by metal detectorists on land adjoining Buckingham Road.

There is only limited evidence for Roman activity within the town. Roman pottery has been recorded at a number of locations within the town centre and there is an unsubstantiated report of a coin hoard during building works at the White Swan public house (BCC ND, 25).

3.5 ***Saxon and Medieval*** (c.450-1500)

The origins of the present settlement at Stony Stratford are not well understood. The town is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey (1086), and Brown (1987, 3) records that the earliest mention of the place name Stony Stratford places it in Northamptonshire. This may be a confusion with *Old Stratford*, which is situated adjacent to the river, north of Stony Stratford, and which may have been the older settlement.

Neither of the two manors at Stony Stratford is mentioned in the Domesday Survey. The west side of the town was originally part of Calverton Manor, which is first recorded as a separate manor in 1257 and was subinfeudated by the Earls of Oxford. The church of St Mary & St Giles, to the west of the High Street, is known to have originated as a chapel c.1202, possibly to serve travellers along Watling Street. The east side of the town formed part of the manor of Wolverton, which ranked as a separate manor in the 16th century (VCH 1927, 479). The church of St Mary Magdalene, to the east side of the High Street, was probably also established by the 13th century, though details of its foundation are uncertain (Brown 1987, 21).

Hugh de Vere, Earl of Oxford and Lord of the Manor of Calverton, was granted a fair at his manor in Stony Stratford in 1257, to be held around the feast of St. Giles. His son was granted another, in 1290, for a 'yearly fair ... on the vigil and the feast of St Mary Magdalene' (Brown 1987, 22). By 1792 there were three annual fairs, dwindling to only one by 1888 (VCH 1927, 479).

It is recorded that King John stayed in Stony Stratford in 1215, as did Edward I in 1290 when the funeral cortege for his wife, Eleanor of Castile, processed to Westminster for burial. The Eleanor Cross, erected in honour of Queen Eleanor, was destroyed in the 17th century.

Edward IV visited Stony Stratford in 1464 when several inns including *The Cock* and *The Bull* were recorded. In 1520 *The Cock* was given to the town under Thomas Piggot's will to set up a charity to fund the repair of the bridge and causeway over the river. The old bridge collapsed and was replaced in 1835, when a toll house was also constructed (Brown 1987, 16).

3.6 ***Post-Medieval and Modern*** (1500-present)

Two major fires occurred during the 18th century. The first, in 1736, destroyed fifty three houses and the second, in 1742, took St Mary Magdalene's church and in addition one hundred and thirteen houses (VCH 1927, 476). The church tower survived the blaze and is now a Grade II* listed building.

No 7A High Street comprises a red brick building constructed c.1840-1860 which currently serving as a shop with offices above. It is a Grade II listed building (Woodfield 1986, 121).

4. Results

- 4.1 The footing trenches for the extension measured 0.5m in width, and were *c.*1m in depth (Plates 1 & 3). The stratigraphy comprised 0.2m of modern made ground, which overlay 0.7m of post medieval made ground, which contained a fragment of clay pipe stem, and a sherd of glazed pottery. Below this was a 0.1m thick layer of orange clay silt. This layer was noted to be very clean, and may have represented a layer of subsoil. This overlay the natural soil, which comprised sub-angular gravel in yellow silty clay (Plate 2).

- 4.2 An area of modern disturbance was identified in the northern corner of the site (Figure 3, Plates 1 & 2), which may relate to the construction of the bank on the site immediately next door. Apart from this, no other archaeological finds or features were observed within the footing trenches.



Plate 1: Footing trench with modern intrusion, looking south



Plate 2: Footing trench section with modern intrusion, looking north west, 1m scale



Plate 3: General footing shot, looking north

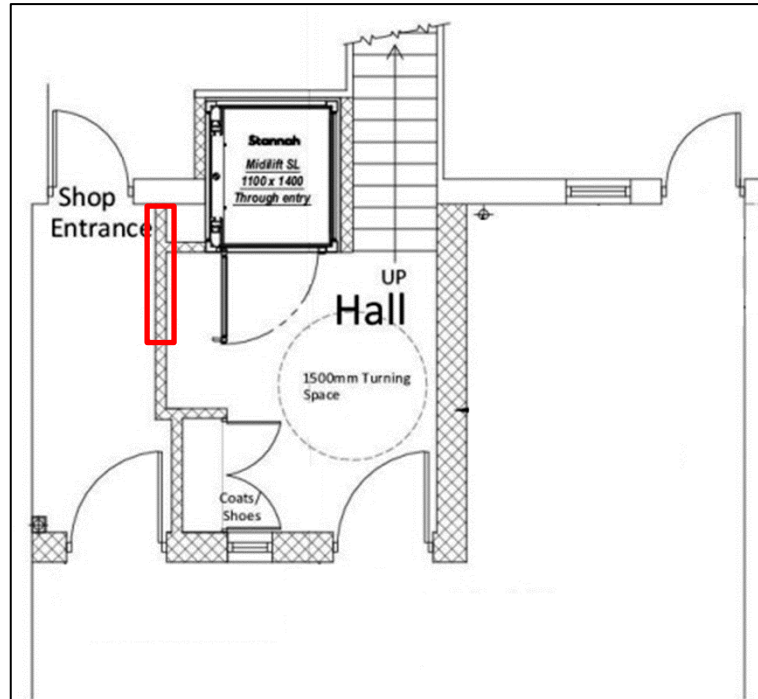


Figure 3: Proposed development plan, with area of modern intrusion outlined in red
(not to scale)

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Stony Stratford is a town with considerable history, as discussed in Section 3, above. The site's position immediately adjacent to the High Street, and close to the junction with Wolverton Road, suggested it had the potential to provide an insight into the early development of the town.
- 5.2 The presence of up to 0.9m of post-medieval made ground observed in the footing trenches suggests that the site has been subject to some previous disturbance. Although this means that any potential archaeological remains within the development area pre-dating the post medieval period may have been destroyed, it is indicative of the site's use from at least this period, if not earlier. While the survival of isolated features located away from the development cannot be ruled out, it is considered unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant impact on any remaining archaeological finds or features.
- 5.3 *Confidence Rating*
The watching brief was carried out in good conditions, and full cooperation was received from all parties involved. As a result, a high confidence rating is attached to the results of the fieldwork.

6. Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by *Meridian Architectural LLP* on behalf of the client *Anne Beckwith-Smith*. The writer is grateful to *Michael Coggin* for his assistance during the project. The project was monitored by Nick Crank, Archaeological Officer of the Conservation and Archaeology department of Milton Keynes Council, acting on behalf of the local planning authority. Thanks are also due to the contractor Mick Lee.

The project was managed for ASC by David Fell BA MA MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by Martin Cuthbert BA AIFA. The report was prepared by Calli Rouse BA AIFA 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. 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*, 2nd edition. English Heritage (London).
- EH 2006 *The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2010 Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2008 Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.
- 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*).
- Brown R 2012 *Project Design for Archaeological Watching Brief: 7A High Street, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes*. ASC report no. 1578/SSH/1

Secondary Sources

- BCC, ND *Stony Stratford Historic Town Assessment Report*. Buckinghamshire County Council
- BGS 1969, *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).
- Brown, Dr O F 1987 *Stony Stratford: the Town on the Road*. Wolverton & District Archaeol. Soc. (Wolverton).
- Croft, R A & Mynard, D C 1993 *The Changing Landscape of Milton Keynes*. Buckinghamshire Archaeol. Soc. Monog. Ser. 5 (Aylesbury)
- Green, H S 1974 'Early Bronze Age burial, territory and population in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, and the Great Ouse valley', *Archaeol. J.* **131**, 75-139.
- Markham, Sir F 1974 *History of Milton Keynes and district, vol. 2* (Luton).
- OS 1979 *Ordnance Survey map of Roman Britain*. South Sheet. Ordnance Survey. Southampton
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).
- VCH 1927 *The Victoria History of the County of Buckingham*, vol. 4 (London).
- Woodfield, P 1986 *A Guide to the Historic Buildings of Milton Keynes*. Milton Keynes Development Corporation

Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets



A.S.C. LTD

WATCHING BRIEF RECORD

Project: 7A High st. Stony Stratford		Project No/Code: 1578 / SSH	Sheet: 1 of 1
Client/Developer		Date of visit: 15/4/13	
Contact: Mick		Phone: 078 332 40986	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 8:30am	Finish: 12:00 pm	
Completed by: M.C			
Development Type:			
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: dry.			
Observations: footing for extension to property all footings = 0.5m wide c. 0.8m ^{im} deep.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mod made ground = tyle ① + brick rubble + concrete • Post mod made ground = soft mid orange brown silty clay occ brick frag intrusion - clay pipe stem, 1x glazed pot. • Subsoil? - very clean orange - clay silt • natural - found in sub-org gravel in silty clay - yellow 			
1x mod intrusion poss disturbance created when bank was built. only seen in western NE-SW footing trench (see plan).			
2x mod Services - drains.			
Comments: continue tomorrow 16/4/13 short length of service trench to monitor.			

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: 7A High Street, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes			SITE NO/CODE: 1578/SSH
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1			Footing trench, looking north east
2			Working shot
3			Working shot
4			Working shot
5			Working shot
6			Footing trench, looking north east
7			Footing trench section, looking north west
8			Footing trench section, looking south east
9			Footing trench with modern intrusion, looking south
10			Footing trench with modern intrusion, looking south
11			Footing trench section with modern intrusion, looking north west, 1m scale
12			Footing trench section, looking south west, 1m scale
13			Footing trench section, looking south west, 1m scale
14			General view of footing trenches, looking north
15			General view of footing trenches, looking north
16			General view of footing trenches, looking north
17			General view of footing trenches, looking north

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	7A High Street, Stony Stratford	OASIS reference:	Archaeol2-148083
Short Description:	In April 2013, an archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks for an extension at 7A High Street, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes. The proximity of the site to the High Street suggested it had the potential for the survival of archaeological remains that may have contributed to the understanding of the development of Stony Stratford. No pre-modern archaeological finds or features were observed within the trenches. One area of modern disturbance was recorded in the north western part of the site, which may be connected to the construction of the bank on the adjacent plot.		
Project Type:	Watching Brief		
Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	None	Site status: (eg. none, SAM, listed)	None
Current land use:	Commercial residence	Future work: (yes/no/unknown)	no
Monument type:	-	Monument period:	-
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	-		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Buckinghamshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 7886 4034
Site address: (+ postcode if known)	7A High Street, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes, MK11 1AA		
Study area: (sq. m. / ha)	0.1ha	Height OD: (metres)	c.70m
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	n/a	Project design originator:	ASC (Brown 2012)
Project Manager:	ASC David Fell	Director/Supervisor:	ASC M Cuthbert
Sponsor / funding body:	Anne Beckwith-Smith		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	15-04-2013	End date:	15-04-2013
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Bucks County Museum	None	
Paper:		Archive Box	
Digital:		CD with all digital files	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: 7A High Street, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1578/SSH/2		
Author(s):	Calli Rouse BA (Hons) AIFA		
Page nos	1-17	Date:	07/05/13