

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
ELMTREE COTTAGE
9 NORTH STREET
CASTLETHORPE
MILTON KEYNES**

on behalf of Mr David Shepherd



C. Barclay BA & Dr Jonathan Hunn BA PhD MIFA

February 2007

ASC: 886/CEC/1

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Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	CEC	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	886
<i>Event No:</i>	1099	<i>Accession No:</i>	-
<i>County:</i>	Milton Keynes		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Castlethorpe		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Castlethorpe		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 7999 4449		
<i>Present use:</i>	Residential		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Side-extension		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	06/01197/FUL		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Milton Keynes Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	30 th January 2007		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr David Shepherd Elmtree Cottage 9 North Street Castlethorpe Milton Keynes MK19 7EW		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Mr David Shepherd		

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Caroline Barclay	<i>Date:</i>	06.02.2007
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<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
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<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
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Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

On 30th January 2007, a watching brief was carried out by ASC Ltd at Elmtree Cottage, Castlethorpe, Milton Keynes. The work was undertaken during the construction of a small extension to the side of the existing structure. One feature, possibly a modern wall footing trench, was observed, but no finds or dating material were recovered.

1 Introduction

1.1 In January 2007 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC)* carried out a watching brief at Elmtree Cottage, Castlethorpe, Milton Keynes (NGR 7999 4449: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by the owner, *Mr David Shepherd*. The relevant planning application reference is 06/01197/FUL. The work was undertaken according to the requirements of the Archaeological Officer, Milton Keynes Council (MKCAO), and ASC's *Standard Method Statement for Watching Briefs* (Appendix 1).

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 small side-extension to the existing structure.

1.3 *Location & Description*

The site is located near the centre of the village of Castlethorpe, in the administrative district of Milton Keynes (Fig. 1). The property lies *c.60m* ENE of the church, on the north side of North Street, at its junction with School Lane. It is located on the projected line of the outer edge of the moat of Castlethorpe Castle, which survives as an earthwork to the north, west and south of the church (Fig. 2). The house fronts directly onto North Street, with a side gate to the east leading to the kitchen door, and vehicular access to the rear on the west side of the house. The site of the proposed extension is in the rear garden, on the north side of the house, towards its north-west corner. Prior to the construction of the extension, this area was open ground.

1.4 *Geology & Topography*

The site is situated on level ground, at an elevation of *c.88m* OD. Soils in the area belong to the Hanslope Association, comprising "*slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils, with some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils*" and the underlying geology is chalky till (Soil Survey 1983, 411d).

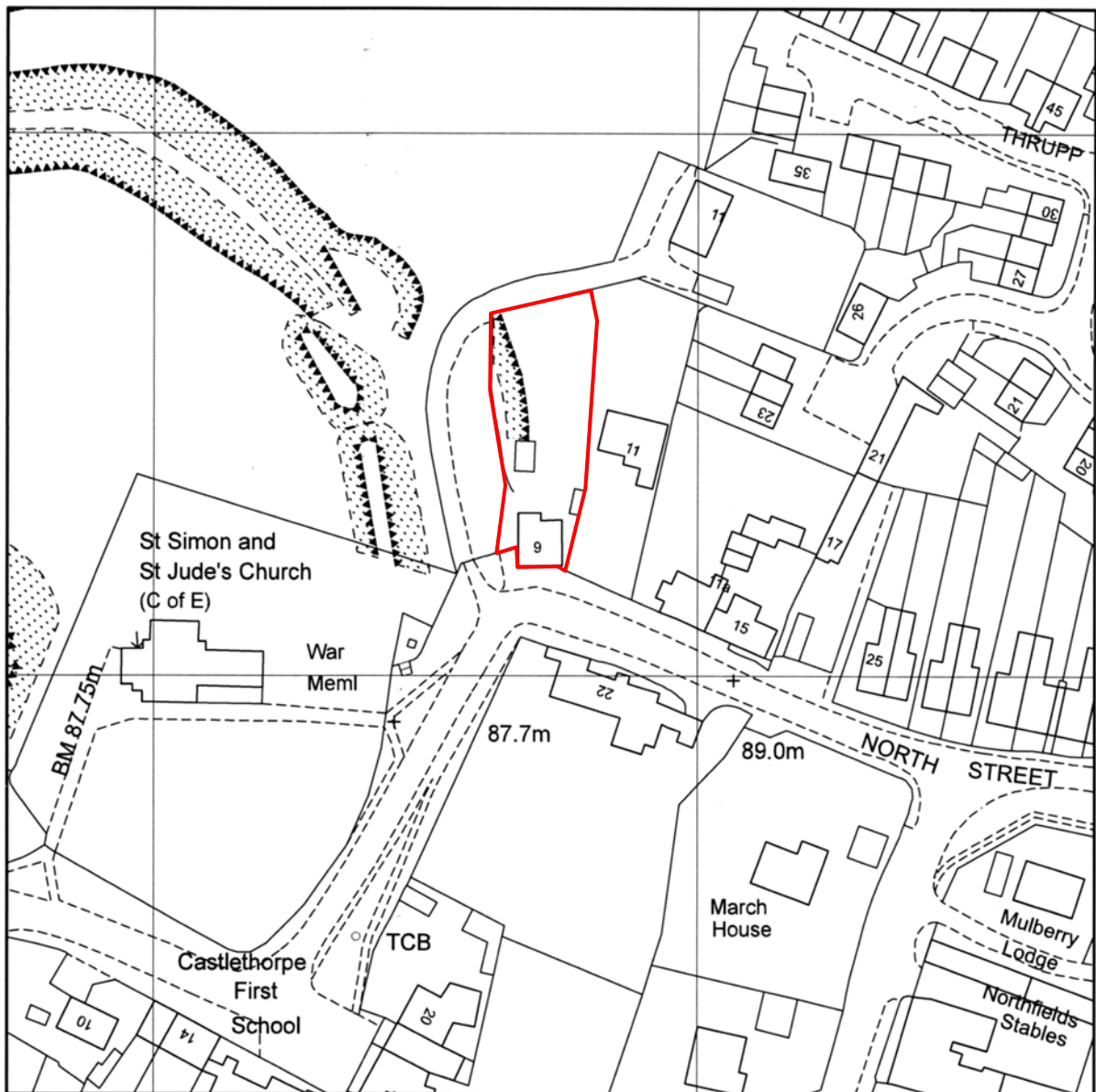


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1,250)

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

In accordance with the requirements of MKCAO, the aim of the watching brief was:

- to carry out appropriate levels of investigation, recording and sampling of archaeological features revealed during construction works in order to characterise their form and function.

2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), to the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to ASC's standard watching brief methodology (Appendix 1).

2.4 Constraints

No constraints were anticipated and none were encountered during the fieldwork. The watching brief was completed in a single site visit.

3 Archaeological & Historical Background

- 3.1 As a desk-based assessment was not required as part of this watching brief, detailed information regarding the past history of the site is not readily available for inclusion in this report. This section has therefore been compiled from readily available sources, in order to place the site within its historical context, in relation to Castlethorpe Castle and village, and the surrounding landscape of north Buckinghamshire.
- 3.2 Published information regarding the archaeology of the Castlethorpe area is more or less non-existent. Apart from isolated finds of most prehistoric periods, the only systematic fieldwork that has been undertaken dealt with areas around the village of Haversham, 3km to the south-east, and Hanslope, 3km to the north. Both are unpublished. A study of settlement and burial in the Ouse valley during the Bronze Age (Green 1974) demonstrates that much of the human activity at that time was limited to the lighter gravel soils in the river valley. The only other periods to receive a similar degree of attention are the late Iron Age and Roman: these are described below (Zeepvat 1987, 1991).
- 3.3 During the Roman period, the area around Castlethorpe formed a part of the tribal territory of the *Catuvellauni*, with its capital at *Verulamium* (St Albans). The nearest Roman town was *Lactodorum* (Towcester), some 11km to the north-west. The Roman road known latterly as *Watling Street* (now the A5) lies 3.5km to the south-west of Castlethorpe. A string of Roman estates, each centred on a substantial villa, is known to have existed on the north side of the Ouzel valley: villa sites have been recognised at Deanshanger, Cosgrove, Haversham (Hill Farm), Stanton Low and Gayhurst. A similar situation existed to the south of the Ouse (Zeepvat 1987, 1991). During this period the character of the Castlethorpe area was almost certainly rural, with scattered Romano-British farmsteads. In Castlethorpe parish two silver bracelets, identified as 'Celtic', and a pot containing a hoard of 2nd-century Roman coins, were found in 1827 by a farmer at *Birtles Hill* (Page 1927, i, 188).
- 3.4 A settlement appears to have existed at Castlethorpe since at least the early 11th century. At this time a large part of eastern England was occupied by the Danes (the *Danelaw*), extending as far south as the Ouse and west to Watling Street (Markham 1973, 34). In 1002 Ethelred 'the Unready' gave orders that all Danes in England should be slain. During this event, which became known as the *Massacre of St Brice*, Danish settlements in the North Bucks area were wiped out, including one at Castlethorpe (*ibid*, 36). Danish retaliation was ferocious, as might be expected.
- 3.5 During the late Saxon and early medieval period Castlethorpe fell within the ecclesiastical parish of Hanslope, which formed part of the Hundred of Bonestou (later combined with the Hundreds of Moulsoe and Sigelai to form the Newport Hundreds). Castlethorpe is mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086.
- 3.6 Castlethorpe Castle was probably erected during the Baronial Wars in the 12th century by William Maudit (latterly Earl of Warwick), a supporter of the Empress Matilda (Page 1927, iv, 350). It appears to have had a short life, for in 1215 it was sacked and destroyed by Fawkes de Breauté. It was granted to de Breauté in the following year,

but never rebuilt. The site appears to have remained unoccupied since that time, but has almost certainly suffered several changes subsequently, and its original form and extent is difficult to ascertain. Like much of the land in Castlethorpe, it was held as part of the manor of Hanslope: the castle is sometimes referred to as 'Hanslope Castle', and references to the two villages are similarly confusing. The relative status of the two villages within the ecclesiastical parish could not be ascertained in this brief study, and is further confused by the presence of churches in both settlements from the 12th century onwards.

3.7 In 1292 William Beauchamp was granted a license to build a mortared stone wall around a garden court within his dwelling at Hanslope. It has been suggested (*ibid.*) that this may refer to the site marked by rectangular earthworks to the south of the castle, which have been partly obliterated by the construction of the railway. These earthworks have also been interpreted as a southward extension of the outer bailey of the castle, though they are on a slightly different alignment.

3.8 Elm Tree Cottage is listed Grade II. The listing description (which incorrectly lists the house as 11 North Street) reads:

'Cottage. Dated 1763. Rubblestone with a thatched roof and flanking brick chimneys. 1½ storeys, 2 bays. One bay rear range, also thatched. Central 6 panel door, upper four panels glazed. 2-light casements, upper ones cut into the thatch. Datestone over door inscribed in moulded and corniced frame: 'J.H, A.H, 1763'. Rear range thatch sweeps over c.1970s.'

4 Results

- 4.1 The watching brief was carried out while the footings for the proposed extension were dug out over an area covering approximately 3.5m sq. The ground level had been reduced by less than 0.2m prior to arrival, and the footings were then excavated down to and through the clayey natural (Plate 2).
- 4.2 One feature was observed during the watching brief. This proved to be a foundation trench, aligned north-south (Plates 3 & 4: see Appendix 2 for sketch plan). It was filled with stony rubble, dark soil and charcoal flecks. No datable finds were recovered from its fill. The feature appears to have been cut from a relatively high level, and is probably of relatively modern origin.
- 4.3 No dating material or artefacts were recovered during the watching brief.



Plate 1: General working view



Plate 2: View of footings on east side (scale = 1m)



Plate 3: General view of location of feature (scale = 1m)



Plate 4: Close up of feature (scale = 1m)

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The watching brief did not reveal any features or finds of archaeological significance.
- 5.2 A single north-south aligned cut feature was revealed in the north footing trench of the extension. This was filled with rubble, and was interpreted as a footing trench for a wall. It contained no finds, and thus could not be dated. In view of its alignment and relationship to the house, it is likely that it originally contained the footings of a wall, probably a continuation of the surviving wall to the north of the house (Fig. 2).
- 5.3 The extension is located close to the projected outer edge of the moat of Castlethorpe Castle. As natural clay was encountered during the excavation of its footings, the watching brief has shown conclusively that the moat did not extend beneath this property.
- 5.4 *Confidence Rating*
The watching brief was undertaken on good weather, and full co-operation was provided by the clients and their builders. A high confidence rating is therefore assigned to this project.

6. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Mr David Shepherd for commissioning the work, and to his architects, Hawkins Historic Limited, for providing the ground plan of the house. Nick Crank (MKCAO) acted as archaeological monitor.

The fieldwork was carried out by Dr Jonathan Hunn PhD MIFA; the report was written by Caroline Barclay BA and Dr Jonathan Hunn BA PhD MIFA, and was edited by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Initial Report
2. Site Monitoring Sheets
3. Site record drawings
4. List of photographs/slides
5. 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).

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)*.

Secondary Sources

Green, H.S., 1974 'Early Bronze Age Burial, Territory and Population in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, and the Great Ouse Valley', *Archaeological Journal* **131**, 75-137.

Markham, Sir F., 1973 *History of Milton Keynes & District: volume 1 - to 1830*. White Crescent Press (Luton).

Markham, Sir F., 1975 *History of Milton Keynes & District: volume 2 - from 1800 to about 1950*. White Crescent Press (Luton).

Page, W. (ed.) 1927 *The Victoria History of the County of Buckinghamshire*. 4 vols (London).

Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).

Zeepvat, R.J., 1987 'Romano-British Settlement in the Upper Ouse and Ouzel valleys' in Mynard, D.C. (ed.) 1987 *Roman Milton Keynes*. Buckinghamshire Archaeology Society Monograph **1**, 6-18 (Aylesbury).

Zeepvat, R.J., 1991 *Roman Milton Keynes*. Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit / Buckinghamshire County Council (Milton Keynes).

Appendix 1: Method Statement for Archaeological Watching

Brief

1 *Definition*

An archaeological watching brief is a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any earth-moving operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons (IFA 1999, 2). It normally involves the monitoring by an experienced archaeologist of ground disturbance on a development (eg. footing and service trenches, reduction of levels, landscaping).

2 *Standards*

All work will conform to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* and *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000), to current English Heritage guidelines (EH 1991), to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*, and to any specific requirements of the Planning Archaeologist (PA).

3 *General Methodology: Observation & Recording*

3.1 Archaeological observation and recording normally involves visits when groundworks are under way, and requires close co-operation and communication between contractor and archaeologist. In many cases only regular, relatively brief visits are required (an *intermittent* watching brief). In certain circumstances (e.g. where archaeological features are known or strongly suspected to exist), the archaeologist's continuous presence may be required (an *intensive* watching brief). In the absence of specific instruction, professional judgement will be exercised to determine the level of monitoring.

3.2 Each site visit will be recorded on ASC's *Site Monitoring Sheet* (example attached). These sheets should record what is observed, including sketches where appropriate. A photographic record (see 4.4, below) will also be maintained throughout the watching brief. Plans of the development provided by the client will normally form the basis for recording the location of archaeological features and finds.

3.3 If significant archaeological remains are identified during the watching brief, a meeting will be arranged between ASC, the client, and the PA in order to agree an appropriate investigation. Provision to cover this has been made in the project estimates. Detailed investigation will follow the methods set out in the following section.

4 *General Methodology: Investigation (if required)*

4.1 Excavation will be carried out by hand. Maximum depths of excavation will conform to current Health & Safety regulations.

4.2 At the start of fieldwork temporary bench marks will be established, to be tied in subsequently to an appropriate Ordnance Survey bench mark. All plans and section drawings will be annotated with relative heights derived from these benchmarks. Plans will be related to the OS National Grid. Overall site plans will normally be drawn to a scale of 1:100 or 1:50: detailed plans of specific areas or features may be drawn to 1:20 or 1:10: burials will always be drawn at the latter scale. Sections will be drawn at 1:20 or 1:10, depending upon size and complexity.

- 4.3 A detailed record of all archaeological contexts will be maintained on individual pro-forma record sheets, designed to meet current professional standards. Each context will be individually numbered in a single sequence, and will be described in terms of dimensions, shape, fill type and inclusions, artefact content, samples and interpretation. A register of contexts will be maintained, and context records will be cross-referenced to all other records.
- 4.4 The primary photographic record will normally be compiled in 35mm black & white print format, supplemented by 35mm colour slide and/or digital photography, illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. A photographic register will be maintained on ASC's *Photographic Record Sheet*, fully cross-referenced. Digital photographs will be used to illustrate the report. Metric scales will be used in all photographs.
- 4.5 All finds relating to the archaeological record of the site will be collected with reference to context and location. Finds of particular significance (small finds) will be recorded three-dimensionally on site, and described on individual pro-forma record sheets. A register will be kept of all finds. Finds processing may take place during or after fieldwork, and will entail cleaning, marking, packaging, quantification and initial classification. Conservation of artefacts will normally take place after processing, but primary conservation of delicate artefacts may be required on site.
- 4.6 Provision will be made for the sampling and analysis of environmental data by appropriate specialists. Sampling will be carried out in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (EH 2002). All samples will be recorded on individual pro-forma record sheets, and a register of samples will be maintained. Specialists will be required to submit copies of the base data from environmental analysis for inclusion in the site archive.
- 4.7 Any human remains encountered will normally be recorded and left *in situ*. The removal of human remains in consecrated ground requires a Home Office licence, and investigation or removal of remains must be agreed between ASC, the client, and other appropriate authorities. For the excavation and recording of human remains, current IFA guidelines will be followed (McKinley & Roberts 1993). In general, due care and respect will be accorded to any human remains, and site staff are required not to discuss their discovery in public, so as not to attract undesirable interest.
- 4.8 Due concern will be given to the physical security of all archaeological features, deposits, artefacts and records, both on and off site. All reasonable measures will be taken to secure their protection before, during and after excavation.

5 Reporting

- 5.1 Upon completion of the watching brief, an initial report on its findings will normally be prepared within four weeks, subject to specialist input. This will typically include:
 - a concise non-technical summary of the results
 - information relating to the circumstances of the project
 - background information about the site
 - a summary of the aims of the project and the methods used
 - a description of the results, supported by appropriate illustrative material
 - a conclusion, summarising the results and examining their significance
 - a confidence rating
 - the contents and location of the archive
 - appendices (record sheets, specialist reports, reference works etc.)
 - an SMR summary sheet, if required

- 5.2 Copies of the report will be provided as required to the client, to the PA, and to other bodies as required. Eight copies are normally produced: a charge may be made for providing any additional copies. Interim reports will be submitted to the relevant period and/or regional journals within one year of the project's completion.
- 5.3 Once the final report has been accepted by the AA, an OASIS fieldwork summary form will be completed and submitted to the Archaeology Data Service.

6 *Archive*

- 6.1 All archaeological projects generate a quantity of records and related material. Together, these constitute the *project archive*. While the report may describe the project's findings in some detail, the archive contains the evidence on which the report is based, and its importance cannot be too highly stressed. By its nature, archaeological fieldwork cannot normally be repeated, so the archive often constitutes the only surviving evidence for past activity on a site, and arrangements must therefore be made for its deposition and long-term storage.
- 6.2 At the start of a project, ASC will initiate arrangements for archive deposition. On completion of the reporting stages of the project, the archive will be prepared for long-term storage. If arrangements for deposition cannot be concluded, ASC will store the archive until deposition can be arranged.

7 *Staffing*

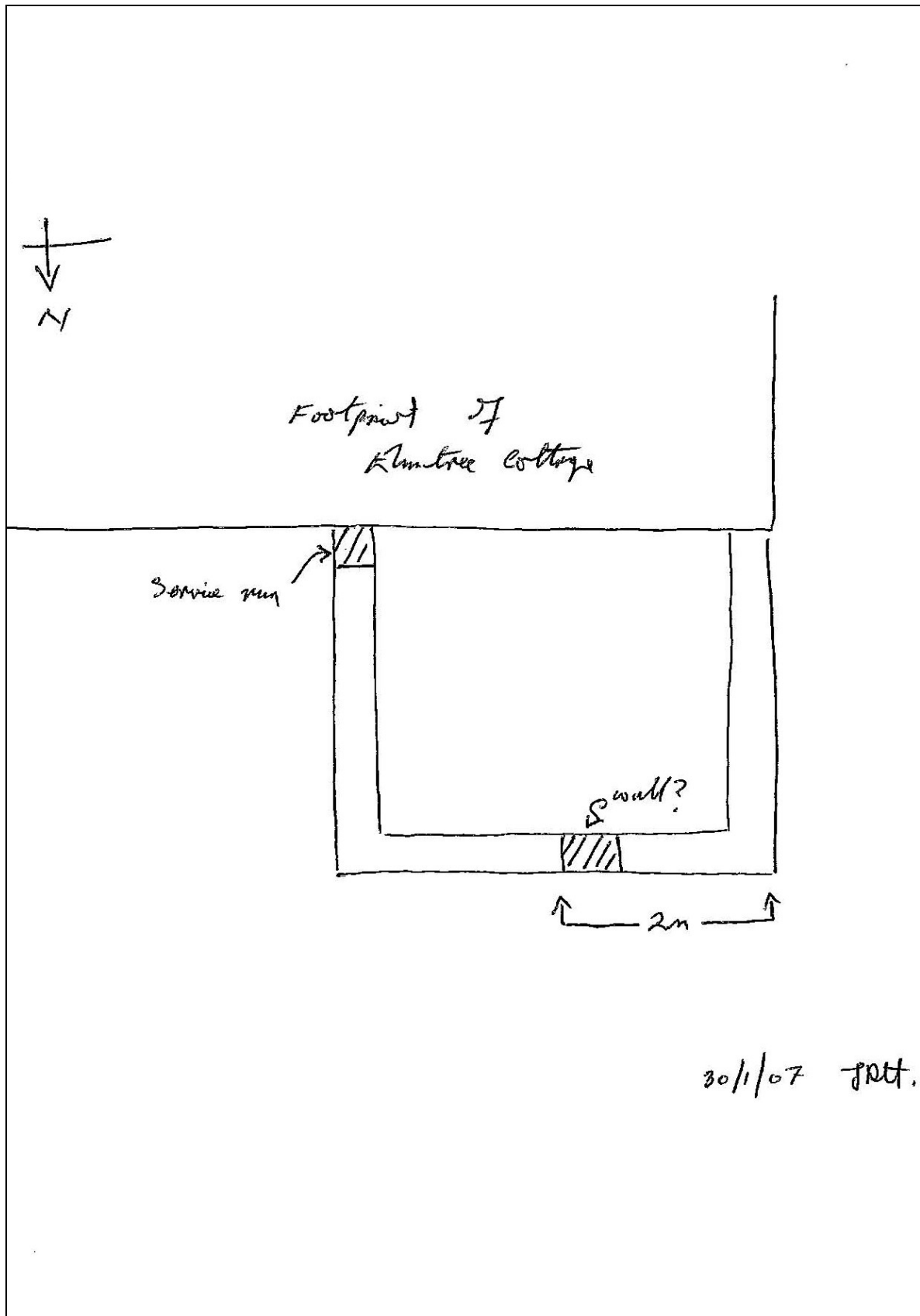
- 7.1 The project will be under the overall direction of **Bob Zeepvat** BA MIFA, an established archaeologist with extensive experience in managing archaeological projects, of a wide range of fieldwork in both rural and urban environments, of post-excavation, publication and presentation projects, and of work on a wide range of historic buildings and structures.
- 7.2 Staff undertaking watching briefs will all be experienced archaeologists, of at least Assistant Project Officer grade. Less experienced staff may assist with any detailed investigation, under supervision.

References

- EH 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects* (2nd edition). English Heritage (London).
- EH 2002 *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation*. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 1999a *Standards & Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*. Institute of Field Archaeologists (Reading).
- IFA 1999b *Code of Conduct*. Institute of Field Archaeologists (Reading).
- McKinley J.I. & Roberts C. 1993 *Excavation and Post-Excavation Treatment of Cremated and Inhumed Human Remains*. Institute of Field Archaeologists Technical Paper **13**.

Appendix 2: ASC Monitoring Sheet

A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD				
Project: 9, North Street Castlethorpe		Project No/Code: 886 1 CEC		Sheet: 1 of 1		
Client/Developer Mr & Mrs D. Shepherd		Date of visit: January 30 th				
Contact: David Shepherd		Phone: 01908 510244				
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 12.05 pm		Finish:		
Completed by: GRA						
Development Type:						
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: Overcast but dry, mild.						
Observations: Observed the footings of the extension. This was approximately 3.5m sq. The ground had been lightly removed by less than 0.2m. The footings were 0.65m wide and were taken down, initially only by about a further 0.25m to expose the actual slab. A point from two drainage runs (one assumed out to be a stone filled soakaway) on closer examination looks more like a pondlet. If so was 0.7m wide and filled with stray rubble, dark soil & charcoal flecks. This feature was out from quite high up.						
Comments: No dating material removed.						



Appendix 3: List of Photographs

Shot	Digital	Subject
1		Back of house and garden
2		General working view
3		View of footings on east side
4		General view of location of feature
5		Close-up of feature
6		

Appendix 4: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS						
Project Name:	Elmtree Cottage, Castlethorpe					
Short Description:	<i>On 30th January 2007, a watching brief was carried out by ASC Ltd at Elmtree Cottage, Castlethorpe, Milton Keynes. The work was undertaken during the construction of a small extension to the side of the existing structure. One feature, possibly a wall footing trench, was observed, but no finds or dating material were recovered.</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)	Listed		Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)			
Current land use:	Residential		Future work: (yes / no / unknown)		unknown	
Monument type:			Monument period:			
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)						
PROJECT LOCATION						
County:	Milton Keynes		OS reference: (8 figs min)		SP 7999 4449	
District:	Castlethorpe		Parish:		Castlethorpe	
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Elmtree Cottage, 9 North Street, Castlethorpe, Milton Keynes. MK19 7EW					
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	c.3.5m		Height OD: (metres)		c.88m	
PROJECT CREATORS						
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd					
Project brief originator:			Project design originator:			
Project Manager:	Dr J Hunn		Director/Supervisor:		Dr J Hunn	
Sponsor / funding body:	Mr David Shepherd					
PROJECT DATE						
Start date:	30.01.2007		End date:		30.01.2007	
PROJECT ARCHIVES						
	Location (Accession no.)		Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)			
Physical:						
Paper:						
Digital:						
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)						
Title:						
Serial title & volume:						
Author(s):						
Page nos			Date:			