

## Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

### **WATCHING BRIEF: DOVECOTE LAKES, LITTLE LINFORD, MILTON KEYNES**

*on behalf of Mr. D. Rambridge, Dovecote Lakes*



**By  
Teresa Hawtin BA MSc PIFA**

**May 2007**

**ASC: 912/LLD/1**

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## Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	LLD	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	912
<i>Event No:</i>	1116		
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Little Linford		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Haversham-cum-Little Linford CP		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 8479 4388		
<i>Present use:</i>	Open grassed area adjacent to lake		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Construction of Clubhouse and dwelling		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	01/01783/FUL		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Milton Keynes Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	19 <sup>th</sup> April 2007		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr Des Rambridge Badgers Reach Bragenham Lane Nr. Leighton Buzzard Bedfordshire LU7 0EE		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Mr Des Rambridge		

## Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Teresa Hawtin BA MSc PIFA	<i>Date:</i>	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2007
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

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

## Summary

*In April 2007 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out a watching brief during the excavation of footing trenches for a new Clubhouse at Dovecote Lakes, Little Linford. The village dates back to the Saxon period, if not earlier, and it was thought that the excavations might reveal medieval house platforms. Dovecote Lakes were formed by extensive gravel extraction undertaken in the 1960s during construction of the M1 motorway. This watching brief showed that the quarrying extended southwest of the lakes, towards Little Linford Lane, reaching a depth of between 1.5m and 1.8m below the current ground level. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were observed.*

## 1. Introduction

1.1 In April 2007 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out a watching brief at Dovecote Lakes, Little Linford (NGR SP 8479 4388; Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Mr. Des Rambridge on behalf of Dovecote Lakes, and was carried out according to ASC's standard watching brief methodology, approved by the Milton Keynes Council Planning Archaeologist. The relevant planning application reference is 01/01783/FUL.

### 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 Clubhouse and dwelling (Fig. 2).

### 1.3 Location

The site is located c.400m to the southeast of Little Linford village, north of Milton Keynes and west of Newport Pagnell. The proposed development is situated adjacent to Dovecote Lakes, north of Little Linford Lane and southeast of a woodland area called The Wilderness.

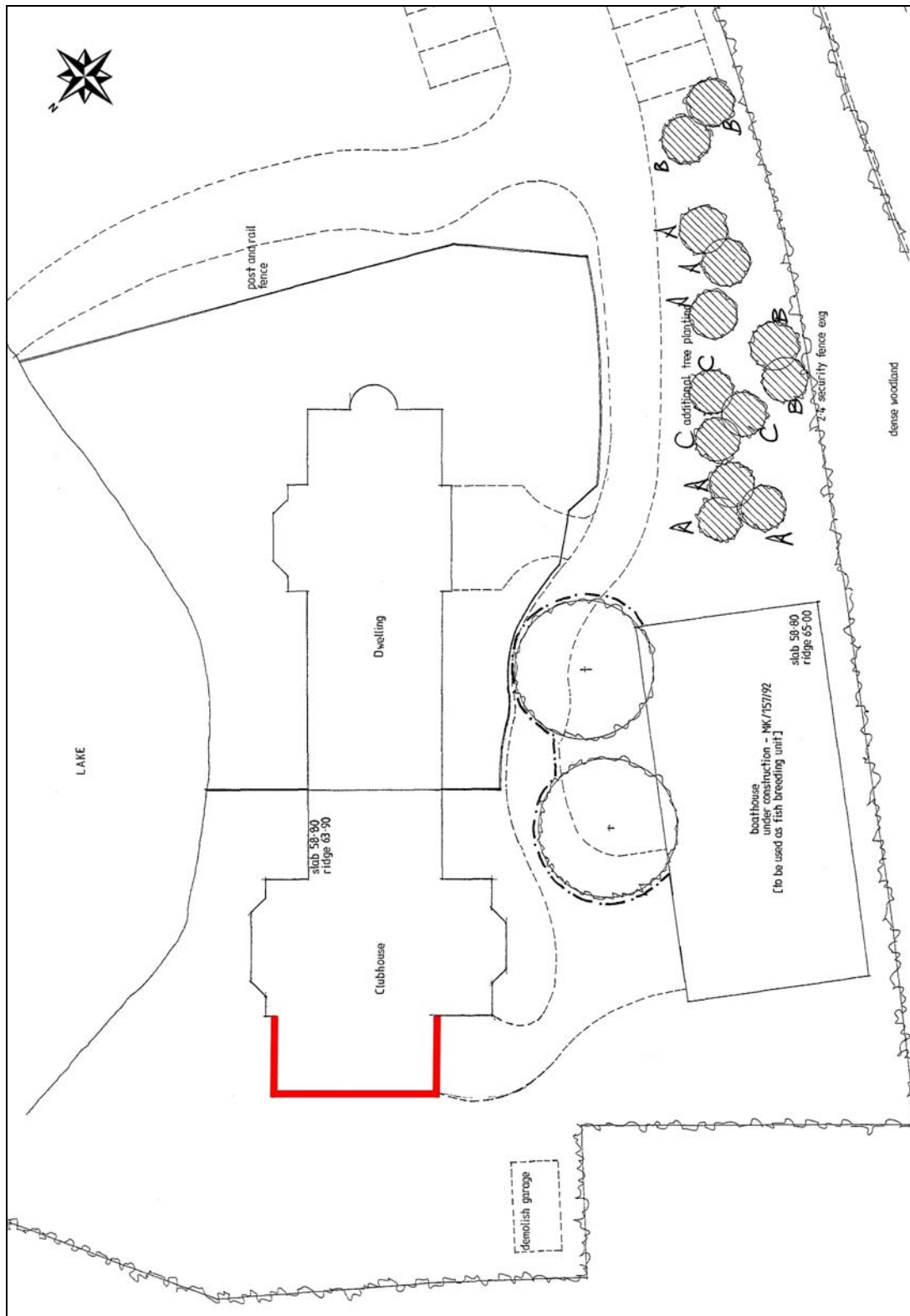
### 1.4 Description

The site affected by the proposed development is an area of rough grassland adjacent to Dovecote Lakes. A small garage, which will be demolished, currently lies to the west of the proposed Clubhouse but no other structures are present on the site.

### 1.5 Geology & Topography

The soils of the area are of the Bishampton 2 Association, which are characterised as *deep fine loamy soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging associated with well drained fine and coarse loamy soils in an undulating landscape. Some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged fine loamy soils* (Soil Survey 1983: 572t). The underlying geology is river terrace drift (*ibid*). The site lies on relatively flat ground, at a height of c.60m AOD.





**Figure 2:** Site plan showing monitored trenches in red (*scale 1:400*)

## **2. Aims & Methods**

### **2.1 Aims**

As described in ASC's standard watching brief methodology, the aims of the watching brief were:

- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains encountered by the proposed development.
- To carry out appropriate levels of investigation, recording and sampling of discovered archaeological features in the attempt 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), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual* and standard watching brief methodology.

### **2.3 Methods**

The work was carried out according to ASC's standard watching brief methodology (Section 1), which requires:

- monitoring by an experienced archaeologist of ground disturbance.

### **2.4 Constraints**

No constraints were encountered during the fieldwork.

### **3. Archaeological & Historical Background**

- 3.1** The village of Little Linford was probably established during the Saxon period (c.450-1066). The Domesday Book records that Little Linford Manor, in Bunsty Hundred, was owned by the Bishop of Coutances and held by *Eadgifu*, who had also held the manor before the Norman Conquest. It consisted of 4 hides with land for 4 ploughs, a mill, a meadow for 4 ploughs and woodland for 40 pigs (Williams & Martin 2003: 399).
- 3.2** The Church of St. Leonard and St. Andrew in Little Linford, c.350m from the site, dates to the early 13<sup>th</sup> century (Page 1969: 394), although much of it has been rebuilt (Pevsner & Williamson 1994: 439).
- 3.3** Linford Hall, dating to the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, once stood off Church Lane, but was demolished c.1959 (Pevsner & Williamson 1994: 440). The associated park was landscaped in 1761 by Richard Woods, but only the canal, grotto and an alcove survive today (*ibid.*). The buildings that currently make up Little Linford village are mainly built on the site of the old Linford Hall estate (Haversham cum Little Linford Parish Council 1993).
- 3.4** Linford Lakes, which includes Dovecote Lakes, consists of 16 man-made lakes of various shapes and sizes created by gravel extraction. A series of planning permissions were granted between 1959 and 1968 for gravel extraction and subsequent restoration (Milton Keynes Borough Council 1991: 1). Much of this was related to the construction of the M1 motorway.



## **4. Results**

- 4.1** On 19<sup>th</sup> April 2007 the author monitored the excavation of three foundation trenches by mechanical digger (Fig. 2; Plates 1-4). These trenches form the northwest end of the proposed Clubhouse and were being excavated to investigate the nature of the ground and to inform the Council Building Control Inspector.
- 4.2** All trenches were c.0.75m to 0.85m wide. The longest trench, oriented NE-SW, was c.11m in length and the two perpendicular trenches were each c.5.8m long. The trenches were excavated to a depth of c.1.8m to 2.1m.
- 4.3** The topsoil consisted of a dark brown sandy loam, ranging from c.20mm up to c.300mm in thickness.
- 4.4** Below the topsoil was a mixed mid orange-brown / mid grey-brown / pale yellow-brown sandy and gravelly clay deposit containing modern brick fragments, large lumps of concrete, plastic pipes, plastic sheeting and a variety of other debris (Plates 2 & 3). This deposit appeared to be a modern make-up layer, probably dating to the restoration of the quarry, and reached a depth of between 1.5m to 1.8m below ground level.
- 4.5** The natural blue-grey clay was visible below this modern deposit and was waterlogged (Plate 4). Some dark staining was visible on the surface of the clay, probably relating to its previous exposure during quarrying. The bases of the trenches cut into the undisturbed natural clay by up to c.0.3m and no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were observed.



**Plate 1:** NE-SW trench



**Plate 2:** Section of NW-SE trench adjacent to lake, showing made-up layer containing modern debris



**Plate 3:** Section of NW-SE trench furthest from lake



**Plate 4:** Section of NW-SE trench adjacent to lake, showing natural clay at base

## 5. Conclusions

- 5.1** The historical background of Little Linford suggests that the settlement dates back to the Saxon period, if not earlier. Archaeological monitoring of the work undertaken at Dovecote Lakes was required because of the possibility that the medieval settlement extended to this area and it was thought that medieval house platforms could have been encountered.
- 5.2** The results show that this area was part of the gravel extraction undertaken in the 1960s during the construction of the M1 motorway, from which Dovecote Lakes originate. Any archaeological remains that were present on the site are likely to have been completely obliterated by this extensive quarrying.
- 5.3** It is unlikely that any archaeological remains will be revealed during further construction work on the site.
- 5.4** *Confidence Rating*
- The watching brief was undertaken on a bright and hot day. The ground was moist and the trench bases were clearly visible before the water gradually accumulated. The natural geology was easily recognised and was distinguishable from the modern make-up layer above it.
- 5.5** We are confident that any archaeological features revealed during this evaluation would have been identifiable, and a high degree of confidence is attached to these results.

## **6. Acknowledgements**

The writer is grateful to Mr. Des Rambridge of Dovecote Lakes for commissioning this project and to Nick Crank, who monitored the project on behalf of Milton Keynes Council.

The fieldwork was carried out by the author and the report was edited by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

## **7. Archive**

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Method Statement
2. Initial Report
3. Clients site plan
4. Site Monitoring Sheet
5. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum.

## 8. References

- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. English Heritage (London).
- Haversham cum Little Linford Parish Council 1993 *Haversham and Little Linford Appraisal 1993: Final Report*.
- 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)*.
- Milton Keynes Borough Council 1991 *Linford Lakes Linear Park, Milton Keynes (Draft) Planning Brief*.
- Page, W. (ed.) 1969 *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: A History of Buckinghamshire* Vol. IV. Institute of Historical Research (London).
- Pevsner, N. & Williamson, E. 1994 *The Buildings of England: Buckinghamshire*. Penguin Books (London).
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpender).
- Williams, A. & Martin, G.H. (eds.) 2003 *Domesday Book: A Complete Translation*. Penguin Books (London).



## Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheet



A.S.C. LTD

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: Dovecote Lakes, Little Linford, MK		Project No/Code: 912/LLD	Sheet: 1 of 1
Client/Developer (Agent Lawrence Wilbraham)		Date of visit: 19/4/07	
Contact: Mr. Des Rambridge		Phone: 01525 261126	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 8.15	Finish: 11.15	
Completed by: Teresa Hawlin			
Development Type:			
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: Bright + hot			
Observations:			
Excavation of footings for new clubhouse across c. 1.8 m deep (up to 2.1m).			
Topsail v. shallow in places up to c. 30cm			
Below that mixed sandy/gravelly clay containing modern brick, concrete, plastic pipes, etc.			
Probably made-up when quarry went out of use (lake was part of quarry - from time M1 motorway was built according to Mr Rambridge)			
Natural blue-grey clay (waterlogged) seen at base of trench 1.5-1.8 m below ground level. Some blackish staining on surface from when it was previously exposed by quarrying			
Comments:			
Spoke to Nick. Will produce report. Unlikely that further visits required.			

## Appendix 2: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Dovecote Lakes, Little Linford, Milton Keynes		
Short Description:	<i>In April 2007 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out a watching brief during the excavation of footing trenches for a new Clubhouse at Dovecote Lakes, Little Linford. The village dates back to the Saxon period, if not earlier, and it was thought that the excavations might reveal medieval house platforms. Dovecote Lakes were formed by extensive gravel extraction undertaken in the 1960s during construction of the M1 motorway. This watching brief showed that the quarrying extended southwest of the lakes, towards Little Linford Lane, reaching a depth of between 1.5m and 1.8m below the current ground level. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were observed.</i>		
Project Type:	Watching Brief		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	None	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	None
Current land use:	Rough grassland	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	Unknown
Monument type:	None	Monument period:	N/A
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Buckinghamshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 8479 4388
District:	Milton Keynes	Parish:	Haversham-cum-Little Linford
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Dovecote Lakes, Little Linford, Milton Keynes, MK19 7EB		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	c. 440 sq m	Height OD: (metres)	c. 60m AOD
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	Nick Crank	Project design originator:	Standard Method Statement
Project Manager:	Bob Zeepvat	Director/Supervisor:	Teresa Hawtin
Sponsor / funding body:	Dovecote Lakes		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	19 <sup>th</sup> April 2007	End date:	19 <sup>th</sup> April 2007
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	N/A	N/A	
Paper:	Buckinghamshire County Museum	Method statement, client plan, site monitoring sheets, this report	
Digital:	Buckinghamshire County Museum	Digital photographs, this report	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: Dovecote Lakes, Little Linford, Milton Keynes		
Serial title & volume:	ASC: 912/LLD/1		
Author(s):	Teresa Hawtin BA MSc PIFA	Date:	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2007