

# Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF: BEACHAMPTON TO SHENLEY GROUNDS REPLACEMENT WATER MAIN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE & MILTON KEYNES

on behalf of Anglian Water Services Ltd



**Nigel Wilson HND AIFA** 

September 2007

ASC: 847/SGB/1

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

ASC site code:	SGB		Project no:		847		
Accession No		Requeste	ested but not yet supplied				
SMR Event No (MK):		1135	1135				
County:		Bucking	namshire				
Village/Town:		Beacham	pton				
Civil Parishes:		Beachampton CP; Calverton CP					
NGR (to 8 figs):		SP 7722 3693 to SP 8040 3696					
Length of Route:		3.2km					
Present land use:		Agricultural: pasture and arable					
Planning proposal:		Construction of water main					
Local Planning Author	rities:	Aylesbury Vale DC: Milton Keynes Council					
Planning application	ref/date:	n/a					
Client:		Anglian Water Services Ltd					
		c/o BSP	c/o BSP Associates Ltd				
		45a High	45a High Street				
		Stony Stratford					
		Milton Keynes					
		MK11 12	AA				
Contact name:		Terry Sn	nith				

### **Internal Quality Check**

Primary Author:	Nigel Wilson HND AIFA	Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> September 2007
Revisions:		Date:	
Edited/Checked By:		Date:	

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### **Plates:**

Cover: General view of the pipeline easement looking west

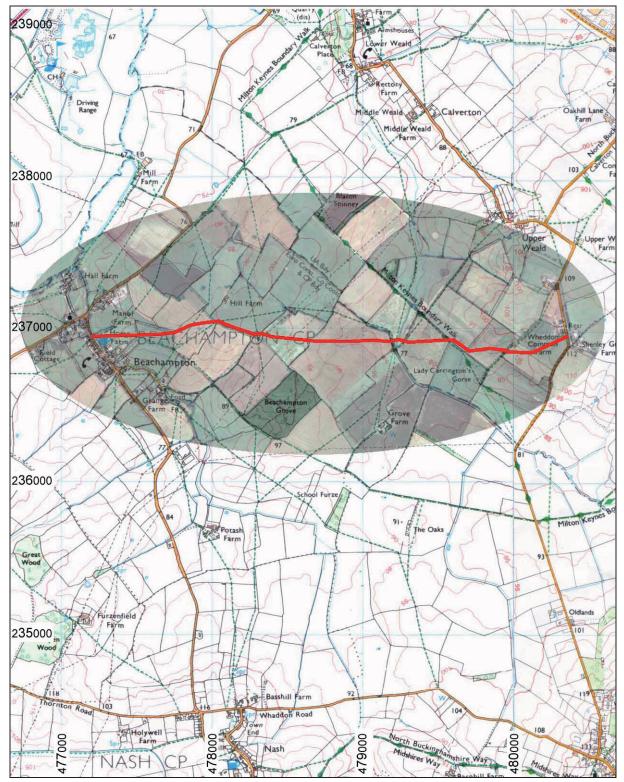


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

### **Summary**

During August and September 2007 a watching brief was maintained on the stripping of a water pipeline easement between Beachampton and Shenley Grounds. The only features of archaeological interested were three fields of medieval ridge and furrow towards the Beachampton end of the route.

### 1 Introduction

1.1 During August and September 2007 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out an watching brief on a water pipeline running between Beachampton and Shenley Grounds (NGR SP 7722 3693 to SP 8040 3696: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by BSP acting on behalf of Anglian Water Services Ltd, and was carried according to a verbal scheme agreed with the archaeological advisors for the areas concerned, the Buckinghamshire County Council Archaeology Service (BCAS) and the Milton Keynes Council Planning Archaeologist (MKCPA), and a project design prepared by ASC (Zeepvat 2007).

### 1.2 Planning Background

This watching brief was required under the terms of AWS statutory environmental obligations, in response to proposals for the construction of a water main.

### 1.3 The Route (Fig. 2)

Starting at its western end, the water main route commences at a junction with an existing main on the west side of Beachampton High Street at NGR SP 7722 3693. It crosses the High Street and the adjoining stream, passing into farmland on the east side of the road (Fields 1 & 2), which is currently under pasture. The route climbs the field in an easterly direction, passing through the eastern boundary of Field 2 c.0.3km from the starting point. From this point the route takes a more northerly alignment, crossing Field 3, which is also pasture, to its easternmost point, c.0.7km from the starting point. Passing through the boundary into pasture Field 4, the route turns to the south-east and follows the south-western boundary of the field into Field 5. About 70m into Field 5 the route swings to an east-west alignment, which it follows to Shenley Grounds. In Field 5, which is arable, the route passes beneath two high-voltage electricity lines. From its change of alignment in Field 5 the route follows an east-facing slope, falling from c.100m OD to c.80m OD to the brook marking the Bucks/MK boundary, which it crosses between Fields 6 and 7. From there the route rises again through Fields 7-12, reaching 112m OD at the Shenley Grounds reservoir.

The proposed water main closely follows the route of an existing water main, which it replaces.

### 1.4 Geology

From Beachampton to its high point in Field 5, and at its east end through Fields 9-11, the water main route passes through soils of the Hanslope association (Soil Survey 1983, 411d), described as "slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils. Some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils. Slight risk of water erosion". In the lower

lying areas of Fields 6-8, the route passes through soils of the Denchworth association (Soil Survey 1983, 712b), described as "slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clayey soils with similar fine loamy over clayey soils. Some fine loamy over clayey soils with only slight seasonal waterlogging and some slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils." The underlying geology comprises Jurassic and Cretaceous clays.

### 2 Aims & Methods

### 2.1 *Aims*

As described in the project design (Section 2), the aims of the evaluation were:

- To establish the date, nature and extent of any evidence for activity or occupation found in the water main corridor;
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;

### 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 project design (Section 2), which required:

- A watching brief during topsoil stripping of the easement and, if necessary, during excavation of the water main trench
- Adequate provisions for the investigation and recording of any significant archaeology revealed by the above.
- Preparation of a detailed reports on the results of the watching brief, and reporting according to current BCAS and MKCPA requirements.

### 2.4 Constraints

With the exception of Field 1, through which the pipe was installed using a trenching machine cutting from ground level, no constraints were encountered and the watching brief was successfully undertaking using the methods described above.

### 3 Archaeological & Historical Background

Historical & Archaeological Background (Fig. 2)

The water main route passes through a landscape of significant archaeological potential. Very little archaeological investigation has been undertaken in the area, except at the eastern end of the route, in connection with the development of Milton Keynes. The following is a summary of the known historical and archaeological background of an area extending *c*.1km either side of the water main route, based upon information from the Buckinghamshire (CAS) and Milton Keynes (MKC) Sites & Monuments Records. Sites within the study area are listed in Appendix 1: those mentioned in the following text are located in Fig. 2.

Evidence for prehistoric activity in the northern part of Milton Keynes and adjacent areas is generally limited to the Ouse valley, and that is where the only monument of this period in the study area has been recorded. About 350m north of Hall Farm, Beachampton, a circular cropmark identified as a Bronze Age ring ditch (ploughed out burial mound) is recorded on the west bank of the Ouse (CAS01981).

Moving on to the Iron Age, the only recorded find of this period within the study area are two parallel ditches containing Iron Age pottery, found during a watching brief by ASC on the construction of a water main from Shenley Dens to Oakhill, c.0.8km south-east of Shenley Grounds (Records of Bucks 46, 199). Evidence of Iron Age activity from other recent work on the west flank of Milton Keynes, such as the excavations at Oxley Park, south of Oakhill Wood (ibid: Records of Bucks 47, 220), may suggest that Iron Age activity is more widespread in the study area than the available information demonstrates. A cropmark identified as a rectangular enclosure c.0.6km south of Shenley Grounds (MKC8195) may date to this period.

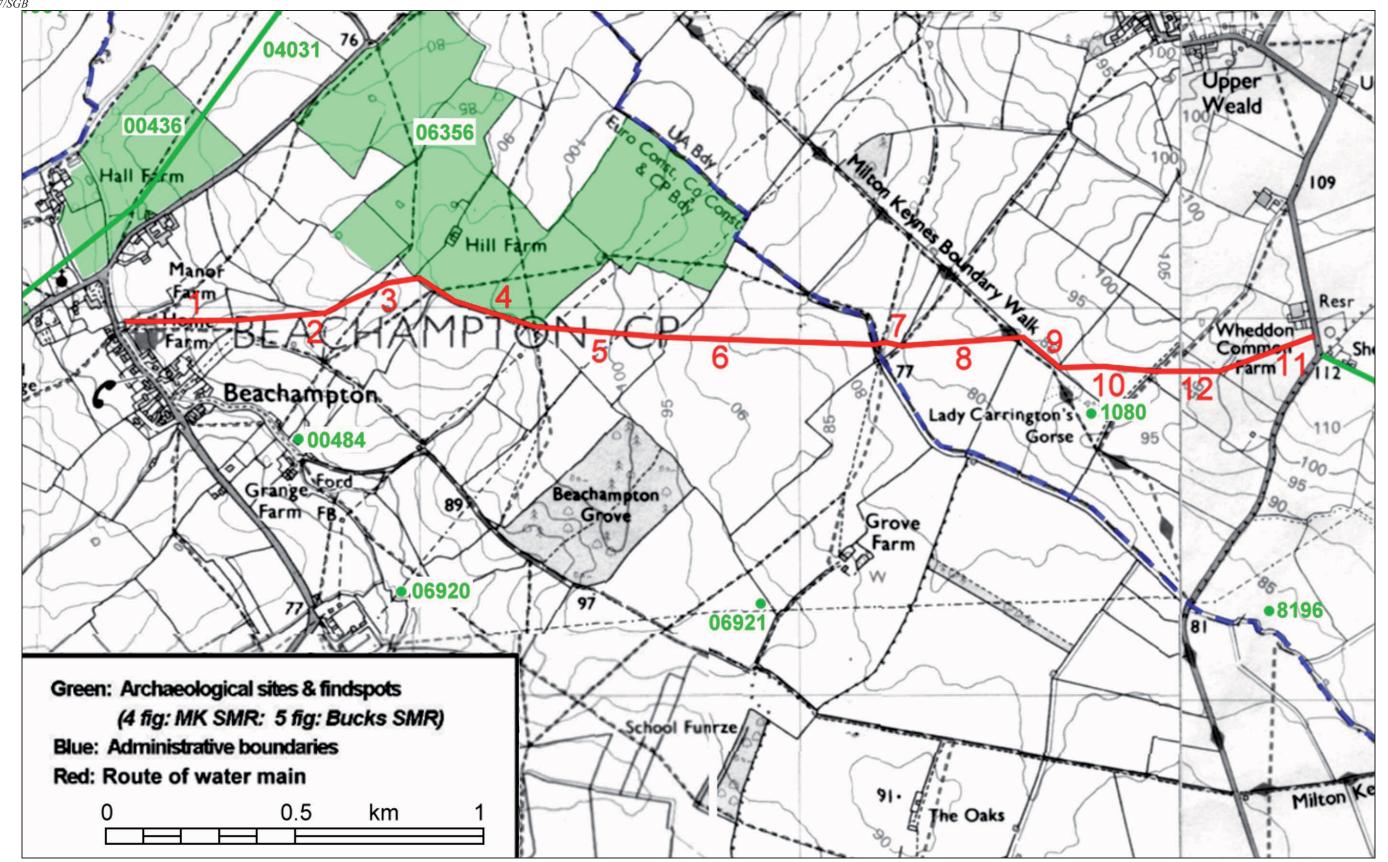
During the Roman period, north Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes formed a part of the *civitas* (tribal territory) of the *Catuvellauni*, with its capital at *Verulamium* (St Albans). The nearest Roman town to the study area was *Magiovinium*, near Fenny Stratford, *c*.10km to the south-east of Shenley Grounds. The Roman road now known as *Watling Street* passes 1.5km north-east of Shenley Grounds. In addition, the line of a possible Roman road (CAS04031) identified by the Viatores (1964, road 174) following the south side of the Ouse valley passes to the immediate north of Beachampton Church. Evidence from fieldwork in Milton Keynes (Zeepvat 1987) suggests that occupation on the claylands in the Roman period comprised both native settlements and villa establishments, the latter located at intervals of *c*.2km along both edges of the Ouse valley, above the flood plain. There seems no reason to suppose that this pattern did not continue up the valley, to the study area and beyond. Iron slag and Roman pottery were found in 1968 during fieldwalking to the south of Field 10, 180m south of the water main route (MKC1030).

The villages of Beachampton and Calverton, through which parishes the water main route passes, are probably of Saxon origin from their etymology (-ham, -ton), and the fact that both are mentioned in the Domesday survey (1086). At that time Beachampton was in the possession of Walter Giffard, and Calverton formed part of the lands of Hugh de Bolebec (Page 1927, 150 & 308). The only possible Saxon find

from the study area is a spearhead, found on the north bank of the Ouse in Wicken parish (CAS02424). From surviving earthworks (CAS00436) the village at Beachampton may originally have been located to the north of the Calverton-Thornton road, around Hall Farm (originally *Beachampton Hall*), and the parish church, the earliest part of which dates to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The present village, to the south of the Calverton-Thornton road, contains a number of listed buildings, mostly of 17<sup>th</sup>-century or later date, which are recorded in the Bucks SMR. Calverton, the focus of which lies 1.5km north of the water main route, is comprised of a principal settlement (Lower Weald), and two subsidiary settlements (Middle Weald and Upper Weald). Upper Weald is the nearest to the pipeline, being 0.7km north of Shenley Grounds. The Milton Keynes SMR records a number of listed buildings in Upper Weald, all of 18<sup>th</sup>-century or later date.

The Buckinghamshire SMR records a significant area of surviving ridge and furrow to the north-east of Beachampton, designated as being of county importance (CAS06356). This extends into Field 4 on the water main route, which skirts its southern edge. On a recent site visit it was noted that, while ridge and furrow is present in Field 4, its south end is not distinct, and may have been truncated when the original water main was installed, at least 20 years ago. The open fields of Beachampton were enclosed in 1579-80, presumably by private agreement, as there is no enclosure act (Page 1927, 149), while Calverton parish was enclosed by act of Parliament in 1782 (*ibid*, 308). The present landscape of both parishes, with the addition and subtraction of a few field boundaries, essentially derives from those enclosures. There are SMR references to other medieval or later landscape features in the study area, such as isolated field barns and enclosures (CAS06920, CAS 06921) and lanes (MKC7914), that have disappeared as a result of changes in farming practices.

Beachampton to Shenley Grounds Water Main



**Figure 2:** Route plan and archaeological sites and findspots (scale 1:10,000)

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### 4 Results

- 4.1 About 10m of the 15m easement was stripped using a 360° excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, the remaining 5m was used for storing the stripped soil. Only sufficient soil to reveal the top of the subsoil was removed.
- 4.2 As each field was stripped the exposed surface was visually examined for features and the spoil heaps scanned for artefacts. Earthworks associated with Beachampton and ridge and furrow in fields 1, 2 and 3 have been previously noted. The route of the pipeline did not cut through the earthworks, however the ridge and furrow could not be avoided and the topsoil was removed whilst retaining the shape of the upstanding ridges. The ridge and furrow was rapidly plotted in each field Whilst the plots are available with the archive they have not been reproduced in the current report as a 10m segment of ridge and furrow is fairly meaningless and it is felt sufficient to mention its presence. The only other buried features exposed along the route were two recent field boundary ditches. Both ditches were orientated NE-SW one at the western end of Field 3, the other at the western end of Field 8. Both of these ditches are depicted on recent Ordnance Survey maps.
- 4.3 The location of each field and the depths of deposits are listed in Appendix 2.

### 5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Prior to the start of the watching brief little was known regarding the archaeology of the area through which the pipeline passes and it was considered possible that observation of the stripping of the easement, though only 10m wide, could reveal unknown archaeological features.
- 5.2 The watching brief has confirmed that, other than the earthworks associated with Beachampton and the previously recorded ridge and furrow, no hitherto unknown sites were crossed by the route. The total lack of artefacts also indicates that no major settlement sites lie close to the route. However it is possible that field systems and non settlement features may lie undiscovered close to the route.

### 5.3 Confidence rating

Full co-operation was received from Anglian Water Services Ltd and their contractors Weldon Plant Hire Ltd. A high confidence rating is therefore attached to the results of this watching brief.

### 6. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to BSP acting on behalf of Anglian Water Services Ltd for commissioning ASC to undertake the watching brief. We would like also like to thank David Radford from Buckinghamshire County Council and Nick Crank from Milton Keynes Council for their curatorial advice during the project.

The project was managed by Bob Zeepvat MIFA and the watching brief was carried out by Nigel Wilson AIFA.

We would finally like to acknowledge the assistance and cooperation given by the machine driver from Weldon Plant.

### 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
  - 7. B/W prints & negatives
  - 8. 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 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).
- Zeepvat B. 2007 Shenley Grounds to Beachampton Replacement Water Main. Project design for watching brief. ASC Ltd (Ref 847/SGB)

### **Secondary Sources**

- Page, W (ed) 1927 The Victoria History of the County of Buckingham, vol. 4 (London).
- Soil Survey 1983 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend (Harpenden).
- Viatores 1964 Roman roads in the south east Midlands. Gollancz (London).
- Zeepvat, R.J., 1987 'Romano-British settlement in the upper Ouse and Ouzel valleys' *in* Mynard, D.C. (ed.), 1987 *Roman Milton Keynes*, 6-18. Buckinghamshire Archaeol. Soc. Monog. Ser. 1 (Aylesbury).

# **Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets**

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Footings Services Roads Lev	Developm relling Qua		Pipelines	Other (sp	ecify):		
Site & weather conditions:							
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A.S.C. LTD	ARCHAE	OLOGIC	AL FIELD	MONI	TORIN	G RE	CORD
Project: SHANIFE GRAL	INDS TO	Project No/	Code:	SOB	Sheet:	of	12
DEACHATT P 70N Client/Developer	PIPECINE	Date of visit:	26/9	107			
Client/Developer ANG-LIAN	WATITA	1356	٥ ,				
Contact:	10 ·1 /1/ 1()		Phone:				
Duration of Visit Start: (inc. travel):	8-00		Finish:	9.0	0		
Completed by:		<u>l.</u>					
70	Developm	ent Type:					
Footings Services Roads	Levelling Qua	mying Pi	pelines	Other (spe	cify):		
Site & weather conditions:		n -ul-	•				
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Comments:		<i></i>	.1617				
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### **Appendix 2: Field descriptions**

# | NGR | West | East | SP 77205/36966 | SP 77504/36974 | | Facing west |

Topsoil 0-300mm

Natural limestone

### Comments

This field was trenched using a trenching machine. Ridge and furrow run roughly north south across the field. Four ridges (4.8m ridge to ridge) survived at the eastern end of the field. Height from base of furrow to top of ridge 0.2–0.5m. The western end of the field contains earthworks, house platforms? Not disturbed during the trenching.

Field 2			
	NGR		
And the state of t	West	East	
Facing east Tonseil 0, 200mm	SP 77504/36974	SP 77745/36986	

Topsoil 0-300mm

Natural subsoil clay

### **Comments**

North south orientated ridge and furrow (31 ridges, 4.8m ridge to ridge) continues from Field 1. Height from the base of furrow to top of ridge 0.2–0.5m. Only topsoil removed shape retained for reinstatement.

Field 3
Facing northeast

	NGR	
	West	East
	SP 77745 36986	SP 78024 37057
NA PER		
Sec. 1		
1		

Topsoil 0-350mm

Natural subsoil clay

### **Comments**

Deep ploughed into the natural clay. Old field boundary observed at western end of the field, filled relatively recently as it is still shown on the OS 1:25000 map. Possible bases of two shallow discontinuous N-S furrows observed at the eastern end of the field (ploughed out).



NGR	
West	East
SP 78024 37057	SP 78317 36980

Topsoil 0-300mm

Natural subsoil clay

### **Comments**

Distinct north to south orientated ridge and furrow (34 ridges, 6.9m ridge to ridge) crossing the trench. Height from base of furrow to top of ridge 0.3-0.5m, very well preserved. Only topsoil removed shape retained for reinstatement.

Field 5			
	NGR		
The state of the s	West	East	
Facing east	SP 78317 36980	SP 78642 36930	
Topsoil 0-300mm			
Natural subsoil clay			
Comments			
Pasture no ridge and furrow.			

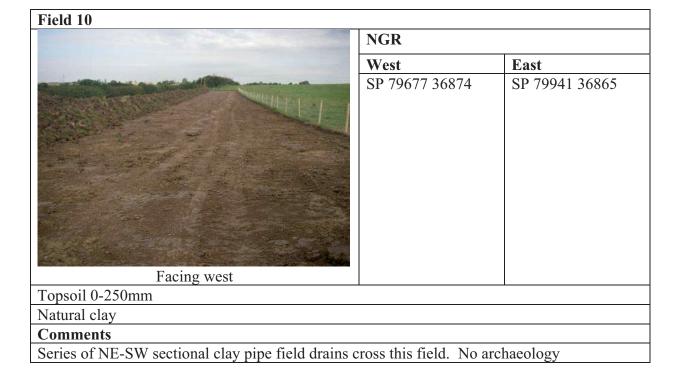
Field 6				
	NGR			
Maria Company of the	West	East		
	SP 78642 36930	SP 79181 36926		
Facing east				
Topsoil 0-300mm				
Natural subsoil clay				
Comments				
Arable, no ridge and furrow				

Field 7				
		NGR		
-	de la	West	East	
Facing east		SP 79181 36926	SP 79261 36929	
Topsoil 0-250mm				
Natural subsoil silty clay				
Comments				
Colluvial deposit in the valley bott	tom, ground dam	o. No archaeology		

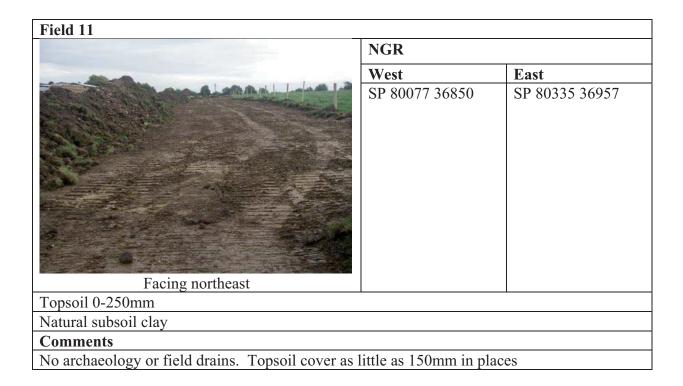
Field 8				
	NGR			
	West	East		
	SP 79261 36929	SP 79570 36935		
Facing west				
Topsoil 0-250mm				
Natural subsoil clay				
Comments	·			

Modern field boundary at the western end of the field continuation to the north still marked by a hedge. Series of NE-SW sectional clay pipe field drains cross this field. No archaeology

Field 9					
	NGR				
	West	East			
	SP 79570 36935	SP 79677 36874			
NO PICTURE					
Topsoil 0-250mm					
Natural subsoil clay					
Comments					
Series of NE-SW sectional clay pipe field drain	ns cross this field. No an	rchaeology			



Field 12			
	NGR		
	West	East	
Facing East	SP 79941 36865	SP 80077 36850	
Topsoil 0-250mm			
Natural subsoil clay			
Comments			
No archaeology, or field drains			



# **Appendix 3: List of Photographs**

SIIE NAN	SITE NAME: Beachampton to Shenley Grounds Water Main			SITE NO/CODE: 847/SGB	
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject		
1		✓	Field 1		
2		✓	Field 1		
3	✓	✓	Field 1		
4		✓	Field 1		
5		✓	Field 1		
6		✓	Field 1		
7	✓	✓	Field 1		
8	✓	✓	Field 11		
9	✓	✓	Field 11		
10	✓	✓	Field 11		
11	✓	✓	Field 12		
12	✓	✓	Field 12		
13	✓	✓	Field 1		
14	✓	✓	Field 2		
15	✓	✓	Field 2		
16	✓	✓	Field 3		
17	✓	✓	Field 3		
18	✓	✓	Field 3 modern ditch		
19	✓	✓	Field 4		
20		✓	Field 4		
21		✓	Field 4		
22	✓	✓	Field 4		
23		✓	Field 4		
24		✓	Field 4		
25		✓	Field 5		
26	✓	✓	Field 5		
27		✓	Field 6		
28		✓	Field 7		
29	✓	✓	Field 7		
30	✓	✓	Field 8		
31		✓	Field 8		
32		✓	Field 10		
33		✓	General view		

**Appendix 4: ASC OASIS Form** 

	PROJEC	Γ DETAILS					
Project Name:	Beachampton to Shenley Grou	nds Water Main					
Short Description:	During August and September 2007 a watching brief was maintained on the stripping of a water pipeline easement between Beachampton and Shenley Grounds. The only features of archaeological interested were three fields of medieval ridge and furrow towards the						
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	Beachampton end of the route.  Watching Brief						
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	none	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	none				
Current land use:	mixed farmland	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	no				
Monument type:	Earthworks/ Ridge & Furrow	Monument period:	Medieval				
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	n/a						
PROJECT LOCATION							
County:	Buckinghamshire/ Milton Keynes	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 7722 3693 to SP 8040 3696				
District:	Aylesbury Vale/ Milton Keynes	Parish:	Beachampton CP Calverton CP				
Site address: (with postcode if known)	n/a						
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	3.5km	Height OD: (metres)	100.00				
	PROJECT	CREATORS	•				
Organisation:	Archaeological Services 8	ervices & Consultancy Ltd					
Project brief originator:	Buckinghamshire County Council	Project design originator:	Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd				
Project Manager:	Bob Zeepvat	Director/Supervisor:	Nigel Wilson				
Sponsor / funding body:	Anglian Water Services Ltd	AT D.175					
		CT DATE					
Start date:	20/08/2007	End date:					
	PROJECT	ARCHIVES					
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal	l bone, files/sheets)				
Physical:	Bucks County Museum AYBCM2007.						
Paper:	Bucks County Museum AYBCM2007.						
Digital:	Bucks County Museum AYBCM2007.& Milton Keynes HER						
BIBLIOGRAF	PHY (Journal/monograph, publis	hed or forthcoming, or unpublis	hed client report)				
itle: Watching Brief Report Beachampton to Shenley Grounds Water Main							
Serial title & volume:	Unpublished Client Report (Ref: ASC/847/BSG/2)						
Author(s):	Nigel Wilson HND AIFA	I n /	To 1 1 0007				
Page nos		Date:	September 2007				