

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:  
LAND REAR OF  
153 SHENLEY ROAD  
BLETCHLEY  
MILTON KEYNES**

*on behalf of Lombardy Properties Ltd*



**J Richards BA PIFA**

**December 2007**

**ASC: 980/BSR/1**

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## Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	BSR	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	980
<i>Event No:</i>	1138	<i>Accession No:</i>	
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire (historic county)		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Bletchley		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Milton Keynes		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 85315 34185		
<i>Present use:</i>	Residential Garden and Garage		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Demolition of Garage and Construction of New Dwelling		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	06/01642/FUL		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Milton Keynes Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	24 <sup>th</sup> September to 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2007		
<i>Client:</i>	Lombardy Properties Ltd 74 Wordsworth Avenue Newport Pagnell Milton Keynes MK16 8RJ		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Ken Pike		

## Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Jenny Richards BA PIFA	<i>Date:</i>	18 <sup>th</sup> December 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

*In October 2007 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd carried out an archaeological watching brief on land to the rear of 153 Shenley Road, Bletchley during groundworks for a new building. The excavation of footings trenches by mechanical excavator was monitored. No archaeological remains were observed and it appears that the site had been terraced prior to the construction of the garage which previously stood on the site.*

## 1 Introduction

1.1 In October 2007 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at land rear of 153 Shenley Road, Bletchley (NGR SP 85315 34185; Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by *Lombardy Properties Ltd*, and was carried out according to ASC's standard methodology for archaeological watching briefs. The relevant planning application reference is 06/01642/FUL.

### 1.2 *Planning Background*

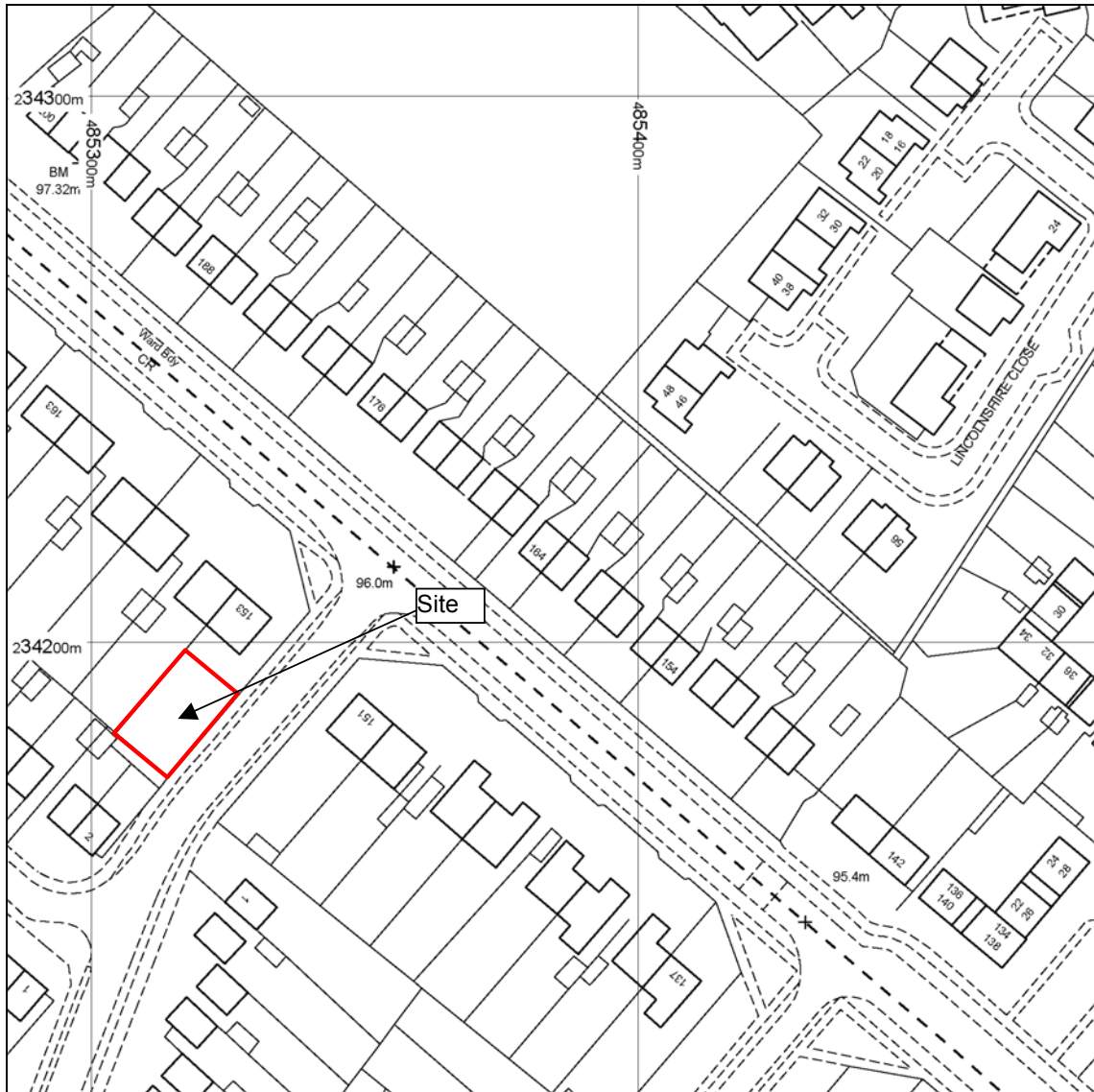
This watching brief has been required as a planning condition under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), in response to proposals for the demolition of a garage and construction of a new single storey dwelling.

### 1.3 *Location & Description*

The site is located in the town of Bletchley, in the administrative district of Milton Keynes (Fig. 1). It lies c.1km northwest of Bletchley town centre, and previously formed part of the garden of 153 Shenley Road, Bletchley. The site is an approximately rectangular piece of land c.260 metres square (Fig. 2).

### 1.5 *Geology & Topography*

The soils of the area are recorded as Unsurveyed, as the site is within an urban area. However, they are likely to be of the *Hanslope Association*, which comprises *slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils*. *Some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils*. *Slight risk of water erosion*. The underlying geology is likely to comprise chalky till (Soil Survey 1983, 411d). The site is on relatively flat ground at an elevation of c. 96mAOD.



**Figure 2:** Site plan (scale 1:1250)

## **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 date, 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*.

### **2.3 Methods**

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

### **2.4 Constraints**

The work was not hindered by any factors, and all observations were made after the site had been stripped to the depth required for the development.

## 3 Archaeological & Historical Background

### 3.1 Introduction

Much of the archaeological and historical background below has been taken from a project design and report prepared for an archaeological evaluation at Romans Field School, Shenley Road, Bletchley, c. 200m northwest of the development site (Rouse 2007).

### 3.2 Prehistoric (before 600BC-AD43)

No settlement of prehistoric date is known within Bletchley parish, although some isolated Bronze Age flints have been recorded.

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

The major Roman settlement of *Magiovinium* was located to the northeast of the development site, and the Roman road of Watling Street runs c.1km to the north east of the site. It is therefore not surprising that a number of Roman occupation sites have been found within the area, most significantly including the discovery of a T-shaped corn drier and a possible 4<sup>th</sup> century threshing floor during the construction of the Romans Field School in 1971.

Four other small farmsteads are known within the area, at Sherwood Drive, Holne Chase, Whaddon Way and Windmill Hill. The association of many of these farmsteads with grain-drying kilns such as that found at the school suggest that this was a reasonably productive arable area in the second to fourth century (Croft & Mynard 1993).

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

There is little evidence for Saxon activity in the area, but it is reasonable to assume that there was settlement during this period, as we know that there was substantial occupation during the Roman period.

### 3.5 Medieval (1066-1500)

Bletchley is not mentioned in the *Domesday Survey*, but *Etone* (Water Eaton) is referred to as being held by Geoffrey Bishop of Coutances, and is recorded as having a relatively high value with a view to the number of recorded villagers, small-holders and slaves (Williams & Martin 2003). This indicates that there were already several dispersed settlements in the area, which went on to become the three main settlements of West or Far Bletchley, Bletchley Church and Water Eaton (Croft & Mynard 1993).

### 3.6 Post-Medieval (1500-1900)

Bletchley became nationally famous for its brick industry, which started in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and grew substantially with the construction of the Grand Junction Canal, which opened 1800. Initially the brickworks supplied the local area, but the construction of the London to Birmingham railway in 1838 (now part of the West Coast main line), which ran through the parish allowed them to be sent further afield. The main area of brick production was to the south of the parish, on the Water Eaton-Newton Longville boundary (Croft & Mynard 1993, BCM 1980).



**3.7 Modern** *(1900-present)*

During the modern period Bletchley has been subject to a great deal of development, especially after the designation of Milton Keynes as a new town in 1964. Figure 1 shows the layout of the area surrounding the site *c.*1998, and shows how much the area has been encroached on by residential development fuelled by the expansion of Milton Keynes.

## **4 Results**

- 4.1 In total 4 site visits were made between 24<sup>th</sup> September and 1st November to monitor the excavation of the footing trenches for the new dwelling.
- 4.2 The dark blackish brown silty clay topsoil overlay the light grey chalky clay natural strata at a depth of 0.40m below ground level (Plate 1). A number of shallow depressions filled with topsoil were observed in the sections of the footing trenches. These contained no finds, and have been interpreted as being root disturbance from modern garden shrubs (Plate 2): one of these features adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site still had the roots in situ.
- 4.3 No archaeological remains were observed during the watching brief. The ground had been disturbed by the construction of the garage which had previously occupied the site. The removal of the footings of this garage had reduced the ground level almost to the level of the natural strata (Plate 3).



**Plate 1:** Typical section of footings



**Plate 2:** Section showing root disturbance



**Plate 3:** Overview showing stratigraphy cut away by terracing

## **5. Conclusions**

5.1 No archaeological remains were observed during the watching brief. The ground disturbance caused by levelling the site for the construction of the garage would have damaged any archaeological remains present.

### 5.2 *Confidence Rating*

Full co-operation was received from *Lombardy Properties Ltd*. Heavy rain in the days before the commencement of groundworks resulted in the site becoming waterlogged. However, the watching brief took place during a period of dry weather and a moderate to high confidence rating is attached to the results of the watching brief.

## **6. Acknowledgements**

The writer is grateful to *Lombardy Properties Ltd* for commissioning this watching brief. The curatorial services of Nick Crank at *Milton Keynes Council* are also acknowledged.

The watching brief was conducted on behalf of ASC by Jenny Richards BA PIFA. The report was written by Jenny Richards and edited by David Fell MA MIFA.

## **7. Archive**

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Initial Report
3. Clients site plans
4. Site Monitoring Sheets
5. List of photographs
6. B/W prints & negatives
7. 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)*.

Rouse, C. 2007 *Archaeological Evaluation: Romans Field School, Shenley Road, Bletchley* (ASC Ltd unpublished client report)

### *Secondary Sources*

BCM 1980 *Gazetteer of Buckinghamshire brickyards 1800-1980* Buckinghamshire County Museum.

Croft, R. A. & Mynard, D. C. 1993 *The Changing Landscape of Milton Keynes*. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society Monograph Series No. 5

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

Williams, A. & Martin, G. H. (eds) 2003 *Domesday Book. A Complete Translation*. Penguin

## Appendix 1: Methodology

### *Watching Briefs*

An archaeological watching brief comprises monitoring by an experienced archaeologist of ground disturbance on a development (footing and service trenches, reduction of levels, landscaping). This 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 requirements, professional judgement will be exercised to determine the level of monitoring.

Each site visit will be recorded on ASC's *Field Monitoring Sheet* (Appendix 1). These sheets are used to record what was observed, including sketches where appropriate. A photographic record (see 2.5.4, 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.

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

### *Investigation (if required)*

#### *Excavation*

Excavation of archaeological deposits and features will be carried out by hand. Maximum depths of excavation will conform to current Health & Safety regulations.

#### *Survey & Planning*

At the start of fieldwork temporary benchmarks will be established, to be tied in subsequently to an appropriate Ordnance Survey benchmark. All plans and section drawings will be annotated with relative heights derived from these benchmarks. All 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. Plastic film will be used for manual site drawings: digital survey data will be presented in an appropriate CAD format.

#### *Recording*

A detailed record of all archaeological contexts will be maintained on ASC's *Context 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.

### *Photography*

The primary photographic record will normally be compiled in 35mm black & white print format, supplemented by digital photography, illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include general shots, to illustrate the nature of the site, and the archaeological work. A photographic register will be maintained on ASC's *Photographic Record Sheet*, fully cross-referenced. Digital photographs will be used to illustrate the report, and will be stored on CDROM in an appropriate digital format. Metric scales will be used in all photographs where appropriate.

### *Finds*

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 ASC's *Object Record Sheet*. A register will be kept of all finds. Procedures for finds recovery, processing and packaging will be based on *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson & Neal 1998). Finds processing may take place during or after fieldwork, and will entail cleaning, marking, packaging, quantification and initial classification. Conservation of artefacts, if required, will normally take place after processing, but primary conservation of delicate artefacts may be required on site. Certain objects (e.g. ironwork) may require radiography to facilitate identification. Provision has been made for conservation and radiography in the project estimates.

### *Environmental*

Sampling for environmental data will normally be carried out in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (EH 2002). If necessary, additional guidance may be sought from the appropriate EH Regional Science Advisor. All samples will be recorded on ASC's *Sample Record Sheet*, 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. Provision has been made for this in the project estimates.

### *Scientific Dating*

Where waterlogged deposits are present column samples may be taken. These may be supplemented by C14 samples taken where the dating appears to be ambiguous. Environmental deposits in the form of burnt material may be sampled for C14 dates where appropriate. Inhumations devoid of burial furnishings may be dated using C14 techniques. Stratified deposits of early ceramic materials may be dated using archaeomagnetic or thermoluminescence techniques, as appropriate. Provision has been made for scientific dating in the project estimates, in line with the requirements of the brief.

### *Human Remains*

Any human remains encountered will be recorded and left *in situ*, unless specific requirements have been made to the contrary. The removal of human remains requires a licence from the Coroner's Division, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Section 7.6, below), and investigation or removal of remains must be agreed between ASC, the client, the AA 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.

*Security*

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.

## Appendix 2: Monitoring Forms

A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD				
Project: 153, Shenley Rd, Bletchley, Milton Keynes.		Project No/Code: 980 1 BSR		Sheet: of		
Client/Developer Mr Ken Pike		Date of visit: 24/09/07				
Contact: Mr Ken Pike			Phone: 07974 316401			
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 10am		Finish: 11am		
Completed by: LIZZIE GILL						
Development Type:						
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Footings	<input type="checkbox"/> Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Roads	<input type="checkbox"/> Levelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Quarrying	<input type="checkbox"/> Pipelines	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: Clear + bright.						
Observations: Informed this morning by Lombardy Properties that footings should be started today - also start date from Ken Pike.  Was informed on site by builder that he doesn't expect work to start for another 3-4 weeks.						
Comments:						

For sketch plan, use reverse

©ASC, 2003



A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: 153 SHENLEY RD, BLETCHLEY		Project No/Code: 980/BSR	Sheet: of
		Date of visit: 29/10/07	
Client/Developer: <b>Lombardy Properties Ltd.</b>			
Contact: <b>Ken Pike</b>		Phone: 01908 557514	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 1:50	Finish: 2:55	
Completed by: <b>JR</b>			
Development Type:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Footings	<input type="checkbox"/> Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Roads	<input type="checkbox"/> Levelling
		<input type="checkbox"/> Quarrying	<input type="checkbox"/> Pipelines
			<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: VERY WET UNDERFOOT; OTHERWISE DRY + BRIGHT DAY.			
Observations: FOOTINGS TO REAR OF SITE HAVE RECTANG. SITE PREVIOUSLY OCCUPIED BY GARAGE.  NATURAL STRATA :- <sup>MID BROWNISH</sup> <del>VARIOUS</del> GREY CLAY WITH FREQUENT FLINT PEBBLE AND GRAVEL INCLUSIONS. 0.50M OF OVERBURDEN VISIBLE IN SECTION. THIS CONTAINED BROKEN GLASS + BRICK FRAGMENTS (FROGGED); <del>BRICK FRAGMENTS</del> AS WELL AS GRAZED TILE FRAGS. AND OVERLAY 0.25M OF LIGHT YELLOWISH BROWN CLAY WITH NO INCLUSIONS			
Comments:  FOOTINGS WILL BE CONCRETED ON FRIDAY. FURTHER SITE VISIT WEDS. NEEDED.			

For sketch plan, use reverse

©ASC, 2003



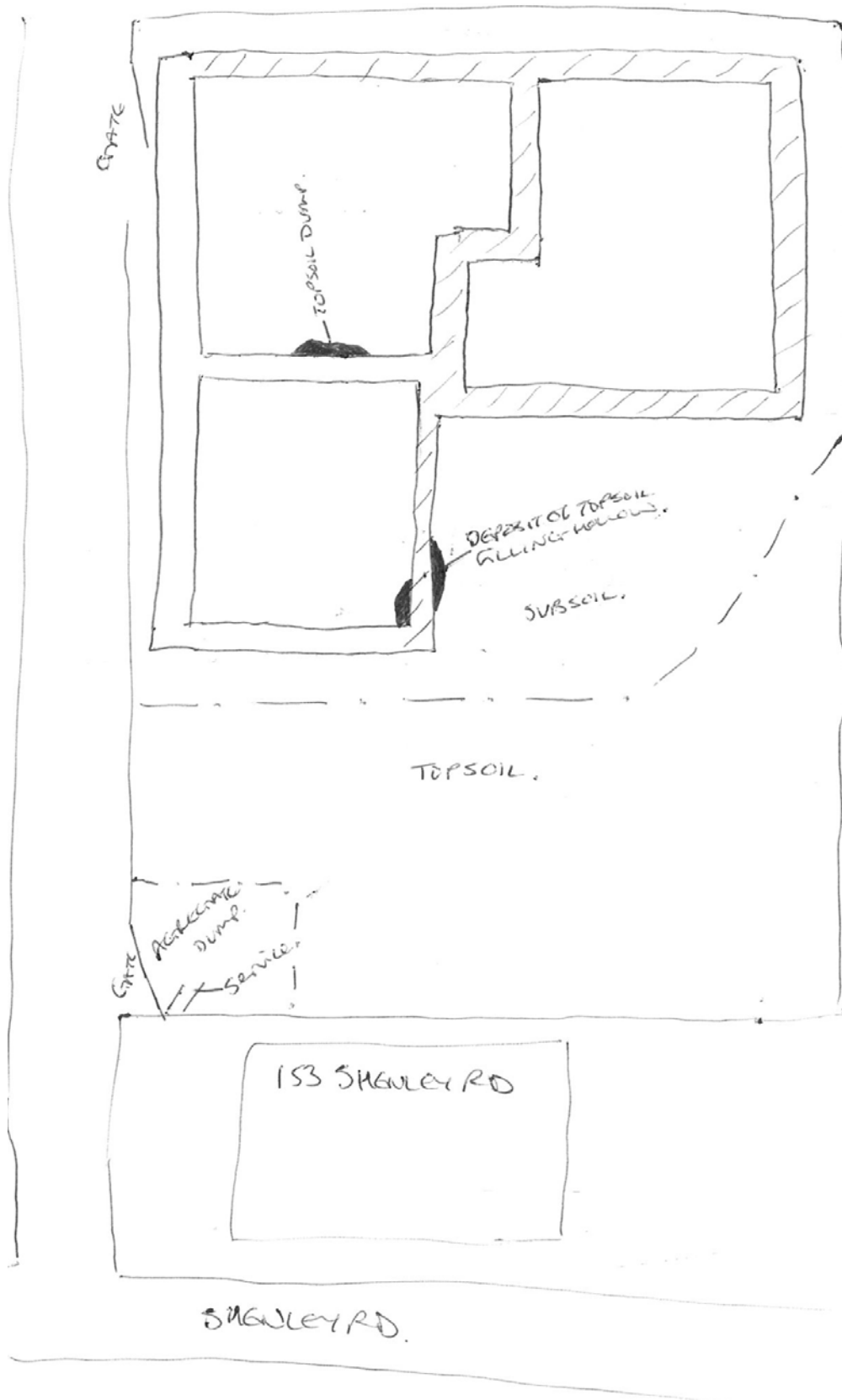
A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: 153 SHENLEY RD, BLETCHLEY		Project No/Code: 980 1 BSR		Sheet: of		
		Date of visit: 31/10/07				
Client/Developer LOMBARDY PROPERTIES LTD.						
Contact: KEN PIKE			Phone:			
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 11:00		Finish: 12:00		
Completed by: SR						
Development Type:						
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: DRY, OVERCAST. RESIDENTIAL GARDEN.						
Observations: SITE VISIT TO MONITOR FOOTINGS. OVER 50% DUCT (SEE OVER FOR SKETCH PLAN). DUMPHOPE BLACK TOPSOIL (NO FINDS) OBSERVED (SEE OVER).						
Comments: REMAINDER OF FOOTINGS AND SERVICES WILL BE DUCT THIS AFTERNOON/TOMORROW MORNING. VISIT AGAIN THURSDAY PM.						

For sketch plan, use reverse

©ASC, 2003





A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: 153 SHENLEY RD		Project No/Code: 9801 BSR		Sheet: of		
		Date of visit: 1/11/07				
Client/Developer: LOMBARDY PROPERTIES LTD						
Contact: KEW PIKE.			Phone:			
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 2pm		Finish: 3pm		
Completed by: SR						
Development Type:						
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: DRY, SUNNY.						
Observations: ALL FOOTINGS DUG. NO ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS OBSERVED.						
Comments: NO FURTHER VISITS NECESSARY, CONFIRM WITH NICE CRANK (CAO).						

For sketch plan, use reverse

©ASC, 2003

### Appendix 3: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: R/O 153 Shenley Road, Bletchley			SITE NO/CODE: 980/BSR
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1		√	Working shot
2		√	Working shot
3		√	Working shot
4	√	√	Overview
5	√	√	Overview
6	√	√	Overview
7	√	√	Northern footing trench from east
8	√	√	Root disturbance
9	√	√	Root disturbance
10	√	√	Root disturbance
11	√	√	Western footing trench from south
12	√	√	Overview
13		√	Overview

## Appendix 4: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	153 Shenley Road, Bletchley		
Short Description:	In October 2007 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd carried out an archaeological watching brief at land rear of 153 Shenley Road, Bletchley during groundworks for a new building. The excavation of footings trenches by mechanical excavator was monitored. No archaeological remains were observed and it appears that the site had been terraced prior to the construction of the garage which previously stood on the site.		
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	Watching Brief		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	None	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	None
Current land use:	Residential garden	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	No
Monument type:	None	Monument period:	None
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Buckinghamshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 85315 34185
District:	Milton Keynes	Parish:	Bletchley
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Rear of 153 Shenley Road, Bletchley, Milton Keynes		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	260	Height OD: (metres)	96
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	None	Project design originator:	None
Project Manager:	David Fell MA MIFA	Director/Supervisor:	Jenny Richards BA PIFA
Sponsor / funding body:	Lombardy Properties Ltd		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	September 2007	End date:	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2007
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	None	None	
Paper:	Buckinghamshire County Museum	Report, B&W photos and negatives	
Digital:	Buckinghamshire County Museum	CD-Rom with copy of report, digital photos	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: Land Rear Of 153 Shenley Road, Bletchley, Milton Keynes		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Client Report 980/BSR/1		
Author(s):	Jenny Richards BA PIFA		
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