

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

WATCHING BRIEF: 58 HIGH STREET STONY STRATFORD MILTON KEYNES

NGR: SP 78735 40490

on behalf of Hamilton Gould Associates



Martin Cuthbert BA (Hons) PIFA

August 2009

ASC: 1178/SHS/1



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Site Data

ASC project code:	SHS		ASC Project No:	1178	
OASIS ref:	archaeol2-62951		Event/Accession no:	1245/AYBCM:2009.161	
County:	M	lton	Keynes		
Village/Town:	Ste	ny S	Stratford		
Civil Parish:	Ste	ny S	Stratford		
NGR (to 8 figs):	SP	787	735 40490		
Extent of site:	20	5 sq	l m		
Present use:	Sh	Shop courtyard			
Planning proposal:	Ex	Extension to rear of property			
Planning application	n ref/date: 09	09/00041/FUL			
Local Planning Auth	ority: M	Milton Keynes Council			
Date of fieldwork:	29	29/07/2009 - 30/07/09			
Client:	Ha	Hamilton Gould Associates Ltd			
	Tc	Tower Fields			
	Tu	Tusmore Road			
		Nr Souldern			
		Bicester			
	OZ	OX27 7HY			
Contact name:	Cl	Clive Hamilton Gould			

Internal Quality Check

Primary Author:	Martin Cuthbert	Date:	7 th August 2009
Revisions:		Date:	
Edited/Checked By:	Bob Zeepvat	Date:	7 th August 2009

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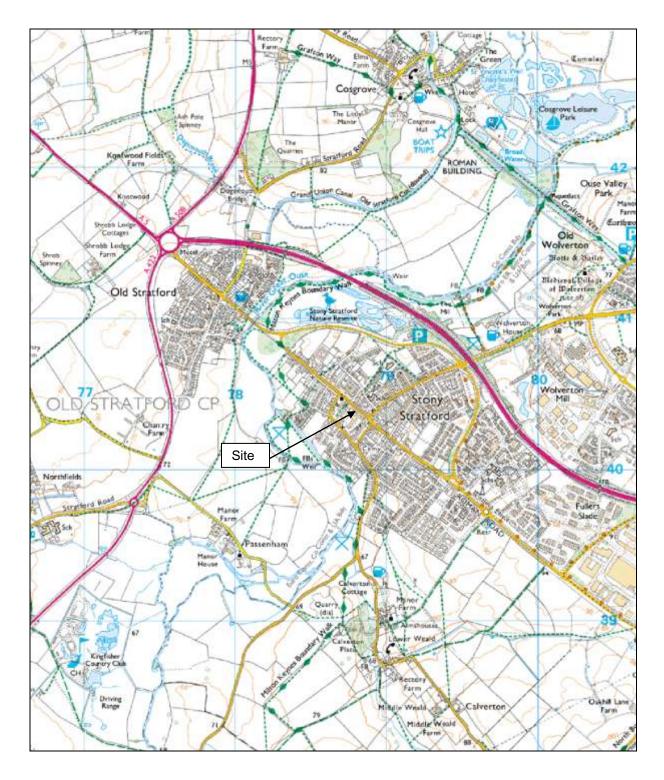


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In July 2009 a watching brief was carried out at 58 High Street, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes, during the excavation of a footing trench and a service trench, in relation to the extension of the existing shop. Only the remnants of a modern drain were present; No deposits or finds of archaeological significance were revealed. However, as the ground works were limited in scope and the natural soil horizon was not reached, this does not preclude the presence of archaeological remains elsewhere on the site.

1. Introduction

1.1 In July 2009 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out a watching brief at 58 High Street, Stony Stratford. The project was commissioned by *Hamilton Gould Associates*, and was carried out according to ASC's general method statement (Appendix 1), defined in discussions with Milton Keynes Council's Archaeological Officer (MKCAO). The relevant planning application reference is 09/00041/FUL.

1.2 Planning Background

This watching brief was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

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 Archaeological Organisation* by the Institute of Field Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 Management

The project was managed by Karin Semmelmann BA MA MIFA, and was carried out under the overall direction of Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

1.5 The Site

1.5.1 Location & Description

The site is situated in Stony Stratford in the administrative district of Milton Keynes, historic county of Buckinghamshire (Fig. 1). It is located to the rear of number 58 High Street, a property which is on the northern side of the High Street, and is centred on OS NGR SP 78735 40490. The site comprises a rectangular area of c.20.5 square metres, and is located between the rear building of 58 High Street and the outbuildings associated with 60 and 62 High Street (Fig. 2).

1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

The soils of the area comprise of the *Hanslope Association*. These are characterised as slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils, with some slowly

permeable non-calcareous clayey soils (Soil Survey 1983, 411d). The solid geology has been mapped as 1^{st} Terrace river deposits (BGS, Sheet 202). The site is flat and lies at an elevation of *c*.66m OD.

1.5.3 Proposed Development

The development comprises a two storey shop extension to the rear of the shop at 58 High Street (Fig 3)

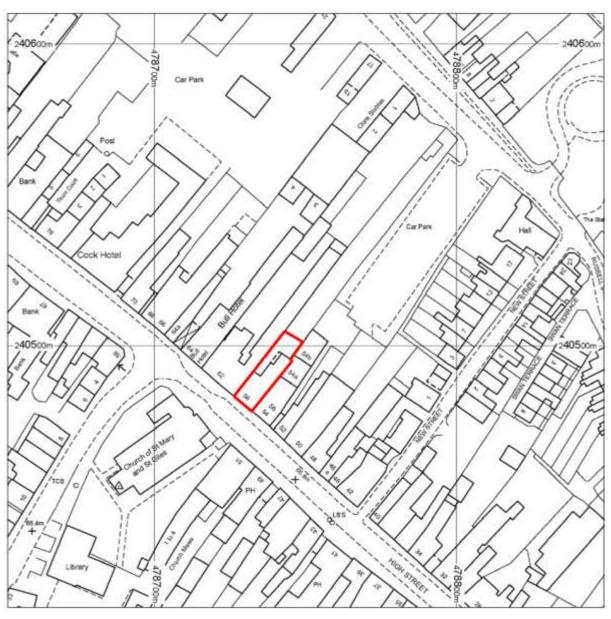


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1250)

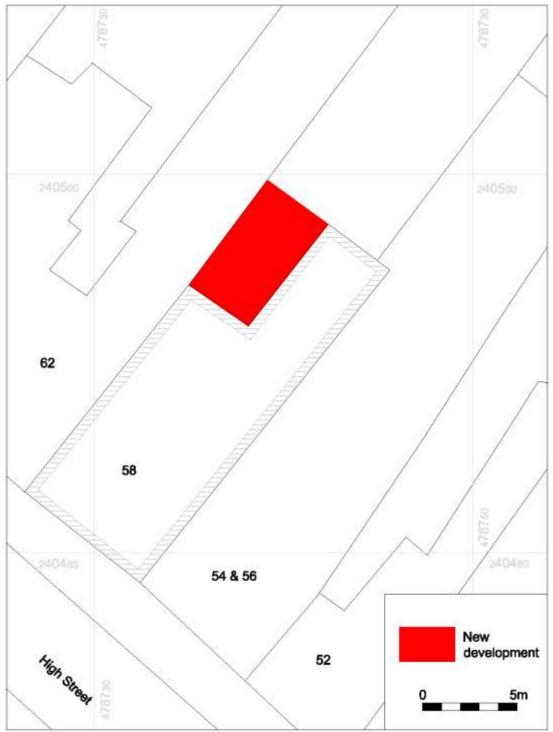


Figure 3: Proposed development (scale 1:200)

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 *Aims*

Following discussions with the Milton Keynes Archaeological Officer (MKAO) the aims of the project were:

• To record any archaeological features or deposits revealed during the construction of the proposed new extension

2.2 *Standards*

The work conformed to the method statement (Appendix 1), to the relevant sections of the Institute for 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*

Following discussions with the Milton Keynes Archaeological Officer (MKAO) the methods for this project were:

- A continuous watching brief on all groundworks associated with the construction of the new extension
- Appropriate provision for dealing with any significant archaeology revealed during the watching brief
- Preparation of a report and project archive

2.4 *Constraints*

No constraints were identified prior to the work and none were encountered during the monitoring visits.

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 has the potential to reveal evidence of a range of periods.

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. (Zeepvat 2002, 9).

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. Other evidence of human activity is the ring ditches and now ploughed out burial mounds and can be attributed to the Bronze Age. An isolated find of a Bronze Age socketed axe is recorded from Stony Stratford (Croft & Mynard 1993, 7).

3.2 **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 as before, but has been found in a much wider range of topographic settings (Zeepvat, 2002, 9). Iron Age pottery has been recorded at Kiln Farm, *c*.2m south-east of the proposed site and from the Ouse Valley, close to the present Watling Street bridge (*ibid*) at Old Stratford.

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

Roman activity within Stony Stratford is evident with the Roman road known as *Watling Street*, which passes through the centre of Stony Stratford, facilitating the present day High Street. Metal detectorist finds include Roman coins and some votive objects from Old Stratford, suggesting the existence of a religious site, and from the same area came an elaborate headdress, now in the British Museum (Zeepvat 2002, 10).

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

On the west side of Wolverton, burials found in 1956 during the construction of extensions to McCorquodale's factory were thought to be of Saxon date (Green 1957).

In 1969, aerial photography revealed the existence of a rectangular enclosure in the area now occupied by the Wolverton Mill Training College, c.1.5km east of the site. Excavations in 1971 revealed the east corner of the enclosure (Preston 2007) and further excavations in 1992 and 1994 (*ibid*), have indicated an early and middle Saxon date. More recent excavations (Thorne 2005) discovered two early to middle Saxon grübenhauser (sunken feature buildings), and late Saxon timber buildings with associated pits, a well, cess pits and a malting/drying oven. Late Saxon finds, including coins and metalwork, have also been found c.2.0km east-northeast of the site. The evidence suggests (Croft & Mynard 1993, 181) that mid to late Saxon settlement in the parish may have been centred on and north of the Training College grounds.

In 2007/8 ASC undertook an excavation *c*.2km east of the site, at Radcliffe School. Eighty three Saxon burials were revealed plus two urned cremations and one tentatively identified un-urned cremation. Most burials contained a variety of grave goods, including beads, buckles, knives and spearheads. The range of artefacts present indicates a 7th-century date for the cemetery, which is one of the largest of this period identified in Buckinghamshire.

3.5 **Medieval** (1066-1500)

There is some uncertainty as to the date of the earliest settlement at Stony Stratford and it is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey (1086). Brown (1987, 3) records that the earliest mentions of Stony Stratford place it in Northamptonshire. He suggests that the name may have originally referred to the settlement on the high ground north of the river, now Old Stratford. The present town, probably referred to as *Little Stratford* in the Eyre Roll of 1227, outgrew the original settlement, taking its name, much in the same way that the name of Wolverton transferred from the older settlement to the new. In 1291 the royal cortège carrying the body of Queen Eleanor to London stopped overnight at Stony Stratford, and a commemorative 'Eleanor Cross' was erected there. During the medieval period Stony Stratford assumed some importance as a local market: grants were made in 1257 and 1290 for annual fairs on the feast days of St Giles and St Mary Magdalene (Zeepvat 2002).

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

Stony Stratford's location on one of England's major thoroughfares assured its continuing prosperity into the 18th century. In 1838 the London & Birmingham Railway was opened through Wolverton resulting in an increasing demand for labour, leading to the expansion of Stony Stratford throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.

3.7 Modern (1900-present)

Stony Stratford is a conservation area with many 16th century fronted buildings located on the High Street and Market Square. 58 High street is currently operating as a shop.

4. **Results**

- 4.1 The watching brief consisted of 1 full day and 1 half day visit to monitor ground reduction across the footprint of the new building, as well as excavation of a footing trench and a service trench. All were excavated by a mini digger prior to the construction of the extension (Fig. 4). No archaeological finds or pottery, other than 19th and 20th century material, were observed in the spoil from the trenches.
- 4.2 Prior to the excavation of the footing and service trench ground reduction across the footprint of the new building took place. About 0.2m of made ground consisting of modern aggregate was removed revealing a further layer of made ground consisting of dark brown soil with occasional 20th century tile fragments (Plate 1). At the southern end of the area of ground reduction a 20th century brick lined drain was revealed extending 1.2m out from the current building. The drain was constructed of one course of red bricks with no form of bonding and cut the dark brown made ground layer (Fig 4, Plate 2).
- 4.3 The footing trench was $c.15m \log_{10} 0.7m$ wide and 0.3m deep and cut through the dark brown made ground layer. The natural subsoil was not reached and no archaeological remains were observed (Fig 4, Plates 3-5)
- 4.4 The service trench was $c.4m \log_{10} 0.7m$ wide and 0.3m-0.45m deep and cut through the dark brown made ground layer. The natural subsoil was not reached and no archaeological remains were observed (Fig 4, Plate 6).

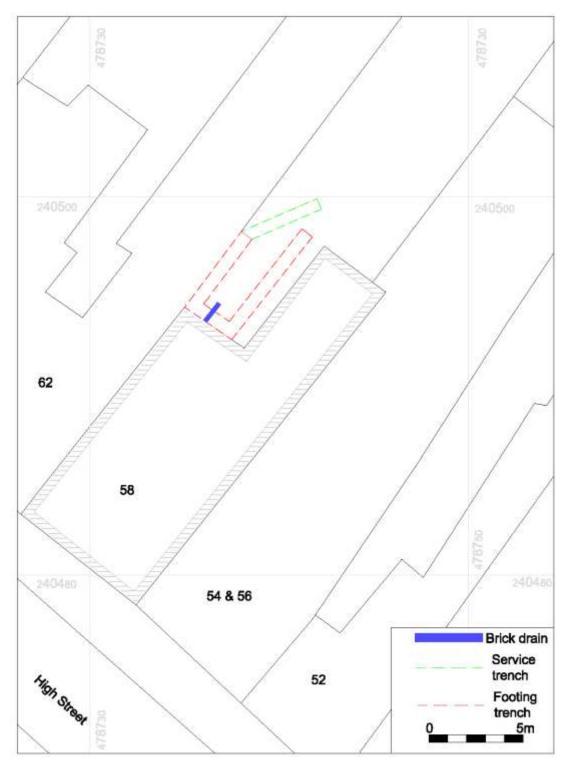


Figure 4: Excavated areas (scale 1:200)



Plate 1: Area of ground reduction, looking southwest, 2 metre scale.



Plate 2: Brick lined drain, looking northwest 1 metre scale.



Plate 3: Footing trench westerly run, looking southwest, 2x1 metre scale.



Plate 4: Footing trench southerly run, looking southwest, 1 metre scale.



Plate 5: Footing trench easterly run, looking southwest, 1 metre scale.



Plate 6: Service trench looking northeast.

5. Conclusions

5.1 No significant archaeological finds or features were discovered within the development area, as the natural soil horizon was not reached. The only feature present was a 20th century brick drain. This however does not imply that there are no archaeological deposits within this area.

5.2 *Confidence rating*

The conditions for the watching brief were reasonable and the work took place in overcast weather conditions. Full co-operation was received from the contractors and a high degree of confidence is attached to the results of the watching brief.

6. Acknowledgements

The watching brief was commissioned by Hamilton Gould Associates Ltd. The writer is grateful to Clive Hamilton Gould for his assistance. The project was monitored by Nick Crank on behalf of the local planning authority. Thanks are also due to the contractors for their cooperation.

The project was managed for ASC by Karin Semmelmann BA MA MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by Martin Cuthbert BA (Hons) PIFA. The report was prepared by Martin Cuthbert and edited by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

7. Archive

- 7.1 The project archive will comprise:
 - 1. Initial Report
 - 2. Clients site plans
 - 3. Site Monitoring Sheets
 - 4. List of photographs
 - 5. B/W prints & negatives
 - 6. CDROM with copies of all digital files.
- 7.2 The archive will be deposited with *Buckinghamshire County Museum* (AYBCM: 2009.161)

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

BGS British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology.

- Brown, O.F. 1987 Stony Stratford the Town on the Road. Wolverton and District Archaeological Society
- Croft R.A. & Mynard D.C. 1993 *The Changing Landscape of Milton Keynes.* Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society
- Green, C. 1957 'Review of finds 1957', Wolverton Dist. Archaeol. Soc Newsletter 2, 5.
- Preston S forthcoming *Excavations and fieldwork at the Post Office Training Centre, Wolverton,* 1991-1994. manuscript copy in MK SMR.
- Soil Survey 1983 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend (Harpenden).
- Thorne, A 2005 'Wolverton, Wolverton Mill, Great Monks Street', *South Midlands Archaeol.* **35**, 19-20.
- Woodfield, P And Milton Keynes Development Corporation 1986 A Guide to the Historic Buildings of Milton Keynes. Milton Keynes Development Corporation
- Zeepvat, R 2002. An Archaeological Desk-Based Assesment of London Road Garage, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes. Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd.

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 for 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 communication and 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 proforma 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 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 requires a licence from the Ministry of Justice, 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 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 PA, 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.

Appendix 2: Monitoring Sheets

Project: 58 High St			Project	Project No/Code: Sheet:			
Story Stratfard.			Date of	Date of a Black			
Client/Developer)					
Contact:					Phone:		
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):							-15:40
Completed by:	M	. C					
			Deve	lopment Type	:		
Footings Serv	ces	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (spe	ecify):
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Stary Stratford			A Date of visit:	Date of visit: 30 7 09,				
Client/Devel	Client/Developer							
Contrat					Phone:			
Contact:	Tam Ho	llinshea	d - Fare	man	Filone.	070	930 9022990	
Duration of (inc. travel)	Visit S	tart: \C	:30		Finish:	1173	50	
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			Deve	lopment Type	:			
Footings	Services /	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (sp	ecify):	
Site & weat	her condition:	s:						
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not needed to watch this during								
excavationarly after campletion								

Appendix 3: List of Photographs

SITE NA	ИЕ: 58 Hig	gh Street,	Stony Stratford	SITE NO/CODE:11778/SHS		
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subj	ect		
1			Brick drain, looking northwest 1x1m sc	ale		
2			General shot of ground reduction.			
3			General shot, looking southwest			
4			General shot, looking southwest			
5			Area of ground reduction, 1x2m scale			
6			Footing trench, looking northwest 2x1m scale			
7			Footing trench, looking southwest 2x1m scale			
8			Service trench, looking northeast			
9		\checkmark	Footing trench, looking southwest 1x1m scale			
10		\checkmark	Footing trench, looking south 1x1m scale			
11		\checkmark	Footing trench, looking southwest 1x1n	n scale		

Appendix 4: ASC OASIS Form

	PROJEC	T DETAILS				
Project Name: Watching Brief: 58 High Street, Stony Stratford						
Short Description:	Scription: In July 2009 a watching brief was carried out at 58 High Street, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes, during the excavation of a footing trench and a service trench, in relation to the extension of the existing shop. No deposits or finds of archaeological significance were revealed apart from the remnants of a 20 th century drain. However, as the ground works were limited in scope and the natural soil horizon wasn't reached, this does not preclude the presence of archaeological remains elsewhere 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:	Shop courtyard	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	Unknown			
Monument type:	N/a	Monument period:	N/a			
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	None	1				
	PROJECT	LOCATION				
County:	Buckinghamshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 78735 40490			
District:	Milton Keynes	Parish:	Stony Stratford			
Site address: (with postcode if known)	58 High Street, Stony Stratford	, Milton Keynes, MK11 1AQ.				
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	<i>c</i> . 20.5 sq m	Height OD: (metres)	<i>с.</i> 66m			
	PROJECT	CREATORS				
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consult	ancy Ltd				
Project brief originator:	N/a	Project design originator:	N/a			
Project Manager:	Karin Semmelmann	Director/Supervisor:	Martin Cuthbert			
Sponsor / funding body:	Hamilton Gould Associates Ltd					
	PROJE	CT DATE				
Start date:	29-07-2009	End date:	30-07-2009			
	PROJECT	ARCHIVES				
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, anima	l bone, files/sheets)			
Physical:	Buckinghamshire Museum	N/a				
Paper:	(AYBCM: 2009.161)	Site records, report, photogra	aphs			
Digital:	1	CD-ROM with copies of all di	gital files			
BIBLIOGRA	PHY (Journal/monograph, publis	U . 1	hed client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: 58 High Street,					
Serial title & volume:	erial title & volume: ASC Ltd Report ref. 1178/SHS/1					
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Page nos	22	Date:	07/08/2009			