

# Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Thorn Farm, Stone Street, Stelling Minnis, Kent



NGR: 613400 146550

Site Code: STONE /EV/17

(Planning Application: Y15/1292/SH)

**SWAT Archaeology**

The Office, School Farm Oast

Graveney Road Faversham, Kent, ME13 8UP

Email: [info@swatarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:info@swatarchaeology.co.uk)

Tel.: 01795 532548 and 07885 700112

© SWAT Archaeology 2017 all rights reserved

## Contents

List of Figures.....	3
List of Plates.....	3
1. Summary.....	4
2. Introduction.....	4
3. Site Description and Topography.....	4
4. Planning Background.....	5
5. Archaeological and Historical Background.....	5
6. Aims and Objectives.....	6
7. Methodology.....	6
8. Monitoring.....	6
9. Results.....	6
10. Discussion.....	9
11. Finds.....	9
12. Conclusion.....	9
13. Acknowledgements.....	9
14. References.....	10
15. KCC Summary Form.....	10

List of Figures:

Figure 1 – Location of site

Figure 2- Plan of evaluation trench

List of Plates:

Plates 1 – 10 Evaluation Trenches

# **Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Thorn Farm, Stone Street, Stelling Minnis, Kent**

NGR: 613400 146550

Site Code: STONE-EV-17

## **1. Summary**

*Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Thorn Farm, Stone Street, Stelling Minnis in Kent on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017. A Planning Application (Y15/1292/SH) to develop this site for the erection of residential houses and two B1 office units with associated car parking was sent to Shepway District Council, whereby the Council requested that a Condition on the planning permission for an Archaeological Evaluation to be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.*

*The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (SWAT Specification A and KCC Manual Part B) and in discussion with the Senior Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council. The results of the excavation of 9 evaluation trench revealed no archaeological features (Figure 2). The natural geology of Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel was reached at an average depth of between 0.35m and 0.40m below ground level (BGL).*

*Tim Allen the Senior Archaeologist on site writes that ‘The site is surrounded by a massive bund and comprises a horizontal area lying at least 1.5m lower than the surrounding topography. Clearly the massive, industrial-scale chicken farm was built on much reduced and levelled ground. The evaluation indicates that there is no potential for the survival of archaeological features on the site unless they were originally cut to a depth in excess of c. 1.5m, which is highly unlikely’.*

*Thus the Archaeological Evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Archaeological Specification.*

## **2. Introduction**

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by the land owners to carry out an archaeological evaluation at the above site. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (SWAT & KCC 2017) and in discussion with Ben Found Senior Archaeological Officer KCC. The evaluation was carried out on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

## **3. Site Description and Topography**

3.1 The site lies to the west of the village of Stelling Minnis and is on the western edge of the Roman road (B2068) that runs from Canterbury (*Dunovernum*) to Lympne (*Portus Lemanis*). The site is a redundant egg packing facility which comprises four buildings with loading bays for lorries which are surrounded by concrete hard standing. The current buildings date from around the 1970s/1980s and comprise three large former egg production buildings linked to the main egg packing unit with ancillary

offices and accommodation. To the north is a dry pond, to the north-east a band of trees and shrubs set on an earth bund which is about 1.2m in height. The same bund and tree line the boundary with Stone Street to the south-east. To the south of the site another bund of the same height is found on the southern boundary of the site. The access to the site is to the east on Stone Street. The Desk-Based Assessment noted on aerial photographs potential Roman buildings to the south of the Proposed Development Area (PDA) and relict field systems.

3.2 On the basis of current information from BGS, the site lies on Bedrock Geology of Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation with Superficial Deposits of Clay with Flint Formation- Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel Deposits. A geo-environmental investigation by BJB Consulting in 2015 demonstrated that a nominal thickness of topsoil and/or made ground caps the Clay with Flint Formation and the generalised strata profile shows that topsoil or made up ground is from 0.09-0.30m thick overlaying the Clay with Flint Formation and only TP1 and WS04 were into made ground of 1.00m thick (BJB 2015:4).

#### **4. Planning Background**

4.1 Development proposals for site comprise the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of 30 houses and two B1 office units with planning permission obtained (Y15/1292/SH). On the basis of present archaeological information, the Archaeological Officer for Shepway District Council recommended that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological work in order to clarify the historical and archaeological elements within the site (Condition 3). *No development shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.*

*The results can then guide appropriate mitigation measures for the future development.*

#### **5. Archaeological and Historical Background**

5.1 The potential of this area has been gauged in relation to the proximity of known archaeological remains. In the vicinity (200m) a possible Iron Age knife was found (MKE 96731). Adjacent to the PDA is one of the major Roman roads in Kent (TR 14 NW 53). The DBA identified a possible large Roman building to the south of the PDA and a Roman gold finger ring was found 200m north of the PDA (MKE 96742) Anglo-Saxon presence is indicated by place names and the medieval period by pottery found 200m east of the PDA and two medieval coins, one 250m north-east of the PDA, the other 300m north-east (MKE 96760). Further information on the above is provided in the Archaeological Desk-based Assessment (SWAT 2016).

## 6. Aims and Objectives

According to the SWAT Archaeological Specification, the aims and objectives for the archaeological work were:

*The aims of this investigation are to determine the potential for Roman activity and in particular the adjacent Roman road, and also in any Prehistoric and Medieval activity.*

The programme of archaeological work should be carried out in a phased approach and will commence with evaluation through trial trenching. This initial phase should determine whether any significant archaeological remains would be affected by the development and if so what mitigation measures are appropriate. Such measures may include further detailed archaeological excavation, or an archaeological watching brief during construction work or an engineering solution to any preservation in situ requirements.

## 7. Methodology

The initial evaluation comprised 9 machine excavated trenches (20-25m x 1.8m) in a layout agreed with the Senior Archaeologist KCC. The trenches were to be machine excavated down to the top of any significant archaeological horizon/level or to the top of 'natural' subsoil where no archaeological deposits have been found at a higher level.

## 8. Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was not available during the course of the evaluation.

## 9. Results

The nine evaluation trenches were located in the footprint of the development site and failed to expose any features of potential archaeological significance, and contained no cultural materials, or, indeed, anything indicative of associated and/or nearby human activity, such as charcoal or scorched daub flecking.

### Trench 1

The plan is recorded in Figure 2 (see also Plate 3). The trench lay on an NNW alignment and measured approximately 20m by 1.80m.

Undisturbed natural geology (**103**) was identified across the trench as yellow brown sandy silty clay with flint, at a depth of approximately 0.50m (138.66mOD) below the present ground surface at 139.16m OD at the NNW end of the trench.

The natural geology **(103)** was a mid brown to orange silty sandy clay with flint topped by subsoil **(102)** 0.50m thick topped with a thin layer of topsoil.

## **Trench 2**

The plan is recorded in Figure 2 (see also Plate 9). The trench lay on an NW alignment and measured approximately 23m by 1.80m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(203)** was identified across the trench as yellow brown sandy silty clay with flint, at a depth of approximately 0.45m (139.45mOD) below the present ground surface at 139.99m OD at the SE end of the trench.

The natural geology **(203)** was topped by subsoil **(202)** 0.45m thick topped with a thin layer of topsoil.

## **Trench 3**

The plan is recorded in Figure 2 (see also Plate 6). The trench lay on an NW alignment and measured approximately 23m by 1.80m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(303)** was identified across the trench as yellow brown sandy silty clay with flint, at a depth of approximately 0.50m (139.48mOD) below the present ground surface at 139.98m OD at the SE end of the trench.

The natural geology **(303)** was topped by subsoil **(302)** 0.50m thick topped with a thin layer of topsoil.

## **Trench 4**

The plan is recorded in Figure 2 (see also Plate 4). The trench lay on an NNW alignment and measured approximately 17m by 1.80m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(403)** was identified across the trench as yellow brown sandy silty clay with flint, at a depth of approximately 0.50m (139.01mOD) below the present ground surface at 139.51m OD at the NNW end of the trench.

The natural geology **(403)** was topped by subsoil **(402)** 0.50m thick topped with a thin layer of topsoil.

## **Trench 5**

The plan is recorded in Figure 2 (see also Plate 5). The trench lay on an NNW alignment and measured approximately 18m by 1.80m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(503)** was identified across the trench as yellow brown sandy silty clay with flint, at a depth of approximately 0.48m (139.13mOD) below the present ground surface at 139.61m OD at the NNW end of the trench.

The natural geology **(503)** was topped by subsoil **(502)** 0.48m thick topped with a thin layer of topsoil.

#### **Trench 6**

The plan is recorded in Figure 2 (see also Plate 7). The trench lay on an NW alignment and measured approximately 19m by 1.80m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(603)** was identified across the trench as yellow brown sandy silty clay with flint, at a depth of approximately 0.50m (139.32mOD) below the present ground surface at 139.82m OD at the NW end of the trench.

The natural geology **(603)** was topped by subsoil **(602)** 0.50m thick topped with a thin layer of topsoil.

#### **Trench 7**

The plan is recorded in Figure 2 (see also Plate 10). The trench lay on an NW alignment and measured approximately 20m by 1.80m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(703)** was identified across the trench as yellow brown sandy silty clay with flint, at a depth of approximately 0.47m (139.56mOD) below the present ground surface at 140.03m OD at the NW end of the trench.

The natural geology **(703)** was topped by subsoil **(702)** 0.47m thick topped with a thin layer of topsoil.

#### **Trench 8**

The plan is recorded in Figure 2 (see also Plate 8). The trench lay on an NW alignment and measured approximately 25m by 1.80m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(803)** was identified across the trench as yellow brown sandy silty clay with flint, at a depth of approximately 0.49m (139.56mOD) below the present ground surface at 140.05m OD at the SE end of the trench.

The natural geology **(803)** was topped by subsoil **(802)** 0.49m thick topped with a thin layer of topsoil.

#### **Trench 9**

The plan is recorded in Figure 2 (see also Plate 7). The trench lay on an NW dog-leg alignment and measured approximately 20m by 1.80m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(903)** was identified across the trench as yellow brown sandy silty clay with flint, at a depth of approximately 0.51m (140.03mOD) below the present ground surface at 140.54m OD at the W end of the trench.



The natural geology (**903**) was topped by subsoil (**902**) 0.51m thick topped with a thin layer of topsoil.

## **10. Discussion**

No archaeological features were exposed in the trenches as the site has been truncated in the previous build of the industrial units. The only feature exposed was a modern dump of building materials which was identified in Trench 9 (Plate 7). The proposed development can therefore be judged to pose no threat to any potential significant archaeological remains as the severe truncation suggests that any archaeological remains are now no longer in existence on the site.

## **11. Finds**

No finds were recovered.

## **12. Conclusion**

The evaluation trench at the proposed development site revealed no significant archaeological features or artefacts.

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. A common stratigraphic sequence was recognised across the site comprised of a thin layer of topsoil (**100**) sealing subsoil (**102**) which overlay the natural geology of Clay with Flints (**103**). Therefore, this evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the aims and objectives as set out in the Planning Condition and the Archaeological Specification.

## **13. Acknowledgements**

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the client for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Ben Found Senior Archaeological Officer KCC. Site survey and illustrations were produced by Bartek Cichy. The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Allen MCIfA and the project was managed and report written on information received from Tim Allen by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

Paul Wilkinson 10/03/2017

## **14. References**

Institute for Field Archaeologists (IfA), Rev (2014). *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation*

KCC Specification Manual Part B

KCC and Historic England HER data 2016

SWAT Archaeology (2017) *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Thorn Farm, Stelling Minnis, Kent*

## **KCC HER Summary Form**

**Site Name:** Land at Spring Gardens, Holmsdale Road, South Darenth, Thorn Farm, Stelling Minnis, Kent

**Site Address:** As above

### **Summary:**

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation on the development site above. The site has planning permission for residential and office development and parking whereby Dartford Borough Council requested that Archaeological Evaluation be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Evaluation revealed no archaeology.

**District/Unitary:** Shepway District Council

**Period(s):**

**NGR (centre of site to eight figures)** 613400 146550

**Type of Archaeological work:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date of recording:** February 2017

**Unit undertaking recording:** Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT. Archaeology)

**Geology:** Underlying geology is Clay with Flint

**Title and author of accompanying report:** Wilkinson P. (2017) Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Thorn Farm, Stone Street, Stelling Minnis, Kent

### **Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate)**

No archaeological features or finds were revealed

**Location of archive/finds:** SWAT. Archaeology. Graveney Rd, Faversham, Kent. ME13 8UP

**Contact at Unit:** Paul Wilkinson 10<sup>th</sup> March 2017

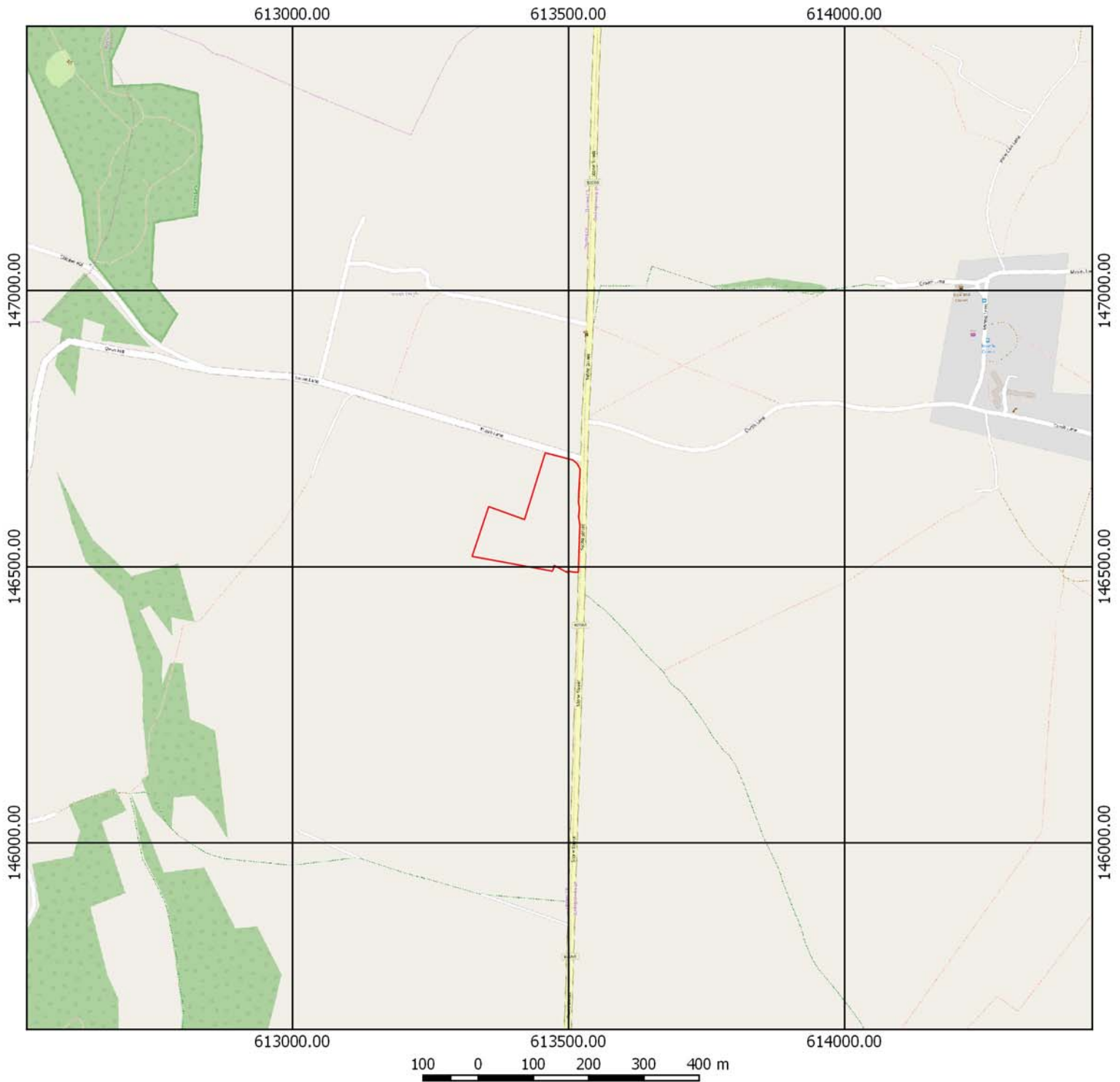
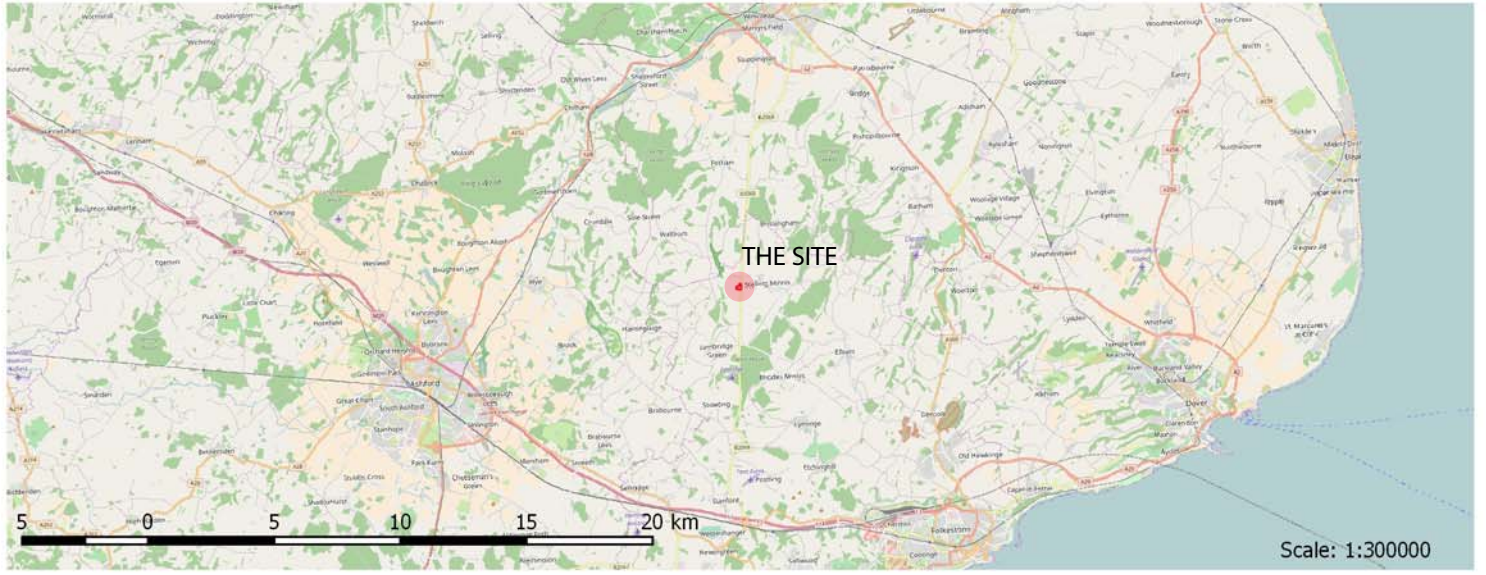


Figure 1: Site location map, scale 1:10000

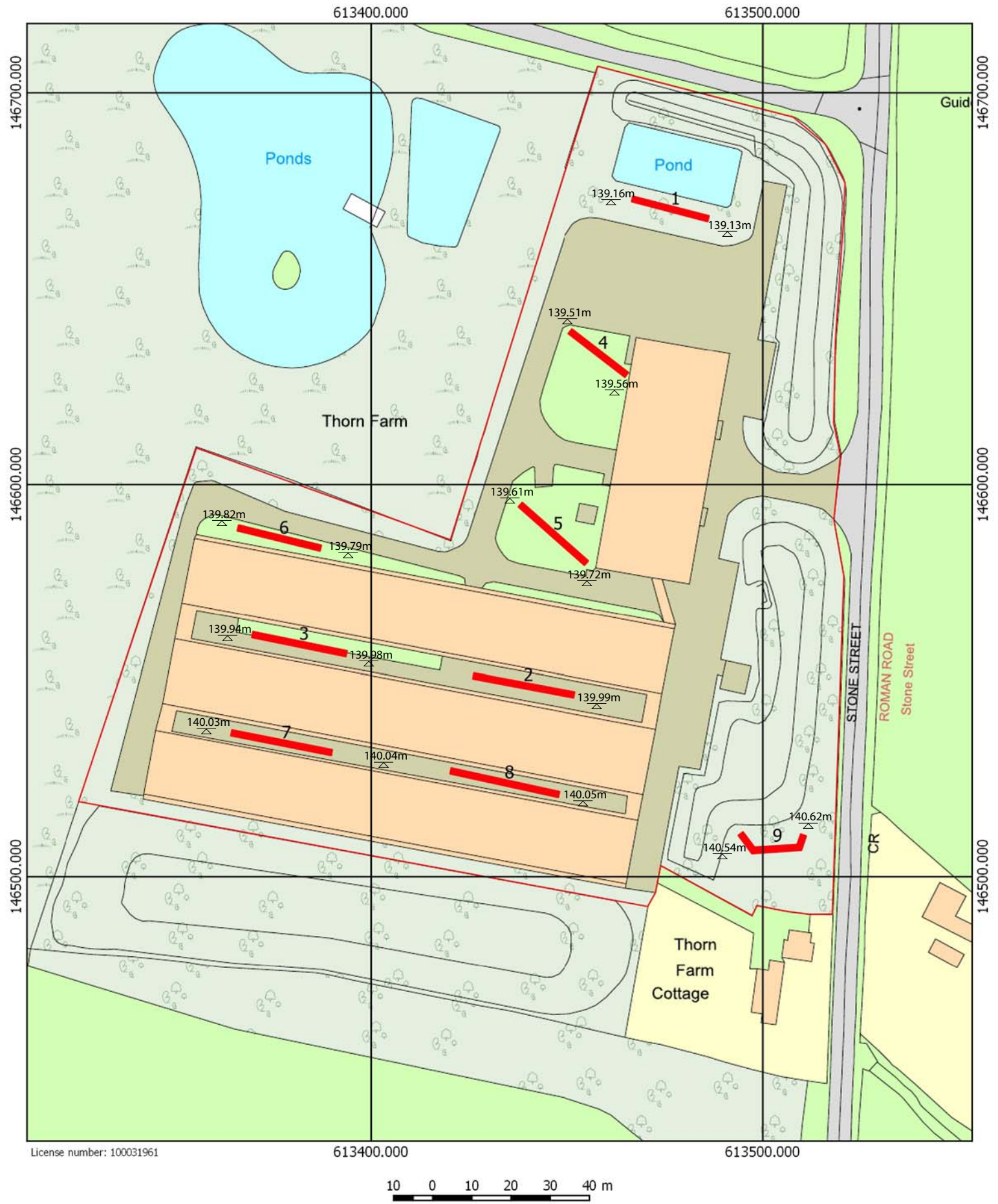


Figure 2: Trench location plan, scale 1:1250



Plate 1. View of the site (looking west)



Plate 2. View of the site (looking NW)



Plate 3. Trench 1 (looking east)



Plate 4. Trench 4 (looking SE)



Plate 5. Trench 5 (looking SSE)



Plate 6. Trench 3 (looking SE)



Plate 7. Trench 9 (looking NNW)



Plate 8. Trench 8 (looking west)





Plate 9. Trench 2 (looking W)



Plate 10. Trench 7 (looking SSE)