Historic Landscape Recording of Land to the rear of 2-33 St Marys Road, Stone, Dartford, Kent



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SWAT Archaeology

The Office, School Farm Oast, Graveney Road, Faversham, Kent

Tel: 07885 700 112 or 01795 532548

www.swatarchaeology.co.uk info@swatarchaeology.co.uk

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Historic Landscape Recording of Land to the rear of 2-33 St Marys Road, Stone, Dartford in Kent

Summary

SWAT Archaeology has been commissioned by Skillcrown Homes Ltd to carry out a programme of phased archaeological investigations of which historic landscape recording at land to the rear of 2-33 St Marys Road, Stone in Kent is Phase 1 (Figure 8).

The Site is currently occupied by a number of crushed rock (roadstone) linear banked railway tracks and discarded concrete railway sleepers associated with the sites former use as a railway marshalling yard and depot and is overgrown with scrub, trees and grass (Plates12-18).

The Site is of some significance due to its age, possible interesting features and historic development. It was therefore required by KCC Heritage that a Level 1 survey for a Historic Landscape Assessment be undertaken. This would serve to mitigate the negative effects of the redevelopment/demolition of any surviving buildings or structures by 'preservation by record' and inform KCC Heritage of the sites potential for surviving industrial archaeology.

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Skillcrown Homes Ltd and SWAT Archaeology is grateful to Michael Jackson in this regard. SWAT Archaeology would also like to thank Wendy Rogers (Senior Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council), and the staffs of the Kent History and Library Centre and National Monuments Record Centre for their assistance.

On site survey, photography and documentary research was carried out by Paul Wilkinson MifA., PhD., FRSA. The illustrations were produced by Jonny Madden of 'Digitise This'.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 SWAT Archaeology was commissioned by Skillcrown Homes Ltd to carry out a programme of historic landscape recording at the former railway marshalling yards and depot at land to the rear of 2-33 St Marys Road, Stone, Kent, and centred on National Grid Reference NGR 557119/174952 (hereafter 'the Site').
- 1.1.2 The Site (Fig.8) is currently occupied by areas of hard-standing, linear banks of roadstone, piles of concrete railway sleepers, trees, scrub and rough grassland.
- 1.1.3 Planning consent for the proposals was granted by Dartford Borough Council subject to certain conditions. Condition 11 states that:
- 11) Before commencement of any building operations on site, details of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall be implemented as approved.
- 1.1.4 It was therefore required by KCC Heritage that an Level 1 (non-analytical) record be made of the site in accordance with the guidelines set out in the document 'Understanding the Archaeology of Landscapes: a guide to good recording practise (English Heritage 2007).
- 1.1.5 In addition KCC Heritage has requested:
 - Archaeological trial trenches
 - Geo-archaeological test pits
 - Detailed mitigation based on the results of the first 3 phases

2 THE SITE

2.1 Site location, Geology and Description

2.1.1 The Site is located within the parish of Stone, Dartford and centered on NGR 557119/174952. The Site lies to the south of St Marys Road and north of the North Kent Railway Line. The site is currently scrub, trees and rough grass. There are proposals to develop the site for 53 dwellings and associated works. Further details are set out in the planning application DA/14/01180.

The Site is near the village of Stone, to the east of Dartford at a distance of about 0.6 km from the modern waterfront of the estuarine River Thames. The Site is on ground rising from NE to SW representing the slope up from the edge of the alluvial floodplain, at a level of c.1.0m OD, to higher levels. The ground surface at the Site is between 4.0m OD near its NE corner and 9.9m OD near its SW corner, but mainly between 6.0m and 8.0m OD. The British Geological Survey (BGS) (1:50,000 Sheet 271 Dartford 1998) shows the Site to be underlain by Taplow Gravel, forming a narrow outcrop extending eastward from the broader spread of gravel to the north of Dartford. The bedrock is the Chalk.

2.1.2 In recent years, the Taplow Gravel of the BGS in this part of the Lower Thames valley has been variously re-interpreted. Bridgland (1994) regards the gravel underlying St Mary's Road, and its westward continuation as part of the Mucking Formation which he equates with the Taplow Gravel and places stratigraphically in the period that includes the latter part of MIS 8, the whole of MIS 7 and the early part of MIS 6. In this interpretation, the surface of the post-MIS 7 Mucking Gravel forms a terrace, which Bridgland (1994, Figs 1.3 and 4.2) shows at a level of c.10-12m OD in the Dartford area. Gibbard (1994 Fig. 1) assigns the same body of gravel to the East Tilbury Marshes Gravel which he equates with the Kempton Park Gravel of the Middle Thames and places stratigraphically in the period following the Last Interglacial (Ipswichian, MIS 5e). Gibbard (1994 Fig. 6) illustrates a section based on borehole records extending from the high ground of Dartford northward along the route of the Dartford Crossing southern approach road (M25) and identifies his East Tilbury Marshes Gravel in this section at levels between c. 6.0m OD and c.-7.0m OD.

3 METHODS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The aim of the programme of historic landscape recording was to make a permanent record of any railway/industrial activity on the Site prior to any redevelopment and demolition works. This would serve to mitigate the negative effects of the redevelopment/demolition of any buildings or structures by 'preservation by record'. This is Phase 1 of the archaeological investigation programme.
- 3.1.2 This recording programme was achieved through a combination of photographic, written record and documentary research. Particular attention was paid to any evidence for functional details or machinery associated with the use of the site as an railway depot, although following demolition in the 1980's, much of the former sidings and railway infrastructure had been removed from the Site.
- 3.1.3 The recording programme included detailed description and analysis, high-quality digital and film photographic record (Figure 9).

3.2 Documentary Research

- 3.2.1 A search of relevant primary and secondary sources was carried out in the following repositories/locations:
- Kent History and Library Centre, Maidstone
- Kent Historic Environment Record (HER Appendix 3)
- 3.2.2 In addition to the above-mentioned repositories, a search for information was also carried out via SWAT Archaeology's own library and via the internet.

3.3 Site visits

- 3.3.1 The Site was visited on 9th July 2015 by Dr Paul Wilkinson, a senior archaeologist from SWAT Archaeology.
- 3.3.2 The Site has been recorded to *Level 1*, as described in the document *Understanding the Archaeology of Landscapes: a guide to good recording practise* (English Heritage 2007). In addition the recording was carried out in

accordance with the Manual of Specification for the Site (Part A) issued by Kent

County Council (KCC 2015) and guidance given by the Institute for

Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and

recording of standing buildings and structures (IfA 1996, revised 2001 and

2008).

3.3.3 During the site visits, some 31 colour digital photographs were taken

using an digital SLR camera equipped with Zeiss optics.

3.3.4 Due to varying lighting conditions encountered during the site visit (due

to time of day), some of the views were digitally photographed a number of

times, with varying timed exposure ratings (bracketed shots). A metric

photographic scale has been included in all detailed shots.

3.3.5 All photographic views were recorded on photographic registers which

give the direction of the view and a brief description of the subject.

3.3.6 A selection of the digital photographic record has been used to illustrate

this report (Plates 1 - 17). Topographic plans showing the location of

photographic locations used to illustrate the report are included in Figure 9.

4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Site OS Development: 1867 – 1992

4.2 Map Regression 1769-1992

Visits to the Kent History and Library, Maidstone were productive in viewing

early maps including the Tithe maps and aerial photographs from the 1940's.

All results of interpretation of this data are presented in order of chronology. A

map regression exercise on historic OS maps was carried out on the Proposed

Development Area (PDA) and has shown that the site includes a dairy farm

with historic beginnings that can be mapped in some detail from the mid 19th

century and railway lines associated with the winning of aggregate south of the

PDA (Figures 1-8).

8

- **4.3** Maps consulted for this earlier period include, the Andrews and Dury map of 1769 and the OS Surveyors Drawings (1799). The scale on all these maps is such that the fine detail required for a Historic Landscape Survey is not there. However, both sets of these large scale maps were the first to use triangulation which enabled actual field boundaries to be drawn. The Ordnance Survey surveyors claimed to illustrate 'every inclosure, however small.....every road, public and private....the rivers, with their bends, fords and bridges'.
- 4.4 From the 1840s the Ordnance Survey started work on the Great Britain 'County Series', modelled on the earlier Ireland survey. A start was made on mapping the whole country, county by county, at six inches to the mile (1:10,560). From 1854, to meet requirements for greater detail, including landparcel numbers in rural areas and accompanying information, cultivated and inhabited areas were mapped at 1:2500 (25.344 inches to the mile), at first parish by parish, with blank space beyond the parish boundary, and later continuously. Early copies of the 1:2500s were available hand-coloured. Up to 1879, the 1:2500s were accompanied by Books of Reference or "area books" that gave acreages and land-use information for land-parcel numbers. After 1879, land-use information was dropped from these area books; after the mid-1880s, the books themselves were dropped and acreages were printed instead on the maps. After 1854, the six-inch maps and their revisions were based on the "twenty-five inch" maps and theirs. The six-inch sheets covered an area of six by four miles on the ground; the "twenty-five inch" sheets an area of one by one and a half. One square inch on the "twenty-five inch" maps was roughly equal to an acre on the ground. In later editions the six-inch sheets were published in "quarters" (NW,NE,SW,SE), each covering an area of three by two miles on the ground. The first edition of the two scales was completed by the 1890s. A second edition (or "first revision") was begun in 1891 and completed just before the First World War. From 1907 till the early 1940s, a third edition (or "second revision") was begun but never completed: only areas with significant changes on the ground were revised, many two or three times.
- **4.5** The Andrews and Dury & Herbert map of 1769 is of interest as it shows in some detail 'Stone Parsonage' (now called 'The Old Rectory') located just to the north of the PDA. The road indicated south of the 'Stone Parsonage' is

presumably 'St Marys Road' leading as it does to the 13th century church dedicated to St Mary the Virgin at Stone. The church was known as the 'Lantern of Kent' from its beacon light which could be seen by sailors on the nearby River Thames. Of additional interest is the fact that 'Watling Street' the Roman road from Dover and Richborough to London and beyond is shown as a pecked line and seems not to be in use (Figures 21-22).

- **4.6** The Ordnance Survey Surveyors Drawings of 1799 (OSD 129) at a scale of 6" to the mile does not annotate 'Stone Parsonage' but it can be seen as a dwelling house and coloured red (Figure 23). What is annotated is 'Cotton Farm' which presumably was located in Cotton Lane just south of the PDA and can be viewed in a painting held by Dartford Library and dated c.1920 by an unknown artist.
- **4.7** The OS map of 1867 shows the PDA to be open ground and to the east a 'Dairy Farm' which may be the same establishment as 'Cotton Farm' as shown on the OSSD map of 1799. Some of these building are located in the proposed entrance to the PDA. To the north of the PDA the 'Rectory' is shown but separated from the PDA by St Marys Road itself shown on the 1769 map. It may be that ancillary buildings of the 'Rectory' may be situated in the immediate area of the PDA (Figure 1).
- **4.8** By 1897 the 'Dairy Farm' has been sat summed into a 'Brewery' and again there a buildings which are located in the entrance to the PDA. To the west the PDA has no buildings or development activity (Figure 2).
- **4.9** The OS map of 1909 shows some land division in the western area of the PDA whilst to the east the 'Brewery' is still in being (Figure 3).
- **4.10** By 1933 the OS maps show three railway lines entering the PDA through the east entrance with some of the 'Brewery' buildings demolished. Two of the lines veer to the south and cross under the main line carried by a bridge (Plate 6). To the west one line continues on a raised bank to the western edge of the PDA and halts at a large concrete buffer (Plate 7). A passing track veers to the south and on a raised bank joins the main line just to the west of the railway

bridge. To the south of the main line railway lines have been constructed to facilitate loading of aggregate onto railway wagons (Figure 4).

- **4.11** The OS map of 1962 shows more detail of the railway embankments in the PDA and the construction of a large factory just to the north of the PDA at its eastern end (Figure 5).
- **4.12** By 1972 the OS map shows the railway line veering south under the railway bridge has been taken up and the large factory is now identified as 'Cement Works' (Figure 6).
- **4.13** The 1984 OS map shows all the railway lines on the PDA dismantled and taken up with only the embankments remaining. In addition the 'Cement Factory' is longer shown on the OS map (Figure 7).
- 4.14 By 1992 the OS map shows three embankments on the PDA (Figure 8).
- **4.15 The Map Regression Exercise** indicates that there may be the buried remains of a 'Dairy Farm' and 'Brewery' still located in the east area of the site. In addition some buildings not identified by mapping may have existed in the curtilage of the 'Old Rectory' which may be located in the central north area of the PDA. Of the railway remains no standing buildings associated with the mineral railway have been identified in the map regression exercise apart from concrete buffers and the railway bridge both of which are outside the footprint of the PDA (Plates 6, 15). However, no trace of any building remains were found during the Site Investigation.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Prehistoric	Palaeolithic	c. 500,000 BC – c.10,000 BC
	Mesolithic	c.10,000 BC – c. 4,300 BC

Neolithic	c. 4.300 BC – c. 2,300	
		BC
	Bronze Age	<i>c</i> . 2,300 BC – <i>c</i> . 600 BC
	Iron Age	<i>c</i> . 600 BC – <i>c</i> . AD 43
Rom	ano-British	AD 43 – <i>c</i> . AD 410
Anglo-Saxon		AD 410 – AD 1066
Medieval		AD 1066 – AD 1485
Post-medieval		AD 1485 – AD 1900
Modern		AD 1901 – present day

Table 1 Classification of Archaeological Periods

5.1 Introduction

The Archaeological record within the area around St Marys Road, Stone, Dartford is diverse and comprises possible activity dating from one of the earliest human period in Britain (the Neolithic) through to the post-medieval period. The geographic and topographic location of the site is within a landscape that has been the focus of trade, travel and communication since the Palaeolithic. However, the area has had limited past archaeological investigations so for most periods the archaeological potential is unknown.

This section of the assessment will focus on the archaeological and historical development of this area, placing it within a local context. Each period classification will provide a brief introduction to the wider landscape (1km radius centered on the PDA). Time scales for archaeological periods represented in the report are listed on the previous page in **Table 1**.

5.2 Scheduled Monuments; Listed Buildings; Historic Parks & Gardens and Conservation Areas

No scheduled monuments; no Listed Buildings; No Historic Parks & Gardens and Conservation Areas are recorded within the confines of the proposed development area (PDA).

5.3 Prehistoric (Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age)

The Palaeolithic represents the earliest phases of human activity in the British Isles, up to the end of the last Ice Age.

The Mesolithic period reflects a society of hunter-gatherers active after the last Ice Age.

The Neolithic period represents the first farmers and the Bronze Age, a period of large migrations from the continent and more complex social developments on a domestic, industrial and ceremonial level are represented in the assessment area.

Flint implements were found in 1935 about 280m south-west of the PDA (TQ 57 SE 40) whilst a double ring ditch is known 200m north-east of the PDA (TQ 57 NE 1013).

5.4 Iron Age

The Iron Age is, by definition a period of established rural farming communities with extensive field systems and large 'urban' centres. An Iron Age pot was found in 1935 300m south-west of the PDA (TQ 57 SE 377).

5.5 Romano-British

The Romano-British period is the term given to the Romanised culture of Britain under the rule of the Roman Empire, following the Claudian invasion in AD 43, Britain then formed part of the Roman Empire for nearly 400 years.

The predominant feature of the Roman infrastructure within Kent is arguably the extensive network of Roman roads connecting administrative centres: the towns to military posts and rural settlements (villas, farmsteads and temples) increasing the flow of trade, goods, communications and troops. The assessment area includes one record from this period. A Roman pot found in Palmers Pit at Stone Court about 1025m south-west of the PDA (TQ 57 SE 59).

5.6 Anglo-Saxon

The Anglo-Saxon period is not represented in the assessment area.

5.7 Medieval

The medieval period is represented within the assessment area with the 13th century church of St Mary the Virgin located to the east of the PDA.

5.8 Post-Medieval

The Post Medieval period within the assessment area could be represented by 'Cotton Farm and the 'Old Rectory'. The Old Rectory was destroyed by fire on 5th May 1986 (TQ 57 SE 1027) and is located about 50m north-east of the PDA. In addition Whitings Paint Factory and drying sheds both former listed buildings were located 250 west of the PDA (TQ 75 SE 1030, 1019).

5.9 Modern

Modern development within the PDA has been limited to railway sidings built in the 1930's and demolished by 1984.

5.10 Undated

There is no Kent HER undated records that fall within the assessment area.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

6.1 Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age

The potential for finding remains that date prior to the Iron Age within the confines of the proposed development is therefore considered **undefined**.

6.2 Iron Age

The potential for finding remains dating to the Iron Age within the confines of the PDA is considered **undefined**.

6.3 Romano-British

The lack of presence of Romano-British archaeology in the research area suggests that the potential is therefore to be considered as **undefined**.

6.4 Anglo-Saxon

Anglo-Saxon archaeology within the assessment area has not been represented. The potential for finding remains dating to the Anglo-Saxon period on the development site is considered as **undefined**.

6.5 Medieval

The potential for finding remains dating to the medieval period is considered as **undefined**.

6.6 Post-Medieval

The potential for finding remains dating to the post-medieval period is considered as **medium** as cartographic evidence suggests farm and factory activity close to the site.

11. DISCUSSION

A historic landscape walkover and photographic recording exercise took place on 11th May 2015. There were no buildings within the area of the PDA. No industrial activity or infrastructure and no coherent remains from the railway.

- 11.1 Outside the area of the PDA a rather fine mild steel latticed bridge dating from about 1930 could be seen (Plate 6) and at the far west end of the site and again outside the PDA a concrete buffer (Plate 15) which can be identified from historic mapping (Figures 1-8).
- 11.2 Truncated remains of raised roadstone banks, the remains of railway sidings can be seen (Plates 10-14) and in some places piles of concrete sleepers were found (Plates 14, 16). It was noted that massive scarping of the landscape had taken place by the build of the railway sidings which will have an impact on future phases of archaeological investigation of the site.
- 11.3 There were no standing buildings to record and no landscape features of importance to record. A comprehensive photographic survey of the Site was achieved and can be viewed (Plates 1-17).
- **11.4 Proposed Geological Investigation** (QUEST): Given the topographic situation of St Mary's Road on ground sloping up from the alluvium, and given the mapped presence beneath the site of gravel, it seems likely that the ground here forms part of the bluff marking the edge of the Holocene floodplain and separating it from a gravel terrace remnant at a higher level. The position of the site on this bluff means that near surface sediments are

likely to have been disturbed by downslope movement, particularly during periods of cold climate conditions. Such deposits may be quite thick (2-3m) and might rest directly on bedrock chalk. Alternatively the bluff may be cut into terrace gravels, in which case undisturbed fluvial deposits might be present at depth beneath the disturbed sediment.

If undisturbed fluvial sediments are present beneath the site, it is not possible on the basis of the available evidence to determine what their stratigraphic position may be. If they comprise East Tilbury Marshes Gravel *sensu* Gibbard (1994), it is extremely unlikely that they will contain any Palaeolithic remains, either in primary context or as individual artefacts contemporary with the deposition of the sediment. If the sediment comprises Mucking Gravel *sensu* Bridgland (1994) there are sites in the Lower Thames valley where Palaeolithic remains have been recorded in this formation (e.g. Crayford, West Thurrock).

A sensible investigative strategy would be to open a small number of exploratory trenches to the depth of disturbance planned in association with the proposed development of the site, with the possibility of opening deeper sondages if any undisturbed fluvial sediments are encountered.

12. ARCHIVE

12.1 Preparation and Deposition

12.1.1 The Site archive, to include all project records, will be prepared in accordance with Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990).

On completion of the project SWAT Archaeology will arrange for the archive to be deposited with the appropriate repository (to be advised). Any alternative arrangements will be agreed with the County Archaeologist and the Local Planning Authority.

12.1.2 The historic building record archive will include:

- hard copy of the report
- pdf copy of the report on CD
- full photographic record with photographic registers
- field notes and sketches

12.1.3 Following approval of the report, SWAT Archaeology will provide the Kent Historic Environment Record (HER) with copies of all reports in both hard copy and digital format.

12.1.4 Upon completion of the on-site programme of historic building recording SWAT Archaeology will supply the Kent HER with a completed HER form.

13. Copyright

13.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by SWAT Archaeology under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. The designated repository, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-on-profit making, and conforms to the Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003.

14. REFERENCES

14.3 Cartographic Sources consulted

1867 Ordnance Survey, 1:2,500

1897 Ordnance Survey, 1:2,500

1909 Ordnance Survey, 1:2,500

1933 Ordnance Survey, 1:2,500

1962 Ordnance Survey, 1:2,500

1972 Ordnance Survey, 1:2,500

1984 Ordnance Survey, 1:1,500

1992 Ordnance Survey, 1:1,500

14.2 Secondary sources

English Heritage, 2006: *Understanding Historic Buildings, A guide to good recording practice*, English Heritage

English Heritage, 2007: *Understanding the Archaeology of Landscapes, A guide to good recording practice*, English Heritage

Kent County Council, 2015, Specification for archaeological investigation of land. Manual of Specifications Part A

Kent County Council, 2014, Manual of Specifications Part B

Plates



Plate 1 (looking west).



Plate 2. (looking east)



Plate 3. Site defined by green reptile barrier (looking west)



Plate 4. Site defined by green reptile barrier (looking south-west)



Plate 5. Site defined by green reptile barrier, note concrete retaining wall (looking east)



Plate 6. Railway bridge (outside the PDA and looking south-west)

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Plate 7. Looking upslope on made-up ground (looking west)



Plate 8. Looking down one of the sidings (facing west)



Plate 9. Further on- note roadstone of relict railway track (looking west)



Plate 10. Again looking along one of the relict railway tracks (facing west)



Plate 11. Facing east- note roadstone of relict railway track



Plate 12. Facing west



Plate 13. Looking east back into the Site



Plate 14. Concrete railway sleepers still in situ



Plate 15. Concrete buffers outside the PDA (looking west)



Plate 16. Pile of discarded concrete railway sleepers



Plate 17. Far west end of site

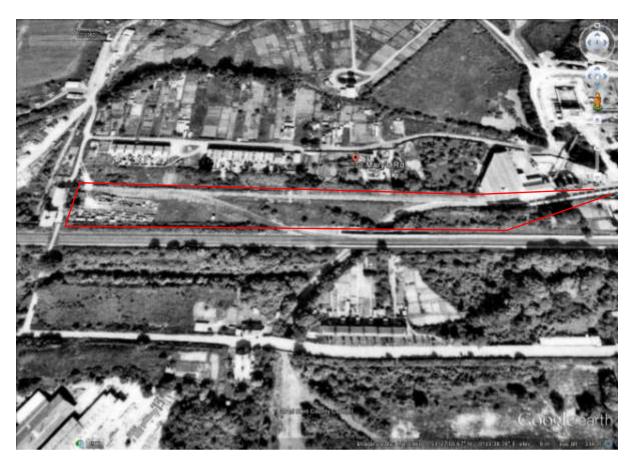


Plate 18. Google Earth 1960 red line denotes extent of PDA



Plate 19. Google Earth 1990



Plate 20. Google Earth 2007



Plate 21. The Andrews Dury map of 1769. Approximate area of site highlighted in red

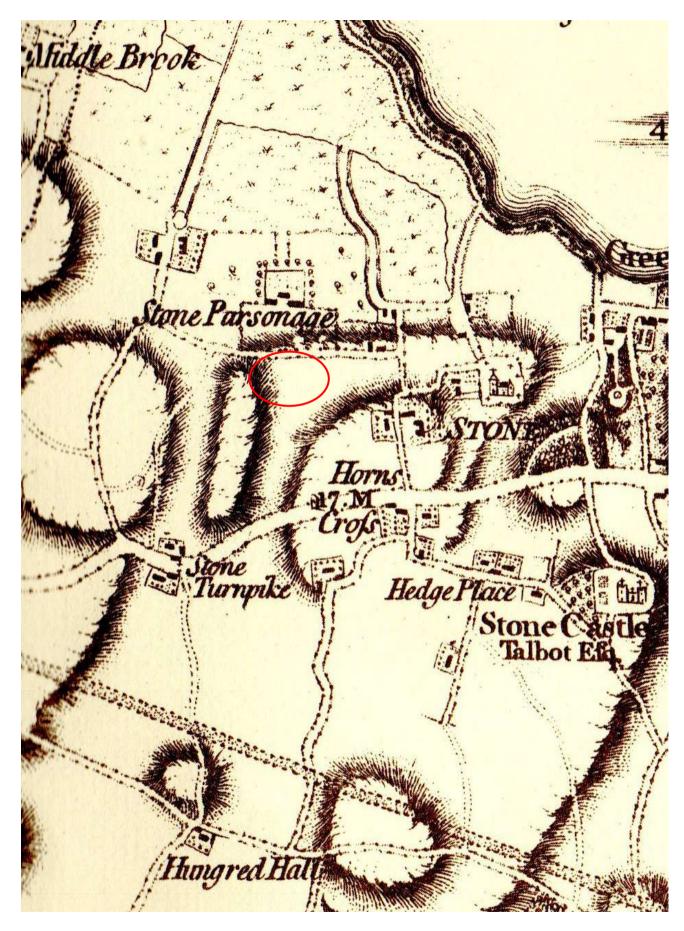


Plate 22. Detail of the Andrews Dury map of 1769. Approx area of site highlighted in red

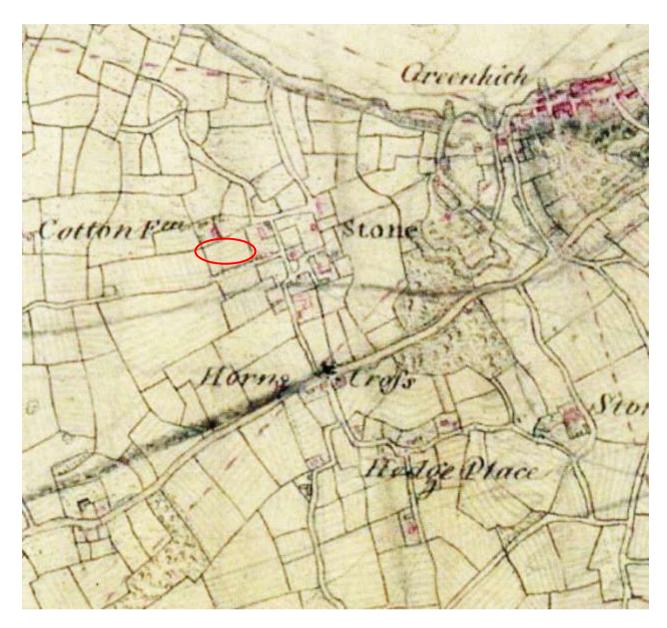
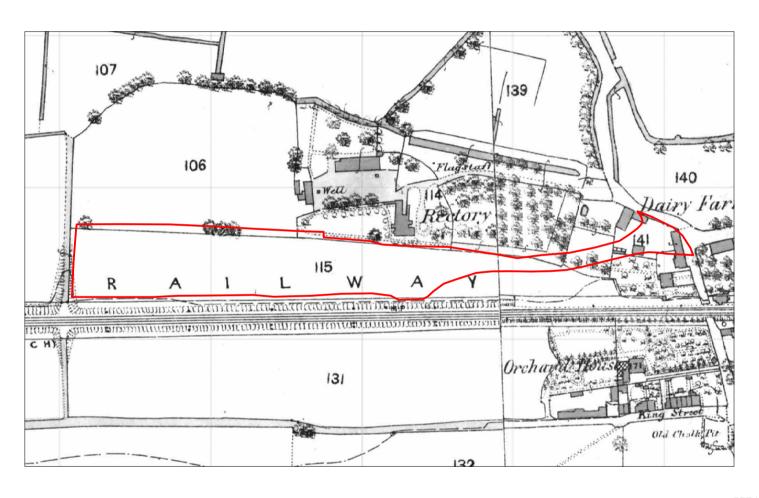


Plate 23. The Ordnance Survey Surveyors drawing of 1799, PDA area highlighted in red



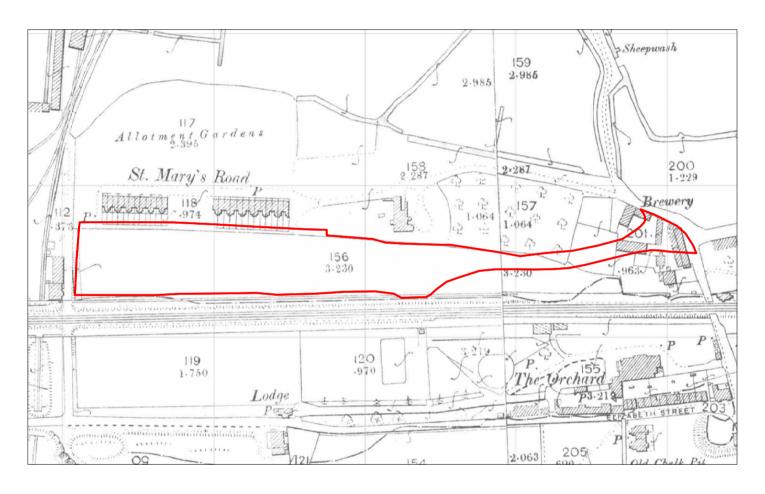


+ 557437.0mE 174787.0mN

Figure 1: Historic mapping 1867

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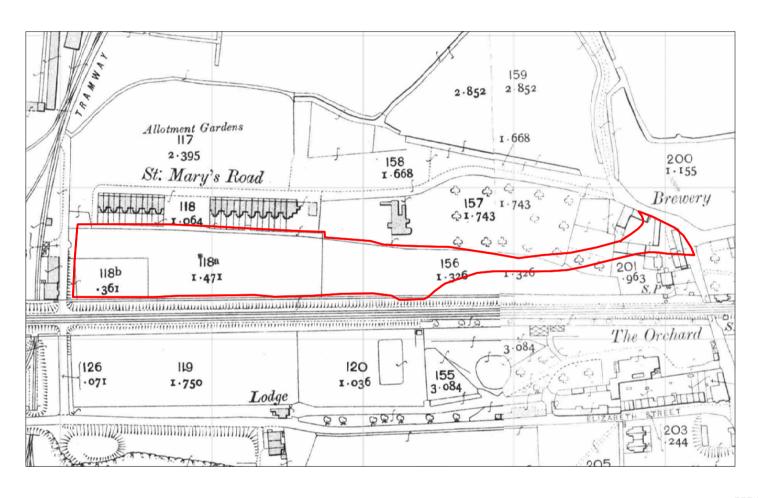
+ 557437.0mE 174787.0mN

200m

Figure 2: Historic mapping 1897

0m 1:2500@A4



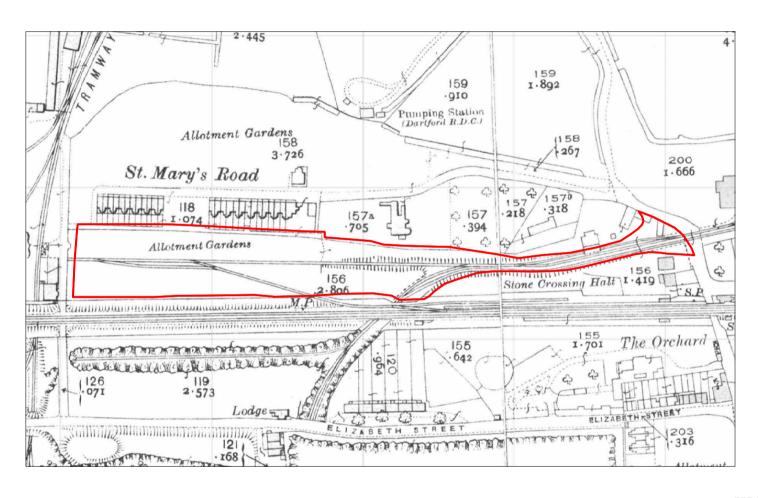


+ 557437.0mE 174787.0mN

Figure 3: Historic mapping 1909

0m 1:2500@A4



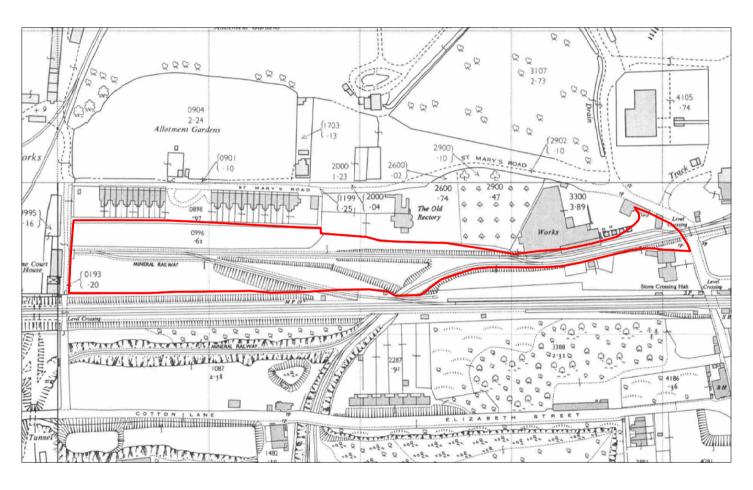


+ 557437.0mE 174787.0mN

Figure 4: Historic mapping 1933

0m 1:2500@A4



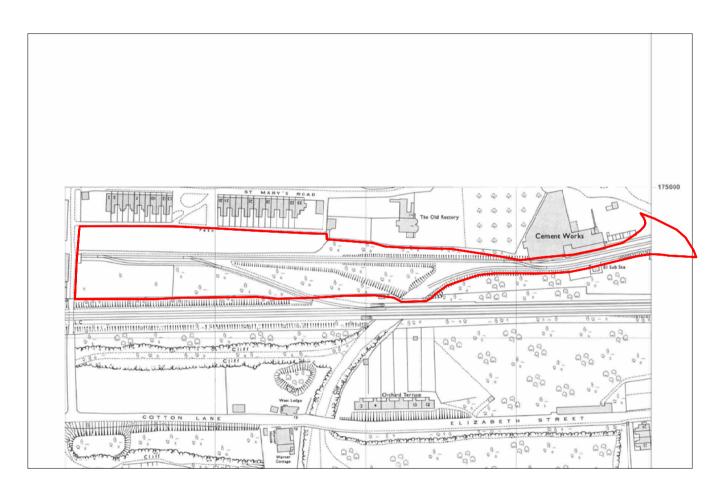


→ 557437.0mE 174787.0mN

Figure 5: Historic mapping 1962

0m 1:2500@A4



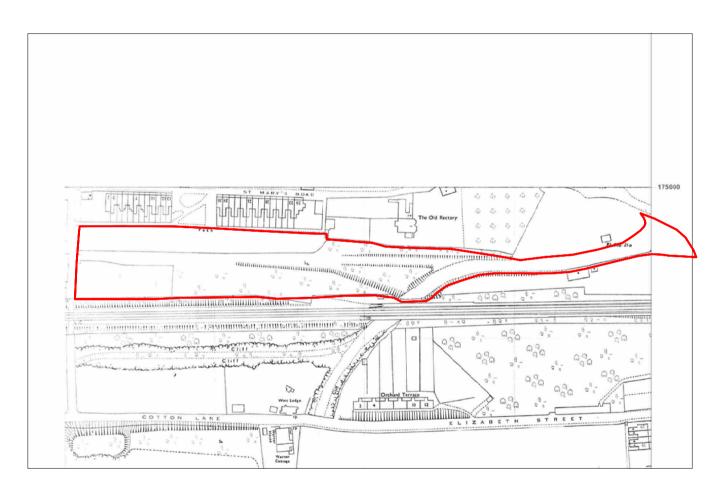


→ 557437.0mE 174787.0mN

Figure 6: Historic mapping 1972

0m 1:2500@A4



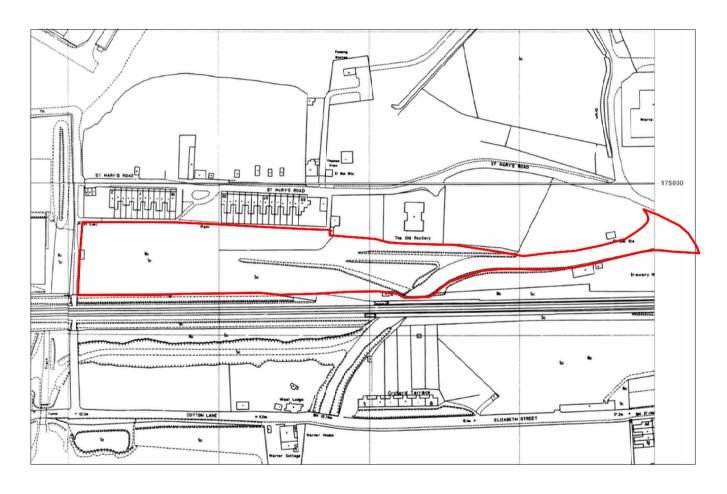


→ 557437.0mE 174787.0mN

Figure 7: Historic mapping 1984

0m 1:2500@A4 200m



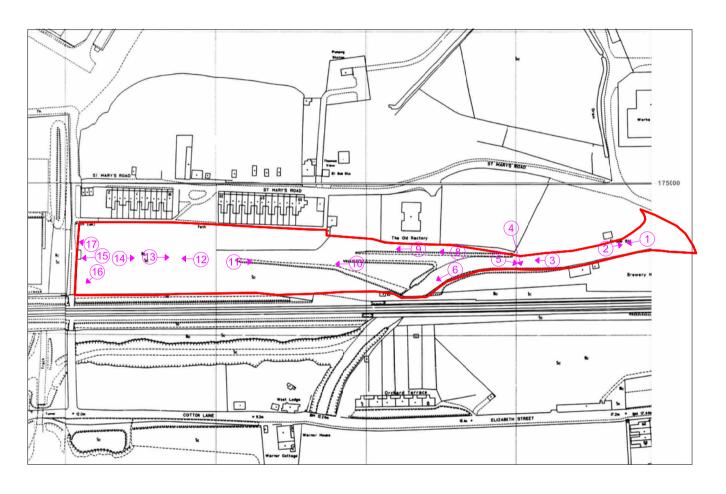


+ 557437.0mE 174787.0mN

Figure 8: Historic mapping 1992

0m 1:2500@A4 200m

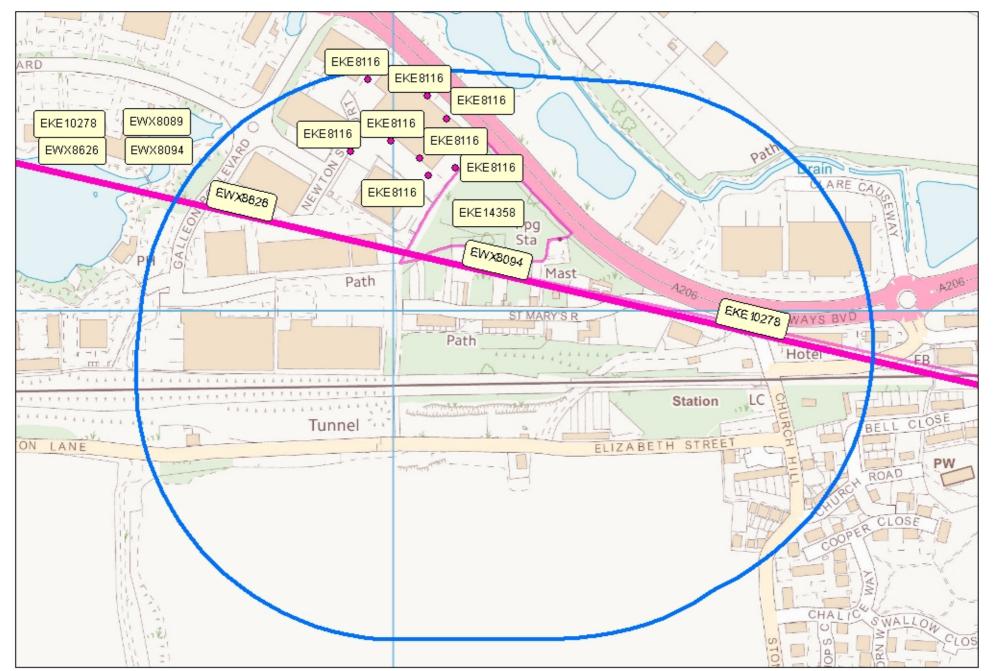




+ 557437.0mE 174787.0mN

Figure 9: Photo Plan 0m 1:2500@A4 200m

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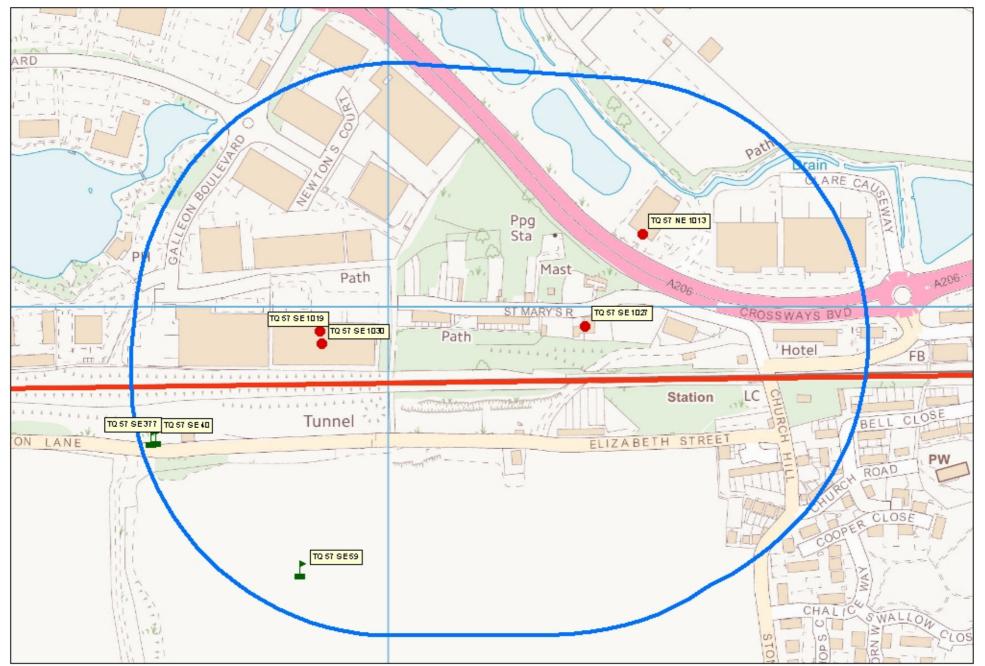


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