3.0 EVALUATION STRATEGY

This programme of archaeological evaluation was designed and executed as a staged investigative programme, wherein the results of the early stages were used to inform the detailed design of subsequent stages. A variety of non-invasive and invasive investigative techniques were employed including fieldwalking, geophysical survey, auger survey, test pitting and evaluation excavation. In addition to the staged programme, existing background information consisting of plotted cropmarks derived from aerial photographs and former field boundaries digitised from historic maps, were also used to inform the evaluation strategy and the interpretation of results. Additionally, the results of previous archaeological investigations in the area also provided valuable background information, along with many years of relevant fieldwork experience gained at Nosterfield Quarry by members of the FAS Ladybridge Farm evaluation team.

This staged programme allowed specific areas to be targeted most effectively and with the most appropriate technique. Where a sample of the site was investigated using a specific technique, this was undertaken on a selective, rather than on a random basis. Accordingly, areas deemed of higher potential, based on the results of preceding investigation, were targeted for more intensive study. Due to the variation in land-use, ground conditions and archaeological visibility, individual investigative techniques were applied only to areas of the site where, based on professional judgement, the technique was considered to be suitable.

In the case of invasive intervention, a reasonable balance has been achieved between the need for information, and the need to minimise damage to the archaeological resource. Test pits were designed to establish whether the ploughsoil within the application area contained a significant vertical distribution of lithic material. The majority of the test pits were undertaken within the area of subsequent evaluation trenches in order to test the

ploughsoil in advance of disturbance, and also to provide a guide during machine excavation of the evaluation trenches. The machine excavated evaluation trenches represent a 2% sample of the application area. While the position of the trenches was determined partly by areas of higher potential identified during the earlier stages of the evaluation, a balance was struck whereby the trenching regime also provided a reasonable coverage of the site. Elongated rectangular trenches were employed to improve the probability of identifying boundary features and defining geological variation.

3.1 ZONATION

Due to the size of the site and the variation in land use, the area of investigation was divided into six zones for the purposes of project management and recording (Figure 7, Table 1). This approach provided a means of assessing the likely variation in archaeological visibility, as well as predicting the relative success of individual investigative techniques.

Table 1 Zones of investigation

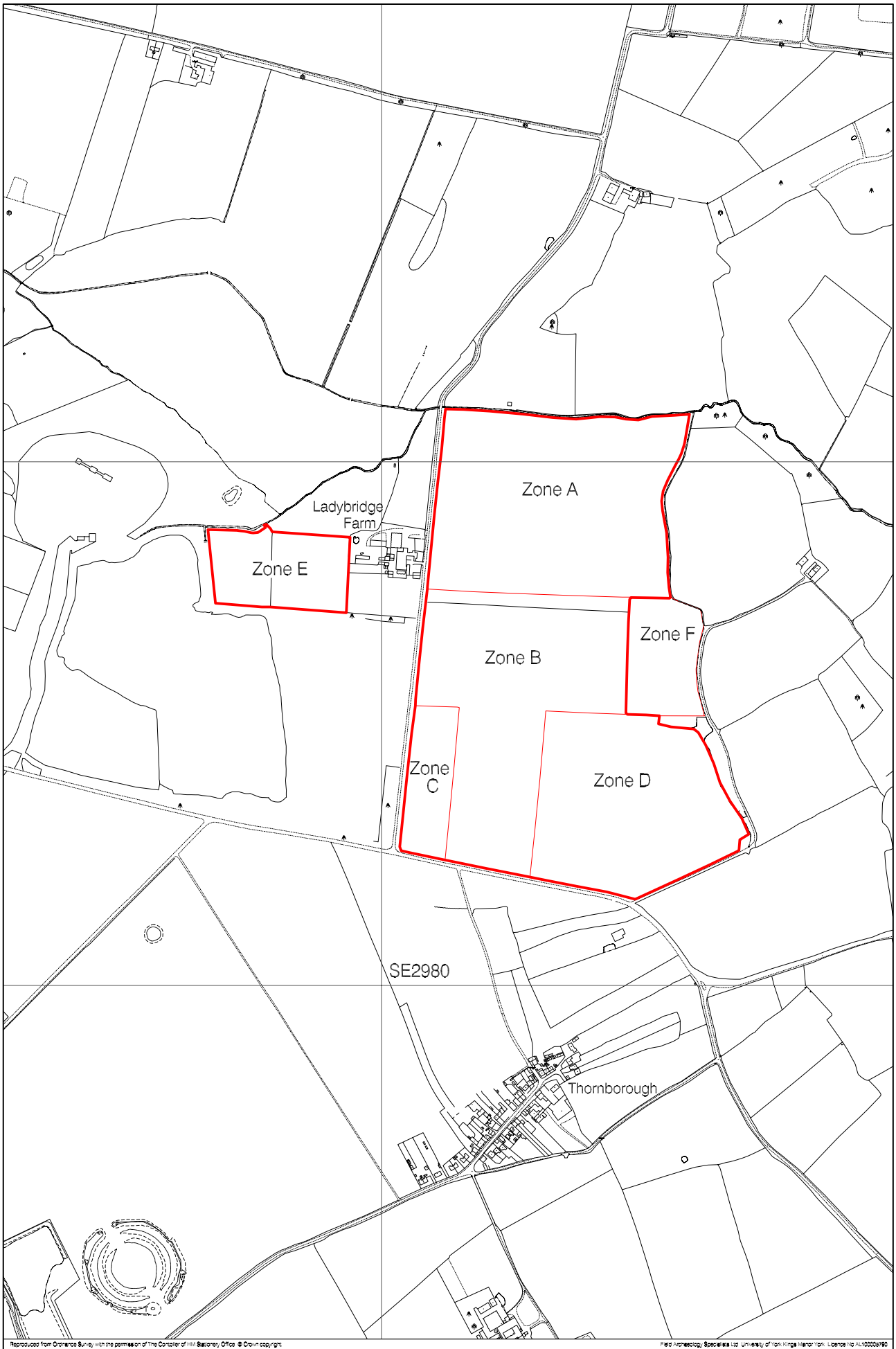
Zone	**Land use**
A	Arable, cereal crop in 2004
B	Arable, with access track to the north, cereal crop in 2004
C	Arable, cereal crop in 2004
D	Arable, beet crop in 2004
E	Pasture
F	Pasture with small pond to the south

3.2 INTERVENTIONS

In order to create a structured and consistent project archive from data-sets derived from the application of different techniques of investigation, each separate operation was assigned an intervention number (Table 2). An intervention was defined either by an area examined or by the application of a technique.

Table 2 Archaeological interventions

Intervention	**Zone**	**Activity**	**Date**
1	A, B, C, D	Fieldwalking	Oct 2003, May 2004
2	A, B, E, F	Auger survey	Oct 2003, Jan 2004
3	F, E	Topgraphic survey	Oct 2003, Jan 2004
4	A, B, C, E	Magnetometer survey	Nov-Dec 2003
5	A, B, D	Soil resistance survey	Jan-Feb 2004
6	A, B, C, D, E	Test pits (x112 1m x 1m)	March 2004, Aug-Oct 2004
7	D	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	March 2004
8	D	Evaluation trench (50m x 4m)	March 2004
9	D	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	March 2004



Zones of investigation | Scale 1:10000 | Figure 7

Intervention	Zone	Activity	Date
10	D	Evaluation trench (50m x 4m)	March 2004
11	D	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	March 2004
12	D	Evaluation trench (50m x 4m)	March 2004
13	D	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	March 2004
14	C	Evaluation trench (3m x 3m)	April 2004
15	C	Evaluation trench (3m x 3m)	April 2004
16	C	Evaluation trench (3m x 3m)	April 2004
17	C	Evaluation trench (3m x 3m)	April 2004
18	C	Evaluation trench (3m x 3m)	April 2004
19	C	Evaluation trench (3m x 3m)	April 2004
20	C	Evaluation trench (3m x 3m)	April 2004
21	C	Evaluation trench (3m x 3m)	April 2004
22	C	Evaluation trench (3m x 3m)	April 2004
23	C	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
24	C	Evaluation trench (50m x 8m)	Aug-Oct 2004
25	B	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
26	B	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
27	B	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
28	B	Evaluation trench (50m x 8m)	Aug-Oct 2004
29	B	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
30	B	Evaluation trench (50m x 8m)	Aug-Oct 2004
31	B	Evaluation trench (50m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
32	A	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
33	A	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
34	A	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
35	A	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
36	A	Evaluation trench (50m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
37	A	Evaluation trench (50m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
38	A	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
39	A	Evaluation trench (50m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
40	A	Evaluation trench (50m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
41	A	Evaluation trench (50m x 4m)	Aug-Oct 2004
42	E	Evaluation trench (100m x 4m)	Oct 2004

3.3 SURVEY

A site grid was established for recording purposes, and all boundaries and features within and around the area of investigation were surveyed using a total station theodolite. The resulting map was then rectified to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. A series of survey stations were then set out around the site to facilitate accurate surveying and recording during all phases of the evaluation programme. All co-ordinates and alignments expressed in this report refer to the Ordnance Survey National Grid; all heights are expressed in

metres above ordnance datum (AOD).

3.4 FIELDWORK CONSTRAINTS

The site is currently a working farm. In order to limit the destruction of crops and disruption to the farming regime, stages of the evaluation were undertaken during periods when damage and disruption could be minimised. This resulted in stages of the evaluation programme being undertaken at different times in different zones of the site, and in one instance, it was necessary to undertake stages of the investigation out of the logical sequence.

Certain areas of the site became inaccessible due to the presence of surface water during wet weather (Zones E and F). Investigation of these areas was therefore undertaken after long spells of dry weather.