Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group

Archaeological Excavation
Hagg Farm Site 103: Feature 407

Hagg Farm
Fremington
Reeth
Swaledale

May 2013

Figure 1: A view of Grinton and the River Swale from the excavation site.

Contents

Figures

1. Summary

The Project

1.1 This report presents the results of archaeological excavations conducted by the Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group (SWAAG) with the support of Tony Liddell, Vindomora Solutions, VindomoraSolutions.co.uk, and forms part of *The Swaledale Project: 7000 Years of a Landscape and its People*. The work comprised excavation of one area adjacent to the Romano-British settlement at Hagg Plantation, Hagg Farm, Swaledale.

Previous Work

1.2 Previous work has demonstrated that a significant archaeological resource is present on Site 103, including secure, stratified, datable deposits. Excavations have demonstrated that the site comprises a later Romano-British settlement which was not abandoned until the late 4th century. No evidence has been identified for continuation beyond this period. At the time of this excavation it is not possible to state when the site was established as excavation has not proceeded beyond the abandonment phase.

Excavation Location

1.3 Site 103 is a settlement located about half way between the River Swale flood plain at 172m AOD and Fremington Edge at about 400m AOD, lying 2km east of Reeth, Swaledale, North Yorkshire, UK.

The Swaledale landscape is a post-glacial landscape with very thin soils. Site 103 is overlooked by 2 glacial mounds, the eastern mound (SWAAG feature 407) is the excavation site. It has particularly fine views both up and down the Swale valley, and directly overlooks the site 103 settlement.

Trench 5

1.4 This is the third excavation at Site 103, and the single trench opened on feature 407 is the 5th trench in the series.

The initial cut of Trench 5 was later extended in two directions covering 43 square metres.

Results

1.5 The excavation clarified the features previously reported on this site by Ed Dennison Archaeological Services (EDAS) in April 1997.

No evidence was found supporting its use prior to the 19C.

2. Project background

Location

2.1 The site is located southwest of the Hagg Wood Plantation at Hagg Farm, below the southern end of Fremington Edge, in the parish of Reeth, Fremington and Healaugh (SE 05670 99015).

Site 103 / feature 407: eastern glacial mound, is marked on the Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 map (red circle). The main settlement (site 103) is immediately to the west of the mound.

Figure 2: Hagg Farm Site 103 feature 407 Map
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Objectives

2.2 The mound is a prominent landmark directly overlooking the Roman-British settlement at Site 103, with fine view both down Swaledale towards Marrick and up the dale towards Reeth.

The objective of the excavation was to identify, excavate and record significant archaeological features on top of the mound.

Figure 3: Site 103 settlement (trenches 1 & 2 June 2012) viewed from the glacial mound (feature 407).

Figure 4: Wall foundations and planted Hawthorns on the top of feature 407. Sketch by Jocelyn Campbell.

Methods

2.3 A proposal document was submitted to the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority for comment, and their suggestions included wherever possible.

Dates

2.4 The excavation started on 22/04/2013 and was completed on 02/05/2013. The trench was backfilled on 07/05/2013.

Personnel

2.5 The excavation was supervised by Philip Bastow and Stephen Eastmead, with Tony Liddell, Vindomora Solutions, as external archaeological advisor.

All excavation was done manually by: David Brooks, Stephen Eastmead, Shirley Gale, David Metcalfe, Kate and Dustin Mirick, Rob Nicholson, Ann and John Russell, Graham and Flora Smith, Mike Walton and Justin Wood.

Edited by: Philip Bastow, Peter Denison-Edson and Stephen Eastmead.

Website: Stephen Eastmead.

Acknowledgments

2.6 SWAAG is grateful for the assistance of the landowners, David Clarke and Brenda Price.

3. Land use and geology

3.1 **Land use**

The site is in permanent pasture at about 266m AOD

3.2 **Geology**

Swaledale lies within the Askrigg Block, formed by limestone, cherts, sandstone and shale. Glacial drift deposits lie above rock, forming terraces of gravels, clay, limestone and sandstone. The underlying solid geology of the Hagg Plantation Settlement comprises Visean-Namurian limestone with subordinate sandstone and argillaceous rocks of the Alston Formation to the east and Visean Middle Limestone overlain by Devensian glaciofluvial sheet deposits of sand and gravel in the west (Countryside Commission 1998). There is a fault line which may be an extension of the Stockdale disturbance towards Marrick that lies just above the site. This may account for the increase in slope of strata within Hagg Farm. The site lies below the lead mining veins on Copperthwaite allotment.

4. The excavation

Introduction

4.1 In 1997 EDAS completed a walkover survey of this part of Hagg Farm which was commissioned by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) as part of the then 'Hill Farming Initiative'.

The glacial mound SWAAG feature 407 is Site 40 in the EDAS report, is described as:

- a tree circle; eye-catcher?
- post-medieval; 18th century? 19th century?
- ruined structure
- c.15m wide
- there may be a shallow raised sub-circular feature on the north side of the interior (SWAAG feature 307), and a shallow irregular depression to the south side of the natural mound
- it is shown on the 1839 tithe map as a circular wooded area and is named Round Plantation
- it is also shown wooded on the OS 1857 6" map, and is depicted on Clarkson's 1848 map and the OS 1913 25" map as a circular field boundary

EDAS concluded that it may have been constructed as an eye-catcher plantation at the time The Hagg (now Hagg Farm) was converted to a shooting lodge in the 19th century.

SWAAG survey

4.2 SWAAG's landscape survey of this site in November 2009 identified both the circular walled 'eye-catcher' enclosure (407) and its sub-circular (307) inner feature.

There has not been a geophysical survey of feature 407.

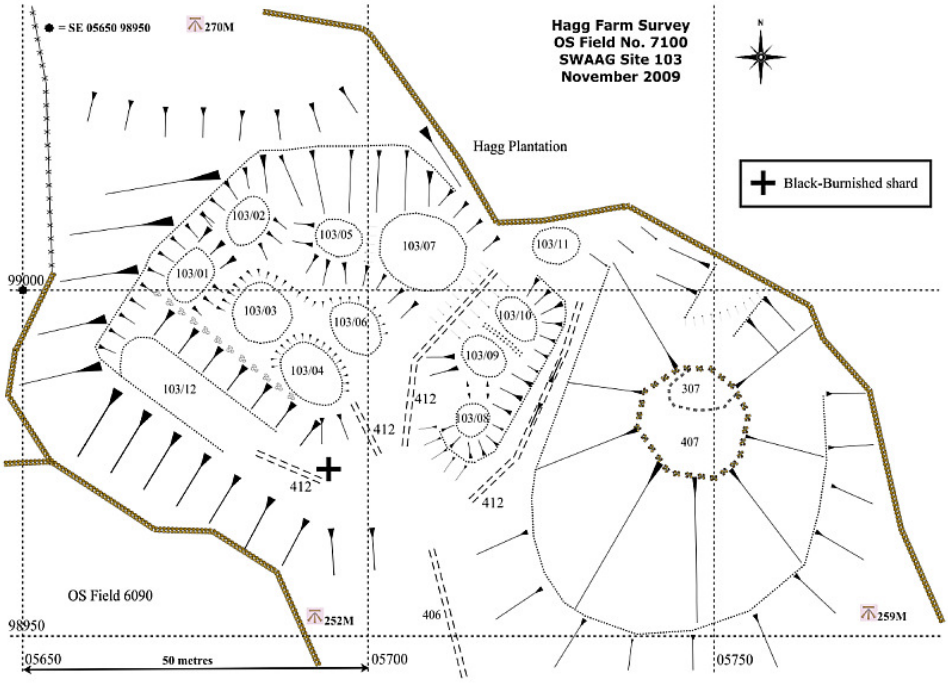


Figure 5: SWAAG map of site 103 and adjacent features: 407 and 307.

4.3 Feature descriptions

The circular enclosure feature 407 is not located centrally on the mound but offset to the north. The enclosure is now only marked by the largely grass-covered dry-stone wall foundations, and the ring of regularly spaced Hawthorns that unusually appear to have been planted within the wall, as each of the remaining Hawthorns is located on top of the remaining foundation bank (Figure 6).

The sub-circular inner feature 307 was still present but much less visible than in 2009. This is probably due to increased grass coverage of the expose stones.

Figure 6: Hawthorns on top of enclosure foundations.

Trenches

4.4 A single trench (Hagg site 103 trench 5 phase 1) measuring 9 x 2 metres was opened on a north-south axis from the centre of the circular enclosure northwards cutting across the enclosure wall.

Trench 5 was subsequently enlarged in two further phases:

Phase 2: 6.4 x 2 metre extension to the east within the enclosure.

Phase 3: 6 x 1 metre extension to the south also within the enclosure.

Trench 5 Phase 1

4.5 When trench 5 phase 1 was cleaned of all topsoil it revealed:

a) The dry-stoned wall enclosure foundation.
b) 'Tumble' from when the enclosure wall was robbed out. The majority of this (>90%) was on the outer north side of the wall, and lay within the topsoil [501]. Context [501] continued either side of the wall wherever there was topsoil present.
c) There was a lighter coloured 'topsoil' [502] between the stones that make up the foundation wall.
d) The trench inside the enclosure wall contained a large area of stones at the southern end and a band of stones cutting across the trench just beyond the enclosure wall.
e) A yellow brown sub-soil [503].

When trench 5 phase 1 was cleaned of subsoil it revealed a compact sandy gravel layer [504] and an intermediate stony bank (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Trench 5 Phase 1 intermediate stony bank with hard stony channels either side.

Trench 5 Phase 2

4.6 Trench 5 was widened within the enclosure by a further 2 metres.

This revealed:

a) Similar soil/sub-soil profiles but with slightly differing depths. This was consistent with the strata dipping to the south west.
b) Parallel features running and dipping gradually to the south west.
c) A 3m wide glacial feature consistent with it being a water channel, which is bisected by a glacial bank into two channels.
d) A short length of vertically aligned stones in the wider of the two water channels (see figure 7).
e) When the hard stony floor to the water channel was excavated to a greater depth, after a succession of sandy layers which gradually increased in coarseness, it became gravelly before terminating into another hard stony glacial layer.
f) A significant area of stones at the southerly end of the trench forming the southern edge of the water channel.
g) A 'cist-like' structure (figure 8) within the mass of stones at the south of trench 5 phase 2. When selected stones were removed this feature appeared to be a natural glacial deposit (Figure 9).

Figure 8: Natural cist-like structure at south end of Trench 5 phase 2.

Figure 9: Natural stone layers within the cist-like structure.

4.7 Trench 5 Phase 3

Trench 5 was lengthened within the enclosure by a further 6 x 1 metres. This revealed:

a) Continuation of the stones found at the southerly edge of trench 5 phase 1 all the way to the enclosure wall at the south end of the enclosure.
b) That when stones in the phase 3 trench were lifted other layers of stone were underneath.

Figure 10: Trench 5 Phase 3 extension.

Trench 5 Enclosure foundation wall.

4.8 A 2 x 0.6 metre cut was made through the dry-stone enclosure wall to look at the wall's foundation.

It revealed that:

a) This segment of the wall is constructed on the top of another hard glacial stony bank
b) The bank was too narrow to fully support the wall.
c) The outer face of the wall was revetted to support the width of the wall
d) The revetting was insubstantial and looked amateurish.
e) Only 2 metres of foundation were excavated, only the outer face of the enclosure had reasonable quality facing stone but laid on insubstantial foundations.

Figure 11: Outer face of enclosure wall.

5. The artefacts

Summary

5.1 Finds were scarce. All the finds came from the topsoil [501] or its interface with subsoil [503]. None could be said to be from a sealed context.

Apart from 4 small pieces of simple thin cream-glazed ware from the 19C, there was a horse/pony shoe, part of a pony shoe, a nail and a small lump of iron slag that when tested adhered to a magnet.

Figure 12: Metal artefacts.

Figure 13: Ceramic artefacts

6. The contexts

Context list

6.1

a) [500] Turf.
b) [501] Topsoil found both north and south of the enclosure foundation wall directly beneath [500].
c) [502] Topsoil only found under [500] directly above the foundation wall.
d) [503] Sub soil found beneath [502].
e) [504] Glacial deposit below [503].
f) [505] Masonry Context for enclosure wall.
g) [506] Soils under [503].
h) [507] Hard glacial deposit use as the enclosure wall foundation.

6.2 **Context matrices**

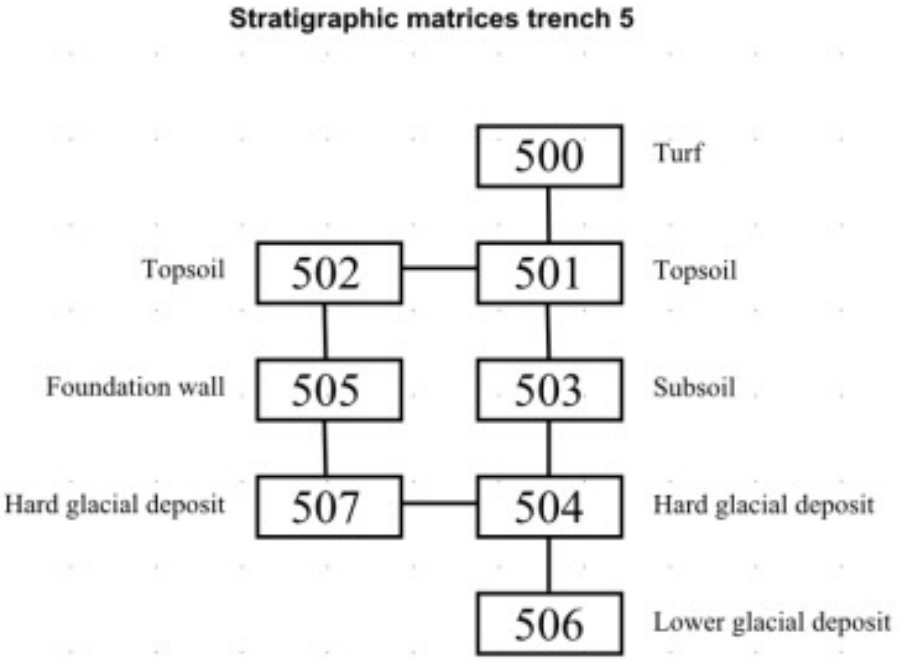


Figure 14: Stratigraphic matrices trench 5.

7. Conclusions

Conclusions

7.1 The mound feature 407 appears to be a product of the glacial processes that accumulated layers of sandstone, cobbles, gravels and course and fine sands. Much of the sandstone is fractured making it an ideal quarry stone for dry-stone wall construction.

There is evidence of quarrying taking place on its southern and northern sides. It is quite probably that stone was quarried from the top of the mound too.

7.2 No evidence was found of human activity on the mound prior to the 18C-19C.

7.3 It is quite probable that previous human activity would have been destroyed by quarrying in the 18C-19C.

7.4 The sub-circular feature 307 was just a random pattern of miscellaneous sandstone rocks showing through the turf.

7.5 The Hawthorns planted within the dry stone wall could not penetrate the underlying strata significantly, and relied on near-horizontal root systems over the mound.

There was no sign of any trees having been planted on the mound.

The difficult growing conditions and the underlying strata may well explain why Hawthorn was chosen and supported in the early years of growth by being planted within the wall.

7.6 It is likely that the mound was used as a view point/picnic spot when the Hagg was converted into a Shooting Lodge.

7.7 The construction of the wall appears to be on poor foundations which would have limited its useful life. At some stage the stone from the enclosure was 'robbed out' and reused elsewhere.

8. Drawings

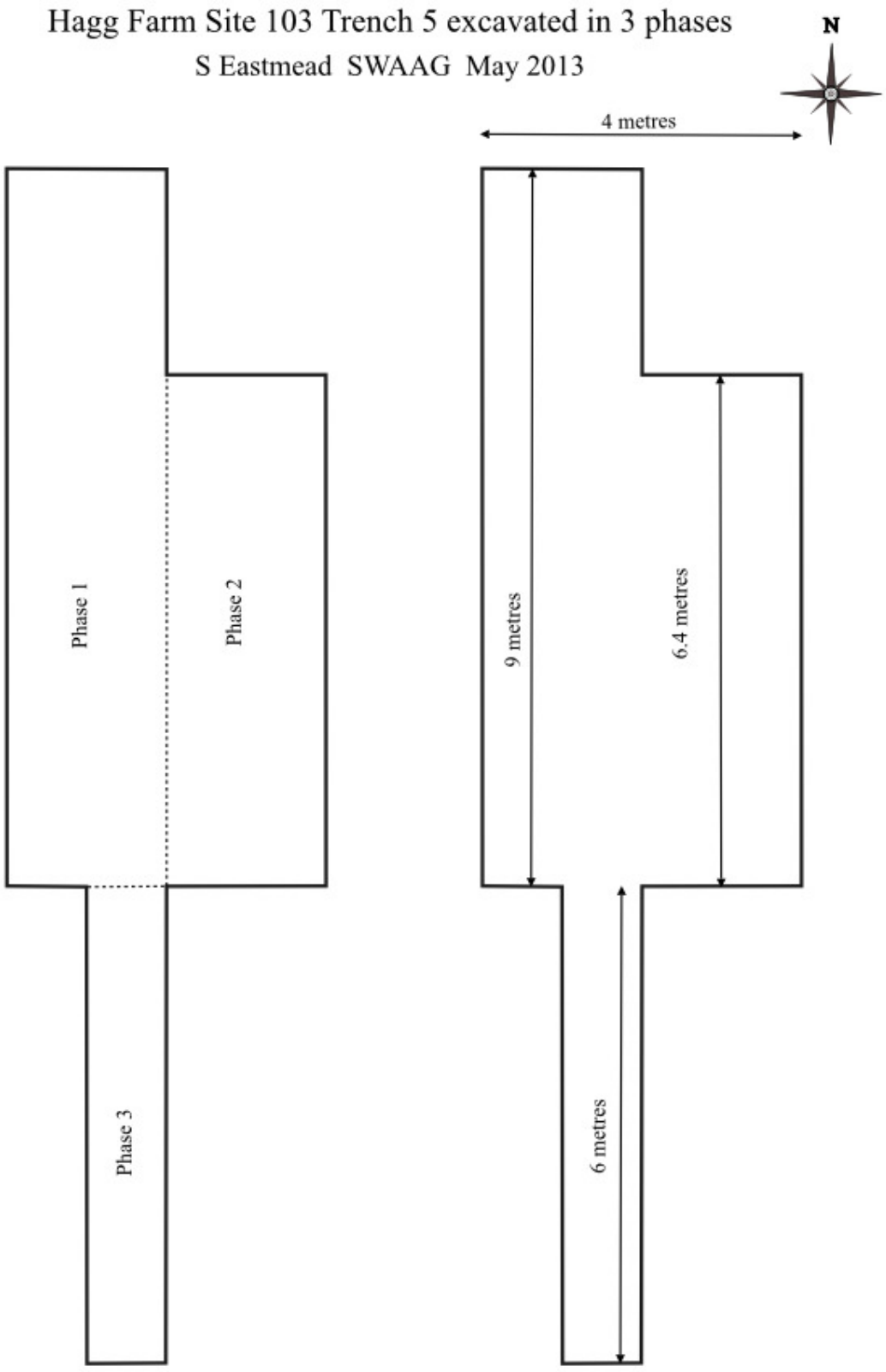


Figure 15: Trench 5: Phase 1 initial trench, with 2 extensions phases 2 and 3.

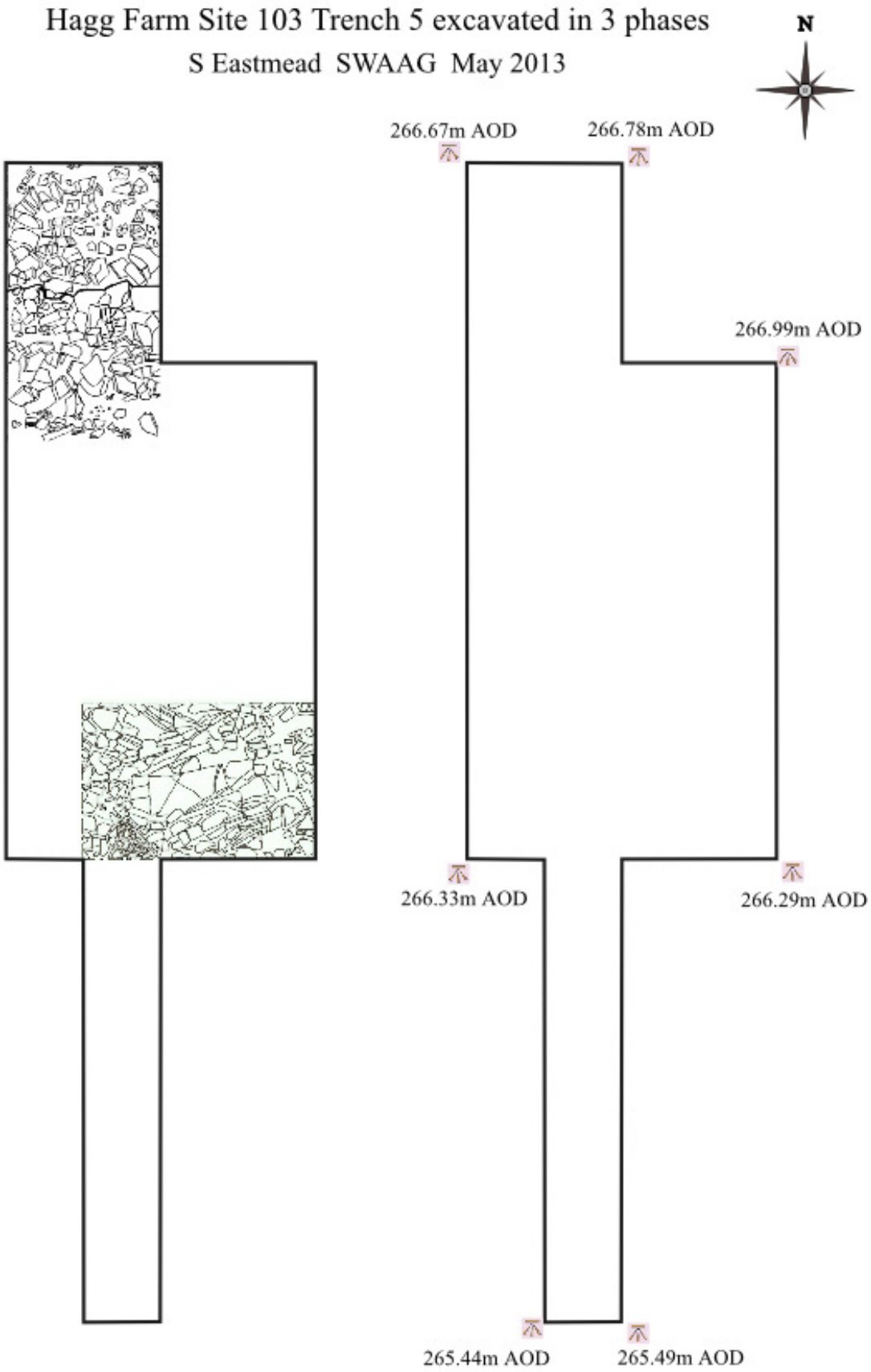


Figure 16: Trench 5. Areas recorded and levels.

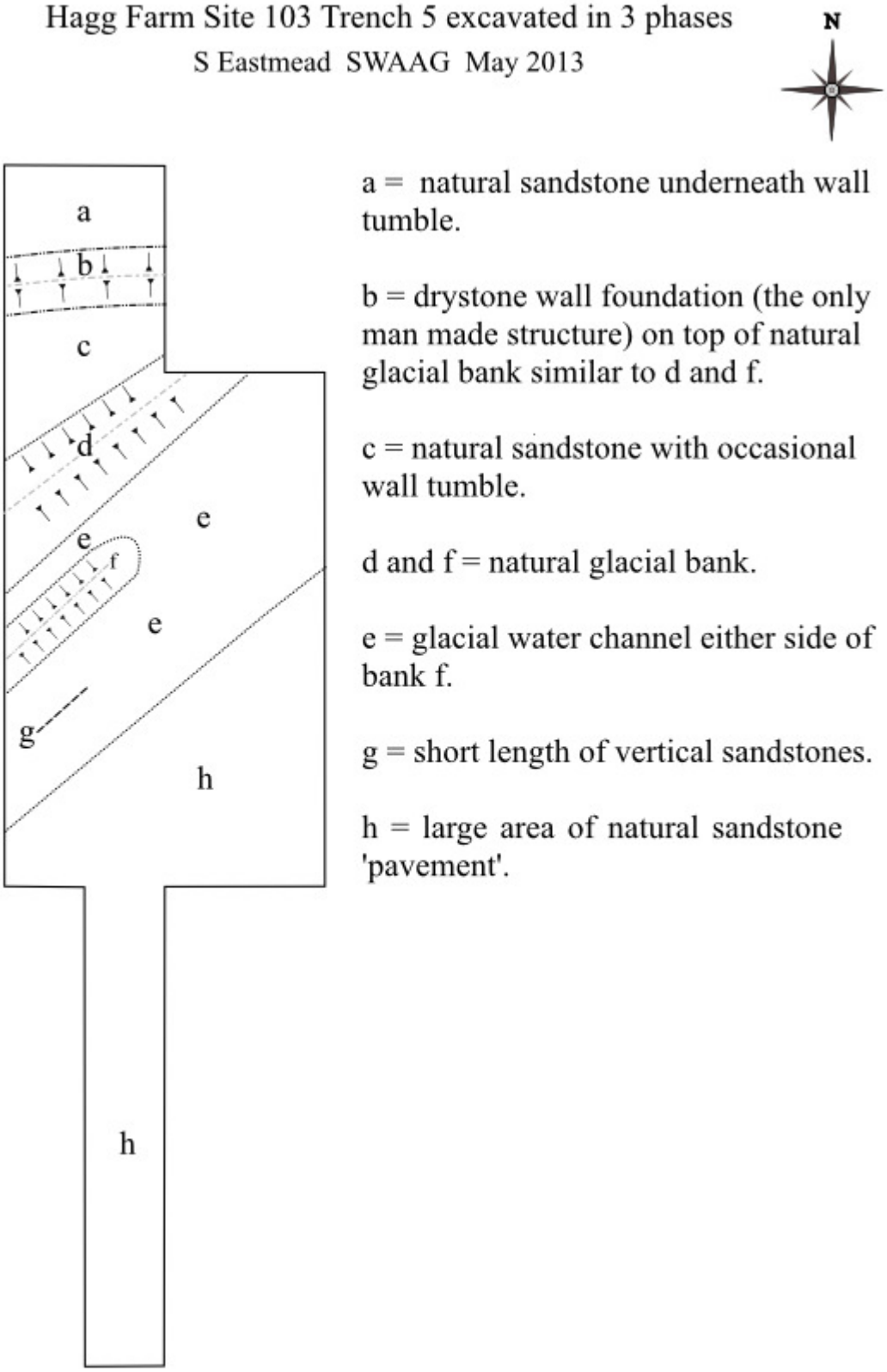
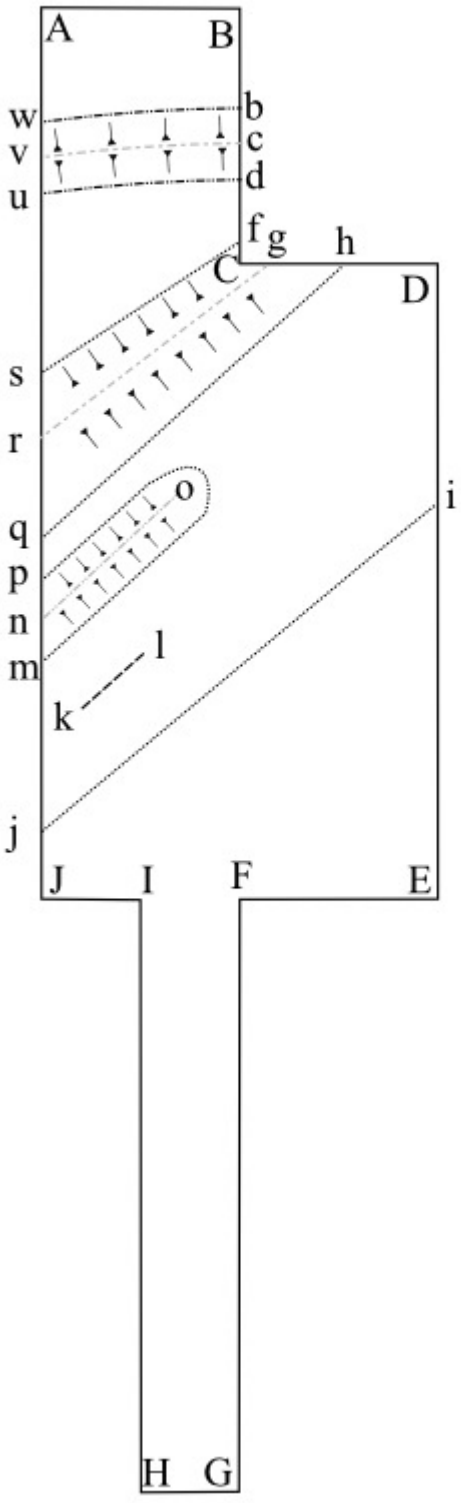


Figure 17: Trench 5. Glacial and man-made features.

Hagg Farm Site 103 Trench 5 excavated in 3 phases

S Eastmead SWAAG May 2013

Dumpy Level positions.



Mound Dumpy Levels

Datum height	266
Datum B/S	1.928

Dumpy Level
267.928

CORNER	F/S GRASS	F/S BOTTOM	Grass Level	Trench Level
A	1.254	1.306	266.674	266.622
B	1.148	1.19	266.78	267.928
C	0.986	1.074	266.942	266.854
D	0.935	1.055	266.993	266.873
E	1.635	1.712	266.293	266.216
F	1.566	1.641	266.362	266.287
G	2.437	2.564	265.491	265.364
H	2.491	2.633	265.437	265.295
I	1.569	1.683	266.359	266.245
J	1.601	1.681	266.327	266.247

Mound Dumpy Levels

FEATURE	F/S GRASS	F/S BOTTOM	Grass Level	Trench Level
a	-	-		
b	1.031	1.137	266.897	266.791
c	0.735	0.888	267.193	267.04
d	0.959	1.065	266.969	266.863
f	0.959	1.065	266.969	266.863
g	0.978	1.155	266.95	266.773
h	1	1.276	266.928	266.652
i	1.165	1.256	266.763	266.672
j	1.453	1.588	266.475	266.34
k	1.398	1.674	266.53	266.254
l	-	1.593		266.335
m	1.326	1.613	266.602	266.315
n	1.292	1.437	266.636	266.491
o	-	1.368		266.56
p	1.25	1.543	266.678	266.385
q	1.223	1.485	266.705	266.443
r	1.182	1.228	266.746	266.7
s	1.217	1.306	266.711	266.622
u	1.053	1.137	266.875	266.791
v	0.82	0.92	267.108	267.008
w	1.071	1.101	266.857	266.827

Figure 18: Trench 5. Excavation and natural levels.

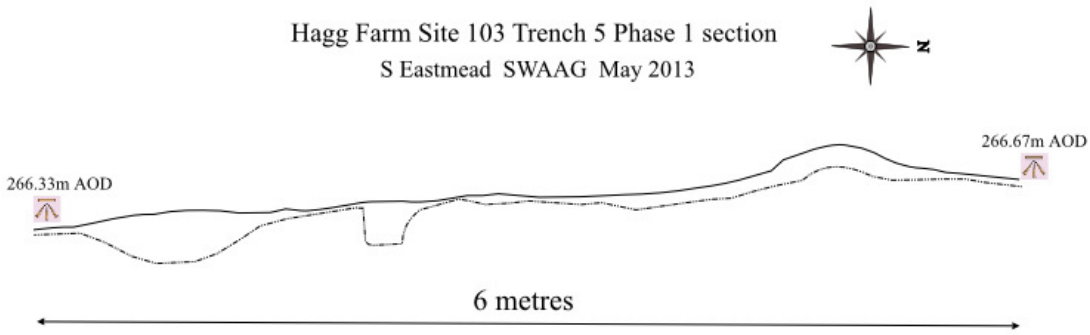


Figure 19: Trench 5. Phase 1 Section.

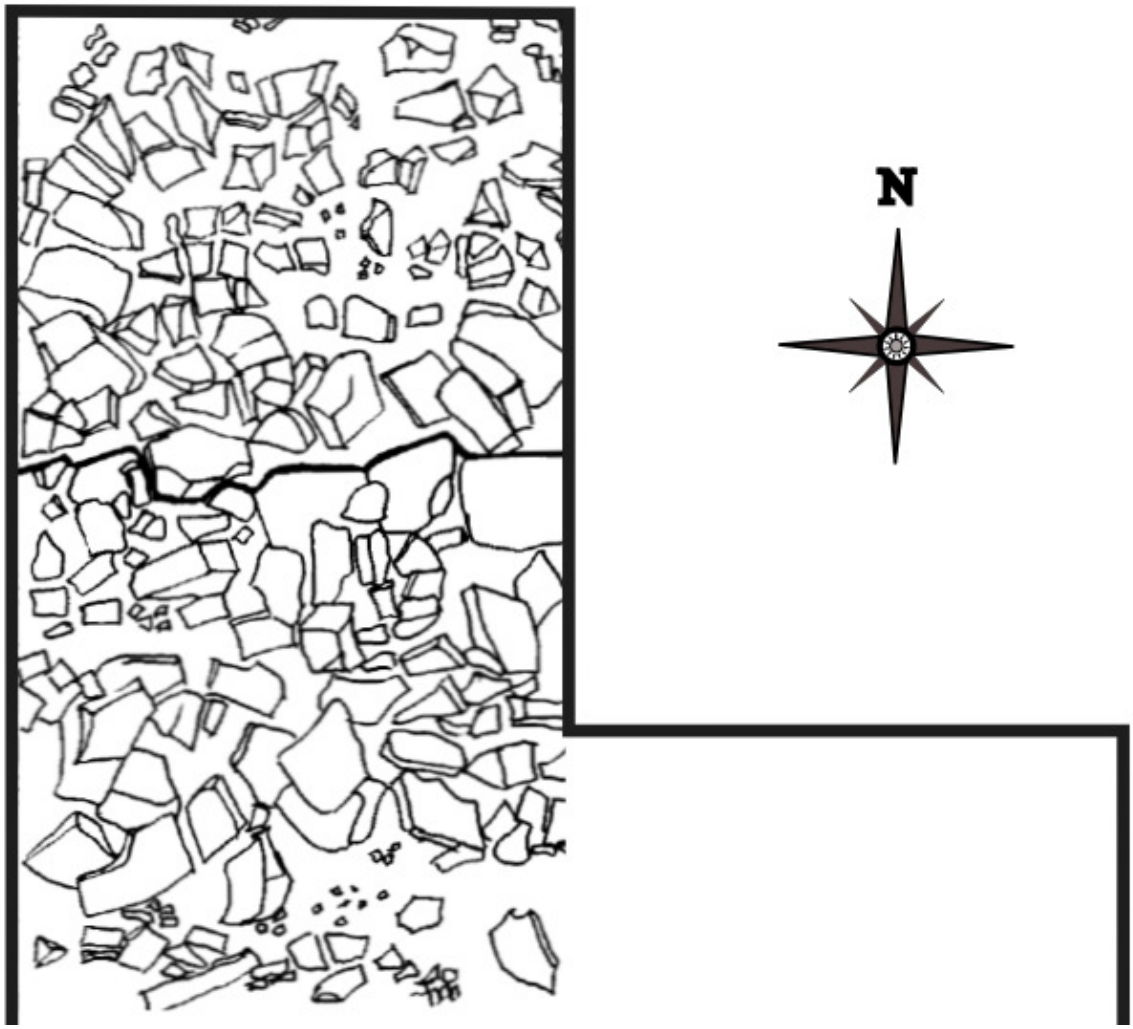


Figure 20: Trench 5. North end. Dry-stone wall facing stones highlighted (facing north).

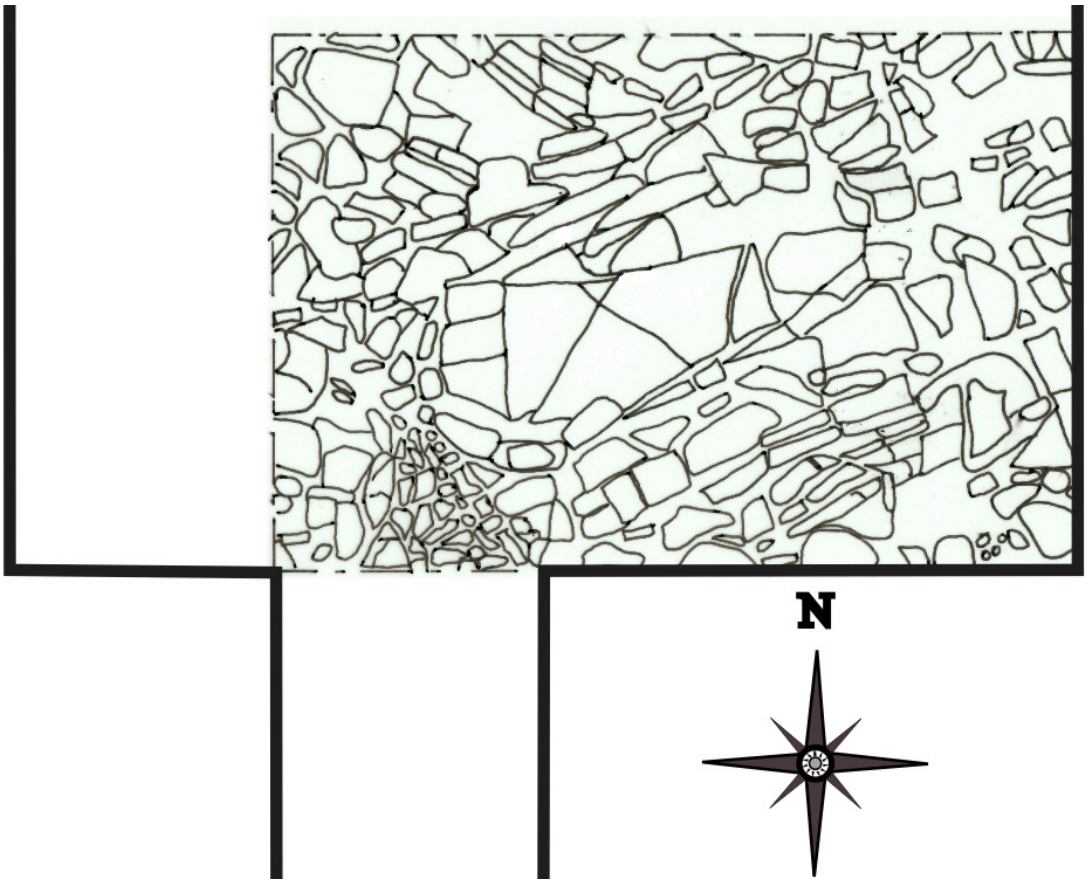


Figure 21: Trench 5. Phase 2 extension southern end. Natural cist-like structure.

Glacial Mound Site 103 Level Matrix: a 20 x 20 metre square centred on the 19C wall circle

Master datum AOD (metres)		266	Datam+B/S
Back site reading position 1		1.829	267.829
Back site reading position 2		2.18	268.180
Back site reading position 3		0.509	266.509

Forward Site readings

	Flag 1	Flag 2	Flag 3	Flag 4	Flag 5	Flag 6	Flag 7	Flag 8	Flag 9	Flag 10	Flag 11	
						North						
Flag 11	2.700	2.346	1.981	1.568	1.361	1.211	1.052	1.020	1.097	1.215	1.457	Flag 11
Flag 10	2.297	2.050	1.725	1.401	1.168	0.944	0.969	0.941	1.031	1.260	1.587	Flag 10
Flag 9	2.215	1.939	1.791	1.124	0.995	0.876	0.879	0.700	1.095	1.446	1.849	Flag 9
Flag 8	2.200	2.034	1.430	1.371	1.262	1.045	1.014	1.090	1.129	1.670	2.095	Flag 8
Flag 7	2.202	2.037	1.707	1.439	1.296	1.198	1.204	1.282	0.118	0.645	0.850	Flag 7
West Flag 6	2.512	2.520	2.035	1.835	1.321	1.660	1.600	1.692	1.710	2.170	1.068	Flag 6 East
Flag 5	3.306	3.146	2.637	2.385	2.218	2.119	2.114	2.217	2.173	2.791	3.031	Flag 5
Flag 4	3.693	3.323	2.787	2.750	2.566	2.463	2.443	2.441	2.640	3.046	3.364	Flag 4
Flag 3	4.090	3.700	1.770	2.874	2.834	2.755	2.595	2.669	3.060	3.313	3.641	Flag 3
Flag 2	4.400	2.324	2.030	3.482	3.447	3.272	1.594	1.582	3.400	3.630	4.088	Flag 2
Flag 1	3.147	4.443	4.095	3.808	3.618	3.495	1.803	1.980	3.930	4.183	4.555	Flag 1
	Flag 1	Flag 2	Flag 3	Flag 4	Flag 5	Flag 6	Flag 7	Flag 8	Flag 9	Flag 10	Flag 11	
						South						

Appropriate Datum+B/S - F/S

	Flag 1	Flag 2	Flag 3	Flag 4	Flag 5	Flag 6	Flag 7	Flag 8	Flag 9	Flag 10	Flag 11	
						North						
Flag 11	265.129	265.483	265.848	266.261	266.468	266.618	266.777	266.809	266.732	266.614	266.372	Flag 11
Flag 10	265.532	265.779	266.104	266.428	266.661	266.885	266.860	266.888	266.798	266.569	266.242	Flag 10
Flag 9	265.614	265.890	266.038	266.705	266.834	266.953	266.950	267.129	266.734	266.383	265.980	Flag 9
Flag 8	265.629	265.795	266.399	266.458	266.567	266.784	266.815	266.739	266.700	266.159	265.734	Flag 8
Flag 7	265.627	265.792	266.122	266.390	266.533	266.631	266.625	266.547	266.391	265.864	265.659	Flag 7
West Flag 6	265.317	265.309	265.794	265.994	266.508	266.169	266.229	266.137	266.119	265.659	265.441	Flag 6 East
Flag 5	264.874	265.034	265.543	265.795	265.962	266.061	266.066	265.963	266.007	265.389	265.149	Flag 5
Flag 4	264.487	264.857	265.393	265.430	265.614	265.717	265.737	265.739	265.540	265.134	264.816	Flag 4
Flag 3	264.090	264.480	264.739	265.306	265.346	265.425	265.585	265.511	265.120	264.867	264.539	Flag 3
Flag 2	263.780	264.185	264.479	264.698	264.733	264.908	264.915	264.927	264.780	264.550	264.092	Flag 2
Flag 1	263.362	263.737	264.085	264.372	264.562	264.685	264.706	264.529	264.250	263.997	263.625	Flag 1
	Flag 1	Flag 2	Flag 3	Flag 4	Flag 5	Flag 6	Flag 7	Flag 8	Flag 9	Flag 10	Flag 11	
						South						

Figure 22: Pre-excavation levels across the mound.

9. Additional images

Figure 23: Trench 5. Phase 1. Turf removed.

Figure 24: Trench 5. Phase 1. Loose topsoil removed.

Figure 25: Trench 5. Phase 1 (left) sub-soils removed. Phase 2 (right) turf and loose topsoil removed.

Figure 26: Trench 5. Phase 1. Glacial water channel with central bank.

Figure 27: Circular 19C. enclosure dry-stone wall foundation.

Figure 28: Glacial features cutting diagonally across the trench NE–SW orientation.

Figure 29: Trench 5. Phase 3 extension.

Figure 30: Overhead view of north end of Trench 5.
The two small holes explored the glacial deposits below the exposed surface.

Figure 31: Overhead view of southern end of Trench 5.

10. References

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