

**An Archaeological Investigation at Stepstile Meadows,
Flanchford Road, Reigate, Surrey**

**NGR 52308 11491
TQ 2308 1491**

Planning Reference: P/08/01630/F

Oasis ID. 52629

**Project No. 3663
ASE Report No. 2008209
Site Code: SSR 07**



Andrew Margetts BA (Hons)

**With contributions by
Anna Doherty, Chris Butler, Lucy Allott and Sarah Porteus**

January 2009

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Summary

An archaeological excavation was undertaken ahead of the construction of a new driveway and a new ramped access at Stepstile Meadow, Flanchford Road, Reigate, Surrey from the 10th to the 19th of November 2008. Given known potential for late Iron Age/early Roman archaeology, based on the previous archaeological investigation for the new house itself (ASE 2008, revised 2009), the areas concerned were topsoil stripped for the purpose of archaeological recording prior to reductions to formation level. This stage of excavation revealed only sparse archaeological remains dating to the prehistoric and Roman periods, much of which probably relates to vegetation clearance but as with the previous work indicates a settlement in the vicinity.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of The Centre for Applied Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, were commissioned by RPS Planning and Development on behalf of Studio Reed and in turn their client Mr Graham Chilton to undertake an archaeological excavation in advance of the construction of a new driveway (Area 4) and a ramped access (Area 5) at Stepstile Meadow, Flanchford Road, Reigate, Surrey, hereafter referred to as 'the site' (centred NGR 52308 11491), (Figs. 1 and 2).

1.2 A Desk Based Assessment (RPS Group 2007) was prepared by RPS Planning for Mr Graham Chilton, and on behalf of Janine Stone Interior and Architectural Design, in support of a planning application for the site. This included a site visit/walk-over on 21st March 2007. It was recommended that targeted trial trenching should be undertaken within the development footprint to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains at the site. This work was carried out by Archaeology South East in May 2007 and led to the recovery of Late Iron Age - Roman remains (Collie 2007).

1.3 Following the results of the evaluation, the following condition (Condition 3) was attached to an amendment of the earlier planning application (ref: 07/01772/F):

No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or their successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme on investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

The site covers an area in which it is considered necessary to preserve for future reference any archaeological information before it is destroyed by the development with regard to the Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005 policy Pc8 and Surrey Structure Plan 2004 policy SE5.

1.4 Following consultation between the County Archaeologist and RPS Planning & Development, a Stage 2 archaeological excavation was defined. This required the stripping of three areas totalling 1,665m² under constant archaeological supervision (Whittaker, 2008, revised January 2009).

1.5 Following the stage 2 excavation a new planning application (P/08/01630/F) was submitted and approved for the construction of a new driveway for the house. The following condition (Condition 4) was attached to the permission:

No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or their successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme on investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

The site covers an area in which it is considered necessary to preserve for future reference any archaeological information before it is destroyed by the development with regard to the Reigate and Banstead Borough Local Plan 2005 policies Ho9 and Pc4.

1.6 In response to this condition, RPS Planning & Development provided a Written

Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing the archaeological procedures (RPS 2008). This document was agreed by the County Archaeologist as a sound basis for a further stage of archaeological investigation (Areas 4 and 5) to be conducted by ASE.

- 1.7 The excavation of Areas 4 and 5 was carried out under the supervision of Andrew Margetts (Archaeologist) from the 10th to the 19th of November 2008. The project was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and Louise Rayner (Post-excavation Manager).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The British Geological Survey (Sheet 286, 1978) shows the underlying geology to consist of Hythe Beds with Higher Terrace River Gravels to the south and south-east with Atherfield Clay to the south-west. An east-west band of Sandgate Beds runs to the north, overlain by Folkstone Beds and a band of Alluvium associated with the Rover Mole.

2.2 The archaeological background has been discussed in depth by a preceding Desk Based Assessment (DBA) prepared by RPS Planning & Development (2007) which indicates potential for multi-period archaeological remains. Broadly the site has been classified as having high archaeological potential due to Neolithic, Iron Age, Roman and medieval archaeological material found during the construction of Stepstile Meadow house in 1939. There have been significant finds in the wider vicinity of the site from the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, with a number of Bronze Age barrows on Reigate Heath. The archaeological background is drawn from the original DBA and is summarised by the periods as follows:

2.3 Palaeolithic 500,000 to 10,000 BC

Both Reigate and Salfords have produced a single biface each, with further finds including an ovate biface (hand axe) from the area of Outwood, east of Reigate. The Hythe Beds geology is a potential source of additional material.

2.4 Mesolithic 10,000 to 4,000 BC

Five hundred square metres of flint scatter has been recorded south of Wonham Mill (about 0.8 km west of Stepstile Meadow), sitting on the River Terrace Gravels of the River Mole, producing over 4000 flint artefacts (SMR ref. 3006). Burnt flint concentrations/hearths suggesting campsites have been found on Reigate Heath.

2.5 Neolithic 4,000 to 2,000 BC

A single Neolithic blade has been found at Stepstile Meadow (SMR ref. 3008), but no further evidence to suggest occupation. Further finds have been recorded from Wonham Mill (SMR ref. 3007) (three arrows and a plano – convex knife) and from Reigate Heath (leaf-shaped arrow) (SMR ref. 2493). The spread of these finds suggests hunting and agriculture on the River Terrace Gravels of the River Mole and the well drained sandy soils of Reigate Heath. Two barrows, possibly of Neolithic date have revealed leaf-shaped arrows and calcined bone at Redhill Junction.

2.6 Bronze Age 2,000 to 700 BC

In close proximity to the site (c. 70m north of Flanchford Road) there is one of a series of Bronze Age barrows on Reigate Heath, occupying a shallow ridge of Lower Greensand. The closest barrow is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 21064). Barbed and tanged arrowheads have been found in Priory Park and Park Lane in Reigate, with three socketed axes, a socketed gouge, a barbed spearhead, ingot fragments and other metalwork also recovered from a potential

settlement site at Priory Park.

2.7 Iron Age 700 BC to 43 AD

In addition to Iron Age coins from the above mentioned Bronze Age barrow cemetery, Iron Age pottery has also been recovered during the development of Stepstile Meadow house in 1939 (SMR ref. 3009). The pot fragment may be residual, possibly from agricultural manuring of the well drained sandy soils, or indicative of more substantial activity.

2.8 Romano British 43 to 410 AD

Stepstile Meadow has produced a quern stone with Alice Holt greyware and Roman tile (SMR ref. 828). The finds may be residual, possibly from manuring and/or the product of more substantial activity and occupation. Reigate is known to have been an important site for the production of brick and tile supplied to local villas and sites in London and Canterbury.

2.9 Saxon 410 to 1066 AD

Whilst no known Saxon remains are recorded in the vicinity, Flanchford Road and Trumpetshill are hollow ways and could date back to this period. The original Wonham watermill (SMR ref. 3739) is recorded in the Domesday Book and is presumed to have been a pre-existing Saxon structure.

2.10 Mediaeval 1066 to 1550 AD

Stepstile Meadow has produced a Tudor Green sherd (SMR ref. 3010); again the suggestion is made that the find may be deposited during manuring. Flanchford Farm to the south of the site (SMR ref. 4116) has produced a fragment of a metal purse frame and Wonham Mill is referred to in 1199 and 1328 at which point it is owned by Reigate Priory until the Dissolution. Reigate was a well known source for fine sand and stone building materials.

2.11 Post – Medieval 1550 AD to Present

A listed windmill dated to c.1765 (SMR ref. 3638) is situated at Reigate Heath approximately 1 kilometre north of the site. There are eleven listed buildings dating from the 16th – 18th centuries within 1 kilometre of the site. Quarrying of chalk and 'Kentish' stone from the Upper Greensand continued at least into the C18th. More recently a line of 20th century pillboxes were built along the River Mole, one of which is within view of the site (SMR ref. 6451).

2.12 Archaeological Evaluation

The preceding evaluation in May 2007 consisted of five trenches excavated to a maximum of 1.20m below ground level. Trenches 3-5, were excavated in close proximity to the old house, contained no archaeological deposits and revealed only natural geology (in Trench 5) or deposits of made-ground where the ground surface had been raised (Trenches 3-4).

Trench 1 revealed an extensive layer of flint overlying the natural geology. The southern end of Trench 2 produced evidence of Late Iron Age/Early Roman activity consisting of a cut feature and an irregular hollow containing dumped deposits of Late Iron Age to early Roman pottery and daub. It was thought that the material was possibly indicative of adjacent occupation.

2.13 Archaeological Excavation (stage 2)

Three areas were excavated down to formation level or to the archaeological horizon or natural which ever was the highest. Several potential archaeological features, probably pits, and a northeast – southwest ditch were identified. These features were of 1st century AD date and were either cut into the natural substrate or an overlying layer of colluvium. The majority of the other ‘features’ excavated during this phase of work, however, probably derive from bioturbation, perhaps relating to the removal of a hedgerow, or animal disturbance.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 The general aim of the current stage of the archaeological investigation was to establish the character, date and function of any archaeological features so as to preserve them by record. All works will link into the previous excavation work carried out at the site.

3.2 The specific objectives were:

- To understand the nature and extent of the Iron Age/Romano British occupation on the site.
- Relate any Iron Age/Romano British remains identified to the remains recorded in the previous excavation and the discoveries made during the construction of the original house in 1939.
- To identify and characterise archaeological remains from other, as yet unidentified, periods of activity as necessary.
- To contribute to an understanding of the environmental history of the Reigate area by the implementation of an environmental sampling strategy.

4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The proposed development included the construction of a new driveway linking the former drive area on the north side of the house. This involved reducing the existing ground level to the natural geology, in order to provide a suitable base for the driveway. However, the main area of archaeological works related to the looped ramped access down to the below ground level car park at the eastern end of the new house. It was considered that these reductions could impact any potential archaeological remains. It was therefore proposed to archaeologically excavate (preservation by record) the areas ahead of construction.
- 4.2 The excavation areas comprised Area 4 (c. 180m²) and Area 5 (c. 880m²) (Fig. 2).
- 4.3 All work was undertaken to standards described by the Institute for Field Archaeologists (1994) and the archaeologists followed the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- 4.4 The machining was supervised by the archaeological sub-contractor (ASE). The machine was used to remove modern overburden, down to the top of significant archaeological deposits. No archaeologically significant deposits were removed by machine unless fully recorded and sampled, and without the prior agreement of the Surrey County Council Archaeological Officer and RPS Planning and Development.
- 4.5 Exposed archaeological remains were hand cleaned to sufficiently define their character and function, and to allow accurate planning and recording.
- 4.6 The excavation area was accurately surveyed by means of GPS and was related to the National Grid. Plans and sections of all features and deposits were also related to their height above sea level.
- 4.7 Archaeological excavation was undertaken by hand and respected the stratigraphy of archaeological layers, features, deposits and structures. Each context was excavated in sequence. The following sampling strategy (as provided within the WSI) was adopted to ascertain the nature, depth, date and state of preservation of archaeological features, as well as the stratigraphic relationships of these deposits and features to one another.
- (i) Normally 50% (as a minimum) of the fills of all pits and other discrete archaeological features were excavated.
 - (ii) 15-25% of the exposed lengths of ditches were excavated as a minimum. The segments were placed to provide adequate coverage of the ditches. All terminals and intersections were also excavated (i.e. in addition to the minimum sample of the exposed lengths). A flexible approach was adopted to the location of excavation samples such that areas of exposed ditch fill with higher artefact or ecofact content may be targeted. A lower excavation sample ratio of ditches was only acceptable in the event that the research aims will not be further advanced. Any such reduction in sample ratio will be agreed with the Surrey County Council Archaeological Officer and RPS Planning and Development.

- (iii) 100% excavation of hearths, furnaces or kilns in all cases where these were identified in order to determine their function and any sequence of repairs or replacements.
- (iv) Layers were assessed following consultation with the Surrey County Council Archaeological Officer and RPS Planning and Development, a decision was made as to the extent of their excavation. The factors governing the judgement included the possibility that they mask earlier deposits, the need to understand function and depositional processes, and the necessity to recover sufficient artefacts to date the deposit and meet the project aims.

4.8 The following procedures were always initiated:

- (i) All features were planned either by means of a GPS or hand drawn plans where appropriate.
- (ii) Sections: all sectioned and excavated archaeological features were drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:10. All sections were levelled to Ordnance Datum.
- (iii) All archaeological features, layers or deposits were allocated unique context numbers prior to any hand excavation including contexts for which there was no archaeological interpretation or definition. All archaeological features, layers or deposits were recorded on pro-forma context sheets detailing: character, contextual relationships, a detailed description, associated finds, interpretation and cross referencing to the drawn, photographic and finds records. On-site matrices were compiled during the excavation such that the results of the written stratigraphical records may be fully analysed and phased.
- (iv) A full photographic record of the investigation was made of all archaeological features and deposits. This included detailed black-and-white and colour transparencies of features and contexts supplemented by digital shots. The record will include working and promotional shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operations. All photographic records included information detailing: site code; date; context(s); section number; a north arrow and a scale. All photographs were listed and indexed on context record sheets.
- (v) A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological features, deposits or layers encountered were produced. The detailed hand drawn plans were related to the site, and O.S. national grid and were drawn at an appropriate scale, generally 1:20. The O.D. height of all principal strata and features was calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans and sections.
- (vi) A record or index was maintained of all site drawings and these will form part of the project archive. All site drawings contained the following information: site name; site number and code; scale; plan or section number; orientation, date and compiler.

4.9 Finds

4.9.1 All relevant finds were retained, washed and where appropriate were marked with the site code and context number (unless contamination evidence to the contrary is provided).

4.10 Environmental Sampling

4.10.1 Environmental sampling strategies were developed subject to the requirements of the excavation and the issues of potential contamination. If contamination is not an issue, specialist staff will have a role in ensuring that appropriate deposits are sampled to retrieve palaeoenvironmental and economic indicators to fulfil the project aims. Preparation, taking, processing and assessment of environmental samples were in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage, 2002). The English Heritage Regional Archaeological Science Advisor would have been consulted if appropriate.

4.10.2 The sampling strategy and methodology was based on that contained within the WSI (RPS, 2008).

4.11 Treatment of Finds and Samples

4.11.1 Different sampling strategies were employed according to the importance of the deposit or feature under investigation and future mitigation strategies. Close attention was given to sampling for date, structure and environment.

4.11.2 All finds were treated in a proper manner and to standards agreed in advance with the recipient museum. They were exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidelines set out in the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation's 'Conservation Guidelines No.2'.

4.13 Finds and Environmental Specialists

4.13.1 Appropriate specialist staff were used on this project depending on the type of artefacts and soil samples recovered during the course of the fieldwork.

5.0 RESULTS

5.1 Area 4 (Figs. 2 and 4)

- 5.1.1 Area 4 measured c. 180m² and was situated on land that had previously been part of the original Stepstile Meadows garden in potentially untruncated areas of the new northern driveway. It was bordered by a retained garden, an area that had been terraced during the construction of the original house and an area of parking used during the construction works.
- 5.1.2 The topsoil in Area 4 comprised c.0.50m of mid grey brown, firm, sandy silt [714], which contained moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules and occasional charcoal flecks. This topsoil deposit was disturbed by rooting as well as the presence of a live electric service. A portion of this area remained un-excavated in order to avoid the service. Stripping of the overlying topsoil resulted in the exposure of the mottled mid red yellow, compact natural sand, [715]. Two features were exposed in this excavation area cut into the natural.
- 5.1.3 Feature [716] was roughly circular in plan and measured 0.11m deep and 1.4m in diameter (Fig 6, Section 5). It had gradually sloping sides and an undulating base. It was filled by mid brown grey, compact, sandy silt [717] with occasional inclusions of sub-angular flint nodules and charcoal flecks. A single piece of 14th to 17th century ceramic building material (CBM) was recovered from the fill. The feature was interpreted as a probable tree-throw.
- 5.1.4 Feature [718] was sub-oval in plan and measured 1.2m in length, 0.8m wide and 0.1m deep (Fig 6, Section 6). It had gradually sloping sides and a rounded base. It was filled by mid grey brown, compact, sandy silt [719] with occasional inclusions of sub-angular flint nodules. This possible pit was truncated by the electric service and although all undisturbed fill was excavated no finds were retrieved.

Table 1: Area 4 Contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Max. Depth
714	Dep	Topsoil	-	-	0.50m
715	Dep	Natural	-	-	-
716	Cut	Tree-throw	1.4m	1.4m	0.11m
717	Fill	Tree-throw	1.4m	1.4m	0.11m
718	Cut	Pit?	1.2m	0.8m	0.1m
719	Fill	Pit?	1.2m	0.8m	0.1m

5.2 Area 5 (Figs. 2 and 3)

- 5.2.1 Area 5 for the ramped access was the largest area excavated, measuring 880m². The area was located on sloping pasture to the east of the main development.
- 5.2.2 The stratigraphy in Area 5, (Fig. 5, Sections 1-4), comprised c.0.5m of mid to dark grey brown, firm, sandy silt topsoil, [708], that contained moderate inclusions of angular flint nodules. The topsoil heavily disturbed in places by thick tree roots.

The underlying deposits varied in nature through the course of the driveway. In places, particularly down-slope, colluvium, [712], overlay the natural substrate, reaching depths of up to 0.6m in places. This colluvium comprised of compact, mid grey brown sandy silt that contained occasional inclusions of angular flint nodules and sandstone fragments. Finds retrieved from this context date to the Early Neolithic, Iron Age, Roman, medieval and Post-Medieval periods. Around the area of the gateway, the topsoil overlay deposits of made ground, [711], a mid brown grey sandy silt, approximately 0.6m deep which contained lenses of natural sand and inclusions of angular flint nodules. It probably derived from excavations and subsequent backfilling associated with the construction of the gateway.

5.2.3 Upon removal of [711] and the colluvium [712] (where this existed, Figs. 3 and 5) the natural and archaeological horizon was reached over most of the access ramp. The underlying deposits comprised of three types, the extents of which are represented on Fig. 3. The first of these [709] consisted of compact mid red brown sand with frequent inclusions of angular flint gravels. This deposit appears to be an extension of the [614/616] colluvium encountered in the previous excavation area (Area 2) to the east (see Fig. 2). It was heavily disturbed through rooting and the removal of vegetation associated with the earlier phase of work. Away from the disturbance and mainly down-slope, [710], was the mid brown yellow compact sand of the Hythe Beds which comprised the majority of the natural ground. The third underlying deposit, [713], consisted of compact, mid yellow brown sandy clay with occasional inclusions of charcoal flecks. This deposit was also probably the same as [614/616] in Area 2 in the preceding excavation and seemed to be the result of the silting of a hollow or small valley. [713] was sondaged in order to help characterise the deposit and this proved its approximate depth and demonstrated its sterility in comparison to the overlying colluvium, [712] (Fig. 5, Section 3).

5.2.4 All recorded features in Area 5 were restricted (cut into) to the geology of the Hythe Beds and were overlain by the colluvium [712]. These features seemed to be largely natural in character with few finds and sterile fills. Phasing was restricted due to a lack of dating material and only one linear feature was encountered, designated Feature A. After recording the remainder of all fills were excavated in order to retrieve datable material.

5.2.5 Feature A (Fig 6, Sections 7-9)

Feature A (Contexts [720], [721], [722], [723], [724], [725]) had gradually sloping sides, an undulating base and measured between 0.75 to 1.5m wide and 0.12 to 0.2m deep. It contained a single fill, of mid yellow brown compact silt sand with frequent inclusions of angular flint nodules and sandstone fragments. Feature A contained a single piece of struck flint.

Feature A continued out of the limit of excavation on a roughly east-west alignment. It was interpreted as a possible ditch possibly associated with pit [726] (below).

5.2.6 Pits: [726], [727], [732], [734]

Pit [726] was sub oval in plan and measured 1.8m long, 1.3m wide and 0.25m deep (Fig. 6, Section 10). It had a u-shaped profile with a rounded base and was filled with variable, compact mid brown grey to mid brown red sandy silt, [727]. A single sherd of Late Bronze Age or Iron Age pottery was recovered from the

environmental sample of this feature. Included within the fill were frequent pieces of charcoal as well moderate frequencies of both natural and heated flint nodules. This possible fire-pit is either the result of an in situ fire that was backfilled to extinguish or, perhaps, is the result of vegetation clearance by way of stump burning.

Possible pit [732] produced no datable finds. This feature was c.1m in diameter and 0.35m in depth and was filled by mid red brown, compact, silt sand [733] (Fig. 6, Section 12). Feature [732] although pit like (regular) in form had a very sterile fill and may therefore be natural in origin.

5.2.7 Natural Features: [728], [729], [730], [731]

Probable root derived feature, [728], had gradually sloping sides and an undulating base (Fig. 6, Section 11). It was filled by mid brown grey sandy silt that contained moderate amounts of angular flint nodules. It was sub-circular in plan and measured 1.1m in diameter and 0.18m in depth.

Feature [730] had sharp sloping sides that undercut the natural and was filled by mid yellow brown sandy silt [731]. This feature was interpreted as an animal burrow and was not fully excavated.

Table 2: Area 5 Contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Max. Depth
708	Dep	Topsoil	-	-	0.50m
709	Dep	Probable colluvium	-	-	unknown
710	Dep	Natural	-	-	unknown
711	Dep	Made Ground	-	-	0.60m
712	Dep	Colluvium	-	-	0.60m
713	Dep	Colluvium	-	-	1.2m
720	Cut	Linear	0.85m	1.25m	0.20m
721	Fill	Linear	0.85m	1.25m	0.20m
722	Cut	Linear	0.65m	1.5m	0.12m
723	Fill	Linear	0.65m	1.5m	0.12m
724	Cut	Linear	0.8m	0.75m	0.16m
725	Fill	Linear	0.8m	0.75m	0.16m
726	Cut	Pit?	1.8m	1.3m	0.25m
727	Fill	Pit?	1.8m	1.3m	0.25m
728	Cut	Rooting	1.1m	1.1m	0.18m
729	Fill	Rooting	1.1m	1.1m	0.18m
730	Cut	Burrow	0.93m	0.4m	unknown
731	Fill	Burrow	0.93m	0.4m	unknown
732	Cut	Pit?	1m	1m	0.35m
733	Fill	Pit?	1m	1m	0.35m

6.0 THE FINDS

6.1 The Finds

6.1.1 A relatively small assemblage of finds was recovered from the excavation, a quantification of which can be found in Appendix 2. The finds have been quantified by count and weight and were bagged by material and context.

6.2 The Pottery by Anna Doherty

6.2.1 A total of 12 sherds of pottery, weighing 148g were excavated from the colluvium, [712]. Of particular interest are nine earlier Neolithic sherds recovered from the lower levels of this deposit. The fabric contains sparse flint, mostly in the size range 3-4mm (but with examples between 1-7mm) in a dense, slightly laminar, sand-free matrix. Two to three different vessels appear to be represented and these include a rim sherd from a simple plain rim, open bowl form which is greater than 200mm in diameter. Not enough of the profile survives to tell definitively whether it fits into the Carinated Bowl (c. 4100-3600 BC) or Plain Bowl (c. 3700-3300 BC) tradition, although simple plain rims were more associated with the latter in the large Neolithic assemblage from Staines (Robertson-Mackey 1987, 72). These sherds are of intrinsic interest because of the rarity of earlier Neolithic pottery.

6.2.2 Another flint-tempered sherd recovered from the environmental sample of fill [727] is in a flint-tempered fabric more typical of the post Deverul-Rimbury tradition of the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age. However, similar fabrics may survive well into the Iron Age and the sherd is too small to date with confidence.

6.2.3 The Neolithic sherds are fairly large and unabraded with more than one vessel represented. Although found in colluvium, it seems unlikely that the sherds had been circulating in soils for a long time before deposition, suggesting that Neolithic features may be present in the vicinity. Interestingly, one Late Iron Age/Early Roman grog-tempered sherd and one Roman oxidised sandy sherd from the mid and upper levels of the deposit show much higher levels of abrasion and this could suggest more than one episode of deposition had occurred.

6.3 The Ceramic Building Material by Sarah Porteus

6.3.1 Ceramic building material (CBM) was recovered from contexts [708] [712] [717]. The material consisted of two fabric types; an orange fabric with moderate coarse quartz grain inclusions (fabric 1) and an orange fine sanded fabric with occasional very fine black iron rich speckles (fabric 2). Context [717] contained a single abraded fragment of fabric 1 and is probably of 14th to 17th century date. Context [712] contained three fragments of fabric 1, two of which are possible peg tile fragments with the third being an undiagnostic abraded fragment. Topsoil deposit [708] comprised of three fragments of peg tile in fabric 1, one with partial peg hole remaining, thought to be of 14th to 17th century date. An additional three abraded undiagnostic fragments of fabric 1 were also present in [708]. A single abraded undiagnostic residual fragment of fabric 2 was also present in context [708] and is possibly roman in date. The assemblage is small

and holds little potential for further study. No further work is required.

6.4 The Flintwork by Chris Butler

- 6.4.1 Two pieces of worked flint weighing 17gms was recovered, comprising a soft hammer-struck, light grey coloured, flake from Context 712, and a hard hammer-struck darker grey flake from Context 723.
- 6.4.2 The assessment comprised a visual inspection of the worked flint, noting details of the range and variety of pieces, general condition, and the potential for further detailed analysis. Classification follows Butler (2005). A hand written archive of the assemblage was produced at this stage.
- 6.4.3 Both of these pieces are un-diagnostic and it is difficult to assign them to any particular period, although the soft hammer-struck flake is likely to date to the Early Neolithic Period.
- 6.4.4 This small assemblage has little potential for further study, and it is recommended that no further work be undertaken on this assemblage, apart from amalgamating these pieces with the earlier assemblage recovered from the same site. The flintwork should be retained for possible further study in the future.

7.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES by Lucy Allott

- 7.1 A single sample was taken during this phase of excavation from a charcoal rich pit-like feature [726], fill [727]. Charcoal rich lenses noted in this feature were interpreted as indicating vegetation clearance from stump burning rather than the feature being a result of domestic or industrial burning. The sample was taken for systematic recovery of charcoal fragments for identification and to assist in interpreting the feature.
- 7.2 The 40 litre sample was processed in its entirety in a flotation tank, the flots and residue being retained on 250µm and 500µm meshes respectively. Both were air dried prior to sorting. The residue was passed through graded sieves of 4 and 2mm and hand sorted. The flot was weighed, measured and passed through graded sieves to aid sorting prior to each fraction being subsampled and viewed under a stereozoom microscope at x7-45 magnification. Charcoal from both the flot and residue were subsampled in a riffle box and 100 fragments distributed across all size categories >2mm, >4mm and >8mm were fractured using standard procedure (Gale & Cutler 2000) along three planes and viewed under an incident light microscope at x50, 100, 200 & 400 magnification. Identifications were verified with reference to modern comparative material and reference texts (Cutler, D.F., *et al.* 1987, 158, Hather 2000, Schweingruber 1990).
- 7.3 The sample produced a flot of 1355ml, weighing 662g. It is dominated (95%) by wood charcoal fragments and the remaining fraction consisted of occasional small uncharred roots and seeds. Evidence for modern disturbance of this feature appears minimal. A single fragment of prehistoric pot and 10g of fire cracked flint was also recovered from the residues however no other environmental remains or artifacts were present.
- 7.4 All of the charcoal fragments viewed have been identified as deciduous oak (*Quercus* sp.). Many of the fragments are from moderately large specimens from slow grown trees. Many display closely spaced growth rings and appear to derive from mature specimens. In addition several pieces display anatomical features such as indistinct growth rings and abundant tyloses that are consistent with root wood. Many of the specimens of both root and stem wood have vitrified to some extent displaying evidence for exposure to high temperatures and/or burning for prolonged periods. The remaining charcoal was scanned for round wood specimens. None were present in this assemblage however in scanning the charcoal further highly vitrified charcoal fragments that could not be sectioned were noted. None of the charcoal fragments are considered suitable for radiocarbon dating as no pith or sapwood were evident.
- 7.5 The exclusivity of oak wood within this sample can be interpreted as evidence for wood selection or, if the feature is associated with woodland clearance, then it suggests that large mature oak trees were being removed from the landscape. It is improbable that a wood such as oak which has a high calorific value and therefore burns well, was burnt without being used for fuel for either a domestic or industrial purpose unless this burning episode results from burning of a tree stump. The presence of possible root and mature stem wood specimens together within the sample as well as distorted specimens supports this

interpretation. Flints are commonly found caught in and around the root system of a tree and these may have been exposed to fire for sufficient time to have become fire cracked. The feature and the sample certainly do not provide a satisfactory alternative interpretation of this feature.

8.0 DISCUSSION

8.1 The investigation revealed only sparse archaeological remains dating to the prehistoric and Roman periods. However, the majority of this dating evidence was recovered from a layer of colluvium, [712], whilst there were no absolutely securely dated cut features on site. In keeping with the previous phase of work, the majority of the 'features' themselves seem to be formed through bioturbation and possibly the deliberate removal/burning of tree roots.. The general lack of archaeological activity found in Areas 4 and 5 has implications for the wider site (discussed in sections 8.5 and 8.6 below).

8.2 As in the previous excavation, Areas 4 and 5 have received a degree of disturbance relating to the construction of the previous house. This came in the form of made ground deposit [711] in the area of the gateway (Fig. 2) as well as the presence of an electric service, a drain and disturbance related to recent vegetation clearance.

8.3 Colluvial Depositions

8.3.1 Figures 2 and 3 show the extent of colluvium across Areas 2 and 5. Layer [710] is similar to the spreads of shallow colluvium found within the northern and central part of Area 2 (Whittaker 2008, revised January 2009) but overlay a deeper deposit of colluvium in Area 5, [713], corresponding with a small valley. This valley ran north-east/south-west and appears to account for the deeper colluvium that was noted in the south-east corner of previous excavation Area 2, probably as well as deposit [709] in the northern arm of Area 5 (Fig.3). Of these layers [712] was on face value the latest but although this deposit was homogenous, (exhibiting no distinct horizons), the artefactual evidence, recovered during machining, is very mixed dating from the early Neolithic, Iron Age, Roman and medieval/post medieval periods. This may indicate re-deposition of the earlier material, and in the case of the medieval/post-medieval finds, intrusion from above (possibly by ploughing).

8.3.2 The small group of Neolithic pottery found within the lower part of layer [712], found in the proximity of feature [732], is of some interest. This group was fairly unabraded, suggesting that it had not moved greatly within the soil. This is perhaps at odds with its presence in a colluvial deposit (although it is possible the colluvium was laid down quite quickly, reducing movement within the soil). There was no evidence that this group of sherds was in a cut feature, although again, given the homogenous nature of the soil matrix, this may be a possibility. Perhaps the most probable explanation is that, despite the mixed later artefacts, the Neolithic sherds were indeed within a much earlier deposition of colluvium. If so, this patch of colluvium does not correspond with the colluviation to the west, within the previously excavated Area 2, as the colluvium there sealed the late Iron Age/early Roman features.

8.3.3 Therefore although the upper levels of colluvium across Area 5 are almost certainly the same as the same as contexts [614] and [613] encountered during investigations in Area 2 (in which Roman pottery was also found - Whittaker 2008) it seems from the artefact evidence that this 'hillwash' process within Area 5 *may* have occurred in two periods, during the early Neolithic period with a further occurrence in the Iron Age/Roman periods.

8.4 The Nature of the Archaeological Remains

8.4.1 As well as similar deposits and disturbance to that found previously, the features themselves also show similarity to those encountered during the 2007 work. It was noted that the features seemed mainly to be of natural origin or natural features that had been subsequently modified by human or animal activity and it was speculated that a hedgerow may have been removed at some point (Whittaker, 2008). This process also seems evident in Areas 4 and 5.

8.4.2 Feature [726] is directly comparable to features associated with burning from the previous excavation and it seems possible from the species present and the form of the features themselves that slash and burn vegetation clearance was being carried out at the site rather than any industrial or domestic activities. It is possible that this speculative vegetation during the prehistoric and Roman periods was the cause of erosion and therefore the build up of colluvial deposits witnessed across the site.

8.4.3 It is worth noting that linear feature 'Feature A' appears aligned broadly at right angles to the probable ditch found in the earlier work. This is circumstantial evidence that the two are interrelated and may represent part of a wider system of possible ditch and hedge boundaries subsequently removed.

8.5 Topography

8.5.1 The activity on site was investigated in relation to the underlying geology and topography. A hollow or valley was observed in the lower western side of Area 5 filled by [713] and probably also [709]. This deposit extends down-slope south-west into the adjacent areas of the previous excavation and to the south of the previous excavation towards the river floodplain, and may have been an area of wetter ground in antiquity. This may partly explain the apparent concentration of activity in relation to the upslope surrounding areas of drier, lighter (poorer) soil.

8.6 Summary

8.6.1 The archaeological evidence encountered seems to be peripheral to any settlement activity and it has been postulated previously that the location of such activity is on surrounding high ground. Although the remains from Areas 4 and 5 was limited, they do provide evidence of a degree of ancient activity. It remains a possibility, therefore, that a focus of the occupation lies on the adjacent higher ground. Although a broad date range of artefacts have been recovered, the quantity of Romano-British finds present, particularly in the earlier phase of work, perhaps suggests that such activity may be of this date.

9.0 PROPOSALS FOR PUBLICATION

9.1 It is proposed that information from this report (Areas 4 and 5) is combined with the earlier phase of excavation (Areas 1 to 3) and published as a short note in the Surrey Archaeological Collections. Selected sherds of the Neolithic pottery should be drawn in addition to the Roman sherds previously selected for illustration.

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SMR Summary Form

Site Code	SSR07					
Identification Name and Address	<i>Stepstile Meadow, Flanchford Road, Reigate</i>					
County, District &/or Borough	Reigate Surrey					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 2308 1491					
Geology	Hythe Beds					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3663 Rep no: 2008209					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav. ✓	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field ✓	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav. 10 th to the 19 th of	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	RPS Group					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Andrew Margetts					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo. ✓	BA	IA ✓	RB ✓
	AS	MED ✓	PM ✓	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p>An archaeological excavation was undertaken ahead of the construction of a new driveway and a new ramped access at Stepstile Meadow, Flanchford Road, Reigate, Surrey from the 10th to the 19th of November 2008. Given known potential for late Iron Age/early Roman archaeology, based on the previous archaeological investigation for the new house itself (ASE 2008, revised 2009), the areas concerned were topsoil stripped for the purpose of archaeological recording prior to reductions to formation level. This stage of excavation revealed only sparse archaeological remains dating to the prehistoric and Roman periods, much of which probably relates to vegetation clearance but as with the previous work indicates a settlement in the vicinity.</p>						

OASIS ID: archaeol6-52629

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Investigation at Stepstile Meadows, Flanchford Road, Reigate, Surrey
Short description of the project	An archaeological excavation was undertaken ahead of the construction of a new driveway and a new ramped access at Stepstile Meadow, Flanchford Road, Reigate, Surrey from the 10 th to the 19 th of November 2008. Given known potential for late Iron Age/early Roman archaeology, based on the previous archaeological investigation for the new house itself (ASE 2008, revised 2009), the areas concerned were topsoil stripped for the purpose of archaeological recording prior to reductions to formation level. This stage of excavation revealed only sparse archaeological remains dating to the prehistoric and Roman periods, much of which probably relates to vegetation clearance but as with the previous work indicates a settlement in the vicinity..
Project dates	Start: 10-11-2008 End: 19-11-2008
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	SSR07 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	FEATURES None
Significant Finds	POT Late Prehistoric
Significant Finds	POT Roman
Significant Finds	CBM Post Medieval

Investigation type 'Open-area excavation'

Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England

Site location SURREY REIGATE AND BANSTEAD REIGATE Stepstile Meadow

Postcode RH2 8XX

Study area 1060.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 2308 1491 50.9199447462 -0.248751093207 50 55 11 N 000 14
55 W Point

Lat/Long Datum Unknown

Height OD / Depth Min: 68.00m Max: 73.80m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South East

Project brief originator RPS planning

Project design originator RPS Consulting

Project director/manager Neil Griffin

Project supervisor Andrew Margetts

Type of Landowner

sponsor/funding
body

Name of
sponsor/funding
body Mr Graham Chilton

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?

Digital Archive No
Exists?

Paper Archive No
Exists?

**Project
bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title An Archaeological Investigation at Stepstile Meadows, Flanchford
Road, Reigate, Surrey

Author(s)/Editor(s) Margetts, A.

Other bibliographic ASE Report No. 2008209
details

Date 2008

Issuer or publisher Archaeology South East

Place of issue or Portslade
publication

Description Excavation Report (Strip and Map)

Entered by andrew margetts (andrew_margetts@tiscali.co.uk)
Entered on 10 December 2008

APPENDICES

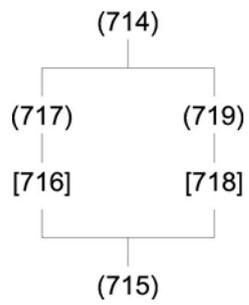
Appendix 1: SMR Entries (after RPS 2007) (See Figure 1)

SMR Point	SMR Ref.	NGR (TQ)	SMR Entry Summary
1	828 3008 3009 3010	23100 49200	Romano British Quern, Tile and Pottery Neolithic Flint Blade Iron Age Pot Sherd Mediaeval Pot Sherds
2	2493	23418 50050	Neolithic Leaf Shaped Arrowhead
3	3006 3007	23450 49450	4000+ Mesolithic Flints 3 x Neolithic Arrowheads 1x Neo.Knife
4	3638	23450 50040	Mid C18th Windmill
5	3739	22400 49600	Wonham Water Mill site poss. orig. C11th
6	4116	23600 48500	Late Mediaeval Purse frame fragment
7	6906	22200 49300	Anglands Copse
8	6115	22500 48700	Pillbox
9	6141	22500 48650	Defence Cube
10	6142	2250049600	Pillbox
11	6149	23060 49170	Pillbox
12	6150	23420 48920	Pillbox
13	6180	23490 48200	Pillbox
14	6181	23010 48620	Pillbox Type FW 3/24
15	6451	22500 49100	Pillbox
16	6466	23600 48400	Pillbox Type FW 3/24
17	6490	23570 48400	Pillbox
18	6514	22500 49400	Pillbox Type FW 3/24
19	6571	23340 48490	Pillbox Type FW 3/24
20	6572	23400 48500	Pillbox Type FW 3/24
21	6576	22500 49100	Pillbox Type FW 3/24
22	6577	22440 48780	Pillbox Type FW 3/24
23	6578	22830 48740	Pillbox Type FW 3/24
24	6579	22940 48760	Pillbox Type FW 3/24
25	6580	23050 48720	Pillbox Type FW 3/24
26	6581	22300 48500	Pillbox Type FW 3/24
27	6644	23500 48300	Pillbox Type FW 3/24
28	9991	23761 49715	C17th Grade 2 Timber framed building
29	10001	23073 49371	C17th Grade 2 Millers Cottage
30	10002	22462 48924	C17th Grade 2 Farmhouse
31	10035	23435 50036	C18th Grade 2 Post Mill
32	10036	23498 50035	C17-18th Grade 2 Cottage
33	10039	23258 48832	C17th Grade 2 Timber framed house
34	10040	23120 48848	C16th Grade 2 Timber framed house
35	10041	23064 49316	C18th Granary
36	10042	22641 49266	C16-17th Grade 2 Timber framed house
37	10226	23055 49292	C17th Grade 2 Farm
38	10274	23705 49288	C17th Grade 2 House & Dairy
39	10284	23096 48855	C17th Grade 2 Timber framed barn

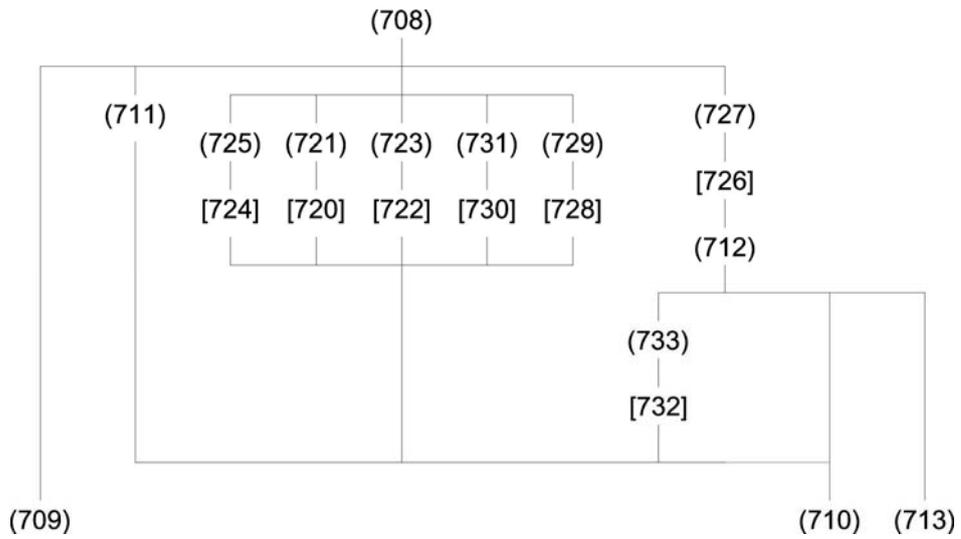
Appendix 2: Finds Quantification Table

Context	Pot	wt (g)	CBM	wt (g)	Flint	wt (g)
708			7	132		
712 lower	9	104				
712 mid	1	36			1	6
712 upper	1	10	3	50		
717			1	8		
723					1	14

Appendix 3: Area 4 Harris Matrix

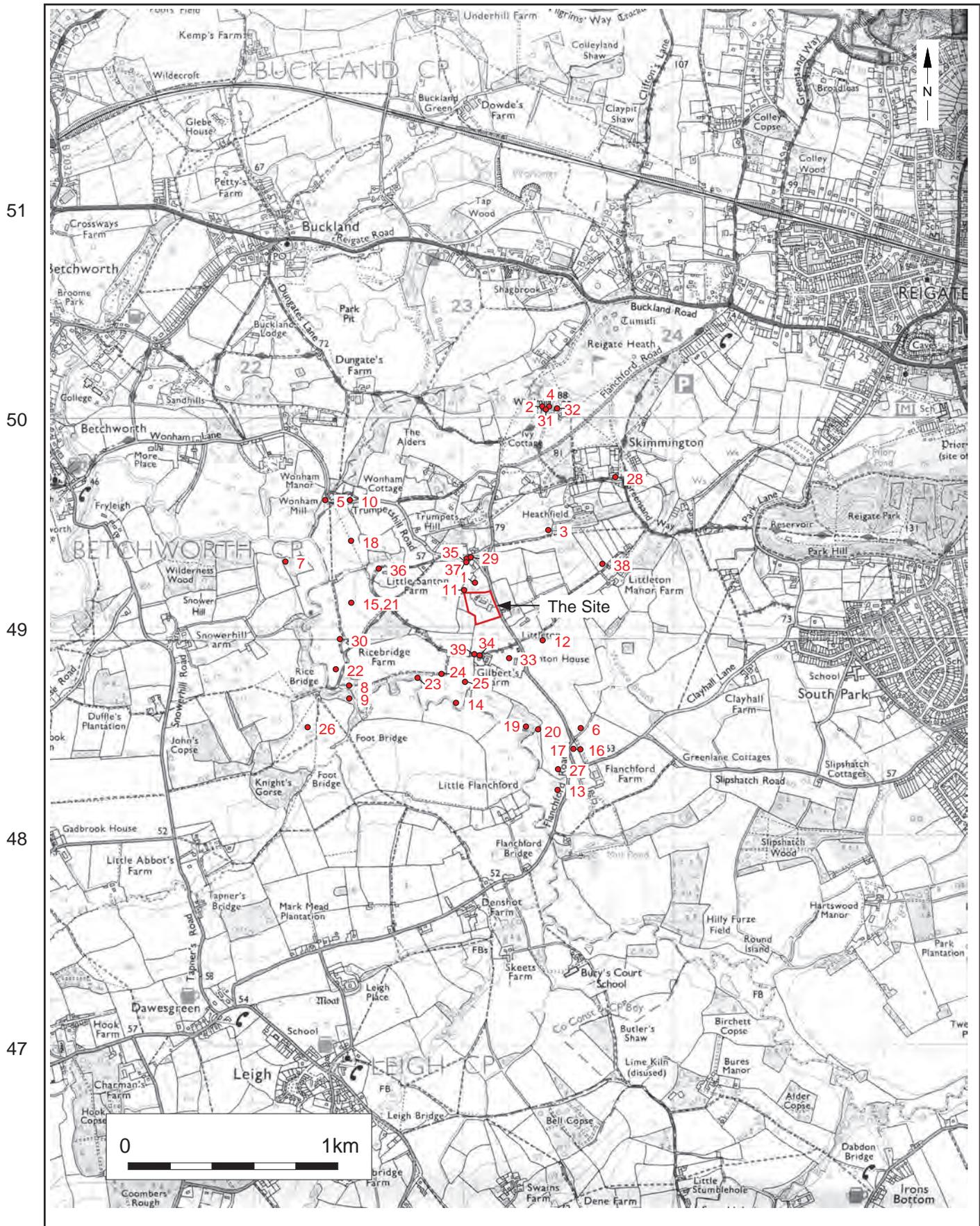


Appendix 4: Area 5 Harris Matrix



Appendix 5: Context Register

Number	Type	Description	Area	Spot Date
708	Dep	Topsoil	Area 5	
709	Dep	Natural	Area 5	
710	Dep	Natural	Area 5	
711	Dep	Made Ground	Area 5	
712	Dep	Colluvium	Area 5	Neolithic-med/post med?
713	Dep	Natural	Area 5	
714	Dep	Topsoil	Area 4	
715	Dep	Natural	Area 4	
716	Cut	Tree-throw	Area 4	
717	Fill	Tree-throw	Area 4	14 th - 17 th C?
718	Cut	Pit?	Area 4	
719	Fill	Pit?	Area 4	
720	Cut	Linear	Area 5	
721	Fill	Linear	Area 5	
722	Cut	Linear	Area 5	
723	Fill	Linear	Area 5	
724	Cut	Linear	Area 5	
725	Fill	Linear	Area 5	
726	Cut	Pit?	Area 5	
727	Fill	Pit?	Area 5	Prehistoric
728	Cut	Rooting	Area 5	
729	Fill	Rooting	Area 5	
730	Cut	Burrow	Area 5	
731	Fill	Burrow	Area 5	
732	Cut	Pit?	Area 5	
733	Fill	Pit?	Area 5	



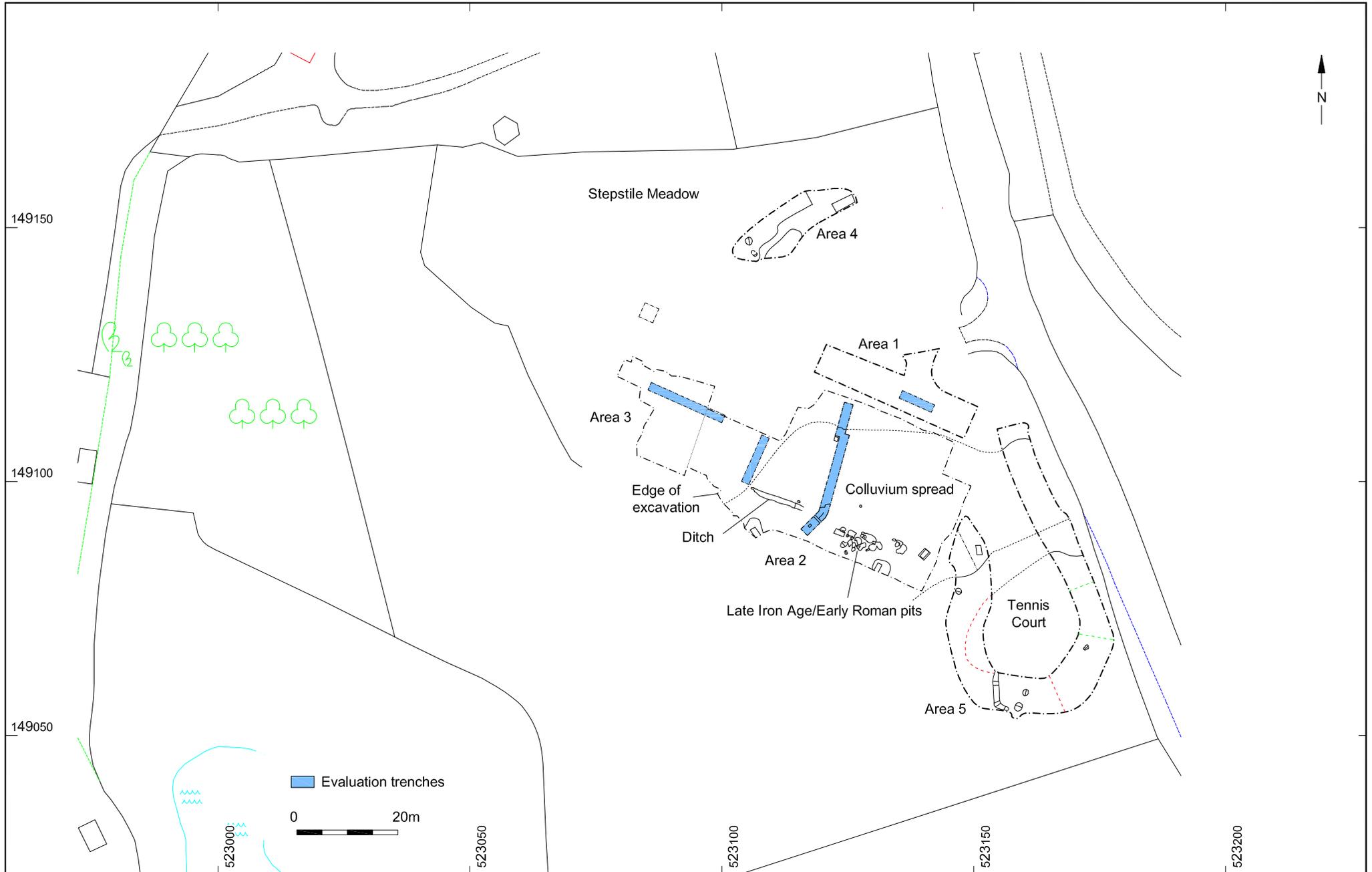
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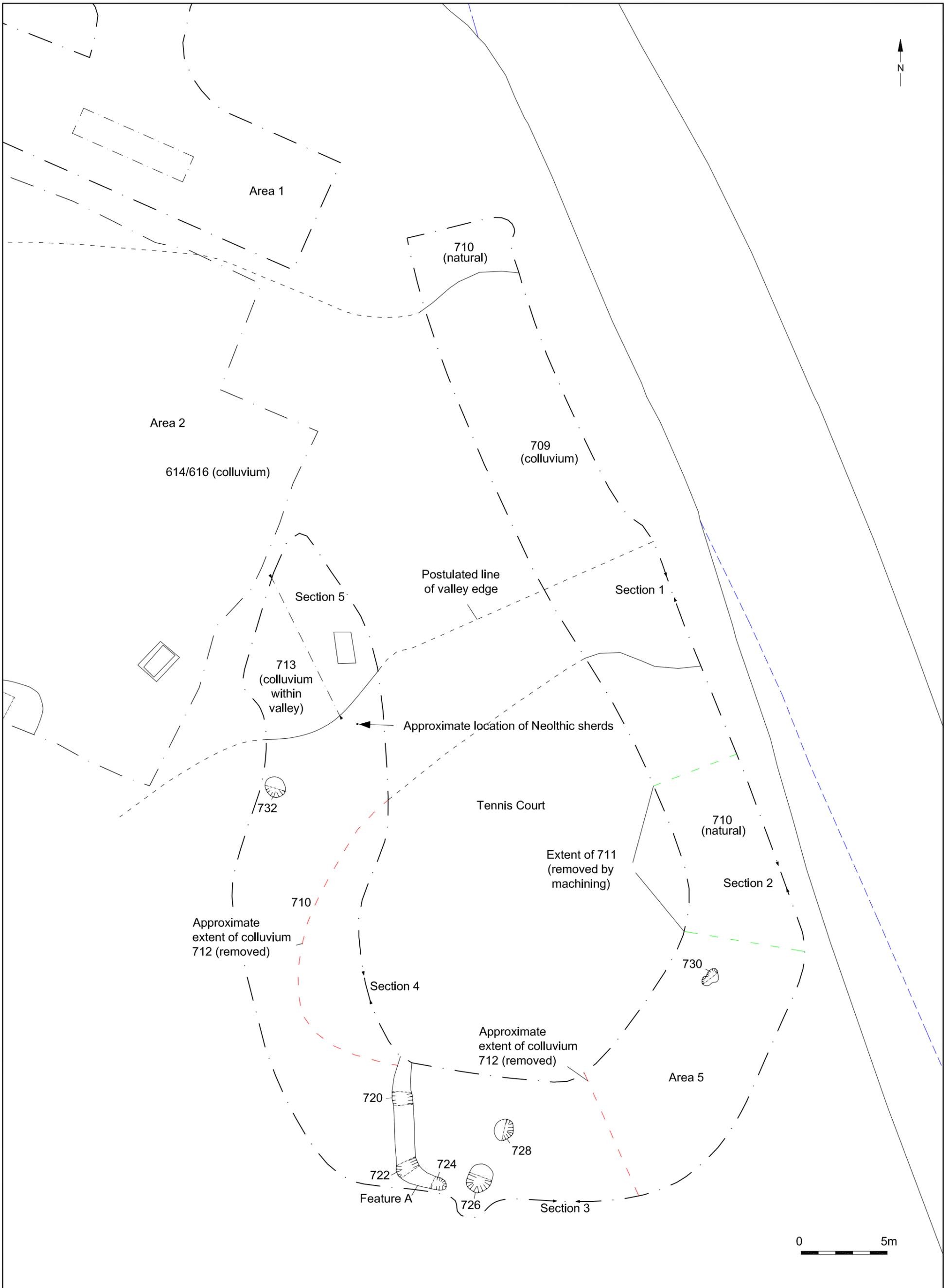
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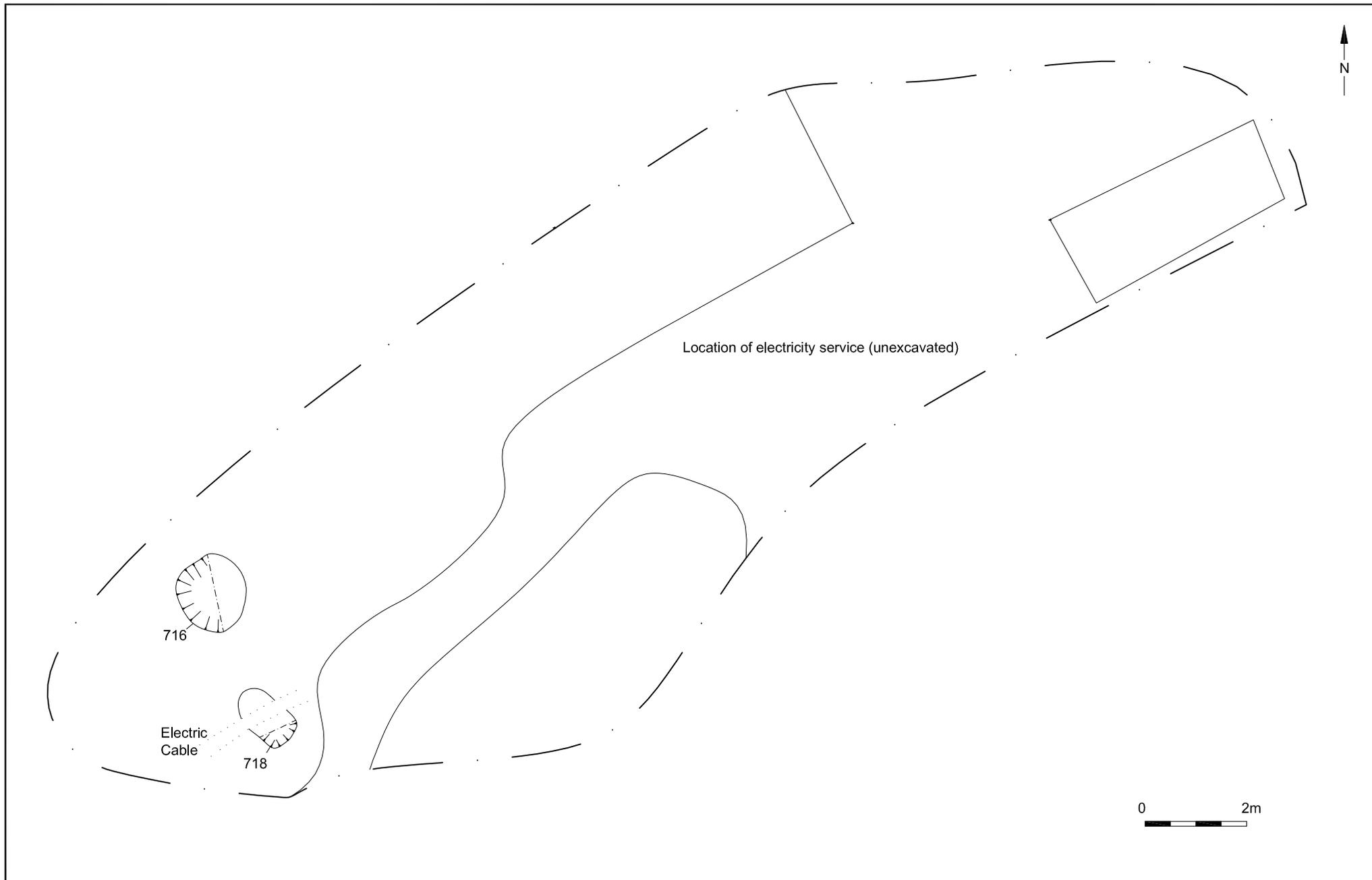
© Archaeology South-East		Stepstile Meadow	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 3663	Jan 2009	Site Location Plan with SMR data	
Report Ref: 2008209	Drawn by HLF		



© Archaeology South-East		Stepstile Meadow		Fig. 2
Project Ref: 3663	Jan 2009	Site plan showing previous excavation		
Report Ref: 2008209	Drawn by: HLF			



© Archaeology South-East		Stepstile Meadow	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 3663	Jan 2009	Plan of Area 5	
Report Ref: 2008209	Drawn by: HLF		

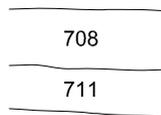


© Archaeology South-East		Stepstile Meadow	Fig.4
Project Ref: 3663	Jan 2009	Plan of Area 4	
Report Ref: 2008209	Drawn by:HLF		

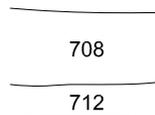
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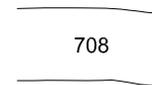
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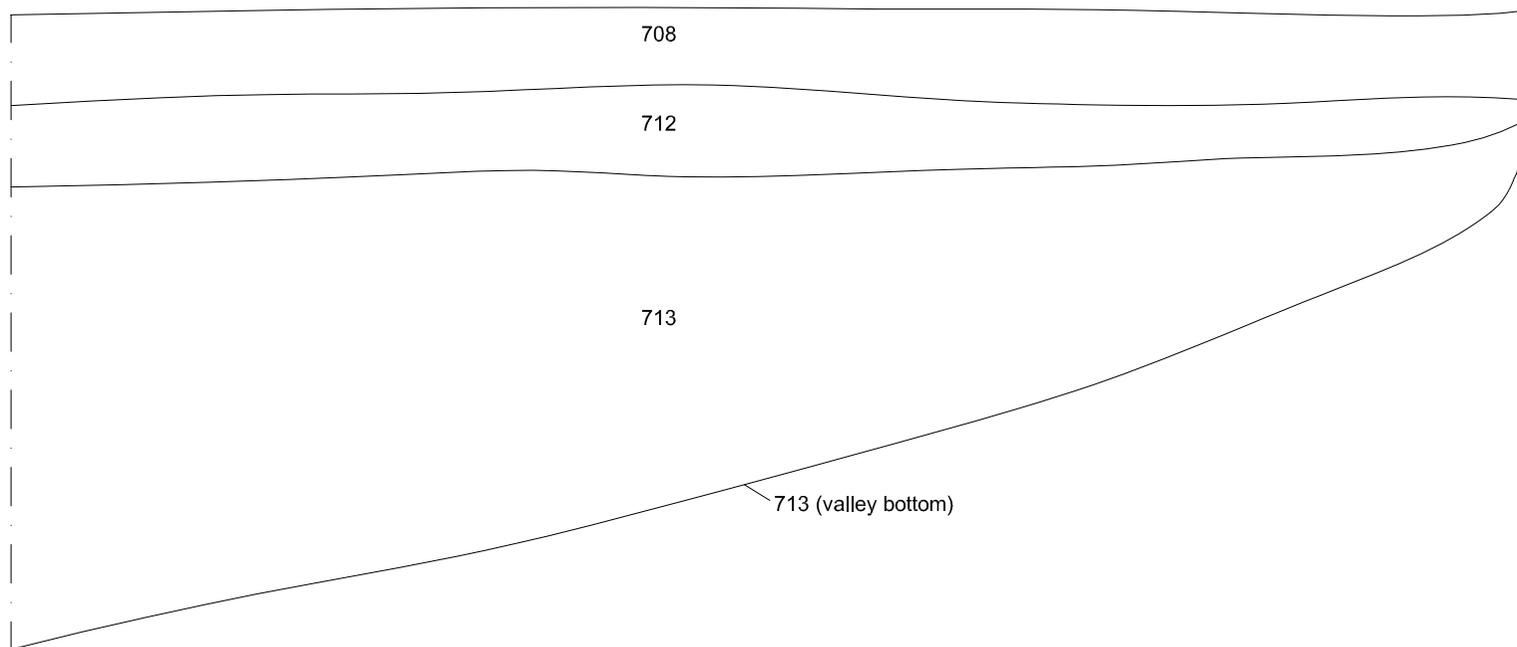
Section 3



Section 4



Section 5

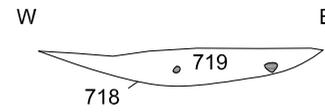


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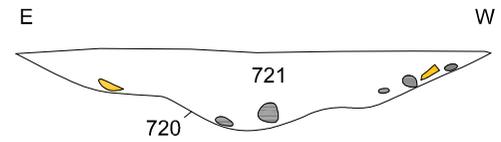
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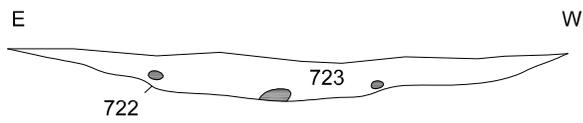
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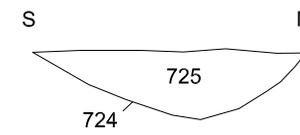
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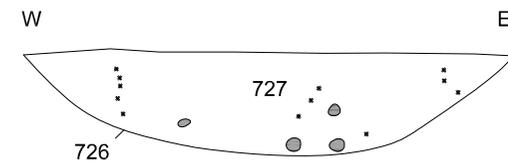
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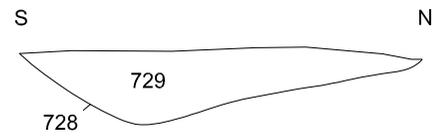
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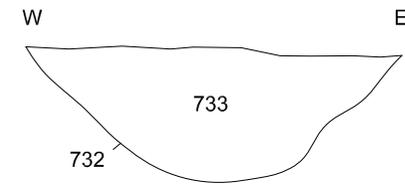
Section 10



Section 11



Section 12



 Sandstone
 Flint

0  1m

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