

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**East Hall Farm, East Hall Farm Road, Wennington,
London Borough of Havering**

Archaeological Recording Action

Phase 1

by James McNicoll-Norbury

**Site Code: EAS13/12
(TQ5382 8145)**

**East Hall Farm, East Hall Lane,
Wennington, London Borough of Havering**

Phase 1

An Archaeological Recording Action

For Robert Brett and Sons Ltd

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code EAS13

March 2018

Summary

Site name: East Hall Farm, East Hall Farm Road, Wennington, London Borough of Havering

Grid reference: TQ5382 8145

Site activity: Recording Action Phase 1

Date and duration of project: 30th September - 2nd November 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: James McNicoll-Norbury

Site code: EAS13/12

Summary of results: A number of pits, postholes and linear features were found across the site including two features datable, one to the Late Bronze Age and the other possibly to the Middle to Late Iron Age. It is possible that some or all of the undated features are also of Later Bronze Age date and represent a low level of activity within the wider landscape.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at the Museum of London in due course.

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www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 04.04.18 Steve Preston ✓ 05.04.18

East Hall Farm, East Hall Lane, Wennington, London Borough of Havering An Archaeological Recording Action- Phase 1

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Report 13/12c

Introduction

This report documents the results of archaeological fieldwork carried out at East Hall Farm, East Hall Lane, Wennington, Rainham, Greater London (TQ5382 8145) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Andrew Josephs of Andrew Josephs Associates, 16 South Terrace, Sowerby, Thirsk, Yorkshire, YO7 1RH, on behalf of Robert Brett and Sons Ltd, Robert Brett House, Milton Manor Farm, Ashford Road, Canterbury, Kent CT4 7PP.

Planning permission (App no: 2012/4647) has been gained from the London Borough of Havering to extract mineral from the site. The consent is subject to a condition (10) relating to archaeology. Following the results of a field evaluation (Platt 2013) which revealed the presence of prehistoric and later features on the site a further phase comprising an archaeological recording action was requested prior to gravel extraction commencing. This is in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012, para 128) and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Adam Single, archaeological adviser with Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service and monitored by Mr John Gould. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury, Luis Esteves and Jesse Coxey between the 30th September and 4th November 2015 and the site code is EAS13. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at the Museum of London in due course, with accession code EAS13.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on two plots of land located to the east and south of East Hall Farm (Fig. 2), *c.* 1km south-east of Rainham. Its use was as arable fields. The underlying geology of the site comprises floodplain gravel but with a brickearth cap at the extreme eastern end (BGS 1976). The land is level and lies at a height of *c.* 5m above Ordnance Datum except for the north western margins where the ground slopes down slightly to the side of a stream valley.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a cultural heritage assessment (Josephs 2009). In summary a large number of finds and sites are recorded for the environs of the proposal site. Various detailed archaeological investigations have taken place to the north of the proposal site prior to earlier episodes of mineral extraction. These have revealed earlier prehistoric, Roman and medieval occupation and burial sites which can be considered as typical of the archaeologically rich terraces of the lower Thames Valley. Recent fieldwork comprising geophysical survey (Roseveare 2013) and fieldwalking (Ford 2013) have added further specific information on the potential of the site. The fieldwalking has recorded a range of pottery finds of Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and Medieval dates, but not in sufficiently large numbers to identify the certain presence of occupation sites. However a cluster of struck flint probably of later Neolithic and Bronze Age date was sufficiently marked to indicate the likely presence of an occupation site which may be reflected in the presence of subsoil deposits. The geophysical survey confirmed the presence on the site of a ring ditch (levelled round barrow) visible from the air along with a number of linear features (field boundaries), some of which appear to respect the presence of the ring ditch. Further work in the form of machine dug trenching on the site revealed further evidence of prehistoric activity on the site as pits and linear features and confirmed the presence of the ring ditch (Platt 2013).

Objectives and methodology

The general objectives of the project are to:

- Excavate and record all archaeological deposits and features within the areas threatened by the proposed development.
- Produce relative and absolute dating and phasing for deposits and features recorded on the site.
- Establish the character of these deposits in attempt to define functional areas on the site such as industrial, domestic, etc.
- Produce information on the economy and local environment and compare and contrast this with the results of other excavations in the region.
- The potential and significance of any such deposits located will be assessed according to the research priorities such as set out in *English Heritage Research Agenda* (English Heritage 2005) or any more local or thematic research priorities necessary.

The specific aims of the project are:

- What is the nature and date of any landscape features (eg fields, boundary features, large enclosures) and what is their spatial organisation?
- How did these landscape features relate to occupied areas?
- When was the sites first occupied and when were they abandoned?
- Are there further occupied areas within the proposal site?
- What is the palaeoenvironmental setting of the area?
- What is the function of the ring ditch? (not phase 1 area)

Results

The areas designated settlement ponds, Phase 1 and the haul roads were stripped under constant archaeological supervision using a 360° type excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, a number of possible pits and linear features were identified which were sampled accordingly to the brief.

Settlement Ponds (Fig. 3)

Gully 200 was aligned NW-SE and measured 14.5m long and was 0.50m wide, a single slot was excavated (100) which was filled with a light grey brown silty sand (150) from which no finds were recovered. The gully was found to continue to the south in the Phase 1 extraction area (as 122 and 123).

Gully 201 was aligned SE-NW and measured 5.5m long, a single slot was excavated (101) (Pl. 1) which was filled with a light grey brown silty sand (151) from which no finds were recovered.

Gully 202 was aligned SE-NW and measured 17.5m long, two slots (105 and 107) were excavated and were both filled with light grey brown silty sand from which no finds were recovered. It is possible that this is the continuation of gully 201 to the south.

Gully 203 was aligned SE-NW and measured 22.5m long, two slots (102 and 106) were excavated (Pl. 2) and were both filled with light grey brown silty sand from which no finds were recovered. A third slot (103) was excavated to establish a relationship with a short length of gully (104) however none could be established.

Phase 1 Extraction area (Fig. 3)

Linear Features

The continuation of gully 200 was recorded on the western edge of the phase measuring 19m in length, two further slots were excavated (122 and 123) both containing a light grey brown silty sandy deposit and no finds were recovered.

Gully 112 was aligned SW-NE and measured 10m in length, a single slot was excavated which contained a light grey brown silty sand (163) from which no finds were recovered. It is possible that the gully once may have had a relationship with gully to the east however this can only be speculated.

Gully 206 was aligned SE-NW and lay immediately to the east of gully 205 and measured 15.5m long and was 0.40m wide. Two slots were excavated (111) and (113) both of which contained a light grey brown silty sand from which no finds were recovered.

Pits

Eight pits were recorded in the extraction area as summarized in Table 1. Only one pit (108) produced dating evidence, including most of a single jar, which indicated a Late Bronze Age date (Pls 3 and 4). The pits are all broadly similar in profile and dimensions and it is entirely possible that they are all broadly of the same date.

Table 1: extraction area pits (Fig. 5)

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Diameter (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Profile</i>	<i>Comment</i>
108	158-9	1.5	0.25	bowl-shaped	85 LBA sherds
109	160	0.9	0.28	bowl-shaped	
110	161	0.5	0.06	shallow-bowl-shaped	Possible sand patch
114	165	0.7	0.24	bowl-shaped	
119	170	1	0.18	bowl-shaped	
120	171	1.3	0.27	bowl-shaped	
121	172	0.5	0.06	bowl-shaped	
124	175	0.48	0.08	bowl-shaped	Tree hole
125	176	0.6	0.09	bowl-shaped	
126	177	0.4	0.05	Shallow bowl-shaped	

Postholes

Four features interpreted as postholes (115-118) were also revealed (Table 2; Pls 5 and 6). None of these contained dating evidence. They were in a line 7m long and seem to represent a fence or possibly a wall.

Table 2: extraction area 1 postholes (Fig. 5)

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Diameter (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Shape</i>	<i>Comment</i>
115	166	0.4	0.16	Deep bowl-shaped	Part of fence?
116	167	0.4	0.16	Deep bowl-shaped	Part of fence?
117	168	0.5	0.18	Deep bowl-shaped	Part of fence?
118	169	0.5	0.1	Deep bowl-shaped	Part of fence?

Haul Roads (Figs 2 and 4)

Gullies

Two parallel lengths of gully (144, 145) were partly revealed in the northern haul road, and are presumably parts of a field system. Neither contained any dating evidence.

Penannular gully

Gully 132 was unusual in that it was penannular in plan with a diameter of just 1.5m (Fig. 3, inset; Pl.7). It was 0.2m wide and 0.1m deep with a bowl-shaped profile and was open to the south-west. It was fully dug but contained no dating evidence. Placed centrally within was charcoal-rich pit 130 which cut an earlier pit (131). Neither pit 130 nor pit 131 contained any dating evidence despite full excavation and sieving.

Table 3: Haul road Gullies (Fig. 6)

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Diameter (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Shape</i>	<i>Comment</i>
132	183	0.2	0.1	Bowl-shaped	Circular
144	197	0.52	0.1	Bowl-shaped	
145	198	46	0.11	Bowl-shaped	

Pits

Nine pits were recorded in the haul roads as detailed in Table 4. Finds were very sparse. Only pit 142 (Pl. 8) contained a single sherd of Middle to Late Iron Age pottery.

Table 4: Haul Road pits (Fig. 6)

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Diameter (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Profile</i>	<i>Comment</i>
127	178	1.2	0.27	Bowl-shaped	
130	181	0.6	0.2	Deep bowl-shaped	Cuts 131
131	182	0.4	0.1	Bowl-shaped	
136	187	0.7	0.15	Bowl-shaped	Charcoal-rich
138	189	0.7	0.15	Bowl-shaped	
140	191	1.45	0.15	Flat based	
141	192	2.1	0.2	Shallow bowl-shaped	
142	193	1.4+	0.6+	Bowl-shaped	Cut by 143. 1 sherd of M-LIA pottery
143	194-6	2.48	0.84	Deep bowl-shaped	

Postholes

Three, possibly five postholes were recorded in the haul roads (Table 5). None produce dating evidence and did not form any obvious post-built structure.

Table 5: Haul Road postholes (Fig. 6)

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Diameter (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Profile</i>	<i>Comment</i>
128	179	0.3	0.2	Deep bowl-shaped	
129	180	0.4	0.25	Deep bowl-shaped	
135	186	0.3	0.1	Deep bowl-shaped	Possible sand patch
137	188	0.3	0.09	Bowl-shaped	Possible sand patch
139	190	0.4	0.1	Bowl-shaped	

Finds

Prehistoric pottery by Richard Tabor

The prehistoric pottery assemblage comprised a total of 86 sherds weighing 968g. The weights, fabrics (Table 6) and vessel parts of all sherds were recorded (Fig. 7). All but one sherd of the assemblage was from pit 108. Based on fabrics and rim forms a minimum of eight vessels are represented.

The sherds were allocated to fabric groups based on the material, size and sorting of the principal inclusions. Vessel forms were grouped also by characteristic profiles, where reconstruction was possible, or by rim or other diagnostic features, including surface treatments in accordance with guidelines for the recording and analysis of prehistoric pottery (PCRG 2010).

Fabrics

The fabrics include one with coarse flint inclusion but the others are all sandy fabrics with usually sparse flint inclusions and one lacking flint altogether (Table 5). Flint was the dominant inclusion in pottery of the Middle to Late Bronze Age in central southern and eastern England, remaining so into the Early Iron Age but tending to

become finer over time and increasingly mixed with other material. The sherds in coarse fabric F1 may be Middle Bronze Age residual material but the other fabrics are consistent with a later date and common coarse flint occurred in the Late Bronze Age assemblages from Stansted (Leivers 2008, 17.31). It was noted of the Late Bronze Age assemblage at Runnymede that there had been deliberate grading of flint (Longley 1991, 163-4) and there is evidence for similar selection in the present assemblage. The single fine sherd from pit 142 might either be from a Middle Bronze Age or from a later Iron Age vessel.

Table 6: Pottery fabric quantification by cut

		F1		fS1		fS2a		fS2b		fS3		Qf1		vmS1	
cut	fill	No	Wt(g)	No	Wt(g)	No	Wt(g)	No	Wt(g)	No	Wt(g)	No	Wt(g)	No	Wt(g)
108	158	5	152	8	90	19	127	2	26	50	550	1	1		
142	193													1	22

Late Bronze Age: flint

F1 (Coarse) Moderately hard grey fabric with buff orange to grey surfaces including common angular burnt flint (<3mm). Smoothed exterior.

Late Bronze Age: sand and flint

fS1(Medium) Moderately hard grey sandy fabric with buff yellow to orange exterior and grey interior surfaces including sparse medium (<2mm) to very coarse angular burnt flint (<8mm). Smoothed exterior.

fS2a (Medium) Moderately hard grey sandy fabric with buff yellow to grey exterior and grey interior surfaces including rare fine to medium angular burnt flint (<1.5mm) and fine quartz (<0.25mm). Smoothed or rusticated exterior but lower wall may be scratched.

fS2b (Medium) Moderately hard grey sandy fabric with buff yellow to grey exterior and grey interior surfaces including rare fine to medium angular burnt flint (<1.5mm) and fine quartz (<0.25mm). Smoothed or rusticated exterior but lower wall may be scratched.

fS3(Coarse) Moderately hard grey sandy fabric with buff red to grey surfaces including poorly sorted sparse to patchily moderate medium (<2mm) to angular burnt flint (<6mm). Near vertical scratch marks on middle and lower wall sherds.

QF1 (Medium) Moderately hard yellowish grey fabric with buff orange exterior surfaces including moderate medium angular burnt flint (<2mm) and rounded quartz (<0.5mm). Smoothed exterior.

Undated prehistoric: micaceous sand

vmS1 (Fine) Moderately hard grey micaceous sandy fabric with buff pink with sub-angular and linear voids (<3mm) probably due to dissolution of calcareous material such as shell.

Vessel forms

The sherds in F1 include a badly damaged heavy rim fragment (Fig. 7: S1) which may derive from a barrel form vessel and date to the Middle Bronze Age although it should be noted that others in the that fabric are in fairly fresh condition. The other material from the same contexts has distinctive late Bronze Age traits. Fifty sherds from the neck downwards in the coarse fabric fS3 are probably from a single vessel (S2). Several comparable traits have been recorded elsewhere in and around the Thames Valley, including Runnymede Bridge, Stansted, Essex and Shelford quarry, Kent. They include fingertip impressed cordons at the base of neck (Longley 1991,

fig. 101, P517; Needham 1996, fig. 67, P683; fig. 81, P799; fig.83, P836, P837; Leivers 2008, fig. 17.4, 26; McNee 2012, 316) and near vertical scratching on the lower walls of vessels with expanded bases (Needham 1996, fig. 64, P674; fig. 82, P809). Upright or slightly everted flattened jar rims (S3) (Longley 1991, fig. 95, P345; Needham 1996, fig. 81, P790, P792) and thin upright, simple rounded jar and bowl rims (S6) also features in the Runnymede Bridge assemblages (Longley 1991, fig. 93, P292; fig. 94, P329; fig. 96, P368; Needham 1996, fig. 82, P814). Everted rounded and outwardly tapered rims (S5, S4) from thin-walled bowls occurred at Runnymede Bridge and several sites in Kent (Needham 1996, fig. 78, P761; fig. 82, P816; McNee 314).

Illustrated Sherds (Fig. 7)

(All from Pit 108, fill 158)

- S1. f1. Rim fragment from large jar or urn with fingertip impressions immediately below the rim which may have been outwardly expanded. Rounded channel on the rim top. Wall thickness 15mm.
- S2. fS3. Probably closed high-shouldered jar. Concave neck with applied cordon with deeply moulded fingertip impressions. Near vertical scratch marks are distributed irregularly over the middle and lower wall giving way to rough finger impressions and applied clay smears giving a rusticated appearance immediately above an expanded base. Base radius: 70mm, angle at 40° from vertical. Wall thickness approximately 6mm below neck to 7mm on lower wall. The join between the shoulder and the lower wall was not reconstructable.
- S3. fS1. Upright, flattened rim from high-shouldered jar. Rim radius: 90mm+. Wall thickness 7mm.
- S4. fS2a. Everted, tapered rim from closed bowl. Wall thickness 4mm.
- S5. fS2a. Slightly everted, simple rounded rim over short concave neck. Wall thickness 4mm. Highly burnished exterior, smoothed interior.
- S6. fS2b. Upright, simple rounded rim over short concave neck. The rim top is very uneven, having an undulating appearance but the sherd is too small to determine whether or not this was a deliberate decorative feature. Probably from the same vessel as a scratched lower wall sherd. Wall thickness 4mm. Rusticated exterior.

Summary

The combined evidence of fabrics and forms indicates that pit 108 is of Latest Bronze Age date, although there are a few sherds possibly residual Deverel-Rimbury sherds. The single sherd from pit 142 is likely to be of Middle or Late Iron Age date.

Struck flint by Steve Ford

A single struck flint was recovered during the phase 1 works from the stripped surface of the site near to feature 144. It was a narrow flake with a single finely bevelled edge with a hint of use polish visible under low-power magnification.

Charred plant remains by Joanna Pine

Seven soil samples ranging from 16-24 L were taken from a selection of the features on the site (Appendix 1). They were floated and sieved using a 0.25m mesh. All samples had charcoal present in very small or modest

volumes but only two had additional plant remains, consisting of a probable weed seed in sample 23 (gully 133) and a collection of cereal grains in sample 26 (LBA pit 142).

Conclusion

The recording action has revealed a small number of certain and probable archaeological features across the site though most are undated. These features comprised linear features, assumed to be field boundaries, and pits and postholes. The only datable features were one pit of Late Bronze Age date, and one pit possibly Iron Age. The most notable, if unexplained, feature was penannular gully surrounding a pit. Neither feature produced any datable finds. However, this has similarities with round barrows/ring ditches of Bronze Age date except for its tiny diameter of just 1.5m. Very similar features have been recorded elsewhere, and termed 'barrowlets' (Powlesland and May 2010), although, as here, their function and date remain obscure: a role in cremation is considered probable, and a date in the Iron Age suggested, although as little more than speculation.

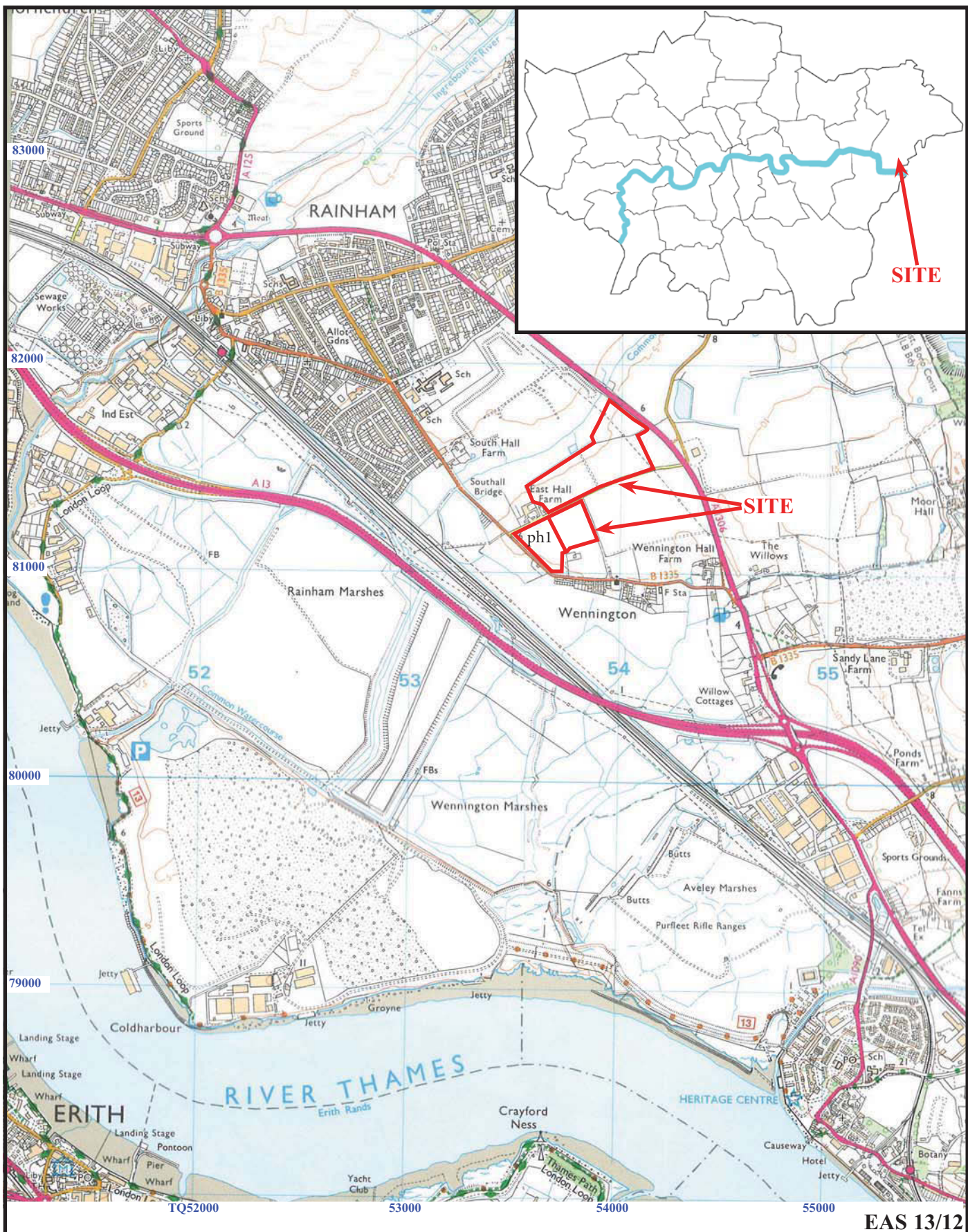
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APPENDIX 1: Summary of features

Group	Cut	Fill(s)	Sample	Charred plant remains		Type	Date	Dating Evidence
				Charcoal	seeds			
200	100	150				Gully		
201	101	151				Gully		
203	102	152				Gully		
203	103	153				Gully		
	104	154				Gully		
202	105	155				Gully		
203	106	156				Gully		
202	107	157				Gully		
	108	158-9	20	XX	-	Pit	LBA/EIA	Pottery
	109	160				Pit		
	110	161				<i>Pit? or Sand patch</i>		
206	111	162				Gully		
	112	163				Gully		
206	113	164				Gully		
	114	165				Pit		
	115	166	24	X	-	Posthole		
	116	167	25	X		Posthole		
	117	168				Posthole		
	118	169				Posthole		
	119	170				Pit		
	120	171				Pit		
	121	172				Pit		
200	122	173				Gully		
200	123	174				Gully		
	124	175				<i>treehole</i>		
	125	176				Posthole		
	126	177				Posthole		
	127	178				Pit		
	128	179				Posthole		
	129	180				Posthole		
	130	181	22	XX		Pit		
	131	182				Pit		
	132	183				pennular Gully		Around pit 130
	133	184	23	X	1 weed indet	Gully		
	134	185				Gully		
	135	186				<i>Posthole? or natural</i>		
	136	187	21	XXX	-	Pit		
	137	188				<i>Posthole? or natural</i>		
	138	189				Pit		
	139	190				Posthole		
	140	191				Pit		
	141	192				Pit		
	142	193	26	X	31 cereal indet	Pit	LBA/EIA	Pottery
	143	194-5				Pit		
	144	196				Gully		
	145	197				Gully		

XXX= Much charcoal present; XX = Some charcoal present; X Flecks of charcoal present

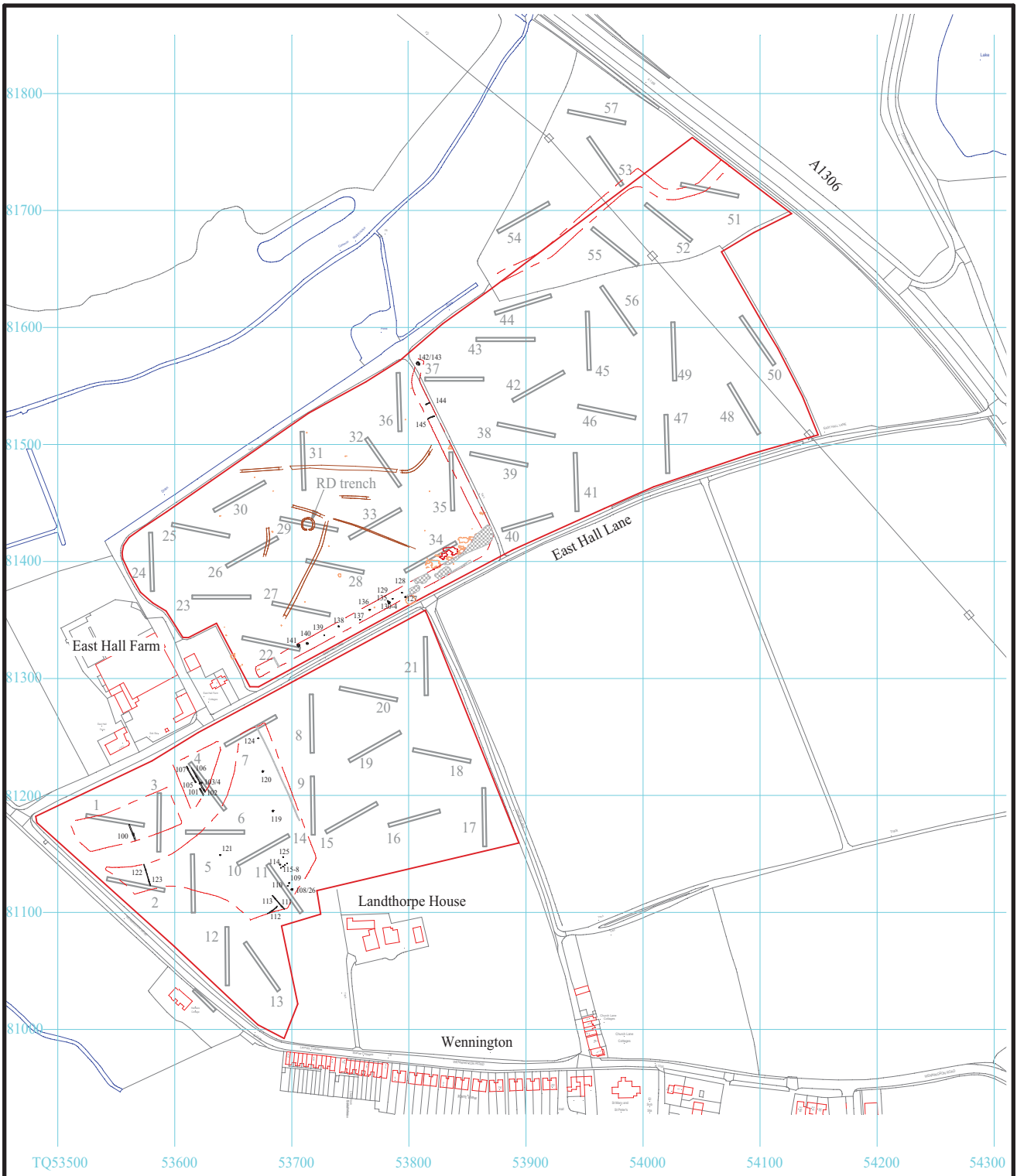


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Figure 1. Location of site within Wennington and London.

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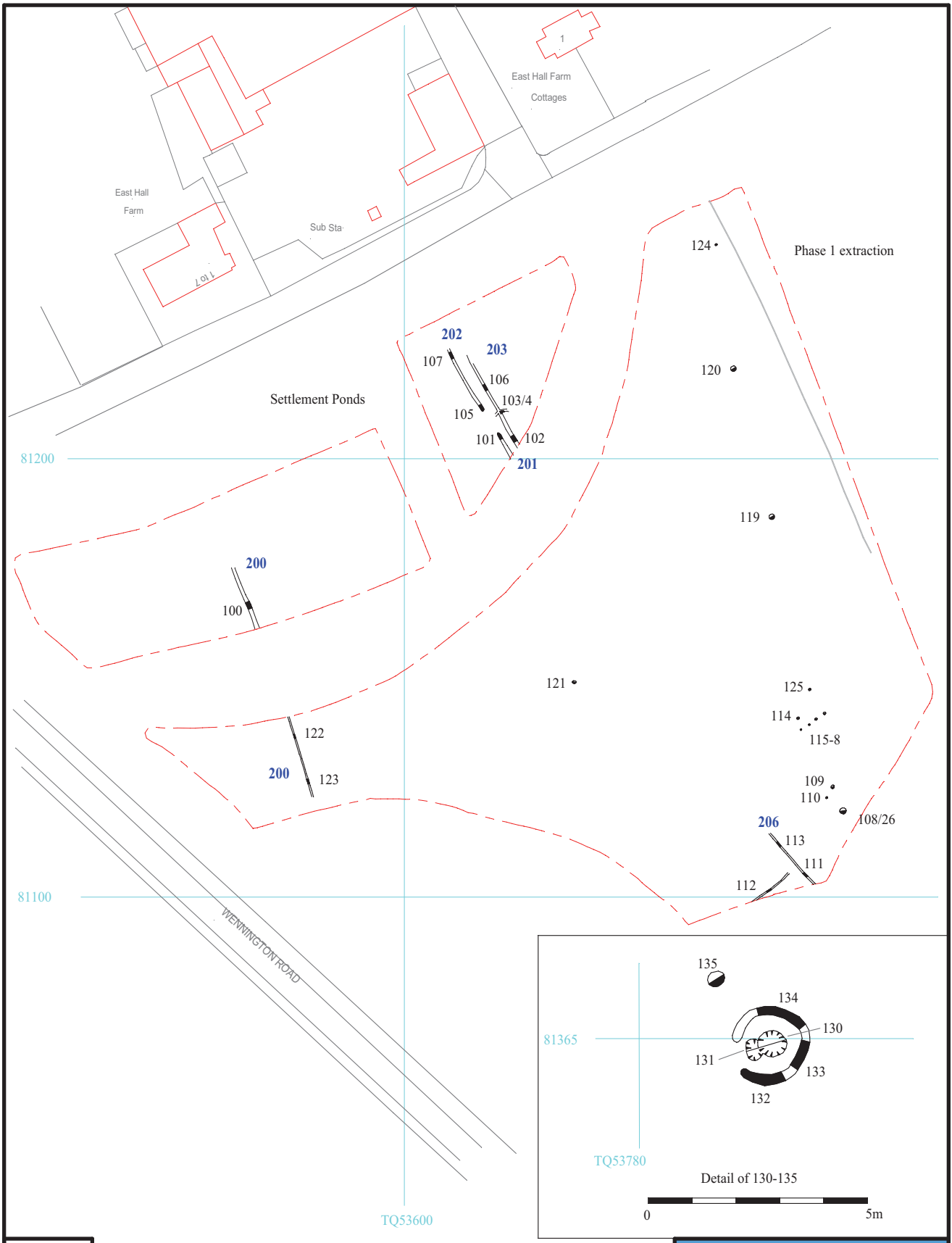


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Figure 2. Location of excavated area within site and in relation to evaluation trenches



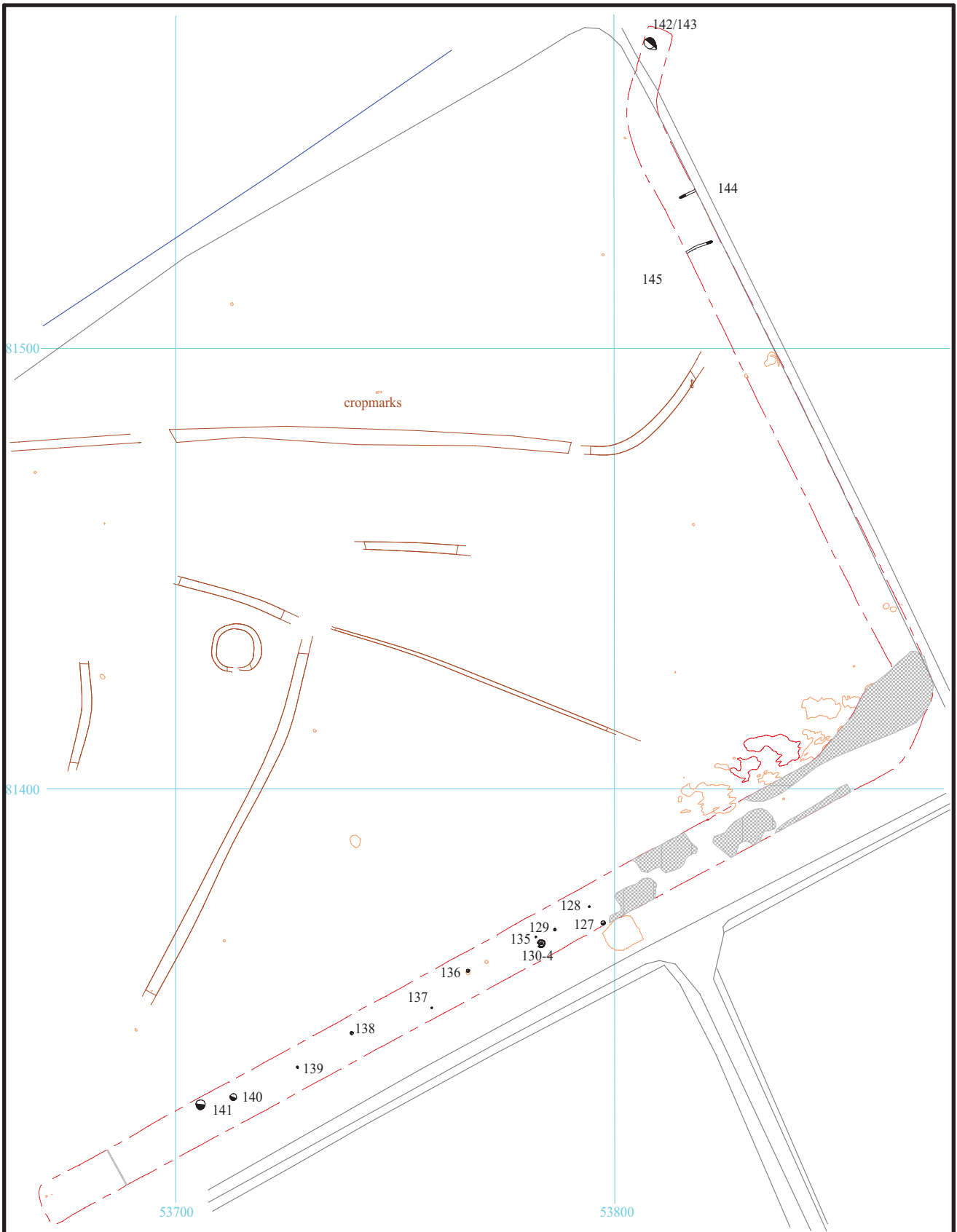
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Figure 3. Detail of extraction area, and settlement ponds,
with inset detail of features 130-135.



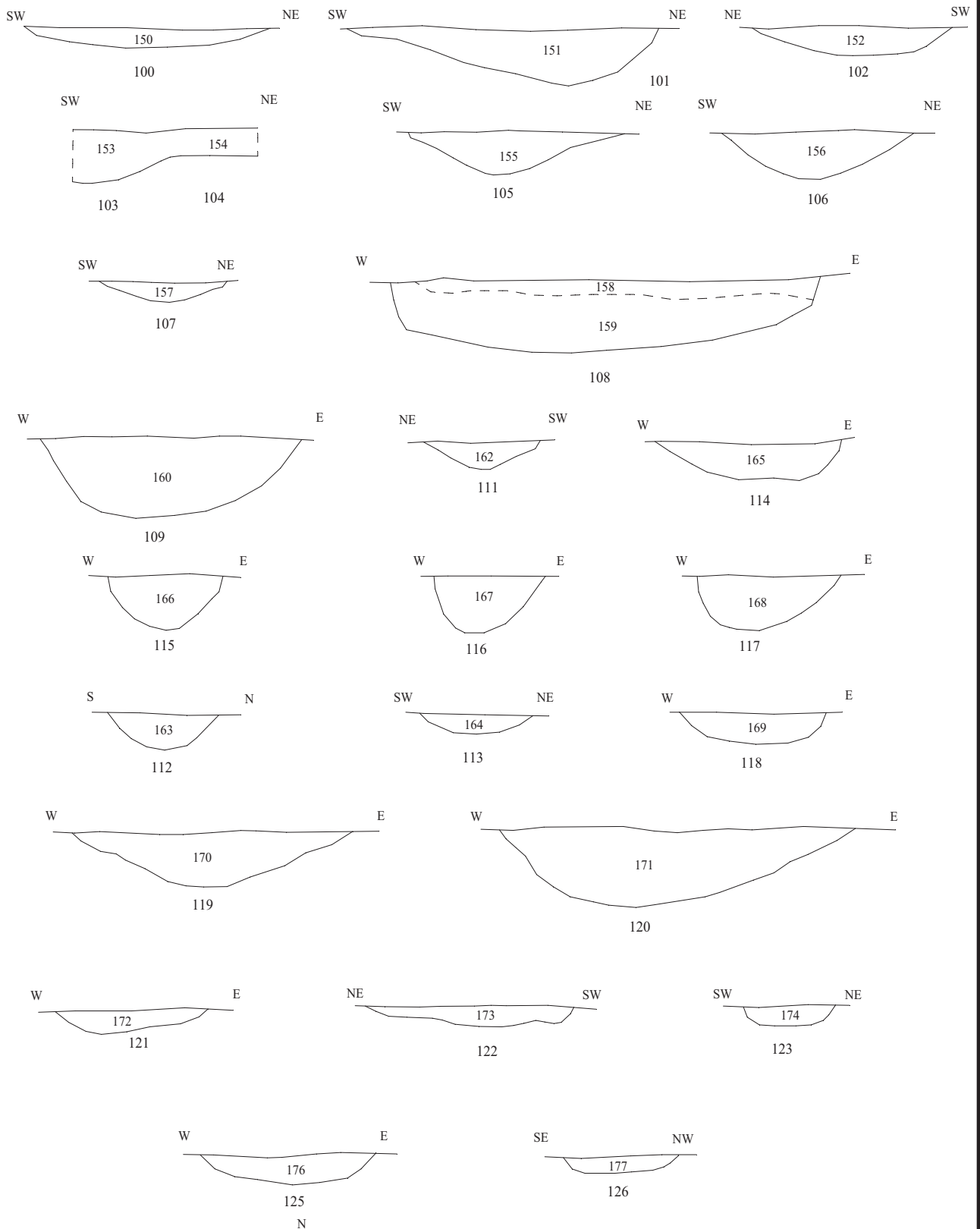


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Figure 4. Location of haul road features



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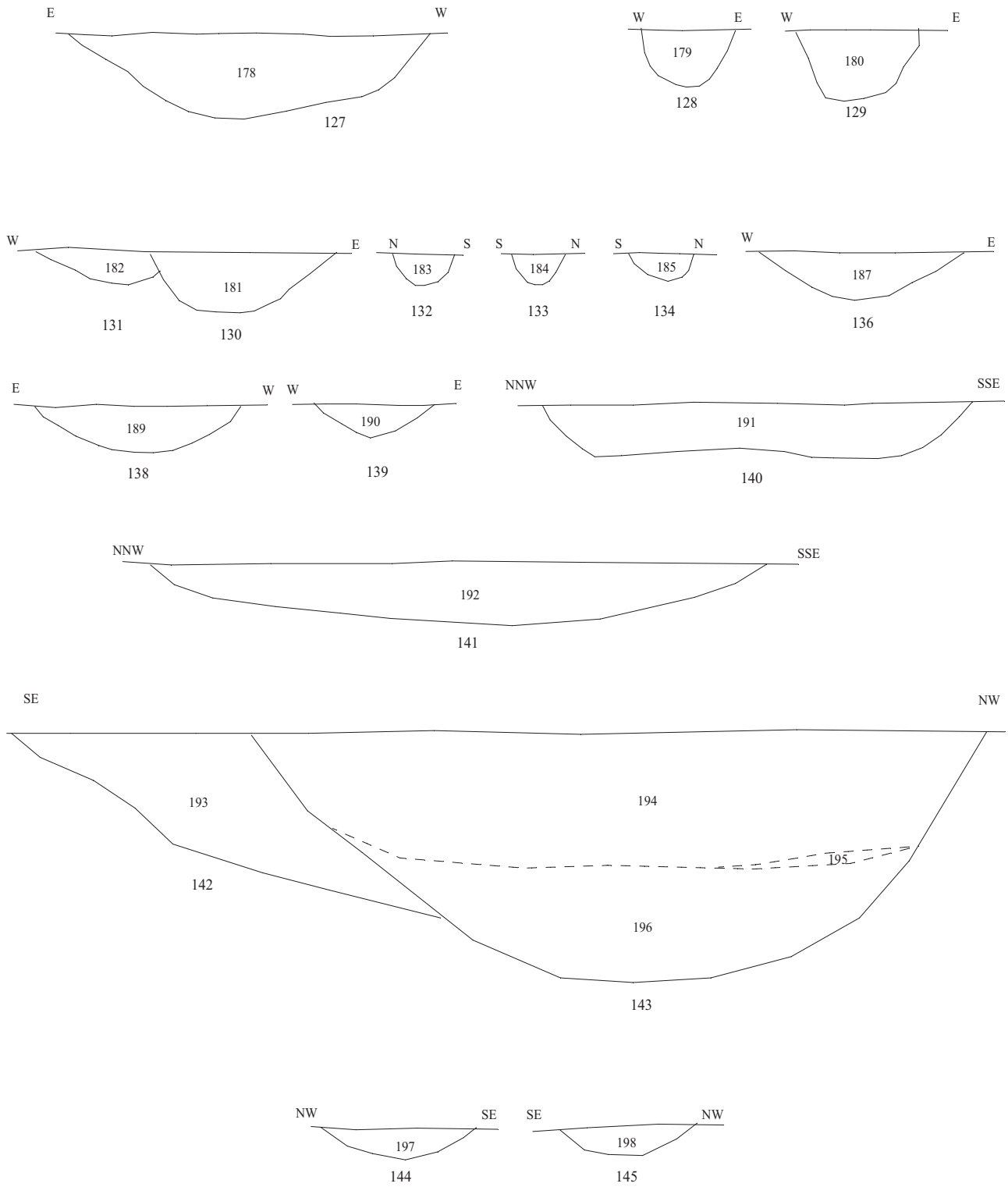


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Figure 5. Sections



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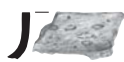
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Figure 6. Sections





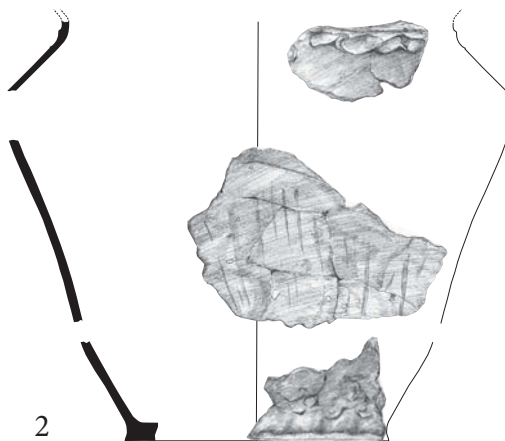
1



3



4



2



5



6



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Figure 7 pottery from pit 108

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Plate 1. Gully 101, looking NW, Scales: 0.5m and 0.2m.



Plate 2. Gully 102, looking SE, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.

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**East Hall Farm, East Hall Lane,
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Pit 108 with pot, looking N, Scales: 0.3m and 0.1m.

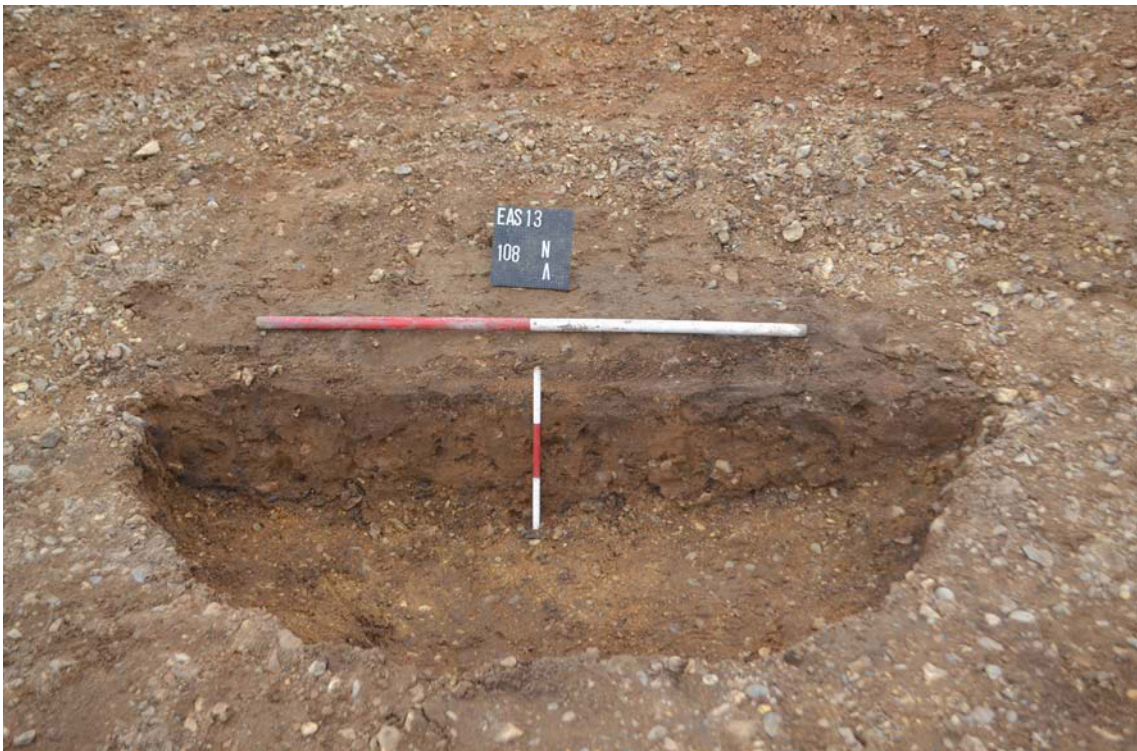


Plate 4. Pit 108, looking N, Scales: 1.0m and 0.3m.

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Plates 3 - 4.**

THAMES VALLEY
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Plate 5. Posthole 115, looking N, Scales: 0.3m and 0.2m.



Plate 6. Posthole 116, looking N, Scales: 0.3m and 0.2m.

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Plates 5 - 6.

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Plate 7. Pits 130 and 131, surrounded by gully 132-134, looking N, Scales: 0.5m, 0.2 and 0.1m.



Plate 8. Pits 142 and 143, looking SW, Scales: 2.0m and 0.5m.

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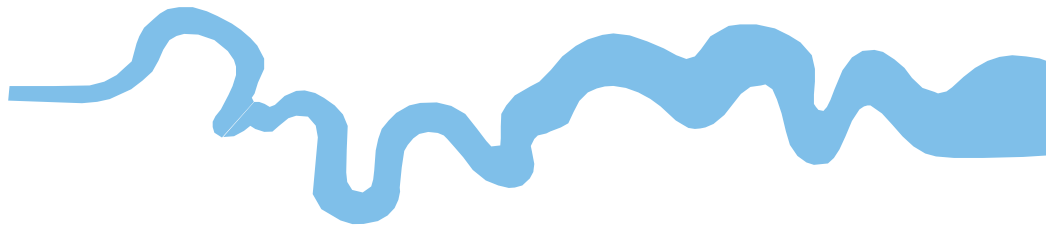
Plates 7 - 8.

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES

TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





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