

LAND SOUTH OF HILL FARM, DALWOOD, NEAR KILMINGTON, DEVON

(Centred on NGR SY 23524 99297)

Results of an Archaeological Excavation

Planning References: East Devon District Council
13/2712/FUL and 13/2713/FUL

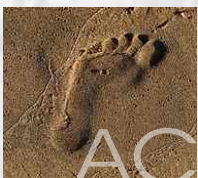
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archaeology

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Summary

An archaeological excavation ahead of the construction of an agricultural building on land to the south of Hill Farm, Dalwood, near Kilmington, Devon (centred on SY 23524 99297) was undertaken by Arrowhead Archaeology, assisted by AC archaeology, during May 2014. The work comprised the excavation of features observed following a topsoil and subsoil strip of two rectangular areas totalling c. 2.7ha, in advance of the construction of a new agricultural building and silage store.

The removal of overburden exposed the remains of medieval post-built structures, a pit and field system in Area 1 (the new agricultural building). No features were observed in Area 2 (the silage store). Industrial residues of iron smelting and smithing were recovered from linear features, principally a gully which continued beyond the limit of excavation to the west. Other finds included an assemblage of medieval pottery probably dated to the 11th – 12th century AD.

1. INTRODUCTION (Fig. 1)

1.1 This document sets out the results of an archaeological excavation which followed on from a watching brief on groundworks associated with the construction of an agricultural building and a silage store at land to the south of Hill Farm, Dalwood, near Kilmington, Devon (centred on SY 23524 99297). The work was undertaken by Arrowhead Archaeology, assisted by AC archaeology, during 2nd – 13th May 2014, and was required by East Devon District Council, advised by the Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (DCC HET), as condition 6 of planning consent, (ref. 13/2712/FUL) for the construction of a new agricultural building and condition 2 of planning consent (ref. 13/2713/FUL) for construction of a silage store.

1.2 The work was commissioned by the landowner Mr David Dare.

1.3 The site is located on agricultural land and is to the south of a minor road which separates the site from Hill Farm. The site is situated on a gentle east-facing slope at between 40m and 45m aOD. It comprised two broadly rectangular areas (Area 1 and Area 2), totalling c. 2.7ha, located adjacent to the north and to the southwest of an existing livestock barn. The underlying solid geology of the site comprised Sandstone of the Upper Greensand Formation, with superficial deposits comprising Clay-with-flints Formation - Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel (BGS 2015).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 A substantial quantity of prehistoric worked flint has been recovered as surface finds during field-walking of the ploughed fields on and surrounding the application site (Devon HER ref. MDV50310). Further to the east, a possible prehistoric earthwork is recorded (MDV49222). To the immediate northeast and east of the site, the road that passes the entrance to Hill Farm, between Shute Cross and Moorcox Cross, follows the line of the Roman road from Dorchester to Exeter (MDV14190; Weddell, Reed and Simpson 1993). The parish boundary between Shute and Dalwood also follows the line of the road.

2.2 Hill Farm is recorded as a place-name as early as AD 1327 (MDV30353) although is not present on the Dalwood Tithe Map of 1840. It is present on the 1st edition 25" map of 1889 and labelled Dalwood Hill. The site is within an area of post-medieval enclosure fields according to the Devon Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (DCC

2015), although these are rather unregimented when compared to the small rectangular fields on the Hill Farm side of the road; these too are regarded as resulting from the same programme of post-medieval enclosure. The Shute Tithe Apportionment of 1841 provided no clues to activity on or around the site with the field names all being descriptive of size, although one field to the southeast is called Great Moor which may be an indication of the topography prior to enclosure. The fields around the present Hill Farm are described in the Dalwood Tithe Apportionment of 1845 and are even less enlightening with simple labels of 'inclosure', 'plot', 'allotment' and 'field', although of possible interest is that they were all in arable whereas it was a mix of pasture and arable across the road.

- 2.3** During a watching brief conducted by Arrowhead Archaeology features of probable archaeological interest were observed during the stripping of topsoil in Area 1. The works were stopped to allow for a strip, map and sample excavation the results of which are described here. The watching brief of Area 2, the location of a new silage store, showed this area to be archaeologically blank and is not discussed further.

3. AIMS

- 3.1** The aims of the works were to investigate by excavation the archaeological features identified during the watching brief of the topsoil strip in Area 1. The investigation including the sampling of features and deposits and the collection of any associated artefacts across the area affected by the development.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1** The work comprised the machine stripping of soil overburden totalling an area of approximately 0.12ha (Fig. 2). The removal of soil overburden was undertaken under the control and direction of the site archaeologist. Archaeological features identified in the stripped area were cleaned and excavated by hand.
- 4.2** The work comprised a strip, map and sample of Area 1 which was to the NW of a standing agricultural building of the same size and design of the proposed new building. The stripped area had maximum dimensions of 54m NE-SW by 25m NW-SE.
- 4.3** All features were mapped using a Leica Viva GS08 device with a horizontal accuracy of up to 10mm. All soil removal was undertaken under the control and direction of the Site Archaeologist. Topsoil and overburden were removed by mechanical excavator, using a wide toothless bucket, and ceased at the level at which archaeological deposits or natural subsoil was exposed.
- 4.4** Following completion of the overburden removal, the trench was cleaned by hand, where necessary. All features and deposits revealed were recorded using the standard AC archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2* (revised August 2012). Detailed sections or plans were produced at a scale of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate.

5. RESULTS (Fig. 2, Plate 1)

- 5.1** The natural subsoil (101) was encountered at a depth of approximately 0.3m below topsoil (100). Natural subsoil comprised varied deposits of gravel, sand and silt. A

cluster of pit and short linear features were identified centrally and to the southeast edge of the stripped area; three square or rectangular post-built structures (1-3) could be discerned by postholes within this cluster. The remainder of the stripped area was largely sterile apart from some short linear features and a larger collection of linear features forming a T-shape in the southwest part of the site. The T-shape apparently enclosed the cluster of features mentioned above. All features are described below.

5.2 Structures (Figs 3-6; Plates 2 and 3)

A total of 21 postholes were exposed and excavated. Of these, 18 were clearly associated with three separate structures (Plate 2). Most of these were large post-pits with clearly defined post pipes.

Structure 1 (Plan Fig. 3 and detailed sections Figs 4a-i)

This comprised seven postholes (F411, F412, F413, F415, F429, F430 (Plate 3) & F431) and a short rubble filled gully (F426). The principal structure was formed by five large postholes in an ENE-WSW oriented, rectangular configuration with dimensions of 5.0m by 3.4m. The extrapolated position of the southeast corner post fell outside of the stripped area and would have been removed by recent terracing for construction of the adjacent livestock barn. Gully F426 was aligned NNW-SSE and extended along the inside of the probable southwest wall of the building. A total of 173 sherds of medieval pottery, probably 11th-12th century date, were recovered principally from gully F426, but also from two postholes (F429 and F430). Two postholes (F411 and F412) fell outside but in close proximity to the northeast of Structure 1, but appeared to be related, being of similar character to the Structure 1 postholes and on the same alignment to the structure.

Postholes (F411, F412, F413, F415, F429, F430 and F431) were similar in character, each comprising a large circular or oval post-pit up to 0.7m in diameter and 0.46m deep with straight, near vertical sides, moderately sharp break of slope at the base and a flattish base. Each contained a principal fill (019, 022, 023, 014-015, 006, 005, 017) composed of moderately compact greyish or yellowish-brown, silty clay with occasional sub-angular pebbles, representing rapidly backfilled redeposited natural. With the exception of F429 and F415, each contained a clear post pipe fill (020, 021, 105, 004, 018) composed of very soft, dark grey silty clay with rare small sub-angular pebbles.

Short gully F426 was slightly irregular, ending in an irregular termination to the north and truncated by modern terracing to the south. It measured 4.15m long, 1.05m wide and 0.2m deep with moderately steep convex sides and sharp base break of slope to a flat base. It contained three fills (001-3). Primary fill 003 was present at the southern extent of the feature and was composed of mottled dark to grey silty clay. This fill was partially overlain by secondary fill 002, which comprised the principal fill of the gully and consisted of sub-angular flint and chert cobbles and boulders up to 300mm within a grey silty clay matrix. Upper fill 001 consisted of dark grey silty clay. Medieval pottery was recovered from fills 001 and 002. A large fragment of iron slag was also recovered from rubble fill 002.

Structure 2 (Plan Fig. 3 and detailed sections Figs 5a-f)

This comprised five postholes (F419, F432, F434, F435 and F418) in a square arrangement. It was oriented ENE-WSW with approximate dimensions of 3.3m by 3.0m. A further posthole (F436) was internal to the area of the structure.

The four corner postholes F419, F432, F434 and F435 and posthole F418 were of similar character. Each was broadly circular, measured up to a maximum of 0.9m across and 0.42m deep with steep straight sides, moderate to sharp base break of

slope and a flattish base. Each contained a principal fill (512, 206, 514, 516 and 213) consisting of greyish or yellowish-brown, silty clay of rapidly backfilled redeposited natural with a clear post pipe fill (511, 204, 513, 515 and 212) consisting of dark grey silty clay. Posthole F435 had been cut by a modern land drain with only its northwest half remaining.

Internal posthole F436 was smaller than the corner postholes and was distinct in containing a single dark greyish-brown silty clay fill (517) with no evidence for a post pipe. Its position, would indicate that it is related to the structure, possibly supporting a ridge timber with opposing mid-positioned post 418.

Structure 3 (Plan Fig. 3 and detailed sections Figs 5g-k, 6a-b))

This structure was identified by four postholes (F428, F440, F441 and F443), positioned in a square arrangement, aligned NW-SE with approximate internal dimensions of 3.0m by 2.5m. These were positioned partially enclosing a broadly rectangular depression (F420) aligned NW-SE and continuing SE beyond the area enclosed by the postholes. Hollow F420 cut an elongated hollow (F427) and a posthole (F437) which would have been internal to the structure.

Postholes F440, F441 and F443 were of similar character. Each was broadly circular, measured up to a maximum of 0.77m across and 0.28m deep with steep straight sides, moderate to sharp base break of slope and a flattish base. Each contained a fill (524, 025, 525) composed greyish or yellowish-brown silty clay comprised of re-deposited natural. F440 and F441 also contained a possible post pipe fill (521, 024) consisting of dark grey silty clay. A single worked flint was recovered from the fill of F441 and must be residual in this context.

Posthole F428 was smaller than the other structural postholes. It was circular in plan and measured 0.16m in diameter by 0.35m deep with near vertical sides, sharp base break of slope and flat base. It contained a single fill (203) of dark greyish-brown silty clay. It is possible that fill 203 represents the post pipe and that the associated post pit was not recognised during the excavation due to the similarity of its fill to the surrounding natural.

Posthole F437 was circular in plan and measured 0.34m in diameter by 0.41m deep with near vertical sides, sharp base break of slope and flat base. It had a single fill (215) consisting of greyish-brown silty clay which contained five sherds of medieval pottery.

Hollow F427 was positioned between postholes F428 and F440. It was aligned NW-SE and measured 2m long, 0.7m wide by 0.13m deep, with moderately concave sides and a concave base. A single fill (202) consisting of brownish-grey silty clay contained two large flint boulders and eight sherds of medieval pottery.

Feature F420 was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 3.5m long, 1.9m wide by 0.22m deep with moderate concave sides and gradual break of slope to a flat base. It had a homogeneous fill (201) composed of brownish-grey silty clay which contained three sherds of medieval pottery and three worked flints that were residual in this context.

Two further postholes (F438 and F444) were in close proximity to Structure 3 and may be related to the structure.

Posthole F438 was positioned close to the northeast corner of Structure 3. It was circular in plan and measured 0.5m in diameter and 0.2m deep with a U-shaped profile. It contained a single fill (520) consisting of greyish-brown clayey silt.

Large posthole F444 was positioned close to the southwest side of Structure 3. It had been partially removed to the south by modern terracing. The remaining part of the posthole measured 1.17m in diameter by 0.42m deep. It contained a fill (527) of pale greyish-brown silty clay and a post pipe fill (526) of greyish-brown clayey silt.

5.3 **Discrete features** (Plans Figs 1 and 2 and detailed sections Figs 6c-h; Plate 4)

Hollow F403 was a wide sub-circular feature measuring approximately 8.8m across and up to 0.3m deep with a shallow undulating profile. It contained two fills (209-10). Primary fill 210 consisted of grey silty clay. Upper fill 209 consisted of dark grey silty clay. The feature had the appearance of a shallow waterhole or dew pond.

Pit F409 was oval in plan and measured 1.45m long, 0.7m wide by 0.13m deep with gradual sides and an uneven base. It had a single fill (519) consisting of greyish-brown clayey silt which contained 14 sherds of medieval pottery. It is possible that this feature is a continuation of very truncated curving linear feature F407 which is described below.

Pit F414 was irregular in plan and measured 2.24m long, 1.30m wide by 0.20m deep with an irregular profile. It contained three fills (501-3). Primary fill 502 consisted of light grey sandy clay. Secondary fill 503 consisted of light greyish-brown silty clay. Upper fill 501 consisted of dark greyish brown silty clay. Despite the presence of a single sherd of medieval pottery from upper fill 501 the irregular form of this pit indicated that it is a probable tree root hollow of natural origin.

Pit F416 (Plate 4) was located between structures 1 and 2. It was sub-circular in plan and measured 2m long, 1.65m wide by 0.6m deep with steep concave sides and gradual break of slope to a concave base. It contained three fills (011-3). Primary fill 011 consisted of grey silt. It appeared to represent degraded organic material. Secondary fill 012 was present on the northwest side of the pit only. It overlay fill 011 and consisted of yellowish brown sandy clay, redeposited natural. Upper fill 013 consisted of greyish brown silty clay. The primary fill 011 contained 12 sherds of medieval pottery and 6 pieces of fired clay/daub.

Pit F417 (not shown in section) was irregular in plan and measured approximately 1.8m long, 1.1m wide by up to 0.28m deep with an irregular profile. It contained a single fill (211) consisting of light grey silty clay with common sub-angular chert gravel. The irregular form of this pit indicated that it is a probable tree root hollow of natural origin.

Isolated posthole F422 was sub-circular in plan and measured 0.5m long, 0.3m wide by 0.15m deep with an irregular profile. It contained a single fill (518) consisting of greyish-brown clayey silt.

Pit F446 measured 0.38m in diameter by 0.08m deep. It had been truncated by gully F445. It had a single fill (530) consisting of dark brownish grey clayey silt and contained a sherd of prehistoric pottery dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

5.4 **Linear features** (Plan Fig. 2 and detailed sections Figs 6c, 7a-h; Plates 5-6)

Gully F404 was located at the eastern end of the stripped area. It was aligned approximately NE-SW and was exposed for a length of 7m, measuring 0.55m wide by 0.15m deep. It terminated to the west and continued beyond the limit of excavation to

the east. It had moderately straight sides and a flattish base. It had a single fill consisting of dark grey silty clay and contained a single worked flint which is probably residual in this context. Gully F404 cut the wide irregular feature F403 (see above).

Gully F405 was located at the eastern end of the stripped area. It was aligned NE-SW and exposed for a length of 4m, measuring 0.57m wide by 0.15m deep. It petered out at its eastern end and continued beyond the limit of excavation to the west. It had steep concave sides, a concave base and contained a single fill (507) consisting of brownish-grey silty clay.

Gully F407 was curvi-linear in plan, aligned approximately east-west and measured 6.8m long, 0.6m wide by 0.1m deep with a concave profile. It was severely plough truncated and petered out at either end rather than terminating. Two segments were excavated (304 and 312). It contained two fills (010 and 009). The primary fill 010 in segment 304 consisted of light brown silty sand. Upper fill (009) in segment 304 and the only fill in segment 312 were the same and consisted of greyish-brown silty loam.

Gullies F423, 421 and F408 appeared to form a single slightly curving or sinuous, east-west aligned linear boundary, fragmented by severe plough truncation. To the west, gully F423 intersected with contemporary gully F424 forming a T-shape within the stripped area (Plate 5). Gully F423 measured 0.48m wide by 0.07m deep and contained a single fill (506) consisting of greyish brown silty clay. To the east, gully F408 intersected with contemporary curvilinear gully F407. Gully F408 was examined in two excavated segments and measured 0.40m wide by 0.13m deep and contained a single fill (007/008) consisting of grey clayey silt. Probable gully 421 was unexcavated. The excavated gullies were extremely shallow and petered out at their extents rather than terminating. Eight sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from the fill of gully F408.

Gully F424 was aligned approximately north-south and measured 25m long, 0.6m wide by up to 0.3m deep. Two segments were excavated (303 and 308). The gully contained two fills in each segment. The primary fill (505/510) consisted of yellowish brown silty clay. The upper fill (504/509) consisted of dark greyish brown silty clay. Primary fill 505 contained fragments of slag and furnace lining. In addition the primary fill (505) also contained three worked flints which must be residual in this context.

Gully F425 (Plate 6) was aligned approximately east-west and was exposed for a length of 2.3m and measured 0.29m wide by 0.07m deep. It petered out to the east and continued beyond the limit of excavation to the west. It had a single fill (214) consisting of dark brownish grey silty clay and contained fragments of slag, burnt clay, furnace lining and hammerscale.

Gully F445 was aligned approximately east-west and measured 0.50m wide by 0.37m deep. It terminated at posthole F446 to the west and continued beyond the limit of excavation to the east. It contained two fills (528-9). Primary fill (529) consisted of yellowish-brown clayey silt and was differentiated from upper fill (528) by a lack of chert stone inclusions.

6. THE FINDS by Charlotte Coles *with contributions from* John Allan *and* Henrietta Quinnell

6.1 Introduction

All finds recovered on site during the excavation were retained and cleaned. The most significant finds were an assemblage of medieval pottery and metalworking residues.

Other finds included a small quantity of non-diagnostic fired clay, an iron object, a whetstone or hone, worked flint and a sherd of prehistoric pottery. The finds have been summarised in Table 1.

Context	Context description	Slag		Furnace lining		Hammerscale	Other fired clay		Worked flint		Burnt flint		Prehistoric pottery		Medieval pottery		Worked stone	
		No	Wt	No	Wt	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt
001	Fill of gully F426						11	108							143	932		
002	Fill of gully F426	1	621				11	52							21	114		
004	Post pipe in posthole F430														8	112		
006	Fill of posthole F429														1	13		
007	Fill of gully F408										1	11						
008	Fill of gully F408														8	18		
011	Fill of pit F416						5	5							12	140		
024	Fill of posthole F441								1	3								
100	Topsoil																1	400
201	Fill of pit F420								3	3	1	20			3	5		
202	Fill of hollow F427														8	48		
208	Fill of gully F404								1	4								
214	Fill of gully terminus F425	390	757	111	855	27												
215	Fill of posthole F437														5	19		
505	Primary fill of gully F424	5	730	3	22				3	18								
501	Fill of tree throw F414														1	6		
517	Fill of pit F436						1	5										
519	Fill of pit F409														14	44		
520	Fill of pit or posthole F438	1	45															
530	Fill of posthole F446												1	3				
U/S	Adjacent to F438								1	8								
Total		397	2153	114	877	27	28	170	9	36	2	31	1	3	224	1451	1	400

Table 1: All finds by context

6.2 Medieval pottery by John Allan

In total, 224 medieval sherds (1451g) were recovered from 11 contexts. The majority of the sherds (143) came from F426, a short gully. The collection consists solely of unglazed handmade coarsewares with Upper Greensand-Derived fabrics, typical of this area. The complete absence of glazed wares alongside the presence of many sherds fired bright red-orange and several combed sherds indicates a date before the end of the 12th century and probably before c. 1150, when glazed tripod pitchers become a regular feature of most assemblages. Pottery of this type was made from c. 950 and it is not impossible that this material is of late Saxon date. However it lacks the distinctive thick sherds sometimes present in groups of that date and there are no stamped wares. The most probable date for the assemblage is in the 11th or early 12th century. Assemblages of this sort have been excavated from the Honeyditches site at Seaton and from various sites around Stockland and Membury (see Allan 1994 and Allan and Langman 2002). The Hill Farm assemblage is one of the best local collections of the period so far discovered.

6.3 Prehistoric pottery by Henrietta Quinnell

A single sherd (3g) of prehistoric date was recovered from posthole F446. The sherd has sparse rock inclusions up to c. 4mm in size. The outer face is a little eroded but has possible traces both of possible comb impressions and a possible incised line; the inner face has residue. The sherd is probably Trevisker and of Middle Bronze Age date. This is a small but important find as dateable prehistoric material is rare in the Axminster area and in the extreme east of Devon. Other possible contemporary finds are from Harepath Road, Seaton (Valentin and Sims 2012) and Burrowshot Cross, Axminster (Quinnell 1993). There was also some Trevisker material from Seaton Down excavated by Exeter Archaeology. Into Dorset/southwest Somerset there is a small

amount of Trevisker-related material at Doghouse Hill near Golden Cap (Papworth 2013, 220) and a large amount from an enclosure at Templecombe Junction, Chard (Quinnell 2012, 165).

6.4 Worked flint

A total of nine worked flints (36g) was recovered from five contexts. The worked flint included seven flakes, one of which is finely retouched, a retouched blade and a chip. The blade is made from a broken secondary flake of good quality dark brown flint. Much of one lateral side has been moderately neatly retouched. It is not clear whether the resulting elongated notch at the distal end is deliberate.

Two pieces (31g) of burnt flint were also recovered, one from the fill of pit F420 and the other from the fill of gully F408.

6.5 Industrial residues

A total of 397 pieces (2153g) of slag was recovered from four contexts, all located close together on site. Two of these contexts (gullies F424 and F425) also contained a total of 114 pieces (877g) of fired clay furnace lining. Two pieces of the slag are of reasonably large size (621g and 676g), but the remainder is of small or very small size. The furnace lining is all in small or very small pieces. Some of the slag is in the form of prills, small lumps of slag which have solidified in a furnace. These are diagnostic of iron smelting. Gully F425 also produced 27g of hammerscale, which is diagnostic of iron smithing. This group of industrial residues is likely to represent a dump of material which had been produced by iron smelting and smithing activity close by.

6.6 Fired clay

A total of 28 pieces (170g) of fired clay was recovered from four contexts. This is distinct from the furnace lining as it is not as heavily fired and is not mixed with slag. The pieces are amorphous, without any obvious surfaces, and contain small pieces of flint and other stone. It may be burnt daub, or other clay which has been accidentally burnt.

6.7 Worked stone

An incomplete whetstone or hone (400g) was recovered from topsoil. It is made from a fine-grained grey stone with white mica inclusions. It is bar-shaped with one wider end and measures 140mm by 56mm by 29mm. It has broken obliquely at the narrow end and there are two areas of damage at the wider end. The straighter of the two lateral edges has particularly clear wear facets.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT by Cressida Whitton

7.1 Introduction

Two environmental bulk soil samples were recovered in order to assess the environmental potential of the site. Sample 1 came from the slag and charcoal-rich fill (context 214) of a gully (F425). Sample 2 was recovered from the fill (011) of pit F416. Both features were associated with medieval settlement features on the site.

7.2 Methodology

Two sub-samples of around 10 litres were processed at AC archaeology by standard floatation/sieve methods using a siraf-type tank to a mesh size of 250 micron (flot) and residues of 5.6mm, 2mm and 500 microns. Dried flots and residues were sorted or scanned under a stereo-binocular microscope (10x – 40x), for ecofacts including charcoal and charred organic remains. Larger charcoal fragments and artefacts were

sorted from the 5.6mm residue fraction using an illuminated hand-lens. The results are summarised in Table 2.

Sample no.	Context no. (& feature type)	Sample volume processed (litres)	Environmental Remains Amount.: x – occasional (<10 fragments), xx – moderate (10 - 50), xxx – frequent (50 – 500+) Type: - Ch – charcoal, CPM - charred plant macrofossils
1	214 (Fill of gully F425)	9 lt (50% of sample)	Ch xxx (eg 500+ small fragments in 2mm residue) Abundant tap slag and Fe+ objects (including possible hammerscale)
2	011 (Fill of pit F416)	8.5 lt (50%)	Ch xx (15 – 20 small fragments of heartwood) CPM x (4-5 x charred grains (barley/wheat type) & 5+ weed seeds).

Table 2: Summarised results of environmental sample processing

7.3 Sample 1

Sample 1 contained abundant industrial-type material, including tap slag and magnetic fe+ objects and possible hammerscale from smithing. The sample also contained small fragments of fired clay, which may be associated with slag production and/or dumping. Sample 1 appears to be a dump of mainly industrial waste from probable iron smelting and smithing, which also contained frequent charcoal fragments.

7.4 Sample 2

Sample 2 contained mainly domestic waste including some charred grains (wheat/barley type) and charred weed seeds. No cereal chaff appeared to be present. Sample 2 also contained abundant charcoal fragments, including occasional large pieces of charcoal (4mm +) and may represent domestic waste from the adjacent/associated settlement.

8. DISCUSSION

8.1 Stripping of the ploughsoil exposed archaeological features representing three small structures, pits and a field system. All of the features appear to be roughly contemporary and appear to relate to a relatively short-lived phase of activity dated by the medieval pottery to the 11th and 12th centuries although elements of the pottery could be Late Saxon and date back to AD 950.

8.2 All features exposed had been truncated by ploughing. Survival of ditches relating to the probable field system boundaries had been particularly severely affected. All were shallow and fragmented in places where complete truncation had occurred.

8.3 While it is apparent that the features fall within a single broad phase of activity which cannot be separated stratigraphically or by examination of the finds, it is unlikely that all of the features observed were in contemporaneous usage. In particular, pit F416 encroaches on the footprint of Structure 1 and would also have completely occupied the small gap between structures 1 and 2. This hints at some succession to the features, but does not allow the possibility of phasing the development of the structures, which may nevertheless be contemporary.

- 8.4** No direct relationship between the postholes grouped into structures could be discerned archaeologically, but the patterns of their plans have been used to infer the former presence of three square or rectangular structures. The buildings were constructed using substantial posts (approximately 0.30m in diameter) set in large post pits. In many cases a post pipe was preserved within the fill. There was no evidence to indicate that the posts had been squared, which indicates a rustic style of construction. No evidence of the walls remained and they were most likely of wattle construction with fragments of probable fired daub recovered from pit F416. No floors or hearths remained and truncation would certainly have removed these features, despite this, internal features were present in structures 1 and 3.
- 8.5** Structure 1 may be almost complete in plan with three postholes marking the long axis of the north wall and a pair of matching posts on the south wall. The expected southeast corner post has been lost to modern terracing adjacent to the site. The six-post building measures 5.0m by 3.4m, although the pair of postholes (F411 and F412) adjacent to the northeast corner could indicate that the structure continued further to the east, with these marking the position of a porch. This would appear to be unlikely given the lack of other postholes defining the east end and the probability that the door would not have been located facing to the north. Structure 1 featured a stone-packed drain (F426) along its western wall. This feature produced the majority of the medieval pottery recovered from the site and these may have been deliberately placed to supplement the rubble for the drain.
- 8.6** Only Structure 2 can be regarded as presenting a complete plan and this is the smallest structure measuring 3.3m by 3.0m. There must be a possibility that postholes F436 and F418 held a ridge pole. There was no evidence to indicate the position of an entrance.
- 8.7** Structure 3 was defined by four postholes giving a size of 3.0m by 2.5m, positioned over a shallow sub-rectangular hollow (F420) which continued to the south. It is most probable that the southern extent of the structure had been lost to modern terracing and that a further pair of postholes were present enclosing the hollow. The dimensions of this building could have been up to 5.0m by 3.0m (although the dimensions of the hollow were smaller at 3.5m by 2m). The fill of the hollow produced three pottery sherds of 11th-12th century date.
- 8.8** Structure 3 appears to be a building of sunken-floored type, which is regarded as common feature of early medieval period settlements up until the 10th century in Britain, but is a type largely absent from the archaeological record in Devon and regarded generally as rare in South-West England (Hamerow 2002; Webster 2008). However, several sites have shown that this type of structure exists later in the medieval period (see Table 3). On the east side of Dartmoor at Houndtor three structures described as sunken-floored huts, were arranged in a row and pre-dated Longhouse 1 (Beresford 1979). Each measured 4m by 2m with the structure indicated by the hollow and postholes and slots; two of them had evidence for hearths. These small structures are interpreted as summer shielings providing temporary accommodation for herders (Beresford 1979; Fox 2012). The building of the longhouse is dated to 13th – 14th century (Allan 1994; Henderson and Weddell 1994) meaning that the shielings are earlier.

Site	Dimensions	Date	Notes
Hill Farm, Dalwood, Structure 1	5.0m x 3.40m	11th – 12th century	Current site –partial plan only
Hill Farm, Dalwood, Structure 2	3.3m x 3.0m	11th – 12th century	Current site –full plan
<i>Sunken-floored buildings in Devon and Cornwall</i>			
Hill Farm, Dalwood, Structure 3	3.0m x 2.5m ?5.0m x 3.0m (extrapolated) Hollow = 3.5m x 2.0m	11th – 12th century	Current site – ?partial plan only
Houndtor (x 3), Manaton, Dartmoor	4m x 2.1m	Pre-13th century	Shielings – transhumance huts
Exwell Barton, Powderham	6m x 4m	13th – 14th century	Corn-drying barn
Davidstow Moor, Cornwall	3m x 2m	15th – 16th century	Transhumance hut - turf built – no postholes
Stencoose, St Agnes, Cornwall	5.8m x 5.5m	5th – 10th century	Transhumance hut - no postholes - ?open-sided

Table 3: Summary of structures 1-3 and other medieval sunken-floored buildings from Devon and Cornwall

- 8.9** At Exwell Barton, near Kennford, a sunken-floored ancillary building was located adjacent to a contemporary dwelling, possibly of longhouse type, although the full plan was not revealed (Mudd and Joyce 2014). The ancillary building was rectangular in plan and measured 6m by 4m with a kiln at one end indicating that it was a corn-drying barn. Pottery dated the farmstead to the 13th – 14th century (Allan 2014).
- 8.10** Davidstow Moor on the north side of Bodmin Moor, Cornwall was the site of a World War II airfield. Excavations prior to the construction of the airfield exposed dozens of archaeological features, mostly of prehistoric date, but also a sunken-floored structure. The structure measured 3m by 2m and appeared to have been turf built (Christie and Rose 1987). In size, shape and isolated location it has been compared with the many transhumance huts recognised on Bodmin Moor (see Rose 1994, 80-83). Similar comparisons have been made with a slightly sunken-floored early medieval building at Stenscoose near St Agnes, Cornwall (Jones 2000-1), although this may have been open-sided and certainly does not compare well with Structure 3 at Hill Farm.
- 8.11** The post-built structures at Hill Farm would almost certainly have been of single cell type with wattle and daub walls and a thatched roof. Domestic dwellings would feature a hearth near the centre of the room. The simple architecture of the proposed structures appears to have more in common with what might be expected of the Late Saxon period than with rural settlements of the subsequent medieval period. The Hill Farm structures are small by comparison to medieval longhouses and barns known from rural settlements, the lower levels of which are typically of stone construction (e.g. Beresford 1979; see also Fox 2012, fig. 5.2). In the west of Cornwall a hamlet of stone longhouses was constructed as early as the 10th century at Mawgan Porth (Bruce-Mitford 2007).
- 8.12** With little remaining of internal features and finds generally limited to pottery the function of the three buildings is difficult to ascertain. It is not certain that all three were occupied simultaneously, but a cluster of buildings would be regarded as typical of the period. The bounds of the settlement are clearly defined in all directions except the south where there may have been further structures, now lost to modern terracing. Structure 2 was small and may have served as storage, although it is no smaller than

the temporary residences for transhumance discussed above. Structure 3 is also smaller than Structure 1, certainly in regard to width, and the sunken floor yielded little to suggest domestic activity, but may have served to provide dry storage on a suspended floor. In this regard this may be an earlier unheated version of the corn-drying barn at Exwell Barton. Structure 1 has the best, albeit weak, claim for a dwelling, although it is small (5m by 3.4m), even Anglo-Saxon houses typically measure 8-10m long by 4-5m wide (Hamerow 2012). In addition, problematical is the position of the drain which is unusual for a dwelling, being located so tight to the end wall that it cut the post pit of the southwest corner post. In later buildings a drain is often positioned under the hearth and this would suggest a hearth close to the end wall which certainly would have required a chimney which would not be present in a building of this date. Unheated medieval buildings with drains are often interpreted as byres, although once again the position is unusual, as in the case of a byre the drain would be expected to be central to the structure.

- 8.13** The finds assemblage was dominated by unglazed coarsewares of 11th-12th century date. While the medieval pottery assemblage is not unique it is locally significant and the clear evidence for associated structures has no direct parallels from Devon. Eight worked flints were certainly residual within medieval and later contexts and a sherd of prehistoric pottery is also probably residual, although together these finds further support the findings of earlier field walking of prehistoric activity in the area.
- 8.14** There is no expectation that lower status rural settlements in Late Saxon or post-Conquest times would be enclosed. Gardiner (2011) has noted that in the 10th and 11th centuries farmsteads were often located in the angles of ditched field boundaries, which matches well the situation prevailing at Hill Farm.
- 8.15** Evidence for metal working was recovered, principally from a short section of truncated gully (F425) located at the western extent of the site. Further fragments of metal working residues were recovered from an adjacent field boundary ditch (F424) and a large fragment of slag had been incorporated into the rubble fill of the probable drain in Structure 1.
- 8.16** Residues comprised c. 2.8kg of probable tap slag, iron fragments including hammerscale and 1.4kg of furnace bottom or lining. Associated charcoal was also recovered. All residues were recovered from contexts representing dumped waste, or, in the case of F426 represented repurposing of the slag as rubble. None of the residues recovered were from their primary or *in situ* context.
- 8.17** The residues are evidence of both iron smelting and probable smithing. Smelting during this period was most likely carried out using small scale slag-pit type furnaces. It is uncommon for slag and used furnace lining to travel far from the production site and the hearth and smelting furnace(s) were probably located in close proximity to gully F245. It is possible that there is some survival of these features outside of the area stripped. However it is also likely that, if shallow, they have been completely removed by ploughing.

9. CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1** No archaeological features related to the prehistoric activity in the area were observed. Plough truncation had removed all but the deepest cut features surviving in the natural subsoil.

- 9.2** The archaeological remains uncovered to the south of Hill Farm appear to represent part of a small rural settlement or farmstead most likely dating from the 11th to mid-12th century. Dating is derived from the pottery assemblage which also shows that activity related to the features could have started in the mid-10th century. The presence of post pipes indicates that the posts rotted *in situ* and that the structures were probably not demolished when abandoned.
- 9.3** The site is located on high land to the northwest of the Axe Valley and west of the Yarty a tributary of the Axe. The settlement appears to have comprised at least three small post-built buildings, set within a series of small paddocks. The structures are unlikely to have been dwellings and were most probably ancillary, to the north, of a now lost farmstead dwelling. In addition, small-scale industry, probably related to activities at the farmstead, was carried out in the vicinity in the form of iron smelting and smithing.
- 9.4** The period of this site is under-represented in the archaeological record from Devon and good comparisons to aid interpretation have not been found. Many such sites will have continued to become established farmsteads building on and removing much of the earlier evidence. The current site appears to have been short-lived and not until the mid-19th century was a farmstead established again in close proximity.

10. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

- 10.1** The finds, paper and digital archive is currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd, at 4 Halthaies Workshops, Bradninch, near Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ. The archive will be offered to the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, under the reference number **RAMM 14/34**, but if they are unable to accept this, then it will be dealt with under their current accession policy.
- 10.2** An online OASIS entry has been completed, using the unique identifier **235465**, which includes a digital copy of this report.

11. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 11.1** The work was commissioned by Mr David Dare. The site works were carried out by Philip Clarke, Alex Farnell, Chris Caine, Abigail Brown and Jon Hall. The illustrations for this report were prepared by Elisabeth Patkai. The collaborative role of Steve Reed, Devon HET Archaeology Officer is duly acknowledged.

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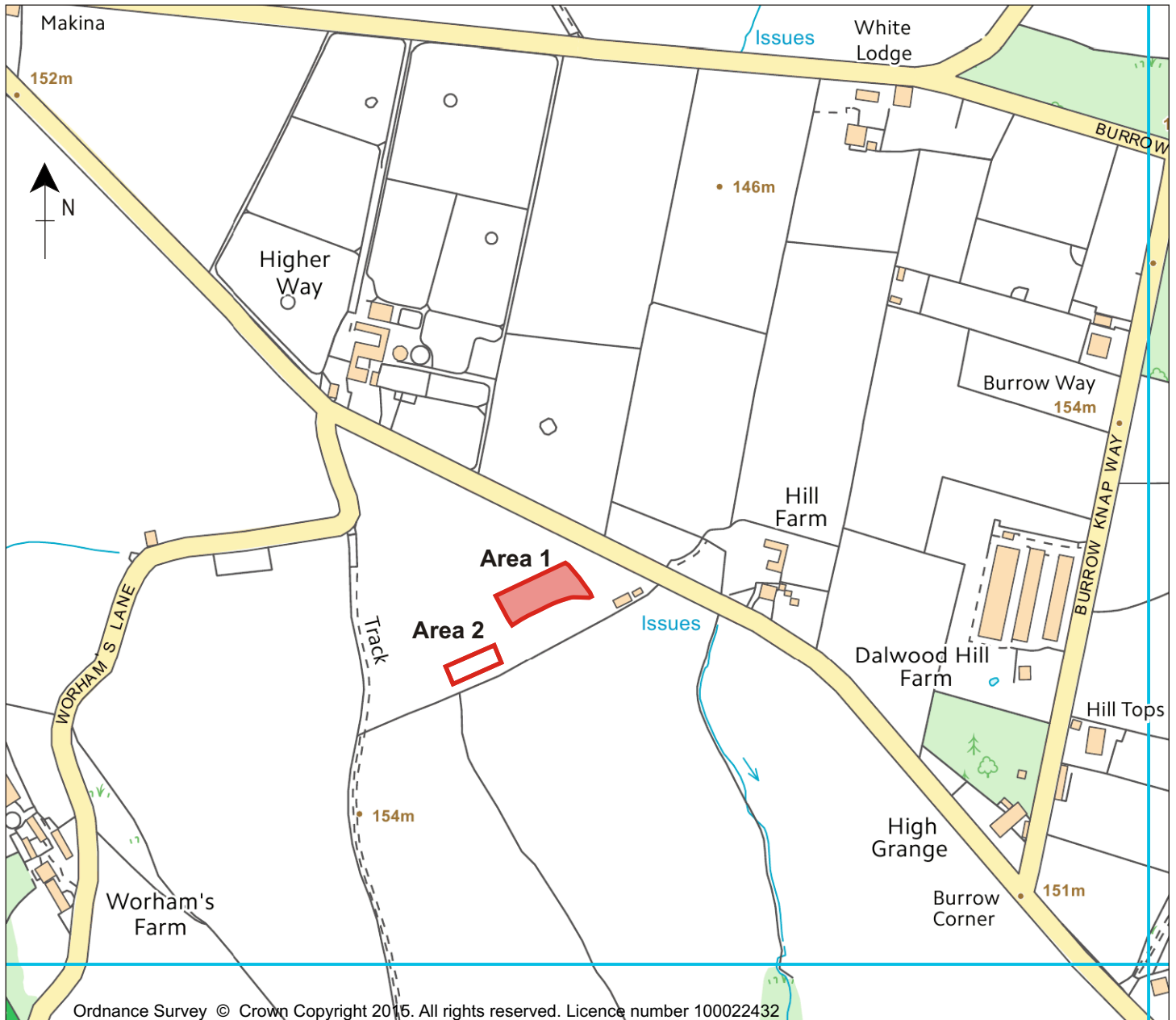
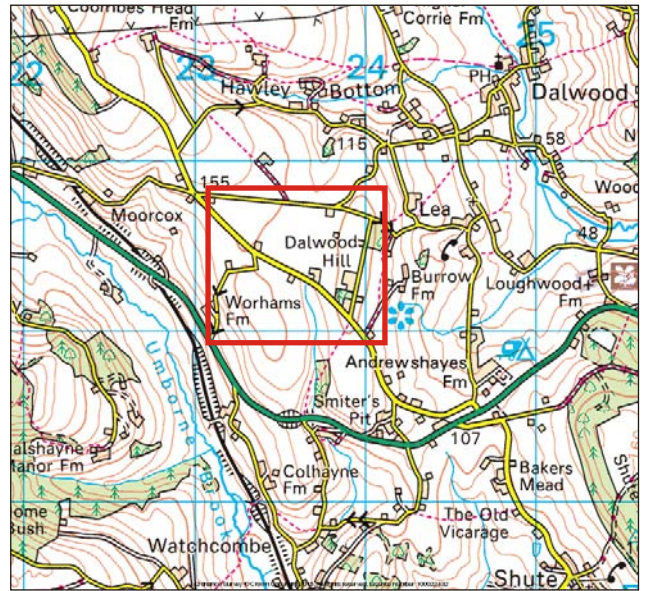
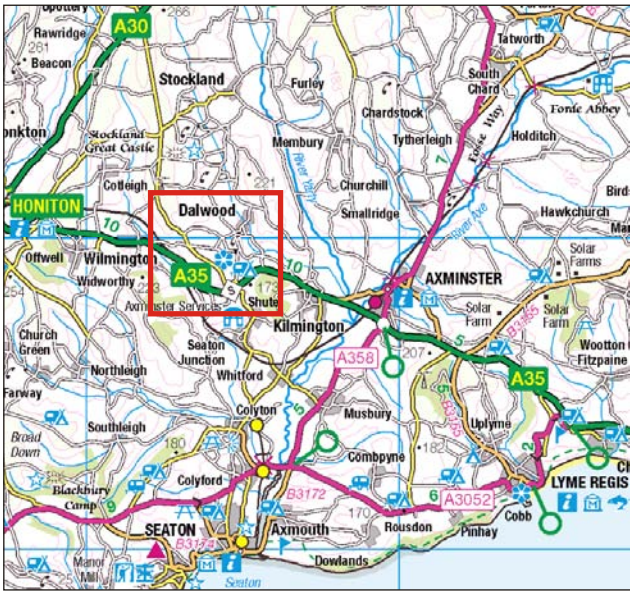
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Historic Maps Consulted

Dalwood Parish Tithe Map of 1840 and apportionment of 1845

Shute Parish Tithe Map of 1844 and apportionment of 1841

Ordnance Survey 25-inch Devon Sheet LXXI.3, published 1889.



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Land South of Hill Farm, Dalwood, Near
Kilmington, Devon

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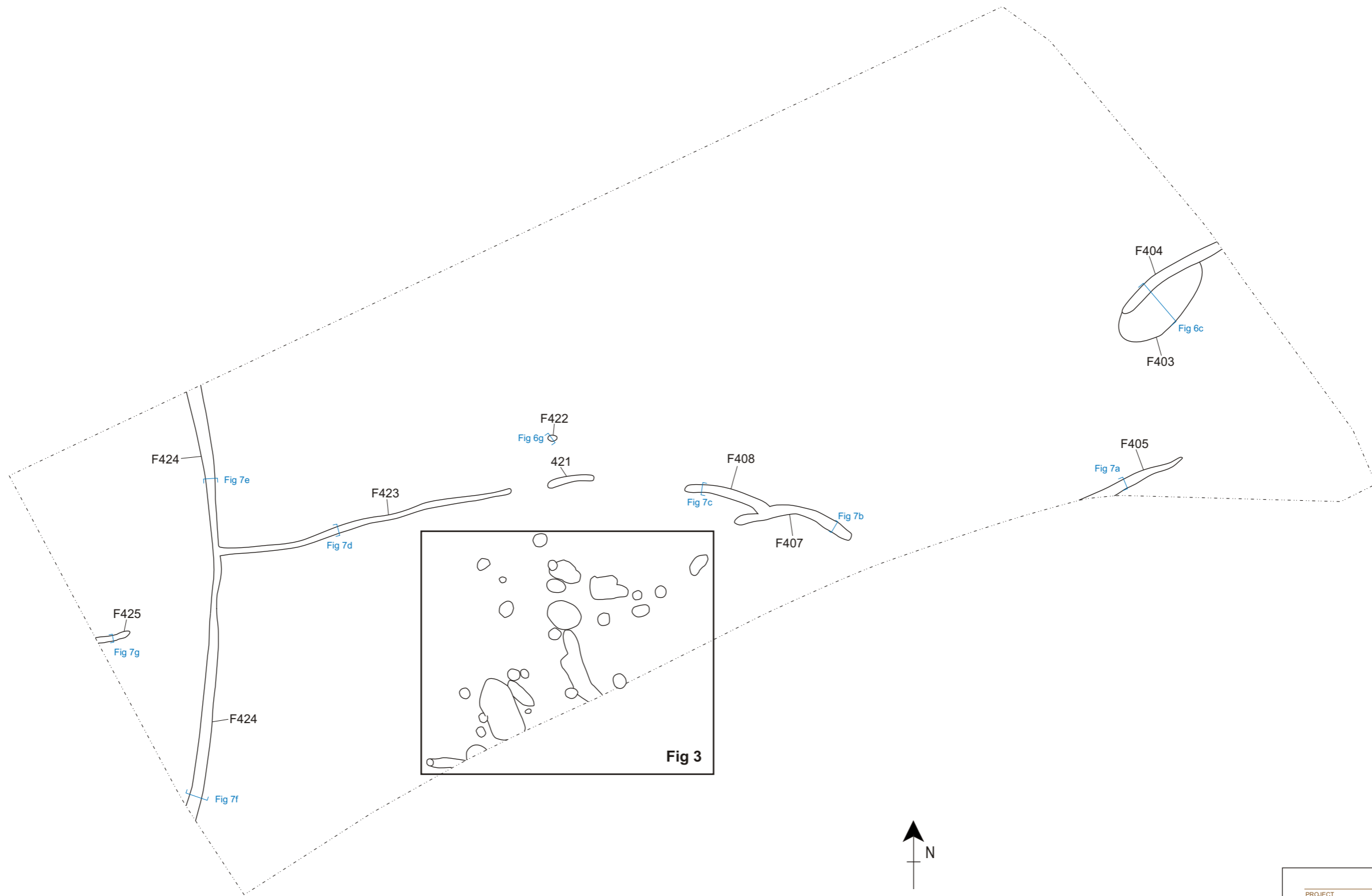
 Areas investigated


Fig. 1: Site location

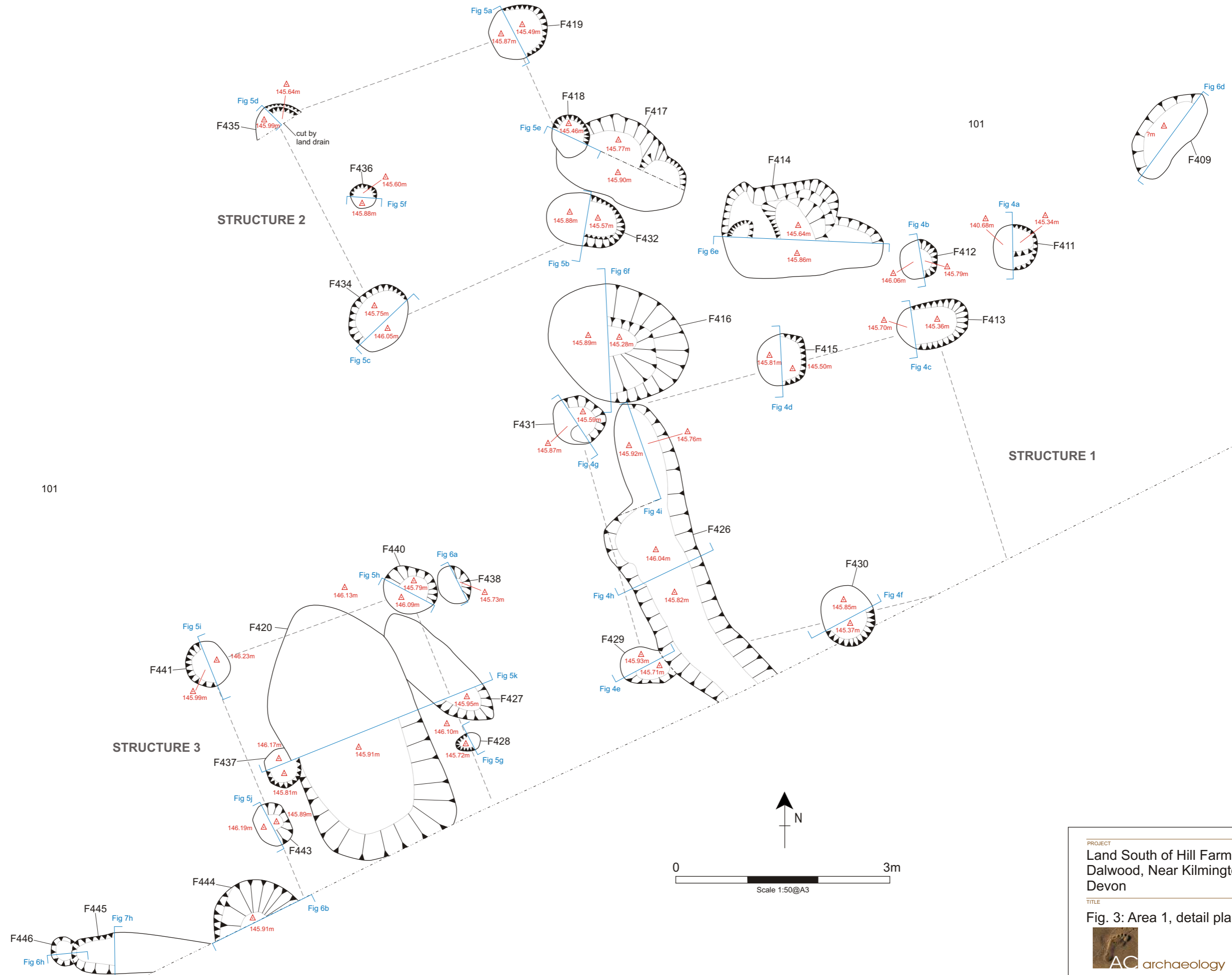




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 Fig. 2: Plan of Area 1



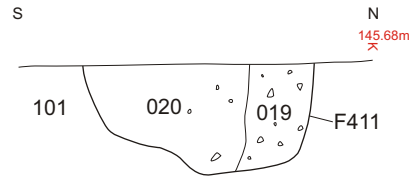


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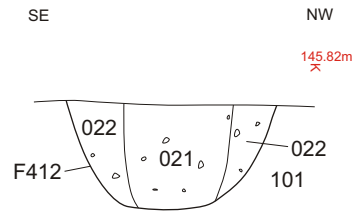
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 Fig. 3: Area 1, detail plan

AC archaeology

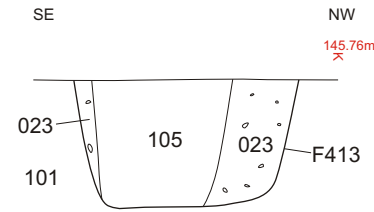
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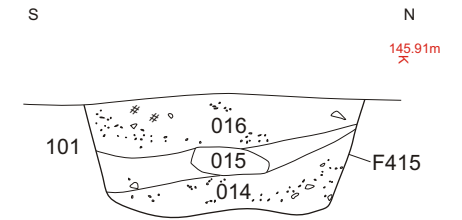
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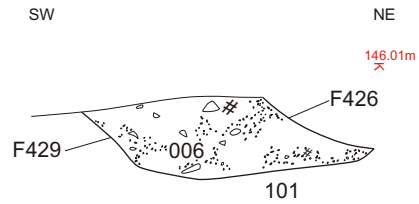
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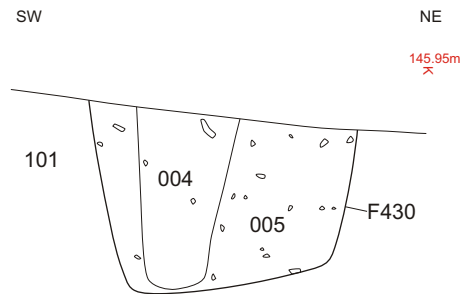
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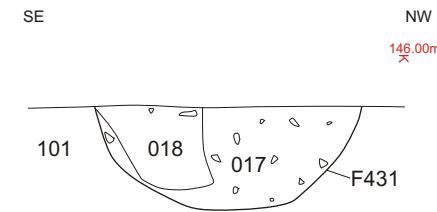
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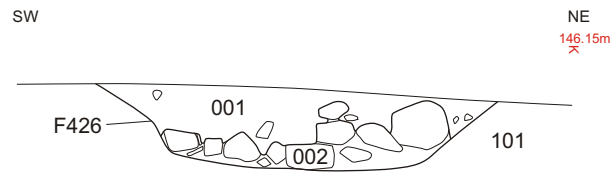
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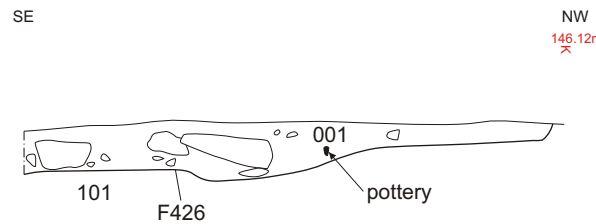
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h) Section of F426



i) Section of F426



Key to all sections

Stones

Charcoal

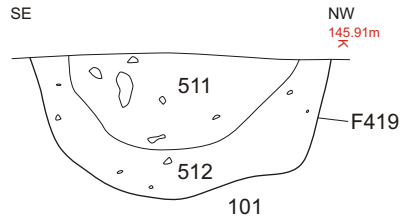


PROJECT
 Land South of Hill Farm,
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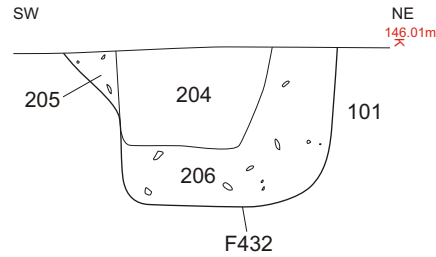
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 Fig. 4: Area 1, Structure 1,
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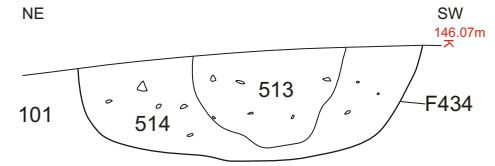
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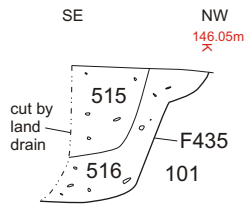
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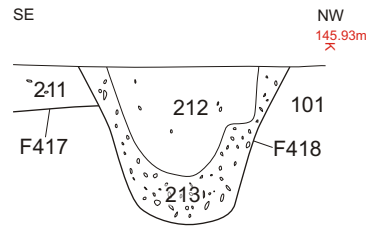
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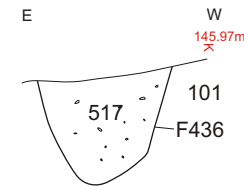
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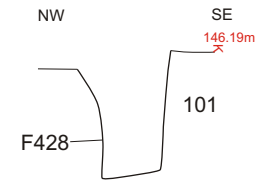
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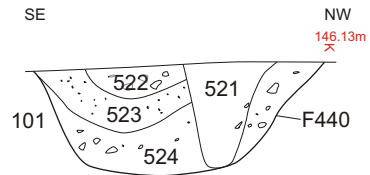
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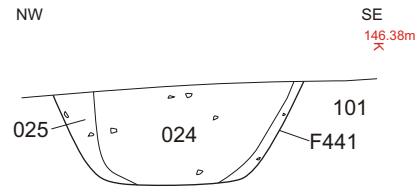
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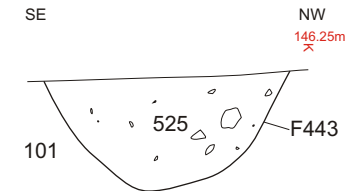
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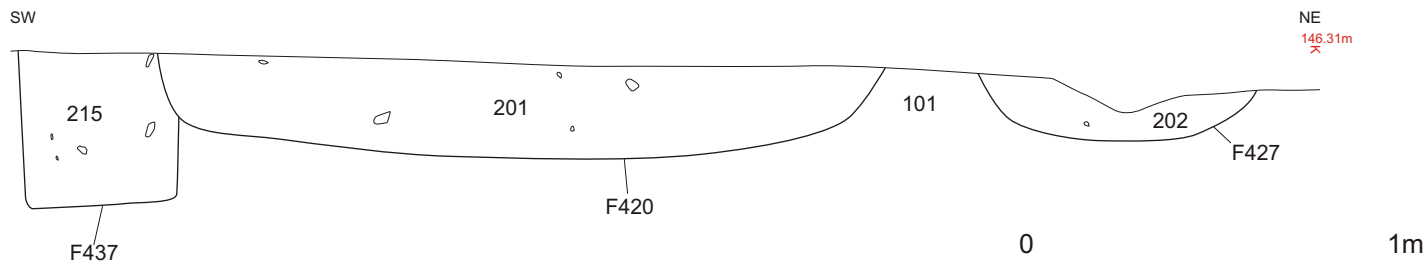
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j) Section of F443



k) Section of F337, F420 and F427

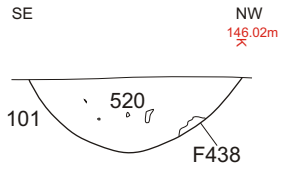


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Land South of Hill Farm,
Dalwood, Near Kilmington,
Devon

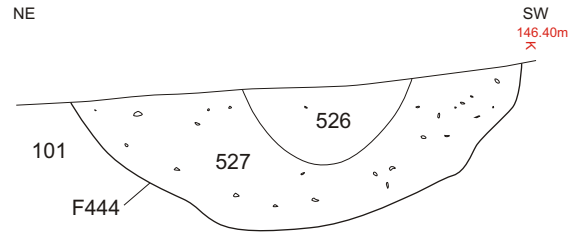
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Fig. 5: Area 1, structures 2
and 3, sections



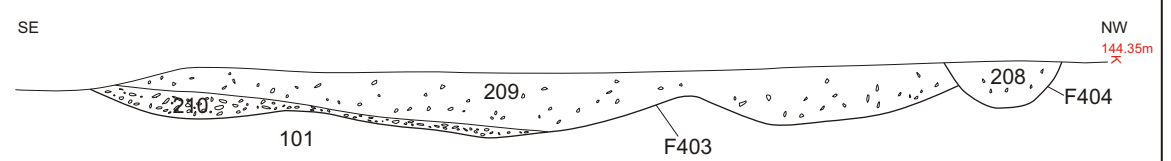
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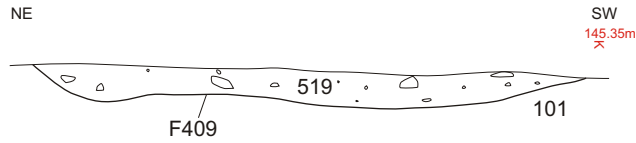
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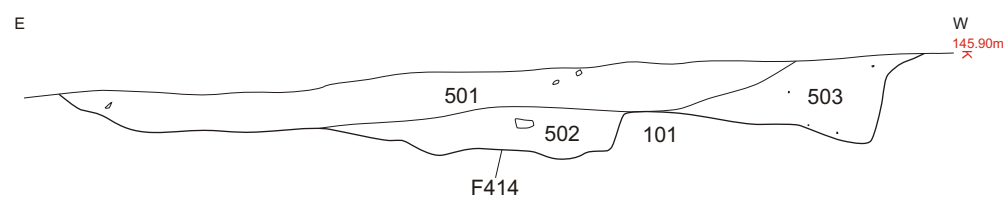
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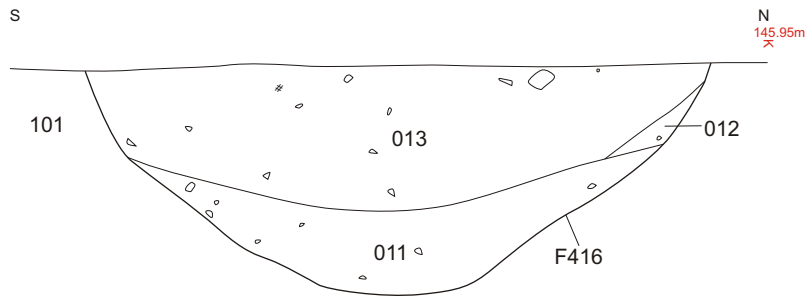
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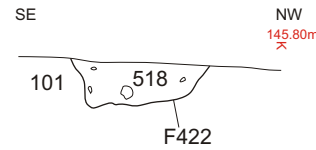
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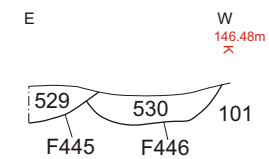
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g) Section of F422



h) Section of F445 and F446



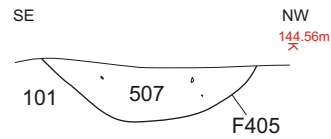
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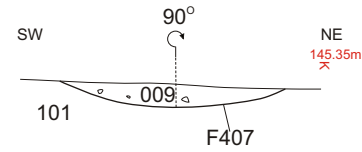
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Fig. 6: Area 1, pit features,
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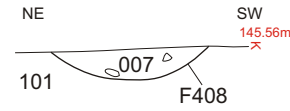
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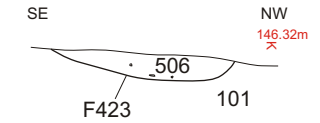
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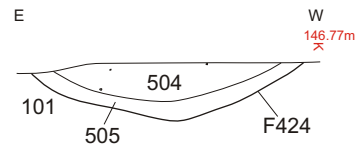
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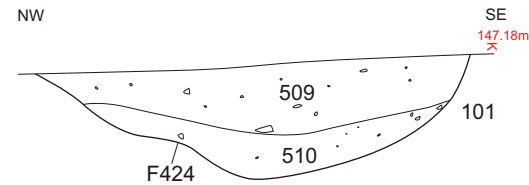
d) Section of F423



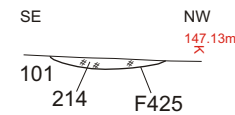
e) Section of F424



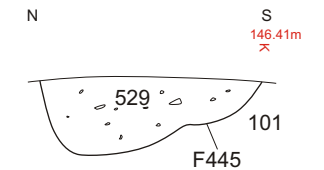
f) Section of F424



g) Section of F425



h) Section of F445



PROJECT
Land South of Hill Farm,
Dalwood, Near Kilmington,
Devon

TITLE
Fig. 7: Area 1, gully
features, sections



Plate 1: Area 1, looking southeast



Plate 2: Area 1, structures 1-3 and pit F416, looking south



Plate 3: Area 1, south-facing section of posthole F430 (scale 0.3m)



Plate 4: Area 1, east-facing section of pit F416 (scale 1m)



Plate 5: Area 1, ditches F423 and F424, looking southwest



Plate 6: Area 1, Gully F425, looking west (scale 1m)

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