

**Archaeological monitoring and excavation
on the EDF Energy Networks cable route,
Little Clacton, Essex
July-August 2009**



**report prepared by
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**on behalf of
Carillion Utility Services**

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Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Archaeological background	1
4	Aim	2
5	The cable route and project methodology	2
6	Results	3
7	Finds	
7.1	The fired clay, slag, ironwork and clay tobacco-pipe <i>by Nina Crummy</i>	6
7.2	The pottery <i>by Howard Brooks and Stephen Benfield</i>	8
7.3	The ceramic building material and glass <i>by Howard Brooks</i>	10
8	Discussion	10
9	Archive deposition	12
10	Acknowledgements	12
11	References	12
12	Glossary	13
	Figures	after p 14
	EHER summary sheet	

List of plates and figures

Plate 1:	general view of Area 2.	front cover
Plate 2:	extract from Chapman and André map of 1777.	11
Fig 1	Site location.	
Fig 2	Detail of Area 1, showing excavated features.	
Fig 3	Detail of the middle part of Area 2, showing excavated features.	
Fig 4	Detail of the east of Area 2, showing excavated features.	
Fig 5	Detail of Area 3, showing excavated features.	
Fig 6	Detail of the east of Area 6, showing excavated features.	
Fig 7	Detail of the west of Area 6, showing excavated features.	
Fig 8	Differential quality of machine-stripping.	
Fig 9	Sections.	

1 Summary

An 11 km-long cable was laid by the contractor from Sackett's Grove Caravan Park (Clacton-on-Sea) to Cook's Green (Little Clacton). For most of this route, the cable was laid along existing roads or in existing ducts. Where the cable crossed open fields, ie for 1.7km of the route, the stripping of the easement was monitored by the Colchester Archaeological Trust. Where monitoring revealed archaeological features, these were excavated and recorded.

Evidence for prehistoric occupation consisted of an Iron Age ditch, and a residual Iron Age loomweight fragment. There were no Romano-British finds.

The most important archaeological feature was the site of a small, medieval rectangular structure with a burnt patch which was either a hearth or the base of an oven. It is not clear whether the structure was domestic or agricultural in function, or whether it was permanently or only occasionally occupied. An adjacent, right-angled gully appeared to be part of a similar medieval structure.

Two ditches forming part of an adjacent cropmark site were excavated where they crossed the easement. One was undatable, but the other was probably of post-medieval date and had been infilled within living memory.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

2.1 This is the archive report on archaeological monitoring and excavation along 1.7km of the route of an 11 km-long electricity cable installed by Carillion Utility Services (CUS) on behalf of EDF Energy Networks from Sackett's Grove Caravan Park, Clacton-on-Sea (NGR TM 15239 14718), to Cook's Green, Little Clacton (NGR TM 19181 18887). The part monitored by CAT was from Centenary Way (NGR TM 17481 18199 to Cook's Green (NGR TM 19066 18974).

2.2 An archaeological desk-based assessment commissioned by EDF Energy Networks and written by Museum of London Archaeology (MoLAS) reported that there was a high potential for archaeological deposits to be discovered along the cable route, especially where its planned route would cut through open fields (O'Goreman 2009). Therefore, CUS consulted the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management (HEM) team on the archaeological implications of the installation of this cable. The HEM team recommended that archaeological work should be undertaken on some parts of the cable route during the stripping process. The HEM team recommendation was in line with the advice given in *Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning* (DoE 1990), and was formalised in a brief which described the required archaeological work (HEM 2009).

2.3 In response to the HEM team brief (HEM 2009), CAT prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which described CAT proposals to carry out the archaeological work according to the brief (CAT 2009).

2.4 Apart from following the brief (HEM 2009) and the WSI (CAT 2009), the fieldwork and reporting stages of this project mirror standards and practices contained in the *CAT Policy and procedures* (CAT 2008), the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IfA 2008b), and English Heritage's *Management of research projects in the historic environment* (MoRPHE 2006), and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14).

2.5 The archaeological work was carried out on behalf of CUS by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) between the 28th July and the 28th August 2009. Post-excavation work was carried out in October-December 2009. The project was monitored by Mr Adrian Gascoyne of the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team.

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background utilises the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held by Essex County Council, at County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex, including the Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) by MoLAS (O'Goreman 2009).

The DBA concluded that there was the potential for the survival of archaeological remains relating to the early occupation of this area. The topography, geology, nearby watercourses and access to the coast would have been conducive to settlement (O'Goreman 2009).

A number of cropmark sites, identified from aerial photographs by the National Mapping Programme, are located within the vicinity of the cable route (O'Goreman 2009, fig 3). Two sets of cropmarks were crossed by the cable route. These include rectilinear cropmarks to the south of Cook's Green Farm (EHER no 2980), interpreted as potential Iron Age or Romano-British enclosures and/or field systems (Fig 1), and one linear feature and some possible pits to the west of Oak House Farm in the field directly north of Centenary Way (EHER no 16988).

A field-walking survey undertaken by LAS in 1998 prior to the construction of Oakwood Business Park, approximately 140m to the south of the cable route, recovered three pieces of worked flint, a sherd of Roman grey ware pottery, nine sherds of medieval pottery, and 29 fragments of medieval/late medieval tile (Fig 1).

Although the date of the creation of the parish of Little Clacton is unknown, it must have been in existence by 1286 because a charter of that date mentions 'Great Clacton' for the first time, presumably to differentiate it from Little Clacton (Jacobs 2002, 8). The main settlement of Little Clacton grew up around the Church of St James, which is approximately 1km to the north-west of the cable route.

The cable route is shown as open fields on the Little Clacton Tithe map of 1840 (O'Goreman 2009, fig 6).

4 Aim

The specific aim of the archaeological monitoring was to preserve, by record, the archaeological deposits uncovered by the topsoil-stripping for the easement, and by the digging of the cable trench where the cable route crossed open fields (ie in CAT Areas 1-6; Fig 1).

5 The cable route and project methodology (Figs 1, 8)

- 5.1** The topsoil was stripped off by the contractor along a 10m-wide easement. Within the easement, the contractor (CUS) excavated a deep trench into which the ducting for the cable was laid.
- 5.2** The depth to which topsoil was stripped along the line of the easement varied. In some places, topsoil was left in place, thus reducing the opportunity for any worthwhile archaeological monitoring (Fig 8).
- 5.3** CAT officers carried out appropriate monitoring, excavation and recording during the topsoil-stripping and the contractor's excavation of the cable trench in the specified areas (section 5.4 below).
- 5.4** The part of the cable route on which there was a requirement for archaeological monitoring (all in the parish of Little Clacton) was as follows. It extended from Centenary Way (TM 17376 18131) in a north-westerly direction across open fields (Fig 1; Area 6). It then crossed Thorpe Road to the south of Oak House Farm (Fig 1; Area 5) and continued in a north-easterly direction to Cook's Green Farm (Fig 1; Areas 3-4). At Cook's Green Farm, the cable route continued in a north-easterly direction (Fig 1; Area 2) until it joined the Holland Road, after which it followed the south side of the road before crossing to its north side and continuing towards the existing electricity substation (Fig 1; Area 1).
- 5.5** There was no requirement for archaeological monitoring where the cable route followed the line of existing roads or was laid in existing ducts, eg from Sackett's Grove Caravan Park (NGR TM 15239 14718) to Harpers Way (TM 15239 15329), Clacton-on-Sea; this area is not shown on Figure 1.
- 5.6** No monitoring was possible on the cable route between the A133 roundabout and Centenary Way because the cable had already been installed; this area is not shown on Figure 1. However, all the contractor's joint/cable pull pits here were excavated entirely within the existing service trenches, and, therefore, had no archaeological impact.

5.7 Other details of the methodology are given in the WSI (CAT 2009).

6 Results

Area 1 (Figs 1-2, 9)

The topsoil-stripping in the 150m-long Area 1 revealed natural ground (light orange sandy clay, with patches of gravel at the eastern end). The stripped surface was very smooth, making for easy observation of archaeological features.

The contexts removed by machine in all the areas were upper and lower ploughsoils (L1, L2). L1 was silty and typically 150mm thick; L2 had a higher clay content and was typically 250mm thick.

Two archaeological features were excavated in Area 1 (Fig 2). These were wheel-rut F2 and undated ditch F1. Charcoal deposit F3 was the result of a modern fire, as the farmer subsequently informed us. F1 contained no finds. Its fill was a firm silty clay similar to the natural clay, and contained lenses of charcoal. It may have been a backfilled field ditch.

Agricultural activity had left numerous scars in the natural clay, ranging from thin plough-scars to deeper, wider wheel-ruts. Most of the wheel-ruts were aligned north-south, whereas the smaller plough-scars mainly followed the line of the field boundary located directly to the south of the easement. Sections were excavated through a number of the wider furrows (eg F2). Their frequently shallow profile, and the absence of finds, confirmed that they were indeed the result of modern agricultural practices, ie ploughing.

Area 1 - context list

Context	Description	Finds	Date
F1	ditch	-	?
F2	wheel-rut	-	modern
F3	charcoal deposit (modern fire pit?)	-	modern
L1	upper ploughsoil	-	modern
L2	lower ploughsoil	medieval, post-medieval and modern pottery, brick, tile, iron, glass, clay tobacco-pipe	modern/ post- medieval
L3	natural	-	-

Area 2 (Figs 1, 3-4, 9)

Most of Area 2 had been neatly stripped down to natural, with the exception of its north-eastern and the north-western ends where a thin layer of ploughsoil remained.

The cropmark plot shows that the line of the easement coincided with two cropmarks (Fig 1). One is a single cropmark line (presumably a ditch), obliquely crossing the easement towards the eastern end of Area 2 (Fig 4). There was no sign of this feature in the easement, despite the ground being well stripped. The other cropmark is of a double-ditched trackway heading north towards the centre of Area 2. This coincided with two features excavated in the easement, ie F11 and F17. There can be no doubt that the double-ditched cropmark and F11/F17 are the same features. The plotted position of all unexcavated cropmarks is, of course, an approximation. In the event, the plot of the cropmarks south of Area 2 only had to be moved 5m to the east to coincide with the excavated features. Figure 1 is, therefore, a corrected cropmark plot. (The positions of the cropmarks near the Telstar Nurseries in Area 3 on Fig 1 were not adjusted, since there was no reason to do so.)

Ditch F17 was undated. It is not known when ditch F11 was dug, but the current landowner remembers it as an open feature, and slate was recovered from its upper fill, which also contained one residual sherd of 12th-/13th-century pottery. Given the lack of obvious earlier silts in the excavated section of F11 (Fig 9), the conclusion is that F11 is probably of post-medieval date, and has only recently been infilled. The cropmark plot indicates that the two ditches are contemporary and are component parts of the same double-ditched trackway. Therefore, the undated F17 is also probably of post-medieval date. The remainder of the cropmarks plotted to the south

of Area 2 appeared to form a coherent pattern with F11/F17, especially the double-ditched trackway approximately at right-angles to F11/F17 and about 50m to the south of the easement. There is good reason to assume, therefore, that at least some parts of the cropmarks plotted to the south of Area 2 (EHER no 2980) are of post-medieval origin.

Apart from the double-ditched trackway F11/F17, there was evidence for a small medieval building in the middle of Area 2. This consisted of a series of gullies and post-holes, the fills of which were a dry, hard, medium grey silty-clay with frequent charcoal, fragments of structural clay, and 12th-/13th-century sherds.

Gullies F6 and F7/F8, the western edges of which were cut by ditch F11, were probably foundation trenches for a wooden structure (Fig 3). Post-holes F9 and F10 found within gully F7/F8 were almost certainly contemporary, and were presumably part of the structure of the building. Compared with the fills of the gullies, the post-holes had distinctly darker fills, due to the rotting of the timbers or the tumbling in of topsoil when the posts were removed. The presence of post-holes F9 and F10 in gully F7/F8 indicates that originally there may have been more post-holes along the line of the gullies. If this is correct, then it would rule out a sleeper-beam construction for the walls of the building.

An entrance to this structure was represented by the eastward-curving terminal of gully F7, which mirrored the eastern terminal of gully F6 just over 2m to the south. Post-hole F18, on the same alignment but slightly off-centre in the entrance, was probably associated with a door or a door frame. F7 also contained residual fragments of an Iron Age loomweight.

A patch of natural clay (F15) in the centre of the building had been baked orange to a depth of 10cm below excavated site level. This may have been the position of a hearth; an alternative interpretation, based on the discovery of fragments of baked clay in the surrounding features, is that it was the base of an oven. An L-shaped gully with charcoal in its fill (F14), adjacent to F15, may have been a flue connected to the oven or may be coincidentally next to F15 and not associated with it.

Less than half a metre to the north of gully F7/F8 lay another L-shaped gully (F12/F13) which contained medieval pottery, and structural clay fragments. This mirrored the plan of gully F7/F8, but was shallower and more difficult to define towards the northern edge of the easement. It may have been truncated by ploughing. This feature appears to represent the corner of a structure resembling that defined by gullies F6 and F7/F8.

A Y-shaped gully (F19) lay 2m to the west of ditch F17. F19 had two terminal ends within the easement, and continued beyond its southern edge. F19 had a grey/brown fill, with daub and 12th-/13th-century potsherds. To the north of F19 and possibly continuing the alignment of one of its terminals, was a narrow, shallow north-south aligned gully (F16). This was 3.4m long, with a charcoally fill but no pottery. Its function is unclear.

The bones of a young pig were observed in a shallow pit near to the northern end of ditch F17. There were other modern pig burials further to the west (not planned). For health and safety reasons, these features were not excavated.

Two archaeological features were excavated at the eastern end of Area 2 (Fig 4), ie the terminus of a ditch (F4) and a post-hole (F5). Ditch F4 contained charcoal, daub, prehistoric pottery, and slag. This was the only prehistoric feature revealed on the cable route. It is of interest that modern field boundaries follow the alignment of this prehistoric ditch. Post-hole F5 contained no finds or inclusions.

Area 2 - context list

Context	Description	Finds	Date
F4	ditch terminus	prehistoric pottery, structural clay (daub), slag, charcoal	Early Iron Age-Middle Iron Age
F5	post-hole	-	?
F6	gully (structural)	medieval pottery, brick/tile, structural clay	medieval
F7/F8	gully (structural)	medieval pottery, brick, triangular loomweight, structural clay	medieval

F9	post-hole in base of F8	structural clay	medieval
F10	post-hole in base of F7	-	medieval
F11	ditch	medieval pottery, brick/tile	medieval
F12/F13	L-shaped gully (?structural)	structural clay	?medieval
F14	L-shaped gully (?flue)	-	?medieval
F15	base of oven, or hearth	-	?medieval
F16	gully (?structural)	-	?medieval
F17	ditch	slate (not recovered)	post-medieval
F18	post-hole	-	?medieval
F19	Y-shaped gully	medieval pottery, brick, structural clay (daub)	medieval
L1	upper ploughsoil	-	modern
L2	lower ploughsoil	medieval, post-medieval and modern pottery, brick, tile, iron, glass, clay tobacco-pipe	modern/post-medieval
L3	natural	-	-

Area 3 (Figs 1, 5, 8, 9)

There were six archaeological features in Area 3 (Fig 5). A cluster of small pits or post-holes towards the eastern end of Area 3 (F22-F26) and a gully in the middle of Area 3 (F20).

Small pits or post-holes F22-F25 contained medieval potsherds. There were no finds in F26. F20, a right-angled gully, also contained medieval potsherds. F20 was cut by a modern land drain (F21).

Area 3 - context list

Context	Description	Finds	Date
F20	right-angled gully	medieval pottery	medieval
F21	land drain cutting F20	-	modern
F22	small pit or post-hole	medieval pottery	medieval
F23	small pit or post-hole	medieval pottery	?medieval
F24	small pit or post-hole	medieval pottery	medieval
F25	small pit or post-hole	medieval pottery	medieval
F26	small pit or post-hole	-	?medieval
L1	upper ploughsoil	-	modern
L2	lower ploughsoil	medieval, post-medieval and modern pottery, brick, tile, iron, glass, structural clay (daub)	modern/post-medieval
L3	natural	-	-

Area 4 (Figs 1, 8)

Only a very thin layer of topsoil was stripped off here, thus precluding any meaningful observation in Area 4 at the topsoil-stripping stage. Unfortunately the cable trench was subsequently dug and backfilled immediately without archaeological supervision.

Area 5 (Figs 1, 8)

There were no archaeological features in Area 5.

Area 6 (Figs 1, 6-9)

There were four archaeological features in Area 6: two areas of charcoal and burnt clay (F28, F29) towards the eastern end of Area 6 (Fig 6), and a ditch (F27) and a small pit or post-hole (F30) towards the western end of Area 6 (Fig 7). F28 and F29 are interpreted as tree-throw pits, with the charcoal and burning being the result of the burning of the trees either by natural causes or during deliberate tree clearance.

Ditch F27 contained fragments of flowerpot and modern glass, and was clearly a modern field ditch; it continued the line of an existing field boundary to the south (Fig 1).

Area 6 - context list

Context	Description	Finds	Date
F27	ditch	medieval and modern pottery, flowerpot and glass, iron (nails), brick, glass	modern
F28	?tree-throw pit	-	?
F29	?tree-throw pit	-	?
F30	small pit or post-hole	-	undated - ?modern
L1	upper ploughsoil	-	modern
L2	lower ploughsoil	pottery, brick, tile, iron, glass, clay tobacco-pipe	modern/ post- medieval
L3	natural	-	-

7 Finds

7.1 The fired clay, slag, ironwork and clay tobacco-pipe

by Nina Crummy

The assemblage is small and is of Iron Age, medieval and modern date. The modern material consists of two stem fragments from clay tobacco-pipes, two nail shank fragments, a probable gate pivot and a ponyshoe. The nail shanks may be as early as medieval, the other items are modern. The diameter of the stem bore of each clay-pipe stem fragment is very narrow, pointing to a probable Victorian or later date.

A loomweight fragment retaining part of the junction between a face and edge is of the triangular form used from the Middle Iron Age to the first one or two decades of the Roman period, and cannot be more closely dated. Its presence in this assemblage provides evidence for an Iron Age community whose economy included the production of cloth on a warp-weighted loom and the keeping of sheep or goats for wool rather than primarily for meat (Crummy *et al* 2007, 43).

A quantity of medieval structural clay forms the largest element in the assemblage, but the overall amount recovered is small. The clay was originally air-dried but has since been burnt at a high temperature, usually in an oxidising atmosphere but occasionally in a reducing one, and it now has the same appearance as deliberately-fired ceramics, such as loomweights. Such conditions are more likely to have pertained in a clamp-like oven or kiln rather than in the destruction of a large building, with the reduced surfaces created inside the structure, the oxidised ones outside or close to vents. The majority of the fragments are in a sandy clay fabric with a very little fine flint grit; the clay used for five pieces is also iron-rich. Some of the very small pieces with no diagnostic features may possibly come from loomweights, but they have been included here as all were found in association with fragments with moulded external surfaces and/or voids from wattles or riven timber. A fragment from F13 is thin and may come from a vent or opening. Two pieces, one from F7 and one from F8, have a flat reduced surface, and one of these has voids from two wattles that butted tightly up against each other. Close-set wattles also occur on a fragment from F12. Well-preserved voids point to wattles little more than 15 mm in diameter, probably from coppiced wood. A few small fragments of charcoal adhere to some of the surfaces of these voids, but they are at variable alignments rather than *in situ*, showing the collapse of the wattles as they burnt. Voids from riven or sawn timber are also evident on fragments from F7, and one fragment from the same feature has horizontal and vertical voids from both wattles and riven or sawn timber.

A small piece of undiagnostic iron slag probably comes from smithing rather than smelting activity in the vicinity. Although iron ore may be won from the ferruginous sand and gravel beds of the area, this is a slow and time-consuming practice. It has been estimated that in the medieval period at West Runton, Norfolk, 50 cubic metres of the local sand would have had to be dug in order to produce one cubic metre of

either ore nodules or iron pan (Crossley 1981, 30). Iron is perhaps more likely to have been traded into the Clacton area in the form of smith's blanks or billets.

Catalogue

Loomweight

SF 5. (5) F7, gully. Fragment from one face of a triangular loomweight, with a short part of one edge. Height 57 mm, width 54 mm, maximum surviving thickness 33 mm. Weight 66g.

Structural clay

(10) F13, gully. 1) Fragment, in four pieces, probably from an opening. One well-preserved external surface survives, with the opposite face badly spalled. The fabric is a sandy clay with a little fine flint grit, hard-fired to orange-buff and with a reduced core. Maximum dimensions 48 by 54 mm, 21 mm thick. Weight 43 g. 2) Small hard-fired fragment in a sandy clay fabric with a little flint grit. A small part of an original external surface survives. The fabric has fired to a dark grey with small patches of orange-buff, with reduction on the surface as well as internally; it is similar to the fragments from (9) F12. Weight 10g.

(2) F4, ditch. One fragment with part of an original external surface. Weight 9g.

SF 3. (3) F6, gully. Four fragments in an iron-rich hard-fired sandy clay with a little flint grit, fired orange-buff with a slightly darker core. Three have part of an original external surface. Total weight 107g.

SF 4. (4) F7, gully. Five fragments in a sandy clay with a little flint grit, fired orange-buff with some patches of reduction. Two have a small part of an original external surface, of which one has been moulded to form a right angle. 10 by 17 mm. Total weight 69g.

SF 7. (13) F7, gully. Three fragments in a hard-fired sandy clay with a little flint grit. 1) Fragment patchily fired from black to orange. It has two contiguous external surfaces set at right angles, and both horizontal and vertical voids from riven timber and wattles. Maximum dimensions of surfaces 45 by 53 mm, 41 by 48 mm. Weight 93 g. 2) Fragment with external surface and two adjacent voids from riven timber. Weight 26 g. 3) Fragment with void from riven timber. Weight 10g.

SF 8. (14) F7, gully. Seven fragments in a hard-fired sandy clay with a little flint grit. 1) With flat reduced surface and a small patch of orange-buff. Weight 45 g. 2) Fired orange-buff, with an external surface and internal wattle void, 13 mm in diameter. 3-7) Fragments patchily fired from dark grey to orange-buff, some with small parts of external surfaces and wattle voids. Total weight 114 mm.

SF 6. (9) F12, gully. Three fragments in a hard-fired sandy clay with a little fine flint grit. 1) Fragment with an oxidised external surface and reduced core, broken to expose three wattle voids, all set close together. Weight 67 g. Width of best-preserved wattle void varies from 9 to 18 mm. 2) Fragment with reduced external surface and core. Weight 18 g. 3) Internal fragment with part of a wattle void. Weight 12g.

SF 9. (15) F8, gully. Seven fragments. 1-2) Two fragments in a sandy clay with a little fine flint grit, fired to orange. One retains what appears to be a vent, 28 mm in diameter, but it is severely abraded and this may instead be a large wattle void. Total weight 31 g. 3-4) Two fragments similar to 1-2, but with black and buff patches, one has an external surface, the other an external surface or a wattle void. Weight 50 g. 5) Similar fragment, fired dark grey. Weight 26 g. 6) Similar fragment, with a flat reduced surface and orange-buff core with two adjacent wattle voids, both with a diameter of about 15 mm. Weight 149 g. 7) Fragment in an iron-rich fabric, fired orange, and with part of a wattle void. Weight 31g.

(11) F9, post-hole in base of gully F8. Nine fragments of fired sandy clay with a little flint grit and flecks of haematite; seven have part of an original external surface but no other features. Total weight 87g.

Slag

(2) F4, ditch. Small fragment of undiagnostic iron slag. Weight 13 g.

Ironwork

SF 1. (1) L2, post-medieval to modern ploughsoil. Iron plano-convex disc, probably a gate pivot. Diameter 64 mm, 17 mm thick.

SF 2. (1) L2, post-medieval to modern ploughsoil. Fragment from an iron ponyshoe or small horseshoe. Length 64 mm, width 14 mm.

(24) F27, medieval to modern ditch. Two iron nail shanks Lengths 57 and 58 mm.

Clay tobacco-pipe

(1) L2, post-medieval to modern ploughsoil. Plain stem fragment. Length 30 mm; stem bore 1 mm.

(26) L2, post-medieval to modern ploughsoil. Plain stem fragment. Length 42 mm; stem bore 1.5 mm.

7.2 The pottery

by Howard Brooks and Stephen Benfield

Introduction

This is the report on the pottery from the site. This report was written by HB, who thanks SB for dating and commenting on the prehistoric sherds.

Description of pottery

Because of their small number, the prehistoric sherds have not been ascribed to fabric types. For the medieval and later sherds, fabrics present are as follows (after *CAR 7*): Fabric 13 (early medieval sandy ware); Fabric 20 (medieval sandy grey ware); Fabric 21 (sandy orange ware); Fabric 40 (post-medieval red earthenware); Fabric 45 (German stoneware); Fabric 48d (modern ironstone); and Fabric 51b (flowerpot).

Comment

This small but interesting group of pottery (58 sherds, 343g) demonstrates activity on this site in the prehistoric and medieval periods.

Area 2

Ditch F4 at the east end of Area 2 contained two sherds. One dates to the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age, and the other to the Early Iron Age or Middle Iron Age. The collective date of F4 is therefore Early Iron Age or Middle Iron Age. Otherwise the features on Area 2 are securely dated to the medieval period. As some of the sherds are very small and abraded, exact precision in dating is not feasible. The presence of Fabrics 13, 20 and 21 would indicate a date in the 12th or 13th centuries, possibly later.

Area 3

The features on Area 3 are securely dated to the medieval period. As some of the sherds are very small and abraded, exact precision in dating is not feasible. The presence of Fabrics 13, 20 and 21 would indicate a date in the 12th or 13th centuries, possibly later.

Area 6

Ditch F27 on Area 6 contains Fabric 51b flowerpot, which dates its infilling to the 19th or 20th centuries.

Catalogue

Area 2

F4

Finds number 2

5 flint-tempered sherds with orange fabric; one sherd is a bowl rim, 11g. Late Bronze Age-Early Iron Age

1 thick sand-and-flint-tempered sherd with dark grey fabric and dull brown surface, 8g. Early Iron Age

F6

Finds number 3

Fabric 13, 1 sherd, 9g

Finds number 21

Fabric 13, 1 sherd, 6g

F7

Finds number 4

Fabric 13, 9 sherds, 21g

Finds number 5

Fabric 13, 1 sherd, 13g

F8

Finds number 6

Fabric 13, 1 sherd, 20g

Fabric 20, 1 sherd, 29g

F11

Finds number 7

Fabric 13, 2 sherds, 8g

Fabric 21, 2 sherds, 4g

Finds number 8

Fabric 20, 1 sherd, 6g

1 undated grey ware sherd, 4g

F19

Finds number 12

Fabric 13, 1 sherd, 3g

Area 3

F20

Finds number 17

Fabric 13, 6 sherds, 8g

Fabric 20, 1 sherd, 63g

Finds number 18

Fabric 13, 1 sherd, 3g

F22

Finds number 19

Fabric 13, 6 sherds, 7g

Finds number 20

Fabric 21, 1 sherd, 2g

F24

Finds number 22

Fabric 13, 4 sherds, 20g

F25

Finds number 23

Fabric 13, 1 sherd, 6g

Area 6

F27

Finds number 24

Fabric 13, 1 sherd, 5g

Fabric 21, 1 sherd, 5g

Fabric 51b flowerpot, 1 sherd, 1g

Finds number 25

Fabric 13, 1 sherd, 6g

L2

Finds number 1

Fabric 21, 3 sherds from an unrecognised vessel type, 34g

Fabric 40 PMRE, 2 sherds, 20g

Fabric 48d, 1 sherd, 6g

Fabric 51b flowerpot, 1 sherd, 29g

Finds number 16

Fabric 20, 2 sherds, 11g

Finds number 26

Fabric 45, 1 sherd, Early German stoneware (?Langerwehe), 9g

7.3 The ceramic building material and glass

by Howard Brooks

Introduction

This is the report on the ceramic building material (CBM) and glass from the site.

Catalogue

F11

Finds number 7

1 pieces of undated burnt CBM, 35g

Finds number 8

2 pieces of undated burnt CBM, 15g

F27

Finds number 24

1 piece of very modern glass, probably milk bottle, 3g. 20th century

1 undated CBM fragment, 9g.

L2

Finds number 1

1 unusually thick piece from the base of a dark green glass ?wine bottle, 43g. 17th-18th century

2 peg-tile fragments, 62g. Post-medieval

Finds number 16

1 fragment of post-medieval or modern brick, 18g

6 CBM fragments, probably all peg-tile, 30g

8 Discussion

Prehistory

Ditch F4 in Area 2 contained two prehistoric (Early Iron Age-Middle Iron Age) sherds. This demonstrates that there was prehistoric occupation, on an indeterminate scale, to the south of Cook's Green.

Medieval

There were two areas which produced evidence of medieval activity.

In Area 6, the evidence consisted of two residual medieval sherds in ditch F27. Small groups such as this could be derived from manure scatter.

In Area 2, to the south of Cook's Green, included the main area of medieval activity. Here, ditches or gullies defined two rectangular structures. The more complete one measured 4m x 5m internally, but was originally larger; its western edge had been cut by a later ditch. It had an internal hearth or oven, and an entrance in its east side. A right-angled gully to the north of this structure appeared to be a mirror image of the north side of the more complete structure, and may have been part of a similar structure.

These two medieval structures were on the southern edge of Cook's Green. The presence of associated medieval pottery, and of a hearth in the more complete structure, indicates that they were occupied. What is unclear is the extent to which they were domestic or agricultural in function, and whether they were permanently or

only occasionally occupied. There are parallels for these types of structure. Excavations at Stansted Airport in the late 1980s found the remains of a group of up to three rather flimsy-looking medieval rural structures at Molehill Green (Havis & Brooks 2004, 540-45). There, the presence of a hearth, a cooking-pit and abundant domestic pottery demonstrated occupation, but the site of the buildings was only defined by a series of irregular gullies rather than by post-holes. Judging by the ceramic evidence, the Molehill Green site did not survive beyond the 14th century. Reasons for its abandonment may have included the famine of 1315-1322, the Black Death of 1349, and the Peasant's Revolt of 1381, all of which may have contributed to dislocation and abandonment of some rural medieval sites (*ibid*, 545). The ceramic evidence from the Cook's Green sites would support the idea that these structures were only occupied (on whatever basis) in the 12th-14th centuries. Whether they were abandoned for the same reasons as the Molehill Green structures is unproven, but it is nevertheless an attractive hypothesis.

There were other medieval linear features 8m to the west, ie beyond the post-medieval double-ditched trackway F11/F17. However, it is not certain whether these were connected with the two postulated medieval structures.

Post-medieval

The principal feature of this period is the pair of ditches F11 and F17 in Area 2. One was infilled within living memory, and the other, although undated, is almost certainly post-medieval because the two ditches together show convincingly as the cropmark of a double-ditched trackway (Fig 1). Other elements of this cropmark site (EHER no 2980) may also be of post-medieval date, particularly the field boundary and the other double-ditched trackway at right-angles to F11/F17.

F1 in Area 1 and F27 in Area 6 are also recently-infilled field ditches.

Growth and shrinkage of settlement at Cook's Green (Plate 2)

The earliest firmly-dated settlement on Cook's Green is the pair of medieval structures excavated on Area 2. The earliest map evidence (Chapman and André 1777) does not show the Area 2 site, which had been abandoned long before the map was made, perhaps by the later 14th century. Instead, the Chapman and André map shows three houses and/or farms bordering Cook's Green, two on the north side (Plate 2, nos 1 and 2), one on the south side (Plate 2, no 3). For reference, the approximate location of the Area 2 medieval structures is shown (Plate 2, no 4). We have no dating evidence for sites numbered 1-3 (Plate 2, nos 1-3) – they may have been contemporary with the Area 2 site, or they may have been later foundations.

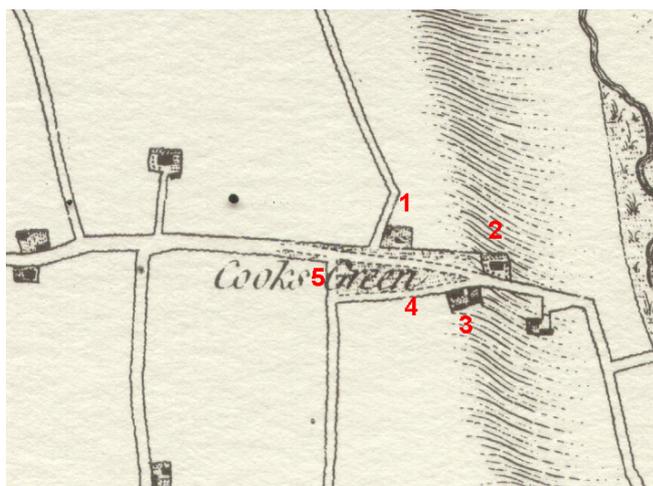


Plate 2: extract from Chapman and André map of 1777.

Today, there are buildings on the two northern sites, but the southern site no longer exists. Instead, Cook's Green Farm (not shown on the Chapman and André map,

but marked as no 5 on Plate 2) occupies a large site on the western edge of the green.

Cook's Green is a good example of a settlement focus which has shrunk and grown in response to economic pressures during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

9 Archive deposition

The paper archive and finds are currently held by CAT at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, but will be permanently deposited with Colchester and Ipswich Museums under accession code COLIM 2009.46.

10 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Carillion Utility Services for commissioning and funding the work. Site work was conducted by A Wightman assisted by C Lister.

The project was monitored by Mr Adrian Gascoyne of the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team.

11 References

Note: all CAT reports, except DBAs (desk-based assessments) are available online at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk> in .pdf format.

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12 Glossary

CBM	ceramic building material
context	on a site, a specific location (especially of finds)
CUS	Carillion Utility Services
Early Iron Age	c 700-c 400 BC
ECC	Essex County Council
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, maintained by Essex County Council
feature	something excavated, ie a wall, a floor, a pit, a ditch, etc
HEM	Historic Environment Management team
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
Late Bronze Age	1000-c 700 BC
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c AD 1500
Middle Iron Age	c 400-100 BC
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
NGR	National Grid Reference
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
post-medieval	after c AD 1500 to c AD 1800
prehistory	the years BC
residual	an earlier find in a later context, eg a Roman coin in a Victorian pit
Roman	the period from AD 43 to AD 410, approximately
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

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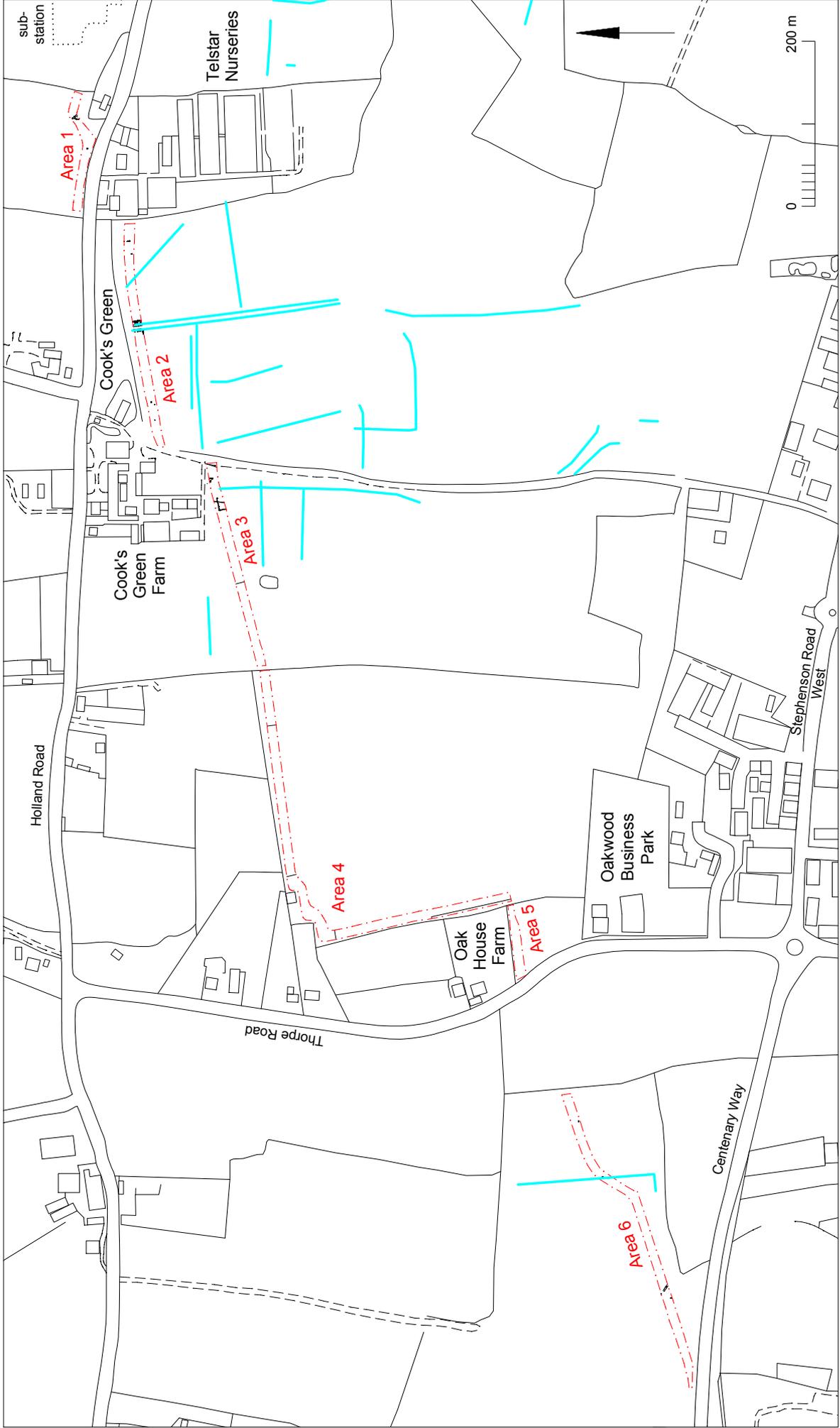
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Date: 18.12.09

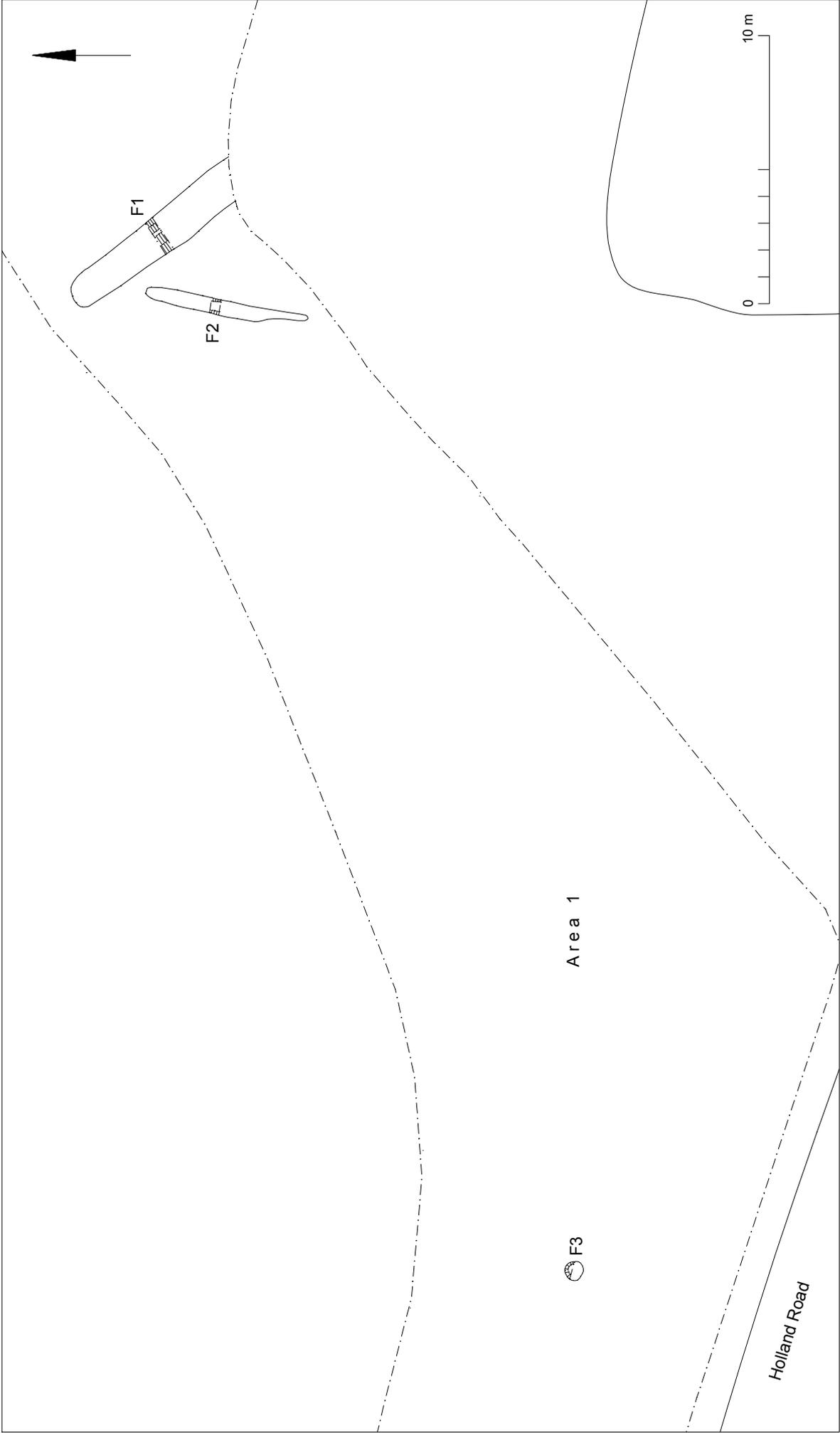
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cropmarks

Fig 1 Site location.



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Fig 2 Detail of Area 1, showing excavated features.

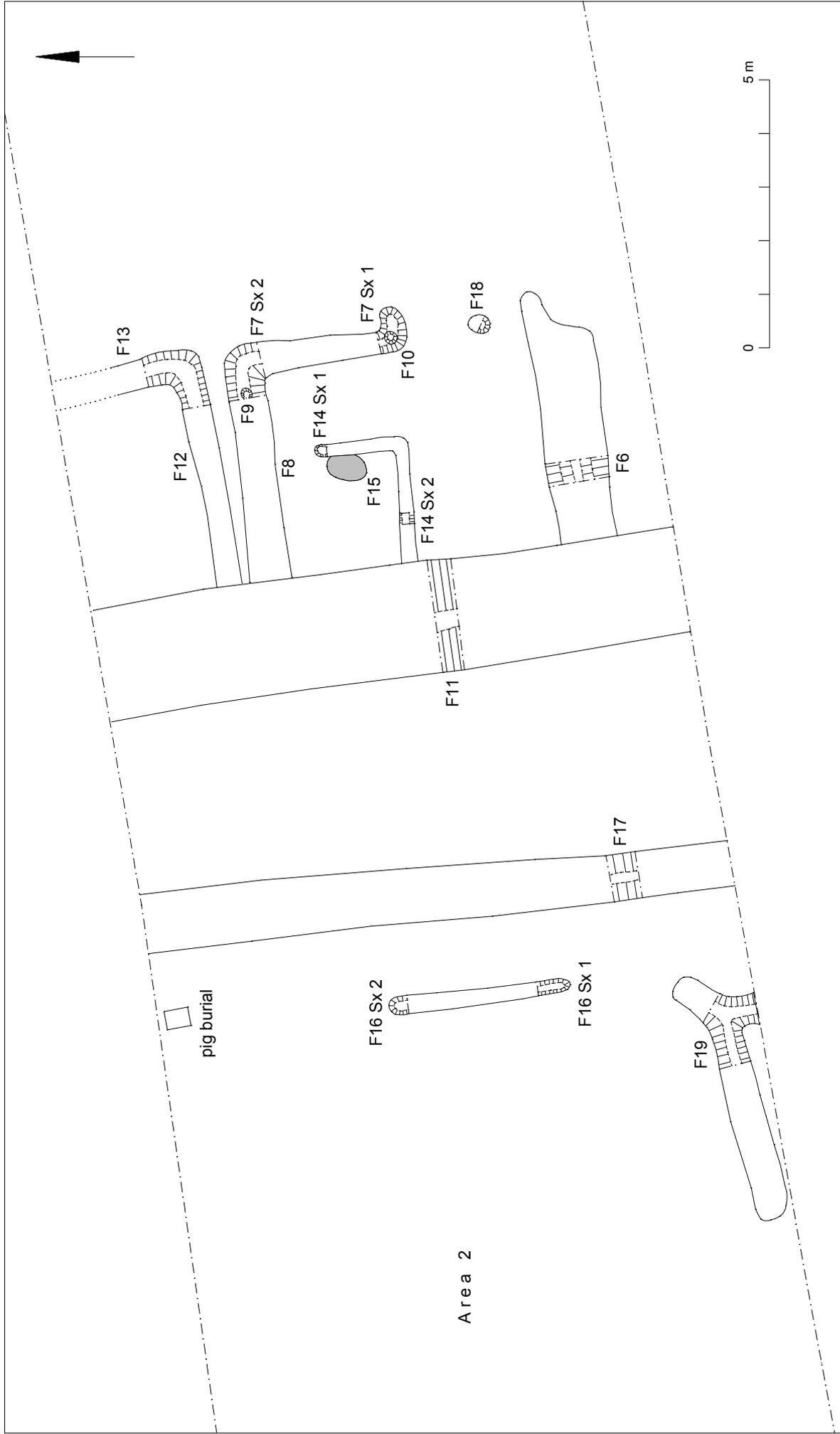
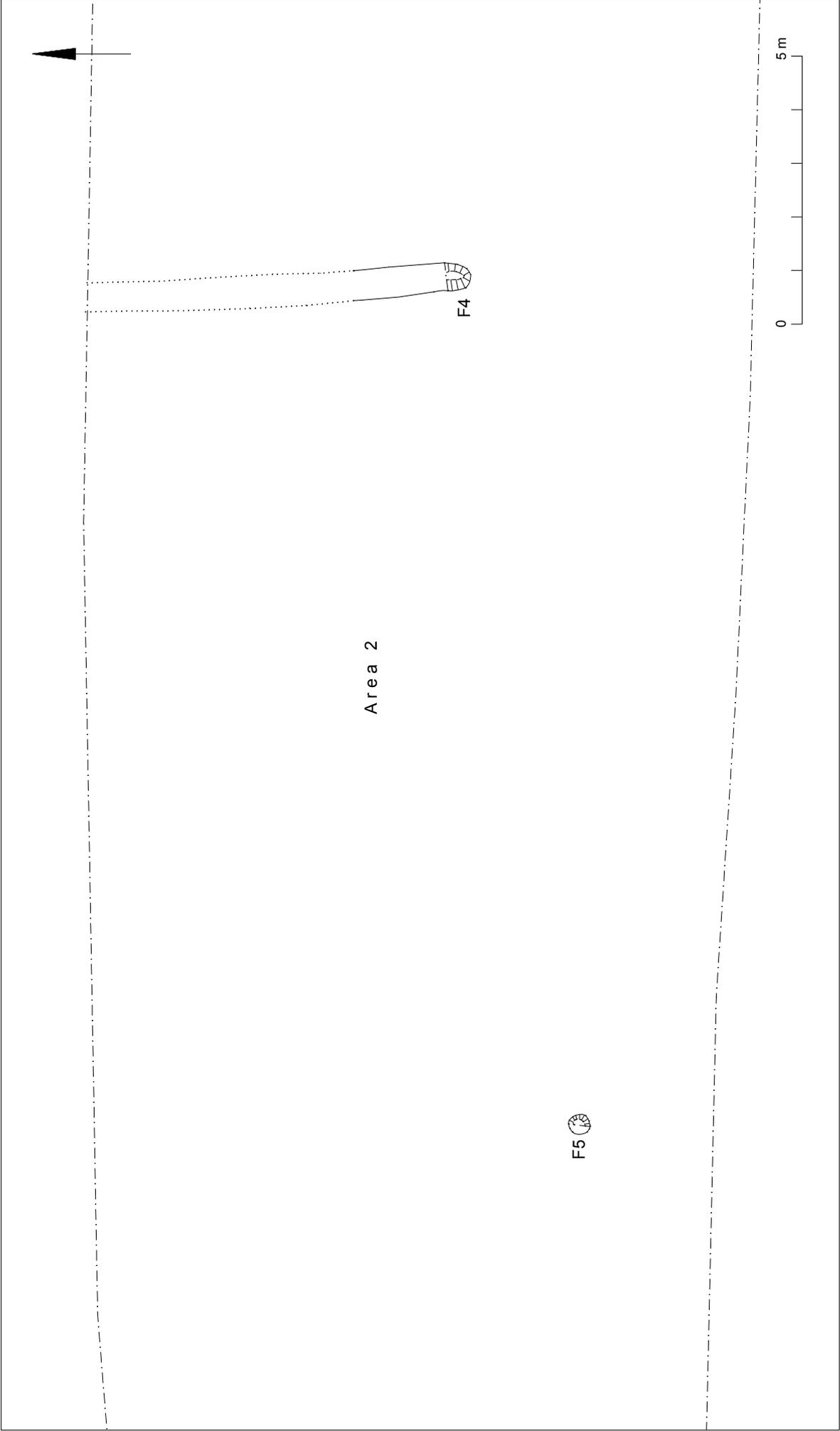


Fig 3 Detail of the middle part of Area 2, showing excavated features.



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Fig 4 Detail of the east of Area 2, showing excavated features.

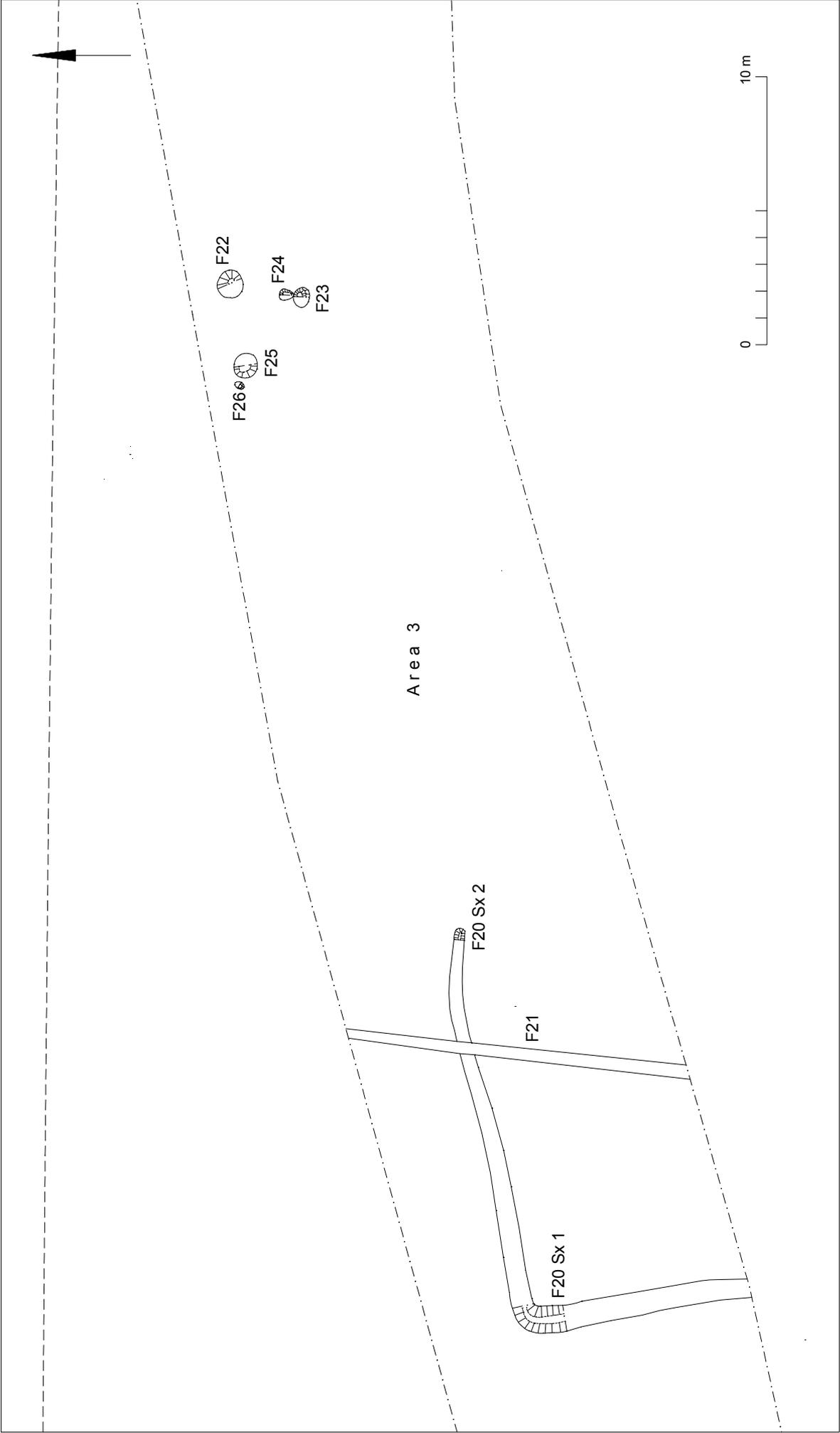


Fig 5 Detail of Area 3, showing excavated features.

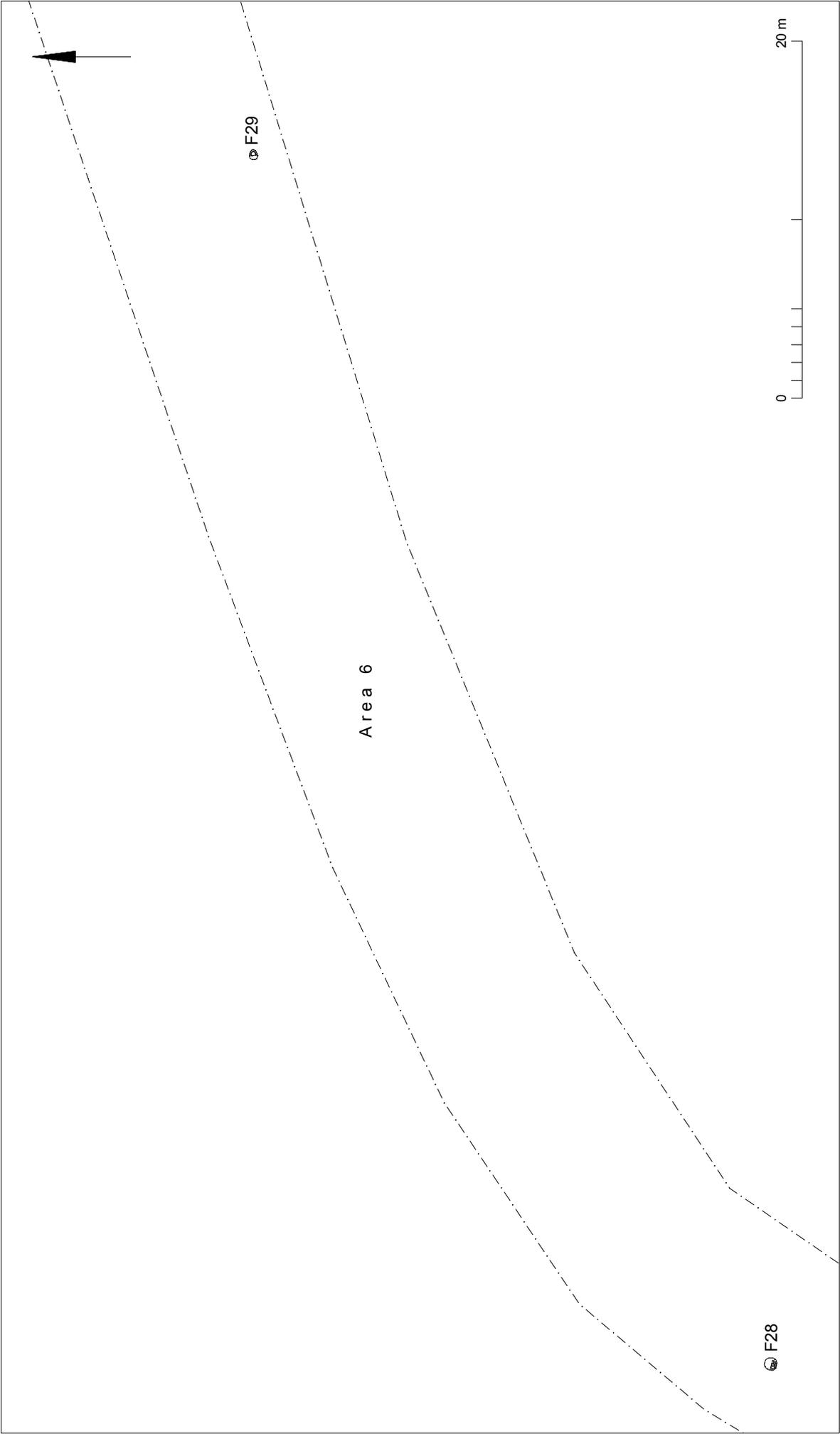


Fig 6 Detail of the east of Area 6, showing excavated features.

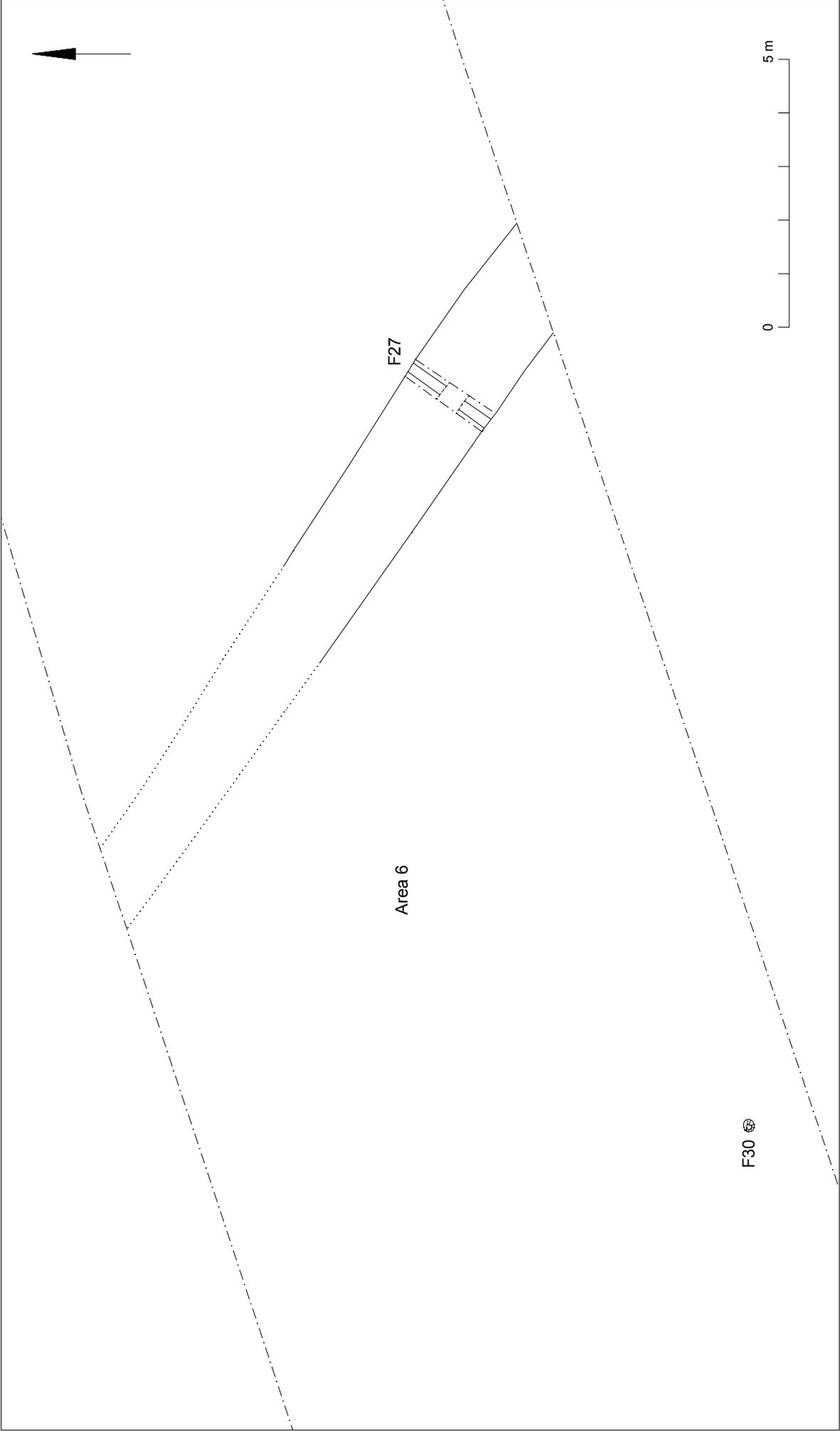
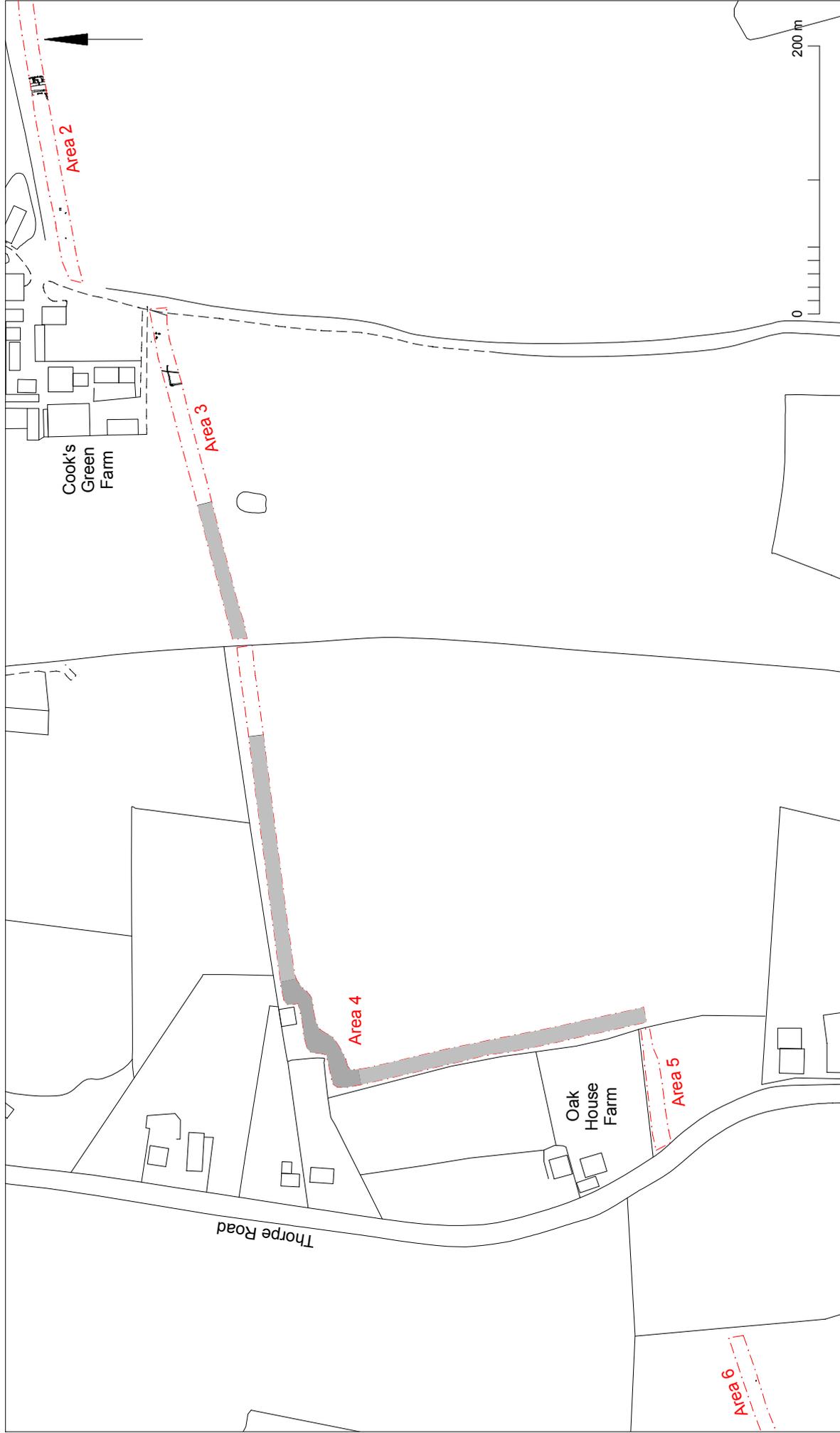


Fig 7 Detail of the west of Area 6, showing excavated features.



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■ topsoil only removed ■ not stripped to natural

Fig 8 Differential quality of machine-stripping.

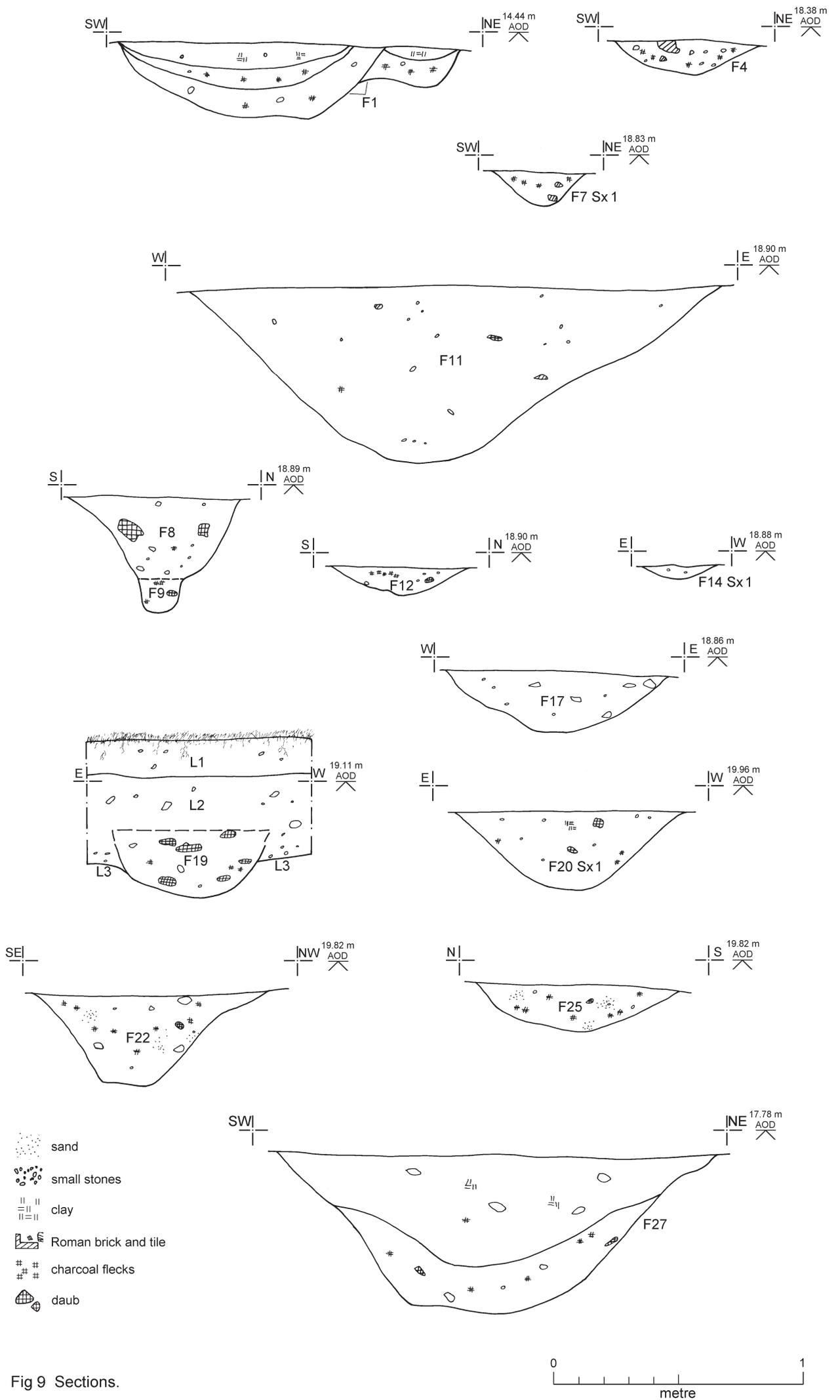


Fig 9 Sections.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Site address: EDF Energy cable, Little Clacton, Essex	
Parish: Little Clacton	District: Tendring
NGR: TM 17481 18199-TM 19066 18974	Site codes: CAT - 09/7a HEM - CSEF 09 Museum accession - COLIM 2009.46
Type of work: Monitoring and excavation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: July-August 2009	Size of area investigated: 10m-wide easement on 1.7km of an 11km-long cable route
Location of curating museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museums	Funding source: Contractor
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER nos: 2980, 16988
Final report: CAT Report 532 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
Periods represented: Iron Age, medieval, post-medieval, modern	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p><i>An 11 km-long cable was laid by the contractor from Sackett's Grove Caravan Park (Clacton-on-Sea) to Cook's Green (Little Clacton). For most of this route, the cable was laid along existing roads or in existing ducts. Where the cable crossed open fields, ie for 1.7km of the route, the stripping of the easement was monitored by the Colchester Archaeological Trust. Where monitoring revealed archaeological features, these were excavated and recorded.</i></p> <p><i>Evidence for prehistoric occupation consisted of an Iron Age ditch, and a residual Iron Age loomweight fragment. There were no Romano-British finds.</i></p> <p><i>The most important archaeological feature was the site of a small, medieval rectangular structure with a burnt patch which was either a hearth or the base of an oven. It is not clear whether the structure was domestic or agricultural in function, or whether it was permanently or only occasionally occupied. An adjacent, right-angled gully appeared to be part of a similar medieval structure.</i></p> <p><i>Two ditches forming part of an adjacent cropmark site were excavated where they crossed the easement. One was undatable, but the other was probably of post-medieval date and had been infilled within living memory.</i></p>	
Previous summaries/reports: None	

Keywords: Iron Age, loomweight, medieval, building, post-medieval, cropmark ditch	Significance: **
Author of summary: Howard Brooks	Date of summary: December 2009

