

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF A POSSIBLE PREHISTORIC MONUMENT  
AT STRINGMANS FIELD, LEES COURT ESTATE, FAVERSHAM, KENT**

Planning Reference: N/A

NGR: TR 0247 5434

Site Code: SF19

OASIS Reference Number: TBC



Report prepared for the Kent Archaeological Society (KAS)

By Richard Taylor

Report Number: SF19-002

April 2020

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## Document Control

|                            |                                 |             |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
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| Report reviewed by:        | Fred Birkbeck                   | 4 June 2020 |
| Version no:                | 1.2                             |             |

(Front cover image – looking south at SF19 site)

## **Stringmans Field Monument SF19**

### **Lees Court Estate, Kent**

#### **Archaeological Evaluation, Geophysical Surveys and Assessment of Results**

##### **Summary**

During July and August 2019 an archaeological investigation was undertaken by the Kent Archaeological Society (KAS) at Stringmans Field, Lees Court Estate, Kent (NGR 602478 154347). The focus of this investigation was a geophysical anomaly, partially excavated in 2018 by students from the University of Kent (Taylor 2018).

The initial investigation in 2018 partially excavated what is believed to be the northeast tip of a Prehistoric Monument. By 2019, two distinct curvilinear ditches of different cultural phases were discovered and thought to enclose the Monument. Also, a possible earlier pit feature cut into the chalk bedrock, appears to have been incorporated within the initial phase of the Monument's construction.

The 2019 volunteer investigation aimed to ascertain a likely identity, extent and condition of surviving archaeological deposits, along with their chronological and spatial relationships, building on the 2018 excavation results to gain an understanding of the function of the probable Prehistoric Monument. Further geophysical surveys carried out in 2019 revealed the Monument's extent heading off to the southwest (into an adjacent field), measuring approximately 37m long and 21 metres wide and rectilinear in shape.

Combined evidence from the 2019 investigation suggests the Prehistoric Monument is likely to be a small earthen long barrow or enclosed burial mound, though no human remains were discovered. Ceramic and lithic assemblages and a limited quantity of animal bone combine to support the circumstantial evidence that the site may have been of ritual significance during the Late Prehistoric period.

A small Medieval field-boundary ditch respects the edge of the Monument, implying that the latter remained as a feature within the landscape as late as the twelfth century AD, and possibly later depending upon Post-Medieval agricultural activities. The site has been subject to ploughing, and the state of preservation seems to have deteriorated through this activity, having been further disturbed by 2018 excavations.

The investigation confirmed the presence of a Monument first located in 2018 and added knowledge of its periods of use. However, the limited extent of the excavation allows little more detailed discussion of the site. Further analysis and publication are proposed and will be submitted to *Archaeologia Cantiana*.

## Stringmans Field Monument 2

### Lees Court Estate, Kent

#### Archaeological Evaluation, Geophysical Surveys and Assessment of Results

##### Acknowledgements

The Kent Archaeological Society commissioned this volunteer archaeological investigation as part of the broader Lees Court Estate landscape study.

The investigation was undertaken by volunteer archaeologists, Pauline Roland, Ian Plummer, John Beaumont, Phil Chalmers, Mary Carter, Don Blackburn, Mike Breton, Phil Burkin, Emily Elms, Andrew Mayfield (Shorne Woods Archaeological Group), Caroline Clakstone, John Clarkstone, Suzanne Miles (Faversham Archaeological Group). All on-site machining was carried out by Ken Hogben (Lees Court Estate); metal detecting was carried out by Dave Ambrose; additional resistivity geophysical survey work was carried out by John Townsend, and the archive and recording process was co-ordinated by Richard Taylor (Darnley Archaeological Services). Finds processing on-site was carried out by Madeline Taylor, Rosie Jones (St George's CofE Secondary School, Gravesend) and Roma Mortimer. The report was researched and compiled by Richard Taylor, with specialist reports by Nigel Macpherson-Grant and Paul Hart.

Thanks must also be extended to the people who helped initiate the project: Clive Drew (Hon Gen Secretary of KAS), Elizabeth Roberts (Estate Manager, Lees Court Estate) and Countess Sodes for her permissions and continued support.



(Figure 1 – SF19 investigations during September 2019)

*\*This report is dedicated to the memory of Nigel Macpherson-Grant – simply the best\**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Project Background

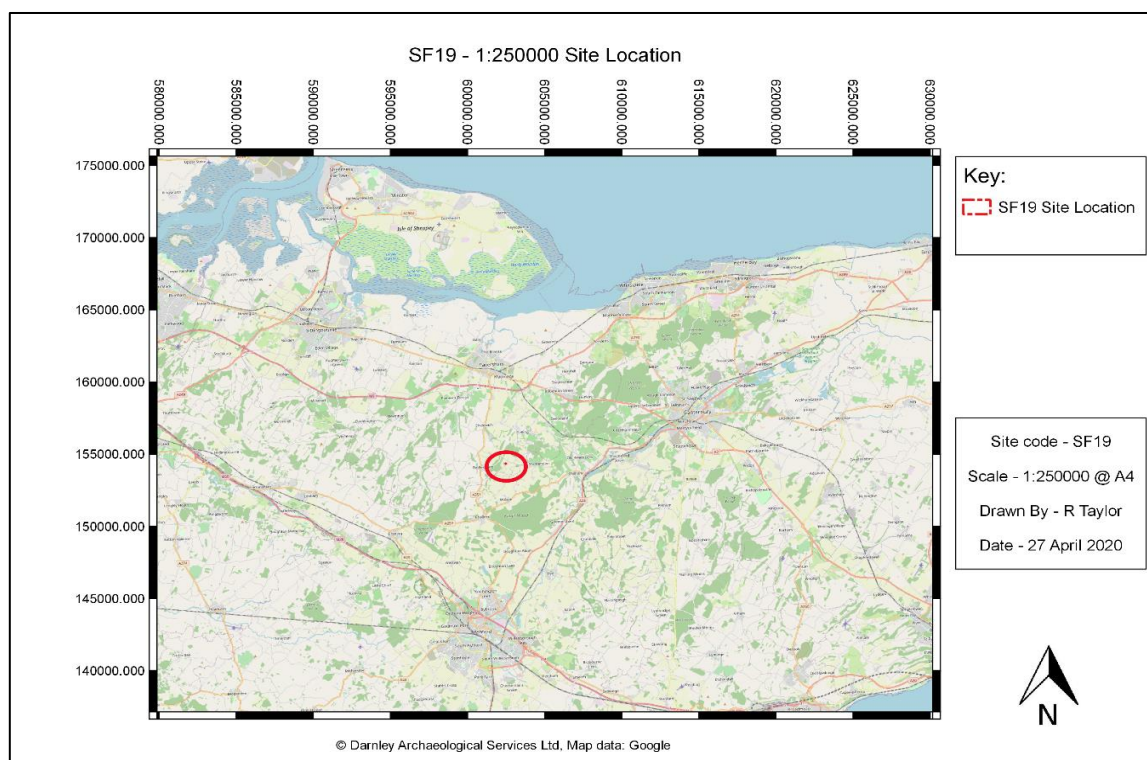
1.1.1. In 2019 the Kent Archaeological Society (KAS) was commissioned by Lees Court Estate to carry out the recording and post-excavation analysis for an archaeological investigation undertaken by members of the KAS on a 'Monument' site of Stringmans Field, Faversham.

1.1.2. This report documents the results of the investigation undertaken by the KAS members and represents an assessment of these results.

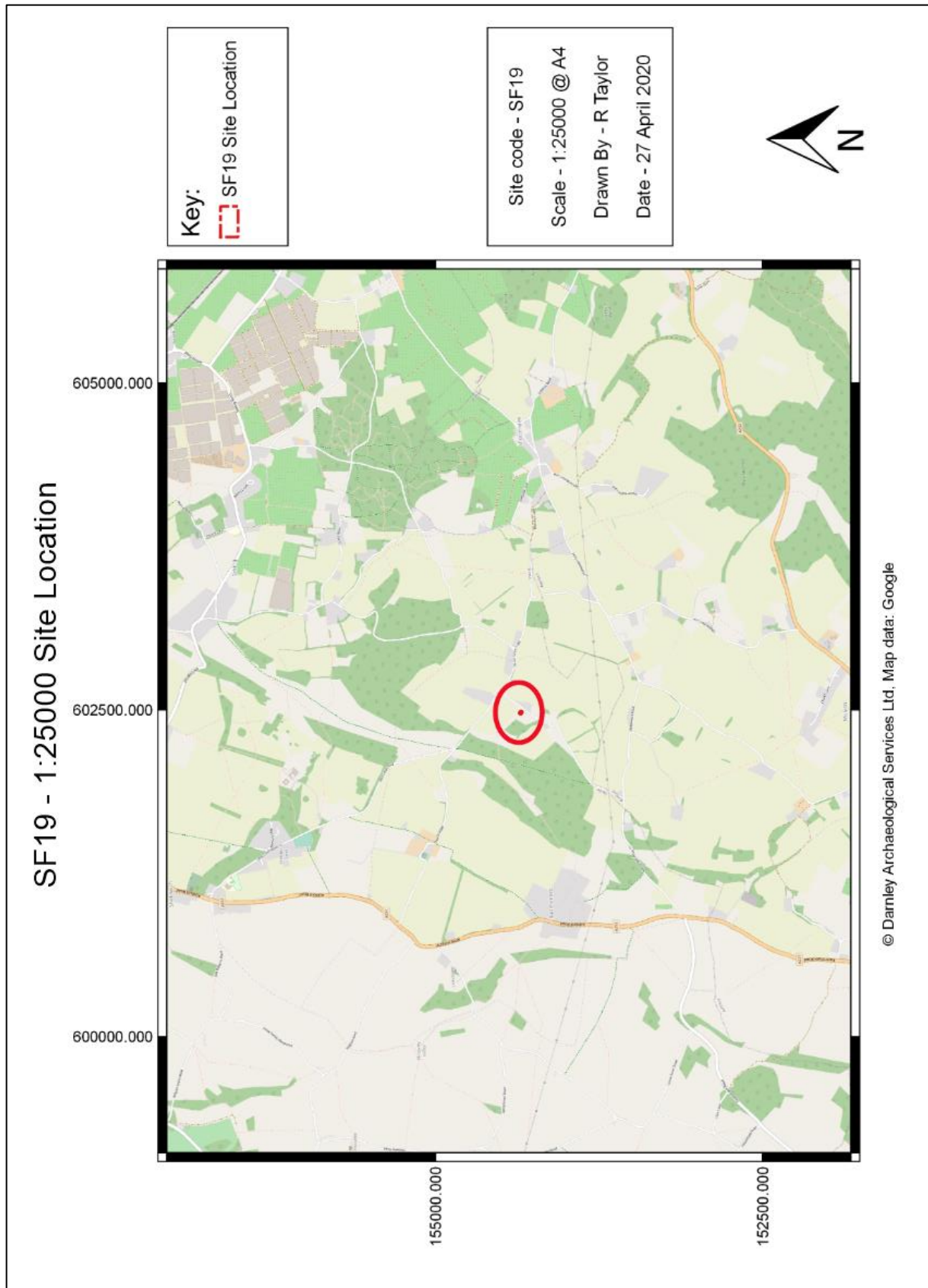
### 1.2. Location, Topography, and Geology

1.2.1. The site is centred upon NGR 602478 154347 and located within a rural area to the south of Fisher Street Road, and part of the more extensive Lees Court Estate, 2km west of the village of Shottenden, 1.5km east of the village of Badlemere and 2.4km south of the village of Selling (Figures 2 & 3).

1.2.2. The site, currently used as arable and pasture land, is on top of clay with flints, which sits above bedrock composed of the Seaford Chalk formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed during the Cretaceous Period (BGS 2020). The site is on the southwest-facing slope of a dry valley at 95m (+/- 2m) aOD.



(Figure 2 – SF19 1:250000 Site Location)



(Figure 3 – SF19 1:25000 Site Location)

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1. Recent investigations in the area

2.1.1. In September 2017, a metal detecting rally was held on the Lees Court Estate, with fields across the historic parishes of Badlesmere, Selling and Sheldwich being searched. Four hoards of Late Bronze Age metalwork were found during the rally: three in Woods Court Field. Hoard 1 was found to be contained within an inverted pottery vessel and yielded more than 16kg of metal – mostly plate scrap and sword chape fragments of the Wilburton Industry broadly datable to 1150-1000 BC. Hoard 2 lay approximately 150 metres northwest of Hoard 1 and contained thirteen pieces of broken bun-ingot, packed into a small pit. Hoard 3, spread by the plough, lay 17.5 metres to the southwest of Hoard 1, also consisted of fragments of bun-ingot, totalling 34 in number. Taken together, the Bronze Age discoveries made in Wood Court Field suggested the Hoards may have been buried within a contemporary settlement site, which excavations in 2018 and 2019 confirmed (Parfitt, 2018).

2.1.2. The remains of a probable Neolithic Monument, approximately 200m northwest of the site, were discovered in Stringmans Field (Figure 4) in April 2018 following a KAS study of aerial photography and magnetometry geophysics results. The study indicated the presence of a ring ditch (NGR 602330 154543) approximately 25m in diameter (HER number TR 05 SW 3). Evaluation trenching carried out in April 2018 revealed stratified Neolithic pottery from secure ditch fills of a probable Neolithic Causewayed Enclosure (Taylor Unpublished).



(Figure 4 - Aerial view of causewayed enclosure site looking north – image courtesy of KAS)

### 3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. An excavation strategy for the work was compiled by Richard Taylor, providing details of the research aims and methods.
- 3.2. The project aimed to carry out a limited programme of non-intrusive investigations and intrusive excavation. The following research aims were defined:

**Research Aim 1: What is the extent of archaeological deposit at the Stringmans Field site?**

- 3.3. Aerial photographs and previous investigations in the immediate area suggest Prehistoric Monuments may occupy the top of the south-facing valley slope running down from Stringmans Field. Landscape study and a geophysical survey were undertaken to provide targets for invasive trenching. This trenching was intended to characterise the extent, form, chronological and functional relationships between the possible Prehistoric structure (the putative Monument site) known through previous investigations in 2018.

**Research Aim 2: What is the condition of the archaeological deposits at the Stringmans Field site?**

- 3.4. The Stringmans Field site was initially discovered due to a geophysical survey in 2018. Agricultural practices over centuries appear to have significantly disturbed above-ground archaeological deposits at the site. The excavations conducted in 2018 further disturbed below-ground remains. The targeted trenching, based on geophysical survey results, was intended to establish the present condition of the archaeological deposits across the site.

**Research Aim 3: What are the chronological and spatial relationships of archaeological deposits at the Stringmans Field site?**

- 3.5. The date range demonstrated by archaeological deposits at the Stringmans Field site is becoming more evident. The targeted trenching, based on geophysical survey results, was undertaken to clarify both the chronological and spatial relationships of archaeological deposits and to retrieve material suitable for dating. Also, it is proposed that an attempt was made in at least one location on site to excavate natural deposits to ensure a comprehensive understanding of stratigraphic relationships.

**Research Aim 4: What was the function or functions of the Prehistoric structure at the Stringmans Field site?**

- 3.6. Stringmans Field site is part of a complex palimpsest of Prehistoric features visible in the surrounding Lees Court Estate landscape as crop marks. The remains are from the Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age and Medieval periods. The Stringmans Field site exhibits evidence as part of a multi-period prehistoric landscape atop the North Downs overlooking Faversham Creek.

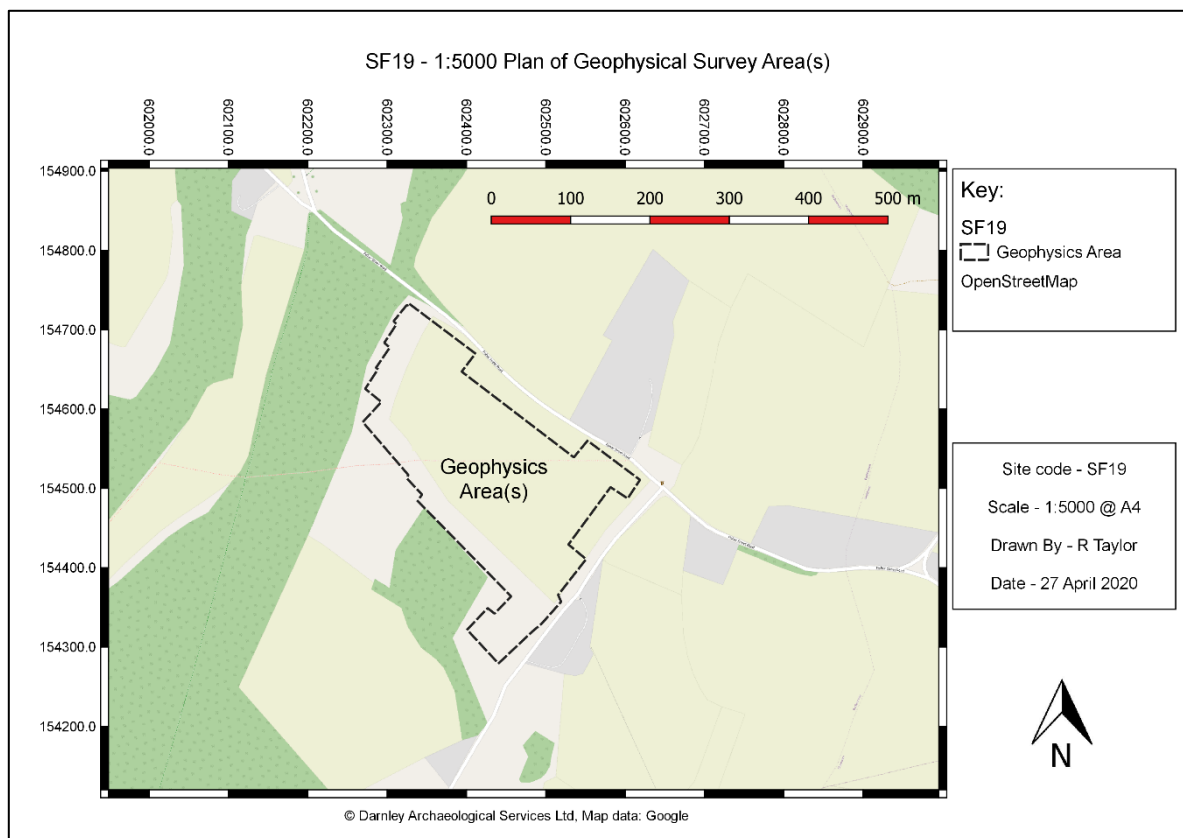
## 4. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1. Geophysical survey

4.1.1. Before excavation, a geophysical survey of Stringmans Field using a magnetic survey was carried out in 2018 and later added to in 2019. The survey grid was tied into the Ordnance Survey grid system using a Leica GNSS real-time differential GPS.

4.1.2. In addition to the magnetic survey carried out in Stringmans Field in September 2019, a combination of resistance and magnetic survey was carried out south of the site with the adjacent Holly Grove to identify further probable projections of the Monument.

4.1.3. The total area covered by the geophysical survey is illustrated in Figure 5 below:

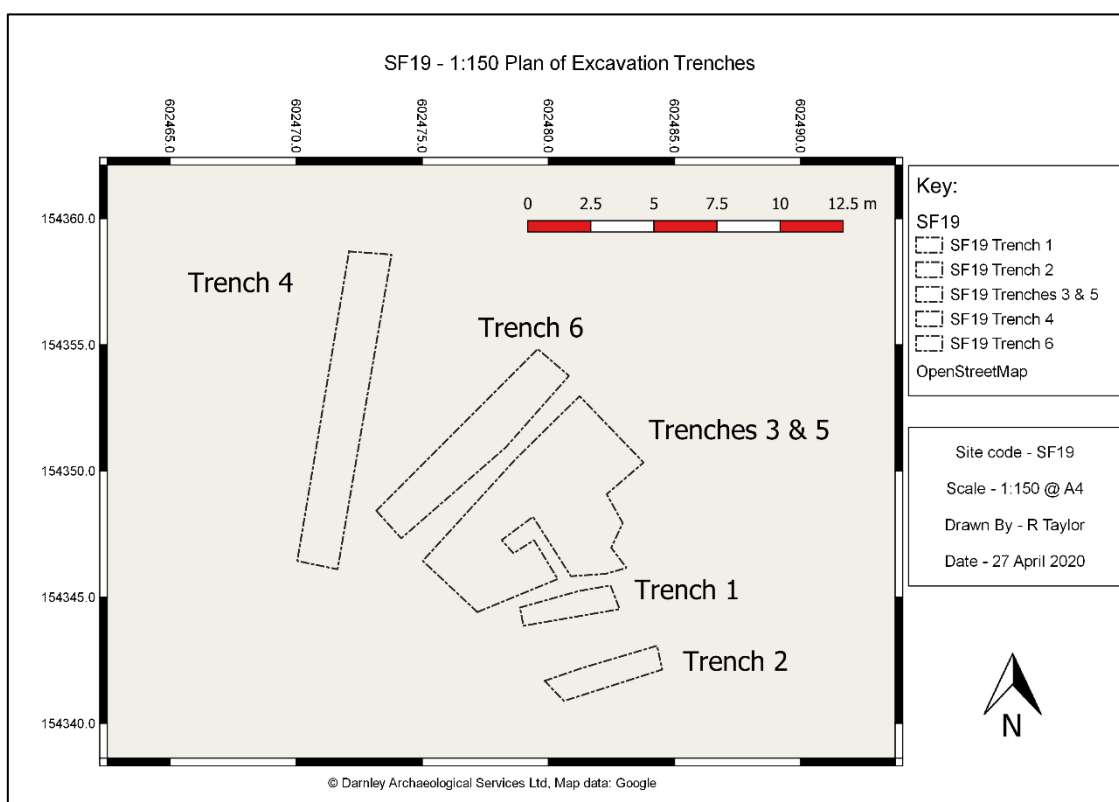


(Figure 5 – SF19 1:5000 Geophysics Area(s))

## 4.2. Evaluation trenches

4.2.1. Based on the geophysical results, six machine-dug trenches were excavated in 2019 (Figure 6); Trench 1 and 5 were started in 2018 by University of Kent, and extended during 2019. A mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket and working under constant archaeological supervision removed the overburden from all the trenches. Machining ceased as soon as significant archaeological deposits were identified.

4.2.2. The trenches were cleaned by hand with limited sampling of the underlying archaeological deposits. An experienced metal detectorist scanned all spoil excavated from the evaluation trenches.



(Figure 6 – SF19 Trench Location Map)

4.2.3. All contexts and features were recorded using standard pro-forma KAS record sheets. A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits was made, usually at a scale of 1:20; sections were drawn as appropriate. The OD height is indicated on the appropriate plans and sections. A photographic record of the investigations and individual features was also prepared. All trenches were related to the National Grid /Ordnance Datum by local control.

4.2.4. The excavation work was carried out between 8-19 July and 2-6 September 2019. The archive and all artefacts were subsequently transported to the on-site offices of the KAS at Lees Court Estate where they were processed and assessed for this report.

### **4.3. Copyright**

4.3.1. This report may contain material that is non-KAS copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are unable to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of the KAS copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by KAS.

## 5. RESULTS

5.1. The following section provides a summary of the information held in the site archive, including the full geophysics report. Details of individually excavated contexts and features are retained in the Site archive, and a detailed tabulated version of these can be found in Table 1.

### 5.2. Geophysical Survey

5.2.1. A magnetometry survey of Stringmans Field was carried out in stages during April 2018, August 2018 and September 2019. Gaps in the survey map are due to game hides being present at the various stages to provide a haven for birdlife.

5.2.2. The site survey and reporting conform to current national guidelines as set out in 'Geophysical Survey in Archaeological Field Evaluation' (English Heritage 2008), 'The Use of Geophysical Techniques in Archaeological Evaluations' (Gaffney et al. 2002) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and guidance for archaeological geophysical survey' (CIfA 2014).

5.2.3. The geophysical survey consisted of a detailed gradiometer survey of the area made available, extending approximately 5.5 hectares.

5.2.4. The survey was carried out by a team of experienced geophysicists (Richard Taylor & Fred Birkbeck) from Darnley Archaeological Services, assisted by archaeological volunteers. The survey was accurately located and tied into the National Grid using a Leica GS18T RTK NetRover GPS.

5.2.5. The survey was carried out using a Bartington Grad601-2 Dual Fluxgate Gradiometer with an onboard automatic data logger. This instrument is a highly stable magnetometer which utilises two vertically aligned fluxgates, one positioned 1m above the other. This arrangement is then duplicated and separated by a 1m crossbar. The arrangement allows for rapid assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. Data storage from the two fluxgate pairs is automatically combined into one file and stored using the onboard data logger.

5.2.6. Data collection was undertaken in a zig-zag traverse pattern, using a sample interval of 0.25m and a traverse interval of 1m.

5.2.7. Summary of survey parameters:

- Fluxgate Magnetometer
- Instrument: Bartington Grad601-2 Dual Fluxgate Gradiometer
- Sample Interval: 0.25m
- Traverse Interval: 1.0m
- Traverse Separation: 1.0m

- Traverse Method: Zig-zag
- Resolution: 0.01nT
- Processing Software: Terrasurveyor version 3.0.35.10
- Surface Conditions: Established arable
- Area Surveyed: 5.5 Hectares
- Dates Surveyed: April 2018, August 2018 & September 2019
- Surveyors: Richard Taylor & Fred Birkbeck
- Survey Assistants: Ian Plummer, Mary Carter & Don Blackburn
- Data Interpretation: Richard Taylor & Fred Birkbeck

### **5.3. Data Collection and Processing**

5.3.1. The grids were marked out with tapes measures and recorded using a Leica GS18T RTK NetRover GPS. Magnetic data was collected on a west-east alignment. The data collected from the survey has been analysed using Terrasurveyor 3.0.35.10. The resulting data plots are presented with positive nT/m values and high resistance as black and negative nT/m values and low resistance as white.

5.3.2. The data sets have been subjected to processing using the following filters:

- Clipping
- De-Striping
- De-Spiking
- Interpolate

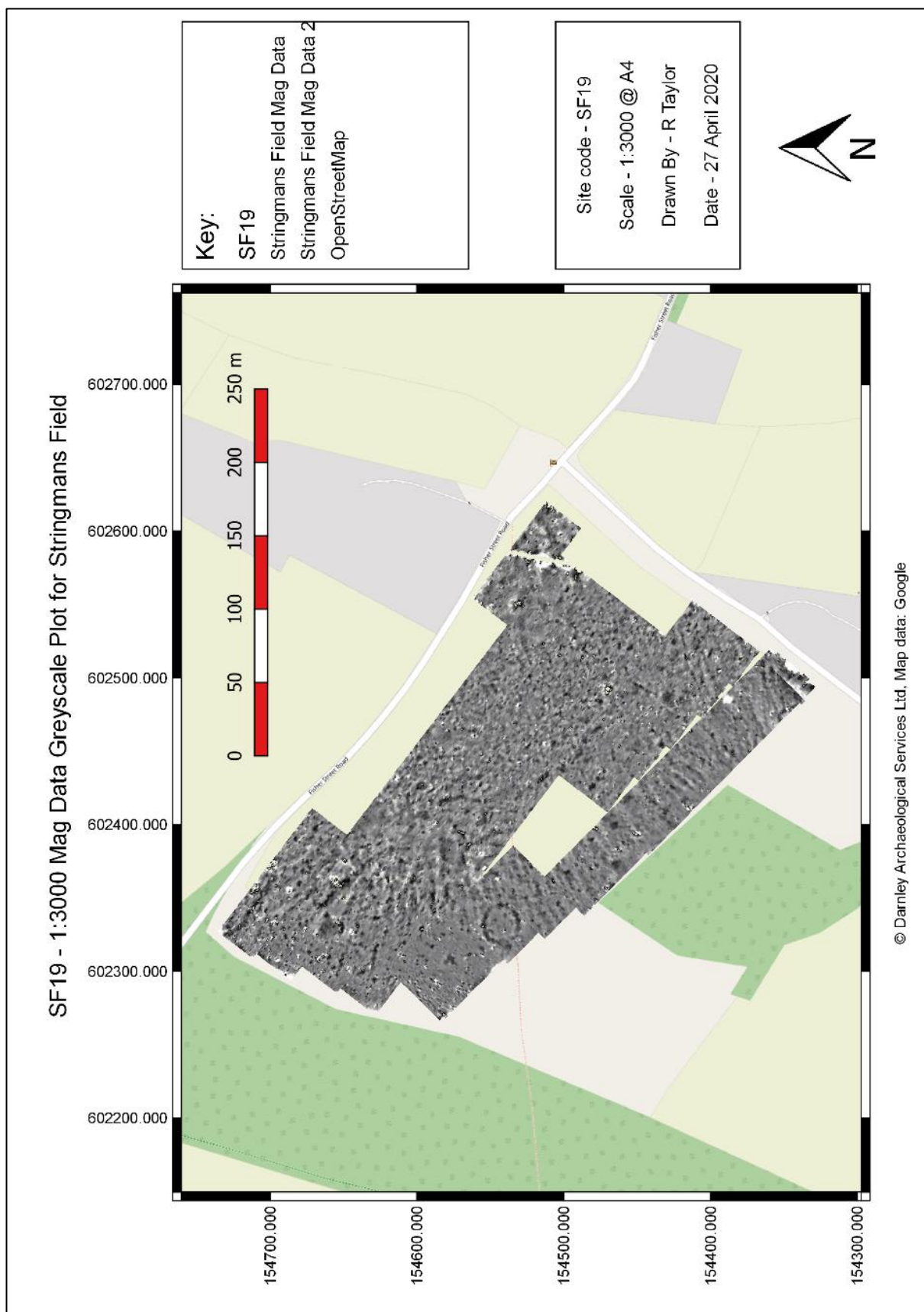
5.3.3. The De-Striping process – when data from a magnetometer survey conducted in a zig-zag pattern are processed, they can exhibit alternating bands of light and dark traverses caused by the direction sensitivity of the survey machine. The De-Stripe function assumes that the directional error is constant and sets the mean of all traverses to either zero or a value typical to all traverses.

5.3.4. Clipping – the clip function removes extreme data values by replacing the min and max readings with either absolute values or by +/- standard deviations.

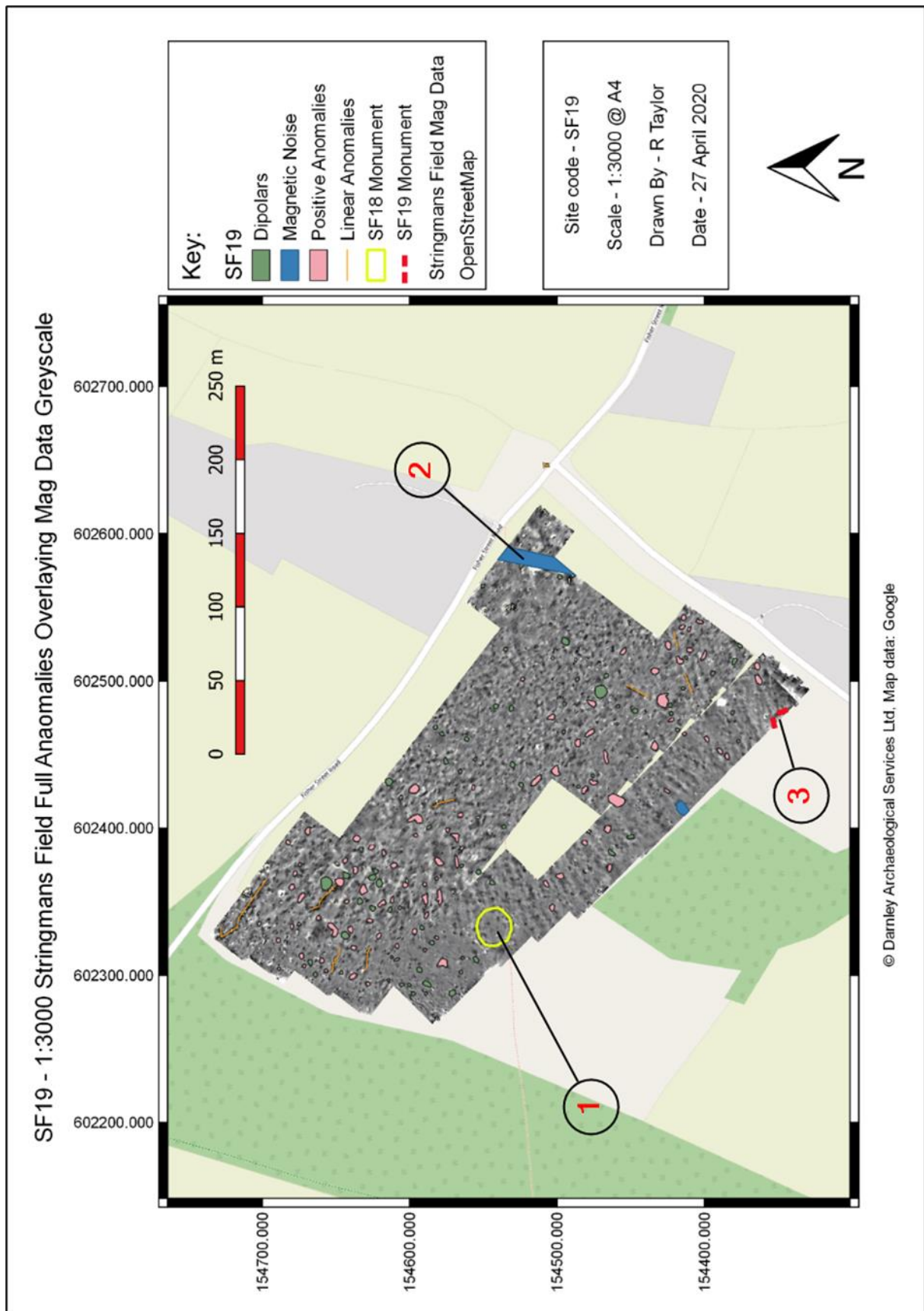
5.3.5. De-Spike – ferrous objects on or under the ground surface cause anomalously strong spikes in plotted data. The de-spike function detects and replaces these readings with a mean filter.

5.3.6. Interpolate – the interpolate function increases the resolution of plotted data by generating extra data points between every existing data point in both X and Y directions.

5.3.7. To interpret any anomalies, the survey data has been processed to the values of -12 to 10 nT/m. This enhances faint anomalies that may otherwise not be noted in the data, with several anomalies identified across the data set, and these are discussed in turn and recorded as a single of double-digit numbers.



(Figure 7 – SF19 Mag Data Greyscale)



(Figure 8 – SF19 Stringmans Field Full Anaomalies Overlaying Mag Data Greyscale)

## **5.4. Interpretation of Survey Results**

### **5.4.1. Positive Curvilinear Anomalies**

To the west of the survey area is (1), a positive circular anomaly measuring approximately 30m in diameter. (1) was subject to an evaluation excavation in 2018 (Taylor 2018) and results suggest the presence of a Late-Neolithic causewayed enclosure (see 2.1.2). To the southeast of the survey area is a curved shape running on a north-east southwest alignment (3), thought to be a ditch feature, over which the series of evaluation trenches (Figure 6) were excavated from 2018 to 2019.

### **5.4.2. Bipolar Anomalies**

To the northeast of the site there is a sizeable bipolar anomaly (2) on a north-south alignment, likely a modern service pipe.

### **5.4.3. Positive and Dipolar Anomalies**

Several anomalies (positive anomalies) are thought to be natural in origin, based on their amorphous character. Small scale ferrous responses (dipolars) are scattered throughout the data; these are likely to be caused by metal debris within the topsoil or on the surface.

## **5.5. Additional Geophysical Survey at Holly Field (2019)**

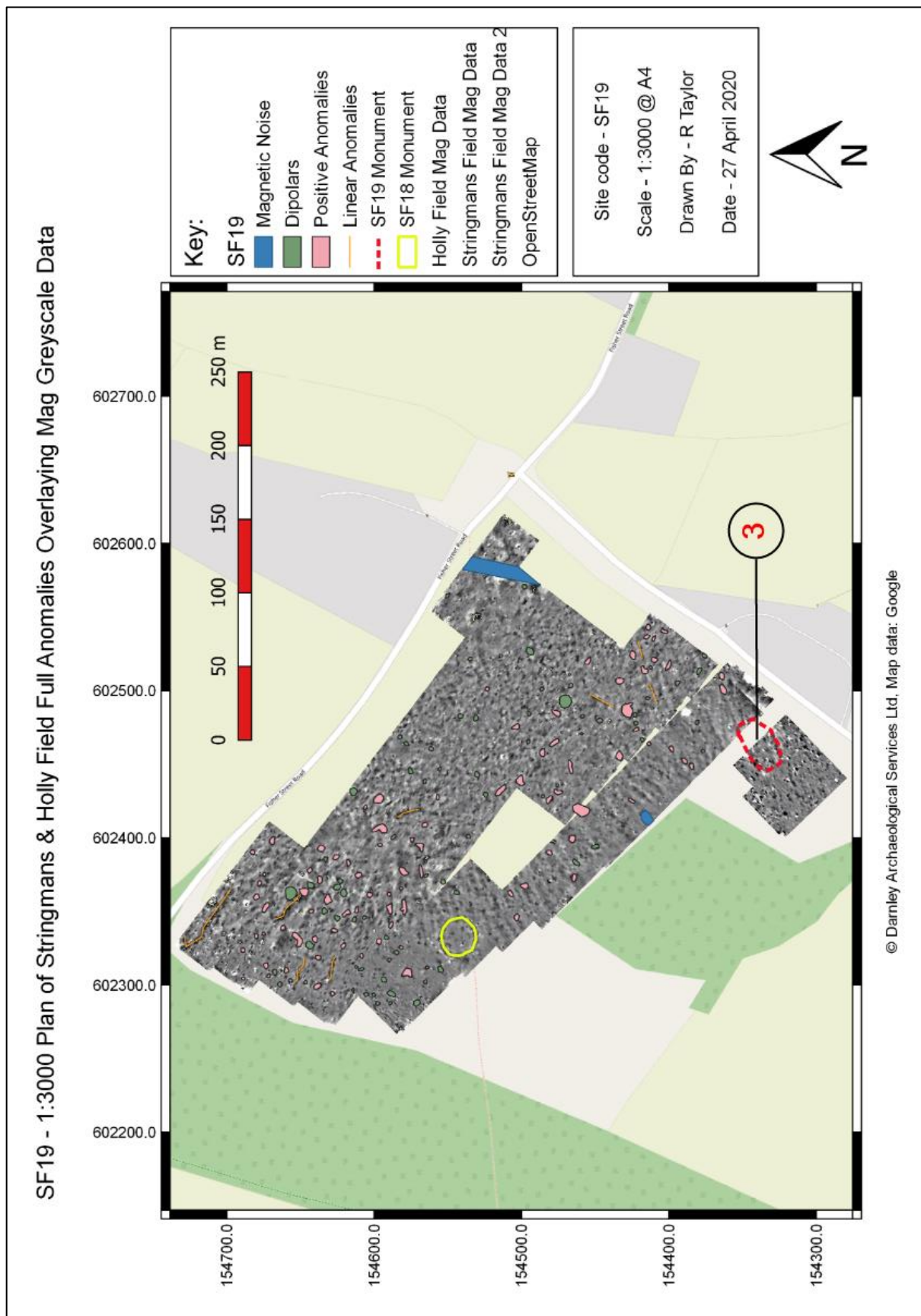
5.5.1. The area south of ditch feature (3) located in Stringmans Field is Holly Grove, a meadow area that sits on the south-facing slope of the dry valley. Ditch feature (3) was thought to extend into this area, so a further magnetometry and resistivity survey was carried out in September 2019 to determine if this was indeed the case.

5.5.2. The additional surveys indicate that a prominent ditch feature (3) continues into Holly Field, forming a rectilinear anomaly, extending southwest for approximately 37m and a width of 21m (Figures 9, 10 & 11).

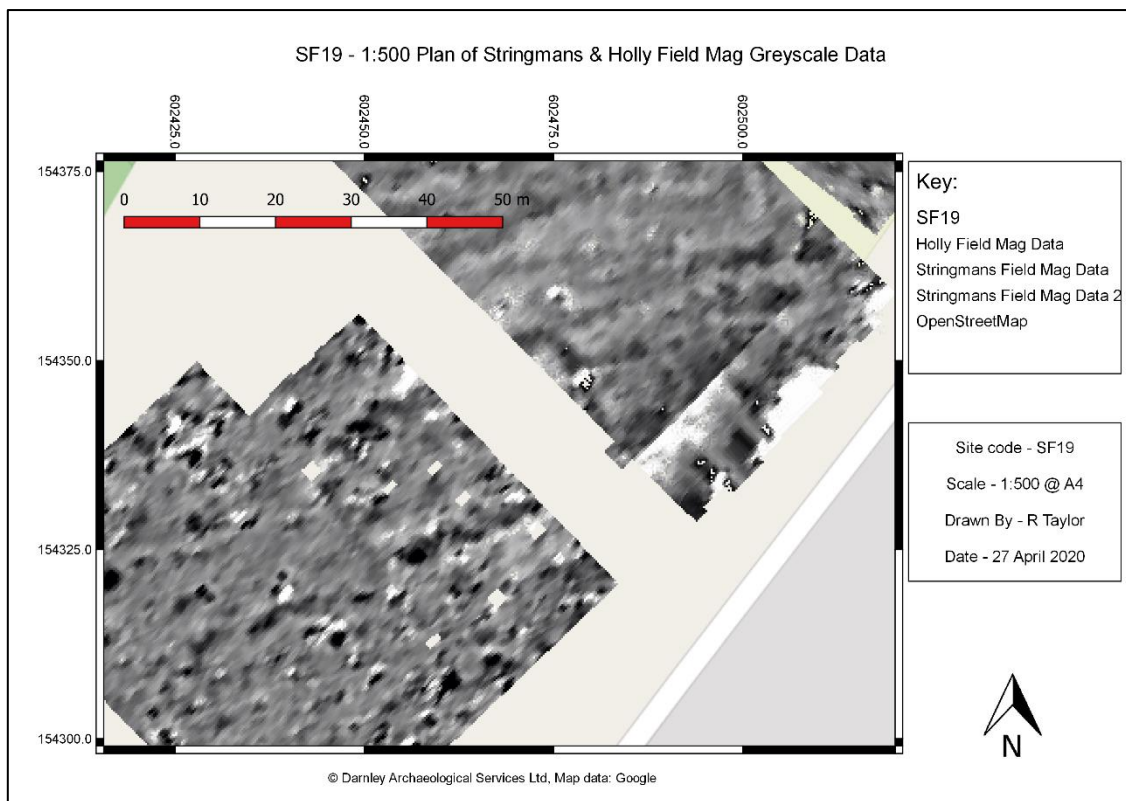
5.5.3. As with Stringmans Field, Holly Grove demonstrates several anomalies (positive anomalies) thought to be natural in origin based on their amorphous character. Small scale ferrous responses (dipolars) are scattered throughout the data; these are likely to be caused by metal debris within the topsoil or on the surface.

5.5.4. The resistivity plot of Holly Grove confirms the presence of a rectilinear anomaly, extending southwest for approximately 37m and at a width of 21m (Figures 12 & 13).

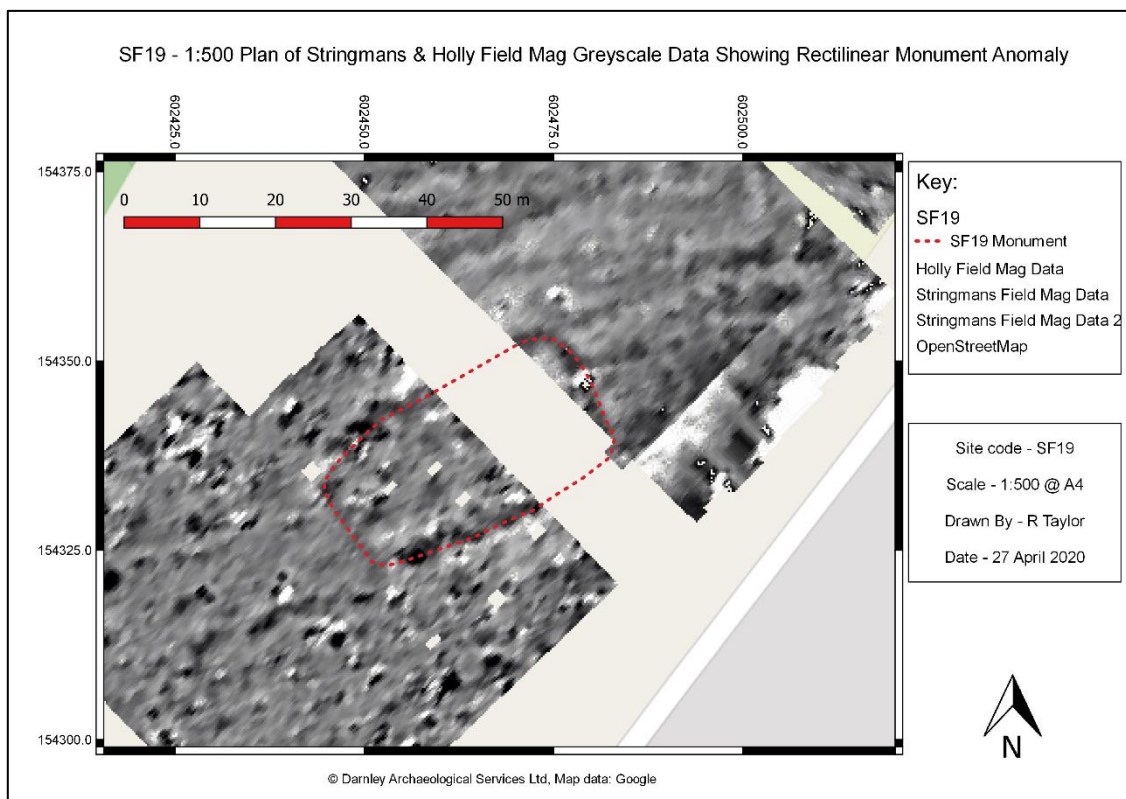
5.5.5. A feature (4) seen at the centre of the curved rectilinear anomaly visible in the resistivity results suggests the possible presence of a primary grave at the centre of a Monument.



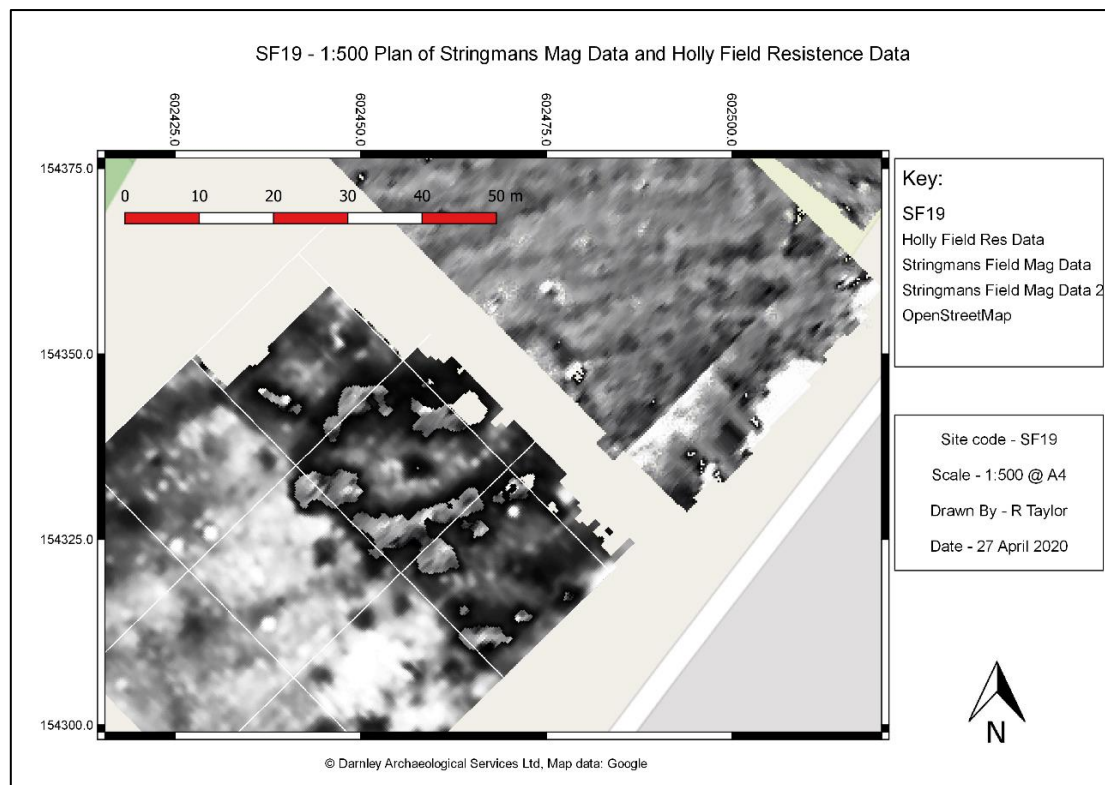
(Figure 9 – SF19 Stringmans Field & Holly Grove Full Anomalies Overlaying Mag Data Greyscale)



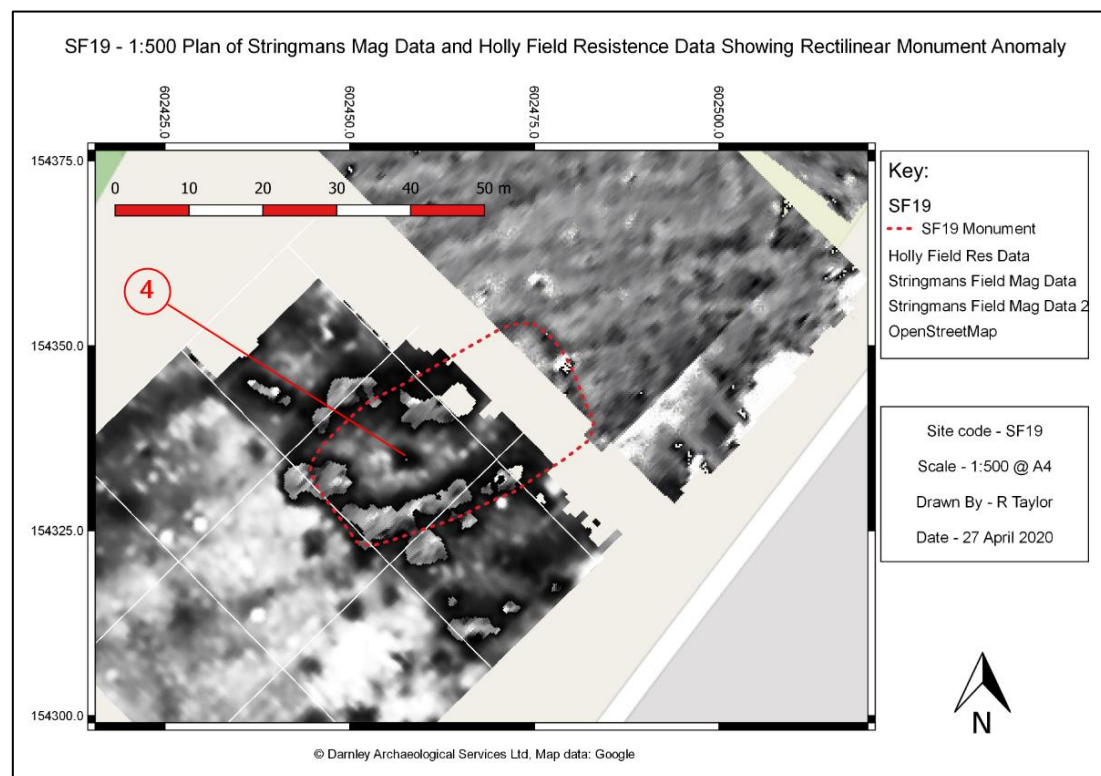
(Figure 10 – SF19 1:500 Rectilinear Monument Anomaly visible in Stringmans Field & Holly Grove Mag Data Greyscale)



(Figure 11 – SF19 1:500 Rectilinear Monument Anomaly Interpretation in Stringmans Field & Holly Grove Mag Data Greyscale)



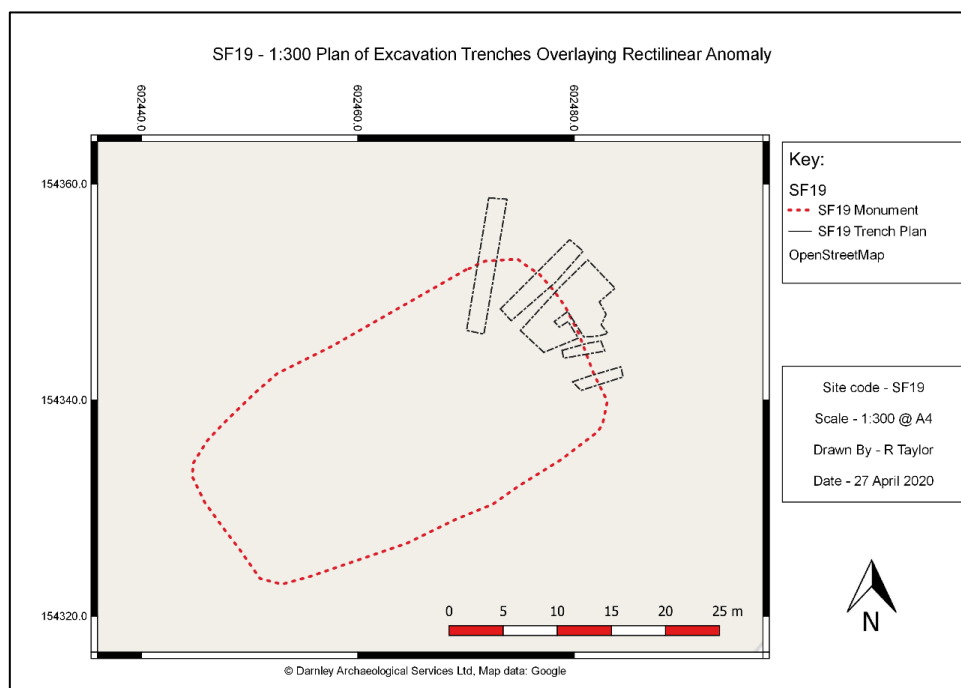
(Figure 12 – SF19 1:500 Rectilinear Monument Anomaly visible in Stringmans Field & Holly Grove Resistivity, courtesy of John Townsend, and Mag Data Greyscale)



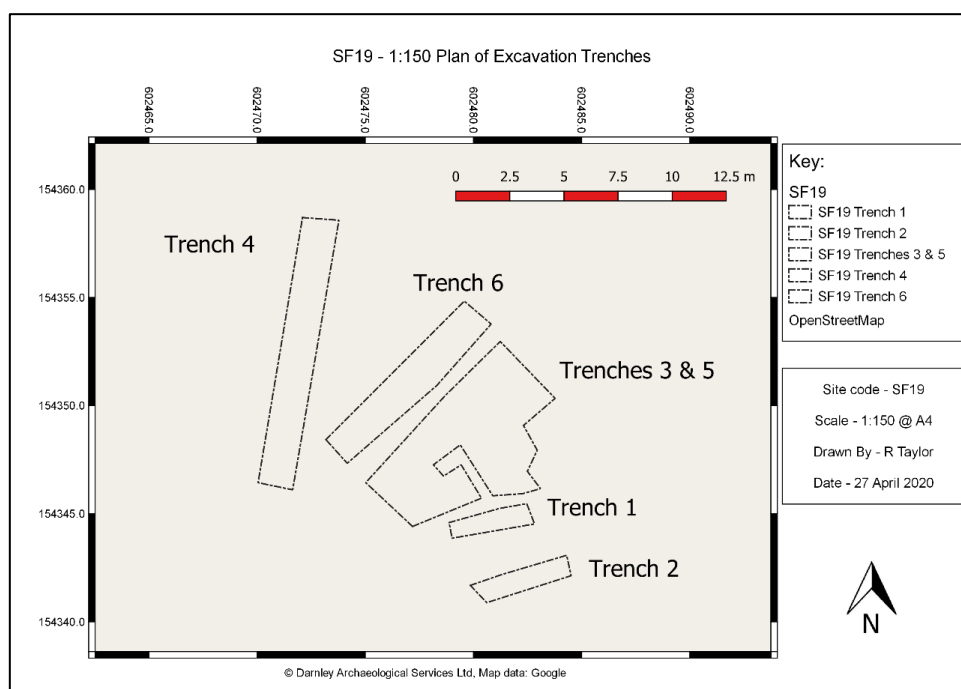
(Figure 13 – SF19 1:500 Rectilinear Monument Anomaly Interpretation in Stringmans Field & Holly Grove Resistivity, courtesy of John Townsend, and Mag Data Greyscale)

## 5.6. Evaluation trenches

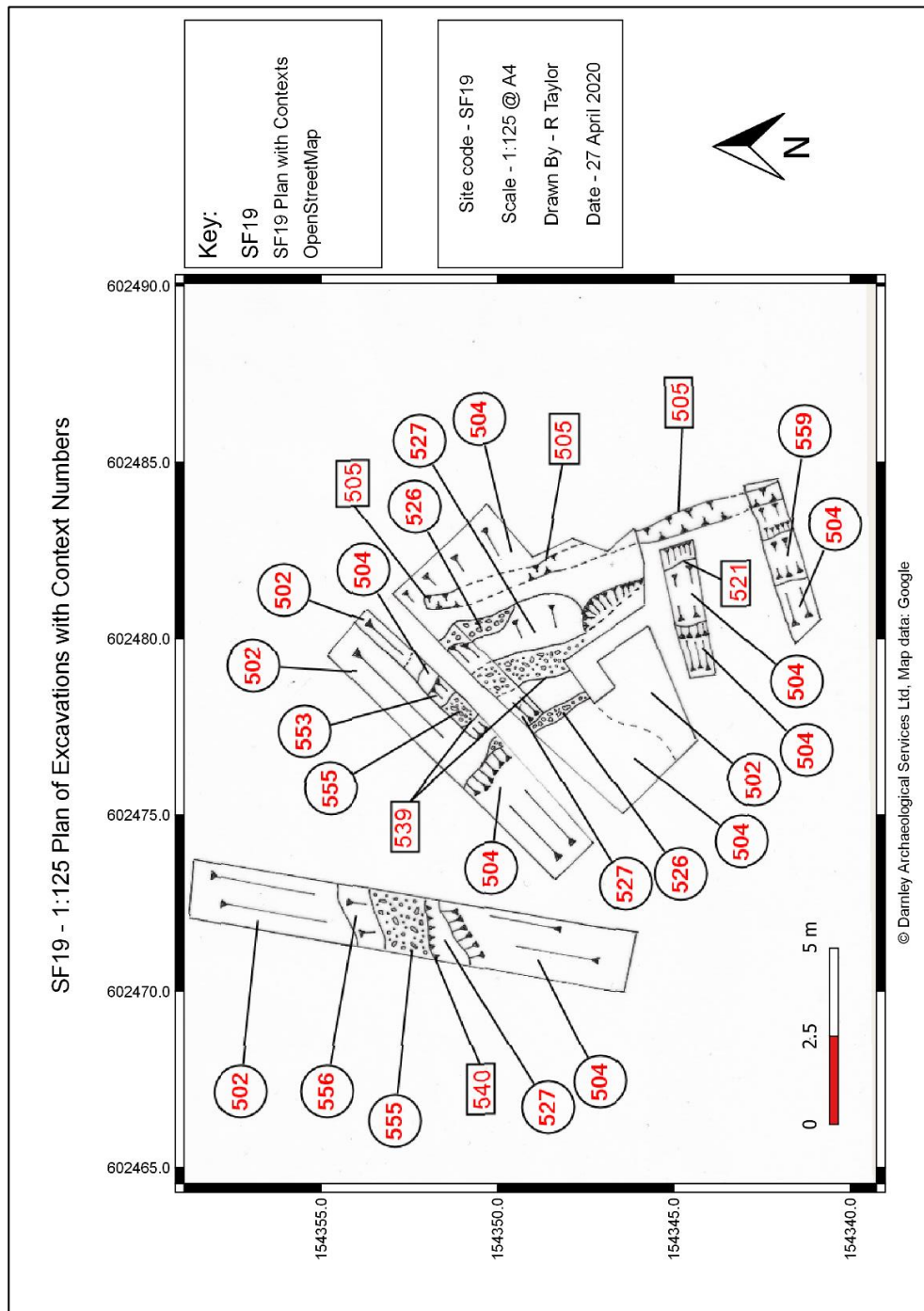
5.6.1. The location, and the subsequent six excavation trenches (Figure 15), were determined by the results of the geophysical data, aerial photography, and space available, to address the research aims of the investigation. 140m<sup>2</sup> of the site was excavated below the topsoil, 78m<sup>2</sup> accounted for deeper trenches (1-6).



(Figure 14 – 1:300 plan of excavation trenches overlaying geophysical anomaly)



(Figure 15 – 1:150 Plan of Trenches 1-6 for 2019)



(Figure 16 – Plan of excavations with context numbers for SF19)

5.6.2. The topsoil varied in depth (0.2m to 0.4m) across the site, often with flint inclusions.

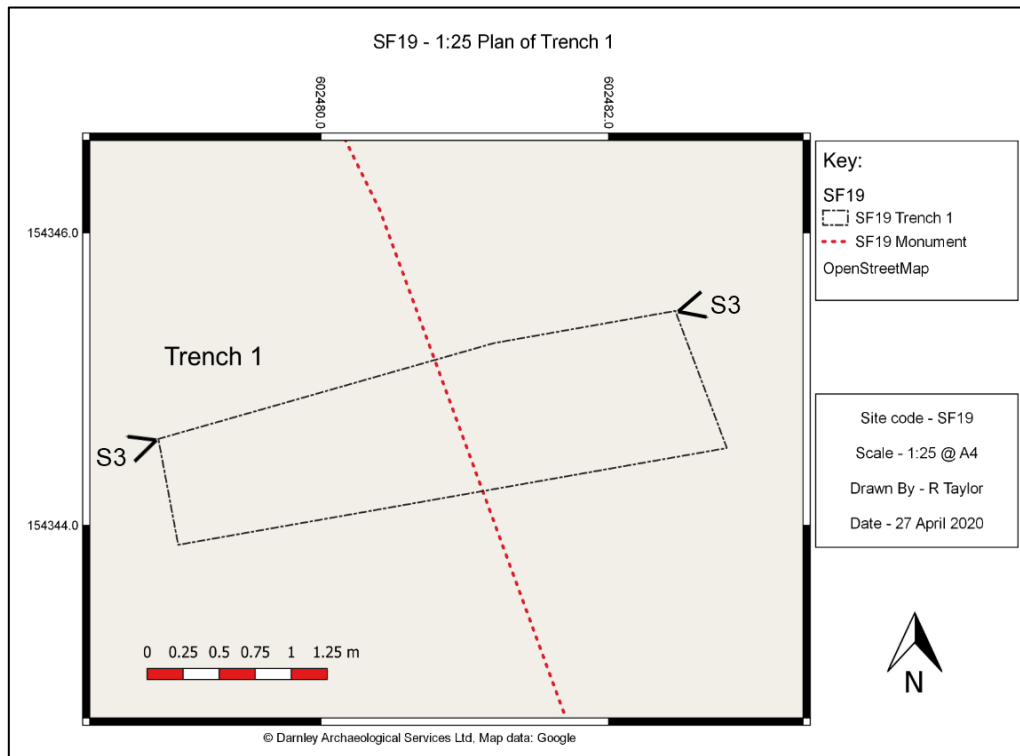
All trenches contained a subsoil that varied between 0.15 and 0.3m thick, which contained frequent and rounded chalk inclusions.

5.6.3. The natural consisted of Seaford Chalk, into which, solution hollows were eroded.

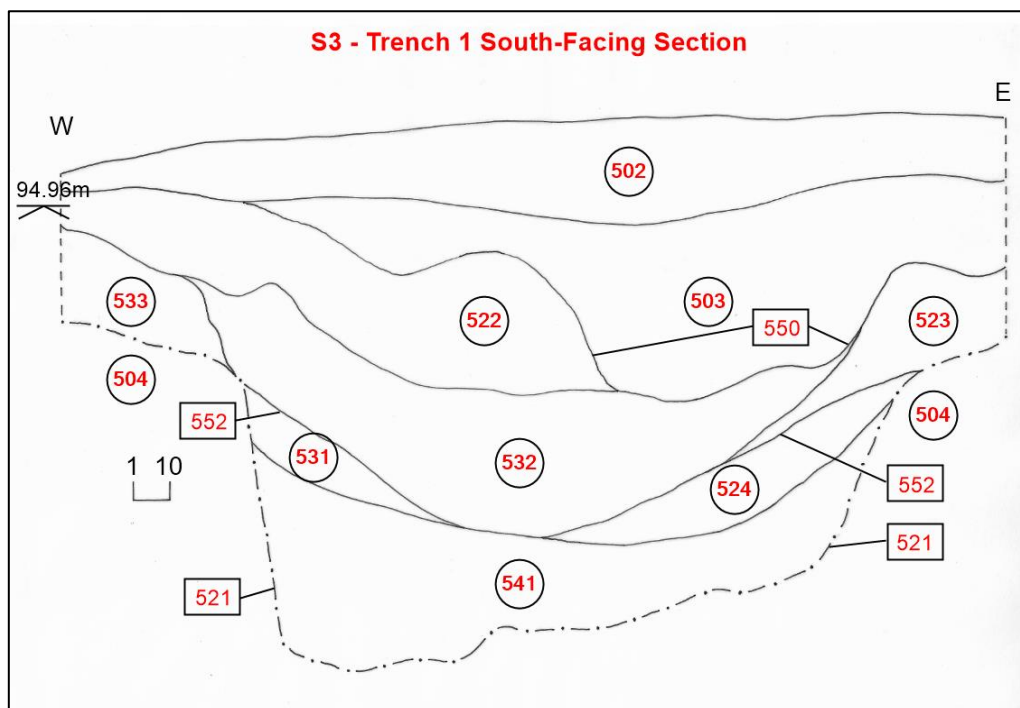
These hollows are filled with a soft, yellowish, silty sand, with flint nodules set in a black manganese-stained silty clay adhering, which adhered the flints to the sloped surface of the natural chalk.

## 5.7. Trench 1

5.7.1. Trench 1 investigated the anomaly identified by the geophysical survey, the positive response and likely be ditch fill.



(Figure 17 – Location of Trench 1 SF19)



(Figure 18 – South-facing section of Trench 1 2019)

- 5.7.2. After machining off the topsoil as part of the 2018 excavation, (502) covered much of the trench. This subsoil sealed ditch [550] and fill (503) which, according to other trench areas, probably runs around the outline of the Monument as a curvilinear. Given the profile and stratigraphic sequence, it is likely that [550] represents a later re-cut surrounding the Monument.
- 5.7.3. (503) covers both (522) to the southwest and (523) to the northeast, both the latter are truncated by [550]. However, (522) and (523) are not contemporary; (522) is a fill probably composed of chalk/clay run-off from an upstanding Monument structure, whereas (523) is likely fill composed of accumulated weathered chalk from the exposed east face of earlier cut feature [521].
- 5.7.4. (522) partially covers (533), which exhibits a convex profile as a possible chalk-rich build-up or structure associated with the internal Monument. (522) also covers (532), the primary fill of [552]. [552] is thought to be the initial ditch cut associated with the Monument construction, which implies that [521] is a cut of an early feature before the Monument construction.
- 5.7.5. Contemporaries of [552] and (532) in other Trenches are where many of the Early Neolithic pottery sherds (c.3800 to 3600 BC) have been discovered. [552] truncates both (531) and (524), likely the same Context, both powdery fills that accumulated weathered chalk from the sides of [521].
- 5.7.6. Finally, (531), (532) and (524) all cover (541), the initial fill of [521]. (541) is interesting as it is composed of larger chalk lumps, unlike the powdery fills (531) and (524), implying (541) was not exposed to weathering for any prolonged period which, in turn, suggests an Early Neolithic date. Initially, it was thought [521] was the initial ditch cut associated with the geophysical anomaly. However, given the contemporaries of [552] and (532) contain Early Neolithic pottery, stratigraphically [521] and (541) must be earlier. A possible explanation is that [521] constitutes an Early Neolithic pit feature, part-filled with (541), (531) and (532), before the Monument construction. Key to the age of (531) is the discovery of a bovid vertebra found at the base of Trench 1 that will require carbon-14 dating.
- 5.7.7. Immediately west of Trench 1 is [505], a Medieval boundary ditch cut into the chalk bedrock (504) and filled by (506). [505] respects all subsequent cuts/re-cuts associated with the Monument, implying that the latter remained as a feature within the landscape as late as the twelfth century AD, and possibly later depending upon Post-Medieval agricultural activities.



(Figure 19 – South-facing section image of Trench 1 demonstrating complex, multi-phase stratigraphy)



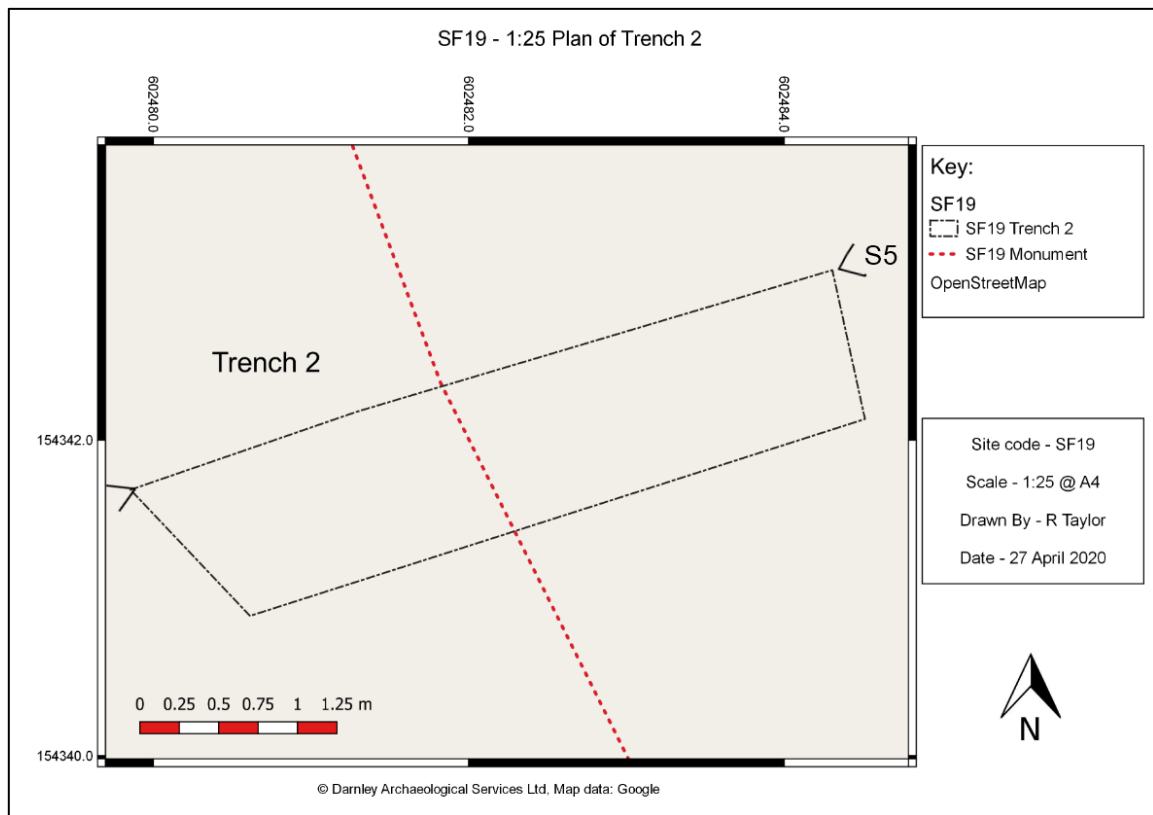
(Figure 20 – West-facing chalk face of the pit [521])



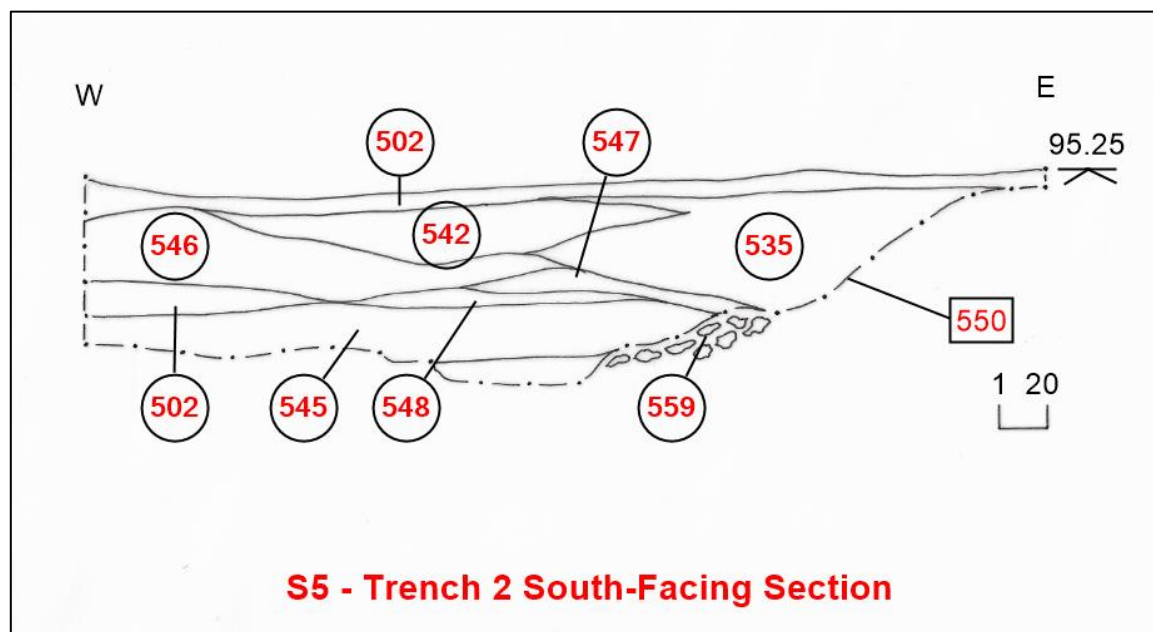
(Figure 21 East-facing chalk face of the pit [521])

## 5.8. Trench 2

5.8.1. Trench 2 investigated the ditch anomaly continuing south of Trench 1.



(Figure 22 – Location of Trench 2 SF19)



(Figure 23 – South-facing section of Trench 2 SF19)

5.8.2. After machining off the topsoil as part of the 2018 excavations, (502) covered much of the trench. This subsoil sealed re-cut ditch [549] and fill (535) which, according to other trench areas, probably runs around the outline of the Monument as a curvilinear and contemporary with [550] and (503) in Trench 1.

5.8.3. [549] is truncated by (542), a brown silty clay with chalk pieces is a possible chalk/clay run-off from the Monument structure. Both (542) and (535) cover (546), clay with chalk pieces; (535) also covers (547), a light brown sandy clay with chalk flecks. Both (546) and (547) are possible contemporaries with (522) in Trench 1. Both (546) and (547) cover (548), a thin band of green-grey, firm silty clay which may indicate a discrete water/flood episode. (546), (547) and (548) cover (545), a brown silty clay with chalk inclusions. (545) is over (559), a dark brown silty clay. Cut not yet seen during excavation but (559) thought to be the same episode as (532) and (538), based on the recovery of a single potsherd though to date from Early Neolithic (c.4000 to 3350 BC).

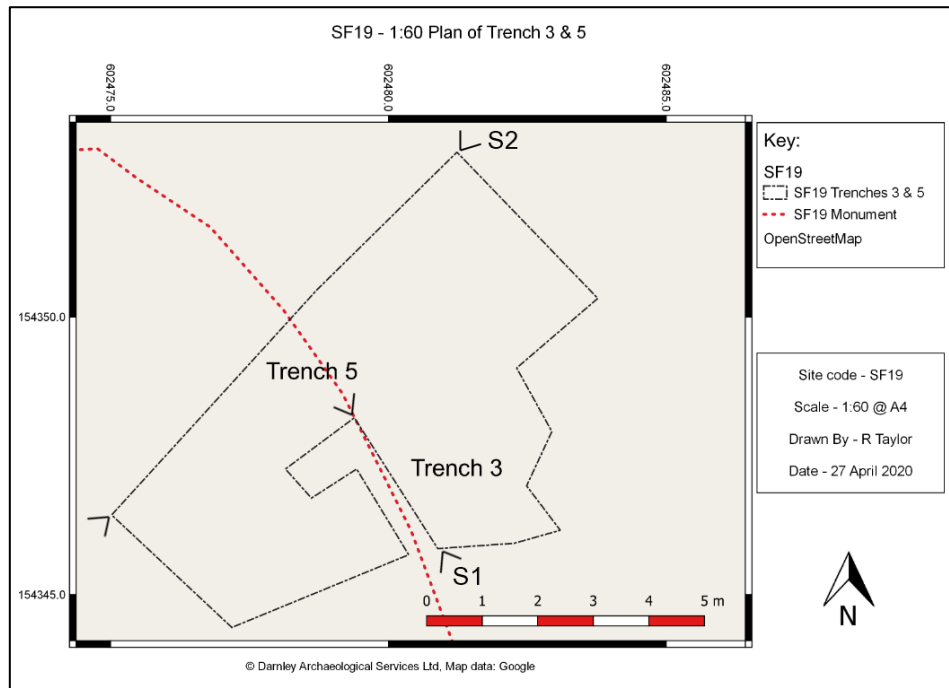
5.8.4. Trench 2 demonstrates the continuation of the initial ditch fill [559] and (532) and later re-cuts [549] and [550] that skirt the Monument structure. However, Trench 2 did not reach a depth to investigate further the continuations of [552] and the base of the earlier cut feature [521] in Trench 1. Consequently, Trench 2 does not build on the hypothesis that [521] was a pit feature pre-dating the Monument.



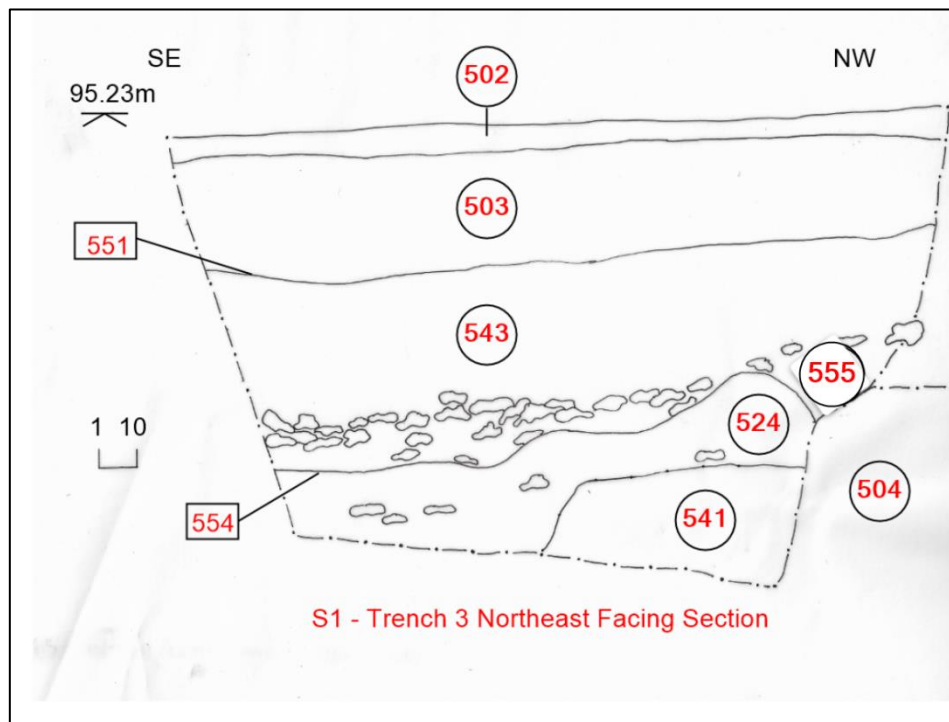
(Figure 24 – Image of south-facing section Trench 2)

## 5.9. Trench 3 & 5

5.9.1. Trench 3 investigated the ditch anomaly continuation northwest by exploring a longitudinal section slot perpendicular to Trench 1 in an attempt to view the assumed continuation of [521].



(Figure 25 – Location of Trench 3 & 5 SF19)



(Figure 26 – Northeast-facing section of Trench 3 SF19)

- 5.9.2. After machining off the topsoil as part of the 2018 excavation, (502) covered much of the trench area. This subsoil sealed ditch [551] and fill (503) which, according to other trench areas, probably runs around the outline of the Monument as a curvilinear and contemporary with [550] and (503) in Trench 1.
- 5.9.3. (503) covers (543), a brown silty clay fill of [554], contemporary with [552] and [532]. (543) covers (553), a dark brown silty clay containing occasional struck flint, fresh Early Neolithic pottery sherds (c.4000/3800-3350 BC) and charcoal pieces. Large flint nodules appear to have been lain at the base (555).
- 5.9.4. (553) sits above (524), a granular fill that accumulated from a weathered chalkface. It is believed that the chalk face visible in Figure 28 is the same as [521], though curiously, to the immediate north of Trench 3 (toward Trench 5) is evidence of a solution hollow, which [521] may have abutted when constructed.
- 5.9.5. (524) sits above (541), composed of larger compacted chalk lumps. If [521] was a pit feature, before the Monument's construction, [521] exhibits a curved shape in plan which truncates a natural solution hollow at the boundary of Trench 3 and Trench 5.



(Figure 27 – Image of northeast-facing section S1 in Trench 3 showing the curved shape of [521] in the foreground, truncating the solution hollow to the right)



(Figure 28 – Looking Southeast in Trench 3)

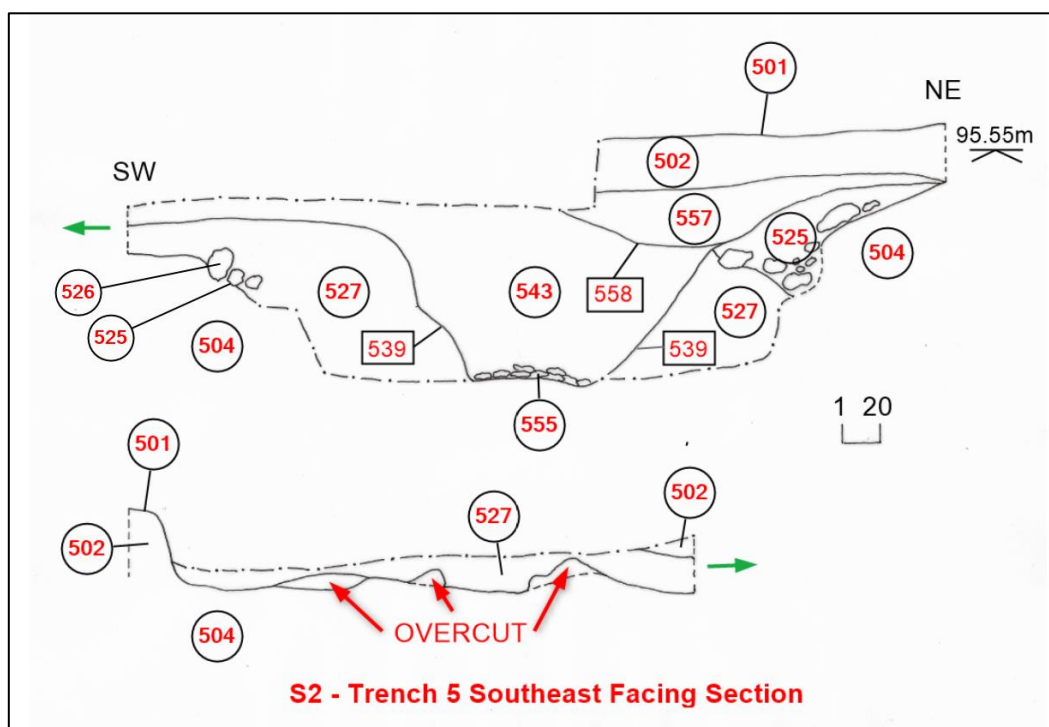
(Figure 29 - East-facing longitudinal section S1 in Trench 3)

## 5.10. Trench 5

5.10.1. Trench 5 offers the most convincing evidence of the ditch anomaly identified by the geophysical survey. After machining off the topsoil as part of the 2018 excavation, (502) covered much of the trench area. This subsoil sealed ditch [558] and fill (557) which, according to other trench areas, probably runs around the outline of the Monument as a curvilinear, the exact course of which could be traced in Trench 1 [550] & (503) and [551] and (503) in Trench 3. Given the profile and stratigraphic sequence, it is likely that [550] represents a later re-cut surrounding the Monument.

5.10.2. [558] truncates (543), a dark brown silty clay. It contained occasional struck flint and both charcoal pieces and flecks. At the base of (553), a concentration of large flint nodules appear to have been lain (555), sat within the dark brown silty clay matrix, thought to be the same episode as (532) in Trench 1 and (543) in Trench 2, and sit above cut [539]. [539] is a continuation of [552] in Trench 1 and [554] in Trench 3.

5.10.3. [539] is the first ditch cut for the Monument and the positive anomaly likely to be shown as a continuous ditch on the geophysics results. [539] truncates (527), a light yellow/brown sandy soil, thought to be the fill of a solution hollow. Within the solution hollow (527) sits atop of (526), a band of large flint nodules that are adhered to the face of the natural chalkface (504) by (525), a black manganese-stained silty clay. It is believed this combination is a consequence of geological action, resulting in the contents of a solution hollow that [539] punched through during the construction of the Monument.



(Figure 30 – Southeast facing section in Trench 5 SF19)



(Figure 31 – Image of southeast-facing section S2 in Trench 5 showing solution hollow into which the ring ditches are cut)



(Figure 32 – Southeast-facing Trench 5 showing [539])

(Figure 33 - Looking southeast at (555) in Trench 5)



(Figure 34 – Looking southwest at geological relationships between natural sand (527) in the foreground, the flint nodules (526), manganese-stained black clay (525) and chalk face of the solution hollow (504) in Trench 5)

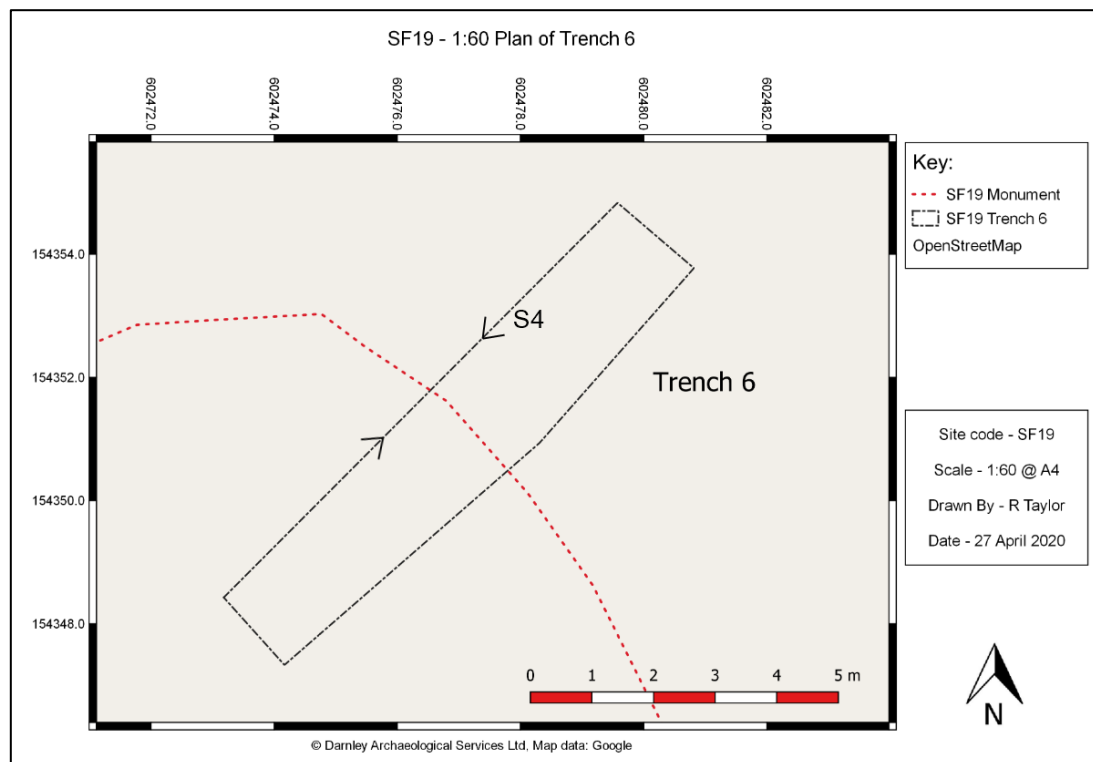


(Figure 35 – Looking north at Medieval ditch [505], cut into chalk bedrock (504) with fill (506) partially removed, north of Prehistoric ditch cuts/re-cuts in Trench 5)

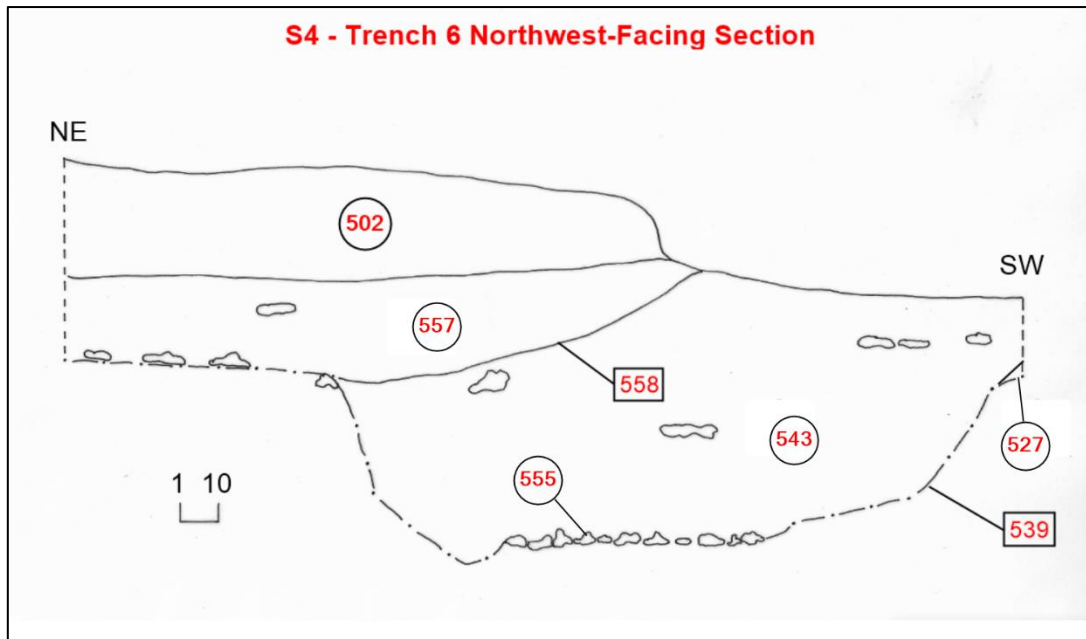
## 5.11. Trench 6

5.11.1. Trench 6 mirrors much of the stratigraphy in Trench 5. After machining off the topsoil as part of the 2018 excavation, (502) covered much of the trench area. This subsoil sealed ditch [558] and fill (557) which, according to other trench areas, probably runs around the outline of the Monument as a curvilinear, the exact course of which could be traced in Trench 1 ([550] & (503)). Given the profile and stratigraphic sequence, it is likely that [550] represents a later re-cut surrounding the Monument.

5.11.2. [558] truncates (543) & (553), a dark brown silty clay. It contained occasional struck flint and both charcoal pieces and flecks. At the base of (553), a concentration of large flint nodules appear to have been lain (555), sat within the dark brown silty clay matrix, thought to be the same episode as (532), (538), and sit above cut (539).



(Figure 36 – Location of Trench 6 SF19)



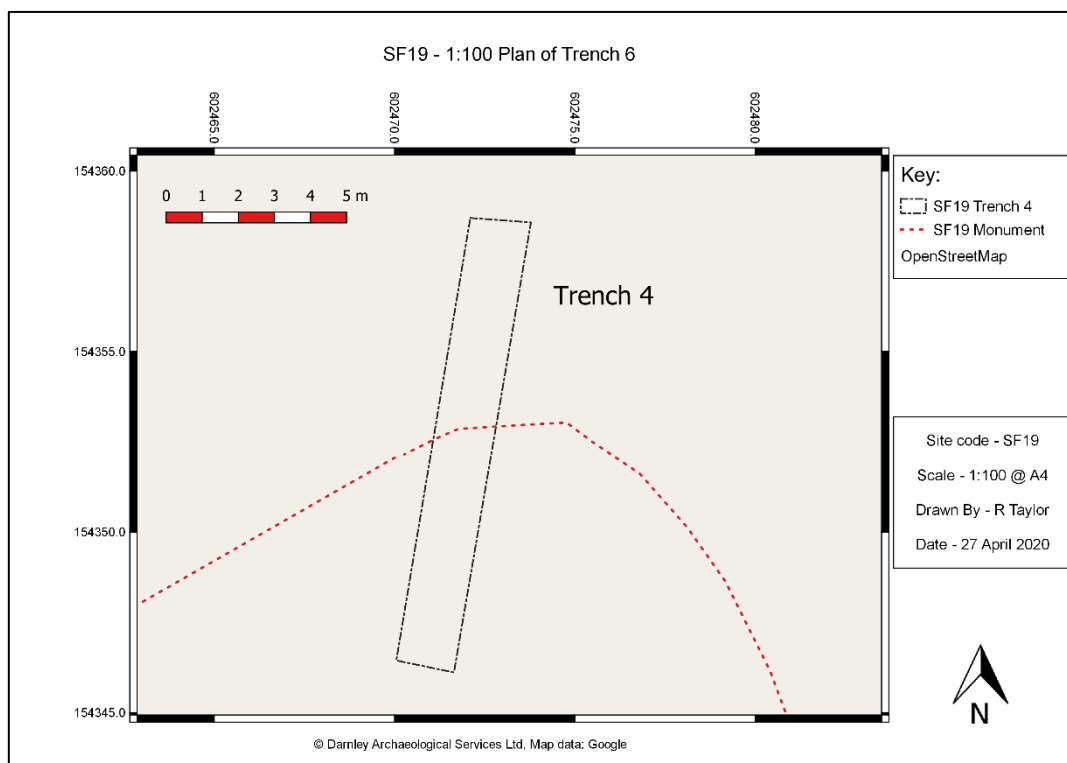
(Figure 37 – Northwest-facing section S4 in Trench 6)



(Figure 38 – Image of northwest-facing section 4 in Trench 6 showing ditch [539] and re-cut [558])

## 5.12. Trench 4

5.12.1. Trench 4 further investigated the anomaly identified by the geophysical survey and evaluated the projected continuation of [552] in Trench 1, [554] in Trench 3 and [539] in Trench 5 & 6. Trench 4 provided diagnostic flint tools and pottery from Early Neolithic into the Middle Bronze Age.



(Figure 39 – Location of Trench 4 SF19)

5.12.2. After machining off the topsoil as part of the 2019 excavation, (502) covered much of the trench area. This subsoil sealed a continuation of ditch [558] and fill (556) which, according to other trench areas, probably runs around the outline of the Monument as a curvilinear, the exact course of which could be traced in Trenches 1, 2, 3, 5, & 6. Given the profile and stratigraphic sequence, it is likely that [558] and fill (556) represents a later re-cut surrounding the Monument.

5.12.3. [558] truncates (538), a dark brown silty clay. It contained occasional struck flint and both charcoal pieces and flecks. At the base of (538), a concentration of large flint nodules appear to have been laid (555), sat within the dark brown silty clay matrix, thought to be the same episode as (532), and sits above cut [540]. MBA pottery was located near the interface between (538) and (556) which, at the time of excavation, was not entirely clear. Therefore, pottery dates attributed to (538) should also be considered as a possible early phase of (556).

5.12.4. [540] is cut into the natural sandy fill (527), which sits above the chalk bedrock (504).



(Figure 40 – West-facing image of (555) with (504) to the right in Trench 4)



(Figure 41 – Looking south in Trench 4)

(Figure 42 - Looking south at (555) in Trench 4)

## 6. FINDS

6.1.1. Finds were recovered from all six trenches. Pottery and lithic material were recovered in an appreciable quantity, while a limited amount of bone was also recovered. As befitting a probable Late Prehistoric Monument, most artefacts belong within the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods, but there are also a few items (pottery) of medieval date.

6.1.2. The condition of the material is generally reasonable. However, the limited amount of bone has suffered, probably as a result of chemical and mechanical erosion of the harsh clayey and silty sands of the area rather than pre-depositional wear or abrasion.

6.1.3. All finds have been quantified by material type within each Context, and this information is summarised by trench in Tables 2, 3 & 4. This section provides a basic description of the artefacts recovered and assesses their potential to address the aims and objectives of the project.

### 6.2. Pottery (Nigel Macpherson-Grant)

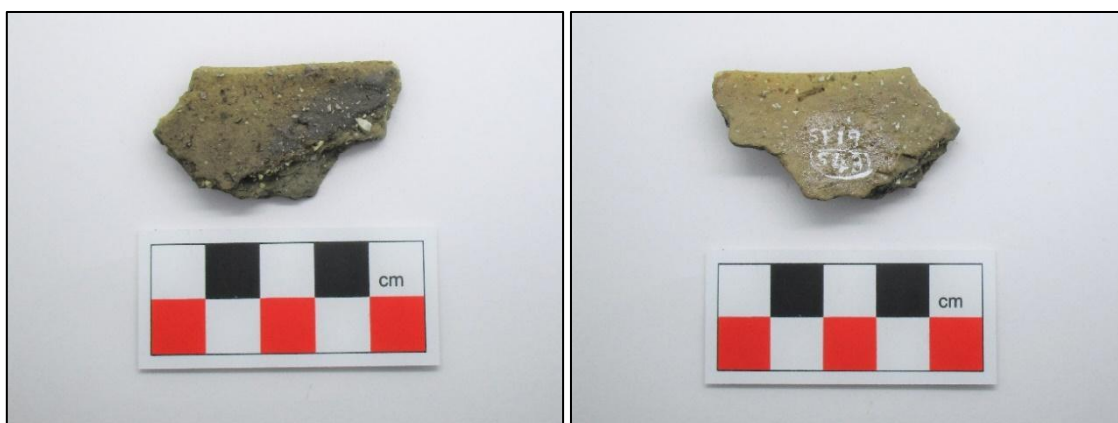
6.2.1. The pottery provides the primary dating evidence for the site, with over 90% of the assemblage derived from secure, stratified deposits. A total of 73 sherds weighing 211gms were recovered during this season's work on this Monument. This small total is multi-period in content – with the majority of its cultural phases confined to the Early Prehistoric period (between c.4000-1500 BC). Only one is of Historic Period date (post-c.50 BC). Not unexpectedly, considering the apparent antiquity of the Monument, some of the earlier material is small, fragmentary and worn. However, material from its earliest phase is frequently and surprisingly, even if recovered from late-phase contexts, only little worn or near-fresh. This includes a small number of diagnostic rim elements. Overall, the 2019 assemblage includes:

- i. No material pre-dating c.4000 BC
- ii. A first ceramic phase of activity represented by a quantity of Early Neolithic rims and body sherds that can be given an initial date of c.3800-3600 BC
- iii. A second Late Neolithic phase of activity *may* be represented – but the evidence is ambiguous
- iv. A second or third phase of activity is *probably* represented by a small quantity of Early Bronze Age Beaker-*type* sherds, but the evidence is not entirely conclusive
- v. A third or fourth phase of activity *may* be represented by a few sherds of *possible* Early Bronze Age Urn-*type* – but again, the evidence is not entirely conclusive.
- vi. Irrespective – Points iii-v represent activity that can be placed either between c.2800-1500 BC or more probably between c.2100-1500 BC
- vii. An assumed final, Medieval, phase of activity associated with the cutting and use of a field-boundary ditch at some point between c.1175-1250 AD

6.2.2. Two definite, possibly 4, separate phases of activity appear to be represented by the material of this general date:

### 6.2.3. Early Neolithic pottery

(38-40 sherds) was recorded from Trench 4 Context (538) and Trench 3 & 5 Contexts (502), (537), (543), (553) and (555) – the last four contexts produced solely Neolithic ceramic. The majority of elements consisted of coarsely flint-tempered body sherds but also included four rim elements and one shoulder fragment. Surprisingly, much of this material is in relatively good condition and indicates only a minor degree of exposure or redistribution during any subsequent, post-depositional, activity. All the rims are from closed-mouth round-based bowls of medium-fairly large diameter. One useful near-fresh part-profile element from Context (543) is from a bowl with a broad shallow horizontal groove externally, just below the rim (Figures 43 & 44) – and has reasonable parallels from the Early Neolithic causewayed enclosure assemblage at Windmill Hill, near Avebury, Wiltshire (Smith 1965, Fig.18). The groove may well have facilitated the tying down of a cloth/skin cover. Another rim from Context (555) (Figures 45 & 46), relatively thick, upright and beaded also has useful general parallels from the same site (op.cit., eg. Fig.20 P94).



(Figures 43 & 44 – Rim from Early Neolithic Round-Based Bowl from context (543))



(Figures 45 & 46 – Early Neolithic rim from context (555))

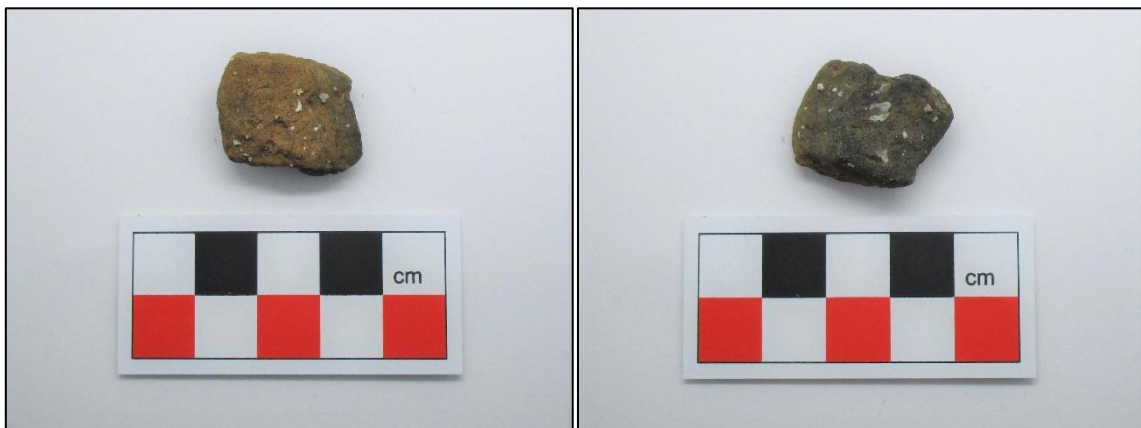
The other rims are simple and technically featureless (from Contexts (543) and (555)). A small worn angular shoulder sherd (residual in (502)) is from a rather weakly carinated bowl. The carination is not accentuated and therefore not from the very earliest phase of Neolithic activity in this country, i.e. broadly between c.4000-3800 BC. None of the pottery recovered to date is decorated so, initially, a relatively early date of c.3800-3600 BC for this material is reasonably likely, in the current absence of a radiocarbon date.



(Figures 47 & 48 – Early Neolithic rim from context (555))



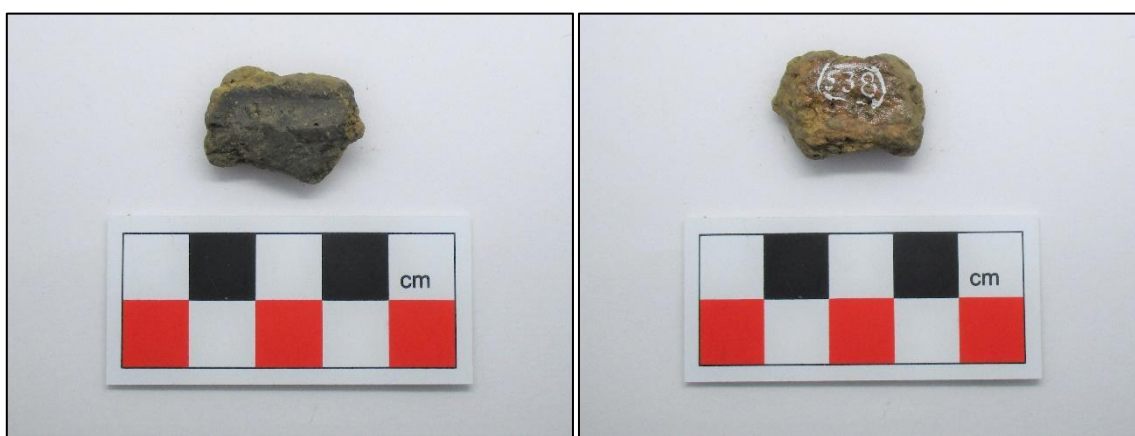
(Figures 49 & 50 – Early Neolithic rim from context (543))



(Figures 51 & 52 – Early Neolithic sherd from context (502))

#### 6.2.4.Late Neolithic pottery

Potentially represented by a single small moderately worn grog-tempered body sherd from Trench 4 Context (538) with traces of one or more horizontal or vertical 'ribs' on its exterior (Figures 53 & 54). These apparent 'ribs' could well be the bi-product of deeply groove-decorating the vessel body. If this has been correctly identified this would make the present sherd, and possibly some of the grog-tempered material recorded from (538), Late Neolithic Grooved Ware. Initially, this could be placed between c.2800-2300 BC. Alternatively, the decoration is only apparent – and arguably is from the moulded shoulder of an Early Bronze Age Biconical Urn. Although this analyst tentatively favours a Late Neolithic attribution – the evidence for a Late Neolithic phase of activity is currently too inconclusive.



(Figures 53 & 54 – Late Neolithic grog tempered sherd from context (538))

#### 6.2.5.Early Bronze Age pottery

Probably represented by a cluster of 16 mostly small purely grog-tempered sherds from Context (538)<sup>1</sup>. The assemblage includes several rim fragments - One is a thin, simple rim from a closed-mouth vessel (Figures 55 & 56), another is represented by two tiny thin rim elements from an upright rimmed vessel. Much of this material is oxidised and a drab buff-pink. Some, including the two tiny rim scraps, are dual-fired with oxidised exteriors and reduced interiors, a characteristic of some Early Bronze Age firing trends, and frequently found on EBA Beakers and some Collared Urns. The simple closed-mouth rim is a little unusual in an EBA context – and might just possibly be Late Neolithic. The other same-vessel rim scraps look like EBA Beakers – though the absence of typical comb-tooth impressed decoration hinders absolute confidence. Also, from the same Context, there are four small sherds from a thick-walled vessel in a drab grey-buff coarsely grog-tempered fabric which looks like an EBA Collared Urn.

<sup>1</sup> MBA pottery was located near the interface between (538) and (556) which, at the time of excavation, was not clear. Therefore, MBA pottery dates attributed to (538) should also be considered as a possible early phase of (556).



(Figures 55 & 56 – EBA rim of a closed-mouth vessel from context (538))

6.2.6. Assuming all three cultural attributions are correct, the Late Neolithic Grooved Ware can be broadly placed between c.2800-2300 BC. EBA Beaker, as a general type, between c.2400-1700 BC and Collared or other EBA Urn traditions, between c.2000-1500 BC. To find all three traditions from the same Context is surprising and, as said, the absence of larger rim or decorated elements hinders clarity. Several of the EBA sherds were located near the interface between (538) and (556), and when excavated, this interface was not entirely clear. Therefore, pottery dates attributed to (538) should also be considered as a possible early phase of (556). At this stage it is safe to say that Early Bronze Age activity is represented at this location – broadly datable to between c.2100-1500 BC, if as late.

#### 6.2.7. Historic Period

This late phase of activity is represented by six sherds from Trench 5 Contexts (502) and (506). Three different ware types are present, all body sherds and mostly only slightly worn with one very worn. One to two sources are represented by late twelfth to earlier thirteenth century probable north-central Kentish fine sandy ware (Figures 57 & 58), some moderately shell-tempered. A further single sherd is a Canterbury sandy ware product. All are probably from kitchen vessels; none need necessarily pre-date c.1175 and none are likely to post-date the mid-thirteenth century AD.



(Figures 57 & 58 – sherds of north-central Kentish fine sandy ware from context (506))

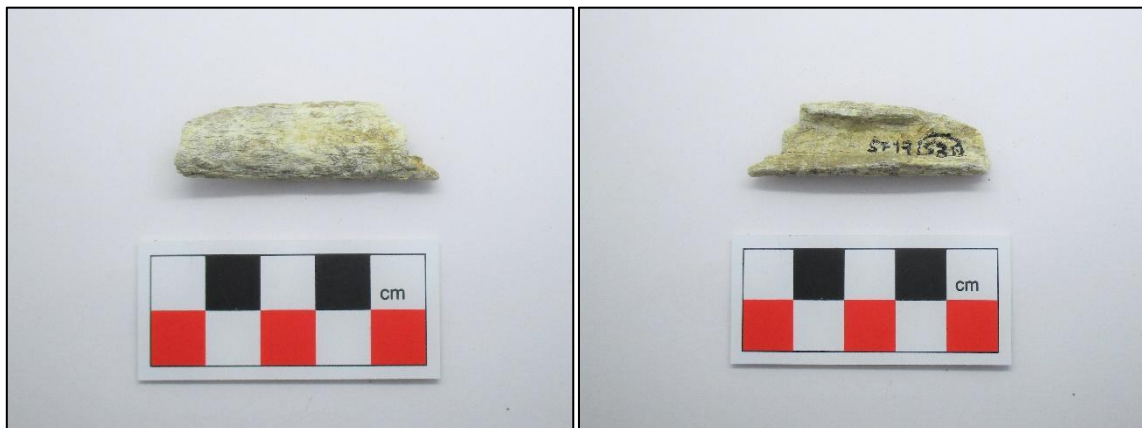
### 6.3. Animal Bone

6.3.1. A total of 8 bones or bone fragments were recovered (see table 4). The most diagnostic piece offers evidence of Early to Late Neolithic bovine species from a single vertebra recovered from Context (531).



(Figures 59 & 60 – Bovid vertebrae from context (531))

6.3.2. Seven bone fragments of unspecified species were located in secure contexts (522), (531), (535) and (543) – all appear fragments of animal long-bones shafts and subject to moderate calcification due to the soil conditions.



(Figures 61 & 62 – Bone fragment from Context (531) exhibiting heavy calcification)

#### 6.4. Worked Flint (Paul Hart & Richard Taylor)

6.4.1. A total of 1088 lithics were recovered from the excavations (Table 2). Many of the flints appeared to be of Early Prehistoric date and were contemporary with the features from which they were recovered. A small number of diagnostic pieces offer evidence of activity within the Early Neolithic (4000 to 3200 BC). In comparison, much of the Beaker Period to Early Bronze Age (2500 to 1550 BC) and the Middle to Mid to Late Bronze Age (1550 to 1150 BC) are represented by flakes and debitage.

6.4.2. The majority of the assemblage was struck from flint from local sources. The high quality of some of the pieces indicates that some care went into selecting appropriate nodules. The cortex varies from rare, moderately thick to thin whitish, chalky examples to more frequent, weathered chalk examples and heavily rolled and abraded examples. Some flakes and blades exhibit an olive-green cortex with an underlying orange band attributable to flint from the Bullhead Beds. However, these may have been obtained from derived material found locally.

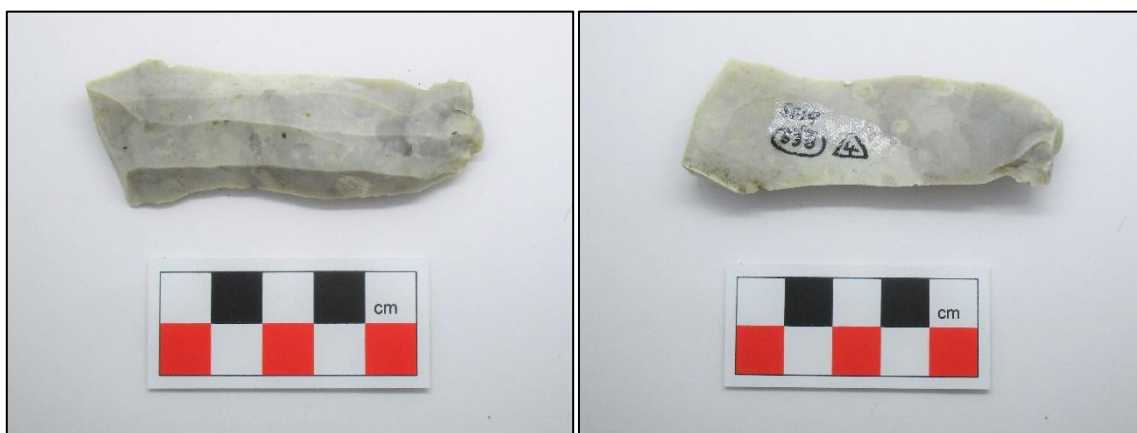
6.4.3. While most of the pieces have a light patina, a significant portion has no patina at all. Heavy patina/cortication was rare. Most of the flints were in a relatively fresh condition, but some displayed moderate edge and heavy damage, and a small proportion were rolled. A significant percentage of the assemblage was broken, perhaps reflecting both the thinness of many of the blade forms but also the use of sources of flint with numerous inherent flaws. Unpatinated material within chalk soils are more likely to be contemporary with their contexts under normal circumstances, showing no evidence of having experienced a significant period of exposure post discard (this does not apply to 'brickearth' or silt/clay geologies, however). When this fresh-looking material is considered to be residual, it could suggest its disturbance and re-deposition from (and thus the former presence of) an earlier context.

6.4.4. Overall, the 2019 assemblage includes:

- i. No obvious material pre-dating c.4000 BC
- ii. A first flint phase of activity represented by several primary flakes, good flakes and debitage *probably* associated with the construction of the first Monument ring-ditch and given an initial date of c.4000-3000 BC.
- iii. The first flint phase of activity is also represented by a quantity of deposited diagnostic tools: two Neolithic arrowheads, a horseshoe scraper and blade core, all of which can be given an initial date of c.4000-3000 BC
- iv. The second phase of activity represented by several primary flakes, good flakes and debitage *probably* associated with the construction of the second (or re-cut) Monument ring-ditch and given an initial date of c.2200-1500 BC, but the evidence is not entirely conclusive.
- v. Irrespective – Points ii-iv represent activity that can be placed either between c.4000-1500 BC.

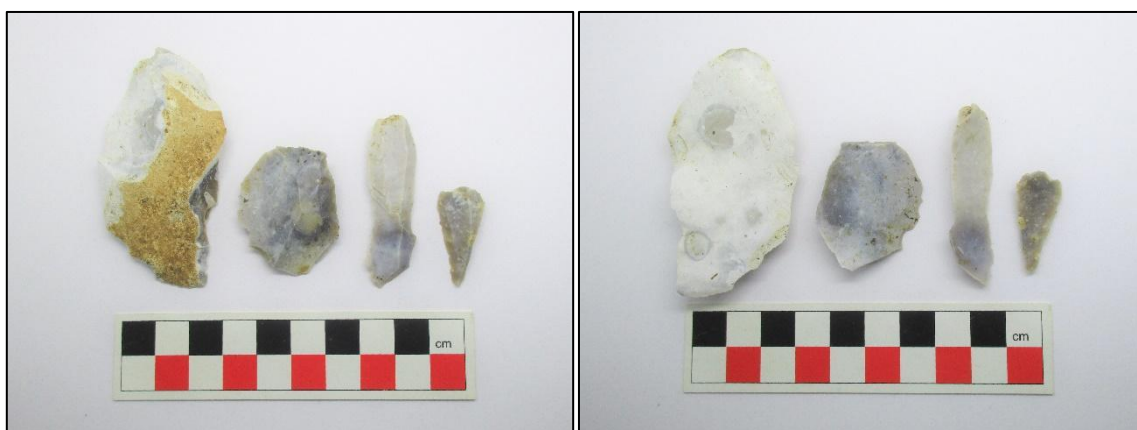
## Primary Technology

6.4.5. The assemblage was flake-based, and this was reflected in the cores which displayed flake scars. These varied in form from tested nodules and core fragments through to more carefully formed single and multi-platform varieties. They tended to have few removals and were often quite large, but one blade core may date to the Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age (Figures 62 & 63).



(Figures 63 & 64 – Neolithic blade core from context (538))

Blade forms (blades, bladelets and blade-like flakes) accounted for 51 of the 577 blanks recovered, giving a blade to flake index of 9.2 per cent (Ford 1987). This figure is relatively low if the assemblage is taken as a coherent whole but, along with the high number of primary flakes, probably reflects the construction and maintenance nature of the site as a multi-period Monument.

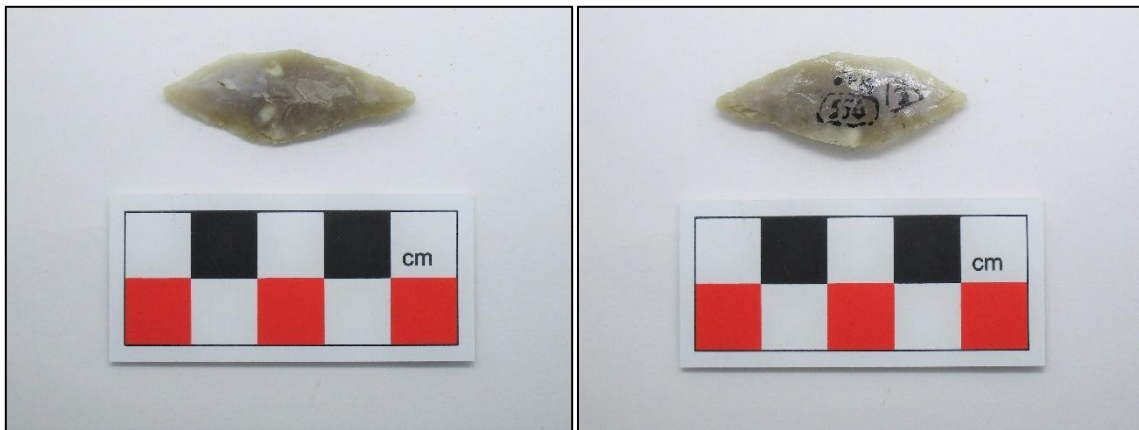


(Figures 65 & 66 –Primary flake; flake; blade & bladelet from context (537))

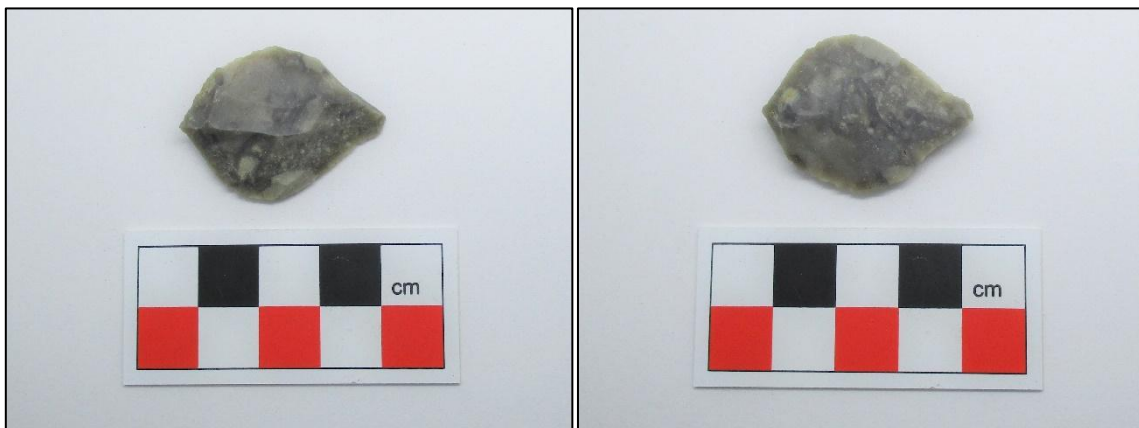
## Secondary Technology

6.4.6. A small collection of tools was recovered (Table 2) including two Neolithic arrowheads, a horseshoe scraper and a rod/fabricator. Three of the four pieces have good potential to be contemporary with Neolithic contexts in which they were found, confirmed by the presence of diagnostic pottery (see section 6.2). These flint tools include two Neolithic arrowheads, a horseshoe scraper and blade core, all of which can be given an initial date of c.4000-3000 BC.

6.4.7. The first arrowhead is an Early Neolithic leaf-shaped Type 1C (Butler 2012, Pollard 1997), found in Context (538) in Trench 4, fill of the first Monument ring-ditch. The Second arrowhead is an Early Neolithic leaf-shaped Type 2A (Butler 2012), again found in Context (538) in Trench 4.

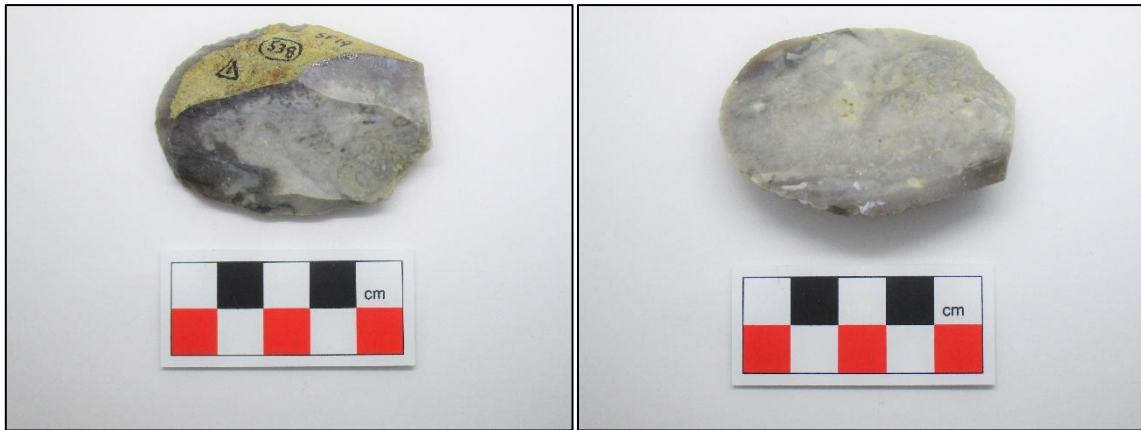


(Figures 67 & 68 – Early Neolithic leaf-shaped Type 1C from context (538))



(Figures 69 & 70 – Early Neolithic leaf-shaped Type 2A from context (538))

6.4.8. The horseshoe scraper is a Neolithic end scraper (horseshoe), manufactured on a short or rounded flake (Butler 2012) and found in Context (538) in Trench 4.



(Figures 71 & 72 – Neolithic horseshoe scraper from context (538))

6.4.9. A patinated 'rod/fabricator' tool, thought to be Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age (Butler 2012), was recovered from the subsoil (502) showing evidence of a significant period of exposure post-discard.



(Figures 73 & 74 - Late Neolithic rod/fabricator from context (502))

6.4.10. Fourteen 'potboilers' were present, weighing a total of 898g, all of which were recovered from ditch-fill contexts. One showed a remnant of a buff cortex.

## **7. PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE**

7.1.1.No bulk samples were taken throughout the excavation.

7.1.2.Wood charcoal was generally recorded only in low quantities in ditch fills (538, 553, 532 & 559).

## 8. DISCUSSION

8.1. Analysis of the recovered artefacts considered alongside the excavation contexts has produced the following seven phases relating to the Monument's life.

8.1.1. Phases 1 & 2 - Modern agricultural topsoil and subsoil.

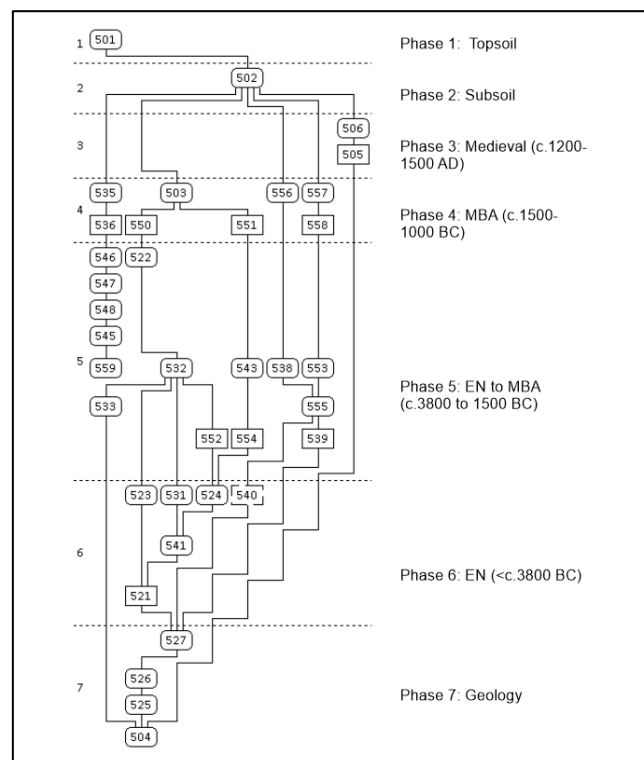
8.1.2. Phase 3 – Medieval (c.1200 – 1500 AD) – ceramic evidence from (506) and the alignment of (505) suggests the Monument remained a feature in the landscape into the Medieval period.

8.1.3. Phase 4 – Middle Bronze Age (c.1500 – 1000 BC) – the surrounding ditch re-cut (536), (550), (551), (558), fill (556) and associated ceramic and lithic evidence suggests the Monument was maintained throughout this period. No artefact evidence from the Iron Age, Roman or Early Medieval periods is presented, suggesting the Monument, while enduring as a feature into the landscape, ceased maintenance and active use after c.1000 BC.

8.1.4. Phase 5 – Early Neolithic to Middle Bronze Age (c. 3800 – 1500 BC) – the Monument was constructed during the Early Neolithic (c.3800 – 3600 BC), evidenced by the initial ditch cut (539), (540), (552) and (554). Subsequent fills suggest the Monument underwent prolonged multi-period use covering c.2000 years.

8.1.5. Phase 6 – Early Neolithic (< c.3800 BC) – Trench 1 demonstrates evidence for a pit feature [521], excavated before the construction of the initial ditch cut (and perhaps the Monument itself). The purpose of this pit feature is currently unknown;

8.1.6. Phase 7 – Geology.



(Figure 75 – Stratigraphic sequence for SF19)

- 8.2. An interpretation of the Monument's function and chronology, based upon the evidence accumulated that addresses the Research Aims can be summarised as follows:

**Research Aim 4: What was the function or functions of the Prehistoric structure at the Stringmans Field site?**

Given the size and shape of the Monument anomaly visible in the geophysics data, combined with construction and maintenance methods employed by Prehistoric people, the investigation suggests the presence of an Early Neolithic Monument surrounded by a ditch.

In the absence of evidence (excavation & geophysical survey) of any associated passage or entrance attached to the structure, a possible explanation is a small to medium-sized long barrow of the 'False Passage-Grave type'. An elongated earthen burial mound surrounded by a ditch (Grinsell 1936). In structure, long barrows are rectangular or sometimes trapezoidal earth mounds, and some have a long ancestry. However, we have little understanding of how most people were buried during the Neolithic period (Butler 2011). What we do know is burial practices within barrows differed from place to place, and to understand the function of this Prehistoric Monument fully, it is essential future excavations focus on the discovery or examination of a burial.

Any surface trace of a mound has been removed from the surrounding landscape by ploughing, agriculture, etc., probably since the Medieval period. However, before this, the mound must have remained an impressive feature within the landscape. Indeed, the Monument was likely just one component of a broader Prehistoric ritual landscape overlooking the north downs. Previous excavations (Section 2.1) indicate a settlement and ritual activity from c.3000 – 1000 BC. The discovery of the SF19 Monument pushes this date range back to c.4000 BC.

**Research Aim 3: What are the chronological and spatial relationships of archaeological deposits at the Stringmans Field site?**

The excavation of an Early Neolithic Monument and the recovery of Early Neolithic material is always a bonus for regional studies. The investigation located the northeast portion of a Monument, which had first been revealed during the previous excavation in 2018. Two distinct curvilinear ditches of different cultural phases were discovered enclosing the Monument. Also, a probable earlier pit feature cut into the chalk bedrock appears to have been incorporated within the initial phase of the Monument's construction.

Based on the material culture dating evidence recovered (pottery and lithics), the Monument was likely constructed before the mid-fourth millennium BC, at a time when the regional Neolithic population was beginning to increase in numbers, and expand into areas less rapidly occupied than the more easily grazed or cleared chalk downland zones.

**Research Aim 2: What is the condition of the archaeological deposits at the Stringmans Field site?**

The original profile of the Monument has long since gone. However, the continual use of the surrounding fields for agriculture has preserved Prehistoric deposits below a depth of 0.5m, to the extent whereby secure contexts were producing fresh, diagnostic artefacts.

**Research Aim 1: What is the extent of archaeological deposit at the Stringmans Field site?**

Further resistance and magnetic surveys revealed the probable extent of the Monument heading off to the southwest, measuring approximately 37m long and 21m wide and rectilinear in shape. It may well have acted as a 'founder' burial Monument for the local population. As such, its potential re-use for burial or ancestor-related offerings in the Early Bronze Age is not unexpected.

In terms of more recent landscape history, the Historical Period is represented by a small cluster of Medieval-type pottery sherds derived from an adjacent field-boundary ditch. What is interesting is that the excavated Medieval field-boundary respects the edge of the Monument, implying that the latter remained as a feature within the landscape as late as the twelfth century AD.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1.1. In terms of future excavations, it is suggested that small-scale evaluation trenches to confirm the Monument type are excavated over geophysical anomalies/targets to the south of the field hedge into Holly Grove. One such trench should aim to locate the primary burial. These investigation trenches will have to take account of the Elm sapling planting in Holly Grove. It is also suggested that the current site, north of the field hedge, be excavated further to remove the existing baulks and enable the northeast sector to be seen in plan.

9.1.2. In terms of interpreting the Monument's history, the implications of the frequently fresh Early Neolithic pottery compared with the markedly worn grog-tempered Grooved Ware/Beaker/Urn-type material needs to be assessed concerning their contextual sources.

9.1.3. At this stage, no attempt has been made to assess ceramic vessel numbers represented and, likely, a closer examination of the fresh Early Neolithic material at least may well aid this aspect.

9.1.4. It is hoped that any future work will provide material suitable for radiocarbon dating (bone), at least for the Early Neolithic phase.

9.1.5. A method of bulk sampling context soils should be introduced to future excavations to assess further the local environmental evidence relating to the phases identified.

9.1.6. Mollusc remains are evident in some ditch fills, which has the potential to inform on the local environment. They can be specified on the environment in the immediate vicinity, indicating the presence of different kinds of terrestrial environments such as woodland, pasture and meadowland.

## **10. ARCHIVE**

The finds, paper records and digital archive will be deposited at an appropriate museum in Kent or remain with the Lees Court Estate. The archive (SF19) includes all records made on site: post-excavation assessment reports, original versions of the final pottery, bone and lithics reports, context sheets, section drawings and digital plans of the site.

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## 12. LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 – Trench summary & contexts:

| <b>Trench 1</b> | Dimensions: 3.80m x 1.0m |  |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
|                 | Land use: arable         |  |                          |
| <b>Context</b>  | <b>Category</b>          | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Depth / Thickness</b> |
| 501             | Topsoil                  | Mid brown silty clay loam with stone inclusions, <50mm, rounded, medium density and moderately sorted; flint inclusions <150mm, angular, medium density and moderately sorted. Contained occasional CBM, abraded <100mm; occasional abraded pottery; occasional struck flint.  | 0.25m                    |
| 502             | Subsoil                  | Dark brown-orange silty clay with chalk inclusions, <10mm, rounded, medium density and moderately sorted; contained occasional struck flint, abraded pottery, marine shell and few metal items (copper alloy and iron). Like lower plough soil associated with arable farming.   | 0.20m                    |
| 503             | Fill                     | Mid brown-orange silty clay with flint inclusions, <150mm, angular, low density and moderately sorted. Contained occasional struck flint, abraded pottery, marine shell and animal bone. Depth 0.2 to 0.6m, width 2.5m. Clear fill of 550, probable later-recut maintaining Monument at later (>1,000 years) date. Same as (535), (537), (543), (556) & (557).                         | 0.20m – 0.60m            |
| 504             | Natural                  | Seaford chalk  | n/a                      |
| 505             | Cut                      | Cut of probable linear Medieval ditch/field gulley running NW-SE. Shallow concave sides and flat/concave base. Contained single fill (506). Width 0.35m.   | 0.20m                    |
| 506             | Fill                     | Mid brown silty clay loam with chalk inclusions, <10mm, rounded, frequent density and moderately sorted. Contained fresh Medieval pottery sherds.  | 0.2m                     |
| 521             | Cut                      | Cut of the possible Neolithic ditch into (504); steep sides with a concave base. Unclear whether the cut is a ditch cut associated with the Monument or an earlier pit excavated before Monument construction. Depth 0.8 to 1.0m, width 1.8m. Occasional struck flint and animal bone present in numerous fills (541), (524) & (531), stratigraphically earlier than cut/re-cut (552). | 0.80m – 1.0m             |
| 522             | Fill                     | Mid brown silty clay with chalk inclusions, <20mm, rounded, high density and well sorted. Possible chalk run/clay run-off from Monument structure.   | 0.2m – 0.4m              |
| 523             | Fill                     | Light brown silty clay with degraded chalk inclusions, <5mm, well rounded, frequent density and well sorted. Likely fill of an early re-cut (552) that has accumulated weathered chalk from exposed sides of (521)   | 0 – 0.25m                |
| 524             | Fill                     | Light brown silty clay with degraded chalk inclusions, <5mm, well rounded, frequent density and well sorted. Likely fill that has accumulated weathered chalk from exposed sides of (521). Truncated by cut (552) and possibly the same as (531)   | 0 – 0.20m                |
| 531             | Fill                     | Light brown silty clay with degraded chalk inclusions, <5mm, well rounded, frequent density and well sorted. Likely fill that  | 0 – 0.20m                |

|     |       |   |              |
|-----|-------|---|--------------|
|     |       | has accumulated weathered chalk from exposed sides of (521). Truncated by cut (552) and possibly the same as (524).   |              |
| 532 | Fill  | Brown silty clay with flint inclusions <150mm, angular, high density and well sorted. Initial fill of cut/re-cut (552). Depth 0.4m, width 1.7m. Contained occasional struck flint, fresh pottery sherds, marine, animal bone and charcoal flecks. Silty clay and flint nodules look homogenous in section, however, in plan, the flint nodules appear as a separate layer or surface at the base of (552) and have therefore been allocated context number (555). Contemporary with (538), (553) & (559). | 0 – 0.40 m   |
| 533 | Layer | Mid brown silty clay with chalk inclusions, <20mm, rounded, high density and well sorted. The detailed curvilinear profile indicates a possible chalk-rich build-up or structure associated with the internal Monument.   | 0.25m        |
| 541 | Fill  | Mid brown silty clay with degraded chalk and chalk inclusions, <50mm, angular, high density and moderately sorted. Contained occasional struck flint and animal bone. Primary fill of (521). Chalk lumps (inclusions) rather than degraded chalk matrix may indicate deliberate backfill of an earlier feature rather than prolonged ditch fill.  | 0.30 - 0.50m |
| 550 | Cut   | Curvilinear ditch cut around the north of the Monument. Depth 0.6, width 2.5m. Fill is (505). Probable later re-cut maintaining Monument at later (>1,000 years) date. Same as (549), & (558).  | n/a          |
| 552 | Cut   | Curvilinear ditch cut around the north of the Monument. Primary fill is (532) and appears truncated in section to the north by (550). Probable first re-cut or primary ditch cut for Monument structure. Same as (539) & (554).   | n/a          |

| <b>Trench 2</b> | Dimensions: 4.80m x 1.05m |  |                          |
|-----------------|---------------------------|--|--------------------------|
|                 | Land use: arable          |  |                          |
| <b>Context</b>  | <b>Category</b>           | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Depth / Thickness</b> |
| 501             | Topsoil                   | Mid brown silty clay loam with stone inclusions, <50mm, rounded, medium density and moderately sorted; flint inclusions <150mm, angular, medium density and moderately sorted. Contained occasional CBM, abraded <100mm; occasional abraded pottery; occasional struck flint.  | 0.25m                    |
| 502             | Subsoil                   | Dark brown-orange silty clay with chalk inclusions, <10mm, rounded, medium density and moderately sorted; Contained occasional struck flint, abraded pottery, marine shell and few metal items (copper alloy and iron). Like lower plough soil associated with arable farming. | 0.20m                    |
| 504             | Natural                   | Seaford chalk  | n/a                      |
| 535             | Layer                     | Mid brown-orange silty clay with flint inclusions, <150mm, angular, low density and moderately sorted. Contained occasional struck flint, abraded pottery, marine shell and animal bone. Depth 0.2 to 0.6m, width 2.5m. Clear fill of 536,                                     | 0.20m – 0.60m            |

|     |       |  |               |
|-----|-------|--|---------------|
|     |       | probable later-recut maintaining Monument at later (>1,000 years) date. Same as (503), (537), (543) & (556).   |               |
| 536 | Cut   | Cut of possible Neolithic ditch into 504; steep sides with a concave base. Unclear whether a ditch cut associated with Monument or an earlier pit excavated before Monument construction. Same as (521).                               | n/a           |
| 542 | Layer | Mid brown silty clay with chalk inclusions, <20mm, rounded, high density and well sorted. Appears to truncate (535) & (536). Possible chalk run/clay run-off from Monument structure.  | 0.20m – 0.30m |
| 545 | Fill  | Mid brown silty clay with chalk inclusions, <20mm, rounded, medium density and moderately sorted.  | 0.20m – 0.30m |
| 546 | Layer | Mid brown silty clay with chalk inclusions, <20mm, rounded, high density and well sorted. Possible chalk-rich build-up or structure associated with the internal Monument.   | 0.2m – 0.25m  |
| 547 | Fill  | Mid brown silty clay with chalk inclusions, <20mm, rounded, high density and well sorted. Possible chalk run/clay run-off from Monument structure  | 0.1m          |
| 548 | Fill  | Green-grey band of firm silty clay. Clay colouring possibly indicates water/flood episode  | 0.5m          |
| 549 | Cut   | Curvilinear ditch cut around the north of Monument. Depth 0.6, width 2.0m. Fill is (535) and appears truncated in section by (542). Probable later re-cut maintaining Monument at later (>1,000 years) date. Same as (550) (Trench 1). | 0.20m – 0.60m |
| 559 | Fill  | Dark brown silty clay. Cut not yet seen during excavation but thought to be the same episode as (532) and (538).   | Unknown       |

| <b>Trench 3, 5 &amp; 6</b> | Dimensions: 9.05m x 6.25m x 4.2m x 6.2m x 5.7m |  |                          |
|----------------------------|--|--|--------------------------|
|                            | Land use: arable                               |  |                          |
| <b>Context</b>             | <b>Category</b>                                | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Depth / Thickness</b> |
| 501                        | Topsoil  | Mid brown silty clay loam with stone inclusions, <50mm, rounded, medium density and moderately sorted; flint inclusions <150mm, angular, medium density and moderately sorted. Contained occasional CBM, abraded <100mm; occasional abraded pottery; occasional struck flint.  | 0.25m                    |
| 502                        | Subsoil  | Dark brown-orange silty clay with chalk inclusions, <10mm, rounded, medium density and moderately sorted; contained occasional struck flint, abraded pottery, marine shell and few metal items (copper alloy and iron). Like lower plough soil associated with arable farming.   | 0.20m                    |
| 504                        | Natural  | Seaford chalk  | n/a                      |
| 525                        | Layer  | Blackened, manganese-stained silty clay between large flint nodules and chalk bedrock. Found at edges of a probable solution hollow where flint has lain against (geologically) eroded chalk. When first excavated, looked as though flints had lain against the chalk (504), but the cover of (527) implies this could not have occurred. | n/a                      |
| 526                        | Layer  | Redeposited natural layer of flint nodules <200mm, angular, high density and well sorted. When first excavated, looked as  | n/a                      |

|     |       |   |               |
|-----|-------|---|---------------|
|     |       | though flints had lain against the chalk (504), but the cover of (527) implies this could not have occurred.  |               |
| 527 | Layer | Light brownish-yellow, coarse-grained sand and clay. Redeposited natural layer, most likely the majority content of a solution hollow.  | n/a           |
| 537 | Fill  | Mid brown-orange silty clay with flint inclusions, <150mm, angular, low density and moderately sorted. Contained occasional struck flint, abraded pottery, marine shell and animal bone. Depth 0.2 to 0.6m, width 2.5m. Clear fill of (550), probable later re-cut maintaining Monument at later (>1,000 years) date. See in section and since removed. Same as (503), (535), (543), (556) & (557). | 0.20m – 0.60m |
| 539 | Cut   | Curvilinear ditch cut around the north of the Monument. Depth 0.8, width 1.3m. Fills are (555) & (553) and appear truncated in section to the north by (558). Probable first re-cut or primary ditch cut for Monument structure. Same as (552) (Trench 1).  | n/a           |
| 543 | Fill  | Mid brown-orange silty clay with flint inclusions, <150mm, angular, low density and moderately sorted and contained occasional struck flint, abraded pottery, marine shell and animal bone. Depth 0.5m. Clear fill of (551) visible in longitudinal section, probable later-recut maintaining Monument at later (>1,000 years) date. Same as (503), (537) & (535), (556) & (557).                   | 0.5           |
| 551 | Cut   | Curvilinear ditch cut around the north of Monument seen in longitudinal section. Depth 0.5m. Fill is (543). Probable later re-cut maintaining Monument at later (>1,000 years) date. Same as (549) (Trench 2).  | n/a           |
| 553 | Fill  | Dark brown silty clay. Initial fill of cut/re-cut (539) & (554). Contained occasional struck flint, fresh pottery sherds and both charcoal pieces and flecks. Depth 0.8, width 1.3m. Though to be the same episode as (532) and (538). It is truncated by (558) in Trench 5.  | 0.8m          |
| 554 | Cut   | Curvilinear ditch cut around the north of Monument seen in longitudinal section. Fill is (555) & (553) and appears truncated in section by 551. Probable first re-cut or primary ditch cut for Monument structure. Same as (552), (539) & (540).  | n/a           |
| 555 | Layer | A redeposited layer of flint nodules <200mm, angular, high density and well sorted. When first excavated, looked as though flints had lain as a surface/structure at base or ditch (554), (539).  | Unknown       |
| 557 | Fill  | Mid brown-orange silty clay with flint inclusions, <150mm, angular, low density and moderately sorted. Contained occasional struck flint, abraded pottery, marine shell and animal bone. Depth 0.2 to 0.5m, width 2.0m. Clear fill of (558), probable later re-cut maintaining Monument at later (>1,000 years) date. Same as (503), (535), (537), (543) & (556).                                   | 0.2-0.4m      |
| 558 | Cut   | Curvilinear ditch cut around the north of Monument seen in longitudinal section. Depth 0.5m. Fill is 557. Probable later-   | 0 – 0.5m      |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  | recut maintaining Monument at later (>1,000 years) date. Same as (549) (Trench 2). |  |
|--|--|--|--|

| <b>Trench 4</b> | Dimensions: 12.25m x 1.65m |  |                          |
|-----------------|----------------------------|--|--------------------------|
|                 | Land use: arable           |  |                          |
| <b>Context</b>  | <b>Category</b>            | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Depth / Thickness</b> |
| 501             | Topsoil                    | Mid brown silty clay loam with stone inclusions, <50mm, rounded, medium density and moderately sorted; flint inclusions <150mm, angular, medium density and moderately sorted. Contained occasional CBM, abraded <100mm; occasional abraded pottery; occasional struck flint.      | 0.25m                    |
| 502             | Subsoil                    | Dark brown-orange silty clay with chalk inclusions, <10mm, rounded, medium density and moderately sorted; contained occasional struck flint, abraded pottery, marine shell and few metal items (copper alloy and iron). Like lower plough soil associated with arable farming.     | 0.20m                    |
| 504             | Natural                    | Seaford chalk  | n/a                      |
| 538             | Fill                       | Dark brown silty clay with flint inclusions <150mm, angular, moderate density and well sorted. Initial fill of cut / re-cut (540). Contained occasional struck flint, fresh pottery sherds and both charcoal pieces and flecks. Thought to be the same episode as (532) and (553). | n/a                      |
| 540             | Cut                        | Curvilinear ditch cut around the north of the Monument. Depth undetermined, width 1.5m. Fill (538) and appears truncated in section to the north by (556). Probable first re-cut or primary ditch cut for Monument structure. Same as (552), (539) & (554).                        | n/a                      |
| 556             | Fill                       | Mid brown-orange silty clay with flint inclusions, <150mm, angular, low density and moderately sorted. Contained occasional struck flint & abraded pottery. Probable later re-cut maintaining Monument at later (>1,000 years) date. Same as (503), (535), (537), (543) & (557).   | 0.2-0.4m                 |

**Table 2 – Pottery summary & contexts:**

| Context      | EN        | LN/EBA    | EBA      | EP/LP    | Medieval | Total     |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 506          | 1         |           |          |          | 4        | 5         |
| 538          | 3         | 12        | 4        |          |          | 19        |
| 502          | 2         |           |          |          | 1        | 3         |
| 559          |           |           |          | 1        |          | 1         |
| 543          | 15        |           |          |          |          | 15        |
| 555          | 7         |           |          |          |          | 7         |
| 537          | 9         |           |          |          |          | 9         |
| 553          | 10        |           |          |          |          | 10        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>47</b> | <b>12</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>69</b> |

**Table 3 – Flint summary & contexts:**

| Context       | Debitage   | Flake      | Blade     | Bladelet  | Core      | Arrowhead | Rod      | Burnt Flint | Primary Flake | Scraper  | Total       |
|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------|---------------|----------|-------------|
| 502           | 7          | 20         |           |           | 1         |           | 1        |             |               |          | 29          |
| 503           | 5          | 12         | 3         |           |           |           |          |             | 1             |          | 21          |
| 506           |            | 6          |           | 1         |           |           |          |             | 4             |          | 11          |
| 522           | 1          | 11         | 1         |           | 1         |           |          |             |               |          | 14          |
| 523           | 8          | 14         | 5         |           |           |           |          |             | 1             |          | 28          |
| 527           |            |            |           |           |           |           |          |             | 1             |          | 1           |
| 531           |            | 4          |           |           |           |           |          |             | 1             |          | 5           |
| 533           |            | 4          |           |           |           |           |          |             |               |          | 4           |
| 535           |            | 4          |           |           |           |           |          |             | 6             |          | 10          |
| 537           | 46         | 55         | 6         | 4         |           |           |          |             | 15            |          | 126         |
| 538           | 67         | 83         | 4         |           | 5         | 2         |          | 2           | 17            | 1        | 180         |
| 541           | 8          | 10         |           |           |           |           |          |             | 8             |          | 26          |
| 542           | 2          | 9          |           |           |           |           |          |             | 4             |          | 15          |
| 543           | 16         | 86         | 3         | 3         | 3         |           |          | 1           | 48            |          | 160         |
| 544           | 22         | 68         | 4         | 1         |           |           |          | 4           | 5             |          | 104         |
| 545           | 2          | 13         | 1         |           | 1         |           |          | 1           |               |          | 18          |
| 553           | 36         | 125        | 4         | 8         |           |           |          | 1           | 34            |          | 208         |
| 555           | 24         | 19         | 2         |           |           |           |          |             | 4             |          | 49          |
| 556           | 36         | 16         | 1         |           |           |           |          | 5           | 5             |          | 63          |
| 557           |            | 5          |           |           | 2         |           |          |             |               |          | 7           |
| 559           | 1          | 6          |           |           |           |           |          |             | 3             |          | 10          |
| u/s           |            | 7          |           |           |           |           |          |             | 1             |          | 8           |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>281</b> | <b>577</b> | <b>34</b> | <b>17</b> | <b>13</b> | <b>2</b>  | <b>1</b> | <b>14</b>   | <b>158</b>    | <b>1</b> | <b>1098</b> |

**Table 4 – Bone summary & contexts:**

| <b>Context</b> | <b>No.</b> |
|----------------|------------|
| 531            | 2          |
| 543            | 1          |
| 535            | 2          |
| 522            | 3          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>8</b>   |