

**An Archaeological Excavation of land at Stone Court,  
Balcombe Road, Worth, Crawley, West Sussex**

**Post-Excavation Report**

**Planning Ref. CR/2004/0322/FULL  
West Sussex: Crawley Borough**

**Project No. 2414  
Sitecode: SCW 06  
Report No. 2007270**

**Simon Stevens BA MIFA**

**With contributions by Lucy Allott**

**July 2007**

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## INTRODUCTION

An application for planning permission for a residential development at Stone Court, Balcombe Road, Worth, Crawley, West Sussex was granted by Crawley Borough Council (ref: CR/2004/0322/FULL) (Fig. 1). John Mills, Archaeological Officer, West Sussex County Council recommended that the applicant undertake a pre-determination programme of archaeological fieldwork to determine the impact of the proposed development.

The initial archaeological work consisted of the production of a Desk-Based Assessment, which outlined the archaeological potential of the site (Hawkins 2003). Subsequently Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracts division of division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology was commissioned by Taylor Woodrow Developments Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation at the site in advance of the development. Twenty-seven trial trenches were mechanically excavated during November 2005, and two areas of potential prehistoric activity were identified (Priestley-Bell 2005).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS (Figs. 2 & 3)

The results of the evaluation phase are detailed elsewhere (Priestley-Bell 2005), but in summary the majority of the evaluation trenches were archaeologically sterile. However, two specific areas of archaeological activity were identified: a group of possibly Mesolithic features was traced through three trenches in the south-east of the site and three undated quarry pits were identified in the western part of the site.

The dating of the prehistoric features was based on the recovery of a single Mesolithic bladelet and two other pieces of struck flint from the features. A sample taken for recovery of environmental remains and micro-debitage proved that neither was present within the deposit.

Given the results of the evaluation, an area measuring 15m by 15m was mechanically stripped in one of these areas of interest (Fig. 2) and investigated according to a Written Scheme of Work produced by ASE (Stevenson 2006). This work was undertaken in April 2006. Between the time of the evaluation and the further work described here, the area had been heavily disturbed by the use of this part of the site as a transit route by various machines in use with the on-site contractors.

The excavation area was mechanically stripped of c.350mm of garden soil, context [101] and c.120mm of an interface layer between the garden soil and the 'natural' Tunbridge Wells Sand, context [102] that covered much of the area. Unfortunately, in places it was found that rutting from vehicle tyres had caused substantial localised damage to the surface of the 'natural', and in these parts of the site mechanical stripping was continued until all overburden 'squashed' into ruts had been removed. In some places this led to the removal of c.750mm of material until a 'clean' surface was established.

The stripping of the area allowed the re-examination of some of the features encountered during the evaluation phase, as well as the excavation and recording of 'new' features (see Table 1). The second half of Feature [23b/04] was removed and sieved but no finds were retrieved (a piece of worked flint had been retrieved from the first half of the pit when it was excavated during the evaluation phase). A further, shallow, irregular undated feature with a yellowish brown silty fill was uncovered close to this feature, [111], fill [112].

A charcoal-rich ?post-hole, [107] was encountered to the west of Trench 23b. It was 400mm in diameter and 100mm in depth with a dark silty fill [108]. The complete fill was retained as an environmental sample, but no artefacts or ecofacts of significance were recovered. A second possible post-hole was located to the south. Cut [109] was 320mm in diameter and 180mm deep. No artefacts were recovered from the single, yellowish brown fill [110].

In close association with this post-hole there was a slightly curving gully (Feature [115]). The three sections excavated through the feature (Cuts [116], [118] and [120] varied in depth (see below), although the greyish brown silty fills (Contexts [117], [119] and [120] were similar in character. No datable artefacts were recovered from the feature.

The other gully encountered during the evaluation phase (Cut [23/04]) was found not to continue any great distance to the north or south of Trench 23. Despite heavy truncation by machinery (see above) elements of the gully were encountered to the north ([103], fill [104]), and to the south ([105], fill [106]). Depths were 120mm and 80mm respectively. Despite sieving of the fills, no artefacts were recovered. It is possible that this feature represents the continuation of a gully encountered in Trench 30, but is far from proven.

The only other 'new' feature encountered at the site was a possible small, shallow, elongated pit ([113]), encountered close to the south baulk of the stripped area. It was 300mm in width, 260mm in depth, and contained a single, brown silty fill ([114]). Despite sieving no artefacts were recovered. Feature [23a/04] could not be traced outside of the confines of Trench 23a owing to rutting (see above).

Given the depth, irregularity and silty character of all of the encountered fills, and the complete absence of any humanly-produced material, it is possible that some of the encountered features represent tree throws (particularly [111]) or silting of hollows in the surface of the 'natural' Tunbridge Wells Sand. The only artefact recovered was a single struck flint found on the surface of the 'natural'.

Feature	Type	Depth	Filled By	Comment
[103]	?Gully	120mm	[104]	Part of Evaluation Feature [23/04]
[105]	?Gully	80mm	[106]	"
[107]	?Post-Hole	100mm	[108]	
[109]	?Post-Hole	180mm	[110]	
[111]	?Pit	200mm	[112]	
[113]	?Pit	260mm	[114]	
[115]	?Gully			Feature Number
[116]	?Gully	80mm	[117]	Part of [115]
[118]	"	220mm	[119]	"
[120]	"	180mm	[121]	2

Table 1 – The Features

It was unfortunate that site traffic had caused damage requiring a deeper-than-usual strip of some parts of the site (most obvious in the case of the evaluation Gully [23/04] re-examined in the excavation phase as Gully [103] and [105]). However, the virtual absence of material culture at the site in both phases of work suggests that little archaeological data was lost.

Given the paucity of material recovered during the evaluation, and subsequently during the small-scale excavation, it can be concluded that, based on currently available evidence, no deposits of archaeological significance were destroyed during the redevelopment of the site.

## THE FINDS

### The Worked Flint by Lucy Allott

#### *Introduction*

One flint blade (26g) was recovered from the surface during excavations at this site. The blade is semi-cortical, it is on a grey mottled flint with white cortex. This piece has not been further worked and there is also no obvious evidence of use-wear or damage.

#### *Significance and Potential*

This worked flint does not provide significant information regarding flint working or use at the site because it is a single piece. On its own it does not have further potential for study.

#### *Further Work*

No further work is required.

### The Environmental Samples by Lucy Allott

#### *Introduction*

One bulk sample was taken from a charcoal-rich context to recover environmental remains.

### **Methods**

The sample was processed using tank flotation and the residue (heavy fraction) and flot (light fraction) were retained on 500µm and 250µm meshes respectively. The flot was passed through graded sieves and further sorted into the categories documented (Table 2). The residue was air dried and passed through 4mm and 2mm sieves to aid the sorting process. Archaeological and environmental materials from the residue have been classified and quantified (Table 3).

### **Results**

The sample did not contain large quantities of environmental material. Archaeological remains were absent. Contamination and disturbance of the deposit is indicated by uncharred vegetation (approximately 50% of the total) in the flot. Charcoal fragments constituted the majority of material recovered from the residue. Pieces of magnetic ore were also recovered.

Sample No.	Context No.	Uncharred Vegetation (%)	Charcoal >4mm	Charcoal <4mm
2	108	50		**/<2g

Table 2 - Flot contents quantification (\* = 1-25, \*\* = 26-50...)

Sample No.	Context No.	Charcoal >4mm	Charcoal <4mm	Magnetic ore
2	108	77/6g	*****/6g	*** /8g

Table 3 - Residue contents quantification (\* = 1-25, \*\* = 26-50, \*\*\* = 51-75, \*\*\*\* = 76-100, \*\*\*\*\* = >100)

### **Significance and Potential**

The environmental remains from this sample do not provide significant information regarding palaeovegetation or economy. Charcoal from this deposit, although present, has not been analysed for several reasons. Firstly, the deposit has been contaminated and therefore the charcoal assemblage may represent a mixture of deposition episodes. Second, the context has not yielded datable finds and the palaeovegetation information gained through charcoal analysis could not be placed in a firm datable sequence.

### **Further Work**

No further work is recommended for the environmental remains

## **PUBLICATION PROPOSALS**

It is proposed that the results from the evaluation and subsequent excavation at Stone Court do not justify full publication. Therefore, it is proposed that the current document, and the OASIS record (appended below) will form the reporting of the site, and that the site archive (including material from the evaluation and excavation phases) will be offered to Crawley Museum.

## REFERENCES

Hawkins, D. 2003. *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: Stone Court, Balcombe Road, Worth, Crawley, West Sussex*. Unpub. CgMs Consulting Report

Priestley-Bell, G. 2005. *An Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Stone Court, Balcombe Road, Worth, Crawley, West Sussex*. Unpub. Archaeology South-East Report No. 2266

Stevenson, J. 2006. *Land at Stone Court, Balcombe Road, Worth, Crawley, West Sussex. Method Statement*. Unpub. Archaeology South-East Document

### Appendix 1 - SMR Summary Sheet

Site Code	SCW 06					
Identification Name and Address	Land at Stone Court, Balcombe Road, Worth					
County, District &/or Borough	Crawley Borough, West Sussex					
Ordnance Survey Grid Reference.	TQ 2980 3630					
Archaeology South-East Proj. No.	2414					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav. ✓	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other <i>Former Garden</i>		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav. April 2006	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd.					
Project Manager	Darryl Palmer/Louise Rayner					
Project Supervisor	Simon Stevens					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other <i>Prehistoric</i>		
<p>100 Word Summary</p> <p>A small-scale excavation was undertaken in an area of the site in which potential Mesolithic activity had been identified in an evaluation by trial trenching. No further proven Mesolithic features were encountered, and no artefacts of any date were recovered from any of the encountered features. A single struck flint was recovered from the surface of the 'natural' Tunbridge Wells Sand.</p>						

## Appendix 2 – Completed OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-28978

### ? Project details

Project name	Stone Court, Balcombe Road, Worth
Short description of the project	A small-scale excavation on potential Mesolithic site identified during previous archaeological evaluation
Project dates	Start: 18-04-2006 End: 21-04-2007
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	2414 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	SCW 06 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 6 - Land boundary
Significant Finds	Flint Late Prehistoric
Investigation type	'Full excavation'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Status Complete

### ? Project location

Site location	WEST SUSSEX CRAWLEY CRAWLEY Stone Court, Balcombe Road, Worth
Postcode	RH10 7RZ
Study area	225 Square metres
Site coordinates	NGR - TQ 2980 3630 LL - 51.1107343024 -0.145531759737 (decimal) LL - 51 06 38 N 000 08 43 W (degrees) Point
Height OD	Min: 98m Max: 100m

Status Complete

### ? Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Archaeology South East
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project	Darryl Palmer

director/manager

Project supervisor      Simon Stevens

Type of sponsor/funding body      Developer

Name of sponsor/funding body      Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd.

**Status**      Complete

**? Project archives**

Physical Archive recipient (other)      Crawley Museum

Physical Contents      'Worked stone/lithics'

Digital Archive Exists?      'No digital archive'

Paper Archive recipient      Crawley Museum

Paper Contents      'Worked stone/lithics'

Paper Media available      'Context sheet','Plan','Report','Unpublished Text'

**Status**      Complete

**? Project bibliography 1**

Publication type      Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)\_1

Title      An Archaeological Excavation at Stone Court, Worth, Crawley, West Sussex

Author(s)/Editor(s)      Stevens, S.

Other bibliographic details      Document Ref. 2414

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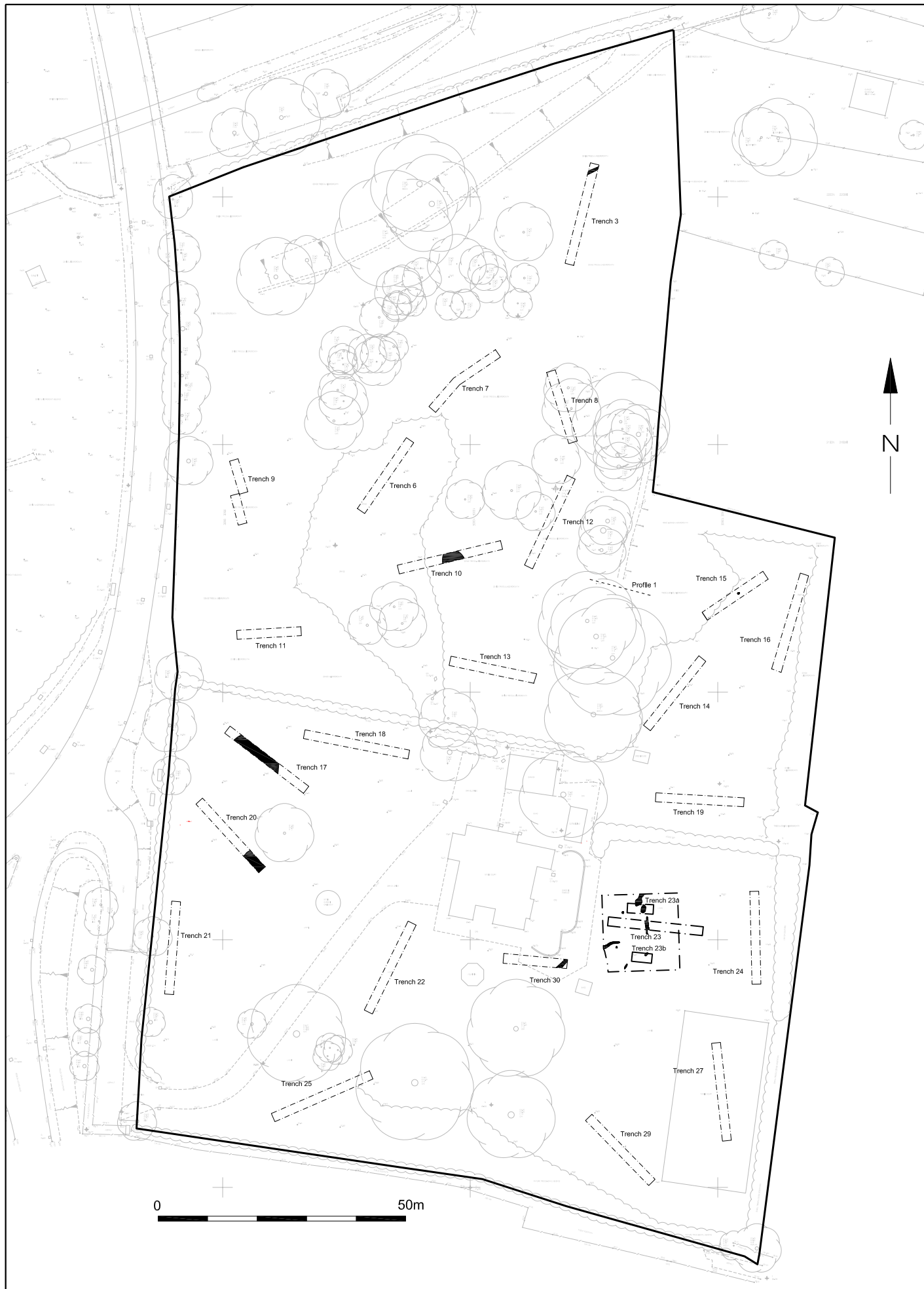
Description      Standard A4 sized ASE document with logo on front cover.

**Status**      Complete

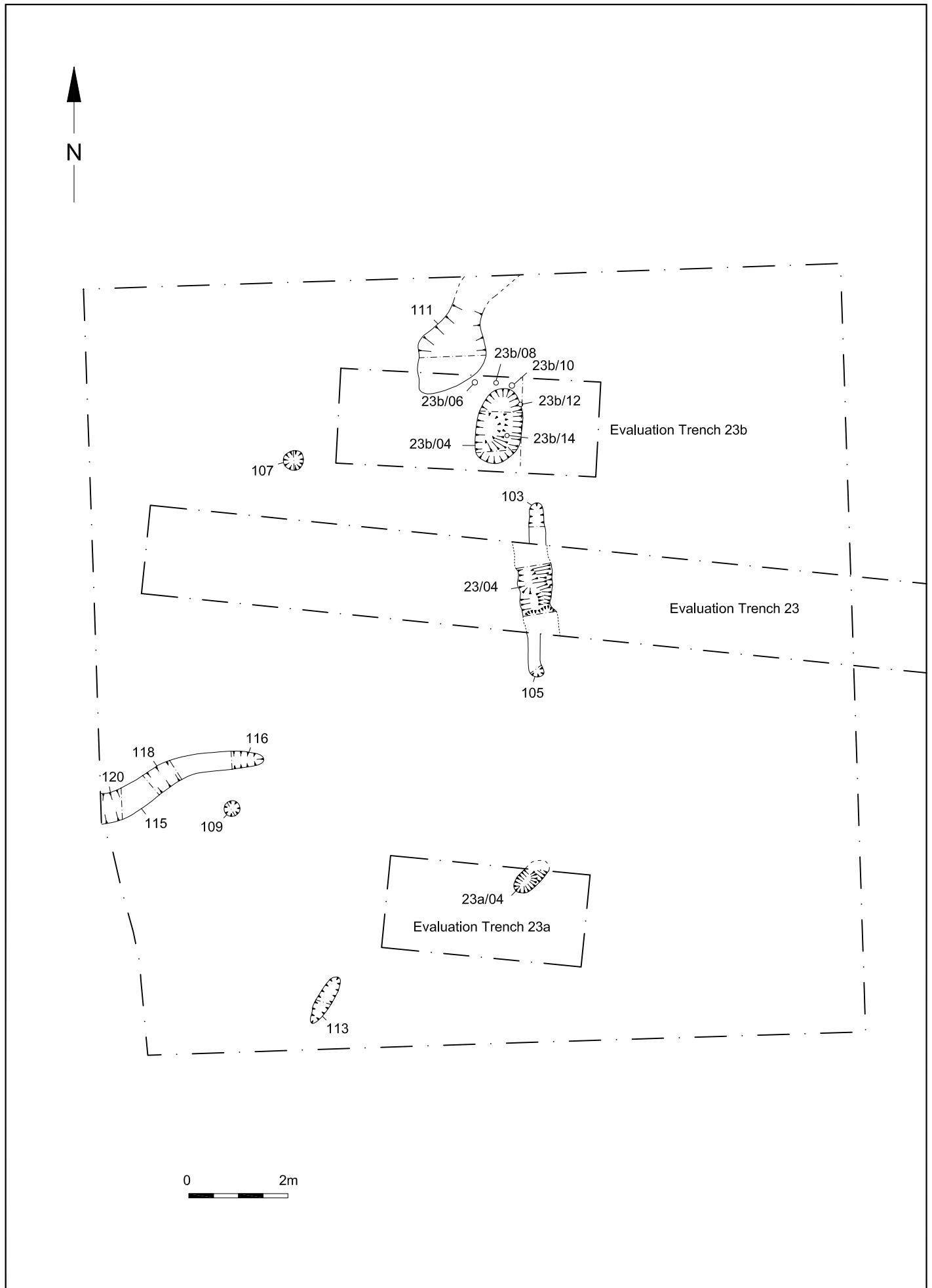


© ARCHAEOLOGY SOUTH EAST			Stone Court, Worth, Crawley	Fig. 1
Ref: 2414	March 2006	Drawn by: JLR	Site Location Plan	

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© Archaeology South-East		Stone Court, Worth		Fig. 2
Ref: 2414	Aug 2007	Drawn by: JLR	Trenches and Excavation Area	



© Archaeology South-East		Stone Court, Worth		Fig. 3
Ref: 2414	Aug 2007	Drawn by: JLR	Site Plan	

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