

CUT FEATURES	
PITS	
BURIAL PIT	A pit containing multiple inhumations.
CESS PIT	A pit dug to receive 'night-soil' and organic refuse.
CHARNEL PIT	Pit used for the re-burial of disarticulated human remains, occasionally displaying sorting of remains, e.g. grouping of skulls or long bones (distinct from mass burials which contain articulated skeletal remains).
CREMATION BURIAL PIT	A Pit containing cremated remains sometimes within a container and associated with grave goods.
EXTRACTION PIT	Excavated for the purpose of quarrying natural materials such as sand, gravel, clay or chalk.
GRAVE	A pit excavated to receive a burial.
LATRINE PIT	A pit excavated to receive human excrement.
MARL PIT	A pit from which marl, a mixture of clay and carbonate of lime, is excavated for use as a fertilizer.
PIT	The general term for a human-made hole excavated in the ground.
PLAGUE PIT	A pit used for the burial of plague victims.
POND	A natural hollow or excavated pit which contained a small body of water.
PYRE PIT	A pit below a pyre on which a corpse has been burnt. Remains of the pyre, the body and burnt grave goods may be found within the pit.
QUARRY PIT	Excavated for the purpose of quarrying raw materials such as building stone.
RE-CUT	Evidence for re-cuts may be identified in the sequences of infilled features e.g. pits and ditches.
ROBBER PIT/TRENCH	A cut feature excavated to rob the materials of built features, such as stone from walls. May follow the line of walls from which structural material has been removed.
RUBBISH PIT	A pit which may have been primarily dug to receive dumps and tips of unwanted waste, often of a domestic nature.
SCOOP	Wide and shallow feature, often with no obvious purpose or function.
SOAKAWAY	A trench, pit or shaft filled with rubble/aggregate into which rain/waste water flows for dispersal into the surrounding soil. May be lined with brick or stone.
STORAGE PIT	A pit used to store grain or other foodstuffs.
TANK	Usually a regularly shaped pit lined with a water-tight material such as clay for the purpose of storing fluids or for wet processing.
WATERHOLE	Natural hollow or man-made feature which provides a source of water for people and animals.
WELL SHAFT	A deep shaft excavated to tap a natural water source. Often stabilised with a brick, stone or wattle lining above the bedrock.
LINEAR FEATURES	
AMORPHOUS FEATURE	General term for an irregularly shaped feature of uncertain origin or function.
CHANNEL	A linear feature which may be man-made to carry water or formed through natural water action.
CONDUIT	A channel or pipe usually for conveying water.
CURVI-LINEAR FEATURE	Generic term for a curving linear feature.
DITCH	A linear channel often excavated for drainage, to mark a boundary or for defence.
DYKE	A deep drainage ditch or artificial watercourse.
FIELD-DRAIN	Unsocketed earthenware or porous concrete pipes laid end to end and unjointed so as to drain the ground or simply thin trenches containing aggregate or gravel.
GULLY	A thin and shallow ditch-like feature, usually an artificial channel forming a drain or gutter although sometimes formed naturally by running water.
HOLLOW WAY/ TRACKWAY	Sunken path or road formed through erosion of use.
LINEAR FEATURE	Generic term for a straight cut feature of uncertain function; may resemble a ditch or gully
MOAT	Wide ditch surrounding a building or manor, usually filled with water.
PIPE TRENCH	Trench containing a pipe for conveying water, gas or similar.
PLOUGH MARK	Linear scar formed by a ploughshare.

RECTI-LINEAR FEATURE	Generic term for a rectangular shaped linear feature.
SERVICE TRENCH	Trench containing live or defunct services e.g. water pipes, foul pipes, gas pipes, electrical cables etc.
WATERCOURSE	Channel used for or formed by the conveyance of water. Can be natural, or artificial.
WHEEL RUT	Deep tracks formed by the passage of cart wheels, usually found eroded into the surfaces of a road/track.
NEGATIVE STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS	
BEAM SLOT	Trench/slot dug to contain a sill beam (a horizontal timber used as a foundation for the wall of a building).
CONSTRUCTION CUT/PIT	Trench/pit usually dug in order to receive a structure such as a wall.
FOUNDATION TRENCH	Trench dug in order to receive the foundation courses of a structure such as a stone wall.
FLUE	Channel for conveying hot air.
HEARTH	Carefully constructed pit to contain fire or the floor/base of a fire may be formed or marked by hearthstones.
PLANK SLOT	Slot dug to accommodate a plank placed either on its end or along its edge as part of a structure.
POST HOLE	A hole dug to provide a firm base for an upright post, often with stone packing and sometimes with a pad of firm material in the base.
POST-PIT	A pit dug to receive a post, the pit often being much larger than necessary to accommodate the post.
POST SOCKET	Socket constructed to receive the form of a post/post-base, sometimes lined by stone.
SLOT	Thin trench to accommodate a structural element e.g. the base of a wattle fence or a thin beam or plank.
STAKE HOLE	A hole created by driving or hammering a pointed stake into the ground.
NATURALLY FORMED FEATURES	
BIOTURBATION	Underground disturbance caused by burrowing animals or tree roots.
ANIMAL BURROW	Underground chambers and tunnels dug by animals.
HOOF MARKS	Preserved impressions formed by hoofed animals.
NATURAL FEATURE	A generic term for features formed though natural processes.
PALAEO-CHANNEL	An ancient pre-historic watercourse.
PERIGLACIAL FEATURE	These form under permafrost conditions such as ice wedges, involutions and pingos. May resemble cultural features in the form of patterned ground, such as linear striping or elongated doughnut and garland shapes. NB: in section ice wedges may be mistaken for postholes or classic V-shaped ditches.
ROOT ACTION	Discrete traces of underground disturbance specifically caused by the growth of roots.
ROOT DISTURBANCE	Areas of underground disturbance specifically caused by the growth of roots. NB: Archaic hedge-lines can be recognised from such evidence.
SOLUTION FEATURE	Depressions and holes caused by chemical weathering of bedrock such as chalk. Large solution holes may open up at the surface due to the collapse of material into solution pipes and shafts below.
TREE-THROW	A bowl shaped hollow with amorphous edges formed from the growth of tree roots or a crescent shaped hollow formed by an uprooted tree. DO NOT use the term 'Tree-bole' which refers to the base and trunk of a living tree. NB: some tree-throws may contain evidence of human activity either as residual finds or intentional deposition.
WORM ACTION	Traces of underground disturbance specifically caused by burrowing worms.
OTHER	
BOREHOLE	Any exploratory hole drilled into the ground to gather geophysical data.
LEVELLING HORIZON	An event which horizontally truncates earlier deposits, such as the levelling of an area through demolition to receive a new building or floor.
MACHINE DISTURBANCE	Disturbance caused by modern machining (usually demolition activity).

DEPOSITS

BASIC CATAGORIES

BACKFILL	Infill that includes some or all of the material originally excavated by the hole rather than purely imported material.
BUILD UP	A naturally accumulated deposit such as a soil formed during a period of abandonment.
DUMP	An imported waste material either dumped as waste down a slope or as infill of a feature.
FILL	The generic term for a deposit which is not contained by a feature such as a pit or ditch e.g. pit-fill, ditch-fill, posthole-fill etc.
INFILL	Any material which fills a hole or void.
LAYER	The generic term for a deposit which is not contained by a specific feature but observed as a spread of material.
LENS	A thin and isolated layer of which may occur within the matrix of other deposits e.g. a lens of charcoal within a soil layer.
LINING	Layer of material used to cover an inner surface such as a pit-lining of clay.
MAKE-UP	Imported material forming a layer.
TIP	A sloping layer formed by the active process of tipping material down a slope.
TRAMPLE	Usually a thin layer of well mixed material formed by the action of people or animals above a surface

NATURAL DEPOSITS

ACTIVE LOAM	Active Loams or Humus consist of decomposing/decomposed organic material and particles of clay, sand and silt with a crumb like structure with spaces for air and moisture.
ALLUVIAL SEDIMENTS	A fine deposit generated by flood deposition.
BURIED SOIL	Remains of an archaic soil or subsoil preserved by overlying material which has protected it from further active processes.
CLAY	Fine grained sedimentary particles smaller than silt. Plastic when wet and hard when dry and may be hard fired to produce brick, tile and pottery.
COLLUVIUM/HILLWASH/PLOUGHWASH	Material deposited by gravity at the foot of a slope sometimes sealing archaeological features. Often formed as a result of the degeneration of soil structure due to tillage, deforestation or overgrazing.
FLUVIAL SAND	Sand deposited by riverine activity.
GRAVEL	A loose mixture of pebbles and rock fragments that are coarser than sand.
IRON PAN	Hard layers or granules of mainly ferrous mineral compounds forming at a horizon below leached deposits
LOAM	A fairly balanced mix of clay, silt and sand.
MANGANESE PARTICLES	Naturally formed dark coloured oxides of manganese often found as black or reddish black flecks or granules in clay.
NATURAL	Deposits which form the natural undisturbed geology.
PALEOSOILS	Ancient preserved soils which are no longer active.
PEAT	Organic sediment formed from decomposed plant matter under waterlogged conditions (e.g. sphagnum peat, brushwood peat and reed-swamp peat).
PEBBLES	The term pebbles should only be used to describe stones worn smooth by erosion, usually by water e.g. Beach or Riverine pebbles.
SAND	A loose fine grained material of particles ranging up to 2mm in diameter. Individual grains are usually formed of siliceous rock, coral or shell.
SEDIMENT	Any particles of material deposited by wind or water.
SILT	A fine grained sedimentary deposit falling between clay and sand in size (0.002 to 0.06mm diameter). Silky textured when wet and dries to a powder.
SUBSOIL	The soil horizon below the upper more active topsoil.
TOPSOIL	The most active upper layer of soil in which plants have most of their roots.
WINDBLOWN SAND	Sand deposited by wind action.

CONSTRUCTION/DEMOLITION DEPOSITS

BEDDING LAYER	Materials used to provide a bed, flat base or foundation for a solid structure or service pipe.
CONSTRUCTION LAYER/DEBRIS	Formed residually from local construction activity, often consisting of waste debris such as brick, flint and mortar.
DEMOLITION LAYER/DEBRIS	Formed residually from local demolition activity, often consisting of waste debris such as brick, flint and mortar.
FLOOR	A simple floor of mortar, clay or earth.
METALLING	Hard aggregate materials such as stones compacted to form a tough surface for roads and pathways.
POST PAD	Solid material placed in the base of a post-hole/post-pit to support the post base and slow down decay, may often be of a single piece of stone or brick
POST PIPE	The impression of a post usually surrounded by the infills of post-holes and post-pits; either as organic staining from a post that has decayed <i>in-situ</i> or as material which subsequently filled the void of a removed post.
RAFT	Imported material laid down to create a firm and level surface on which to build e.g. a rammed chalk raft.

RUBBLE LAYER	A layer consisting of large fragments of demolition material such as bricks, concrete and stone.
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BUILDING MATERIALS

AGGREGATE	Mix of sands/stones/rubble used in concrete or as make-up.
ASPHALT	Tar like substance mixed with gravel for surfacing roads or paths.
CEMENT	Mix of ground calcined limestone + clay used as building material or an ingredient of mortar/concrete. Cement sets by a chemical reaction with water. It is combined with aggregate, such as sand, to form an adhesive mortar or grout. With more coarse aggregate e.g. gravel, it can produce concrete.
CONCRETE	Mixture of gravel and cement used as a building material.
DAUB	A mud or clay based material often used to cover wattle constructions. Fragments often retain smooth surfaces with wattle impressions on the opposite side.
MORTAR	Various bonding materials used in masonry, surfacing, and plastering; especially a plastic mixture of cement or lime, sand, and water that hardens in place and is used to bind together bricks or stones.
RENDER	Usually a coat of stucco (plaster) applied to a masonry wall.

OTHER

ASH	In-organic residue left over from burning.
BODY STAIN	Organic staining resulting from the decay of a corpse.
CESS	Organic waste derived from human/animal excrement.
CHARCOAL	Black, carbon rich residue formed from burning wood or other organic materials.
COBBLES	The term cobble should only be used to describe smooth stones of a large to very large size.
COFFIN STAIN	Organic staining resulting from the decay of a wooden coffin.
MIDDEN DEPOSITS	Rubbish consisting mainly of food and domestic waste.
PEAT ASH	Oxidised ashy residual waste resulting from the burning of peat as a fuel.
REDEPOSITED NATURAL	Deposits formed primarily from excavated and redeposited geology.
RESIDUE	Material leftover from an event or process.
SLAG	Waste from the smelting process of extracting metal from ore.

MASONRY

BLOCKING	Courses of brick or stone used to block a former portal such as a window or doorway.
BUTTRESS	A structure of brick or stone built against a wall, arch or vault to reinforce it by resisting outward pressure.
CELLAR	A cellar or basement is an architectural construction that is completely or partially below ground in a building.
CHIMNEY STACK	A structure designed to vent hot gases and smoke from a fireplace, furnace, boiler etc.
CISTERN	A covered tank in which rainwater is stored.
COLLAPSED WALL/STRUCTURE	The <i>in situ</i> remnants of a collapsed wall or other structure.
CULVERT	A drainage structure in the form of a channel; often covered and buried to carry water below obstructions.
DRAIN	A channel constructed to collect and transport water.
FIREPLACE	An open recess in a wall at the base of a chimney where a fire can be built.
FLOOR	A laid floor of brick, stone or tile.
FOOTINGS	The very base or lowest portion of a walls foundations.
FOUNDATION	The part of a wall or structure which provides the base for further construction.
HEARTH	The inner floor of a fireplace; made of firebrick/stone/tiles etc.
JAMB	The vertical side masonry framing a door, window, fireplace or portal entranceway.
KILN	A furnace or oven often used for burning/baking/drying/calcining lime/firing pottery etc.
LINTEL	Horizontal load-bearing beam over an opening in masonry, such as a door or fireplace
PUTLOG HOLE	A hole intentionally left or constructed as a socket to place a putlog (a horizontal beam).
REBUILD	The reconstruction of a demolished or disassembled structure.
REPAIR	The reconstruction or renewal of any part of an existing structure for the purpose of its maintenance.
SLUICE	A conduit that carries a flow of water controlled by a sluice gate, which can be raised or lowered to regulate the flow of water.
THRESHOLD	The sill of a door formed by a horizontal piece of wood or stone that forms the bottom of a doorway.
TOMB	A stone built structure used for interring human remains.
WALL	There are three principal types of structural walls: building walls (internal or external), boundary walls, and retaining walls.
WELL	Stone/brick lined shaft to tap a natural water source.