The value, meaning and protection of lithic scatters

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ABSTRACT

Much research has been completed on British lithic scatters over the past 30 years, principally on field techniques and site formation processes including three 'Lithic Scatters Projects' in England, Scotland and Wales. Despite this and the publication of a guidance note for planners and conservation officers, it still appears that archaeologists in the curatorial and academic sectors undervalue the contribution of lithic scatters. This paper will review the progress over the past 30 years and consider lithic scatters in terms of their: Value, Meaning and Protection.


Keywords: Lithic scatters, landscape, palimpsest, interpretative frameworks, heritage protection.

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Consequently the prime consideration in the field should be on how best to record both the position and sedimentary context of lithic artefacts encountered at an appropriate level for their possible significance. While overall interpretation of lithic material can only be made after excavation, careful assessment and evaluation of depo