shapes. An exemplary cross sectional dimension contacting the surface of touchpad **24**B for nodule **302** may be in the range of about up to 30 mm, 20 mm or 10 mm. An exemplary height of nodule **302** may be any of up to about 15 mm, 10 mm, 5 mm or 3 mm. These dimensions and shapes are not meant to be limiting to other embodiments.

[0078] The surface area of nodule **302** when viewed from above (herein referred to as the overhead surface area) may have dimensions and a shape such that the end of a user's finger (such as a child's pinky finger) is larger in cross-sectional area than the overhead surface area of nodule **302**. Generally, one functional requirement is that the size and shape be sufficiently large to be felt by a user as he scans about or on the surface of touchpad **24**B in order to provide a tactile sense that the particular key is being hovered over by the user's finger. As nodule **302** should be sufficiently small, such that if the user has his finger on nodule **302** and decides that he wishes to activate the key associated with nodule **302**, then as the user depresses his finger onto nodule **302**, the tip of the finger can deform around nodule **302** such that a part of the tip of the finger will contact the surface of touchpad **24**B, thereby allowing the contact of the surface to register as an activation signal on touchpad **24**B for the key associated with nodule **302**.

[0079] Underneath touchpad **24**B and within the housing of device **10** (not shown) elastomer **402** is provided. Elastomer **402** is a resilient material that provides some physical cushioning for touchpad **24** B. Elastomer **402** may or may not be provided in other embodiments. Supporting elastomer **402** is platform **404** which is simply a physical structure to allow elastomer **402** to be located underneath and in close proximity to the bottom of touchpad **24**B. As shown, platform **404** is situated above printed circuit board (PCB) **406**. Platform **404** may be affixed to PCB **406**. The dimensions and shapes of elastomer **402** and platform **404** depend on the dimensions of the housing for device **10** and the location of touchpad **24**B in device **10**.

[0080] It will be appreciated that other embodiments may be provided where a transducer is located in device **10** to provide a feedback signal upon detection of a "key" being activated on touchpad **24**B. In other embodiments, a key assembly may be provided having one or more additional electromechanical switching mechanisms to provide additional feedback signal(s) when the key region in touchpad **24**B is pressed (or not pressed). Further still, a key with a transducer may be provided in a section of device **10** that is separated from display **14** and touchpad **24**B.

[0081] In FIG. **5**A, nodule **302** is shown as fitting over a region in touchpad **24**B that has been designated as a key. Nodule **302** is shown as a separate component for a specific key. In other embodiments, a connected or continuous substrate in which nodule **302** is an element may be provided that is laid over touchpad **24**B and a region of key in touchpad **24**B. In such a substrate, individual keys may be connected to each other by a web or other material. Such a web may be thinner in thickness than nodule **302** and/or may be made from a (more) flexible material, in order to isolate movement of nodule **302** from adjacent nodules **302**.

[0082] Referring to FIG. **5**B, further detail is provided on activation of a key region associated with touchpad **24**B and nodule **302**. When finger **500** touches only nodule **302** (action not shown) a first feedback is provided, namely the feeling by the user of the nodule **302** alone. As finger **500** presses further downward on nodule **302**, the tip of finger **302** deforms around and about nodule **302**, such that at least one portion of the tip of finger **500** makes contact with the surface of touchpad **24**B, as shown as contact area **504**. As such for the user action, the second region on the physical feature is being contacted simultaneously with the first feature, that being the surface of touchpad **24**B. This may provide a second feedback felt by the user, namely the simultaneous touching of nodule **302** and contact area **504**. There may be an air gap **502** defined by the location of contact area **504**, the edge of gap **502** defined by the location and size of contact area **504** on the first region, the edge of nodule **302** and finger **500**. There may be more than one contact area and there may be more than one air gap. When finger **500** is on top of nodule **302** and the user begins pressing down on it, the air gap(s) may decrease in (total) size as the finger compresses around the feature and makes more contact with the surface of touchpad **24**B. As such, the capacitance value may increase as the user pushes on nodule **302**.

[0083] An air gap may affect the magnitude of the signal generated by the input signal generator. The signal may be affected by the combination of one or more of a size of the air gap, an area of first input region on the surface of touchpad **24**B contacted during the user action and an area of the second input region on nodule **502** contacted by during the user action.

[0084] Depending on the sensing technologies used, nodule **302** may be formed with a view to minimize or maximize the size and/or number of air gaps **502** provided. When a sensing circuit has decreased sensitivity to a finger on nodule **302** because of an air gap **502**, the size and number of air gaps may be reduced. Generally, touchpad **24**B may deflect downwards by pressure applied by finger **500**, but the deflection is not significant. Elastomer **402**, platform **404** and PCB **406** support touchpad **24**B to resist pressure applied to touchpad **24**B. The circuitry in touchpad **24**B and input signal generator **74** are configured to be sensitive to recognize one or more signals caused by the user's fmger making contact with one or more regions around nodule **302**, such as contact area **504**. Touchpad **24**B and input signal generator **74** may generate a signal when finger **500** makes contact with only nodule **302**. However, this signal in one embodiment is set to be distinguished from actual contact signals made around nodule **302**. Once the activation signals on touchpad **24**B are processed, they may be filtered and processed with any other signals detected on touchpad **24**B in order to identify which key region in touchpad **24**B has been activated.

[0085] As such nodule **302** and touchpad **24**B combine to provide a tactile feedback (sense) to the tip of the finger of the user as he is initially contacts only through top of nodule **302** and an activation signal generated by touchpad **24**B once finger **500** contacts the surface of touchpad **24**B and the resulting signals generated by touchpad **24**B are processed.

[0086] Referring to FIG. **6**, another embodiment is shown where key **600** is shown in touchpad **24**B. Touchpad **24**B is shaped to have well **606** depressed in its surface. Depression regions **608** define the exterior walls of well **606**. Within well **606**, in its bottom, nodule **302** is located. As with key **400** (FIG. **4**), the dimensions and shapes of both well **606** and nodule **302** are provided to allow finger **500** to, at a first instance, touch only nodule **302**, and at a second instance, touch at least one part of the surface of touchpad **24**B, such as at contact area(s) **602**. For example, the top cross-sectional area of well **606** may be square, rectangular, oval, or any combination thereof. The depth of well **606** may be approxi-