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**39-45 CRESCENT ROAD
HEYBRIDGE
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



**Essex County Council
Planning**

Field Archaeology Unit

July 2001

**39-45 CRESCENT ROAD
HEYBRIDGE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Report Prepared by
T. Ennis

July 2001

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Field Archaeology Unit,
Fairfield Court,
Fairfield Road,
Braintree,
Essex.
CM7 3YQ.

Tel: 01376 331470

Fax: 01376 331428

39-45 CRESCENT ROAD, HEYBRIDGE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Client: Mr M. Plummer
Project: 840
Site Code: HYCR01
Date of Work: 25 June – 2 July 2001

Introduction

Nine archaeological trenches were machine excavated on land to the rear of 39-45 Crescent Road, Heybridge. Trenches 1 to 6 were located in a large rectangular area of overgrown grassland and trenches 7 to 9 in the back gardens of properties 39, 41 and 43. All trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision using a mini digger fitted with a flat bladed bucket. Most trenches (apart from 8 and 9) were approximately 1.4m wide and trench lengths totalled c.135m.

The work was carried out in accordance with a brief issued by the Heritage Advice Management and Protection Section of Essex County Council's Planning Division.

Trenches 1-6

These trenches were located across the main area of grassland. Their position varied slightly from the original trench location plan due to the presence of several small trees and overgrown areas of shrubbery. The removed topsoil/overburden was generally between 0.4m to 0.6m deep.

Archaeological features were present in all six trenches. Feature types identified included pits, post-holes, gullies, ditches and a number of large features that may be sunken featured buildings. Relatively intense archaeology was encountered across the whole of this area with the exception of the western half of trench 3, where the depth of overburden was noticeably deeper.

Surface finds include prehistoric and Iron Age pottery, an Iron Age coin, early to late Roman pottery, Roman brick and tile and a few pieces of animal bone. The acidic nature of the natural gravel may limit the number of surviving animal bone fragments. The distribution of the surface finds suggests that the earlier prehistoric and Iron Age features may be located more towards the west of the site, particularly trench 2. No Saxon finds were recovered. However, the size and shape of several of the larger features might indicate that they are Saxon structures known as sunken featured buildings particularly given that a number have been previously excavated to the east and south-east of the site.

A large ditch feature present in the south of trenches 2 and 4 and the north of trench 1 may be a continuation of the late Roman wood lined ditch excavated during the Elms Farm Excavation in 1994/5. A number of Roman cremation burials were also excavated during the Elms Farm work. However, these do not obviously appear in the evaluation trenches and may not extend this far north.

Trenches 7-9

These trenches were located in the former back gardens of properties fronting onto Crescent Road. All gardens were clearly disturbed by modern pond, well and pit digging and the construction of greenhouses and numerous sheds.

Archaeological features were only identified in trench 7. This contained a shallow curving gully [1], 6m+ long by 0.5m wide by 0.22m deep. A rounded butt end was excavated to the north and both ends of the feature curved towards the eastern edge of the development area. Two sherds of Iron Age pottery were recovered from the fill of the gully. It is possible this gully is part of an Iron Age roundhouse that extends beyond the property boundary fence. Two small post-holes [3& 7] and a pit [5] were undated. Another pit [9] contained post-medieval tile. Large areas of modern disturbance were identified at the two ends of the trench and across the centre. The overburden above the natural was up to 0.72m deep and modern finds were distributed all through it. It is therefore likely, that some truncation of the top of the gravel has taken place in this trench.

Trench 8 had an overburden depth of 0.9m at its north end and a depth of 1.2m and deepening at its south end. Modern finds were found throughout this deposit. No archaeological features were visible. This trench has clearly been heavily truncated.

Modern finds were also found in trench 9. The north end of this trench was over 1m deep and had been backfilled with large amounts of modern rubbish (plastic, old car parts, etc). Mid-way down the trench was a large concrete block. The south end of the trench also produced modern finds but shallowed up to 0.7m deep. The landowner believed there had been a swimming pool at one time in this area.

Conclusions

The main southern part of the development area contains fairly intense archaeology spread over the majority of the area. Features range in date from later prehistoric to probable early Saxon. At least one large ditch crosses the development area and this may be a continuation of the wood lined ditch from Elms Farm. A number of large features may be Saxon sunken featured buildings.

The three trenches (7-9) located in the back gardens all show a high degree of modern disturbance.

T. Ennis
4 July 2001

LIST OF ATTACHED PLANS

Trench Location Plan

Trench 1 Plan

Trench 2 Plan

Trench 3 Plan

Trench 4 Plan

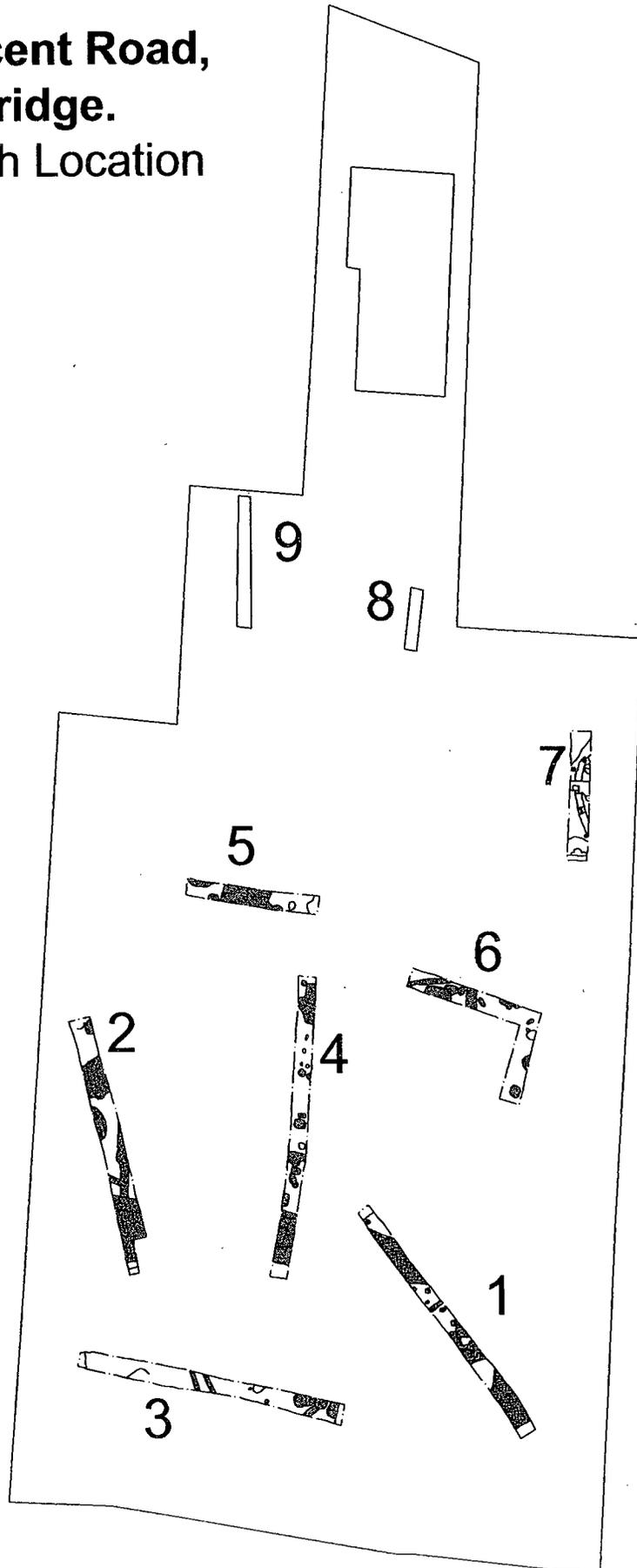
Trench 5 Plan

Trench 6 Plan

Trench 7 Plan

Plan Showing Relationship with Elms Farm (Area R)

**Crescent Road,
Heybridge.**
Trench Location
Plan.

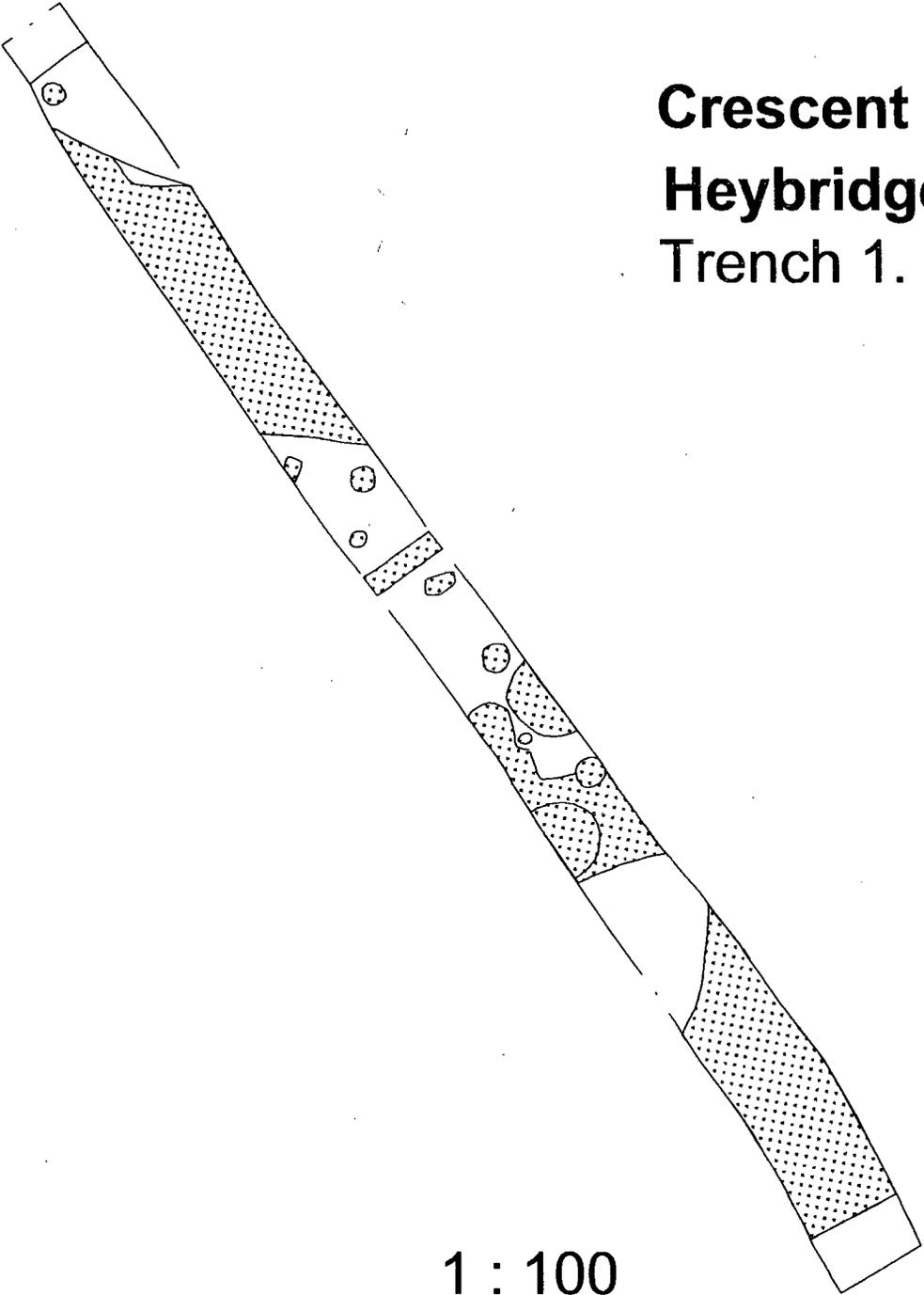


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**Crescent Road,
Heybridge.
Trench 1.**



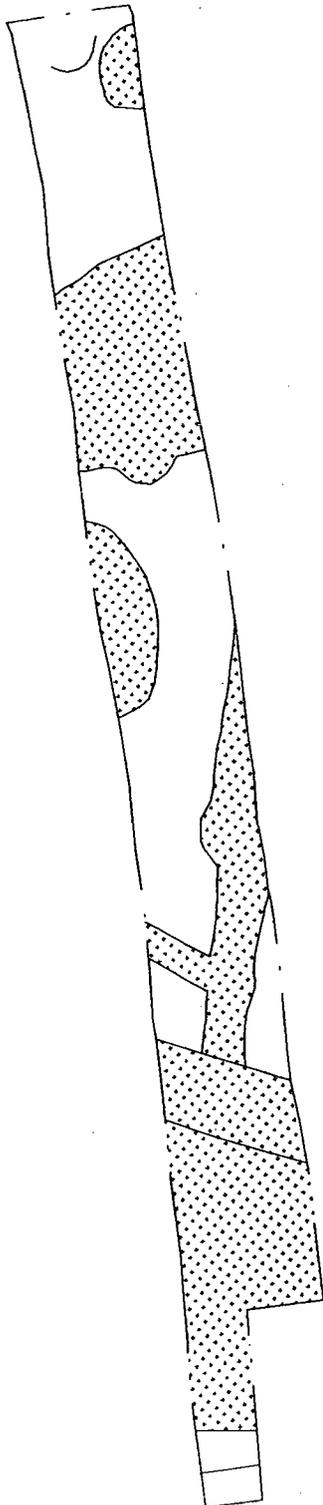
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**Crescent Road,
Heybridge.
Trench 2.**



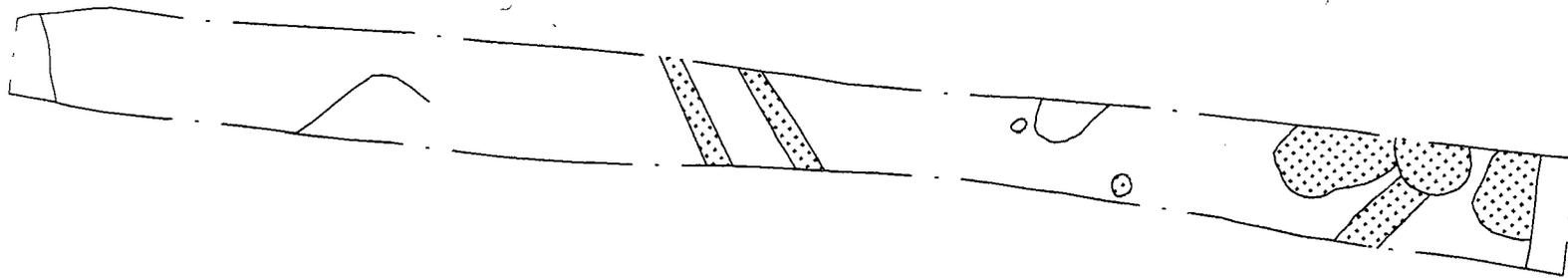
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**Crescent Road,
Heybridge.
Trench 3.**



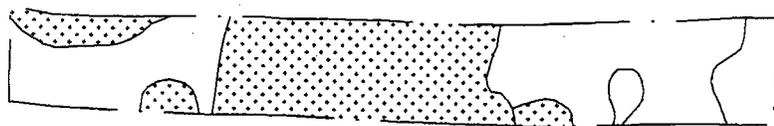
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**Crescent Road,
Heybridge.
Trench 5.**



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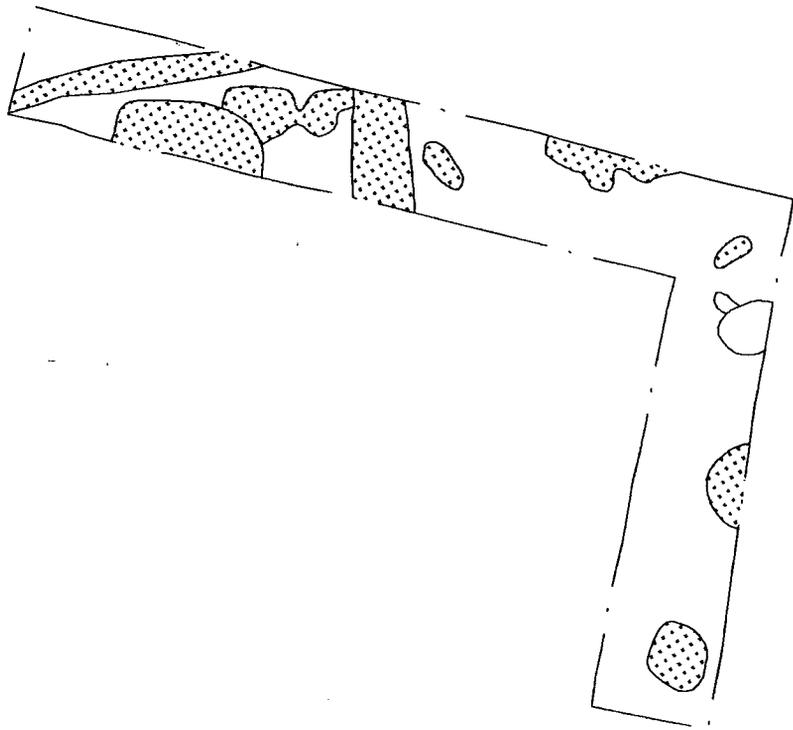


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**Crescent Road,
Heybridge.
Trench 6.**



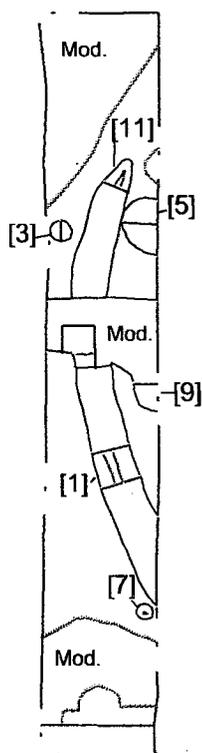
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Crescent Road, Heybridge. Trench 7.



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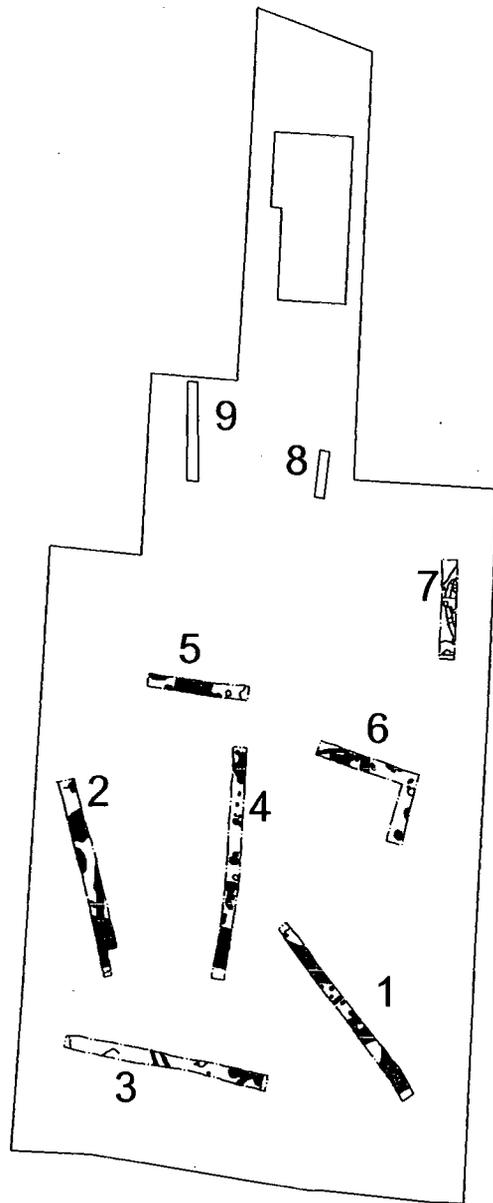


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**Crescent Road,
Heybridge.**
Trench Location
Plan, Showing
Relationship with
the Elms Farm
Excavation.



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Elms Farm (Area R)

