

**BENACRE
60 MILL ROAD
STOCK
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
BY
TRIAL TRENCHING**



**Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit
November 2006**

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As part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or the presentation of this report.
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**BENACRE
60 MILL ROAD, STOCK**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION BY
TRIAL TRENCHING**

Client: Mr Peter Fay
FAU Project No.: 1662
Planning Application No: CHL 0024/06
NGR: TQ 6918 9871
Site Code: SKMR 06
OASIS No.: essexcou1-19796
Date of Fieldwork: 24 October 2006

SUMMARY

As part of the planning condition on the demolition and then construction of a residential dwelling at Benacre, 60 Mill Road, Stock an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching was undertaken by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) on behalf of Mr Peter Fay.

Two trenches were excavated within the footprint of the new house. Trench 1 was 15m long and ran along the eastern edge of the building footprint, while trench 2 was 10m long and ran along the northern edge. Trench 1 contained two shallow features but trench 2 was heavily disturbed by concrete footings of the original house and no features were identified.

The remains in trench 1 were a shallow pit and shallow linear feature. Neither of these features were dated, however the fills of both features was very similar to the subsoil and it seems likely that they are both the remains of modern garden features, such as flower beds or planting holes.

It seems likely that no significant archaeological remains survive within the footprint of the proposed house as most of the area has been previously disturbed by the construction of the original house and its services.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching within the footprint of a proposed house at Benacre, 60 Mill Road, Stock, Essex (Fig. 1), following the demolition of the existing house.

Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) carried out the evaluation on behalf of Mr Peter Fay in response to an archaeological condition placed on the planning consent under PPG 16 (DoE 1990). The project was carried out in accordance with a Brief of Archaeological Works produced by Essex County Council Historic Environment Management Team (HEM) and the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by ECC FAU. The site archive will be deposited at Chelmsford Museum. A copy of this report will be deposited with the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER). A further copy will also be uploaded to the OASIS database.

The report is structured to describe the background to the project, followed by an assessment of the results of the fieldwork, followed by a discussion of the archaeological potential. Appendices include descriptions of the trenches, details of the archive contents and the EHER summary. All illustrations are placed together towards the back of the report.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and Topography (Fig 1)

The investigation area lies to the immediate east of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Roman Catholic church on the eastern side of an access track leading from Mill Road, Stock. The area of investigation is partially disturbed by the demolition of the former house and partially under grass. The land generally slopes gently down from west to east.

2.2 Geology

The topsoil in the both the trenches was contaminated by modern debris, much of which would have come from the demolition of the house. On average the depth of topsoil was 0.4m. A shallow layer of mid brown silty clay subsoil, with an average depth of c.0.2m was also identified in both trenches.

The drift geology of the site was generally bright orange clay. The underlying solid geology of the area is Bagshot Clay (BGS map accessed Oct 2006).

2.3 History and Archaeology

The site is thought to be situated within a putative Iron Age Enclosure (EHER 9135) and close to a Romano-British cemetery (EHER 5380). This indicates that the general area was probably settled during the Iron Age and into the Roman period. However, the earliest evidence for settlement is from 1234 in the *Feet of Fines for Essex* (Reaney 1976, 269-70) when the settlement was called *Herwardstock* (Hereward's Stump). There is no mention of Stock or its antecedents in the Domesday Book.

The site is located outside the medieval village which is documented as being the home to potters from 1482 to 1745 (Cunningham 1985, 87–8). The closest findspot for Stock pottery was approximately 150m away at Thorndon Place (EHER 5381). However, dumps of pottery wasters dating to the 17th and 18th centuries have been recovered from the general area of Stock and Stock common.

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map shows that the development area was open fields, albeit immediately behind the properties along Mill Road.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The general aim of the project was to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the area of the new house, and to preserve by record any significant remains. The research objectives follow those outlined in the regional research framework (Brown and Glazebrook 2000) with the following site specific objectives:

- To record any evidence of settlement or activity earlier than the medieval village
- To record any evidence of settlement or activity relating to the medieval and post-medieval village
- To record any further evidence of pottery manufacture at Stock in the 16th to 18th centuries

4.0 METHOD

As originally specified the evaluation comprised excavation and recording of a single 25m long trench. After further consultation of the plan of the new house this was then changed to two 10m trenches and a 5m trench. However, while on site the location of the earlier footings and services dictated that one 10m trench and one 15m trench were excavated. The eastern 'wing' of the house was not trenched due to the presence of services and a manhole.

Both trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator under the supervision of an archaeologist. All the trenches were planned and located to existing property boundaries; representative sections of the baulks were drawn and a photographic record comprising monochrome and colour print maintained throughout the fieldwork. All plans were linked to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

Standard FAU methodologies were employed with regard to the recording. Both the fieldwork and the reporting have been carried out to professional standards and guidance issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999) and the ALGAO standards for fieldwork (Gurney 2003).

5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS (Fig 1)

Two trenches were machine excavated under archaeological supervision. Each trench is briefly described below. Further information can be found in Appendix 1.

5.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was located along the eastern edge of the proposed new house. It was aligned north – south, measured 15m x 2m, and was excavated to a depth of 0.6m.

The topsoil was approximately 0.45m deep and contained a moderate amount of modern debris. A thin layer of light brown silty clay subsoil, 0.15m deep, was identified between the topsoil and the bright orange brown clay natural geology.

Two features were identified in this trench, a shallow pit, 1, and a shallow linear feature, 3. Pit 1 measured 2.1m x 1.1m and was 0.2m deep; the fill of pit was very similar to the subsoil and no finds were recovered from it. It is likely that this feature was associated with the garden of the demolished building. Linear feature 3 ran east west across the length of the trench, it measured 1.2m wide and was only 0.11m deep. The fill was again very similar to the subsoil and no finds were uncovered. Again it seems likely that this feature was a garden feature, i.e a flower bed, associated with the demolished building. Neither of these two features were dated but it seems likely that both were of modern origin, and they may well be the very bases of garden features such as planting holes or flower beds.

5.2 Trench 2

Situated along the northern edge of the proposed new house trench 2 measured 10m x 2m and was excavated to a depth of 0.2m. It was orientated east - west. As with trench 1 the topsoil

contained a significant amount of modern debris, 0.4m deep. Below the topsoil was the same subsoil as trench 1, which was 0.2m deep and overlay the bright orange clay natural geology.

The trench was heavily disturbed by the concrete foundations of the demolished house and the natural geology was only identified in small areas. No archaeological features or deposits were identified and no finds were collected or environmental samples taken.

6.0 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATERIAL

No finds were recovered any of the features or trenches. No deposits with perceived environmental potential were identified and so no soil samples were taken.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The area of investigation was severely disturbed by the foundations of the previous house that occupied the site and by its subsequent demolishing. The only features identified, although undated, were likely to be of modern origin and may have been associated with garden features directly behind the original house.

The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1861 - 76 indicates that the whole area was open fields prior to becoming a house and garden. It is clear from the excavated trenches that over the majority of the investigation area there had been a significant amount of modern disturbance.

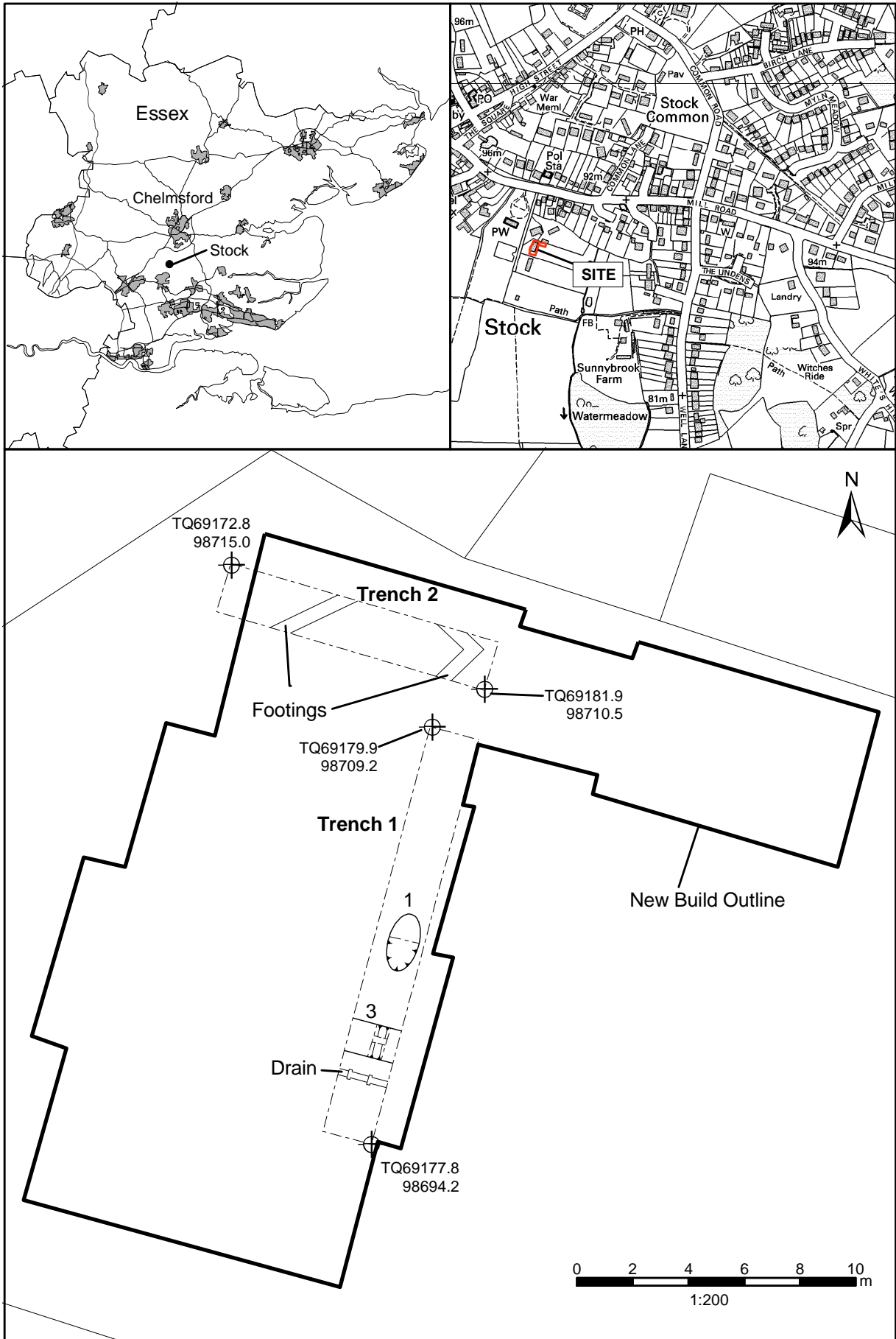
It is unlikely that any significant archaeological remains survive within the development area. If remains did once exist then it is highly likely that the construction of the previous house has destroyed them. There were no pottery finds that could be associated with the Stock potteries, indeed no archaeological artefacts were noted within either the topsoil or the subsoil which further suggest the absence of archaeological remains on the site.

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Mr Peter Fay. Thanks go to Mr J Pryor and Mr P Fay of Navarre Interiors Limited for their assistance throughout the project. The Illustrations were produced by A Lewsey, P Allen managed the project and the author carried out the fieldwork.

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Fig.1. Location plan

APPENDIX 1: FIELDWORK DATA

All dimensions are given in metres.

Trench	Dimensions (L x W)	Depth	Truncation of ground level?	Archaeological Features	Co-ordinates (NW and SE corners)
1	15 x 2	0.6	No	Yes	TQ 69172.8 / 98715.0 TQ 69181.9 / 98710.5
2	10 x 2	0.6	Yes	No	TQ 69179.9 / 98709.2 TQ 69177.8 / 98694.2

Context No	Type	Trench No	Description	Date
1	Pit	1	Sub oval pit – 2.1 x 1.1 x 0.2 – Probably a planting hole	-
2	Fill	1	Fill of [1] – single fill – natural deposition	-
3	Linear	1	Shallow Linear feature – 2+ x 1.2 x 0.11 – pos a flowerbed	-
4	Fill	1	Fill of [3] – single fill – natural deposition	-

APPENDIX 2: ARCHIVE INDEX

SITE NAME : BENACRE, 60 MILL ROAD, STOCK (SKMR 06)

Index to the Archive

File containing:

1. Research Archive

- 1.1 Brief of Archaeological Works
- 1.2 Written Scheme of Evaluation
- 1.3 Client Report

2. Site Archive

- 2.1 2 x Trench Sheets
- 2.2 4 x Original Context Sheets
- 2.3 2 x Photographic Registers
- 2.4 4 x Photographic Prints (colour + B+W)

No finds

APPENDIX 3: EHER SUMMARY SHEET

Site Name/Address: Benacre, 60 Mill Road, Stock	
Parish: Stock	District: Chelmsford
NGR: TQ 6918 9871	Site Code: SKMR 06
Type of Work: Evaluation by trial trench	Site Director/Group: A. Robertson ECC Field Archaeology Unit
Date of Work: 24 October 2006	Size of Area Investigated: Development area c 50m sq
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Chelmsford Museum	Funding Source: Mr Peter Fay
Further Work Anticipated? No	Related EHER Nos: 5380; 5381; 9135
Final Report: EAH Summary	
Periods Represented: Modern	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>As part of the planning condition on the demolition and then construction of a residential dwelling at Benacre, 60 Mill Road, Stock an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching was undertaken by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) on behalf of Mr Peter Fay.</p> <p>Two trenches were excavated within the footprint of the new house. Trench 1 was 15m long and ran along the eastern edge of the building footprint, while trench 2 was 10m long and ran along the northern edge. Trench 1 contained two shallow features but trench 2 was heavily disturbed by concrete footings of the original house and no features were identified.</p> <p>The remains in trench 1 were a shallow pit and shallow linear feature. Neither of these features were dated, however the fills of both features was very similar to the subsoil and it seems likely that they are both the remains of modern garden features, such as flower beds or planting holes.</p> <p>It seems likely that no significant archaeological remains survive within the footprint of the proposed house as most of the area has been previously disturbed by the construction of the original house and its services.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: N.A.	
Author of Summary: A. Robertson (ECC FAU)	Date of Summary: November 2006